

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Saturday, May 2, 1964

Even before I got up this morning, I knew it was a bright, sunny day! And sure enough, when I pulled back the curtains, it was glorious. Cloudless blue sky, the emerald lawn, bright with the striped booths for refreshments, the shell for the performers already in place, the chairs being put up for the 3,350 delegates who were to converge on us at 4 o'clock. And the tulips around the fountain, a brilliant spot of color.

Bess had planned well, but Oh, what luck. I'm sure that it was either Bess or Liz that thought of putting on the back of the pretty grey program, facsimiles of Lyndon's autograph, mine, Lynda's and Luci's. The front, of course, showed the White House, American Light Opera Company, and the inside the program they would present us - three songs from Guys and Dolls and three from South Pacific, including my very favorite Bali Hai, and that natural for the occasion, There's Nothing Like a Dame.

The delegates were to come in buses, with a hostess on each bus. Such knowledgeable veterans as Lindy Boggs, Barbara Bowling, Mrs. Floyd Breeding, Dorothy Vredenburg Bush, Ann Chapman, Mrs. Frank Church, ^{Carrie} ~~Gay~~ Davis, India Edwards, and Jane Freeman.

Young and friendly daughters of Congressman had been assigned the job as ushers, to help seat that enormous crowd, as efficiently and graciously as possible. And all this planning was necessary, because the tales we heard of last year, were total confusion and pandemonium.

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About 4 o'clock, the buses began to pour into the White House grounds, and here, our logistics went awry, because nobody, not even the Army, could seat 3300 women in 15 or so minutes! After the first arrivals had waited nearly 30 minutes, Lyndon and I, and Lynda Bird, went out onto the lawn, and into the crowd, which quickly engulfed Lyndon. Women applauded, shrieking, and snapping his picture, as he made his way to the shell. I welcomed them all to the White House, and told them that I knew that they had been working so hard, on serious problems for the last three days, that I thought they would just like to enjoy some music on the lawn. And so, let's indulge ourselves in the oldest of Washington habits, relaxing and listening.

Then I introduced Lynda Bird, and she introduced her "favorite daddy." Still the buses continued to roll up. Lyndon's speech was brief and light, and full of the sort of humor that I do not really like, rather barbed it was, and the thing he does best.

Then he returned to his office and to work, because, after all, this was one of those really "expected surprise" appearances, and he wasn't on the schedule.

The American Light Opera program was just perfect. . . Gay, light, in the spirit of the day. Once more Bess had scored an A plus.

When they finished, I returned to the stand because the last of our guests had rolled up, right in the middle of the music program, and I wanted

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to greet them too, and ask everybody to find one of the pretty striped tents for punch and cookies. And then I descended into the vast crowd, for handshaking and greeting. There were, ^g according to the list, a good many governors wives, ^[and] Congressional and Senate wives there, but they deliberately stay away, so that I would have the chance to shake the ^h hands of the folks from ^{"Rosebud Dinebox"} Rosewood and Dinebox, so to speak.

In all that sea of humanity, with all those outstretched hands, how could you tell whose hand it really was. [?]

There were only a few Texans there - Mrs. Judd Collier, among them, and naturally [^] for the best of all reasons [^] because today is voting ~~is~~ day, the first primary in Texas.

But one close-by state - I think it was Delaware - topped the list with 296 delegates! I saw some old time friends, like Doris Cromity from North Carolina, and Alice Dunagan - and of all things, Lillie Gresham from Texas. And I'm so glad Lyndon did have time to shake her hand.

The Democratic Committee Women or Vice Chairman, Mrs. Millie Jeffrey, ^g of Michigan, Miss Mae Gur^evich, Georgia Neece Gray of Kansas, ^{Doña} ~~Onya~~ Felicia ^{is} ~~Guateres~~ ^{Guiteres} from Puerto Rico, Miss Mary Fantasia, and Mrs. William Eiseman from the Canal Zone [^] and I never see her without thinking of the vote in 1960, ^g in Los Angeles, when Kennedy had won overwhelming, and still, at the very end, the Canal Zone still voted for Johnson.

Two ladies in the crowd identified themselves as "friends of Virginia Darr." She has a long reach, bless her! They were such well known names

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as Mrs. Edison Dick, Mrs. Michael DiSalle, and Coy^a Knudsen.

But mostly there were just acres and acres of friendly Democrats, happy that the day was beautiful and I hope that the welcome was warm.

Finally, after about 45 minutes traverse across the lawn, with infinite ^{steps} ~~spots~~ for pictures, I reached the White House door and made my goodbys.

Even the dogs got out to enjoy them, I understand.

Well, this is the big day and the polls will be closing and the vote will be coming in!

Walter came over and had dinner with us, pad in hand, as so many times in the past, waiting for those first phone calls.

After dinner, Jack and Mary Margaret came in, and then we called and got David Brinkley and his wife and their house guests, the Norman Fishers, to come over and join us.

Very early in the evening, it was obvious that John was a good, easy winner, holding an early lead and coming out ^[with] close to 70% of the votes. Not so Senator Yarborough, with a not so formidable opposition of Gordon MacLendon. It was way into the night until it looked like he had won, by not too much of a 52%, as I remember... Which does not bode well for November, and sends some long, long thoughts winging back to what John had said all along - about Yarborough's popularity in the state.

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The guests left about midnight, and we went to bed, after a happy talk with John, with that good feeling that we've done our best this day and luck had attended us.