

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Saturday, April 29, 1967

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I had spent the night in the East Carnation Room on my search for what's wrong with our house and what's right. It was very pleasant, actually, for so small a room -- the books, a reading light, an ample closet.

I was up early because Roy White was coming at 9:00 to spend a couple of hours with me on plans for our house. He spread them out on the little table in the dining room in front of the picture window, over a second cup of coffee, and worked on the hardest problem in the house. That is, Lyndon's bathroom. To Roy, to me, this is the most important room in the whole project. We took out that bath tub, we worked toward maximum light and ^{water} pressure and insulation. And we talked to Mr. ^{Warrick} ~~Warick~~ about hiring some more men.

I telephoned Lyndon -- he relieved us with quick answers, the sort we wanted, and then about 11:30 Roy and I rolled up the run-way very slowly in his little car -- a low-slung, sporty car -- ^{surprising fast} a so-quiet a man -- and I looked for the results of last summer's planting. Sparse and few, a sprinkling of blue-bonnets close to the little tower, an Indian blanket coming out on the South end. What's so disappointing, I'm getting bored with the main highway to Austin. I told Roy I was looking for back roads. He said, "I know one. Can you spare the time to drive it?" I could. And so we went to Austin by the way of Cypress Mill, which I doubt anyone else in their right mind would do. A farm-to-market road, narrow, winding, lonely, paved most of the way with a few gravel stretches past the old Stage Coach Inn, and a huge stand of cypresses on the river where Cypress Mill had been, and little St. Luke's church. And then rolling vistas.

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And then a dramatic spot where the road dropped down to the river steeply. And there was the Pedernales, a rocky river bed, sand bars, cliffs, and as far as you could see the gray ghosts of cypress trees, weathered stumps where huge trees had been ripped out in a flood.

It was a spectral sight. I thought it must have been the flood of '52, but Roy told me it had been some time in the '30's when he had been in the University.

From their trunks, they must have been huge trees.

On the way, he had been lovingly describing a place he called West Caves. Limestone overhangs above the river and clear pools of water and lovely little sand bars and places to picnic. And lo and behold, when we approached it, there was a huge sign -- red, white and blue -- a horrible development --
" \$ dollar for picnicking, two dollars for camping. His magic, special place was gone.

We got to Luci's a little past 1:30. Helen was busily, methodically unpacking. And Luci giving her preferences of where she liked the linens and the china and what to unpack. And I fell upon a tray of sandwiches that a neighbor had brought yesterday, Mrs. Pitman I believe it was, and a tub of fried chicken.

James and Mr. ^{Klein} ~~Kline~~ were there moving furniture. I unpacked seven boxes of books, including Bill Benton's Encyclopedia Britannica and arranged them in the book case in the hall. And many of Luci's beautiful things -- the Pope-signed

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picture, the Virgin of Guadalupe, from I believe the dear ^{Tortases} ~~Saldassas~~, and
^{?? Lyn's?} dear Lyn's picture and put them in the shelves in the living room. We all
backed off and looked at our handiwork with pleasure.

And then about 3:30 I went to Larry's Beauty Salon for a shampoo and set.

When I returned a couple of hours later, there on the table on the patio
was a half-demolished chocolate cake bearing the legend "Hap" on one line
and on another "Bir" and a few candles. I said, "What's been going on?"

Luci said, "I found out it was Mr. ^{Kline} ~~Kline's~~ birthday so I went to the grocery
store and got him a cake. Did you ever hear of anybody sweet enough to help
me like this on his birthday, and it's Saturday too?"

Mr. ^{Kline} ~~Kline~~ was beaming, and I thought how easy Luci makes it to help her.
She is the most appreciative, most loving little girl, and it will make her way
through life easier.

^{Mary} ~~Dora~~ White had asked us to dinner. Luci and Pat said they were too tired.
But I worked another hour and then at 7:00 Jesse came by to pick me up and we
drove to Roy's house and had a happy visit in his backyard with Mary and his
son and daughter-in-law and his daughter and son-in-law. Such a pleasant
evening. Roy is so capable, gentle, unaggressive, undemanding of life.

And there is a touch of ^{Elfin Humor} ~~Elfin~~ Neumer, a restful friend. He was to take us
to the Red Barn for dinner -- my first trip there. And how different from
anything in Washington. It was a barn! And while we waited for our table
we went into a huge, ^{lost} ~~loss~~-like room, where a girl in flesh-colored tights and
a red satin costume of the gay '90's climbed into a swing that hung on a red velvet

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ropes from the ceiling. It swang to the tune of [bassin][?] music from a player piano. While we consumed home-made bread and cheese and red wine and thought we were being very young and gay. And so we were. It was fun.

And then into the next room ^{where} we had a good thick steak and frosted mugs of beer, and then we said goodbye -- I with the Secret Service drove to Luci's and tumbled into bed -- my first night in her new house -- a very comfortable, attractive room though it has not yet taken on the aura of home with pictures and books and those things that stamp it with your own life. When I think about Luci and Pat I pause gingerly, almost on tiptoe, holding my breath. They are so lucky. It is almost too good to be true. But then maybe we are all having our troubles in other ways and it's not too much of life to give us this happiness.