

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Monday, July 15, 1968

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Monday, July 15th, was a breathly sort of day when I'd pay for a ~~quite~~^{quiet} and restful weekend. And I am sure Lyndon must pay a much ~~dearer~~^{dearer} coin.

The first important meeting of the day was at 10:00 on the Truman balcony with Doug Hubbard and and Mark ~~Sagay~~^{599.9N} and Carl Deegan in regard to our Park project across from the Ranch.

It was a muggy hot day and I am afraid I wilted three gentlemen simply because I love to look at those Monuments. We had iced tea. They brought me up to date on Jerry Roger's history of the region and the people from which the exhibit makers will produce an exhibit plan which should be ready in early September. We discussed the unbeliev~~able~~ boom that seems the Park is going to have, the State appropriation which will be matched by a Federal appropriation, how we could wisely plan on spending it.

Mr. Deegan, I believe it is, is working on the film and said that he had seen most of the film about the Ranch which our White House boys have. He did want to shoot more himself.

Then I got down to what was really the purpose of the meeting -- that I was going to be in Texas from Wednesday night until Sunday night and that I could devote anything from a half a day to two days in any sort of work on the Park.

Between them, they decided it would be a good idea if Mr. Deegan could come down possibly Saturday and we could do a walk-through of the Ranch -- a sort of a description of the whole area and you would get the feel of it -- take in enough osmosis to then do a script.

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This movie will be used at the visitors' center in the Park. So we set aside Saturday for that, and I suggested to Mr. Hubbard that he might want to call Mark Gosdin to discuss the laying out of nature trails because work on the Park was proceeding very fast.

Just as I walked out into the hall -- and it must have been after 11:00 -- I met Jim Jones. Could I be ready in a few minutes to go down to the East Room to watch a Bill signing? Quickly, fortunately, I agreed more because I want to do whatever Lyndon wants me to do than because I knew what the Bill was. It turned out to be a major victory for Conservationists -- the best thing that's happened this year, maybe in many years, and it had slipped through unheralded, unsung, and virtually unargued -- a sort of a burr-rabbit deal. It would earmark funds from the sale of oil on the outer continental shelf for the land and water conservation fund instead of going directly to the United States Treasury. This money -- up to \$200 million a year -- would go into that fund and would be used to buy new parks and recreation areas. All this I heard Lyndon say as he stood at the podium and I looked around the room and saw some western Senators on the other side -- Henry Jackson who had been the chief author of the Bill, and I think Senator McGhee and Claiborne Pell and Mrs. Hansen whom Lyndon remembered in his remarks humorously and with praise for her interest in conservation. His heart was in it and he made a good speech.

I saw Doug Hubbard in the back of the room, but there were so many I wish could have been there. Lawrence Rockefeller most of all. Mary Lasker

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of course. All my conservationist friends. The whole Committee would have loved it; and I, how unpardonably ignorant, had not known about it. But perhaps the same applied in Congress. And maybe that's one reason why it passed. Obviously it gave Lyndon the keenest satisfaction.

Next, quickly to the swimming pool and thirty laps, but done for exercise and not for joy. I get a little annoyed at myself -- there is too much Martha. Life is to be savored -- not to be clocked.

And then to Mr. Per's for a hair-do.

Back at the White House Lynda Bird came into my room with a modern painting she had just bought -- an amusing checkerboard of little squares, every shade of yellow and orange and a little red, not meant to mean anything except to be pretty. One of my main aims for the rest of the summer is to apply myself to our monthly movies in a pre-script conference for everyone there so that ~~they~~ will be balance in the events we use. And then at the time of interlock to make sure that the most significant or dear events of our time here are woven into these movie diaries as far as we can.

And so I spent an hour in the little Lincoln Sitting Room -- which I will always remember as a place of business for me -- with Simone and Tommy Atkins and a scriptwriter and I think Liz and Erv Duggan and Joe Frantz were in and out and we worked on the month of June.

Next, I had thirty minutes with Liz making decisions on articles and TV things. I had asked her to get for me ^{the} request to write a book that had come in in the four years that I had been here -- I wanted to review them. I told

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her I hoped she would save out a couple of weeks in the Spring, possibly April, to come down and help us at the time of the opening of the little Park.

