

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Saturday, July 8, 1967

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It was our last full day at the Ranch, and I had saved the afternoon at the Ranch like a miser to do what I wanted with.

In the morning I was up early-- coffee and juice and joined John Ben a little past 8:00. We spread out Conrad Wirth's map of the Lyndon Johnson Park on the small dining room table, oriented ourselves, and when Mark Gosdin arrived the three of us set out for the selection for the Visitors' Center that Conrad ~~ka~~ Wirth had made. It is on the edge of the peach orchard, a little to the west and north of the Sweeney house -- a very prestigious spot I thought. We stopped the Secret Service car in about the exact place where it would be, and I climbed up on top of it and looked through binoculars that Laure^ance Rockefeller had given me. No, with all the foliage of summer on we still had privacy at our house and a very pleasant view down to the river through the pecans and live oaks and on to the west and north over the hills. It was my choice.

X Lyndon joined us, and we explained it to him. Mr. Gosdin kept on saying that it was too close to the Sweeney house which they hope to make into a maintenance center and wouldn't be as easy to administer, what that means, as the site they had selected.

I asked Mr. Taylor of the Secret Service. He agreed the spot would be all right. There would be a buffer zone for wild life between the Visitor's Center and Ranch Road 1.

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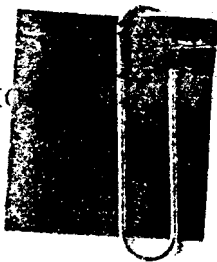
And so we went over to the other site selected by the State Park planners. It is slightly to the west of the windmill on the hightower track in a thicket of mesquite -- not quite as high and not the prestigious view that there is from the other. A little farther from the house -- yes, our privacy would be better protected here. But I did not feel that the view, the general slope of the land, was as good.

Mr. Gosdin was politely adamant^e in preferring this. And I expect it will be here. In the end, John Ben agreed with him. And Lyndon said just wherever we wanted to put it. So I am alone.

We spent a good 2-1/2 hours walking and driving and discussing it from every angle. And then back at the house John Ben and Mr. Gosdin both left, and I had the rest of the day to myself.

Meanwhile, Lyndon was driving around with Drew Pearson and a German editor, Mr. Henri Nanen and two other Germans. So I was able to help by going out to the plane to meet the Time-Life people -- Mr. Otto Furbringer and James Shepley. ~~They~~^{It} came ^{as} at no surprise that Lyndon told us at the last minute that he had asked Drew and his friends to stay for lunch. I was actually glad he did. So Mary sliced some baked ham to add to the shrimp curry, and we sat down to lunch a little past 1:00. And then fatigue overtook me. I read some of Thornton Wiler's^d "The Eighth Day", and then I went to sleep -- a long, luxurious nap.

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It was nearly 6:00 when I woke up and dressed, just in time to go and bid the Time-Life people goodbye. And then we all got in the chopper -- Don Thomas and Jesse Kellam had driven out -- and with Jim, Mary, Marie and Ashton and Jewel and Dale, we flew over and picked up Mariallen and A. W. and headed for the beach house. There followed the usual ~~xixix~~ ritual of ~~x~~ dividing the young and adventurous -- Lyndon and all of the girls who chose the speed boat -- and those who just like to soak up the serenity of the evening -- me and Mariallen and Jesse and later Don joined us.

^o~~And~~ We got on the big boat. Where the Llano flows into the Colorado to form the lake itself, I said, "Let's head on up the Colorado. I want to swim." A little ways up I slipped over the side and in the fading twilight swam and swam and swam. It must have been 3/4 of a mile, past 18 houses -- it's very intimate here, the river, narrow and quiet, usually. But today full of speed boats and skiffers. And on the banks all the middle-aged people sitting on their lawns enjoying the evening. The temperature was mild and pleasant, ~~and it was~~

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I counted the houses as I slowly swam along and the number mounted to 18. There were willows and rustling cottonwoods along the banks. And one less-than-charming note -- suddenly I saw on the right hand bank some enormous hogs, almost the size of hippopotamus down on the edge of the water! And then I saw a fence enclosing what must have been a block long pig pen stretching into the river, and the forms of about 20 huge hogs back in the underbrush, ~~and~~ getting cooled on the edge of the river. It's high time ^{we} begin to think of pollution at home. I swam out to the middle and went as fast as I could. Finally, as it was about dark, I crawled aboard the boat feeling twice as good as when I had gotten in and back in dry clothes, ^{lay} laid up on the top deck with a drink. ~~And~~ suddenly I saw a little slim crescent of a new moon. The sky was full of pink powder puff clouds and the lovely light faded gradually into dark. And a cloud of bats began to fly around above us. It was the most perfect relaxation -- the most contentment -- I had known all during these nine wonderful days.

Don and Jesse joined me and we talked quietly. And the evening was so pleasant. It was not even marred by the subject that was on all our minds. We ^{had} discussed it off and on during the week. The fact that revenues were going down and expenses were going up at KTBC, and there were storm clouds of many problems.

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It was 10:00 before we arrived at the Haywood and had our dinner in the court yard overlooking the river. I had missed "Gunsmoke", but I had given myself the great luxury of asking that it be taped. And so our last full day at the Ranch ended on a note of euphoria. We were back at the Ranch by 12:00. But I was horrified when I walked into the kitchen to find Luci, whom I had left frying chicken a little before 7:00 when we departed in the chopper, ^{and} whom I found still frying chicken. She had deviled two large platters of eggs and made an enormous mound of potato salad all by herself. It is Patrick's birthday tomorrow, and she's invited about 40 or 50 friends to a party on Lake Austin. I was ^hagast. I told her she mustn't work so hard and to go to bed and that Gertrude would take over in the morning. Actually, there was very little to finish. I am torn between being proud of her and fearful lest she do too much. She gave me a beatific smile and said, "You don't hear me complaining." #