

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Wednesday, December 28, 1966

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It was cold and bright. It was a day I had looked forward to because I was anxious to make a success of the President's Proclamation of 1967 as Youth for Conservation and Natural Beauty Year. I am anxious to have the gathering of the young folks -- 13 representatives from last June's conference upon the subject -- be a success. They are coming to the Ranch at 10:30 with newspaper and TV coverage. Lyndon would read the Proclamation. Hopefully it would get a great deal of publicity and give them the wedge to go back home to Jackson, Mississippi and Pawtucket, Rhode Island, etc. and get their various chapters of Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts and 4-H and Future Farmers and YWCA to make conservation and beautification their whole environment picture -- their programs -- for the year. I want to mobilize the young folks in any way that we can -- enlist their excited interest.

Diana is the ramrod for all of the youth organizations for the one-year followup after the conference. And this Proclamation had been, I believe, her idea. But the weather was biting. We couldn't have it in the yard. What next? The hangar? It looks a little cold and bleak. There would be a pool of 18, so we decided to do it in the living room.

The young folks drove up in a bus a little before 10:30, and I went out to meet them. Then Lyndon came. And a fine looking young bunch they were, led by the two chairmen, Jacqueline Sharp, a Negro girl, and George

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Fox. And geographically representing the whole United States, from New York to Hawaii. And I was proud that there was one Texas girl from Kingsville on it.

I had talked to Tom Johnson earlier to enlist his cooperation and to impress on him that I was very anxious to get the most coverage we could. He was out to handle it. They did pictures of the four of us -- Lyndon and I and the two chairmen by the front gate where the Christmas wreath still hung. And then of the whole group in front of the fence using the house as the background. The press seemed apathetic -- dully interested if at all. I had put out coffee and cookies and tried my hardest to be hospitable and full of Christmas spirit and get them to ask questions of the young people -- interview them. I do not believe that a single one did.

Then we went inside -- about 30 of us -- crowding into the living room and Lyndon read the Proclamation. Without notes I made a little talk about the role youth could play in what happens to our environment in the next decade. Rarely do I think I did well. I did then. And I do feel I saw a flicker of interest among the women who accompany me on all of my trips.

I urged everybody to have more cookies and coffee and suggested that we like to take the young people around to see the Ranch, dividing up into two station wagons, Lyndon driving one and I the other. But not until after the press had had all the time it wanted to them. No interest was evidenced. I felt disappointed. I had tried hard, and I do not know where I had failed. At any rate I was glad I had given them in my little talk some

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vignettes of what these young folks had done back in their home towns. Perhaps that will sink to rest in their mind, and sometime a seed will spring up.

So we took the 13 young folks and Diana down by the house where Lyndon was born and the cemetery and the little schoolhouse and through the Reagan to see the deer. And somewhere a little past 12:00 we were back at the main house -- they piled into their bus and said goodbye, and I rushed out at the last minute with enough bookmarks for each of them for a tiny Christmas memento.)

How I have enjoyed these deerskin bookmarks. I am determined to get a little house work done during this stay. And one main objective is to fix up Mary and James' house. We've painted the outside a Lambert green and put on white shutters. And we've painted most of the rooms of the inside. Now I am getting shades and a matching bedspread for their daughter. And lending them some Russell prints for the boys' room. Nothing could be enough for people who add so much to our comfort.

So that was several trips down to their house. And then about 1:30, out to the airport to meet the Valentis, including Courtney and nurse and Ashton, and to drive around to show Courtney the deer and cows.

We had lunch a little past 2:00 with the Valentis and staff. And then Ashton and I worked on Christmas presents, dictating, listing, trying to bring order out of the chaos of my crowded room.

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Neva and Wesley had come up to spend the night with us. Neva and I took off from work about 5:30 and went down to the guest trailer, and we did a little decorating. There are several friends that I love to go around with -- Nancy Negley, Neva West, and years ago it was Vo^lta Mae Odam -- and talk about where to hang this picture or what to cover that chair with. We had a good time placing things in the guest trailer. And then the sunset called us. The flow was on the river. The last of the day was at hand. We couldn't wait any longer. We set out to join Lyndon and the Krims and Wesley and Jack Valenti. We found them in the Eighty Acres. We divided up into two cars and drove around until it was black night, stopping to see the quail.

As we were heading east through the Martin in the glade where the big trees are just before you get to the field, I looked up and saw the most glorious sight -- an absolutely full, golden moon, coming up over the horizon. It was a thrilling, breath-taking sight. I called everybody in both cars to look. It is one of the real dividends of living here in the country. Sunset and moonrise and all the play of weather and change of seasons.

We had asked the Moursunds to come to dinner and bring Mrs. Hadden and we called the Hills -- John and Joe. The Krims and the Valentis were ~~also~~ already with us staying in the Cedar house, and the Wests upstairs.

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So there were 16 of us for dinner including staff. And it was a good, happy time. There has been a fire almost every day since the 23rd.

This is the coldest winter, and driest, I can remember.

I slipped off to talk to Lynda in Acapulco. She sounds happy, excited. I sense a growing independence.

|| There had been the most amazing news on the ticker. In the list of best dressed women I showed up in fifth place along with two Fords and two Vanderbilts -- Princess Lee Radziwell leading the list. Mollie Parnis or Adele Simpson or ~~Sam~~ Stanley ^{Marcus} ~~Marquise~~ must have tried hard, but I don't deserve it. Though I rather think that Lynda Bird might. Actually, she did show up high in the voting, it said.

And then came the big surprise. In the list of most admired women of 1966, Luci Baines Nugent, at the very mature age of 19, showed up high in the runners up. Among such company is Clare Booth Luce and Princess Margaret and Margaret Mead and the Duchess of Windsor. There is something about that little girl that does go to the heart of people. ||

It is always a particularly warm time to me to have Neva and Wesley. I love to hear her talk about the party that she had to introduce Luci and Pat to the young folks of Houston. She had given them lovely pictures of it for their Christmas.