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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Friday, April 5, 1968 WND

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I was up early, probably not to anybody in the city, was it a restful night. I went into Lyndon's room for coffee. I was still firm in his feeling that I should go, and my one thought for staying, was any comfort that I could give him. He had Lynda, and Luci, and Patrick, and Lyn.

Liz called and I told her it was on. We both recognized we would have to make some changes in the speeches. The world had changed over night.

Mr. Per came in for a comb-out. I told Luci goodbye. Liz and I both thought I should hit it as soon as I got on the plane - make a statement about the killing of Dr. King, and then go on with the welcoming speech I had planned. She had typed an opening sentence and I wrote out in long hand, my feelings on what I should say.

~~And~~ Then it was time to get in the car with Stewart, and head for Dulles. We stopped under the nose of the plane - how many times we've done it. Above was the map of our trip, and its title "Crossing the Trails of Texas". There were pictures, and then we went up, and as I went down the aisle, I put out my hand to right and left, and met all the foreign correspondents - 38 from 13 European countries, ^{was} a sizeable contingent of Washington press.

I sensed a feeling of uncertainty, tension in the air. As soon as we were aloft, I went to the PA system, and in a quiet serious voice said "We travel

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with a heavy heart today, because of the tragedy of Dr. King's death. Every man must look into his own heart, and ask himself, if his every word, every act, leans toward peace and healing in our country. This lays a demand on all Americans, for understanding, self-control, and steady, determined work to attack the problems ^{that} made possible such violence. The greatest tribute we could pay to Dr. King is to bring forth from this cruel tragedy, some good action on our problems."

And then I put it behind me, with a change of tone, and welcomed them on a journey to the part of our country that I know best.

The jolly air of ^{Cameras} ~~urban~~ that is usually there when these trips begin, ^{was} was absent, but I thought the tension lessened. An enormous cattleman's brunch was served, Steak, ^{and} eggs, ^{and} sweet rolls, and orange juice, and lots of coffee, preceded by Bloody Mary's, which never fails to shock me, at 10 oclock in the morning.

As soon as I was through, I had an interview with the German press because Fredericksburg was our first destination on the trip. There were about eight of them, I think. One sat beside me, and one was perched on an arm, and the rest squatted or leaned around. And I told them about Fredericksburg. In a way, we were ⁱⁿ encapsulated, sealed off from the world in the plane.

We arrived in San Antonio - there must have been headwinds - about 12:30. There were John and Nellie at the foot of the ramp, and the long line of the red coated welcoming committee, headed by Mayor McAllister.

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And there was the Reverend McAllister and his wife. ~~And~~ Briefly I glimpsed Nancy Negley and Jessica Cato.

There was a short ceremony, a welcome from the Governor, ~~and~~ ^{Mayor} ~~Leah~~ McAllister, ^a brief response from me, and then we boarded buses for Fredericksburg, under a brilliant April sun, and I pointed out bright flags of blue bonnets, and coral Indian paintbrush along the road way. ~~And~~ over the PA System, ^I told them about the wild life of the hill country, ^{the live} ~~wild~~ oaks and caliche land, ^{the} German stone houses, and occasional log cabins.

~~And~~ Just a little before two o'clock, on time, we drove into Fredericksburg. We got out of the buses in front of the Nimitz Hotel, to a sizeable crowd, lots of familiar faces, and piled into orchard wagons, decorated, alas, with pink and blue crepe paper flowers, each ^{wagon} ~~one~~ pulled by a tractor, about 12 of us in each and a guide in the lead seat.

Mr. ^{Petmecker} ~~Petmecker~~ on his wagon, ^{was} ~~was~~ telling the history and the sites of Fredericksburg, ^{MRS KOWERT} ~~August Cowart~~ in German. ~~August Cowart~~ was our guide, and a delightful one, except that the tractor almost drowned out the interesting story of the old Nimitz Hotel, built in 1852, in the shape of a ship, ^{& or} ~~And~~ a young son at that home, some 80 or 90 years later, Chester Nimitz, who became Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet in World War II. They told me things I'd never known before. ^{had} That a silversmith ~~that~~ designed the bow and arrow transom on the Kurt Keidel home, ^{which} ~~were~~ were the nicest details in town, ~~And~~ that the building with the white elephant above the door, had been, naturally, the

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White Elephant Saloon. She pointed out the birthplace of Frantz Von Den Steucken, who achieved world wide fame as a composer and a conductor, having his education in Europe under Edward Grieg, and returning to America to be the conductor of the New York Philharmonic, and the Chicago Symphony, and the Cincinnati Symphony. ^{He} Friend of Liszt, ^{and} Grieg, ^{and} Verdi! ~~And~~ She pointed out the statue of John Meusebach, who had led the settlers here and given up his title of Baron. He had negotiated a treaty with the Indians in 1847, had started trade between them and the pioneers. And the delightful old Court House that the Eugene McDermotts had done over and turned into a Pioneer Memorial Library and Community meeting hall.

