

Confidential. Brigadier General Godfrey McHugh, 2500 Q St., Carolyn Apartments, Apt. 515, May 6, 1964, 3:00 p.m.

(The General is heavily handsome, with conspicuous jowls, and dark, wavy, bushy black hair flecked with gray. He has a conspicuous French accent.)

At the judicial reception on Wednesday I took some of the justices upstairs and came down. The three aides generally went up to the Oval Room 10 minutes before and accompany the Vice President, the Chief Justice and so forth and downstairs. It was always a ritual—the three military aides went up for 10 minutes and lingered with the guests, and then the honor military aides commanded by a marine captain would take out the two flags after a request to the President and proceed the President down. We would tell the guests to line up in order of protocol—though, of course, they all knew what their protocol rank was—and we would go behind the President. We withdrew at the last minute to avoid being in every photograph. On the right there was the army, in the center the air force, and then on the left the navy. This was not in order of services; it was in order of rank—Clifton was a major general, and so forth. Jackie liked the dignitary of military protocol and she particularly liked "Hail to the Chief."

When we reached to bottom of the steps there were two minutes for taking of pictures of the President. Then the social aide would say, "finished" to the press photographers. The President meanwhile had come down the main steps and was standing being photographed. The photographers having left, the President would go to the center of the hall. He would turn and face the crowd in the East Room and then there would be ruffles and flourishes and "Hail to the Chief." Jackie and the President walked in each room, through the dining room, and out.

The President left early and went over to his office. He stayed a little longer because he wanted to enjoy it.

[I was also sitting as a member in President Truman. I was sitting with the other members. Previously I had been with Franklin Roosevelt, and I was a friend of John F. Kennedy as a young captain. I was not here when Eisenhower was in office.]

I had a standing room in the East Wing of the White House and I kept it as I always always packed as I would get ready in 10 minutes. Thursday at 10:00 I was at the White House. We went to the President's office and had the sign for the last six hours previous dates for general officers.

The weather was a good thing with this. It would tell about the weather, and we would tell it to the staff, and what the exact temperature was in the hall. It would be in the East Wing. It would get our information from people going to the room to work always be around whatever the result was because it was hard to be accurate. I would get reports from the U.S. Weather Service from various parts of the country. I would find out what it is and what it is going to be. It had had a great big wind blowing, there was a lot of rain, the temperature at sea level and that had gone up to the atmosphere and it had been very cold. I would get this information (weather) as a telegram.

On Friday I gave the President some intelligence cables. Mrs. Kennedy was in her bedroom. There was a CIA report on what was happening in every region in the world—each region received a paragraph; Saigon, Cypress, Korea, de Gaulle, what Krushchev (?) had said. They would come over teletype to the hotel we would have one room in the hotel and would put the information in twin sealed envelopes which would go to the aide on duty. We would sign it and then sign the time we gave it to the President. Then we were responsible if the President did not see it. The President always went over this material in great detail. He would want to know how many men were killed in Viet Nam; if Krushchev had really said what he was reported to have said—whether it was a rumor or a news report—and he followed it all with his fantastic memory for details.

Our courier in Texas on this trip was a big heavy set man. He had the satchel. I had relieved Clifton when we left San Antonio; I relieved him at the airport while we were waiting for the plane to Houston. Inside the satchel are sealed envelopes, with 4 or 5 tremendous books. The warrant officer does not know the contents of the satchel.

In a crisis the President would have not had time to leaf through the books. If McNamara or Taylor said missiles were on their way the aide would have to explain to the President that phase such and such number so and so would result in so many million casualties and that there would be second and third options and so forth. Also in that satchel are the ways to communicate with Macmillan or de Gaulle.

In Dallas the satchel was a heavy metal suitcase which weighed about 30 pounds. There was a combination to it and the warrant office knew the combination. The sealed parts inside have wax seals and signatures over them. From time to time the satchel is revised and studied by us. We had gone over with General Taylor for several hours after a meeting of the joint chiefs of staff recently. There are cartoons and color schemes to make the thing more understandable to the President, and at that time we had pointed out that yellow was used for two different things and it might be confusing. Tas Shepherd was closest to this thing. Retaliation would be by the air force and the navy and therefore the naval and air force aide were most closely associated with it.