

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Thursday, November 4, 1965

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It's still a gray and cheerless day. The morning was spent mostly on the telephone and working with mail, the Princess Margaret list, a little dictating to Ashton, talking with Lynda about her trip to Houston. She will stay with Diana and Bill Hobby.

Lyndon is having Bob Thompson of the Los Angeles paper for a lengthy interview. Bob plans to write a book on him.

Lunch with Bob and A. W. and Jake and Marie and Ginny and Ashton. And then one of the highpoints of the day -- Leonard Goldensen called me and said he had just seen our movie on "Beauty in Washington" and he was so proud to have done it. Either he is a great actor or else he is really pleased with it. I felt inflated and delighted. I decided I would ask John and Helen Jean Secondari to fly down as Leonard had suggested and let us have a look at it.

And then I left with Lyndon and A. W. and Bob Thompson in the middle of the afternoon for hours of riding around on the Martin and the Danfz Ranch. Mr. Early is putting in new roads. Judging by the dried seed heads it must have ^{been} a sea of wild flowers last Spring and early summer. For the first time now we are seeing the interior of it with the road being opened up. The fields were covered with a yellow Scotch broom. And underneath the live oaks every now and then we could come upon a lovely clump of purple asters.

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Lyndon wants to put a deer proof fence around a large part of it, clear out the dead wood and small trees to open it up a bit, maybe put in a few little ^{Copper} ~~cor~~ dams in a creek that runs through it and make it a park-like showplace -- the closest one to the main Ranch. It has many of the ingredien^tce.

As we rode along, Bob Thompson kept asking him questions. "What do you think is the greatest single achievement of your two years in office?" Lyndon answered. "The attempt to inject realism into our foreign policy; to make achieving results a criterion in judging our foreign policy. It just won't be a one-way street. It's got to work for us as well as for them." And to the doctors re Medicare: "I will not let you go. You have done too much for me. You have saved my life." And so he talked to them and talked to them and talked to them. Maybe finally now, the country -- even the doctors -- have swallowed Medicare.

And then he made a surprising statement -- "One-tenth of everything we grow in this country" (meaning food and fibers) "goes to India and Pakistan free." I am still wondering if I heard him correctly. About de Gaulle -- "I just step out of the batter's box when he throws one at me."

From the Martin and the Danz Ranches, we went over to the Lewis and the Hartman and continued driving and driving. Presently we approached

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the Hartman House -- Lyndon's own poverty project. Two rooms he's been building on are nearing completion. One large one for the six Hartman boys and another for the mother and father. The present bedroom will be for the four Hartman girls.

We stopped, and Lyndon engaged Mr. Hartman in conversation. "Be sure and get all those boys after school and on Saturdays to cleaning up around the place, planting that grass. We've got to make it look good."

And then with that extraordinary sort of frankness he can manage with people which everybody else would shy away from, he asked Mr. Hartman if his wife had been taking pills. Yes, she had. "How long?" "Ever since their last child had been born." "Well, now that's wonderful. Now you've got ten children -- now don't you think that's enough?" Mr. Hartman replied, "Mr. Johnson, I would not be worth anything without children. I just love children."

Actually, what looks like disaster to many of those of us from outside, having 10 children in a house that actually had been about three rooms and a bathroom, was quite different to him as he lived it. But I could not forget his wife and her listless eyes and bloodless face.

As we kept riding, Lyndon spoke of January. "I have got to have a lot of horsepower in January."

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I felt with a small stab how much I would miss these days of quiet when it was January.

We stopped at the Lewis house and had a drink, and I called Mary Lasker who is inviting me to a benefit dinner in New York on the 18th. And John Secondari with whom I arranged plans for him and Helen Jean to come down to the Ranch on Sunday and show us the movie.

And after while dark drove us back to the Ranch house, and dinner with Bob Thompson still aboard and A.W., Jake, Marie, Genny and Ashton.

We had pork chops and turnip greens and corn bread and sweet potatoes with marshmallows. And the peaches and sour cream. And I watched nearly all of my favorite things go by with a groan. Still hoping to attain and hold that 115.

And then early I went to bed with a feeling of fair satisfaction in the day.