

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Monday, August 8, 1966

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The last of the house guests are leaving. Quiet is descending on the White House after the tempest of activity. The Rays got off and left a sweet note which I found when I woke at 10:00. ~~Tim~~<sup>Tim</sup> and ~~Gerry~~<sup>Gerry</sup> had left just a little while earlier. They had told me goodbye last night. How I wish that Lyndon could share it -- this occasional ability of mine when very tired -- either emotionally or physically -- to sleep until 10:00, because we almost never go to sleep before 1:00 or 2:00.

I gave Patsy instructions to see that Jessie Hunter and the Malecheks had good tours of Mt. Vernon -- hopefully with the Curator -- and of the Custis Mansion. Lyndon had suddenly changed their travel plans and moved them into the White House on Sunday night to spend the night, making other reservations for them late Monday. It will mean so much to these three. That's one of the things I like most about him. He grasps the golden moment. He doesn't wait to plan some long trip in future years for Jessie and Jewel and Dale, but does what he can today.

I took my coffee into Lynda's room and curled up on the bed and had a nice long talk with her and Warrie Lynn about their week's activities. Lynda is getting off for New York today, and Warrie Lynn will go on Wednesday. Lynda will be having job interviews with McCall's and American Heritage. Possibly she will see Arthur Goldberg. I think she has talked it out with McGeorge Bundy. They will see shows. Lynda will buy clothes. Mostly there will be the excitement of being with George in that fascinating city.

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She has a lunch date with David Merrick to talk about a play that George may do. Lynda is really on the edge of an exciting world -- wide-eyed and interested. But always I think as a sightseer and not as a participant.

I had called Alice Brown and made plans to go down to Huntlands for the first time in more than two years. First I went to Lyndon's office and told him what I planned to do. He said, "Call me before you come back. I might join you."

And then I disappeared not telling Ashton or anyone where I was going. There are places -- the very name of which evoke for me the thought of complete relaxation, of leaving all cares behind. They are winged names. Huntlands is one of them. The Virgin Islands. And to a considerable extent, Camp David. The Ranch is not one of them, because here all my undone chores rise up to accuse me.

I found Alice and George around the pool. They have had a weekend full of house guests and now everyone was gone. And we curled up in delighted conversation, soaking up the sun and lemonade, and occasionally a dip to cool off.

George told me of his plan, already put into action, of making a corporation out of Huntlands which will be participated in by their five children -- they have simply included the Herman Brown's adopted children -- and their 11 grandchildren. They will all own shares, and Huntlands will be a sort of a Country Club to which they can all come -- one of the masterpieces of their

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life is that they all like and enjoy each other -- all the family -- all three generations. It interested me because I had been thinking on the way down what would happen to this lovely old place when George and Alice left this world.

We had Tessie's wonderful Virginia ham, homemade bread and Swiss cheese, and fresh peaches and iced tea, around the swimming pool. And then I went in for a nap which was of course ~~illusory~~<sup>elusive</sup>, but I had brought a good book to read. Lynda has given me the "Agony and the Ecstasy" in paperback, and I am also reading "Lyndon Johnson and the World" by ~~Gayline~~<sup>Geiler</sup>.

And then about 5:00 I dressed and returned to the pool to find that the George McGhees had joined us with their daughter ~~Marsha~~<sup>Marcia</sup> and her baby and their daughter Babeck -- a Turkish name for baby, because she had been born there.

We talked about ~~Lynda's~~<sup>Lynda's</sup> time in Germany. They were as much in love with her apparently as she with them. They had all taken each other very easily. It was an interesting hour or two. Little bits of ~~information~~ conversation I remember -- Cecile McGhee saying, "you can't keep the Germans from working." Everybody's puzzlement at why the Russians hadn't made a showcase out of East Germany. Instead, it was incredibly dull and ugly with war ruins still standing. George McGhee saying, "We are long overdue in Europe."

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He very much wanted Lyndon to make a trip to West Germany, France and England sometime before the year is over. He thinks that de Gaulle's apparent feeling that the President should come to see him because he is senior is correct and actually unimportant. He's a real advocate of an American presence, and soon, on the continent. Not to go he feels, is just <sup>Abdicate</sup> to ~~advocate~~ any influence and prestige to de Gaulle.

George is having the most wonderful time on his State-side vacation, hiring a bulldozer and clearing land at Farmer's Delight. And he himself is riding around in a pickup truck -- rather old and battered -- giving instructions on where to dig a pond -- relishing every moment of being a farmer. And he was certainly talking to an understanding audience with me. I wanted to see Farmer's Delight. We got in his pickup -- the Ambassador and the First Lady. ~~The~~ people were enjoying it, but the title sounded incongruous. ~~And~~ we drove over to Farmer's Delight, followed by Alice and the other McGhees.

We sat out on the terrace looking to the far blue mountains across the rolling green meadows and woodlands and enjoyed the magic hour of twilight with the <sup>Galley</sup> ~~valley~~ of the birds wheeling above us. And over on the left <sup>some</sup> some columns from a monastery of the middle ages. They make a sort of a long colonade -- a walk -- with a grape arbor above it I believe. And they had been purchased from the ~~the~~ William Randolph <sup>Hemst</sup> ~~estate~~ estate. Such a delightful mixture/joy is this old house -- built before the Revolutionary War, set in some of the most beautiful real estate the Lord ever made.

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~~There~~  
That is one thing about today that has been painful -- this lovely countryside is so dry, dry, dry. In the city you forget the passing of the seasons, the waning and waxing of the moon, <sup>and</sup> how important rainfall is. And I had not realized the extent of the drought of this summer, <sup>only</sup> when I would look at the trees and the shrubs that the Park Department has bought and has lost or is in danger of losing.

It was a very pleasant hour with good talk, very casual, not a servant in sight. And their adorable 2-year old granddaughter running around underfoot.

And then close to dark at 8:00 we went back to Huntlands for a delicious dinner in the dining room I remember as the scene of some of the best evenings of my life.

Alice has recovered the sofas yellow -- nearly the same. She has several new paintings -- a water color of the Virginia landscape that I loved. It reminded me of Wy<sup>g</sup>ath.

Among the many joys I have planned for the time when we are no longer in this line of work are visits to people like the McGhees and the Browns and maybe house parties at the Ranch from April through June that <sup>encompass</sup> ~~encumber~~ some of the most interesting people I know. But I shall have to strive if I am to give so much in conversation and cross-fertilization of ideas as the ones I enjoy most do give.

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It was 10:00 when I left Huntlands and I drove into the White House about 11:30 to find Lyndon at dinner alone. My only solace was that it might mean he would have less night reading -- the fact that he had stayed at his desk until past 11:00.