

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Wednesday, November 1, 1967

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It was the day of the visit of the King of Nepal and his Queen. The morning I spent at desk work, and then a few minutes before 11:30 I was in Lyndon's office nervously awaiting that moment when he will emerge. It's always a mad dash from the desk or the telephone at the last moment.

The lovely Indian summer had held. It was brisk and cool, but bright and the chrysanthemums were saying their last goodbye to Washington,

King Mahendra emerged from the big black limousine wearing his gray flannel luga -- the coat to a western business suit over what looked for all the world like a ladies petticoat that came nearly to his knees. And then very tight white pants that fit rather like the puttees of our World War I soldiers, and a dark flat fez.

Her Majesty Queen Rutna wore a loose fitting costume very closely akin to the Indian sari, and over it a regular western ladies coat. And on her forehead there was a red spot, probably related to the Hindu religion. They both spoke English -- or so my information sheet said. But as I chattered away, their faces remained emotionless and I cannot say that much communication took place.

When the welcoming speeches were over I put the Queen in the bubble-top car and joined her in following Lyndon and King Mahendra. We drove in a brief parade down Pennsylvania Avenue, left toward

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Garfinckels and on to Blair House -- with me chattering nervously away, pointing out the dome of the Capitol, the bright splashes of chrysanthemums, the red and white and blue balloons rising like a big bouquet into the blue autumn sky.

At one time we passed under a welcoming arch which bore a greeting in Nepalese, looking to me like little squigles of spaghetti. Only here did the Queen give a brief flicker -- a response -- and read it to us.

There was a fairly thick crowd along the way, waving and clapping -- eager response from me, and a mild nod now and then from the Queen.

We said goodbye at the door of the Blair House, and I was back upstairs on the second floor a little past 12:00, having my lunch on a tray.

And then at 2:00, a meeting important to me with Clark Clifford and Madame Shoumatoff. We had tea in the Lincoln Sitting Room. I grow fonder and fonder of it. Clark did 95 percent of the talking, and how grateful I am to him. Yes, Madame Shoumatoff was interested. She was ready for any challenge. She would be glad to paint my portrait with the understanding made very clear by Clark that it was being commissioned and would be paid for by the White House Historical Association, and my only obligation was to sit for it. And that the ultimate disposition of it -- whether to hang in the White House, or in some other public place, or wherever -- it would be entirely up to the White House Historical

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Association. This to be set out in a letter which was to follow.

At one point I left to get my date book to determine some times available for sittings. And while I was gone Clark told me later that they had both agreed that the price of \$6,000 was reasonable and acceptable to both of them. What a valuable part he plays in my life.

We decided on the sittings on November 20th and 21st. And by 3:00 I had said goodbye to Madame Shoumatoff. And Clark and I joined Lyndon and Mathilde Krim and Marie at the dining room table.

Later after Lyndon left I talked briefly with Clark about when and how Lyndon could announce that he was not going to run again. Clark's response is completely negative. He does not feel that Lyndon can do it. He thinks he will be absolutely without any power or influence from the day he says it until he goes out of office. And that that would be a very unhappy year for him. He does not think he should.

He had to leave for an appointment and said, "Let's talk about this more later."

At 4:30 I had tea -- once more in the Lincoln Sitting Room -- with the Bob McKinneys of Santa Fe and the Eugene McDermotts. We talked about the Library in Fredericksburg. And yes, they are going to go to the dinner honoring all the people who have helped Fredericksburg. And Canon and Mrs. McAllister joined us.

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The McKinneys and McDermotts had had a leisurely tour of the house. We had a pleasant 40 minutes talking about the opera in Santa Fe, the aspens in Fall, my brother Tony, little St. Barabas Church. The nicest of all, Luci came in bringing Lynn and sat on the floor and chatted happily with them. And also Lynda came. She's had two sessions with Canon McAllister about the wedding in the course of his stay here -- one two hours; one three hours.

When they left, I made a straight line for my bed. These short nights with Lyndon -- to bed about 1:00 or 2:00 and up about 7:00 with Yuki barking loud enough to raise the roof right off the White House when the man delivers the papers outside Lyndon's door -- I think that's about 6:00 -- leave me limp and lackluster all day long. I am torn between trying to fill the role of giving some solace and companionship to Lyndon -- he likes my presence even if we don't talk -- and wanting to sweep through each day with energy and ebullience instead of drag.

