

(Coyne)

March 15, 1974

FACT SHEET: GRAND OLE OPRY, MARCH 16, 1974, NASHVILLE

1. Event: RN will be helping to dedicate the new Grand Old Opry building and attending the first show held there. The building is part of a complex called Opryland, USA, just outside of Nashville. Also included in the 100-acre complex are an amusement park, shops and restaurants, and the Roy Acuff museum. Opryland is owned by a Nashville radio station, WSM, and its parent company, National Life and Insurance Co.
2. Grand Ole Opry: The Grand Ole Opry was launched in November 1925 as a country music radio show on Nashville station WSM by emcee George D. Hay -- best known as the Solemn Old Judge. (Hay died in May 1968.) The first feature performer was Uncle Jimmy Thompson, an eighty-year-old fiddler who claimed he could fiddle the "taters off the vine." The Opry is now the oldest continuing radio show in America. Saturday night's program will mark the 2,514th consecutive broadcast.
3. The Show: The show begins at 6 pm, with a film clip from a 1940 movie -- The Grand Ole Opry -- in which Solemn Old Judge Hay, introduces Roy Acuff, the original big Opry star, and his Smoky Mountain Boys. The screen will be raised and Acuff and his group will appear live to start the show. Over sixty acts, appearing in alphabetical order, will do their things. At 7:35 Roy Acuff introduces RN. Acuff calls Mrs. Nixon to the stage, Mrs. Tex Ritter gives her a dulcimer, RN helps unveil a dedicatory plaque, and RN makes some remarks. (There is some talk of having all the Opry performers on stage with RN to do a medley.) When RN leaves, the show will continue.
4. Special Guests: In the audience -- the hall seats 4,400 -- will be Governor Dunn; both Senators; Governor and Mrs. Wallace

(Cornelia Wallace once sang with Roy Acuff); Rep. Fulton of the Nashville district; Governor King of New Mexico; Governor Waller of Missouri; Senator Hartke. Also at least 13 other out-of-state congressmen. Also invited: all members of the State legislature; all Nashville metropolitan council members; and the State Cabinet.

5. Opry Stars:

Tex Ritter visited RN on December 14, 1973, along with members of the Country Music Association, to present him with an album of excerpts from his speeches, narrated by Ritter. Ritter died of a heart attack on January 2nd.

Roy Acuff is one of the long-time Opry stars, called "the King of Country Music." His group is called "The Smoky Mountain Boys." Acuff has actively supported RN since 1952. Known for his Christmas tours to entertain troops overseas. Acuff began these tours during World War II.

Other Great Names: Ernest Tubb, Kitty Wells, Gentleman Jim Reeves (dead), Hank Williams (dead), Cowboy Copas (dead), Eddy Arnold, Marty Robbins, Grandpa Jones, Patsy Cline (dead), Stringbean (dead), Cousin Minnie Pearl, Webb Pierce. The greatest eventually go to the Country Music Hall of Fame, located in Nashville. Some living members: Roy Acuff, Ernest Tubb, Bill Monroe. Monroe is a direct descendant of President Monroe. Monroe, Acuff, and Tubb are all on the program.

Opry stars nearly all come from poor -- usually southern farm -- backgrounds. Many of them -- Merle Haggard, Johnny Cash -- have done time. Now that they have made it, they live a very special life, much like the lives of the Hollywood stars of the 20's and 30's. Webb Pierce, for instance, has a guitar shaped mail box, a guitar shaped swimming pool, a cadillac with three hundred silver dollars embedded in it, plus zebra upholstery, gun racks, and a set of Longhorn steers horns mounted on the hood. Cadillacs, glitter, sharp clothes and ornate houses are

the rule for Opry stars. The male stars are also noted for hard drinking and womanizing, and there are an unusually high number of early deaths among them. Hank Williams, for instance, perhaps the truest artist among them, died of booze and drugs at 29.

6. The Audience: The official Opry history book puts it this way: "It is Friday afternoon, and if it is summer they probably already are lining up outside, men in short-sleeved shirts and slacks or bluejeans, women in everything from gingham dresses to hot pants and maybe holding babies. They're from north of Chicago or south of Macon, east of Little Rock or east of Asheville, having driven an average of more than 500 miles to see a show three generations of their forebears have listened to on the radio."

