

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

Sunday, April 10, 1966

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Easter Sunday, April 10th, was a day of perfect beauty in the hill country. Everyone had been warned to be ready to go to church at 8:30. And with Lyndon driving, the Arthur Krim^s, Lynda and George Hamilton and Luci and Pat, as many of us as could possibly crowd into a ^{station wagon} convertible that had three seats -- the back one designed for agreeable children or dwarfs, I believe. And I believe Ginny Thrift was with us.

We drove to Fredericksburg to St. Barnabas. ^{Wisteria} ~~Nastalia~~ and ~~pink~~ passion flower were blooming on the arbor and there stood Reverend Langford -- almost 7 feet of him, smiling broadly, surrounded by his pretty small flock and a larger flock of tourists and press. There was a great deal of picture taking as we walked in, especially of Lynda and George Hamilton. I wore my ^{Alaska} ~~Del~~ Simpson ^{Alaska} black ensemble, last year's beige hat. I'm really the arch type, the perfect model of that ^{Dorothy Parker} ~~slender poem~~ poem. ^{Bright and sparkling is my dress} ~~Bright and sparkling is my dress~~ Oh bright and sparkling is my dress and pristine is my hat, my shoes are 1958. My life is all like that. I always appreciate the members of the press who go in and attend the services. The Garnett Horner^s always do -- a few others -- most of them linger outside. And most of all I was delighted that Luci and Pat went with us, although they slipped away a few minutes before the service was over to attend their own Catholic service.

It's a great source of teasing for Lyndon: Have you reported to the Pope yet? The ~~the~~ Pope has been an intimate part of Lyndon's life for years and years in the most hilarious way. And finally at long last we have come to know two Popes!

After the service there was picture taking. Lyndon and Lynda Bird and I.

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out in front of the Church. The planting is progressing reasonably well.

And then we went into the dear little log house, built in the 1840's by a German pioneer family and owned by them for over a hundred years until they sold it to the Episcopal Church for a mission. That was where we went to church ^{from} at the time we settled at the Ranch until just a year or two ago when this one was completed.

Mr. Ralph Dopler who makes models for a hobby had constructed a very minute, detailed, excellent model of our Ranch house, complete, even to the Eagle over the front door of the stone part. He gave it to us as we had coffee in the little log house.

George was right at home mixing with the crowd, courtfously and not aggressively, speaking to everybody right and left. I tried to introduce the girls, the Krim's, all of my crowd, to as many of the old-timers as I could. Colonel Petch of course and Mrs. Dietz of the wonderful old bakery. And I think I saw Mrs. Frick.

And then we were loaded back into the station wagon and Lyndon decided to take the long way home. He wanted to show Mathilde Krim, who ^{he} loves, Texas in April, some of the hill country. So we drove by Enchanted Rock and then on to Will^{ow} City and by the ^{Cave} ~~Cone~~ Creek Road and the ^{Grays} ~~Great~~ Creek Road, seeing ^{innumerable} ~~innumerable~~, marvelous pastures full of blue bonnets, lovely spreads along the road. It was a brilliant blue and gold day -- the hill country at its best. Pink and white buttercups, wine cups -- all sorts of yellow flowers. Masses of wild ~~varena~~ ^{phlox}, particularly pink ~~flowers~~ among the blue bonnets.

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These are real back country roads. And some how or another we had eluded the press. At least they were not following us within sight. Lyndon had urged them to go on home and to see the Alamo. We weren't going to do anything except stay at home around the pool and enjoy the sun. "Go on~~e~~ back to San Antonio and kick up your heels. Apparently he had been successful. Though we had an adventure that they would have loved.

