

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

San Jacinto Day
Sunday, April 21, 1968

WASHINGTON

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Began grey and threatening rain, like the day before, and my heart sank.

Luci, and Jane, and Charlie Engelhard went to nine o'clock mass at Father Schneider's church. What a variety of visitors he's seeing these days!

But everybody else stayed in their room, for a leisurely breakfast and reading the paper, While Bess and I got weather reports and worried indecisively over a fish fry at the Lake, or lunch here at home.

I walked up to the Cedar House, to see John and Peter Loeb. C. R. an early riser, had already made his way down to the big house, and together we walked back down past the row of live oaks, with me pointing out where we always had the barbeques for the visiting Chiefs of State.

I have never seen Texas so green and I could sing about it every blessed moment and the skies were lightening. By the time we returned, it was, as it is often the case, Lyndon who made the decision - "Sure, let's go on out to the lake. If it rains, we'll just eat in the house."

And so Bess and I reversed gears, got the kitchen started on the fish fry routine, and I sent out a call to everybody that wanted to, to join me on a helicopter ride to see more country.

Lyndon stayed to work at his desk, and later to go to St. Barnabas with Lynda, just the two of them, which in itself, is a special satisfaction to me.

And about eleven, I boarded the helicopter with C. R. and Mary, and Andre,

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and John and Peter Loeb, and Charles and Jane Engelhard, and Bess.

With the skies lightening every minute, ~~and~~ we arrived at the West ranch, landed on their strip, and cars were already there, and the next hour and a half was sheer enchantment.

The hills were a sea, a carpet of blue bonnets, and sometimes there would be a meadow that was a ^{mille} ~~meo~~ fleur design of blue bonnets and white Mexican poppies, and wine cups, and yellow flowers, and pink phlox. Peter Loeb had a camera and the Engelhards, and of course we had brought along the White House cameramen behind us. All the streams were full, the prettiest sight any rancher ever sees.

We stopped at one - clear, fresh water, running over the grey pink ~~granite~~ granite boulders, and everybody explored. We found a big green lizard about a foot long, looking ^{like} he was left over from prehistoric times. There were literally herds of deer and every now and then they would vault over the stone fences in succession, like a ballet. And I told them the story of the stone fences - and then we stopped at one of my very favorite places, the stone corral by the stream that is bordered with cypress trees. And one part of the corral encloses an outcropping of sheer granite. Its always puzzled me. I cannot understand why any farmer or rancher would want ~~to~~ a pen whose floor was hard rock. The amount of man hours, sweat and toil, left here in this old homestead is a romance and a sadness to me.

We took reams of pictures, and at every exclamation, I smiled, they

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loved my country.

Jane said, ^{she} this is going to give Mary Lasker ideas. She never thinks plantings are big enough, and here the Lord had planted a whole world as far as your eyes could see, with bright stretches of flowers. ^{He} And somebody laughingly said, "Yes, next year instead of one million daffodil bulbs, they'd have to get five million."

There was one incredibly perfect spot, a pink granite boulder and behind it a mound that was solidly covered with blue bonnets and so singly, and in groups, we all stood and were photographed, and I was thinking, "What albums I'll have to send, as a memory of this weekend."

But I knew Lyndon would join us before long, so we went on to the Haywood, and the landing spot there itself, ^{was} was a banner of blue, and gold, and pink.

Out on the terrace, the Filipinos already had the table set with red checkered cloths, and Bess had straw baskets and was collecting wild flowers, and Jane immediately set to work helping her. Mary and I took a walk, down through the subdivision. A good many of the lots have now been sold, not a thing has been built. A. W. deftly put firmly puts me off in my hope that a part of it can be retained as a sort of a common park for all of the homes there, and since I don't invest one hour of my time, trying to help sell the lots and pay the indebtedness, I do not feel I can enforce my wish on the management of it.

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Lyndon and Lynda joined us about one and the Krims came in with the Mashmans, ² in their tiny little bubble of a helicopter, and I asked the Mashmans to stay for lunch. And then Lyndon abducted some of the men — I think he wanted to have a talk with John Loeb, and they went for a ride in the speed boat, and the rest of us settled on the terrace.

