

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Thursday, February 18, 1965

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This morning I went to the warehouse with Mr. West, to see the collection of White House furniture that is not actually in use. In one area, there were those things accepted by Mrs. Kennedy, and her committees, for the White House, during the renovation of 1961. Quite a distinguished, handsome array, and very sadly, a miniature sofa and chair, antiques, the size for a little girl of six or so. And one wonders what use she'd intended for them. Perhaps in a little sitting room for Carolyn?

And then a larger collection, things that had been brought in by Theodore Roosevelt in 1902, and put away during the Truman renovation, about 1950.

And then in the biggest group of all, the B. Altman furniture, that was brought in about 1950 and used for a brief time by Truman, and then the eight years of Eisenhower. These were sent to storage by Mrs. Kennedy.

There were some strange oddments - a trunk that must have dated from around 18⁴⁷, with "James Monroe" on the front, and when you opened it, you saw that it was very carefully built, to pack and carry the famous Vermeil that Monroe had purchased in Paris, and that still adorns the table when we have State dinners.

And the wheel chair that President Wilson had used during his long, last weary months in the White House.

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And a portrait, all wrapped up, marked "Warren G. Harding". Just a day or two ago, I had discovered that he was the only President, not hanging in the White House. The picture had been sent out to have something done to the frame. What a lot of stories this old warehouse holds.

I think I found a red rug and a desk, and possibly a tall secretary-bookcase, that can be used in the President's waiting room. We'll work on that later.

So I left the ghosts to their own and went on to a luncheon at Mrs. Freemans, for Mrs. Muriel Humphrey's birthday. The sort of thing I used to do five days a week, when we were in the Senate and the Vice Presidency - and now do so seldom, The only guests were the Cabinet wives, and what a nice group of women they are. I had a delightful time.

Tonight, is the fourth Congressional reception - this time for the Senate. There were a lot of my favorites there, the Tom Dodds and the Frank Church's, both the ladies were members of my Spanish class; the Lister Hills, both showing the mark of age, and how sadly it strikes me. And Jane Lausche, although I don't feel close to her husband at all, she's one of my very favorite wives.

And that latest and most unlikely captive to matrimony, Warren Magnuson and his pretty wife.

Abigail and Gene McCarthy; Mike Manroney, alone, Maryellen is off taking the sun in California, or somewhere. The lovely, new addition to

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Senate wives, Avenell Bass of Tennessee. The Dirksens were supposed to come but at the last minute^f, we heard that he got sick. He's looked very bad lately, but as soon as he begins to talk, I'm mesmerized by his voice, and I forget how he looks.

Tonight we had the showing of the paintings at the White House, and all the ladies enjoyed them tremendously, but it was a short program so I called on Marvella Bayh and then Ellen Proxmire, both of whom talked delightfully, except that people are rather prone to give a testimonial to the present incumbent of the White House, to my squirming dismay. Then I asked if somebody else would like to recall an amusing incident, but I got no volunteers, although I know I have some of the most articulate women in Washington there.

So we had a rather long session of touring the Library and so forth and of sampling the hors d'oeuvres before our husbands joined us, because once more it had been a very good session for the men. Lyndon had been "in great form, several of them told me."

One, a Republican Senator, not known for being fond of us, said "For five minutes, he was the greatest man I've ever known."

I went upstairs about 10 o'clock. People had begun to drift away, and, in fact, most of them were gone. And when I emerged from my room about five minutes later, ^{Helen?} Ellen told me that the Magnusons were going to spend the night. That's quick action - I had just been saying "We must be sure and get together for dinner sometime soon." And that's the way my husband

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responds - why not now.²!

So I found a gown and some makeup for Germaine, and got them settled in the Queen's Room.

Everybody had so much hors d'oeuvres^{re}, they refused dinner, except Lyndon had his usual two bowls of tapioca pudding.

How cozy and content Maggie looks, and how the wives of his fellow Senators are beaming, that he's finally seen the joys of matrimony.

If I would rate Tuesday night as A plus, and I would, I think I would have to rate tonight as A minus - the first two fall far short.

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