

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Thursday, August 1, 1968

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I tried to make up for a limp Wednesday. A little past 9:30 I went out to the Naval Film Lab. I had asked Liz and Jack Valenti and Middleton to come. Simone was already there. We spent nearly three hours looking first at March of '68. We decided to go with the chronological film rather than beginning with the smashing drama of Lyndon's March 31st speech and then returning to it at the end.

Liz and Jack and Mr. Middleton all made very good suggestions. I only wish I had valued these films for what they are 2 years ago. Jack had to leave midway. Then we did January. There is actually so much in them that is first-rate. I am very proud of the photography, and I think the increased work shows. I am grateful that the Navy is so cooperative. It must be sheer confusion to have this many cooks stirring the broth. We decided that these two script writers were the best of any of the films we have seen. On the way back Simone and I planned to talk to Mr. Winterfelt and see if they could be assigned to the most important months.

Back at the White House I picked up Lynda Bird, and without lunch we set out to W. C. Campbell's to look at a file cabinet for Chuck's birthday. I am enormously flattered that she wants my advice. She makes me feel that our home has been all right these many years, that she cares about my judgment and my taste in furniture. For ~~funer~~ furniture it is, not a plain file cabinet. One looked just like a nice table for the hall,

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and another like a good end table for the sofa. They are ordering one for her and she will decide soon. And it's my birthday present to Chuck.

Back upstairs I found Lyndon having lunch with Mayor Daley. He asked us to sit down. We did. The Mayor was giving him a sales talk about coming to Chicago. The Democrats wanted to give him a rousing welcome, they wanted to show their appreciation. Lyndon gave him little encouragement that he would come. He stopped just short of a positive "no". And what of me? I said I would do whatever Lyndon wanted me to do. I have no enthusiasm for going. This convention belongs to others, and I am delighted to let ~~them~~ ^{them} have it. But I do want to make up our minds -- set -- and stick to it.

There was a tape machine sitting on the table, and they had been listening to Chuck's tape which he had sent to Lynda. Lyndon started playing it again, and I listened with a strange mixture of awe and compassion. Yes, and there was pride too. He is such a man -- Chuck. And Lyndon was so proud of him. I could see Lynda Bird did not like having us listen to it, and later I heard so very elegantly. Her daddy simply does not understand.

Lyndon and Mayor Daley talked of the war. It was easy to see that Mayor Daley did not think any of them were worth fighting for -- not the Vietnamese, not the Thai's, not the Philipinos, not the Koreans. He told him rather heatedly what a strong, capable, "on-its-own" nation Korea had seemed to us when we were there. He simply wants out. Lyndon tried

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to explain to him what he faced -- that he the President trying to bargain for peace, speaking for the United States, and every one of the would-be candidates yipping up here and there -- making their offers. He said, "Mayor, just suppose I was trading with you, to sell you a house. And I said, 'Mayor, I'll sell you and Mrs. Daley this house for \$20,000 and not a dollar less'. And you started to leave and Lady Bird followed you to the door and said, 'Mr. Mayor, if you don't buy it for \$20,000, I'll sell it to you for \$18,000.' And Lynda Bird followed you on out to the gate and said, 'If you don't buy it from them I'll let you have it for \$16,000'. What would you do."

It was an enormously telling story. The President and the Administration are being badgered and undermined every foot of the way by the candidates. The whole thing makes me gladder and gladder I am not one of them. The Mayor's whole attitude spoke eloquently of the growing isolationism in this country. He rose from the table and I went into my room and stayed on the phone, calling Roy White and Jesse and A. W. working out for Mr. Bright in the National Park Service the information he had to have about the little house in Johnson City in preparation of us offering it for the National Park Service some time after January 20th.

And then I dressed for the Ambassadors' wives. I went into the Yellow Room to receive them. There were five from Burma and Indonesia

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and Mauritius -- the newest, littlest country, and Paraguay and the Ivory Coast. They were accompanied by Virginia Rusk whom I hadn't seen all summer and Robin Duke whom I've hardly had a chance to visit with since she returned from Spain.

I took my seat on the big yellow sofa next to the fireplace between two of them. They ~~were~~ turned out to be the most talkative ones, from Burma and Indonesia, and very attractive ladies they were -- excellent English. We had a delicious tea, or rather it was offered. On occasions like this everybody is as delicate as birds about eating. And then I moved to the other sofa and chatted with the wife of the Ambassador from Paraguay. We talked of General Stresnors visit. And with difficulty to the new Ambassador's wife from the Ivory Coast who speaks only French. And the nearly silent little lady from Mauritius.