And then thirty minutes with Bess about our trip to New York and the weekend party in Texas, plans for the big buffet on the lawn for a lot of old friends here perhaps before the summer is over and also asked her to save a little time in April to help inaugurate the Park.

Lyndon stuck his head in the door. He was coming home for lunch. It was 4:30. Liz and Bess and I went in and sat with him. He was gay, full of humor, giving Liz instructions to try and get more stories about this mornings conservation victory. And then it was time to dress for the little tea for Marilyn who is to be married on July 20th. I shall not be here. I've become so fond of her and I decided the next best thing would be to have her and her young husband-to-be and their families and members of the wedding party and a few favorite friends for tea in the Yellow Oval Room. There were about 20 of them and it was a very pleasant hour and a half. I moved from group to group and listened about the wedding plans. Marilyn was beaming, looking so happy, and her young man, David Taylor, is a very fine looking young person. He works for YMCA and I told him I hoped that work carried him around the country a good deal. And I wanted to recommend, if there was ever a possibility of a job in Austin, Texas, and he would. I shall miss Marilyn.

We had a delicious tea. Photographers came in and took pictures of the three of us in front of the mantel, and then with Marilyn's parents and then

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group pictures around the room, and I described to the ladies -- and soon found that everybody was circled around and listening -- the history of the room, the paintings, how other Administrations had used it, the gathering before a State Dinner. And I enjoyed it as much as any guest.

And then Ashton was beckoning me, saying my next appointment was here. It was Stu Udall and George Hartzog. I said goodbye and went back to the West Hall.

And this was my last meeting on Parks for the day. I wanted to see them to discuss ~~with~~ offering the little house in Johnson City where Lyndon grew up to the National Park Service, and a piece of legislation that would be introduced after Lyndon had left office -- perhaps next Spring. It could go through quietly I hope sometime next year, and transfer the house with a careful stewardship from that wonderfully continuing body, the National Park Service.

Stu looked at me and said, "Mrs. Johnson and I will be gone, but you, George, will be right here."

After Marilyn's group had drifted away, we too went out on the Truman Balcony. All day long in the summer time I love to meet here or in the Grape Arbor.

They both felt that this would be an appropriate and desirable first step to the eventual acquisition of the whole package -- that is the Ranch, birthplace, cemetery, and all. And Stu made the comparison which pleased me between the two Presidents that had done the most for conservation. The Park Service

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has the home where Theodore Roosevelt was born on Oyster Bay which was their life-long family home -- principally a summer home I think -- and then a sort of a wild retreat in the Dakotas. And for President Lyndon Johnson, some day perhaps they will have this little area along the Pedernales which covers the span of his life from birth to death -- an unusual package in American history.

Stu was very complimentary of the morning's victory, of what it would do for conservation, of Lyndon's foresight in getting it done. Nevertheless I sensed that his thoughts were really moving on beyond next January.

We had a gin and tonic. It was a pleasant meeting. They will send someone down to make a check of how the public goes through the house. I was proud to report the numbers to them.

After they left I went bowling -- two quick games. And then back upstairs for a rub, watching television meanwhile and feeling that I had done a good days work and deserved it.

And it was 11:00 when Lyndon came home for dinner. How long his working days are and how blessed our weekends.

One other good thing had taken place today. Mary Lasker had been in to see Lyndon to show him the book on the health advances of the Johnson Administration that she herself had had written and published. He said it was as simple as a primer, everybody could understand it -- the first time he had ever seen it spelled out in a way that people would want to read it. Nothing could have made him more grateful. Mary is an extraordinary person for aiming

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toward good things and getting them done.

When I went in Lynda's room, I found her talking to Hubert and Muriel on the phone. She sounded gay and kidding. She always does with them. She calls him Uncle Hubert. He is just recovering from his attack of flu and she just wanted to let him know that she was thinking of him. I talked too. He said he had been quite sick for a whole week but felt all right and was getting back to work. Lynda was gay and kidding. She said, "You can just send Donna out and she'll handle all the men. She's so pretty, they'll all fall in love with her."

Lynda is a dear thoughtful person and never lets it be known. Most of the time she's being brave and gay and strong. It's been 21 days of silence from Chuck.