

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 5, 1966

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Tuesday, July 5th, made a fiction out of any story that this is the place we come to to rest.

We were both up about 7:30 to tell the Krims goodbye, and then I spent a hectic morning getting ready for the tea for the 60 or so volunteer hostesses down at the birthplace. I had no script. I had ample notes, but I must finish dictating it and get 100 or so copies thermofaxed. And then at 9:30 Lyndon dropped a small bombshell on the domestic scene, ~~and~~ <sup>when</sup> he said he would like to invite the press out for a barbeque at 1:00 and then have a press conference. Could we manage it? Of course we could, which is not to say it wasn't a strain.

We got the barbeque and beans from Cecil Presnal, did the potatoes and sliced tomatoes and hot homemade bread ourselves. And James barbequed the ribs in the back yard, and we managed an enormous amount of cookies.

I gave up dictating to Marie as a lost cause. I telephoned Miss Christine with an SOS and she was there within an hour and half, <sup>?</sup> to call Miss Person on that busy scene. I finished it in rather good form I thought -- the dictating -- about the house, the furnishings, little anecdotes of the day and of the family life. And then the xerox machine broke down, was fixed, broke down, while I shuttled back and forth between the main house and the old Sam Johnson farm house with tablecloths, punch bowl and cups and spoons and the beautiful Independence Day center piece of red, white, and blue paper flowers and wheat that Billie Marcus had brought me. And all the things that it takes to put on

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a ladies party. Jessie Hunter and Betty Weinheimer were down there working all morning. Betty had shanghaied her little boy to assist, and I had Lee work there. And somehow between them, it turned into a delightful setting for a country gathering. But I was mostly up at the main house where the luncheon for about 50 turned out to be some 85 by 1:00. Somebody had forgotten to count the TV and all the equipment men. Everybody ate heartily and well. And then at 3:00 there was the press conference. It was the first fully televised one they said that Lyndon had had in almost a year. Most of it was consumed with Viet-Nam, and the headlines read: "Johnson Sees Red Victory Hope Gone - But President Says U. S. May Send More Troops, Equipment to South Viet-Nam". There was news for me too: he said he might visit all 50 States before the votes are counted in November. And I also heard, as I often do, about some house guests coming to the LBJ Ranch. He had asked Ambassador Averell Harriman and General Andy Goodpaster and Walt Rostow to go to Los Angeles to brief the Governors. And they will stop here Wednesday for an overnight stay before going on.

Fortunately, Mary and I are elastic about a mere handful of house guests. And very happily, Clark and Marny Clifford would be coming in later this afternoon to spend the night.

Someone asked, "Mr. President, Sir, in light of the recently published polls can you give us your thinking now about running again in 1968?"

"No. I have no announcements to make about my own future except to say that I am going to do my <sup>best</sup> ~~best~~ level best to serve all the people of this

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country." And it was in this context that he continued about visiting the 50 States. As he talked about polls and Latin American prospects and the reaction to the depot bombing and a review of the draft system and racial problems in the cities, the peacocks punctuated his words every few sentences with their shrill cry of "Help".

I left before it was well over because the ladies would be arriving down at the birthplace house. And so they were about 3:30 -- more than 60 of them. Betty Weinheimer stood with me on the porch and introduced each of them, doing a very warm and skillful job.

It was a white-glove afternoon -- not like the first "at home" I had when I settled here in 1952. <sup>She</sup> Many of the ladies who came brought their small children which was the custom of the country. I had the punch bowl full of delicious coffee and vanilla ice cream, and iced tea for the weight-watchers, and loads of good cookies and frosted green grapes and big cherries.

I had asked my neighbor, Mrs. ~~Hodges~~ Hodges, to help serve, and Mrs. Weinheimer who has the grocery store, and Lela Martin, Lyndon's cousin and neighbor, and an old friend of his childhood, Mrs. Tanner. Jessie Hunter helped out on every hand <sup>and</sup> Jewel Malechek manned the guest book.

I made them a little welcome and thank-you speech, and then we distributed the little xerox sheets of paper with all the information about the house, and took them through on tours of about 15 each -- Jessie starting in one direction with a group and I in another. It was not the most skillfully

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managed afternoon, and it is days like this at the Ranch when I really treasure the jewels that I have in Bess and Liz and all the able helpers, because here I am trying to take the place of all of them. And it is not the polished operation they turn out.

But it was a warm, homey afternoon. And sure enough, here came Lyndon right in the midst of it ~~bringing~~ bringing with him, Sissy Morrissey of LIFE. He shook hands with everybody, and made a rather lengthy speech from the front porch and going into some detail about the future of the Park across the road -- or I should say a possible future -- and our own plans for eventually leaving our Ranch to the Government.

Then he left to meet the Cliffords who were flying in, and I followed about 5:30 just as soon as courtesy permitted.

But now we were at the time of the day to relax, and I felt that we had both earned it.

It was Marny's first trip to Texas. There is nobody I would rather show "my own <sup>and</sup> my native land to. And Clark is always such good company. I told Lyndon I wanted to have dinner back at the main house so that James and Mary would not have to drive the extra 100 miles that it would <sup>cause?</sup> cost them when they served dinner to us at the Haywood. But we choppered over to the Haywood for the magic hour of sundown. First, leisurely in the big boat. Then Lyndon, A. W., Clark, Sissy, ~~and~~ <sup>in</sup> Lyndon's small fast boat.

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Back at the Haywodd, Marny was enchanted with the brick patio framed by the live oaks. We had a drink as the last pink clouds faded, and then choppered back to the LBJ Ranch headquarters for dinner -- Clark and Marny, Sissy Morrissey, Jake, Vicki, Marie, Lyndon and I. It is always fun to show your house to a lover of houses -- a person whose taste runs in the same line. For much more than 20 years, I have loved Marny's house. And I delighted in showing her Sam Houston's letter, and the needle-point hassock that Ma Ferguson's daughter made for us, and the painting of wild turkeys done on an old board, and my colonial Mexican chest from President Diaz Ordaz, and my two Mexican primitives from Lopez Mateos and Cantinflas and copper from all over the world -- things that combine to make my room sing as I walk through them, at least to me.

It was a pleasant evening, but as early as I could make it for Clark is just recovering from a serious bout with hepatitis which leaves you bone weary. And for us too, it had been a very full day.