We were on an old, narrow, worn country road. Suddenly ahead of us I saw a rattle snake right in the middle of the road. I said hurry Lyndon -- try to run over him, feeling quite sure he would slither off into the brush. Lyndon's reactions are ~~always~~ always very quick. He speeded up, and then when he got to him he put on his brakes so as to slide the car and then backed up. We looked, and there he was, dealt certainly a ~~lethal~~ ^{lethal} mauling. But he managed to crawl off into the brush. Clarence Kaneth, who else, jumped out of the Secret Service car with his gun drawn and shot him. And then they took two sticks and dr^agged him up onto the highway. He was enormous, probably six feet long with a great bunch of rattles. But the interesting thing was he had just swallowed a victim -- perhaps a small rabbit, who knows. Anyhow there was a large protuberance as big as my ^{upper} open arm a foot or so down from his mouth. We looked at him close. He's the biggest ~~thing~~ one I have ever seen I think. I'm sure it was because of his meal that he was sluggish. He could not or did not move fast enough to get out of our way.

Mathilde, scientist that she is, pryed open his mouth with sticks to look at his fangs. Clarence explained to her how they struck. Between yesterday and today, I ^{blanched at} [blanned] the assurance of safety as I walked in the pastures among

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the blue bonnets, along the creeks, over the rocks. I was a little shaken at the chilling thought that this brute might be under my next foot step in the knee-high ~~chilling~~ pasture of wild flowers.

We really took the long way home through the Danz and the Ragan Ranches, through the deer-proof fences. I ^{was ecstatic} ~~astatic~~ about every ~~expansive~~ expanse of blue bonnets on our land -- such lovely pale pink and white primroses and buttercups. And millions of little calico flowers, about the size of a nickel, pale yellow with a little red in them, like a colonial print on wallpaper.

Lyndon stopped at the Boy Scout Hut. Tourists were backed up with cameras, some six or eight or ten cars of them, and got out and shook hands with them, and they took pictures and we all wished each other a happy Easter, a happy vacation trip.

And then back to the house, starving for lunch.

Earl, Louise and ^{Deathe} ~~Trey Deit~~ joined us and Luci and Pat and Phyllis Nugent and Bill Hitchcock. I ^{had} ~~had~~ only some coffee in a paper cup as I dashed out the door headed for church. So I was ravenous.

Lyndon, mindful of using every hour, had suggested the day before that we call some friends to have ~~xxxx~~ Sunday night supper with us. We had asked them to come a little past 4:00 so that we could see the deer and the lakes and the blue bonnets. Our Blanco County neighbors, who commute from their big city home, the John Hill^s, the Bill ^{Heath} ~~Heitz~~^s, the Wesley Wests^s, the Troy Post^s who were flying in from Dallas, and the Bill ^{Bauer} ~~Bowers~~ from Port Lavaca and of course the ^{McCarson's} ~~Morrison's~~.

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Lynda Bird had left right after lunch with George, who had had a most hilarious ride, all six feet of him crouched in a seat in the station wagon better designed for a four foot child. He had to get back to Hollywood to start filming. So right after lunch, ~~he~~ she had gone to San Antonio with ^{him} in the chopper.

Our guests began arriving about 4:00. I took them down to see the old Sam Johnson farm house and the Cedar House where they could all have a place to change into slacks and get a bit of rest.

And then guests and house party were off in the chopper, landing at Green Mountain Ranch which Lyndon and A.W. had just bought -- as wild a piece of country as ever I saw. Granite mountains, thickets of mesquite, with yellow flowers ^a of carpet underneath, rugged ravines, blankets of blue bonnets in valley pastures and struggling up the hill-sides among the boulders. The most picturesque of the ranches I've seen yet. And as ^{useful a} ~~dull~~ song I've sang against buying any more land, I can't help but look at it with elation. Although I don't see how anybody could ever make a living out it, except to shoot a western movie on it. The roads are fit only for broncos and the sturdiest jeeps. I got one with a top on it and real seats and grabbed Bill Heath and ~~took~~ two or three more friends so that we were protected from the dust more than Lyndon who never seems to mind ^{the} ~~a~~ hottest, brightest sun. And he always tries to get in his bronco the prettiest women, especially Mathilde, and usually A. W. to tell him the lay of the land. We bounced around over tortuous roads about an hour and a half. Twice we saw wild turkey ^{or their} with ~~his~~ tall, stilt legs, stajlking off into the ^{see} ~~B~~ brush down toward a stream. There were a world of deer. Every hill top we came over we could see some in the valley below, and we kept on shouting

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to each other on the intercom, "three deer at ~~two~~ two o'clock; look over there, a whole herd at 9:00".

