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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Saturday, October 30, 1965 WND

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It was one of those awful days that makes you cling to the words of Epicurus<sup>rus</sup> -- "Have confidence. There is nothing terrible that lasts forever or even for long." And to remember Euripides' lines, "There will be many shapes of mystery and many things that God makes to be past fear or hope. And the end men looked for cometh not. And a path there is where no man sought." So hath it happened here.

The day began with an absolute barrage of stories on the radio, on the television, and in all the newspapers, about Luci and Pat coming to the Ranch to seek the permission of the President to marry. I wonder if the Government of Russia had fallen, would it have been blacked out?<sup>?</sup> Such a spate of words and speculation about one little girl and her own dear personal life. A friend in Austin was quoted, Pat's father was interviewed -- he handled it very well. Pat's friends were interviewed. Poor Jim Moyers in his debut as Press Secretary was badgered and besieged with questions until 2:00 at night and waked up again before daylight. Bill had gone to Marshall to be with his father who has a bleeding ulcer and is to be operated and is desperately serious. And Jim took over. And this was his blood bath.<sup>!</sup>

Helen Thomas was the most insatiable of all. Lyndon said, "My representative will have to talk to them twice a day. I want him to be as truthful as he can. I don't see how I can talk to them and then tell my Press Secretary that I have not. I am just going to wait until this dies

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down and at a quiet and appropriate time we'll talk.

It was as harrasing a day as I ever remember. It took all the sturdiness and calmness that everyone of us could call up from the depths of our being.

**SANTIZED**

And I began  
the second hard round of the day -- getting Peter and <sup>Kentella</sup>~~Orlet~~ Hurd into the convertible with Lyndon -- top down -- to ride around the Ranch and the Martin Ranch. I like them both so much -- picturesque, able, sophisticated, but simple. They love so many of the things I do including the land. And here we had to tell them that the President did not like -- indeed hardly any one liked -- the portrait that Peter had worked so hard on. There it laid, wrapped up in the office, while everyone walked on tiptoes around it. So it wasn't exactly a relaxing ride.

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When we got back Congressman Jack Brooks had flown in with a friend, and dozens of yellow roses and red roses for me from Tyler. And we sat down for lunch with two large tables full of us -- including Lynda and Luci and Pat and Jimilu and Bill White -- down to work on a book about Lyndon and foreign affairs. And Jesse and Don Thomas -- awaiting his turn to talk business. And the staff.

Then after lunch -- unable to postpone it any longer because the Hurds needed to catch a plane back to Albuquerque -- we went into the office -- just the four of us -- and unveiled the portrait. My sympathy was mostly for Peter. And next, very much for Lyndon, because I understood so well how the last two days have eaten into him about Luci and also about how he hates to hurt somebody. But he had to tell them the truth, and there was not really any comfortable way to tell it.

He told it quite simply. Peter said he could not improve on the head. He thought the head was as good as he could do. When Lyndon said he did not like the eyes, Peter made a good case for the dreamy expression in them. This man was looking off into the future -- this man had vision. I did not like the background -- in fact no one did -- the sky that is. And this he said he could readily change and would. He was the first himself to say that the body and especially the hands were no good, that he had not had enough sittings. And that is quite true. And that to paint really good hands -- and Lyndon's hands are a

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very important part of him -- it would take several sittings of an hour each. No need to do it if the pictures were to be made smaller. And then there was the Capitol in the background. My idea -- good allegory. "I am a child of the Congress," Lyndon has said. That is where he learned and that is where he came from. And I still think it is a good idea, though I had in mind a sort of dreamy, misty dome. This Peter is simply not the artist for, he explained. Some could, but he couldn't. He is a realist in painting. And I did not like the parapet that Lyndon was standing against.

It was a gruesomely uncomfortable 20 or 30 minutes. <sup>Henrietta</sup>~~Griet~~ in the manner of any woman who feels her husband is attacked or his ability attacked could hardly keep from showing that she was incensed.

Peter was so nice, and my heart went out to him. And then Lyndon insisted on asking Jimilu in and Bill White. And both of them said many good things about it which all added up to though they liked some things they did not think the whole came off.

So the final conclusion was that Peter would work on the background some more, reduce it in size so as to omit the hands, and perhaps leave just the Capitol dome lighted. And then we would look at it later.

I went out to the car with them and said goodbye -- hurt, sorry and incapable of handling the situation with the grace, yet honesty, that

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would give an air of ease for all my guests in our tangled <sup>shein</sup> ~~scene~~ of troubles. And then I fled gathering up Lynda who is often my recourse in time of trouble, and Ashton and Dr. Young and we went down to the guest~~s~~ house, sat under the live oak tree in the bright autumn sun and played bridge for an hour and half. When I was dummy I wrote notes, increasing my little stack for Ashton to mail to those personal friends who sent us flowers or letters or wires.

And then about 5:00 I got that sudden imperative message -- "the President was going to the Nicholson place" -- would I please join him?<sup>2</sup> I would. And so he and I and Jesse and Don and A. W. helicoptered over and drove around over roads that were never meant to be traversed by anything except a jeep. And it was skill and a mighty intuitive force by which A. W. kept us from being stuck. We talked ranches and fence crews and upkeep on the houses of the Nicholson and cattle and grass. And it was Lyndon's part of the day, just as bridge had been mine.

Then back at the Ranch we heard news that Vickie had had a wreck. Troubles come not in single file but in battalions.

Mariallen joined us for dinner. Bill White, sometime or other had had his chance to talk to Lyndon. What an ill-chosen weekend for creative, intellectual work! And Luci and Pat told us they had watched the football game that was on TV all afternoon. And I felt like saluting

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Jimilu as the one winner at the table. Indeed her mission is almost accomplished -- to Lyndon's complete satisfaction and to my admiration and to all who have seen it.

A few moments before 9:00 I leaned over to those at my end of the table knowing that I was going in to watch "Gunsmoke" and said, "I hope you will excuse me in a minute. I have an engagement." Luci screwed up her expressive little face in a rye smile and said, "Couldn't you use another word?" Thank heavens for the light touch. And so once more I fled for what Tony would call -- "Such solace <sup>as</sup> is the Cabin Grants" -- my own room, the days of the early West, and a small glass of dubonnet was a comfort to my spirits.