

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Saturday, June 17, 1967

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I awoke with that most luxurious feeling of owning a day I didn't expect to have. I had thought after the Democratic dinner last night in Austin that Lyndon and I would spend the night at the Ranch, the morning would be full of preparation for the arrival of the Harold Holts, and the afternoon and evening showing our guests from Australia our own Ranch and our way of life in the hill country. But no. The Friday afternoon switch -- Lyndon had called me -- meant that he would be taking them to Camp David instead. And he -- I wonder when he will get to the point when he says "I can't do it. It's too much" -- would fly back after the dinner, leaving about midnight and getting into Washington about 4:00 a.m. and taking them to Camp David around noon while I in Luci's house on Macken Street awoke with that delicious feeling of a new found day simply added to my calendar. If that sounds ungracious and inhospitable -- and I do enjoy the Holts more than practically any Chiefs of State -- it is simply because my life these days is some 350 days that are duty and work, most of which I find highly exciting and pleasant, and a very few indeed personal, lazy, self-indulgent, mine.

So first with a cup of coffee I settled by a telephone and made sure that Mary and James knew of the change of plans and would keep the spareribs and the cat fish in the deep freeze, preserve the fresh fruit and vegetables the best they could and remind me to pick up some of the milk and butter to bring into Luci's house. And then phoning Ashton

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about our desk work, a little dictating. And Roy White and Herbert Wells about the status of our building project.

About 11:00 I left for the Ranch, and with Mary and James and a pickup truck full of pictures we went down to their house from room to room and they selected four or five. One, a rather nice little portrait of me, and hung them in their living room, their bedroom, and ^{La Fayette's} ~~Laffaye's~~ bedroom. And then to the Cedar House where I made plans to hang the old German sitting by the fire and the other German with a stein full of beer. We stopped for a light lunch alone, and then continued to Oriole's old house, gathering up all the old pictures from Iceland to Mal~~a~~isia to Germany that I couldn't place in our house or the Cedar House or the guest house or James. We didn't hang any -- we simply made plans for bedspreads and lights and pictures.

And then back to the main house to bathe and dress. And after talking with Luci I decided that I would not drive in to have dinner with her. Neva had invited me to the West Ranch where she was going to have the Moursunds and the John Hills and a very nice couple that had accompanied them from Houston for dinner.

The summer twilight is very long in June. I arrived a little past 7:00 at this house that has been so much a part of our life for over two decades. It was our retreat, our refuge, our well-loved home base

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in the hill country for years before we bought Aunt Frank's Ranch in the Fall of 1951.

I have tried to remember when I first met Wesley. I think it was '43. There they were in the living room -- Neva and Mariallen and Jo Beth and the lady from Houston, while outside the whole gorgeous summer twilight was the best show on earth.

I lured them out beside the pool. The sun had set and the ever-~~changing~~ changing play of lights across the sky was a dream to watch. The quarter moon growing shinier as the night deepened, and the cottonwood trees that Wesley had planted himself, tall now, ^{here} ~~with~~ tinkling like wind chimes. He put them beside his bedroom window because he liked the sound. The whole symphony of summer time was in full play -- insects tuning up across the wide sweep of lawn to the west and behind us to the east across Neva's beautifully planted lawn. And suddenly the accent of a big bull frog down at the pond -- "ba room, ba room, ba room". It was an absolutely delicious night.

We sat by the pool and Louis brought us drinks and finally the men came and joined us and I thought that some of the most pleasant evenings of my life have been spent right here. Here this very day I was expecting Luci's baby to be born. And here more than 20 years ago ~~when~~ Lyndon and I had visited when we were expecting Luci.

West

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We went in for one of the unequalled meals that the Wests have -- delicious steaks and enormous salads. Fortunately I have dieted at breakfast and at lunch -- no chance tonight. And their friend from Houston discussed his collection of "Texana" -- especially early maps, and indicated that he might be giving them to the LBJ Library.

I left a little before 11:00 -- Neva and I making plans to do some decorating at the Ranch on Monday. I curled up in the back seat and slept on the way home, reaching Macken Street by midnight.

Sometime during the day I had talked to Zara and Harold to welcome them long distance to Camp David and to tell them how sorry I was that I wasn't with them, that we weren't all together at the Ranch -- and that is true -- both prospects were very pleasing. But I suppose one wants a taste, a sample, of what one seldom has -- a self-indulgence. And that is why today as today was. Well, June 17th had passed and no new little Nugent.