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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6

Tuesday, February 6, was a full Washington day. In the morning I briefed myself through old tapes, old notes and conversations in preparation for my interview with Howard K. Smith, who is writing a book about this Administration. There will be a flux of them no doubt and mostly bad. If there is any light I can shed to point up the constructive side, the human side, I had better try. I had lunch on a tray in my dressing room, recorded, went to Mr. Per's for a comb-out, returned to the White House to work at my desk, though groggily, because it had been an awful night. Lyndon and I had gone to sleep around one o'clock and then sometime later the telephone had jerked us awake-- the Situation Room. Lyndon's voice was tense, earnest, and I lay there taut with apprehension and completely impudent to help. It rang again and again during the night at intervals. Once I looked at the clock. It was five twenty and at seven Lyndon turned on the light and the real day began. These mornings Larry Temple and Bill Blackburn have begun coming in taking turns handling the night reading which Lyndon has finished the night before. For two years it was smiling Jake Jacobsen, before that Jack Valenti and more recently for a long while Marvin Watson. He still comes but not every morning.

So in the middle of the afternoon I had tea with six Ambassadors' wives. They were escorted by Virginia Rusk, who is

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as calm and unperturbable as her husband and pretty little Sylvia Symington. We sat in the Yellow Room, the tea table full of delicious things, and Sylvia pouring with Mrs. Mailkyar of Afghanistan, finely chiseled patrician face, gentle and quiet. She spoke little English, but her daughter Leila, interpreted for her, who was very easy in the language. The three ladies from Africa Mrs. Ohin of Togo, and Mrs. Hyde of Sierra Leone, whose English had a definite British accent, Mrs. Badenga, of Gabon, who came quite late, and no wonder with eight children to get settled, and only in this country about two weeks. She was bright and interesting but spoke only French and I found it difficult to penetrate. The most interesting woman of the group, a forceful attractive woman whom I would like to know better, Mrs. Michalowski, the wife of the Ambassador from Poland. She had piercing blue eyes and seemed to be taking in everything. I talked to her about the heavy Polish concentration in our own little Tenth District and over Texas. She seemed to know a great deal about it and when we skipped to the subject of art she said that the dealers tell her that there are now, in Texas, some heavy buyers in the art field from wonderful private collections--funny that the wife of the Ambassador from Poland should be telling me about art collections in Texas. She was sort of a

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bright, alert woman and if she were a citizen of our country I would try to get her interested in working for the Democratic Party. And there was Mrs. Kim from Korea in her native dress, a dignified handsome woman, but her English not very good. I told her how shocked and incensed we were at the assassination attempt on the life of President Park and how glad we were that he was all right. And there was pretty little Mrs. Apacon from Thailand, sunny-faced, very feminine, wearing a pink and green Thai print. She says they have only been making the prints for about ten years.

After a while I changed seats with Virginia and later with Bess so I could move around the room and talk to each lady. It was a pleasant enough meeting. Sometimes I have a wild impulse to say, for instance to the lady from Korea, tell me what's on your mind the most. I took them on a tour of the Lincoln Room, the Queen's Room, Treaty Room and Mrs. Michalowski asking most of the questions and said goodbye a little past four. Then there were two more brief meetings, the first, to meet Dr. Persia Campbell. She and Betty Furness, the panel who would talk to us at our next Women Doers Luncheon--this one on consumer problems and everything must be prepared for. We had asked her down here. Liz and some more of the staff had spent seven hours talking to the two of them about how we

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could make the most out of the luncheon. What points we should try to get over for the press to elicit from the other ladies. How could we use this for a tool to express the Administration's aims? And I came in at the end to meet her and get my own briefings and express appreciation. Everything has to be worked at beforehand. That is, if it is any good. Then the next was a brief and pleasant meeting over a cup of tea in the Library, one of my favorite rooms. The bright faced, eager-eyed little girl Anne Lazarus, who is the first recipient of a scholarship granted by a Jewish Ladies group to a woman student at Yeshiva University's stern college. The scholarship enables the student to study some facet of poverty and it is named in honor of me. Anne Lazarus was accompanied by Mrs. Nathan Wadler, the National President of the Women's group. It was a happy meeting because Anne was so full of the buoyant optimism, a feeling that she could make some little contribution to the attack on poverty. When I asked her what she was doing--what she was studying, I was a little dampened that the description got into so much departmentalese until she began to launch on how in studying one particular segment of the Jewish population that lived in Williamsburg, part of New York I suppose, was quite a low income group. They nevertheless had a very low rate of juvenile delinquency. Immediately your mind jumped to family authority-family closeness. That was it

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she thought. Ah, but how to translate this into those segments of the population where there aren't those generations of filial strength. We had tea. Bob Knudsen took a picture. I dispatched them on a tour of the White House with my earnest thanks and high hopes.

Then there began undoubtedly one of the funniest interviews since I have been in the White House. A young lady from Sports Illustrated who wants to talk to me about bowling. We talked in the little Lincoln Sitting Room. It was easy and if anything can be innocuous, surely it is bowling. And then we went over to the alley and met two photographers and Bob Knudsen who took pictures and I bowled a very bad first game and then, to my overwhelming surprise, an almost star second game for me-- 174. I seldom make it. Unfortunately, they were only taking pictures of me and not of the balls as they fell.

Back on the second floor, I had two long conversations with Dr. Grover about the Library. I try to do a little work on it about two days of each week. And then, with a lifting heart, put on my black lace dress with the pretty white bow at the neck and went over to Lyndon's office. We were going out to dinner with the Monroneys. It is one of the nicest things that happens to us once or twice a year. We have dinner with them-- in their garden, if it is summer. I was surprised and relieved that Lyndon was really going. We arrived late,

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found most pleasant company one could hope to assemble-- Marny and Clark, Carol and Abe, distinguished Maxwell Taylor and his wife and the Bill Whites. Marian and Mike's house is a beautiful foy for fun, a distinguished charming house. The whole glass wall that opens on to the garden, Chinese screen. One of the family brought it from China, beautiful jade here and there, a melange of art, a good deal of it oriental, a very modern painting, quaint, gay, Chinese children, her own granddaughter in a costume of Renoir and a very good portrait of Marilyn's grandfather and her great grandfather. Somehow that speaks volumes to me and the whole house warmed with the pictures of the figures of Washington life they had known through the years, including President Roosevelt. It was just the sort of evening we needed. Nobody hurried us into dinner or at any-time. While we had a drink, Lyndon was in earnest conversation with the General. And then the most delicious dinner and I was glad to see that Lyndon enjoyed it. He had adhered strictly to this stringent diet of his. He has held his weight down to about 203 or 4. He doesn't get his exercise since his return from the ranch, but I think it is the most enormous esprit de Corps of will that he could stick to his diet during these hellish days. There were no formal toasts, but over coffee we just began to talk. Our host sitting down-- a warm,

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strong toast and then around the table Clark and Abe adding his humor and Marny sweet and sentimental and Lyndon who said the most straightforward, simple and yet, somehow, touching things, "I am glad there is one house in this town where I can come without getting into trouble or getting in the papers or getting mad and talk and laugh with good old friends and just rejoice in companionship and a full hearted toast to our host and hostess." It was a delightful three hour reprieve and we left early and went back to the White House to our diet of taton and whey and the Pueblo with fractious factions everywhere, Southeast Asia, the Senate, segments of our own country.