

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Friday, November 3, 1967

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I worked with Bess until the first big event of the day. That was the swearing-in of the new District of Columbia Council in the East Room.

I waited by the elevator, and walked in with Lyndon. Every seat was full, and there was that ripple of excitement that is almost tangible in the air when something is really happening. And a big barrage of cameramen. There they were -- the nine new Council members -- John Hechinger, the Chairman; young, baby-faced Walter Fauntroy, a Negro Minister, Vice Chairman; Polly Shackleton, a graduate from our Beautification Committee; and six others -- with Walter Washington beaming, and Deputy Mayor Fletcher, big and stallied and blond -- an interesting counterpoint to Walter. And Tom Clark in his Justice's robe to swear them in.

Lyndon went right to the podium. This time he let his written remarks lie and talked mostly off-the-cuff, straight from the heart. It was great. "This morning the future separates from the past, from the wagon-wheel Government into the jet age. Your problems are out there waiting for you on the streets." And then he launched into a description of them -- crime, overloaded courts, inadequate schools -- everybody that can afford to sends their children to private schools -- poor housing, use of the limited horizons -- all existing in the national gold fish bowl.

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He spent most of the time on crime. "I want to ask this Council, I want to ask every judge, I want to ask the District Attorney, I want to say to every policeman...." He called on every one of them to drive crime from the streets of the Nation's capital, and said he would do all he could to back it up.

There was fervor and evangelism and an electric quality that communicated itself to the audience.

And then at the end he had that just-right touch of humor. He turned to Senator Morse who was on the front row on the other side and recalled how when he came over to the Democratic side in the Senate he asked to be put on two Committees -- the District of Columbia and Foreign Relations. "And now I want to recognize that quality of service. Nobody has done more to make the District a decent place to live than Senator Morse." Senator Morse was beaming. And then, "I hope after he gets a little more time to spend on foreign relations that he will be as good in that field." And we were all roaring. Lyndon has an extraordinary generous quality of recognizing someone who has been 99 percent of the time a thorn in his flesh, or the 1 percent when he has been a real contributing factor for better government, as he has been in labor disputes sometimes and in the District of Columbia.

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One thing politics has taught me -- you can never really afford a grudge. There is always some time and place where where your bitterest critic -- the most implacable enemy -- who can and sometimes will help run the ship a little better.

And then they were sworn in in mass by Tom, and a great clicking of cameras and a feeling in the room you could almost touch.

And then went to the Blue Room and stood in line. Lyndon asked the Mayor and the Vice Mayor to stand with us. All the Councilmen came through and we had family pictures -- Hechingers, Fauntroys, Yeldells.

It was nearly 1:00 before we were finished, and I was upstairs with my lunch on a tray.

And then to Jean Louis, and then back at the White House to gather together all the seven of us for a family picture. This time in the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden.

I wore my new red dress and jacket by Adele Simpson. Luci was in bright yellow, and Lynda in a soft blue, fur trimmed.

The garden was still bright with chrysanthemums though they were just past their prime. And Indian summer lingered in the air.

Lyn was solemnly cooperative, and Lynda and Chuck beautiful and a little apart. And Yuki was the clown of the afternoon.

We got some good ones.

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And then back upstairs while Lyndon ate his lunch.

I got us reorganized, and changed to a bright green afternoon tea dress and we had more pictures in the West Hall on the sofa.

A few days ago coming out of the flower room I had noticed a family picture of us two years old -- the four of us. It seemed so oddly lonesome. Now we are seven.

Jesse came down and posed with us once.

It's such a happy time having little Lyn here. He is the best balm and release and joy for Lyndon.

A little past 4:00 I went to the Treaty Room and joined Liz and Frances Lewine to finish the interview we had started yesterday. We did it on a tape, and it is more exhausting than mountain climbing. And the end has rather the same effect -- you are glad you've done it.

Late in the afternoon I found that Arthur Krim was our house guest and he and Abe and John Criswell and Lyndon and one or two more were in a huddle in the West Hall. What a mosaic the presidency is. So many people give so much to make it work.

But my day's work was over, and I was really ready for the fun of the evening. I had said "yes" to going by the Roger Stevens. They are having the National Council on the Arts for cocktails and buffet. I wore my white Mollie Parnis long-sleeved evening dress. And to my surprise Lyndon came along with me. And we went into Georgetown

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for a pleasant half hour in the Stevens' high-ceilinged living room full of interesting guests and bright conversation.

Charlton Heston was in the hall when we walked in with Roger and Christine. He is one of my always favorites. And so are Marian Anderson and Harper Lee whom we saw next. When I put out my hand to one of the guests, she said, "Hello Mrs. Cafritz." And I went right on greeting people and making small talk without a flicker -- I think.

I found myself face to face with two very British guests who began telling me how delighted everyone had been in London with Lynda Bird. Their names were just out of reach somewhere in my subconscious. And it was later when I realized with a jolt that it was the ^{Cassins} Katchers -- former British Ambassador to Washington.

Lyndon is not easy to get to a party. He is much less easy to take away. And I wanted to get to the Jack Hight's party for Lynda before it was time for them to sit down for dinner. We did. It was at the City Tavern where Lynda's 21st birthday party had been (Luci had given it for her). And later Luci's own announcement party in February of '66.

As we approached we saw such a crowd around the door of the City Tavern that you would have thought they were awaiting a movie star on opening night.

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Lynda and Chuck had been there a good half hour, and Luci and Pat a few minutes earlier.

Besides the writing press and the photographer, a sizeable crowd had gathered -- some long-haired young folks in odd clothes on their way to the discotheques that fill M Street -- some Georgetown folks just out walking the dog. Everybody was friendly.

We smiled briefly and walked past into Lynda's first party. I found myself so eager. Everybody there was a good friend -- mostly young folks -- many in the wedding -- Doug Davidson and Marie Fehmer and the young Bill Folley. Bridesmaid Mrs. Gerald Gilds with her husband -- the first time I've met him. I told him how we'd prayed him back from Viet-Nam.

From official Washington, Marvella and Birch Bayh and Lindy without Hale who is recuperating from an appendectomy, and the Ramsey Clarks and the Jim Symingtons .

And from the White House, the Carpenters and the Abells and the Watsons and Helene Lindow with her parents and Marta and Stu Ross.

Everywhere I looked there was somebody I wanted to stop and talk to. Nancy and Dick Dickerson, Scooter and Dale, Elizabeth and Everett Hutchinson. And completely at home with these younger folks, Marie and Averell Harriman and the Tom Clarks.

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The room was far too crowded, and nobody minded. And I had that delicious feeling that all this warmth and friendliness and gaiety was meant for and directed right toward that sweet girl Lynda and Chuck, and just because everybody here really loved her.

For me the party achieved what Jack and Nell had meant it to.

We left in a glow a little past 9:00. And back at the White House, Arthur and Abe were still waiting for us in the West Hall. We had taken the Watsons with us. And we had dinner and talked of the Democratic National Committee -- what needed to be done and how they could do them better.

When the men went into Lyndon's room to watch the 11:00 news, I stayed in the Hall with Marion. Actually, it's the first time I've ever had a lengthy quiet conversation with her -- totally feminine, totally devoted to Marvin and whatever his life is -- and now that is us. She wears well -- pretty as many of the town's headline beauties. She has a sort of sterling quality that represents the best of small-town raising. We are lucky to have her and Marvin in our vicinity.

It was 1:00 before Lyndon turned out the light. It had been a full, good day.