

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 4, 1967

Page 1

Tuesday, July 4th, covered the whole range of emotions. It began with happiness. Lyndon and I had our coffee and juice together in his room a little past 9:00. And then I dressed for church while talking to Lynda. It has turned out so happily about her, the way she feels about being the proxy Godmother of Luci's baby. The Gerard Nugents are the real Godparents. It's necessary that they be Catholic. But since she'd had a baby just two days after Luci, they couldn't come for the ceremony. And Luci very much wanted Lynda to hold Patrick Lyndon and to act as proxy Godmother. Not only did she ^{not} feel slighted, she was delighted to. And yes, it would be perfectly alright to have Joe as honorary Godfather. So it worked out to the happiness of everyone.

Luci wore her pink going-away ~~g~~ dress and a pink headband. And Patrick Lyndon wore the same dress that Luci and Lynda Bird had worn and that had been made by Mrs. Johnson. And the sweet ladies of the so and so circle of Montgomery, Alabama had taken the petticoat of Mrs. Johnson's christening dress and had embroidered on it Luci's name and birthdate and Patrick Lyndon's. And one of her favorite Nuns in the hospital had made an adorable cap for the baby. And two more elderly ladies from Wetumpka, Alabama who had been friends of my Aunt Effie's had crocheted some darling booties.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 4, 1967

Page 2

Lyndon and I and Luci and Pat took our places in the church. And then Lynda and Joe came with Patrick Lyndon very good in Lynda's arms. There was a very small gathering indeed. Warrie Lynn and Mary Love and Billy Bailey and Earl and Weeze Deathe were the only others there. Father Keifer performed the ceremony. Photographers were there in full fold and for once everybody was all smiles.

Patrick Lyndon behaved like an angel through a rather long ceremony until at the very end when Father Keifer poured a very sizeable flask of water right on his head at which he cried out mildly.

And then we all stood in front of the St. Francis Xavier Church for all the pictures they wanted to take. ~~And then~~ Lynda continued to keep Patrick Lyndon and drove him home the long way around. She's really awfully good with him and quite in love with him.

The Baileys and the Deathes came for lunch, and of course Joe. And there was much talk about when I would go to Palacura.

What a simple ceremony this baptism in comparison to the elaborate wedding of last August 6th.

About 2:30 with Jake Pickle we left in the Jetstar for the funeral of Merle Patman in Texarkana. I took along a big stack of mail and signed it making Ashton its custodian. And we talked with Jake about the possible trip to Round Top on Friday. I wanted Lyndon to understand and approve of it. And Jake is a good salesman. Just this morning, Lyndon had said,

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 4, 1967

Page 3

"Would you like to fly on over to Karnack?" I eagerly would, but the logistics -- how? He figured out that a helicopter could meet us. I got Ashton to call Doris and Ruth. Ashton got the dividend of going along for an hour or two visit with her folks in Shreveport. We reached Texarkana a little past three. We had told no one except Wright Patman -- and him, just this morning, that we were coming. Nevertheless, the word gets around by osmosis. And there was a small crowd at the airport. We smiled gravely and rode to Wright Patman's home. Lyndon had brought along several bushels of peaches -- one he took to the Patman house which I remembered from campaign stops. Could it be as far back as 1941? I think so. All the family were assembled there -- their three sons and numerous grandchildren, relatives and friends. We had the quick ritual of a cup of coffee. Food was spread on the dining room table as is the custom in the South at the time of a funeral. Wright had greeted us at the steps -- emotional, almost with tears in his eyes, thanking us for coming. And Lyndon said quite simply, "I couldn't be anywhere else today." Wright used to serve in the legislature with Lyndon's father. And he has been our close friend since 1937 when we went to Congress where ^{Wright} ~~he~~ was already an established and a powerful member.

