

WHD

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--I will remember for many things. One, the real impact of moving out, another, the most beautiful party that will ever be given for Lyndon and me.

We had spent our last weekend at Camp David, returning Sunday night. I awoke Monday morning in my dear familiar room, but no, everything was changed--it had the impersonality of a hotel room. All of my things had been moved out over the weekend, packed for Texas. The smiling face of "Arturito" no longer looked down from the wall. Gone the beautiful Guillamin, its pinks and lavenders and shadows I loved no longer above the mantelpiece. A strange piece of furniture stared back at me from the place where my mahogany chest had been. And where my rose satin chair had invited the guests to linger, there was just a vacant spot. Everything gone, no pictures or pillows or books or loved little objects. I still get a draught of sheer pleasure when I look at this canopy bed, rose and yellow with a flowered moire taffeta. I hope it will be enjoyed, perhaps in some guest room in the White House, in the future. Then Helen raised the shades--and the view was magnificently the same, now and forever.

I was up early, worked with Marilyn at my desk and then went to the Yellow Oval Room to have coffee with some cousins of mine from Florida, Esther Lanier Dade Smith, her husband Bill and daughter Elaine and some other cousins, Hazle Sandifer's daughter and son-in-law. They were all on their way to New York and I had asked them to stop by

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the White House and spend the night. We talked of Alabama and kinfolks and then I dispatched them on a tour and joined a second group, Alice Brown and the adopted children of our old friends the Herman Browns. Louisa Stude and her husband Fayez Sarofim and Mike Stude and his pretty little wife. It was a delightful half hour. Alice has, I think, enjoyed being on this committee and she has contributed to the White House with love and generosity. And then I sent them off on a tour with Jim Ketchum and spent more time at my desk, this time plowing deep into the middle drawer, carefully taking out very private things, such as the memo I wrote Lyndon on that August afternoon in '64, when lying in his bed in his room, he had looked at me and said he was not going to Atlantic City, he was not going to accept the nomination. I had been as determined then that he should as I had felt four years later that he shouldn't.

There were all sorts of small personal things tucked away in envelopes, that I didn't want to file. I gathered them up carefully and turned them over to Dorothy Territo. And there close to the top was the one I had written last January when we were getting ready to go up to the State of the Union message and Lyndon had asked George Christian and me and maybe there was somebody else to write a statement saying that he would not be a candidate for re-election. Emptying a desk is a bleak business. I thought about how the house had looked when I had visited Mrs. Kennedy five years and two months ago. I could be gripped by the sadness then. Today I cannot. It simply

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isn't sad. The time has come, the role has been played to the fullest and is finished except for one week. I want to absorb, live every moment, every emotion, but I cannot feel sad.

I had a sandwich at my desk, worked with Helene, dictated a memo to Marilyn about the division of labor at the Ranch. Ah, how soon I shall go back to being a housekeeper! I loved it for twenty-nine years and then how happily I laid it down when I discovered Mr. West and this wonderful staff. Now I shall return to it. I rested and worked with Ashton, and then close to four, had my hair combed and went down to the Blue Room for a reception for the Democratic National Committee, a very brief affair. Actually just a receiving line, and then refreshments in the State Dining Room, and we left the ground by chopper before five o'clock. Lyndon and Luci and I (Lynda Bird was already in New York) arrived at Andrews and boarded Air Force One. Now I never set foot on the bottom step without thinking affectionately, "What a wonderful plane, what great trips we have had on it." And on the last trip I must be sure to take off my blue robe that I leave on it and also Patrick Lyn's porta-crib. Such household thoughts crowd into the memories of great moments. For the last time, I flew above the magnificent skyline of New York City in Air Force One. We landed at Kennedy Airport and motorcaded to the Pierre Hotel.

Eddie Senz and Mr. Jack arrived to make me look my best for the party. I put on my yellow satin dress, long sleeves encrusted with jewels by Mollie Parnis and close to eight, left with Lyndon and Luci with that high sense of anticipation and excitement for this glittering golden evening.