Luci came in and we talked and she fed the baby on my bed.

At 7:00 Jean Louis gave me a comb-out, and I put on my newest dress which Adele Simpson had very skillfully made from one of my Chief of State gifts -- I believe this one from the Queen of Malaysia -- a lovely gold embroidery on a pinky pinch background -- a slim-line dress with a long sleeved jacket.

And promptly a few minutes past 8:00 we were down on the North Portico to greet the King, the Queen, and the official party.

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If this was a gathering at which I had to work it was considerably lightened by the King's son -- his Royal Highness, the Crown Prince Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Deva, who is spending the year at Harvard, speaks excellent English, smiled a lot and was simply easier to talk to. And also by a very charming Ambassador to Nepal -- Carol Laise -- Mrs. Elsworth Bunker -- obviously and immediately a favorite of Lyndon's.

The late-in-the-day regrets from Secretary and Mrs. Rusk, the Bob McNamaras, the Walt Rostows and General and Mrs. Wheeler, made me wonder if something was up. I had always rather not know -- what I don't know, I am in no danger of telling.

Fortunately the Goldbergs were there and came upstairs with us -- always lively company and full of news of a new grandchild and another coming.

Secretary and Mrs. Lucius Battle represented the State Department. And there was a small and silent group from Nepal. Ambassador and Mrs. Khatri, and members of the Royal party.

Our gifts from them were two large and elaborately ornamented boxes decorated with what I took to be semiprecious stones and the carved figures of an elephant, a tiger and two animals I couldn't identify. Alas, questions brought me no closer to an understanding of what it meant.

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But they were indeed exotic and handsome.

We gave them vermeil candelabra which Carol¹~~ee~~² said was a very good selection since this is the year of light in Nepal. Also I had read that the country as yet has very little electricity.

Chuck came in at the head of the honor guard looking very handsome and romantic and led us out. Lyndon took the Queen. I was on the King's right. And Lynda Bird came with the Crown Prince.

I felt both my dress and my hair-do were a real success.

And Lynda looked regal in a ^{bodice} ~~Bodice~~ covered with black jet and a rose ^{button} ~~button~~ skirt, her hair high and lovely.

Stew Udall was our only Cabinet member. But after all, whose more interested in climbing mountains which is what Nepal has.

From the Senate there were the Mike Mansfields, the John Sherman Coopers -- he used to be Ambassador to Nepal when he was also accredited to India. Gale and Loraine McGee. And Ted Moss without Phyllis.

Governor and Mrs. Dan Moore of North Carolina.

And Barefoot Sanders who looks after his own had recommended a sizeable contingent of the House. I find to my dismay that many of them may have served here for 10, 11, even 14 terms without ever having been to a State Dinner.

I was particularly glad to have our old friends, the Cecil Kings

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of California. And the Tom Steeds -- she's a member of my 81st Club. The Dick Bollings at whose country home we spent a couple of pleasant summer afternoons. Congresswoman Leonor K. Sullivan. And one of my favorite Republican couples, the Ogden Reids.

The new head of the Voice of America, John Daly, was there. His wife is one of the daughters of the Chief Justice.

From the old-time Washington hostesses, Mrs. Robert Low Bacon -- another Republican favorite of mine.

From the entertainment world, pretty Cyd Charisse and David Merrick and Marian Anderson. I had asked especially that she be at Lyndon's table.

And from Texas, of course the Gerald McAllisters, besides our other house guests. And Sim Gideon and Jesse Kellam whom I had been able to invite at the last minute when someone dropped out.

On our trips I always try to remember the most interesting or vital or helpful to the Johnson people, or people who give a lot to their communities. And so I had invited a Negro minister -- Leon Sullivan and his wife, who operates a job-training center in the ghetto area of Philadelphia with extraordinary success and the zeal of an old-time summer preacher in east Texas. And the Frank Paces -- he had been my host when I received an honor in New York last December. And its luster in my eyes is enhanced because this year we are giving the award to all the five Rockefeller brothers together.