It's endlessly exciting to the Krim^{ts}s, and we delight in their love of the country. And the Troy Post^s and the Bill ^{Bowers}~~Bowers~~, less used ~~to the~~ than we are to the wild life of this land were thrilled. What makes hosts happier?

Lyndon always likes to reach the water by sunset. So we went to the coca-cola cove where the big boat was beached probably about 6:30 and boated leisurely for about an hour.

I spent much of my time with Bill ^{Bower}~~Bower~~ who comes from five generations of sea captains, and has himself a yacht -- many different yachts ^{over the} for years and years. The last one would sleep twelve. And he had taken Scooter and Dale Miller and a g congenial group on a Caribbean cruise, one ^{of} the list of things I want to do when I walk out of this job. He language is salty and his skin is like leather, and I found him a thoroughly delightful companion.

John Hill, who is all of six feet six or maybe eight is one of those many people who, having made a lot of money, wants to go to the country to live. His house, built by O'Neil Ford, in Blanco County, sounds really exciting. His wife, a gentle little person with a diamond the size of a large marble told the most amusing story about the way they traveled between their homes. A sort of a convoy of several cars, including four children, two couples of help, three dogs and an ~~assortment~~ assortment of other pets. In El Paso, ^a hapless new acquaintance being warmly hospitable had asked them to spend the night. And ^{she} ~~she~~ said, "Oh no, you don't understand." And a very graphic description of the ^{what} changes on this person's face as she explained ~~of~~ taking the Hill's in would mean.

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^{Nega}
~~Nega~~ has been to the Greenhouse and is marvously rested. She told me

she wants me to accompany her some time. That too I will keep on my agenda,

We were back at the headquarters well after dark for a good broiled steak dinner, corn from last year's garden, enormous strawberries that Sam Ford sent us from Florisville and a very keen feeling of gratitude for being alive and healthy and together and happy. And what one of the newspaper men correctly called "a perfect Easter Sunday with sunny skies and warm breeze and butter-cups and the blue bonnets blooming in the fields."

Vicki and her date, Simon MacHugh, joined us for dinner. And Lynda Bird returned from San Antonio.

One of the many nice things Lyndon had done today was to send a wire to Phyllis Nugent's husband in Viet-Nam, and one to ^{Weezie Deathe}~~Wesley Dietz~~' son, Larry. And she laughingly said, "He sent word from Viet-Nam to please send him some flea powder and some rubber dog bones because he had adopted a whole family of homeless dogs."

Another nice moment was when little Bill Hitchcock, Lucy's^{L's} brother, said to me, "This is the nearest to a family Easter I've had in years and years."

After dinner, we watched The President's Country in the living room, ^{for} of the untold time for me and some of the secretaries, and the first time, and thrilling it is, ^{for} of the ^{Bowers}~~Bowers~~, Posts* and Hills*.

The guests left about 10:30 and I went to bed happy.

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Later I was hard put to understand Doug Kiker's story, after ~~deciding~~ ^{describing} what each of the three Johnson women were said, "as for the head of the family, he is wearing a scowl [^{Ch. tape}reed in the fill of the ol temper.] President Johnson is in a foul mood this Easter Sunday, apparent for all to see." I won't say I hadn't seen that mood. But not this weekend. He went on to say, "Those who regularly see him face to face ~~for~~ were particularly impressed last week~~s~~ in Washington by the fatigue that showed in his face. Mr. Johnson has been forced to work the late shift for days now to stay on top of Vietnamese developments." That much is true, painful and killing. The press talked too about how excited the young parishioners had been at the presence of George Hamilton. One story said, "There is a good possibility of George Hamilton becoming the Peter Lawford of the Johnson Administration." Actually to have around as a house-guest, he is a combination of quietly ^{deferential} ~~differential~~ and charmingly articulate, certainly handsome. But most of all he makes Lynda sparkle, come to life. ^{For} ~~for~~ that I am grateful.