

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Saturday, September 21, 1968

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Saturday, September 21st, was one of those delicious interludes in the summer -- a weekend with good friends at the Ranch.

I had come down the day before, actually from "Winterthur", with the Alan Boyds and the George Mahons and the McPhersons.

We slept late and then I went out to the pool to find Lyndon in with much of the company.

Secretary ~~and~~ Boyd and Harry were supposed to go into San Antonio for a press conference, and I was determined to see for one more time HemisFair. I talked to Flavil about it. She was eager. And Helen -- interested enough to want to go.

I called Patsy Steves who must have personally entertained some several hundred of HemisFair's 5-1/2 million guests this summer. But she was not too busy to break away from whatever her duties of the day were and take care of me and mine. So we flew in by Jetstar, and arrived at the HemisFair at about 11:30 where Saheed Kahn greeted us -- Flavil and Helen and I and Clay McPherson and her daughter Coco.

I had outlined everybody on the way what I thought were the greatest things to see and absolutely insisted that everybody go out on their own to what sounded enticing. As for me, I wanted to go right back to the Texas Pavilion, and it ~~would~~^{would} up that this was what we all did, with Henderson Shuffler on hand to give his incomparable dialogue as we went through. And Patsy slowly arranging everything.

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I had the best view of it, and achieved the most understanding that I ever had of the 26 ethnic groups that has made up Texas since man began his stay here. Actually, we only got through about five. But I picked up such interesting nuggets as that a considerable number of Chinese were imported from the West coast to build the railroad which was already being built from the other direction almost entirely by Irish labor. And when the railroad finally met somewhere in the middle of Texas there was a donnybrook that not even Marshal Dillon could have contained.

And for the first time I saw outlined the whole story of the building of the Capitol of Texas.

For quite a time, no one noticed me. And then gradually more and more people did, and I soon found myself moving in a crowd from showcase to showcase and interrupted with twiddlings and squeals and "God bless you's" and "tell the President we pray for him". And most often when it was some particularly touching message, it would be from a Negro. This happens over and over.

We had only gotten through about five ethnic groups when we realized that it was 1:00 and our men would already be at La Paloma del Rio waiting for us. So with Henderson and Saheed and Patsy, we joined them there, found a table on the river bank and drank beer and watched the barges go by waving at them. And delighted in telling our visitors the story of the little river.

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I found from Henderson that indeed the Texas holcultures will remain -- the building -- and that though ever so many of the artifacts have been borrowed from museums and from private collectors, that many of these will be happy to extend the loans for another year. And in some cases additional and even better ones have been found and given for a permanent collection. And so it will close for awhile, be reorganized and some things returned, and then it will reopen -- the basis is still a little uncertain, but I think it will be a permanent part of San Antonio life -- of Texas life. And I am enormously proud of the whole concept and execution.

We ate a delicious Mexican dinner with abandon everything, said goodbye to Patsy, our hostess, and the Mahons and the Boyds and I went back by chopper to the Ranch -- the McPhersons staying to see more.

We all felt ready for a little nap. Lyndon and George had spent a good part of the day around the pool talking and were a healthy red.

Late in the day the Boyds and the Mahons and Mildred and Marie and Bob Hardesty and Harry Middleton -- whom we include in everything possible these days because we want them to learn the Johnson life -- and the Harry McPhersons and Coco went to the lake to spend the evening. We went first to Coca Cola Cove where the boats joined us and Lyndon took all the brave ~~very~~ young ones out in his speed boat, while Helen and some of the quieter members stayed with me in the big boat.

First, I had a good long swim -- about 45 minutes, and what seemed to be long, long distances -- in the cool and rapid choppy waters of the lake, and

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exalted in the feeling of stretching and using my muscles and getting a little tired and lying on my back and looking up into the sky. And generally exalting in the feeling of well-being I have when I do considerable exercise.

Then back into the boat and to the beach house where Lyndon had already taken a car full over to the see the progress on the Krim estate. The "Presidential suite" is coming right along. And every time he sees Arthur and Mathilde he teases them about his taking up residence with them there.

On the ~~the~~ boat going back to the Haywood, we started our bridge game. That is one of the delightful things about this weekend -- having two congenial couples that play bridge. And I am very much aware that Lyndon planned it that way in part for me. He had grown more and more congenial and understanding with the George Mahons through the years. He is a remarkable man with an expanding interest in trees, in the Smithsonian Institute, the vast ramifications of the Appropriations committee. In fact in just about everything that comes his way.

I was astounded that this weekend is his 68th birthday. He is a young, slim 68.

And the Alan Boyds who are their neighbors and good friends have been one of the pleasantest additions to our troops here to our Cabinet. I think he is one of the young comers in Government if he chooses to remain in -- a combination~~x~~ of the solid and pragmatic, with the liberal and idealist.

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In one conversation he gave me about an hours summary of transportation problems -- an exploration, no solutions -- of the short-sided phenomena of funneling more and more automobiles into cities by enormous and expensive freeways, but no places to park the automobiles once they are in the cities. Though scarcer and scarcer, and the problem more frustrating, a synopsis of the story of the rapid transit system in Washington and how one man in Congress has tied it like a Siamese twin to the freeway.

It was a good weekend -- a mixture of talk and fun.

When it was quite dark, we landed at the Haywood. Lyndon is always reluctant to leave the lake or the pastures when there is still light in the sky. We went inside and started a bridge game while they were frying the fish out on the terrace. Ridiculously enough, everybody had insisted on having fried catfish again ~~despite~~ the fact that that was what we had last night.

My thoughts went to Lynda, alone in Washington. And this was the Saturday she had asked me to save and spend with her. Inevitably my life seems to be fragmented and I am torn between people that I love and that need me and I promise myself that I will make it up always to each one.

We ate with reckless forgetfulness of our big lunch and then choppered home about 10:30 and to bed -- all satisfied with a varied and interesting day.

I had a rub and to sleep by 11:30.