~~And~~ she told about the custom of the early pioneer, having his business place fronting the street, his saddle shop, or general store, or barber shop; and then building his home behind it. . . .

Old St. Mary's Catholic Church built in 1861 with its stone steeple adding a touch of old world charm to the landscape.

~~And~~ Then, as we passed one of the Sunday Houses, there was a couple, ^{and} dressed in the costumes of the day, rocking on the front porch, and some children playing out front, just as Mrs. Kowert was describing the use of the houses. ^{How} the pioneers, when they would come in over the weekend to do their trading, or attend their parties, or civic meetings, or go to church.

We stopped at St. Barnabas' and got out briefly. I told how the Peter Walter family had built the house in 1846 and the ^{grape} ~~great~~ vine in the back on

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the arbor had been brought by him from Germany. ~~and~~ Here the family had lived until the 1950's and it had been bought by the Episcopal Church. She showed us Cross Mountain where the early pioneers had found the remnants of a cross built by the Spanish Missionaries sometime in the 1700's, and described the Easter fires.

We made a longer stop at the John Peter Tatch House, walked through and saw examples of the work of the cabinet makers,

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Was it Stewart Webb?
Esther Muller was there to meet us and Mr. Walter Tatch. I pointed out to Dr. [?]Stewart the citation the Department of Interior had given the Tatch home in 1934 with Ickes' signature. It was still hanging proudly on the wall. One of the German press men found something that delighted him even more--an engraving of a city in Germany from which he had come. Everybody was eager to tell us everything. There was lots of German spoken and all along the street ladies in the costume of the 1840's and 1850's. They are quite elegant and you felt sure that they had gotten them out of the trunks at home. And then we stopped at the old ^{sq?}Camela house, now the Pioneer Museum and there were my two friends, the very elderly ladies who had known Lyndon as a boy.

I signed the register. They must have a dozen or more of my signatures now and ^{also}~~so does~~ many of the press. And then, because this part of the building was the Camelas old general store, I pointed out to them some of the articles that the pioneers had bought and sold--corn meal, ground at a local grist mill, a deer head, ^{the} trademark on the sack, and they still had the old press and dye which had imprinted on the cloth the head of the deer, sulphur matches sold in bulk from a big tin container, an ancient bottle of liniment and other remedies for the ills of man and beast. Everybody looked at what interested him most, a handsome deerskin jacket elaborately beaded and fringed that had been worn to Baron Von [?]Morcebach's peace

Meweback's

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parley, Indian Chief Santanna¹ ^{painter} by some pioneer, a tiny-waisted white satin wedding dress, and an engraving made in some town of Bavaria of the weeping local citizen saying goodbye to the adventurous pioneers who were setting off for far-away Texas.

I took my vanity out to powder my nose. It crashed to the floor. I picked it up and ~~I rushed for me~~ ^d I hope it didn't break. I opened it and the glass was in a hundred tiny fragments. I hoped no one had heard me, but it was part of the undercurrent of the day. Underneath the sunshine and bright excitement and genuine interest there was a sense of expectancy of we knew not what, almost foreboding. We went into the kitchen and here it was more evident than anywhere that the ladies had worked hard for our coming. Usually the kitchen is so full of artifacts-- there are waffle irons piled on top of coffee grinders piled on top of cookie cutters. Now it was just as though the kitchen were in operation. There was wood in the fireplace. There was a big old straw basket loaded with vegetables that might have just been brought in from the garden-- squash and cabbage and a string of onions hanging.

We went out into the little paved patio and everywhere the foreign editors were busy clickety click taking pictures of a pretty girl against the well -- one of the hostesses--of other hostesses in their dresses of the 1840's and 50's while the hostesses explained that the house had grown with the generations of Camelas and actually there were three kitchens. We went on out into the back yard and there was a fence. They really had gone to a lot

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of trouble for us-- and German pastries and anxious hostesses and hot steaming coffee. It had been a long time since that brunch on the plane and I was ravenous as I always am on these trips, but there were hands to shake and thanks to bestow and waves ^{to} of familiar faces across the crowd and I knew that I was about to cut off to go home by car for a fifteen minute advance before the press arrived on the bus. Alas, something else had been laid on--a bit of the pageant from the Easter fires. Mr. Petmecky took the floor-- or rather the stump-- and told about the Easter fires and children in pink and blue Easter bunny costumes came out hippety hop while I wiggled as much as they did in my anxiety to get gone. I signaled one of the staff who came over and spoke to me and then I waved my thanks and goodbye and I hoped ^{and} slipped away. Later, I read where some press person described it as "received news of the rioting in Washington and left quickly with tears in ^{her} ~~my~~ eyes." That has become a stock expression ^{about} ~~of~~ me. This has never yet been my reaction-- at least in regard to Lyndon's decision.