The Opry people call them "friends and Neighbors." They're working people, fiercely patriotic. Wallace and/or Nixon are their politicians. They come from auto plants, from farms and factories, from kitchens, from their cross-country deisel rigs. (Example: I worked with a cook in Iowa with four kids who made 2 bucks per hour. He saved carefully so that each year he could load his family into their old Ford and drive them all to Nashville to see the Opry.)

7. Atmosphere: The atmosphere is extremely informal. People run up and down the aisles taking pictures of the performers. They talk to performers on the edge of the stage and get autographs, and in the meantime other performers warm up on another part of the stage. The audience will probably -- but not certainly -- be more restrained because of the presence of RN and the SS.

8. Country Music Lyrics: The best are always about basics -- love, sex, booze, faithless husbands, good girls gone wrong, loneliness, disillusion. Some sample verses:

As I sit here tonight,
the jukebox playing
The tune
about the wild side of life;
As I listen
to the words you are saying,
It brings mem'ries
when I was a trusting wife. (It Wasn't God Who Made
Honky Tonk Angels)

I've never seen a night
so long.
When time goes crawling by.
The moon just went
behind a cloud
To hide its face and cry. (I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry)

9. Additional Info from Clay Whitehead: There is a difference between country music and straight bluegrass. Both are played at the Opry, but plain Bluegrass is rare. Whitehead calls it, along with jazz and blues, the only indigenous American art form.

Pure bluegrass is played with banjo, guitar, fiddle and bass. Bluegrass is directly descended from Anglo-Irish hill music.

The most important pure Nashville bluegrass musician is Bill Monroe, whose group was called The Bluegrass Boys and included Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs.

Generally, "Nashville Music" is a combination of Bluegrass, traditional country music, folk music and "Texas Swing" or cowboy music. Unlike Bluegrass, this Nashville music often makes use of amplifiers, horns, trumpets and drums. Country music tunes increasingly are making the popular top 40 list.

ck
(Stein)NK /PS

March 15, 1974

RN REMARKS -- NASHVILLE AIRPORT -- WELCOME BACK TO
MRS. NIXON (MARCH 16, 1974)

sh
I understand that ^{every year, over a half} people travel an average of 470 miles just ^{here in Nashville.} one way to visit the Grand Ole Opry. Mrs. Nixon must be setting some sort of record -- she has traveled more than 5,000 miles in order to come here tonight. That shows you how much we think of Nashville and the Grand Ole Opry.

* * *

sh
When I see all these smiling faces greeting Mrs. Nixon and me, I am reminded of the power of President and the greater power of First Ladies. The President can ^{invite} ~~have~~ people ~~ordered~~ out to greet him, but only the First Lady can make them smile.

* * *

sh X
Mrs. Nixon will tell you about what she brought back from South America, but I can tell you what I believe ~~that~~ she left there: a message of good will, admiration and friendship from the people of the United States to our neighbors to the south.

* * *

oh Henry Kissinger told me that when they were working on solving the nationalization dispute with Peru, part of the trust between our countries which made that agreement possible was built up by Mrs. Nixon's trip to Peru in 1970. In whatever discussions we have with the people of Venezuela and Brazil over current issues, I am confident that Mrs. Nixon's visit will have helped to strengthen the foundation of trust and cooperation upon which our relations must proceed.

* * *

oh Tomorrow we will ^{officially} celebrate Mrs. Nixon's birthday, and I believe that her trip to South America, as tiring as it was, is a fitting birthday present. That is because the best prize life offers us is to work at something worth doing. And improving our relationships with Latin America, which Mrs. Nixon has been doing, is eminently worth doing.

#

oh When Mrs. Nixon left, I said I was sending her from my heart to the people of Venezuela and Brazil. It is especially appropriate now that she returns first to Nashville, the heart of country music and ~~so~~ surely very close to the heart of America.

CR
(Stein) *SK*

PLEASE RETURN TO:
RESEARCH
ROOM 121 E. O. B.

