

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

Easter
Sunday, March 26, 1967

WASHINGTON

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We awoke pleasantly relaxed at Camp David. I was battling to stay away from the breakfast table, but lost to the smell of bacon and coffee and sat down with the other guests, the Mahon's and Lynda and the ^{Riordan's} and McHugh's. Bill and June White came in just as we were applying ourselves to the always delicious breakfast of Camp David.

And then I put on my yellow Ben Zukerman outfit to ride with Lyndon and Lynda and the Mahon's in a station wagon to a tiny Episcopal Church, St. Ann's in Smithburg. There was no press along the road or at the door. Services had just begun and every seat seemed full. Some of the parishioners moved over and Lyndon and I slipped into a crowded pew -- Lynda behind us and the Mahon's somewhere else. And a very young minister went on with the service. I wasn't sure whether he had recognized us or not. But certainly two or three of the people did. The man next to me leaned over and said, "It's not like when you were here last time -- more people."

We've been to so many little churches around Camp David I had thought this might be one.

It was a pleasant Episcopal service with communion at the rail. A comfort to fall back into the routine after going to Christian and Catholic and Methodist services.

When it was over, a member of the congregation pointed out to me a little bronze plaque on the pew that we had occupied two years before which gave me a rather sweet pang. I had never really thought of people putting up plaques in places we'd been.

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There was a little buzz of excitement as we walked out and we shook hands with a few people and I smiled at everybody. And it was a pleasant, warm, country-like experience. Only alas, Ben Zukerman wouldn't have liked it.

There wasn't a single picture, unless little Suzy took it with her little Brownie.

The minister greeted us, quite composed, saying he hadn't been sure it was us and it had taken him a few minutes to calm down -- he didn't look it.

And then we drove back over the greening Maryland countryside to arrive at Aspen in time to watch Face The Nation with Senator Ed Brooke. It proved to be quite an experience.

I had known of Senator Ed Brooke for his stand on Viet-Nam, which was in general opposed to it...He had just been there. Now the press was wanting to know how he felt about it. In a strong, articulate, forceful manner, he backed up our present stand, without expanding the war we must steadfastly keep on doing what we were doing. To get out, to be irresolute, would be disastrous.

To me it was an astonishing performance. And I felt a great surge of surprise, relief and gratitude.

Lyndon put in a call and talked to him. He told him what a splendid exposition of our whole situation there he thought he had given and thanked him.

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And then we watched Sarg Shriver on Meet the Press. He was as usual a great salesman.

We put in a call for him too, and on this one I said a word and so did George Mahon.

And then we lunched at a very full table of 13. Marie and Mary had joined us. It was a long leisurely lunch with one of those philosophical talks that seemed to develop more easily at Camp David than anywhere.

I remember at one time we discussed the role of the military in our Government, and Lyndon said he thought the best provision in the Constitution was that it vested power in civil authority.

And of course we talked about Viet-Nam. When I think about the number of hours that are spent working on Viet-Nam, talking about it, at higher levels, at all levels -- I mean look at the size of its population and its acreage on the face of the whole wide world. It is bitterly frustrating. What a hallelujah day it will be when this President -- when some President -- can turn his mind only to the problems at home.

Then I laid down for a nap, taking a stack of Sunday papers and not really sleeping.

~~Then~~ Later on in the afternoon, we went to the bowling alley.

George Mahon has proved an ardent bowler. He's a natural good athlete. About four of us had a couple of games, and then Lyndon and four more joined us. And in the course of the play, I shot 175 with more witnesses than I've ever had before for a good game.

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Back at Aspen, we called Luci to wish her a happy Easter. Then we all enjoyed a good dinner and settled down ~~to~~ to watch a movie. Lyndon was soon asleep in the big, comfortable green chair. A movie is the most soporific thing that can happen to him.

It had been a quiet, peaceful, low-keyed day, -- a real balm for Lyndon.

And Lynda and I had had a good game of bridge with the Mahons.

And the two adorable little daughters of Commander Jones had come down in the morning to crawl all over Lyndon and kiss him and tell him about that Easter egg hunt.

It was a sort of day to remember and to be grateful for.

We were ^{so often} tense, tired, and harrassed and still need ^{ed} to go down and shake hands with 500 members of the so and so delegation.

// What do I remember about Camp David? The two martians in their silver suits and helmets, stiff and silent, that startle you when you first step off the helicopter. The cool, green tunnel that leads through the woods to Aspen. The drifts of snow still in late March. And the great valley below where ~~the~~ a battle of the Civil War was fought. And ham and grits and hot cakes, all for breakfast. Mamie and Dwight Eisenhower's bold signature in the guest book and many of her guests. But no Kennedy's at all. Hours of bridge, and bowling and good talk. But mostly just the spirit of being there -- a spirit of release and relaxation. Quite unattainable somehow in the White House. And also for me usually in any house that I am supposed to run, such as the Ranch. //