

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, August 20, 1968

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It was a day of excitement and upsets. I had expected to be in Washington all week by myself. But instead Lyndon had arrived after a speech in Detroit to the Veterans of Foreign Wars very late last night. I spent all of Monday in intensive work on the business I had come for -- filming the family floor of the White House. On Monday it was the West Hall -- our living room. I was considerably upset because Lyndon's presence means that we won't have the freedom of the place -- it will serve his uses. As it turned out his uses were to sleep briefly, telephone at length and go straight to his office. There was an air of excitement, more than usual staff coming and going, a feeling of tenseness, of something about to happen. I deliberately did not try to find out just what was afoot. There was talk of a press conference which was to be on Wednesday morning. Then asking Walt Rostow about some future dates for visiting Chiefs of State, I did say, "Is there anything good going to happen in the next day or two?" In his quiet but humorous fashion he said, "It looks like the Russians have emptied their out-basket to us. They have answered all of the President's correspondence."

I spent the morning going over the script for the Yellow Oval Room in the West Hall, worked with Bess. And then did some filming in my lovely bedroom -- silent, just sitting at my desk. And so managed to get a good deal of work done -- autographing, reading memos, consuming the "Read and File". I had lunch alone in my room. Luci had come up with Lyndon.

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That easy, adaptable little girl had packed, picked up her baby, left on short notice for a trip by Detroit and on to Washington for one day or one week. All travels with Lyndon are open-end. She too was excited. She was working on her book about Yuki. She hoped to go over it with some of Lyndon's staff and maybe get it to the point of presenting it to a publisher. In typical fashion, getting ready to become a young career woman, she had gone out and bought herself a briefcase. She arrived in Lyndon's bedroom with a sack labeled, "Princess Grace" and brought forth from it a rainbow striped briefcase -- exceedingly feminine -- and proudly said to her daddy, "How do you like it?" He looked at it and said, "What is that? A diaper bag?" I never saw a more deflated little girl. And then we all rocked with laughter.

Lyn has been called "Lyndon's Vice President in charge of happiness". But his mother has had that job a long time.

In the afternoon I went over the script for the Treaty Room filming, and we shot about 2 hours of film in that overpowering old room where so many of my projects have come to life. And then just before 4:00 I broke loose, dressed up in a pretty summer print and met Jane and Connie Freeman for pictures in the West Hall, and then stood with them at the door of the Yellow Room for tea in Connie's honor. She is to be married on Saturday. I will not be here for the wedding. Her parents are just about my favorite members of Lyndon's Cabinet. In these years I have come to feel so close

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to them. And it was a happy pleasure to extend this little bit of gaiety and warmth for the wedding of a daughter of a friend. Most of the Cabinet wives were there -- nine of them. And Muriel looking lovely. And the members of Connie's wedding -- bridesmaids, school friends, fellow Peace Corps members -- one of the signs of the time was two young girls standing together in the Yellow Room of the White House -- one a Peace Corps friend of Connie's, very black, very bright, very outgoing. The other the very blond daughter of Marvin Watson from Daingerfield, Texas.

We had delicious refreshments and went out on the Truman Balcony and talked about weddings. It was over about 5:30. And then I settled down at my desk for work on the Christmas list, and a talk with Luci about her book. She is by turns elated and deflated. I think it shows a certain fresh talent -- a light, amusing touch that is distinctively Luci. And I find it easy to quite honestly buoy her up.

Simone came over and we worked on the scripts for the filming. And then close to 9:00 the Bill Whites arrived on the second floor. Lyndon had called them, but it was a good while before he came. We had a good visit, turned on the TV. Secretary Rusk was testifying before the platform committee of the Democratic Convention, chaired by Hale Boggs. We were listening to him when Lyndon came in. And moments later there was a dramatic turn of events. He was making a statement on Viet-Nam, a strong

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clear, tough -- to me, effective statement. He was to answer questions afterward. And then someone came up to him and handed him a note about the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Russians. He asked the Committee's pardon, turned to go. Hale Boggs read the note. There was a churning air of expectancy, excitement in the room. Lyndon had learned about it only a short while before. And what events would follow in its train? Well, first, there would be a National Security Council meeting which he had already called. Lyndon asked for his supper to be brought in on a tray. He ate hurriedly. And then went back to his office. And the Whites and I talked for awhile discussing the portent of all that had happened. I at least foreseeing only dimly. And then I had a massage and was in bed by midnight, knowing that this day would shape much of the days that were to come, but not how.