

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Friday, August 2, 1968

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Since we're leaving for Texas, I got up early to get the most out of the day and worked with Liz and Simone on the questions for the Howard K. Smith show, packed, talked to Ashton about coming down a little later next week. It seems that all this summer it has been a commuting between the Ranch and Washington. I live two lives in two different places.

The helicopter rose from the South Lawn a little before 12:00, and we went directly to Walter Reed. Lyndon was going to see President Eisenhower. That is one of the things that I love about him -- his regard for former Presidents -- solicitous, respectful, determined that they have every comfort, every little dignity or appertainence that their rigorous service entitled them to.

Cheering groups of people waved us into Walter Reed. The military met us and escorted us up to the suite. Lyndon went directly in to see the General. And Mrs. Eisenhower said to Lyndon in the most graceful manner, "You'll leave your girl out here to talk to me, won't you?" And so began about an hours visit with another First Lady -- the longest I've ever had. And a very pleasant one -- remarkable for a number of things. One, the complete, single-tracked devotion she has for the General. She was dressed in a light fluttery green and blue summer dress, rather ageless -- I could not have dated it. And she was vivacious, cheerful, pretty -- all good qualities in a woman. What a lucky man he is to have her constantly at his side. She said, "Yes", she stayed right here. "I know the General

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would worry so about me if I were out at the farm." She showed me her room. It was tiny, almost like a Monk's cell. The only touch of luxury was a soft, delicate, velvet coverlet. She said airily, "I brought my own comfort."

And the second thing for which the meeting was remarkable was a feeling expressed several times of wanting to get free from things. She said she used to care about clothes. She doesn't any more. And she kept all of her jewelry locked up, and wore only little costume jewelry.

It was very much on her mind how to usefully dispose of so many things. She ~~xxx~~ mentioned that they had 14 TV sets at the Gettysburg farm. Once in the Spring at the White House she had spoken of the vast array of gifts that a President accumulates, specifically steuben. I spoke up for any items of real family closeness for the little house in Denison where President Eisenhower was born. She said, yes, but what would they want? I couldn't answer. I also asked if she had worked closely with the head of the library -- about making available to the Library any items. She didn't seem intensely <sup>interested</sup> ~~interested~~ in the Library although she mentioned that they had stopped over there on their last trip out to Palm Springs I believe it was. And I told her how wonderful it was to me that they had turned over in their lifetime their home in Gettysburg to the National Park Service. And I asked if she had met Stewart Udall and George Hartzog when they had come out to survey the place. No, she

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had had someone else do it. I would have wanted to show them every nook and cranian acre. She spoke of how crowds came and looked at the farm, and how they had even stolen a sign, and how they had their fence wired and nevertheless once someone had gotten in and had walked right into their yard -- apparently a psycho case. She said, "You'll have all this too." And we talked of grandchildren, of movies. A thoroughly easy, pleasant, delightful hour.

It was 1:00 when Lyndon came in. We had our picture made with Mrs. Eisenhower and said goodbye, helicoptered to Andrews and then on Air Force I with the Cliffords and the Califanos aboard -- and a plane full, Lafaye and Susan bound for home. They will not return. They will work in the office there some. And we were at Bergstrom a little past 3:00, and touched down at the Ranch about 3:40 to find that the Daløys and Arthur were in ranch clothes in the front yard. I liked the Dalys at once. They seemed outdoorsmen. They were both easy, outgoing, friendly. I took Marny up to the children's room. And at 5:00 the Eugene Blacks and the McGeorge Bundys arrived -- the third of our weekends, a sort of a roaming house party. But this time without one of the stars -- the wild flowers.

We all gathered in ranch clothes in the front yard close to 6:00. Lyndon had already been riding around with the Dalys. So this time I asked the Dalys and the Eugene Blacks because he had his arm in a sling, and I know Lyndon's tendency to crowd about 8 people into a station wagon and go

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bumping around over the pasture -- hardly the dish for a man with an injured elbow.

The 5 of us toured the Dantz ranch. The deer and the wild turkey obliged by coming out in great droves. And then we <sup>headed</sup> ~~headed~~ for the Sharnhorst, stopping first to look at the little rest areas along the highway that had just been completed and admiring the stone work. And I beamed because there was somebody eating in every one of them except one where traffic was forbidden because of the President's being in residence.

We joined Lyndon at the foot of the granite rocks. Sunset was approaching. And we all had a drink and some "jerky" and cheese. And Mr. and Mrs. Daly and I ~~clamored~~ clamored all over the rocks. Bess and I had thought we would serve hor d'oeuvres on top of the rocks at sunset, but decided it was a little too rigorous for some of us.

It was a balmy, cool, August 2nd -- almost incredible for Texas. And the country is still green. The <sup>scissor</sup> ~~scissor~~ tail fly catchers were whirling and twisting in their ballet, settling on the fences long enough for us to admire them.

I had at once found two things about Mrs. Black to like -- the Georgia accent, completely unchanged by what I expect as scores of years of living away from Georgia. And her interest in bird watching. She was delighted with the scissortail flycatchers and identified a good many others for me. And of course for me it is always the best of days to be in the

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presence of McGeorge and Mary Bundy.

We drove on to the Lewis house. Everybody got out. We sat down in the rockers on the front porch. We watched the great pink clouds roll across the sky. And I have seldom felt more relaxed and more easy with the company.

On the way back to the house Mr. Black kept us enthralled with stories of his travels around the world and his work for the World Bank. I asked him about the success stories. What underdeveloped countries had made a go of it in the last two decades or the last decade? He spoke of those I have heard before over and over. One is that Taiwan is a great success story, and Korea becoming one. And Pakistan has made considerable march forward. And he shared my concern about the Philippines.

We were home by 9:00 and gathered around the dinner table shortly thereafter. <sup>Bess</sup>~~Mr.~~ had a delightful dinner for us. How pleasant it is to turn the housekeeping over to somebody who is organized, inventive and calm as Bess. It's an interlude I would rather enjoy of a day of.

After dinner nearly everybody went to see a movie with Lyndon. Although he, as easily predicted, went promptly to sleep and just woke up every few minutes to inquire whether they had gotten married yet.

But I asking around earlier had found that we had a few bridge players. And so Mrs. Dalry and Marny and Eugene Black and I settled down for 2 hours of good bridge. They were excellent players, but not

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too far above me to make me uncomfortable.

Then at 12:00 it suited everybody to go to bed, marking an end to the first day of what felt like a highly successful house party.