Bone of the bone of east Texas, he has served it very shrewdly and well for close to 40 years, containing something of the countryboy touch, but quite capable of matching wits with anybody he meets in the

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 4, 1967

Page 4

Capitol. And the current crop of youngsters are always present in his office in the summertimes. Unlike some politicians he keeps up his ties with the folks at home assiduously.

We drove to the First Baptist Church and sat inconspicuously in a middle pew. I do not think many of the people knew that we were there. I saw a few familiar faces -- the Jake ^GHugh Mahaffeys, the John Simmons, and suddenly, very warmly, Gordon Fulcher whom we have known for 30 years.

// The ceremony was sweet, personal and full of eulogy. Not just the cool reading of verses from the Bible, but a warm description of the life of Merle Patman to whom ^{we} you were saying goodbye.

As we found our way to the car, Jake Pickle beside us, I commented on it. And Lyndon said he thought so too. And then went on to say quite positively "Well, I want to tell you what I want my funeral to be like. I want somebody who is a close friend, who can speak real well, to talk for about 10 minutes. And then I want a real pretty song -- somebody like Anita Bryant. And I want it air-conditioned." Right there with all the mourners pouring out of the church I had trouble restraining a laughing fit. //

In the crowd we got a sight of Gordon Fulcher's face. Lyndon sent for him at once. He has the quickest reaction. He drove with us and we caught ~~me~~ up on the last few years in what had happened to him. He was

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 4, 1967

Page 5

the editor of a small town newspaper in Atlanta. He called Lyndon "Lyndon" with such ease that I am sure he was quite unconscious of it. Everybody else calls him "Mr. President". To my delight he expressed an awareness and an interest in our conservation-beautification program. I told him it would just depend on the folks back home like him, and to back it with editorials and action.

Someone in the crowd had come up to me and had told me about their plantings of Bradford pear trees here in the residential streets of Texarkana.

The ceremony at the cemetery was very brief. We said our goodbyes once again to all the Patmans and embraced Wright. And then got in the helicopter which had parked nearby. Goodbye last to Gordon and we were airborne for Karnack with a press pool, Bob Young and Sid Davis and Frank Cormier, Mike Posner and Jack Horner. As we looked down over the terrain I could not help but notice the change in my short life time. What used to be "forty acres ^{and} in the mule" country, stretches and stretches of cotton fields with some corn here and there and many small cabins, was now heavily wooded. The "new ground" ["]cleared with such back-breaking labor had served the farmer for only a life time or two. And now the woods were coming back! Pine and cattle, must I think, be their chief industry. It was just a thirty minute flight. I found the news-men very eager and interested. They wanted to know all about the brick

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 4, 1967

Page 6

house, our courtship days. Everybody felt in an expansive mood I think. The country was very fresh and green -- a startling comparison to the hill country. And apparently there had been a rain hours or even minutes before. There were pools of water and leaves were still wet and the sky was dark with clouds.

The helicopter ~~and~~ settled down onto Doris^{IV}' front lawn and there they were waiting to greet us -- Doris and Hugh, their son-in-law Dudley Taylor, and their little grandson Dudley, ~~The~~ Edward Odoms III with their three children and Velma.

We got out and there was much hugging and kissing and introducing and then we ~~went~~ went inside. We brought along our photographer, and Lyndon had very thoughtfully asked for a package of gifts for Doris^{IV}' new grandson born just three days before. Diana is still in the hospital with him. And she has been keeping little Dudley. Lyndon had a medallion for him, an autographed picture, several little items. And also a medallion for Doris^{IV} and Hugh and something for Velma. He loves doing this. The White House photographer went with us everywhere and I hope got some good pictures. Doris^{IV} had coffee and snacks and cookies put out and insisted on inviting the newspaper men in, which they seemed to appreciate very much. Her house is full of pictures of us, covering many years. Such a comfortable, pleasant house, and such a triumph for her to have made so much of her life in the restricted surroundings of Karnack.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 4, 1967