March 14, 1974

X RN REMARKS -- NASHVILLE AIRPORT -- WELCOME BACK TO
MRS. NIXON (MARCH 16, 1974)

Trip fact sheet X
I understand that people travel an average of 470 miles just
one way to visit the Grand Ole Opry. *ch* But Mrs. Nixon must be setting
she has traveled some 5,000
some sort of record -- *5,200 miles* ~~by plane~~ in order to come here
tonight. That shows you how much we think of Nashville and the
Grand Old ^e Opry.

~~I sent Mrs. Nixon from my heart to the people of Venezuela
and Brazil. Now she is returning to Nashville, the heart of country
music in America and surely very close to the heart of America.~~

* * *

X Relations with our Latin neighbors are perhaps better now
than they have been in many years. I believe that Mrs. Nixon's
trip to the Venezuelan and Brazilian inaugurals is symbolic of the
beginning of an era of equality among neighbors, of a relationship
of ^f brothers, rather than father and sons.

* * *

Insert from pg. 4

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X South America, but I can tell you ^{what} ~~that~~ I believe that she left there:
a message of good will, admiration and friendship from the people
X of the United States to our neighbors to the South.

~~I am firmly convinced, from what I have seen of Mrs. Nixon's~~
diplomacy, that if we could get her and Secretary Kissinger on a
plane together, there are no problems anywhere that they could
~~not solve.~~

* * *

*Mrs. Ritter
won't be
here
Praise God!*

I notice ~~that~~ Mrs. Tex Ritter is here, and Mrs. Nixon and I
are honored by her presence. As you know, I saw Tex Ritter a
few months ago. I am sure that today he is looking down on us
from that place he sang about so often and so beautifully -- "Hillbilly
Heaven."

* * *

*ask
Ben
- sounds
surprised*

Henry Kissinger told me that when they were working on
solving the nationalization dispute with Peru, part of the trust
between our countries which made that agreement possible was

built up by Mrs. Nixon's trip to Peru in 1970. In whatever
discussions we have with the people of Venezuela and Brazil
over current issues, I am confident that Mrs. Nixon's visit will
X have helped to ~~lay~~ ^{strengthen the} foundation ~~for~~ ^{of} the trust and co-operation
~~needed to solve the problems~~ upon which our relations must
proceed.

* * *

~~I asked Mrs. Nixon, in her talks with President Perez and
President Geisel, to explain that her presence there was a sign
of my personal interest in maintaining and improving the relations
among our countries. She was more than an emissary of a govern-
ment; she was the emissary of good will and of our determination
to strengthen our friendships with our neighbors to the South.~~

* * *

Tomorrow we will celebrate Mrs. Nixon's birthday, and I
believe that her trip to South America, as tiring and difficult as
it was, is a fitting birthday present. That is because the best
prize life offers us is to work at something worth doing. And
improving our relationships with Latin America, which Mrs. Nixon
has been doing, is eminently worth doing.

* * *

I sent Mrs. Nixon from my heart to the
people of Venezuela and Brazil. Now she is returning
to Nashville, the heart of

When I see all these smiling faces greeting Mrs. Nixon and me, I am reminded of the power of President and the greater power of First Ladies. The President can ^{invite} ~~have~~ people ~~ordered~~ ^{him} out to greet ~~us~~ but only the First Lady can make them smile.

#

(Stein)

March 14, 1974

RN REMARKS -- NASHVILLE AIRPORT -- WELCOME BACK TO
MRS. NIXON

I understand that people coming to the Grand Ole Opry travel an average of 470 miles one way to visit the Opry. But Mrs. Nixon's visit must surely be a record -- from Brasilia to Nashville, 5,200 miles, to be at the opening of the Grand Ole Opry Building.

* * *

I sent Mrs. Nixon from my heart to the people of Venezuela and Brazil. Now she is returning to Nashville, the heart of country music in America, which makes it, in a sense, the heart of America.

* * *

I believe that we can say that relations with our Latin neighbors are better now than they have been in many years. I believe that Mrs. Nixon's trip to the Venezuelan and Brazilian inaugurals is symbolic of the beginning of an era of equality among neighbors, of a relationship of brothers, rather than of father and sons.

