

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Wednesday, July 31, 1968

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It was perhaps the portent of many days to come. Most of it was spent working on the Library.

First, in the morning I had coffee in the Yellow Room with Mrs. Lem Scarborough of Austin and Mrs. Logan Wilson who lives in Washington now. And it was bright, easy, feminine chatter. And then I dispatched the ladies on a tour of the White House, and went to the Treaty Room for which I will always have a special affection for so much of my own work has gone on there. This was a meeting on the Library. And the purpose was to come up with a picture however vague of life in the White House and to plan an exhibit. Dr. ~~Goddard~~ Grover is going to meet with Arthur Drexler in about a week, and he had best be armed with some fairly clear picture of what we who have lived it think life in the White House is like and how you can express it in a space 20 by 20 feet, or whatever it is.

Around the old table in the Treaty Room were gathered, Dr. Grover, Dorothy Territo, Juanita, Gary Yarrington -- the exhibits man for the Library -- and that triumvirate who should be able to express more than anybody life in the White House -- Liz and Bess and I. Ashton sat in with us. She too has seen a very personal side of it, as a sort of "mother confessor" to more members of the family than anyone I expect.

Dr. Grover who wastes no time and is an organized man had copies of the plan laid at each one's place. We could see the amount of space allotted for the display on life in the White House -- that is unless

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we fought for more. And we all just began to talk. Liz suggested a model of the White House with the rooms furnished of course. And it was she who came up with the idea of having in front of the case where Lynda's wedding dress would be displayed, a short film of three or four minutes of excerpts from Lynda's wedding -- her father escorting her down the staircase, she and Chuck kneeling in front of Reverend McAllister at the altar in the East Room, and then marching out all smiles underneath the crossed swords of his Marine comrades. And the same sort of thing for Luci's. And Dr. Grover -- or was it Dorothy or Juanita -- talked about transparencies of the East Room or the Blue Room to be used as backgrounds for the wedding dress. Juanita recalled the lovely exhibit we had seen at Expo of the cathedral with its doors open and the wedding party going in. And for the china -- this was Bess' earnest wish -- there must be a place setting with a transparency background and a beautiful silk flower bouquet on the table. I think everybody thought at once of a display of Christmas in the White House. And Liz, quite naturally, was intent on a campaign exhibit and a mail display.

We talked for nearly two hours. Much of it vague, but some of it capable of being confined within the shall we say 20 by 20 feet of space. But it at least armed Dr. Grover for his meeting with Mr. Drexler who has not lived here but who is charged with trying to express it.

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And then I left and went to Mr. Per's for a shampoo and set, having my lunch -- a bowl of rice with some rasins sent to me. I am still feeling squeamish, oddly uncertain after that bout with whatever it was in New York Tuesday morning. I am not used to being sick, and it annoys and embarrasses me.

I left at nearly 3:00, and went directly to the Anacostia Naval Photo Lab to see the film of our walk through the Ranch house with Simone. And once again this week I knew the taste of success -- a minor triumph. It was good. Lyndon was great. How really funny that I should have worked very hard for three days and the whole crew should have worked very hard for three days and he comes in, sits down on the sofa and talks about ten minutes -- no retakes, no preparation -- and he is the star. I am so happy because I can tell him that never again can he say "I just can't come across on film or on TV -- it's not my medium." He did come across. I congratulated Tony Loeb and all the crew with a big smile, and we chalked up another minor victory. Now if I can just do as well on the film of the upstairs of the White House -- the living quarters. I have not heard from Dr. Stanton. And Mr. Wolff returned the script in an envelope with no comments. He had told Simone on the phone that they wanted to do it and that Dr. Stanton would be talking to me. I felt definitely that morning when I met with him in the little Lincoln Sitting Room that this was a brush-off. And so we do it ourselves here the best we can, and we shall have it.

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And then after the walk through the White House we saw one of the monthly films. And if I had been elated before, I was promptly reduced by it because it was awful. They had worked on it and it was worse than before they worked on it. It will simply have to be begun from the beginning. And the time schedule is already a strain. I am determined to devote as many hours as needed on this film project. If only I had realized what a treasure it could be back in the summer of '66 instead of in the Spring of '68. I suppose at the end of one's time in the White House one is equiped to give advice to the next person coming in, except each of us must travel this road with our own abilities and our own aims.

Back at the White House I worked on mail with Ashton and then got dressed for the White House Fellows Reception -- going over the guest lists. And I was in the Yellow Room at the door promptly at 6:00. I had planned this as a quiet, intimate talking party. I wanted to get to know better these exceptionally bright young people gathered from all over the United States. And so I had just asked the Fellows -- the 16 of them -- and a few people from our staff who had worked with them -- the Doug Caters and Erv Duggan, the trio who will be going with us, the Hardestys, Tom Johnsons and Middletons. And Joe Frantz, because I want to include him in some White House things. I want him to get the flavor of it as a part of the background for his working on oral history. And I want him to know them too. And a couple more of the staff -- the Charles Maguires and

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Peter Benchleys. I was particularly sorry that the John Roches could not come. He has already left.

There is a White House Fellow in each of the 12 Cabinet offices -- one with the Vice President, the U.N., ~~and~~ the Budget, and with the White House.

We had drinks and our best hors d'oeuvres. Tommy Atkins and Bob Knudson were on hand for pictures. I opened the door to the Truman Balcony and led a group of them out there where we had some quiet and good talk. And I tried to spend a few minutes with each of them. Only one, Doris Kearns, did I know well. And I especially wanted to meet Dr. Peter Crow who is working at State and John Macy had suggested as a possible Director of the Library -- a handsome, impressive young man. But each of them in their leaving September 1st have been offered many wonderful jobs I understand. They are really the cream of the country. It's one of the programs that Lyndon has introduced. It is a great mixture of taking the brightest young men from industry, finance, universities, bringing them into the stream of Government life, showing them how it really works, and then dispatching them back -- most of them go, some of them stay like Tom Johnson. But those that go back take with them understanding. And there is a transfusion of ideas and knowledge that's all to the good of the future of this country.

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One of the first Fellows who has now been out about 2 years and gone back into his field of finance has worked in trying to interest private money in investing in low-cost housing or ghetto areas. And he is trying to crossbreed HUD with that.

Lyndon came in about 7:00 and presented certificates to each of the Fellows. And then I presented a copy of "To Heal and to Build" to Tom Carr, the Director of the White House Fellows program who is leaving to return to Princeton. And then Lyndon with swift greetings went all around and was gone. The Reception went on though for a good 2-1/2 hours without quite attaining the quality I had hoped for, mainly through my fault. There was absolutely no glitter or brightness in me today. And I moved sluggish. I quietly said goodbye at 8:30 leaving them all still having a good time together, and I noticed they started dancing in the east end of the Hall.

Lyndon came a little past 9:00 and we had dinner together -- just the two of us. And still feeling squeamish I ate only a little chicken. And then a rub and then to bed, only moderately satisfied with my performance on this day. And always there is a growing awareness of how few the days will be here and how much there is to be done.