

FOR RELEASE AT 4:00 P.M.
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1966

Office of the Press Secretary
to Mrs. Johnson

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF MRS. JOHNSON UPON
ACCEPTANCE OF BOOK, THE LIVING WHITE HOUSE,
THE WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON, D. C.

Mrs. Eisenhower, Dr. Grosvenor, Mr. Finley, descendants and friends of all the families of this book:

With 27 more days to Christmas, I feel as if I have received, in behalf of Americans everywhere, an exciting advance gift.

To me personally, this is a very welcome present. For this book, The Living White House, is the fulfillment of an idea that has long been close to my heart.

Many millions of visitors have made the public tour of the Executive Mansion. Arriving now at the rate of nearly two million a year, they walk through its handsome state rooms, and find on every wall the portraits of Presidents, from George Washington on.

Millions of others who may never see the White House read in their daily newspapers of the problems faced and the decisions made in the President's Executive Office.

But there is a less familiar and more intimate side to this building that is home as well as the hub of administrative leadership. And it is the domestic and family aspect -- with all its warm sentiment and color -- that forms the theme of the book we are introducing today.

Perhaps it is not too much to say that students, young or old, can better understand the nation's growth and aims in the light of the human personalities, the individual triumphs and sorrows, of all those Presidential families that have passed here since John and Abigail Adams first took over the still damp and incomplete house in 1800.

In the scores of anecdotes and pictures brought together within the covers of The Living White House, we catch revealing glimpses of the lives and times of our Presidents and their ladies: Thomas Jefferson romping on the floor with his visiting grandchildren... Dolley Madison watching anxiously for the return of her "darling little husband," as she called the slight studious Madison, who galloped off to meet the invading British... Lincoln, interrupting a wartime Cabinet meeting to write a reprieve for son Tad's pet turkey that had been scheduled for the Christmas table... and here in this room today, children and grandchildren filled with memories of snowball fights, the swimming pool and all the rest.

We are grateful to the National Geographic Society's president and editor, Dr. Melville B. Grosvenor, and to Robert L. Breeden and his Special Publications staff, for the production of this lovely book. We are grateful, too, to Mr. Finley and the White House House Historical Association who brought this production into being. Bruce Catton, the

the distinguished historian, provided the introduction and Lonnette Aikman, the Geographic's talented staff writer, played a major role in bringing to life the material on the varied and interesting men, women and children who have taken their turn in this house that belongs to all the people.

There is a story that President Coolidge once approached the big white building at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue with a Senator friend from Missouri. In a joking mood, the Senator said, "I wonder who lives here?" "Nobody," replied the President, they just come and go."

Our guests of honor today -- the offspring and descendants of many former Presidents know that this statement is only partially true. Presidential families, past and future, will always make this place The Living White House. I am so thrilled that many who have come and gone -- have returned for this occasion.

The welcome mat of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue is always out for you.

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