I told them about my plans someday, to light these lovely, crooked, old live oak trees, imaginatively. Even so, and as casually as we live here, with paper plates, and very sketchy housekeeping, it has a great charm.

It must have been 2 o'clock when we finally had lunch. James had fried the fish out on the terrace, and we had a huge pot of black eyed peas, and slaw, and fresh tomatoes, and Mary's delicious hot corn bread. A very plebian meal for these New Yorkers, I'm sure, but then all of ^{the} day ₁ was out of character for them.

After lunch, Lyndon took some of the ladies in the speed boat. Peter Loeb was particularly anxious to go.

And then, we divided up between the Krims' little bubble of a helicopter. — John kept on saying it would be just the thing for him to communicate between his home and office in, ¹ and the big chopper, and a car and as I remember, I as one of the least adventurous, chose to go in a car, and asked André, and Lynda and Bess to go with me, and we all converged on the Krim ranch.

What a funny sight! Here on this lonely hill top, the house with its

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weathered board-and-battling, and cedar shake shingled roof, has already mellowed into the landscape as though its been there for a hundred years, and the rail fence and the windmill¹ and three helicopters - two of them bearing the seal of the President of the United States!

Everybody fell in love with the Krim house. I wish sometimes, ⁹we would get some more neighbors from these visits. I know where I shall return with all my heart, and I also know that I shall miss the good conversation, the competition, the excitement, of people like Mary, and Andre, and the Loeb's, and the Engelhard's, and C. R.

The ladies, of course, had a conducted tour, and I was proud of Tony's things that we saw, especially the old wooden chests. And there was much teasing about the Presidential suite. Actually, it sounds like Mathilde is going to take the big garage, which they never use, build a huge picture window in one end, add a bathroom, and make it ⁿto a room¹ which will be called Lyndon's very own.

Jane and Charles had set 4:30 as departure time for New York. We were a little behind schedule - that most tyrannical word in my life - so we were actually back at the ranch by 4:30, and then the guests quickly gathered their suitcases and changed clothes, and Lyndon and I took them out to the runway, a little past five. And jokingly remarked to Charles as ^{we} ~~he~~ looked at the six flags painted on his plane, "After January, we're going to have to put some more flags on the plane." There had been 30 painted

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on the plane which he had traded in, before he bought this one a few months ago.

We'd asked C. R. to stay with us. Everyone else left, and I believe with all my heart, [✓] that they had had a good time. I know, myself, I had never enjoyed more, showing our country to friends, nor ever was it prettier, nor the guests more interesting and responsive. There's a special luxury in the time right after a party ends, [✓] or any period of responsibility, [✓] no matter how much you may have enjoyed it, and so Lyndon and I - C.R. had gone down to the Cedar House - feeling quite relaxed, and for myself, aimless, rode around.

I had talked to Betty Weinheimer this morning, [✓] about the possibility of taking her children and returning with us tomorrow, for ^a special children oriented sight seeing tour. And this evening, I talked to Jewel, expecting to take her at a later time, because I knew ^{with} the Diplomatic Reception and a State Dinner coming up, the house would be crammed to the gills.

As it turned out, once more, it was Lyndon who settled things and said, on Monday morning, "No, you just take Jewel now too. There'll never be another time. We'll just find room somewhere in that house."

A little before seven, we choppered over to the Moursund ranch, and the Krims were there too, for dinner. Bess, bless her, having finished all her duties and wonderfully, because she was the author of all the grace and precision, the flowers and meal planning, and the seating, and all the real

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hostess duties, while it was Mary who did the bulk of the work. And I who simply enjoyed it. Bess had left to go to San Antonio, as a guest of the Steves, to see "Hemisfair", nevertheless something must have taken a toll of me, these past weeks or days, and how can I speak of work, when it is Lyndon who has worked so hard?

But it was he who thought to call C. R. and have him join us at the Moursunds for dinner.

We drove around while the last rays of light lasted. I shall spend the spring like a miser!

And then we came in to a big, hearty dinner, and then ^{the} men naturally gravitated to the domino table. Nita and Melvin were there, and there began one of those lengthy, battle, of skill and words, and about ten o'clock I said to C. R., "You and I might just drive home."

We did and luckily, because I think it was very, very late indeed, well after one o'clock when Lyndon came in. Barely half awake, I heard him.

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