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Initials

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Monday, July 1, 1968

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Some days have their harvest of hope. This one did with the signing of a very special Treaty in the East Room at 11:30.

First, in the morning I recorded and then went to the Lincoln Sitting Room -- my now familiar meeting place -- to see Simone and Perry Wolff, a TV documentary producer who did Mrs. Kennedy's "Walk Through the White House". Frank Stanton had suggested that they might want to film my very different walk through the family quarters -- the second floor of the White House -- which would show how this House is used and lived in by one family in the mid-1960s. It was a curiously deflating meeting. Mr. Wolff had already been with Simone and had seen the rough movies done by the White House staff here of the Treaty Room and he had read my script -- just spontaneous talk -- about the other rooms.

I had the feeling that he did not think much of it and was reluctant to engage in the project. He ended on the note that his time was compellingly full until September 1st, and that if we were going to do it right -- and he did want to do it he said -- he would like to write out a proposal and we would plan to do it in September. I'd rather do it the homemade variety than not at all. And its being on the air is not what matters to me. Its being there for me to remember and look at and all our friends and the Johnson Library and maybe scholars of the future, for this personal, warm, home part of the White House is not known. This would be a first in its way -- a very small way granted.

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Just before 11:30 I went down to meet Lyndon at the elevator and we marched into the East Room with that feeling of something momentous happening that has so often accompanied me ~~me~~ into this ~~staidest~~ ^{stateliest} room of all. Mr. Wolff was somewhere in the audience. And so surprisingly was Virginia Howard Hamilton and her husband and children. Years ago she had been married to Leo's son who had died, and her family had been a part of my childhood and growing up years.

So today, as so often, the simple and the sweet met with the momentous and world-shaking in this House. It was a dramatic setting. The room was jammed full of spectators and there was as much press and TV as could crowd in. The table from the Treaty Room had been brought down, and there sat the Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin and then Britain's Sir Patrick Dean, and then William C. Foster, our Director of Arms Control and Disarmament, and then Dean Rusk and then Lyndon took his seat and a full battery of cameras were upon them.

But all across the whole East wall of the East Room were representatives of other Nations.

Dean Rusk talked and then Sir Patrick Dean and then Dobrynin. There is always a little rustle of excitement it seems to me when he rises. And then Lyndon. He said this Treaty is the most important international agreement since the beginning of a nuclear age. The gist of it was that the United States and Britain and the Soviet Union as well as 58 non-nuclear nations signed the Treaty to prohibit the spread of nuclear weapons and it had been in negotiation for six years. And dramatically the same sort of ceremony was going on at

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the same time in Moscow and in London.

But at the end came the most momentous statement. Lyndon announced that the United States and the Soviet Union have agreed to begin talks in the nearest future on the limitation and reduction of offensive nuclear missiles and antimissile systems. He had first bro^uched the subject in a private letter to Khrushchev in January of '64. There had been an exchange ever since. And finally, now, a breakthrough. When and where the talks would start, we do not ~~now~~ know. But at least a beginning has ~~mx~~ been made and maybe in years to come, we'll look back on this day as the turning point in the nuclear decades.

He took out some insurance. Discussion of this most complex subject will not be easy. They have no illusions that it will be. I know the stubborn patient persistence it has required to get this far. I know the difficulties that lie ahead. I know the fears, suspicions and anxieties we shall have to overcome. But still, it was a moment of hope.

When it was over we went into the Blue Room for a receiving line, and all of the Ambassadors filed by first with congratulations and a feeling of warmth and of some accomplishment.

And as Arthur and Dorothy Goldberg came by, she said, "Today was worth leaving the Court for." And I felt a pang.

George McGhee, fresh back from Germany, came beaming down the line. I thanked him for sending me the Treaty -- a copy of it -- between Baron von Measebach and his Germans and the Indians at Fredricksburg, and he said

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"Farmers Delight" was beautiful and wouldn't we come out. I hugged Virginia and all her family when they came by. And then we all went into the State Dining Room for refreshments. Lyndon had gone upstairs with the Central American Ambassadors and Covey Oliver and Angie Duke. But I circulated for a good 20 minutes until the guests were drifting away.

And then close to 1:00 I went upstairs for a hamburger on a tray in my room. And then once more down to the Blue Room, (How quickly this House has to change its face for different meetings) to receive the International Consumers Committee -- representatives from many countries -- gathered here to discuss consumer problems. Betty Furness is their Washington hostess.

Then back to the State Dining Room once more for refreshments and mingling.

Usually I try to put myself into a receiving line with all of the vivacity and outgoing warmth and interest I can.

Finally there comes a time when you are a robot, because there were so many whose languages I could not speak, whose problems under discussion I did not know about, I found myself being simply mechanical and left with a dissatisfied feeling that I had not been a good hostess.

And then down to the basement for a very important meeting with Bess and Jim Ketchum and Mr. West and a young lady who had done an enormous lot of research. We were in the room where Luci's wedding presents had been spread out in the summer of '66 and Lynda's in December of '67. And now there ~~is~~ spread out the 50 desert plates that go with the Johnson/^{China} service,

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and an imposing array of botanical books -- ancient and modern, rare and expensive, and everyday like our little "Roadside Flowers of Texas."

We took the plates alphabetically and looked at several prints of each State's flower -- the violet, the golden rod, the dogwood. The hardest of all was the District of Columbia's American beauty rose because ~~were~~ we are attempting to make this delicate, airy and elegant. We labored for nearly two hours, debating, choosing, changing. But most of the credit goes to Bess and to the young woman who had ~~done~~ done the enormous amount of research of collecting these books and standing by elbow turning from the rhododendron in one book to the rhododendron in another book and still another. The desert plates have turned out to be a job. If we can get them all hand-painted, if the results turn out as pretty, most of these botanical prints, it will be a proud day.

The rest of the afternoon I worked with Ashton and recorded. And then went to the bowling lanes for two quick games and then back upstairs and changed into my beige lace to go to ~~Rex~~ Perle Mesta's for just a brief 30-minute dropin -- a cocktail before dinner. She had written us that she was having a small private party in honor of Tom and Mary Clark.

When I stopped by Lyndon's office he had a stack of work and didn't see how he could possibly leave until 9:00 which would be too late. So I went alone.

Then as I walked into the Sheraton Park there, private or no, was a photographer and Dorothy McCardle. My heart sank. It is so pleasant to be able to go out on an evening quite privately, just for fun.

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It was a small gathering in Perle's apartment. The Dale Millers, the Jake Pickles, Lindy and Hale, Senator Ellender. I circled the room, had a drink, some light and pleasant talk and then left before I thought it was time for them to go into dinner.

Dorothy McCardle and the photographer were still there.

~~X~~ Back at the White House I had a rub, and in the middle of it Lyndon came in -- close to 10:00. But that hostile instrument -- the telephone -- summoned him before we could go to the table and it was nearly 11:00 when we had dinner and then to bed.

The second most important news of the day was that Lynda heard from Chuck -- her first letter in two weeks -- a short one. He said he had returned from a mission to find a big stack of mail. He had only time to read two or three letters, write her the short one, stuff a few more into his pocket and leave on another mission. She has been cheerful, normal, busy,

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