

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Saturday, July 20, 1968

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Saturday, July 20th, began early with work on the Park across the river. Three National Park Service men -- Mr. Carl Degan had come to work on a script for a movie to be an exhibit in the little visitors' center across the river, and Mr. Mark Sagan and Mr. Bright who were going to look at the operation of the little house in Johnson City and begin thinking about the possible acquisition of it by the National Park Service sometime next year after we are out of office.

The three had spent the night at the Cedar House and today was to be given to Park work. Also, they will all absorb the impression of the whole Ranch. Because someday down the road -- 10, 20 years, who knows when -- we would hope to turn over the whole thing to the National Park Service in the way that President Eisenhower has.

After my first cup of coffee I called them. They had breakfasted. So I picked them up and we drove into Johnson City. Jessie Hunter took us through the house. It was not yet time for the tourists to come in, but already cars were parked thickly around the sides and the three men seemed impressed when I told them that the 200,000th person passed through the house I believe one day last month, and I had called him on the telephone to hope that he was having a nice vacation and that he enjoyed seeing the house. It turned out amazingly that his name was Nixon and he had a daughter named Pat. How could you pull him out of 200,000.

They seemed impressed also that last evening as they had passed the house there were three cars parked in front with trailers -- each from a

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different state.

As we sat in the little parlor and had a cup of coffee and I told them of how Lucia and I had put it together, we noticed awaiting tourists swinging patiently in the porch swing. And Jessie told us how this Spring there had been some quite new behavior -- people putting their blankets down on the lawn under the trees and letting their children rest their, maybe giving the baby a bottle or having their lunch. But she reported no real problems in running the house.

One of the things that I was most relieved about was that when and if the National Park Service takes over the place they will be happy to put into Civil Service Jessie and any personnel employed there now.

We drove briefly around Johnson City. And then back to the Ranch entering the Park from Highway 295, stopping to walk around the old log cabin, surveying the views, talking about nature trails, picking a couple of peaches off the trees. They were delicious. And then getting a call from Lynda. She was leaving by plane for Houston with Joe, and in a hurry because of bad weather.

So I drove home and I hugged her goodbye at the airport. Joe -- that reliable friend -- is her escort for a weekend at Asto World is staying with the Manns.

And then Betty Weinheimer whom I had already phoned arrived. We went through the birthplace. Here we listened to the tapes. It was the first time I had heard them, and once more we drove into a group of tourists who had their

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cameras out and were clicking away just as they had been at the little house in Johnson City. There some of them had called me by name and young ones squealing with excitement and I had asked where they were from and whether they were having a good summer vacation, had they been to Hemis Fair, a brief pleasant exchange and lots of pictures. And Mr. D^egan, Sagan and Bright seemed a trifle surprised and pleased. We were all overwhelmed at the amount of visitors that had gone through the birthplace this summer. I believe it was 1600 that Betty had had on one record Sunday.

They were highly complimentary of the tapes -- the fact that we had them that is, and the script itself. They thought the mechanical quality was awful and that I should record them again inside. These I had recorded as I remember in the dog-trot of the little house itself in order to get in the atmosphere of the thing.

Inwardly I gave myself a pat that they existed at all. It was one of the little steps forward I have taken, and I will get them done better.

And back at the main house we had lunch -- Betty and Juanita and Mary, the three men and I. Souffle and bacon and ham -- wonderful fresh tomatos from the garden, and peaches that may have been from the little orchard we own or from one of our neighbors. And I enjoyed that oddly satisfying pleasure of the landsman who says, "These came off the place."

After lunch Mr. Sagan and Mr. Bright went back into Johnson City to see that house in operation with tourists going through. Their interest, response, to listen to the tapes there, to ask Jessie some more questions.

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And Mr. Degan and I toured the Ranch with Dale and talked about the cattle and grasses.

And then I came home for 2 hours of lying in bed and recording and making telephone calls, and left them to their own work.

While I watched out the window, a beautiful storm came up -- great rolling black clouds and thunder and lightening -- a magnificent show. Finally a lashing of rain, but short.

The corn is tall and green beyond the fence and we'll have roast ~~and~~ ears for supper tonight. It's a beautiful prospect right out one's bedroom window.

The pink ^{Crepe} ~~great~~ myrtle/our own which we planted back 14 or 15 years ago -- was full of pink blooms. The white ^{Crepe} ~~great~~ myrtle alas has not had a single blossom. The day lillies which were so beautiful in June -- every shade of yellow and orange into bronze -- are just about spent but they were a great June show.

I am more and more satisfied with my bedroom window.

At 6:00 I got up. The storm was over. I picked up our three men and we toured the Dantz. Very surprisingly it was too muddy -- we were almost stuck. So we went around in the Martin, and the deer raced along beside us and all the little dappled fawns. It was one of those glorious summer evenings. The storm was spent, and the air itself a caress.

And then I got word that the President was calling me, and I went back to the Ranch and took the call. It was Jim Jones on Air Force I saying that

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they were enroute home and would be here a little before 10:00.

We picked up Juanita and Mary and drove over ^{to} the Sharnhorst. I told Mr. Degan all about the film that we had in the can of the President and me climbing on the rocks, of my tour of the house, that Tony Loeb.

And every now and then he saw a spot where his crew -- who had come down to shoot wildflower scenes -- had worked.

And finally we saw the antelope. Two in one pasture, seven in another. That means at least one baby. They are the most graceful, the most delightful, of all of the inhabitants of the Ranch.

We discussed the format of the movie. Scenario was gestating in his mind. And we used everything that we had in the can that fits. He wants very much to be able to shoot some more possibly in September of the family at the Ranch.

Dark drove us in and we had a real mid-summer dinner -- much of it from the garden -- fresh corn and green beans, roast and Mary's incredible corn bread.

And the men left a little before 10:00, and I went out to the airport to meet Lyndon. Odd the way I live insulated from the world here when he is not here. I never turn on the TV, I do not have a paper. But with him the world returns and the newspapers.

He came swinging down off the plane, always glad to get back. It had been a good trip he said, and he seemed reasonably satisfied. Thieu was a very good man, as cooperative as he could be, caught in all the tides of

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demands of his own country, his allies, the enemy.

We went swimming. The water was a marvelous temperature, just like a caress. And we lay there floating and looking up at the stars and talked and rested. We left about 11:00 Saturday night.

Lyndon had left for Honolulu at 11:00 Thursday morning and traveled thousands of miles, lived through hours of conferences of sensitive, demanding decisions. And here so quickly he was back.

What will it be like when January comes and there is a surcease from all of this.

I thought of the stories the Park Service men had told at dinner about the Indian pictographs on the cliffs down in the Amistad Dam area. Anyhow for over 2 years I have tried to get down there to see them, and their trip out to the Cascade Mountains -- the most magnificent part of this country they say -- and I thought of my last phone call from Tony telling about his camping trip up in the mountains with his two grandchildren. All of those things for me have a lure.

After crowding into these 2-1/2 days thousands of miles and a pounding of work and decisions, what will it be like in January. A surcease for me.

I went to bed thinking about all the Park Service mens stories of looking at all of the Indian pictographs.....