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And there were old friends -- the John Crookers and the Sol Taishoffs. Mr. Charles Palmer who is responsible for the White House receiving the Roosevelt portrait that hangs in Lyndon's office.

And I had asked Mrs. Dillon Ripley to come without her husband who is overseas because I've so many times enjoyed going out when Lyndon was working late at the Senate.

Once the King and Queen really responded with warmth and delight to a guest.

Medical missionaries, Dr. and Mrs. Edgar Miller, who had spent much of their lives working with the poor of Nepal. My briefings said that it had one of the lowest living standards in the whole East -- about \$70 per capita per year. And only 5 percent of the people are literate. And one of the countries that gives them aid is India which came as a distinct shock to me that India was ever on a giving end.

I had really worked at the seating list, and had put Lorraine Cooper next to the King, trusting that she would be a big help in conversation. And then my favorite, Senator McGee. The wife of one of our businessmen, Mrs. Harold Gray of Pan American Airway. And then our old friend and my favorite, Paul Hoffman, Anna's husband. And Cary Davis -- my co-worker in so many campaigns. And then Dr. Armstrong of Middlebury, Vermont who had given me a degree last June, and proved a very attractive and articulate and interested guest.

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And then Mrs. Dan Moore, wife of the Governor of North Carolina who had been my hostess for a night at their delightful summoned Governors' Mansion on my trip through Appalachia. Then the Crown Prince.

But the star of the evening was Lorraine Cooper who really turned in a performance. I listened wide-eyed as she fixed the King's attention with the story of hunting -- in Nepal of course -- where they rode elephants and hunted for tigers in grass that was shoulder high. And once she went on the ground, rifle in hand, with three other hunters -- they had been charged by a wild buffalo this time. It was high time to shoot and she froze in her tracks while the wild buffalo turned straight at her. Just in the nick of the time one of the other hunters dropped him in his tracks. I felt like clapping. It was real artistry and what ~~helps~~ makes a helpful guest.

Senator McGee told some good stories of hunting grizzly in the northwest. And we discussed the King's trip. He and his wife will wolf hunt in Alaska when they leave here.

And they seemed pleased with the dessert which was named, "Coconut Saganather". It was named for their country's greatest feature -- Mt. Everest.

Lyndon's toast pleasantly referred to the romantic reputation of Nepal. "Only your country has in effect two American Ambassadors."

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Ambassador Laise was married this year in their Capital to Ambassador Elsworth Bunker -- everybody's favorite in the Diplomatic Corps.

The King in his toast invited us to visit Nepal.

And then we had coffee and liqueurs in the Red Room.

And then in the East Room I introduced Charlie Byrd who was greatly acclaimed by all the lovers of jazz. But it is a far cry from "St. Louis Women." The last songs from "Fiddler on the Roof" were poignant and charming and I particularly enjoyed them.

It was over a little past 11:00 and our Royal guests left very soon. We escorted them to the North Portico for goodbyes. Some of the guests began dancing, and I went from group to group. ^(Charles?) George Palmer wanted to talk to me about the Roosevelt Memorial. Delightedly I heard that he favored the Rose Garden.

Stew Udall and Dave Merrick and Cyd Charisse were in a corner -- an interesting threesome.

I had been able at the last minute to invite Marcia Maddox and her husband which made me happy because she is one of the hardest working, most delightful, person on my staff. At each dinner when there is a last day drop-out I try to add someone who gives me a great measure of their devotion and hours.

Before 12:00 I went upstairs sending word to our guests --the

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Charles Urschels and John Peaces of San Antonio, and John Burns of Austin, and of course Jesse, and the McAllisters -- to join us for a night-cap. And we settled in the West Hall for one of my favorite events of a State Dinner.

It was hilariously interrupted by Lyndon bringing in Lyn~~z~~ in blue sleepers, wide-eyed, grinning at everybody -- it was too much. Lyndon simply had to take him downstairs and show him to the remaining guests. The next morning I found that he had topped the King and Queen of Nepal. And now my problem is, how am I going to keep Lyndon from bringing him to the wedding.

We talked of HemisFair and Austin, and close to 1:00 said goodnight on the 36th State visit of the year.