* * *

As some of you may know, today is Mrs. Nixon's thirtieth birthday. She does not celebrate her birthday until tomorrow though,

because her father always wanted to celebrate it on Saint Patrick's Day. To her father she was his "Saint Patrick's Day Babe in the morn." Now she is my Saint Patrick's Day Babe and she gets more dear every year.

* * *

Mrs. Nixon will tell you about what she brought back from South America, but I can tell you that I believe that she left there a legacy of good feeling, sympathy, and admiration from the people of the United States to our neighbors to the South. I am firmly convinced, from what I have seen of Mrs. Nixon's diplomacy, that if we could get her and Secretary Kissinger on a plane together, there are no problems anywhere that they could not solve.

* * *

I notice that Mrs. Tex Ritter is here and Mrs. Nixon and I are honored by her presence. As you know, I saw Tex Ritter a few months ago. I am sure that today he is looking down on us from that place he sang about so often and so beautifully -- "Hillbilly Heaven."

* * *

Mrs. Nixon has just completed a strenuous and lengthy journey to South America. That journey and having her as my personal representative at the inaugurations of President Perez and President Geisel are symbols of our determination to go to great lengths to make this hemisphere a model for the rest of the world of great nations getting along with each other with pride and co-operation.

* * * * *

Recently we have settled several important disputes with some of our Latin American neighbors -- Mexico, Peru, Panama. Differences remain. And we are willing to go as far as is necessary to eliminate them. I know that Henry Kissinger told me that when they were working on solving the nationalization dispute with Peru, part of the foundation of trust between our countries which made that agreement possible was laid by Mrs. Nixon's trip to Peru in 1970. In whatever discussions we have with the people of Venezuela and Brazil over current issues, I am confident that Mrs. Nixon's visit will have helped to lay a foundation for the trust and co-operation needed to solve the problems.

* * * * *

There is an Old Russian story about how it is impossible to tell how long a man's journey will be until you see how long his steps are. The same is, of course, true for women. I hope that the people of Venezuela and Brazil can see, from the length of Mrs. Nixon's steps, about 5,000 miles in each direction, that our journey towards co-operation and helpfulness to one another will move swiftly.

* * * * *

In her talks with President Perez and President Geisel, I told Mrs. Nixon to explain that her presence there was a sign of my personal interest in maintaining and improving the relations among our countries. She was more than an emissary of a government; she was the emissary of a determination to do better by and with our neighbors to the South.

#

CR
(Coyne)

78

Research

March 14, 1974

GRAND OLE OPRY REMARKS

It's great

~~It gives me great pleasure~~ to join you here in Music City,

X USA, and to participate in the dedication of this magnificent building.

It's especially good

I'm also especially happy to have this chance to say howdee --

and I wish I could do that as well as Cousin Minnie Pearl --

to such old and good friends as Roy Acuff.

Roy and I go back many years. We greatly valued his support of the Eisenhower-Nixon ticket in 1952. And I value

his support just as greatly today. ***

TP One of the many friendships we wanted to renew
I think we all agree none deserves the title of The King of
Country Music more than Roy Acuff. Millions of American

fighting men will always remember those Christmas tours

by Roy and his troupes ~~begin~~ during World War II.

~~And I think our adversaries in the Pacific during those~~

~~years dramatized for all of us just how highly Roy is regarded~~

X by all Americans. TP During those ferocious Banzai charges against the

TP Last year, Merle Haggard and the Osborne Brothers
came to the White House to help celebrate Mrs. Nixon's
birthday. ~~which we couldn't resist the opportunity to~~
~~come here again on~~ This year, Pat's birthday ~~come~~
OVER

singing
made
who
part
of
the
great
man
Acuff,
the
a
great
part
of
the
 Opry
 tradition

with
Roy

was

Nashville
Sound
8-12

came on the same
day that you were
dedicating this brand
new Opry House, and we
couldn't resist the
invitation to join all
of you here in Nashville.

Pat says she has never
had a better birthday.

