

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 6, 1965

Page 1

Sleep is an ^{elusive} ~~elute~~ stranger to me. I woke up early and crawled in with Lyndon and we talked sweetly and quietly of needs and plans and days to come. And then in the early morning sun, we went out by the pool -- Lyndon in the hammock. I sat beside him and made plans -- a possible meeting of those people who could do something about acquiring the brick house for historic or community purposes, retrieving it from oblivion. He is the first and most forceful in wanting to. We talked about our dinner for Princess Margaret. It would happen to be on our 31st wedding anniversary. And then the next step to take about the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library through Bill Heath and Clark Clifford. And then getting Peter Hurd down for sittings for the portrait. In the next year or so I want to nail down some history.

Then we had breakfast in the kitchen and read with a little pain, a little sadness, that tempest that Luci's conversion to Catholicism has caused. Liz said there had been 600 letters. She can't wait to get them analyzed. I wasn't mad at Bishop Pike. He wasn't worth it. But a few more ministers had stood up in a world in which there was a great deal of pain and troubles and selected this one little girl's conversion as a subject of their sermon. The Pope even had some statement on it, unless Lyndon was teasing. I hadn't read. And he loves to tease his Catholics -- sweet little Marie, Jack Valenti who always has a laughing

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 6, 1965

Page 2

reply. And calm, gentle Jake Jacobsen.

And then it was time for goodbyes, and Lyndon was airborne about 10:45.

It had been such fun that morning -- warm and comfortable and close. And it is also fun to know that now I will have four days to do planned, disciplined work at my own speed which is slow. And then quiet fun in the evening with my kinfolks.

Jeanne and Heidi Vanderbilt left right after him. I've almost fallen right in love with them as he has in their three-day stay.

Then Liz and I talked business. Then the kinfolks arrived about noon. Elaine and Edwina and little Bernice and Griffen. By now little Bernice must be in her early 40's, but she's still little Bernice. And their daughter Lynn.

We sat around the pool with a bloody mary and all talked at the same time. It's always just as though we'd never left off from the last visit yesterday, although sometimes 5 years may lapse between seeing each other. And then lunch. And then a tour of the Ranch -- the guest house, James Davis' house, up into the fields past the Sudan and the coastal Bermuda I'm so hopeful about and the tanks that are full, praise God, horrible fat hogs as big as hippopotamus and Dale's house. I am really so proud to have a foreman as nice as Dale. ^{Our} My house is nice for him. And around by the cemetery with Elaine reminiscing

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 6, 1965

Page 3

all the way about the last time she was here. And Edwina making me prouder by the intentness of her interest and the liveliness of her questions.

We went by the boyhood home with promises to return later to see it in detail because I've given up the afternoon to LIFE magazine with Stan Wayman and Sissy Morrison⁴ who are arriving any minute.

I left them in the hands of Liz who would get them started on choosing the right subjects and compositions of the beloved places for pictures -- the natural places.

And then I went in for a little rest, which turned out to be fruitless.

And then I began to get dressed for pictures. Gosh, it seems I spend a large part of my time doing this! And nothing was right. How I miss Helen! I finally wound up by borrowing a blouse from little Bernice.

We did pictures in the yard by the oak tree looking down the river. Always for years we tried to get home for sunset to see the fading light on the river. It was the great show of the day. Now we usually are over on the lake. Twilight and the river are a close part of my life at the Ranch.

And then I went walking through the grove of the live oaks down by the river where we have the barbeques for everybody from Chiefs

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 6, 1965

Page 4

of State to precinct captains -- important people all.

Next to the birthplace house where with Pat Taylor I leaned on the rail fence and we talked about how he was spreading out the harvested dried stalks of wild flower seeds, a sort of mulch, from which hopefully many seeds will drop and next year we will have a carpet of Indian blanket, wild ^{phlox} ~~flocks~~ and verbenas, Texas star and wine cups. Then up into the coastal Bermuda -- one "trap" eaten rather close by 42 cattle who had feasted off it for 19 days. The next trap was thick and high and luscious. There I met something I hadn't counted on -- two things -- they had just moved the cattle down that morning into the tall coastal Bermuda. So I found myself bravely walking among them, not as comfortable as Lyndon who adores them. Fat mommas and cute little calves, while Stan Wayman snapped away with glee. This was as real ^{as} a ranch picture as you could get, except me on a horse which nobody is going to get.

