

Transcript of Mrs. Johnson's Audio Diary

Prepared by Staff of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum

December 8, 1963

Sunday, December the eighth. Lyndon got up early; he can't seem to help it these days, and I can't seem to help not getting up early. He went for a walk, and then a brief church service at St. John's. How glad I am about that.

I went in to see Lucy and got the delicious news that she and Beth Jenkins--who was spending the night with her--after having studied algebra 'til about twelve o'clock at night, decided they would light the fire. So they did. And the smoke came pouring out, filling the room and the hall. Lucy said that she thought the British were back again. It wasn't so funny to me. And I hope the staff didn't mind.

It's so good to see Lucy running around in blue jeans and Wisconsin sweatshirts and hair in rollers, and, I think, just like she always did before. I hope she can learn a lot from this, and not essentially change anything.

About eleven 'o clock, we left to go to New York for the funeral of Senator Lehman. I think the reason Lyndon wanted to go was because when he had been very sick with a heart attack back in 1955, it was Senator Lehman who asked the Senate to stand in silent prayer for him. And sentimentality will always be a part of Lyndon. I remember too, that the Senator sent Lyndon some mighty sweet letters and a radio. He doesn't ever want to be cut off from the outside world, and he had that radio glued to his ear for weeks during that convalescence.

I went up in the plane with several of the Justices' wives; Mrs. Warren, and Elizabeth Black, and Mary Clark, and several others. And I was aware that some of the old-timers--Tommy Corcoran, Ben Cohen, Grace Tully--were there with us. There were the senators who were close to the Lehmans; that is, as well as you can select them in a big hurry. That's one of our most difficult problems now is that everything is in a big hurry.

I've never been to a Jewish service before--a funeral service, that is. There was one beautiful line in it: "He never caused a tear except when he left us." Mrs. Lehman looked very queenly in her black veil, and I remembered our days in Senate Ladies together, and said our few words to her, and left. I noticed a newspaper headline that said 5,000 policemen were guarding the President. I hope it's an exaggeration.

Mary Lasker joined us at the airport and returned on the plane with us, to spend the night, to talk about art, and plans for the future. We went out to The Elms and carried back some

of our birds in our own hands, the birds that I love so much that we've been accumulating through the years.

We had dinner with just the Frank Ikards, Mary Lasker, and Jack, and Homer Thornberry. Lyndon's going to have a hard time doing without the velvet that Homer supplies when he leaves, I mean, soft companionship and the laughter. But it's certainly the best thing for Homer to do, to go on and be a [judge?]. **[Recording ends.]**