* * *

Insert A

* * *

Insert A

* * *

oh
I'm told that when the Grand Ole Opry started
here in 1925, it quickly won the hearts of all ^{people} ~~the~~ ^{over}
~~people in~~ Tennessee.

oh
You can be sure that when ~~the~~ ^{President} ~~President~~
of the United States comes here, ^{to the Grand Ole Opry,} ~~for the first time~~ you have
also won the hearts ^{of people all over America.} ~~of all Americans.~~

PN
memo
I can tell you that it's a privilege to
be the first ^{oh} President of our country to ~~be~~ come here
and enjoy some of the ~~country's~~ country's finest music.

* * *

X Marines in the Pacific, ^{some} ~~the~~ Japanese soldiers would shout ^{ed} :

p200
"To hell with Roosevelt; to hell with Babe Ruth; and to hell
with Roy Acuff." If that isn't a tribute, I've never heard one.

* * * * *

oh
I just wish that my good friend Tex Ritter could have joined
us and his lovely wife here tonight. Just a few months ago,
Tex came to the White House to give me a hand-tooled leather
album of excerpts from my speeches, with Tex doing the
narration. I will always treasure that album, and I will always
remember with deep affection and respect the great man who
gave it to me.

* * * * *

oh
X As all of you folks will remember, one of Tex Ritter's
great all-time hits was called, "I dreamed of a Hillbilly
Heaven." If there is such a heaven, and I'm sure there is, then
I know Tex is there now, along with Grand Ole Opry greats
like Patsy Cline, ^{oh} Gentleman Jim Reeves, ^{oh} Stringbean, Cowboy
^{oh} Copas, ^{oh} Hawkshaw Hawkins, ^{oh} Hank Williams, and all the others --
Tex is up there, watching us tonight, singing with us and
laughing with us.

* * * * *

Now I'm not going to stand up here and blabber at you for half an hour. You're here to have fun, and it's no fun listening to a politician.

Whoops. Just as I said that I recalled that Governor George Wallace is with us tonight. Now there's one politician whom it is fun to listen to. And with him, of course, is his beautiful wife Cornelia. Cornelia, you're even prettier tonight than you were when you sang with Toy Acuff.

* * * * *

But as I was saying, you're here tonight to make a little noise, to see and hear these great Opry stars, to listen to some of America's very best music.

X Every American loves ^{country} ~~that~~ music. I think the Solemn

X Old Judge ["] said it best: "The Grand Ole Opry is as simple as

oh X sunshine. It has a universal appeal because it is built ^{upon} ~~on~~ good will, and . . . expresses the heart-beat of a large percentage of Americans who labor for a living."

* * * * *

Country music is the music of working, producing America. It's the music that expresses the hopes, fears, desires and memories of the people who built this great nation and keep it running.

* * * * *

In the rhythms and lyrics of country music we hear and feel the essential America, the real America. When you listen to country music, you know what it is to work in cotton rows and in grain harvests. You remember prayer meetings and Saturday nights around the radio, listening to Nashville. You think of the defense plant workers of World War II and the factory workers today. You feel what its like to jockey a big rig across our Interstates in the dark hours of the night. You hear the yelps of a pack of hounds and the loneliest sound in the world -- the whistle of a midnight freight.

they say, is ^{}even ^{*}stranger than country*
Country music is as vital and invigorating as country
moonshine. In it, very simply, you hear and feel the total
experience of a people. *We know Tonight we know why.*

* * * * *

Look July 13 1971 X
The people who play country music and the people who love it are the very backbone of this ^{oh} nation. ^{oh} Chet Atkins has said, "We have known great hardship, and we tend to realize what a great country we live in."

That's the kind of attitude that those of you who travel here to the Grand Ole Opry bring with you. It's a great country, and we are very proud indeed to be part of it.

* * *
~~Of course there are hardships. Life isn't always a bed of roses. Our country isn't perfect. But without hard times, you can't really enjoy the good times. And even though our country may not be perfect, it's by far the best one the world has ever seen.~~

* * * * *

*sketch
except
for
marked
out
sentence* { Perhaps the problem with many of those we hear today taking potshots at our country and its traditions is that they just never had to get out there and sweat, never had to fight for what they have. ~~If you don't have to work hard for something, chances are you'll take it for granted. And it's easy to knock something you take for granted.~~

7-11-71

Insert B

* * *

~~Merle~~

Merle Haggard ^{has} ~~said~~ said: "I feel like I'm ~~singing~~
singing for the kind of people who fought in World
War II and had something to fight for, and still have
something to fight for."