I hopped in the car. I asked Jerry at my first chance, "How is everything in Washington?" His voice came back, heavily for him, "Not good. Fires and rioting, trouble on Fourteenth Street, supposed to be three persons killed." We hurried home and I changed into my blue denim skirt and red plaid blouse and was out by the side gate, after having had a brief fill-in from Carol^o and Weezie, and the first of the press buses rolled up. For the next three hours I was their number one tour guide around the LBJ Ranch

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and this may have been the most memorable part of the trip for them, for the wrong reason. Later I heard that they kept on exclaiming, "How surprising. She did it herself. Can you ever imagine Queen Elizabeth doing it or Mrs. DeGaulle?" It appeared that the London Editor had even bet one of the young ladies that he had sent that she would never meet me.¹ I invited them in, and with the help of Weezie and Jewel, I attempted to tell the ladies where they could powder their noses and the gentlemen where they could wash their hands--in the language for such an occasion. I then tried to conduct a tour of the living room, den, and dining room.[#] Such affairs are always disorganized and haphazard--short of having a whip-cracking drill sergeant. Even so, it was relatively good. I don't think I ever had a more interested audience. In the den I stood on the steps and told them about the piece of needlework that was made["] by the daughter of not one Texas Governor, but two--["] the old legend of Ma and Pa Ferguson. Many of them surprisingly, and with keen interest, knew about it. Our beautiful old oak table from Sherwood Forest, copper pieces picked up in the Flea Market in Paris, and something of the history of the house. How it had been a familiar home to Lyndon since he was four years old and used to come to visit his Aunt and Uncle who had actually lived here for forty-six years. It was a scene of family reunions and Christmas dinners and big Thanksgiving parties.

In the living room I stood on the raised fireplace and told them something of the visiting Chiefs of State, pointing out the letter from Sam

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Houston, a facsimile, a beautiful old colonial chest from Diaz Ordaz and a charming country piece-- the corner cupboard-- from the President of Finland, but mostly our personal feeling about the house and the country... What it meant to us... How it had grown, and we had added to it in the sixteen years that we had had it. And I told them all to look at the thickness of the walls which were built by the first old German, Mr. Meyer, who had built it of native stone in 1892 with one great big room-- probably with stairsteps up the outside and sort of a low loft room upstairs. I am sure that no more than half of them heard but half of what I had to say, but nevertheless I felt that it was a plus. And then we got on the buses, I in the first and Betty Weinheimer in the second, and took them down to the house where Lyndon was born, showing them Lyndon's grandfather's house along the way. Then the family cemetery. I explained that this was a family custom in the South-- rural sections.

At the birthplace house I stood on the front porch and gave them a brief picture of Mr. and Mrs. Johnson's marriage, moving here and Lyndon's birth and what the country was like then. And then, I took up my place as guide in the West Room and Betty Weinheimer in the East Room and they all wandered through and I kept up my stream of description and they asked questions. Surprisingly, Ann^e Chamberlain, representing the Saturday Evening Post, whom I would have thought of as one of the more rather snide and unimpressible ones-- I remember her with our tour with the Kennedy

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girls in the fall of 1960 and I thought she was probably expecting me to pull out my snuff bottle any minute, but she seemed one of the most interested and eager and actually simpatico of the lot. It remains to be seen what she will write. Here we changed to the school buses from Johnson City and there were three. I was the guide in the first one and then Dale Malechek and Tom Weinheimer whom I attempted, perhaps not with complete success, to introduce to the crowd. You really need a bull horn and a commanding presence and neither one suits me.

On the way back I pointed out the grove where we had barbecue for everybody, from Chiefs of State like Lopez Mateos and Adenauer and ^{Ayub} ~~Am~~ Kahn to Four-H youngsters and last year, just this time, some twenty-six of the Ambassadors from Latin American countries. And then we toured the ranch. I had had to make the decision whether to try to show them the wild life mostly or the farm operation mostly. I had chosen the first. I now wish I had done the last. At any rate we went through the Danfz and later the Martins and there was a blessing of wild flowers but not the miell[?]₂₅ fleur carpet that awaited us by Easter. And when we came to a strutting wild turkey gobbler we nearly lost one of the photographers who got out and followed him down the fence taking pictures while the buses went on. We had to stop and call him back. We saw plenty of deer and they were interested, but not as ecstatic as I would have liked. Actually such a trip is a great big unending lesson to me and I was glad of every expression of enthusiasm that I had not been able to suppress at Mar-^{Lap} ~~Algo~~ and all the places I have

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been because when one loves a place and has worked on it, it is inordinately pleasant to hear somebody else receive it with enthusiasm.

