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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

COMMITTEES:
MERCHANT MARINE AND FISHERIES
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Personal

September 29, 1958

The Riley Smiths
1109 Pace Parkway
Mobile, Alabama

My dear Riley, Frances, Ocllo Gunn Boykin Smith, Jr.,
Sandra Lee and Riley Boykin Smith:

Well, you all certainly gave a pretty party. It was beautiful and, as Congressman Selden's pretty, cute little wife said, it was one of the most unusual affairs that she had ever attended, with the beautiful view from your home there overlooking the valley and the road with "America on Wheels" going right along in front of you, and then just to the left the beautiful Country Club with the swimming pool, the golf course and just everything.

I thought your bartenders were fine, but since I don't use the stuff, I thought your cooks were better. That ham and the way it was cut was "out of this world" and the smoked turkey and that business you dip and whatever you were dipping it in surely were good. Everybody enjoyed it. I went in and had a talk, as I always do, with the cooks and the waiters, and I found that that good cook that fixed all of these goodies was from our old home town of Bladon Springs, where I was born, 32 miles from the railroad.

Then I talked to the other younger darkey and she, too, was from Bladon Springs and knew my old teacher, Miss Ruth Turner. I didn't get their names, but those are good people -- every one of them.

Well, I couldn't get over Ward McFarland. Didn't he look like a million dollars. If I were his pretty, sweet, wonderful wife, I wouldn't allow that "fashion plate", who has lost forty pounds, to "tip-toe through the tulips" down here at your parties without I was with him. I thought Mrs. Jesse Gilliam looked wonderful, too, and so did just everybody. Cornelia McDuffie, with her sugar pie, looked better than ever, and while she can do that wheel stunt that goes around your waist and is supposed to stay there as you twist and turn, it didn't work so good, although Cornelia did it a thousand times better than I did, but Boykin beat us all. Well, I guess that's youth -- I don't know.

Anyway, it was a pretty party and a great success, and all of the people, including the marvelous McVays, Ward's banker from Tuscaloosa, my Congressman from Greensboro and that pretty little woman whom we met in Virginia where Ocllo and Sandy were born, it seems like a hundred years ago, but it was only eighteen years ago, all said your party was great.

I was sorry we didn't bring President Rose out; I know he would have liked to have come; but I was glad to see that big, fine-looking lumberman, Riley's old playmate, Brother Belcher. He is a good friend of mine, too. Well, it was fine and great and it all went off all right.

Then I thought about "Bear" Bryant and his beautiful bride, and you will remember, you all were in each other's weddings. I remember the day I met Riley and Bryant in Washington, when they looked so forlorn and said they hadn't won a game in Lord knows when. I remember I promised Riley and "Bear" a job if they would win that game. Well, we gave Riley a job and were going to give "Bear" one, but I don't know what happened. Anyway, he has a job now and I think he is doing a good job. I think his team did better than anybody thought they would. I didn't make but one little bet and that was that they would score. Well, ten pounds in a player is a lot of difference, but they had the steam and the pep and they went after it; but it is like a big good man and a good little man -- they just can't keep up. I see it in our deer hunts and our bird hunts. You can take a big, good, strong dog and a little, good, strong dog and they will weaken after so long. Well, that's what happened, but their spirits didn't weaken, and it will always be remembered and never forgotten -- what "Bear" Bryant and his great team did at Ladd Stadium at Mobile, Alabama. "Bear" Bryant and his team are on the way back and you watch the next round and the next and the next.

I didn't get to hea r "Bear's" broadcast, but some of the men told me at the hotel last night that it was fine. Well, all he has to do is to keep up the spirit. Isn't it too bad that he didn't have time to come out to your unforgettable party, where everybody surely enjoyed it and had so much pleasure.

I don't know how Ward lost all of his weight, and I imagine you noticed that Cornelia McDuffie, whose father was such a great statesman, as well as a great Judge, has lost as much as Ward. Well, we will have to get Boykin to teach us how to handle that hoop, because Lord knows, I can't do it; but the food was "out of this world", and I thought Ocllo and Sandy were sweeter than ever. I hate to see Ocllo have to go back, but it is something that we all have to do.

It will be a nice memory that we will always remember and never forget. It kind of reminded me of our Christmas parties. Anyway, I will send them a copy of this letter way up to Tuscaloosa, and I will send Frances McFarland one, too, because I keep my eye on these old boys, and while Ward had his young son here to protect him, he certainly needed his wife and that other big boy, too, but I understand he was in the band in Birmingham, playing, to show them what we had at the great University of A labama.

Well, we will be there one day this week, celebrating a great lock and dam up there, which will soon make it possible for us to have the Tennessee-Tombigbee going, which will be downhill both ways from here to Cairo, Illinois -- a direct route from Sioux City, Iowa, right down to our Port and the Gulf of Mexico.

Everything looks good and if we will just keep working and praying, there is just no telling what we can do.

Well, it was a great joy and pleasure, and I thought that pretty Betty Boykin Walker did fine. She reminded me of her father, Matt, and her marvelous mother, Catherine. Bill, Jr., and his pretty wife were certainly shining, too. I wondered where little Glo Boykin was, or if you did forget her. I always forget somebody on these parties. Well, it was mighty fine, and you can't think of everything, but you did a lot of thinking, Sugar Pie, to have everything so fine and it was about as near perfect a party as I have ever attended, and Mother and I have certainly attended an awful lot of them.

Well, I congratulate every one of you in the Riley Smith family and all of those fine friends that I know must have helped you.

May God help, bless and keep you all, now and forever.

Devotedly, Mother and Me,

Frank W. Boykin, M. C.

FWB :m