Doing battle against yesterday's slump, I was energetic and vivacious and did everything that I could to make them have an interesting time and to feel at home. I described to them the Yellow Room and its purposes and then asked if they would like to see the Lincoln Room and the Queens' Room. And we had a very pleasant little 20 minutes' tour. They left about 4:00, and I had that very satisfied feeling of having ~~xxx~~ done my duty rather well. And then Robin and I discussed a plaque to be put in the Vermeil Room, acknowledging the lovely gift of vermeil from Margaret Biddle, now so many years ago.

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Then a little more desk work with Marilyn. A call making a date with Larry Halprin to meet in Texas some time in August -- probably before the 10th.

Then at 5:00 back to the Yellow Oval Room for the second Reception of the day. This time for the interns, most of them from Mt. Holyoke. We had another delicious tea, and this time the guests enjoyed it. The ratio of cookies and tea sandwiches goes up markedly with high school and college youngsters. There were some 45 youngsters who worked on the Hill in Congressmen's or Senator's offices and in various Cabinet Departments and at OEO and AID, and our 6 or so here in the White House. And I had added two who work in Lyndon's office -- Lafaye Davis and Susan Stevenson -- just about their ^{first} really social affair in the White House. And I asked some of the livelier White House interns to see that they met people and had a good time. And I had also asked Susan Spruce, the granddaughter of Mrs. Sam Fore. And Sophia Engelhard -- Jane's daughter.

We have been to beneficiaries of Mt. Holyoke from all of my five years here. They told me the program had been going on for 15 years under the direction of Dr. Victoria Shuk who was one of today's guests.

There was only one other Negro in the group. And I noted with pleasure that our little Lafaye stood up very well in looks, manners and intelligence as you could determine it.

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It often occurs to me that Lyndon puts into practice more civil rights than some of the people who talk loudest about it.

Once more I told the young girls about this room and its uses through the years in various Administrations. And I think I did very well.

Then I dispatched them on a tour. And at 6:30 I was back in the West Hall working with Liz and Simone on the proposed Howard K. Smith show. They had a list of questions. We went over them. I talked out my answers, and on some of them we would need some research to back up -- for instance how many visits have we had from Chiefs of State.

It was a little past 7:00 when we quit. It was too long to finish. We will have to do it tomorrow.

And then I changed clothes -- into something gala and pretty -- my brown lace. We were going to the Monroney's. It's always a good night when we go to the Monroney's. I called Lyndon -- no, he wasn't going to be able to get off at 8:00. He would have to join me later. In fact he was going by the Washington Hilton and make a speech. And so light-hearted I left anyway, arriving at Mary Ellen's charming home to find Marny Clifford and the Bill Whites and Trudy and Joe Fowler -- he just on leave from the hospital where he had checked in from the operation, and wearing a pair of wild strawberry-pink pants in defiance of his condition. And Hale and Lindy Boggs.

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Mary Ellen is one of the best hostesses I know. The conversation always seems to be exciting at her house. And after all that to me is the best thing about a party -- to bring out the new guests -- their talent for communion, for amusement. It was a sheer delight. I moved from group to group. And at one time I found myself saying that I had always planned to go on a river boat down the Mississippi. I had hardly ^{gotten} ~~got~~ the words out of my mouth before I was joined by Bill White who said he wanted to sign up to go along if I ever did. And Trudy and Joe Fowler who had said they had always wanted to go too. And it turned out that Hale and Lindy Boggs even knew where you got on the boat -- Minneapolis -- and it took eight days to get down to New Orleans. And the only boat remaining on that run was called the "Delta Queen". So we practically signed up for some day in the Spring or Indian summer.

Lyndon was forever coming, and I kept on saying to Mary Ellen that she must take us in to eat. She didn't. And he arrived at a quarter of 10 and was worth waiting for. He was aglow -- full of good stories, laughing, looking tanned and fine, enjoying everybody, and making them enjoy the evening more.

He had just been addressing the Negro Bar Association, and he said they had given him a wonderful ovation. I am glad he is approved in some segment of Negro society.

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We dissected and sliced up various characters on the public scene -- a certain Senator had more contempt for his constituency than any other politician. Another star, a man of great charisma, was a word Smith. It was all very relaxed and fun, and thoroughly spicy. And Lyndon was the most ~~entertaining~~ entertaining person there. I am concerned about Mike. He has a difficult race. He is one of my favorite Senators, and it is not at all sure that he will return.

It was after 12:00 when we left for the White House. But it had been a good beginning for another month.