3/16/73
Haggard
Joel
Shel

As ^{your} ~~the~~ President, who ~~has~~ helped to end
~~the war in Vietnam~~ let me say ~~that I feel~~ this:
I feel like I'm representing the kind of people who
fought in Vietnam and had something to fight for,
and still have something to fight for -- a world
of peace. That's the most important legacy I want
to leave behind in 1977.

* * *

Insert B

-6-

I think that's why the people who love country music are always people who also love their country. They've worked hard for what they have, and they realize that anyone who works hard enough in this country will get what he wants. That's a basic American principle, and it works. And everyone here tonight knows it works.

* * * * *

Country music deals with the basics. And the people who understand country music also understand the basic facts of American life. They know it's a great country. They know that despite certain hardships we are still the best fed, best housed, best clothed people in the world. And they know we are going to stay that way.

* * * * *

Someone once said that country music is the music of the people who do the work of the world. And if you listen carefully to the lyrics, you realize how true that statement is. Unlike much of the stuff we hear on the top forty or the top fifty or whatever, country songs are about real people in real situations.

ok ~~Chet Atkins once said that~~ "country music's strength is its honesty and sincerity . . . " *" according to Chet Atkins*

Mrs. Nixon and I want to thank you for the honesty and the sincerity of the welcome you gave us tonight. It's been a pleasure to visit with this wonderful group of real Americans.

And now, let's get back down to business and listen to some more of that good music. As George D. Hay, the *ok* Solemn Old Judge *"* used to say, "Let her go, boys . . . "

#

(Coyne)

March 14, 1974

GRAND OLE OPRY REMARKS

It gives me great pleasure to join you here in Music City, USA, and to participate in the dedication of this magnificent building.

I'm also especially happy to have this chance to say howdee -- and I wish I could do that as well as Cousin Minnie Pearl -- to such old and good friends as Roy Acuff.

Roy and I go back many years. We greatly valued his support of the Eisenhower-Nixon ticket in 1952. And I value his support just as greatly today.

I think we all agree none deserves the title of The King of Country Music more than Roy Acuff. Millions of American fighting men will always remember those Christmas tours by Roy and his troupes begun during World War II.

And I think our adversaries in the Pacific during those years dramatized for all of us just how highly Roy is regarded by all Americans. During those ferocious Banzai against the

Marines in the Pacific, the Japanese soldiers would shout:

"To hell with Roosevelt; to hell with Babe Ruth; and to hell with Roy Acuff." If that isn't a tribute, I've never heard one.

* * * * *

I just wish that my good friend Tex Ritter could have joined us and his lovely wife here tonight. Just a few months ago, Tex came to the White House to give me a hand-tooled leather album of excerpts from my speeches, with Tex doing the narration. I will always treasure that album, and I will always remember with deep affection and respect the great man who gave it to me.

* * * * *

As all of you folks will remember, one of Tex Ritter's great all-time hits was called, "I dreamed of a Hillbilly Heaven." If there is such a heaven, and I'm sure there is, then I know Tex is there now, along with Grand Ole Opry greats like Patsy Cline, Gentleman Jim Reeves, Stringbean, Cowboy Copas, Hawkshaw Hawkins, Hank Williams, and all the others -- Tex is up there, watching us tonight, singing with us and laughing with us.

* * * * *

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Every American loves that music. I think the Solemn Old Judge said it best: "The Grand Ole Opry is as simple as sunshine. It has a universal appeal because it is built on good will, and . . . expresses the heart-beat of a large percentage of Americans who labor for a living."

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The people who play country music and the people who love it are the very backbone of this nation. Chet Atkins has said, "We have known great hardship, and we tend to realize what a great country we live in."

That's the kind of attitude that those of you who travel here to the Grand Ole Opry bring with you. It's a great country, and we are very proud indeed to be part of it.

