

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Thursday, August 10, 1967

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Thursday, August 10th, began in the strangest way. Sometime in the very early morning hours I came awake as I do at the slightest sound or movement, and I thought I could hear a creaking of the boards or of the walls in this old house. And I thought of all the ghost stories -- completely undisturbed by them however. And then I just knew there was somebody in the room -- somebody coming toward the bed. There was no sense of fright. I reached out my hand over the side of the bed and a hand closed upon it. I said, "Who is this?" And Lynda's voice, "Momma, I want to talk to you." She sat down on the side of the bed, and I whispered, "Let's go in your room." But it was too late. Lyndon was awake, sleepily he rose on his elbow, reached for the light and said, "What's going on?" I felt I knew what was -- some lift of excitement in Lynda's voice, some feeling that she was trying to talk to me, but not yet quite ready when I had watched her get dressed to go out for the date the evening before had made me think it was about Chuck, that she was getting more interested in him -- just how interested I wasn't sure. She said, "Mother, Daddy, I am in love. I want to get married." Lyndon was at once wide awake. "Tell us about it." So she told us about him. He is a Marine, six years of service. We've seen him in and out of the house for months now. He's an Aide. In fact he looks like he ought to be on a poster for the Marines. He has a degree from the University of Wisconsin -- Business Administration I think she said.

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And she told us how many brothers and sisters, and what his father did -- he works for American Airlines. And about how much fun they have together, and they like doing the same things. Lynda, whose interests have ^{been} turning more and more this last two years to people on the stage and screen, the cafe society people, to people who are very rich or very talented and appear in columns, and this is a new dimension for her because Chuck Robb looks like the "All-American boy", wholesome, handsome, pleasantly masculine. Actually, I know very little about him, except he plays a good game of bridge. There will be so much to talk about -- a wedding date, a list -- very importantly, Viet-Nam.

Lynda couldn't wait. That's typical of her. After awhile she went onto bed, wrapped in her aura of excitement, and Lyndon, thank God, back to sleep, and I lay stiff as a board, reaching for the beneficence of sleep and not finding it until the telephone rang at 7:15 to waken me. Lyndon and I talked a little more while we had breakfast about Lynda and Chuck and about the Ranch house. And then before 9:00 I had kissed Lynda goodbye, and Lyndon, waved to a group of early-morning tourists in the Diplomatic Reception Room and was on my way to the airport -- Dulles. It's always a pleasant interlude to ride the George Washington Memorial Parkway. I am grateful for its existence.

We were early and the plane was late. But it was an uneventful ride to Dallas where Dale met me and we flew to the Ranch in pleasantly

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cool weather. A front was blowing in. I had had a big brunch on the plane, so we went straight to work with Roy White, minus any lunch, and struggled with our details of lighting in the long, narrow hall with its low ceiling. Mr. Klein had built a mock-up of the light that we hoped we would be able to use -- a sort of a wall-washer for lots of pictures of all our life and times. It was a good thing he did because immediately we saw that it would fill, dominate, that little tunnel. We couldn't use it. And then the first disappointment of the trip -- Mr. Wells, who was supposed to have arrived about 2:00, phoned from Houston saying that he was leaving Houston in a few minutes. That would put him in around 5:00. Meanwhile, Mr. Presnell was busily mixing paints for all the main wall surfaces with me trying to direct him and the samples all spread out. And it was an afternoon of considerable confusion and little progress and a darn lot of effort.

Finally, Mr. Wells arrived a little after 5:00, and we agreed that all the yellow samples we had up to now were much too pale and lifeless. I had been calling on dear Jessie Hunter all day to bring books of wall samples out from Stein Lumber Yard in Johnson City. And later on to take some samples back to Mr. Presnell.

Roy had to leave about 5:30. And at 6:30, more from exhaustion than from any sense of having done a good days work -- of any achievement -- we stopped in time to meet Jesse and Don Thomas and Jane. Then

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the five of us took Mr. Wells down to ^{his} room at the Cedar House, which was as hot as an oven. I had failed to phone ahead to ask them to turn the air-conditioning on. And the determined battle to cut expenses, we are turning it off when we are not in residence. All in all this weekend, I am getting an interesting look at the problems I'll face when our tenure of the presidency ends and we are back at the Ranch with minimum help. James and Mary are off on vacation as they will be in future times. And there is only Gertrude here. No Filipinos, no Ken or Paul, no Helen. If I want something done I lug that chair or ottoman or suitcase full of samples myself.

I find it interesting, and I want to get used to it.

Well we gave up problems for an hour -- the five of us -- and just drove around over the Ranch, coming upon dozens of little fawns still spotted and looking so adorable. But they've had to go back to feeding. In fact they only stopped feeding for about 2-1/2 months. We've had less than 9 inches of rainfall since January 1st, and almost two-thirds of the year has gone by. And in a year the normal rainfall is 28 inches. So we've had less than half of what is normal.

Back at the Ranch I captured Don and Jesse and we sat in the rockers on the front porch and I asked for a resume of all our business affairs, of which I have known virtually nothing since Lyndon's going into the presidency and me going off the payroll. And I was shocked

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at the increase in bills and expenses and of the proliferation of problems. Many of us in the organization are getting old. And a certain fire and spirit of the '40's and the '50's is dimming.

We had a good dinner, served buffet, very country. And Jane and her funny pixie way had taken over Mr. Wells so the three of us could talk.

Then about 9:30 Jane and Don and Jesse left -- the men to fly to Dallas where they will have an early morning conference on our business. And I to bed to read an hour of Thomas Wolff before I went to sleep for one of the earliest nights of this life I lead.

Sometime during the evening Lyndon called, and I could sense the loneliness in his voice and the desire just to talk to me. I keep that loneliness at bay and I felt torn between doing what I was doing which must be done and being with him. The "Mary" and the "Martha" in my life have an eternal war.