The trip was long and I think to borrow a story from Lyndon I gave them a little bit more about Finland than they wanted to know. It was six o'clock and getting remarkably chilly when we got back to the house with a red checked tablecloth spread, a great long table laden with ribs and chicken legs and chili con queso with fritos. And beer and soft drinks were being passed and hot coffee, the most welcome of all, and we were ravenous. These were actually only hors d'oeuvres but hearty ones because they really hadn't had a meal since 9:30 Washington time and here it was past six so everybody fell to. I divided myself between gulping food and trying to answer questions enthusiastically. I saw with approval the sign that hung across the front porch-- Welcome Traveler. I noted that practically everybody had put on the red bandana which little Carol had stood and dispensed at the gate as they came in.

I decided that the tamales were the hit of the day. Shivering, I got some more coffee just as Cactus rose to introduce Brownie McNeil as one College President who could sing protest songs, ^{right} write back to his students. And Brownie, because it was nearly seven, gave them a shortened version of how the folksongs of the southwest were the expression of the pioneers as they came from Tennessee or Kentucky and Alabama and of the Spanish and Mexican strain and the confluence of civilization here in this part of the world.

I am always so proud of this act and how much we have called on them

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for. By seven o'clock they were saying goodbye and I stood at the gate and shook hands as they filed into the buses and left for San Antonio. And then there was nobody left in the ~~year~~^{yard} but me and Brownie and his son and the Weinheimers and the Malacheks and the Deathes and Carol Carlyle and Cynthia Wilson, who had advanced this part of the trip, and Marilyn, so we went in the living room. I invited them to have another drink and eat the leftovers with me and Mary heated up some beans and got out some homemade bread and spread out what was left of the ribs and chicken legs and plenty of preserves on the sideboard. But first we put up our feet and had an interesting talk about our impressions of journalists and theirs probably of us, about the dreadful news from Washington and spreading throughout the country and other cities and the responsibility of a news media in reporting on these national crises.

I asked Brownie and he said on his small campus, now just pushing two thousand, there is no touch of the virus. You ^{still} have to ~~still~~ work for a living out there. It is rugged country. He got out his guitar and sang some more songs just for us and I was enchanted. Then we had potluck supper and I said goodbye and excused myself because I had many phone calls to make and speeches to rewrite to mesh into the changed world as we found it today, talked to Washington to Lynda. She said the White House was like a fortress. Nobody gets out and nobody gets in. There was rioting and looting and fires on Fourteenth Street and way out down toward the Capitol. Fire hoses were being cut. There was a report that seven people had been killed

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and three hundred people in the District of Columbia hospitals. I remember I asked her some question and she said to me rather wearily, "Mother, I don't know. It would take the dropping of the hydrogen bomb to get my attention." [#] Of course, I wondered how this would all affect tomorrow. Should I even go to Hemisfair? [?] I called Liz and we hammered and changed and worked on my speeches until I was relatively satisfied with them. I talked to John and then I had a conference call with John and Liz. John felt that there would be some disturbances at Hemisfair, probably three demonstrations. One, peace-loving and two, militant--a Mexican-American group and about fifteen hundred [?] SDS. He and Nellie were emphatically going right on and he hoped that I would come-- very much hoped so. Sometime I had talked to my agents. They had suggested two changes. One, that I be a little late. Instead of arriving there something around nine thirty, I should get there around ten or ten thirty. Second, that I go from building to building in one of the little minibuses rather than walk. Naturally I agreed. Sometime I talked to Lyndon. The whole sequence of events is rather hazy. He sounded very tired and a little remote. It must have been a shattering, beating day. He said he thought I should go on. There was no flicker of uncertainty in his voice, ~~and~~ ^{so} it was about one o'clock ^{under} when Betty Chapowicki had come in and given me a little rub and I finally got to bed after a day that ran the ^{full} ~~fan~~ gamut of emotions against the background of mounting turbulence with our whole nation straining at its seams. And yet, with a queer sense of ambivalence, because though I was right in the middle

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of it, because of my husband's job and the presence in Washington of all my family, I, myself, was nevertheless removed and encapsulated in a different world where we were just hearing about them and reading about them as though they lived on the moon.