

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

WHD
Saturday, October 19, 1968

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Mrs. Kennedy is going to marry Aristotle Socrates Onasis. And more women are reading more lines in the newspaper about a wedding than practically any time I can remember -- probably men too.

In the middle of the morning I had a little visitor -- Lyndon Jenkins, up spending the weekend with dear Mildred Stegall from McDonnell^{ish} School. He looked very young, very home sick. But his mouth turned up at the corners in a sweet happy sort of way. We had a good talk about all the family. I liked it when he said with pride in his voice -- we happened to be talking about high school -- that his daddy had graduated from high school when he was 13 years old -- a little bit of an ex^ageration I think. But there is no nicer man to exaggerate about.

I showed him all over the 2nd floor. And then to my great pleasure, Lyndon came out and joined us and brought some presents for little Lyndon -- a bookmark, a pen, a handful of his little souvenirs. And little Lyndon kept on look^{ing} at him unbelieving and saying, "You don't have to do all this for me." It was a touching and happy scene. They went over to his office together. I had a hamburger alone in my room. We are going to Camp David, and it is all Lyndon's idea, and I am full of delight at it.

After lunch, I had one of the most interesting hours in regard to the Library that I have yet spent -- a meeting on the exhibit of "life in

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the White House" with Gary Yarrington and Bess, Juanita and I in the East Hall. Bess brought over all the programs that we have had here in the nearly five years of our stay. What a beautiful, rich, varied, wonderful assortment it is. Ballet and opera and Indian dances and country fairs. Our hope is to translate the character of it, the flavor of it, somehow into life in the exhibit. A week or so ago somebody had suggested that Carol Channing's big plumed hat from "Hello Dollie". It sounded smashing.

From there we went on at this meeting to other possible artifacts -- a piece of sheet music autographed by Van Cliburn of one of the pieces he had played. Perhaps one of the lovely ballet costumes from the Harkness ballet that had inaugurated our new stage at the White House. Maybe even a model of the stage itself. How about a plumed war bonnet from the Indian dancers or a string of their beads. And Maria Tallchief's ballet slippers, or the ridiculous fringed buckskin jacket that Bob Merrill had worn when he sang of all things "Tumbling Tumbleweed". A collection of autographed programs itself would be great. Helen Hayes, Leontyne Price -- the roster is endless. Bess will pursue it. And the best thing of all would be to have a tape from Bess herself about the entertainment here at the White House. That to me is a must.

More ~~than~~ accelerated and hopeful about the Library than I've been in a long time, I left a little before 3:00 to find Lyndon in the dining

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having his lunch with Marie, and to take C. R. Smith, who had gotten here a little early for our trip to Camp David, and we sat in there until Lyndon finished. The Engelhards came. I got out both of our portraits and put them in the East Hall. Mine and Lyndon's by Madame Shoumatoff. And then the new one by Wayne Ingram. Then Jane and Charles and I viewed them. They liked them very much.

A little past 3:30 we left by chopper for Camp David -- Mathilde and Arthur and Lyndon, the Harry Middletons -- I am so glad to include them in a weekend like this. And Jane and Charles and C. R. and Marie. And we were at Camp David by 4:00 on a gray and cheerless autumn day. But the flight had been beautiful, and we had looked down on the Catoctin Mountains -- a magnificent show of gold and bronze and green, and every now and then some scarlet of maple. To me Camp David is more a psychological journey than ~~is~~ anything else. I leave my troubles -- our troubles -- outside the gate. Inside you are free and the hours are dedicated to pleasure and companionship.

We all changed to leisure clothes, and I went up to the ~~bowling~~ ^{bowling} lanes with C. R. and Mathilde and had four rather good games. We ~~next~~ returned to Aspen and put on a lovely gift from Jane and Charles -- a rose velvet caftan, trimmed in gold.

Lynda Bird had stayed in town to go to a surprise party being given for Warrie Lynn by her roommate. We had dinner remarkably

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at 8:00. And of course the conversation was very much of Mrs. Kennedy and the approaching wedding -- remembering her eyes when last I had seen her at the funeral of Bobby Kennedy. I thought this complete break with the past must be good for her. And it was a spicy relief to read about after the endless stories of school strikes in New York, the Czech knuckling under, and the gray and murky maze of trying to find a breakthrough in the negotiations in Paris. But the funniest thing of the evening to me was Jane telling a story about a friend of hers calling her up and saying -- and this was a friend she hadn't heard from in several years -- that she knew how helpful she had been (Jane) to Mrs. Kennedy in working on the White House and to Mrs. Johnson on her beautification project. And she wondered if she couldn't find a gimmick for Pat. My face fell. Four years ~~I have~~ of enthusiastic hard work, and the lady calls it a gimmick. And the same of course for Mrs. Kennedy's wonderful restoration of the White House.

After dinner we saw an excellent movie -- "Rachel-Rachel". Lyndon, however, saw only about 5 minutes of it and left us before 9:00 to go to bed and read a vast stack of memos and I hope get some sleep which has been a rare commodity in these last six days for him.

Lynda Bird came in somewhere around the end of the movie, and she and I curled up on my bed and talked until after midnight. She and her Agent had gone for a walk around the perimeter of ~~the~~

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Camp David. At one point out of the dark a Marine guard had leaned up and said, "Halt! Who goes there?" She said, "Lynda." And he said, "Advance and be recognized." And we both collapsed in laughter at her nearly disaster with the ever-vigilant Marine guards of the President.

I went to sleep satisfied and happy to be here. Now that the time grows so short, I almost count the days that are left and I want to use them carefully and spend them lovingly. The Churchill story goes over and over in my mind -- so little done - so much yet to do. And one of the oddest things of all is that as the result of the wedding that will happen tomorrow I feel strangely freer -- no shadow walks beside me down the halls of the White House -- here at Camp David. I wonder what it would have been like if we had entered this life unaccompanied by such a shadow.