Of course there are hardships. Life isn't always a bed of roses. Our country isn't perfect. But without hard times, you can't really enjoy the good times. And even though our country may not be perfect, it's by far the best one the world has ever seen.

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#

(Coyne)

March 14, 1974

FACT SHEET: GRAND OLE OPRY, MARCH 16, 1974, NASHVILLE

1. This is the first show in the new Grand Ole Opry building, located in the Opryland, USA complex outside Nashville.
2. Opryland is owned by radio station WSM and its parent company, National Life and Accident Insurance Co. The complex includes amusement park, shops and restaurants, and the Roy Acuff museum.
3. The show begins at 6 pm, with a film clip from a 1940 movie -- The Grand Ole Opry -- in which Solemn Old Judge Hay, the Opry's founder, introduces Roy Acuff, the original big Opry star, and his Smoky Mountain Boys. The screen is raised and Acuff and his group appear live to start the show.
4. The President will be seated in the President's box at 7 pm.
5. This is the 2,514th Saturday night performance of the Opry over radio station WSM -- the oldest continuing radio show in the country. Over 60 acts will perform in alphabetical order.
6. The atmosphere is extremely informal. People run up and down the aisles taking pictures of the performers. They talk to performers on the edge of the stage and get autographs, and in the meantime other performers warm up on another part of the stage.
7. On the stage in chairs and bleachers are members of "the Opry family" -- friends and relatives of the performers.
8. From 7 to 7:35 the President will watch the show. It is not known which acts he'll be watching.

9. At 7:35 Roy Acuff introduces the President, who then proceeds to the stage.

10. Then Acuff will mention Mrs. Nixon's birthday and call her to the stage, where Mrs. Tex Ritter will present her with a dulcimer, one of the original mountain musical instruments. After accepting it, she returns to her seat.

11. Then William Weaver, Chairman of the Board of National Life and Accident Insurance Co., WSM, and the NLT Corporation, along with RN and Roy Acuff, will unveil a dedicatory plaque.

Weaver returns to his seat and RN makes remarks. (There is some talk of having all the Opry performers on stage with RN to do a medley.)

12. Special Guests: In the audience -- the hall seats 4,400 -- will be Governor Dunn; both Senators; Governor and Mrs. Wallace (Cornelia Wallace once sang with Roy Acuff); Rep. Fulton of the Nashville district; Governor King of New Mexico; Governor Waller of Missouri; Senator Hartke. Also at least 13 other out-of-state congressmen. Also invited: all members of the State legislature; all Nashville metropolitan council members; and the State Cabinet.

13. Items of Interest:

- a. Opry began Nov. 28, 1925.
- b. 500,000 Opry fans travel an average of 470 miles for Friday and Saturday performances.
- c. Fans mostly working people from Midwest and South.
- d. The sign outside Opryland calls it the "Home of American Music."
- e. Nashville is now called "Music City, USA."
- f. Nashville is the home of the Country Music Hall of Fame. Some living members: Roy Acuff, Ernest Tubb, Bill Monroe. Monroe is a direct descendant of President Monroe. Monroe, Acuff, and Tubb are all on the program.

- g. RN is on record as a country music fan. June Carter and Johnny Cash performed at the WH in April 1970.
- h. Exactly one year ago, Merle Haggard and the Osborne Brothers gave a WH performance . The Brothers will be on the program, Haggard will not.

14. Subjects to Avoid: Don't mention the old Opry House. Preservationists want it to remain. Opry owners want it torn down. The Administration has been burned once on this issue.

15. Tex Ritter: Ritter visited RN on December 14, 1973, along with members of the Country Music Association, to present him with an album of excerpts from his speeches, narrated by Ritter. Ritter died of a heart attack on January 2nd.

16. Roy Acuff: One of the long-time Opry stars, called "the King of Country Music." His group is called "The Smoky Mountain Boys." Acuff has actively supported RN since 1952. Known for his Christmas tours to entertain troops overseas. Acuff began these tours during World War II.

