

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Friday, February 13, 1968

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It was a good White House day, I was up at eight, started to the pool. I asked Lyndon to come with me, and to my delight he did. We talked and swam, this time I probably only got 20 turns instead of my usual 30, but I gave myself extra marks for getting Lyndon in the pool. He has wonderful about staying on this diet, Zephyr plans the menu, Juanita figures the calories, and they juggle the menu if necessary. They put the card by his plate, and he sticks to it; and the little chart in the bathroom, by the scales, goes down and down. It's about 201 now, such a wonderful difference. But he does not get the exercise to which he was so vigorously faithful while we were home Christmas.

Then Jean Louis came for a hairdo, and under the dryer, I talked to Liz about my April trip to Texas.

And then the first real appointment of the day, was Adele Simpson, Miss Treyz, and Patsy (he is a man, in spite of the name). In this life, there are at least two days, maybe more, in about February, and about August, that are devoted entirely to clothes. Today was a partial one, and there are at least two women from the world of fashion, that I've come to think of as my very special friends, Adele Simpson and Mollie Parnes.

A quick look through her spring showing, one selection, several maybes, and then we had to postpone the rest until tomorrow, because, since I had planned to see her, something had been set that I must be a part of.

The ceremony in the East Room for the National Medal of Science Awards. I went down a little after 12:30, waited for Lyndon at the elevator, we marched

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past the Marine band the battery of cameras, into the East Room, for another of these ceremonies. So many of them, and this is one, that give a lift to the heart.

This is Dr. Donald Hornig's show, and is the assistant to the President for Science and Technology. The National Medal of Science was established by an Act of Congress in '59, to provide recognition to individuals who make outstanding contributions in the physical, biological, mathematical, and engineering sciences. Today, the twelve received them for contributions, so sophisticated and specialized, that I could hardly pronounce, much less understand them. But there were some familiar names to me, Edwin Land, who had produced the Polaroid camera, and I had watched him receive the Medal of Honor here. And Igor Sikorsky, a pioneer in aircraft, who looked like a very distinguished old gnome, and his product, the helicopter, had played a very important in our lives. And Kistiakowsky, who had been, a Science I believe, /advisor to President Eisenhower, and later, I believe, was one of the scientists and engineers of Johnson, in '64.

Lyndon's speech was a great one. I only wish he had had more time to ~~study~~ study it and had delivered it with more passion, because I knew the passion was there, in his feeling that knowledge could free us from our problems, and that these men were contributing to knowledge.

And after the last medal had been handed out, the beaming Dr. Hornig behind the podium and Lyndon congratulating the recipients, we then went in the Blue Room and Lyndon had his picture made with the 12 recipients

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and then began the receiving line.

There was Bill Haggerty - he's the sort of man you want to greet by throwing your arms around him, and he was just as full of enthusiasm as ever. And the nicest thing about the ceremony, is that the families of the recipients come in full measure, wives that are bedecked with orchids, children of all ages in their party best. There was one adorable little girl who looked like she ought to have her portrait painted, in a velvet dress with a lace collar.

A small group of Congressmen who are particularly oriented towards science, or whose constituents were winners, even including Speaker McCormack, and Mel Laird.

A sizeable representation from Space, Dr. Glenn Seaborg, Jim Webb himself, Ed Welch - and the scientists who had been on the President's Committee to award the National Medal of Science.

It was, in its highly specialized way, a very star-studded group, and I tried to add to the atmosphere of - this is a special moment, a brilliant moment, because you have done something great, - by expressing all the warmth and applause I could. This job ought really to be filled by an actress; there are moments when one needs to be.

Lyndon was in a desperate hurry, for an imperative luncheon for which he was late. The receiving line had to go too fast, so when it was over I went into the State Dining Room, where they were passing sherry and tomato juice, and some salty things. And went from group to group, visiting

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and congratulating, and feeling duly rewarded because the families seemed
thrilled and happy to be in the White House. And that one of ~~your~~ ^{their} own
had received a medal.

Then, upstairs where I had lunch on a tray. Lynda came in to visit.
And, at two o'clock began the most important meeting of the day. My sitting
with Madam Shoumatoff.

Clark Clifford had already seen the portrait, and he had been almost
ecstatic. Madam Shoumatoff was ready in the Lincoln Sitting Room, the
light is good in there. I did not want to look, I gave it the briefest glance
and then sat down in the chair where I could not see it. Lynda Bird came
in, and examined it very critically and with a sort of approval that made me
relax, and settle into my chair comfortably. Maybe within the next two
months I will have a portrait for the White House, not the important one,
that is Lyndon's, but that step may follow.

Madam Shoumatoff talked easily, and interestingly, quite a steady stream
really, and I find myself relaxing into the chair. It is as though two separate
talents were involved, the painters talent of the eye and the hand, and the
talent of the raconteur, who keeps the sitter interested, and at ease - both
go along in tandem.

The sitting lasted more than two hours, with a 10 minute break, and then
we made a date to meet again. I'm feeling encouraged, almost elated.