Page 7

We had a little visit and then Doris^N piled in the car with us and we drove down to see the historical marker, and the little plot at the crossroads where the citizens Improvement Committee of Karnack has put in grass and shrubs and flowers. And I was really very pleasantly surprised. We saw the new site of the Post Office to which I hope to return in October perhaps or in the Spring planting season and make a gift of some shrubbery. It's a very small plot, but I think a dogwood and some easy maintenance shrubbery might give it a little distinction and charm. And then we rode through Caddo State Park which on July 4th was full of people -- children ~~w~~ swinging, families sitting at picnic tables, men pulling their boats in out of the water down at the Caddo landing where the big steamboats used to come up 70 years ago or so. Nobody knew who we were -- a fact that seemed to amaze the newspaper people. And then we rode on out to the brick house.

Ruth was most eager~~ly~~ to see us and greeted us so warmly. Lyndon gave her a little charm. I was grateful that he did. And then she took us through the downstairs to show us how she had done it over and I was hard pressed to say anything because the drapes and the furniture have no relevance ^{to} ~~of~~ the old character of the house.

As we walked I saw very few reminders of my mother's day. ~~The~~ two oak rocking chairs that I have seen my daddy rocking in by the fire for at least a half a ~~a~~ century. How I would love to have one of them! And two ornately carved black chests. They look rather like teak.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 4, 1967

Page 8

- Jacobson
Their period or style are really unknown to me. And they are dear only because I remember them from the earliest days of my life. And there on the mantel were two familiar vases, brightly flowered, that always stood on the living room mantel in mother's time. Otherwise, everything was new.

We went upstairs and the view from the balconies -- the front one on the west and the long one on the east -- is still breath-taking. One sad thing -- the catalpa tree at the front yard ^{gate} is quite dead -- a gray ghost. The first thing that anyone should do with that house is planting of lifetime trees in the front yard. Several of the old cedar trees are no more than storm-riddled trunks. But the crepe myrtles were still beautiful. Tall trees, not shrubs, and pink with flowers. In fact from the outside I was still proud of the old brick house as the newspaper men faced it. There were some there who wanted to take pictures. We stood for them.

But upstairs when we found some of the old bookcases, they were quite empty. I asked Ruth where the books were. She said she thought they were stored in the top shelves of the cupboard in the bathroom. I casually mentioned that if she didn't want them any more I would like to pick up some of them. She said she would be glad for me to. And she kept on repeating over and over that she wished I would come back and stay some.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 4, 1967

Page 9

It was a little past 7:00 when we left from Dorothy's on the chopper waving goodbye to everybody. And I put my hand on Lyndon's knee and said, "Thanks, dear". It had been an amazing day -- all the way from the baptism of our first ^{grand} child, to the funeral of an old friend of 30 years, back to the scene where Lyndon first courted me in the late summer of '34.

We picked up Ashton in an hilariously funny scene at the Shreveport Airport where she and her family emerged from the little lounge -- the men with their pants rolled up and some with their shoes off and in their hands and the women stepping gingerly through deep pools of water. The sky was still black from a flash flood that had taken place during the last two hours. Ashton would never have been able to get out of the airport. Fortunately her family had arrived before the storm broke, so they had had a two-hour visit with water up to their ankles inside the lounge at the airport.

One of my feelings as I flew back was of amazement that after nearly 40 years in Congress the only members there at his wife's funeral were Bob Poage and Frances and Jake Pickle who had gone with us and Lyndon who ^{we father} had served with him for 24 years. No Senator or Governor or other officials. A great church full of friends and relatives.

As soon as we got to the Ranch we left in the helicopter for the West Ranch. I think a package of 8 we were -- the Johnsons and the Nugents

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 4, 1967

Page 10

and four of the staff. And with the Hills and the Moursunds and the Wests. That made a happy crowd. A pleasant evening out by the pool. And at that dinner table that is always laden with the best and most plentiful food.

It was midnight before we went back to the Ranch. I signed some mail while getting a rub and went to sleep close to 1:00.