17. RN has never visited Nashville.

Additional Info from Clay Whitehead: There is a difference between country music and straight bluegrass. Both are played at the Opry, but plain Bluegrass is rare. Whitehead calls it, along with jazz and blues, the only indigenous American art form. Pure bluegrass is played with banjo, guitar, fiddle and bass. Bluegrass is directly descended from Anglo-Irish hill music. The most important pure Nashville bluegrass musician is Bill Monroe, whose group was called The Bluegrass Boys and included Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs. White is called "Nashville Music" is a combination of traditional country music, folk music, and "Texas Swing" or cowboy music. This Nashville music often makes use of amplifiers, horns, trumpets and drums. Country music tunes increasingly are making the popular top 40 list.

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(Stein)

March 14, 1974

PAT NIXON REMARKS

I am happy to be here on a Saturday night for the Grand Ole Opry. I traveled for 9 hours and over 5,000 miles to get here, but I think that anyone in America can tell you that to get tickets to the Grand Ole Opry for a Saturday night, it is worth travelling around the world.

* * * * *

I spoke frankly to the leaders of Venezuela and Brazil about our desire for a new relationship with them. They told me, very diplomatically, that they had heard that kind of language before. I told them that in this case we asked them to judge us by what we did, rather than by what we said. Actions will rebuild this hemisphere's relations, not declarations.

* * * * *

Everywhere we went in Venezuela and Brazil, there was a great outpouring of friendliness and enthusiasm and warmth. Sometimes large crowds would gather around our party, cheering and waving. The road to a fully harmonious and

co-operative relationship will be long, and there have been too many detours in the past, but we have begun, and we will keep travelling on that road until we get there.

* * * * *

I know that one woman travelling with a small party, is just a symbol. But from what I could see, we were a symbol of something our Latin American neighbors wanted very much to see -- a United States of America with a new attitude of sympathy and understanding for the shared ideals and aspirations of the people of this hemisphere.

* * * * *

I thank everyone for coming to see me on my birthday. The warmth of my reception in Venezuela and Brazil and the friendliness of you people in Nashville is just about the greatest birthday present I have ever had. Thank you for making this birthday such a happy one.

* * * * *

The last time I returned from Latin America I had just come from the earthquake ravaged parts of Peru. I spoke

of the Peruvian people as a proud and brave people who, I know, would recover from that tragedy. Now, I am extremely happy to return from much happier events in Latin America, but I can still tell of seeing proud and forthright people whom we are fortunate to have as our neighbors.

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(Stein)

March 14, 1974

FACT SHEET -- RICHARD NIXON -- PATRICIA NIXON REUNION
REMARKS, NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE, MARCH 16

The Event -- Mrs. Nixon will be returning from a trip of almost 10,000 miles to attend the inauguration of Carlos Andres Perez of Venezuela and General Ernesto Geisel of Brazil as Presidents of their countries. Mrs. Nixon will have left Brasilia airport at 7:45 A.M. in the morning and will arrive at Nashville at about 6:00. The event is being called "Join the President in Welcoming Back the First Lady." It will take place at a hangar at the Nashville Airport.

There will be a welcoming committee consisting of various country music personages, including Mrs. Tex Ritter (probably), Governor Dunn, Senators Scott and Brock, and several Congressmen from Tennessee.

Significance -- Several different important events will be occurring at once. Mrs. Nixon will be returning from her second trip to South America of RN's Presidency. The first was in June, 1970, when Mrs. Nixon visited earthquake ravaged parts of Peru.

Also, it is Mrs. Nixon's birthday. However, Mrs. Nixon, owing to a habit of her father, celebrates her birthday on the next day, Saint Patrick's day.

The President is in Nashville to attend the dedication of the Grand Ole Opry building and park. That dedication will take place later that night. The Grand Old Opry is the key institution of country and western music. Since 1925 The Grand Ole Opry has been a radio show on WSM radio. Its fame is world wide and it draws audiences who drive an average of 470 miles one way to see it on Friday and Saturday nights.

The Opry is getting its own building and park for the first time. This is a sentimental occasion (the opening of the new building) since many people were devoted to the old building.

The Grand Ole Opry is run along informal lines. People run up and down the aisles to get near the stage to take pictures of the favorite performers. Friends and relatives of the Opry members sit on the stage.