Said goodby, did some more work in my room, tried to take a 30 minute

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nap - these six or seven hour long nights, when Lyndon turns the light off at one or two and wakes up again at seven, leave me dull and depleted. How can he stand it!

And at five o'clock, I dressed and joined Juanita, Dorothy, and Dr. Grover, and went over to the Smithsonian. The public day was over. Helen Ripley met us at the car, and I saw for the first time, their great modern, steel sculpture. It was good - the first such piece I ever really liked, and it's because it's well married to the building, it is sighted in. How I hope the Hirschhorn Library will be as well done.

his assistants,
Dillon had asked three of his top people plus Mrs. Claphor, who is the curator of the First Lady's Gallery, to go with us. This we saw first. Its 14 feet ceilings, we will never be able to duplicate in the Johnson Library, that is, unless we steal a bit of the great hall. I explained that we hoped to use a few square feet of the Johnson Library, to make a vignette - a little picture of social life in the White House, perhaps a State Dinner or Luci's Wedding reception, or Lynda's wedding in the East Room.

We walked through about four galleries, after the First Lady's, then the collection of campaign material, beginning with the banner used in Thomas Jefferson's campaign, right on down to a great big Kennedy button. And it's paper mache figures and a torch light parade, and its real platform of a train, I thought it was funny, gay. History, true, and so amusingly told.

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Ralph Becker has a collection of campaign memorabilia, which he might lend to the Johnson Library. He and Juanita have had conversations also on the subject, and he and Mary Lasker, I think. This in the Smithsonian, is partly his, on loan.

We saw many interesting things. The electric outlets actually seem to be just a grid below the marble floor, with the possibility of plugging in every 16 feet in a vast checkerboard.

Dillon kept on saying "Variety, Variety". A small between full of objects, and then a room setting, and then posters - but there were no movies, either big or little. I was charmed by it and if the Johnson Library should emerge 50% as good, I think I would be happy.

I spent an hour and a half in all, going at last to a room called "Pastimes of Presidents", a combination of photos, and objects. Theodore Roosevelt's rifle and skiis; Lyndon's saddle.

Then when we emerged from the Smithsonian, there, sailing high in the sky, up above the modern sculpture, was a full moon. And Juanita said, "That accounts for all the loony letters we've been getting. It happens over and over."

We thanked them all and drove back to the White House, and Juanita had what may turn out to be an excellent idea. She said, "Under the stacks, why can't we just steal a few feet, and extend the ceiling on up from the 8 or 10 that it now is, to at least 14. I think we should at least pursue it."

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Back in the White House, I got Paul Fisher to start "Gone with the Wind" again, second half, and Mary and I watched for about half an hour. Then came a call that Lyndon was coming, with a friend of mine. It turned out to be C. R. Smith, who came in, walking jauntily, with that air of achievement that I am happily familiar with, and he said, "Meet your new Secretary of Commerce." And that crusty gentleman, himself, had a very warm smile on. I congratulated Lyndon, and told C. R. how happy I was that he was going to join the Cabinet.

Then we had dinner, joined by Mary and Sam Houston, and Marie. I thanked C. R. for the brochure he had sent me, on design for electric transmission lines. All the electric companies ~~had~~ ^{it} seemed, had commissioned Henry Dreyfus to draw up some handsome designs, that might take the heat off of them, the public clamor to go underground with transmission lines.

I remember how I'd often said that the most impressive things about New York were its bridges, those slender, graceful silver threads across the river, and so, perhaps, it's not impossible to get some grace, some interest in these transmission lines as they stride across the continent. At least, it's an interesting climate when the industry starts trying.

The talk at dinner was mostly about getting tourism to the United States. And then C. R. had to leave to catch a plane, and Mary and I went right back down to the theatre, and for another hour and twenty minutes suffered through the Civil War, and the love story of Scarlett and Rhett.

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And then, back upstairs, I had some exercises and a massage, and went to bed a little before 12.

Actually, I guess the most interesting thing of the day, was an event that I had not participated in at all. When I returned from the Smithsonian, the second floor hall was full of activity and waiters, a noise coming from the Yellow Room. Lyndon sent for me and as I got to the door, he said, "And here's the youngest one of them all." introducing me to a room full of people, mostly quite young I thought. I saw hardly any familiar faces - John Steele of Time, Tom Johnson, I think. I simply said hello and left.

I realize this must be the Time group. I had heard Lyndon planning it, in a brief, hurried sentence, interspersing it between night reading, giving out directions to one of the young men in the morning. Time, Inc. had sponsored the gathering of the Presidents of the Universities Student Bodies, and I think, a few College editors thrown in. They were meeting in Washington to be briefed by various officials and Lyndon has promised to meet with them. And his directions to Bill, or Marvin, or whoever it was, went something like this. "You ought to get the White House Fellows over to see them. You ought to ask all the young staff -(and he rattled them off) come in and visit with first one and then another, and then after they've had about 30 minutes or an hour there, I'll come in and talk to them, and they can ask questions. I want them to see some of the young folks that help run this place."

Later, I heard reports that indicated an exciting, productive, wonderful

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meeting. I wish I could have been there.