I wanted Elaine and Bernice and everybody to see the Sharnhorst so we drove over with Stan and Sissy following us. Stan and I climbed like mountain goats over the outcropping of pink granite behind the Ranch house; the fragile green ferns Margy and I had found with such delight are now dry. The strange purple flowers are gone. Only the little hardy yellow ones remain. But he was charmed by the composition of the long shadowy valley below with the great granite boulders. How

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 6, 1965

Page 5

marvelous to have Liz standing by. It enables me to do two things at once -- something I always need to do -- and she often thinks of it first.

She took Stan and Sissy home to the Ranch and also Pat Taylor for a drink and a swim. And I finished taking the kinfolks around by the Stage Coach Road with ^{the} a sort of exclamations every mile that makes the hostess beam. I like the people to like my country just as much as to like my children.

The helicopter arrived at the Sharnhorst and we boarded -- the first trip for Elaine and Edwina and little Berniece and Lynn.

We landed at the West Ranch where Clarence Knetsch met us and drove us around. Always I learn something new about the deer. I've never seen any so close with the really fuzzy velvet on their horns. Clarence told us at this stage, they were almost soft and pulpy. They would bleed if butted into something. They cannot fight at this season. Later they become hard and boney at the rutting season and they fight over the females. And the little fawns were darling -- so many spotted ones so close to the road -- delicate, gentle faces. We saw several wild hogs. We drove down by Malcolm's house -- over 100 years old, built partly of logs chinked with mud, partly of stone, with an old stairway that had run up the outside of the house. The Wests in their true fashion have air-conditioned it and added every

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 6, 1965

Page 6

convenience.

There was an interesting moment when I asked Malcolm what his little boy was studying in college. I thought maybe he was going to be a veterinarian -- maybe animal husbandry. He's studying something to do with flying -- astro-dynamics -- some highly scientific study that I didn't quite even understand the label ¹ from a pioneer into space in two generations. What a country.

On the wall, Malcolm had the skull of a wild hog with enormous, sharp tusks -- something that looked like an old tool we couldn't even identify -- a set of horns off the enormous English deer we had seen in that deer-proof fence -- huge brown, rather frightening looking beasts. One of them had actually attacked Malcolm's truck and pretty much torn it up with his horns.

The sunset was beautiful. We drove into the yard of the Ranch house and Mr. Kohler's bird of paradise bushes made me want some for the Ranch.

Then we flew back in the fading sunset to the Ranch where Liz had done just what I would have loved to have done if I had more time for housekeeping -- put candles on the tables by the pool, had the music going, and we had delicious fried catfish and corn bread, black-eyed peas and okra and tomatoes from the garden. Everything from now on is from the garden. Nothing is so good as the food you have just raised

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 6, 1965

Page 7

that just came from the corn stalk ~~to the table~~ or the vine to the table in a few hours. This was the time for reminiscing!

Elaine talked about the time Tony at the age of six months was visiting Grandmother, and she a young and lively girl was carrying him around showing him off. To her horror, she dropped him and she was scared she had killed him for sure.

I passed somebody the pepper, and she said, "No, Lord, child, I never have eaten pepper. Uncle Claude taught me when I was a little girl it would burn my insides and I never got used to it."

We talked about old Melton where the grist mill was powered by a wheel that the mill stream went over; where mother and Aunt Effie and Uncle Claude grew up, along with Aunt Susie and Aunt Ida. Elaine knew it as a child, but I not at all. And the pale half moon shone above the live oaks, and the peacocks flew up to the roof top of the house crying their weird call for help. "hel---p-p"

And then we went inside and saw home movies -- my own -- of White House days in the flower garden, on the Potomac, and back at home on the Ranch.

A contented, happy, useful day.

I talked with both Lynda and Luci. Luci's self-confidence for once is shaken. She is almost hurt and frightened that she should have caused a rift, a disturbance, trouble, for her parents, for any Church,

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 6, 1965

Page 8

between any churches. Perhaps in part this will have a sobering effect on her -- that she can always trust her own judgment. Although I find her self-expressions so true that they are often the best and hurt the most honest way to explain an important decision. And her judgment is improving. She was also blissfully wide-eyed, happy, that she had had a message delivered by some officer of the Catholic church from the Holy Father himself welcoming her -- "To me, Momma, Luci -- just a little girl!"