

1964

SUNDAY, JANUARY 12

WHD

This is the sort of day that I think if we could have about two of them every week, we could handle almost anything. We woke up at Camp David to snow, a fireplace, serenity and the good company of Bob McNamara and Margy<sup>and</sup>, their son Craig. Margy and I went for a walk in the bitter cold-- I think it must have been as low as about twelve degrees. There were frequent calls from Panama. Lyndon actually went to Church and it turned out it was a little Episcopal Church down at Thurmont. I probably would have loved it just as I do my own little Saint Barnabas, but I just thought I would skip it for once. And then about eleven o'clock, Senator Dick Russell and Marianne Means came out by helicopter and joined us. We sat in the living room and watched the valley of Maryland spread out before us and Senator Russell began to tell us an interesting story about how he thought we were pretty close to Antietam and about the lost order of General Robert E. Lee. He distributed his orders to all of the Generals. Some General, poor dope, had lost his. They were found in the forest, wrapped around a couple of cigars, by a Union Sergeant. They were, of course, taken to McClellan who at first thought it was a hoax and then began to act upon it, ordered up all his troops and what followed was bad for the Confederacy.

Later on when I was telling Lynda Bird about it, she said "Yes,

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and if McClellan had just acted real fast-- in an aggressive fashion-- brought in everybody, he could have finished off the war two years sooner. When I saw Dick Russell another time he told me that was exactly the way it could have been. That is the reason I want Lynda Bird up here because she knows so many of these things, she rises to the information a lot of the smart people I know have to impart.

For once, I read all the articles--even enough to satisfy Liz-- about what my day Saturday had been like. Dorothy McArdle's was especially good and Nan Robertson's in the New York Times was fine. There were any number of them. The Philadelphia Inquirer-- front page-- also front page in the Philadelphia Sunday Bulletin, a good story in the New York Herald Tribune, a very wonderful coverage about what to me had been a marvelous day.

We went bowling and it was rather comforting to find that that superman, Secretary of Defense, actually wasn't the best bowler in the world. I came in last, but I do believe that he was next to last, but it only made me mad and determined to come in-- well, the next time I <sup>not</sup> am going to be sixth. I am going to at least manage to be fifth. We had a late lunch and then a bit of a nap and at 3:00 o'clock we listened to my TV show with Nancy Han<sup>s</sup>chman, which was catastrophic, at least part of it, in the Library downstairs where we were together. Not Nancy's

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fault. She did her absolute best with me. It was just that I was tired, unprepared, and didn't want to. On the other hand, the week that I had lived was a good week and maybe the recitation of those events will do something to balance my own very poor appearance, and the minutes we had together in the Library. I am not going to do that anymore. I won't say that I am going to require perfection of myself, but I am going to be prepared and I am going to be assured the next time I do such a thing.

Ch. tape ("with"?)  
The best part of the day was listening to Dick Russell, Bob McNamara and Lyndon talk, and I have a queer feeling of sadness that all of the social charm and all the Governmental brains that are wrapped up in Dick Russell that he has chosen to such an extent to withdraw himself from the field of battle because when he wants to and feels like it, there is nobody as interesting or as good as he is.

It began to snow about three or four o'clock and we left about six by helicopter to return to Washington.

The McNamaras had a dinner date and so Dick Russell, Marianne Means, Jack Valenti, Lyndon and I sat in the upstairs dining room and had a quiet and rather early dinner and then to bed. It was really the sort of day that offered some time for that most valuable of luxuries--reflection, and I thought a little bit about what the past six or seven weeks had meant to me. Physical reactions have been quite noticeable.

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One thing, for the first three or four weeks I was cold all the time. I wanted a sweater when nobody else wanted a sweater. I didn't have any appetite and I lost about five pounds. After I moved into the White House for a while I found myself walking on tiptoes and talking in whispers. That's about over now. One can't go on doing that. Has there been any sense of elation at any time at reaching the job we are now in? No. None at all. Just a sense of how hard this is going to be and the determination to make these twelve months--eleven or whatever they are--as good as I can. And then there is another thing that's gone unmentioned but not unnoticed by me. It just happens that every night at dinner since the 22nd of November, Lyndon has either said grace or asked some appropriate member of the group to say grace. That's a habit I like and wanted to foster for about twenty-nine years and somehow or other have never gotten it over and yet here he's the man who does it. Also, he has been to Church every Sunday since then and occasionally on some days in between on an appropriate day like--I believe New Year's or Christmas. There have been at least two Sundays when I have missed that he hasn't missed. We've been to the Lutheran, the Episcopal, once we tried to go to the Christian, but it turned out to be a gathering of all sorts of denominations and we must go to the Christian soon. I am not going to say how glad I am about it for fear it might somehow evaporate, but I have the feeling that it's not going to and then <sup>^</sup>and this is sort of a final amazement <sup>^</sup>that rather rigorous series of exercises which

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Dr. Crouse proposed for Lyndon to keep him in good shape or rather not to keep him-- to get him in good shape. I really thought I was going to wait until after Panama to get started on them. I didn't know quite when we would or even whether we would. I, myself, had started on them and then I find very much to my pleasure that the Corpsman says that Lyndon has done them twice and shows considerable interest and it sounds like he might keep it up.

About the going to Church habit, it would be the understatement of a lifetime to say that a man of good sense doesn't know how much he needs help and solace. He does and I am so glad he's simply and straightforwardly going about seeking it. It reminds me of a line from the Holy Communion service that goes something like this "Ye who are in love and charity with your neighbors and intend to lead a new life, draw near with faith and take this Holy Sacrament to your comfort."

Note: The tape of Jan. 12 was misplaced and -  
remembering it as such a good day - I did another  
one some weeks or so later. Then the first one  
was found - and therefore there are two  
1964

SUNDAY, JANUARY 12

We woke up at Camp David to snow and serenity and fire  
burning in the fireplace, and the highly satisfying company of Bob and  
Margy McNamara and their son Craig. Lyndon went to Church that  
morning--a little Episcopal Church down in the village of Thurmont.  
It turned out to be like my own Saint Barnabas in Fredericksburg. I  
am sorry I did not have the get up and get to go with him. Margy and  
I went for a walk in the twelve degree weather with every breath blowing  
out in front of us like a banner. There were frequent calls about Panama  
from Cy Vance and other people in McNamara's staff, but somehow or  
other at Camp David there is an insulation that keeps you from being  
terribly worried about what's going on in the world around you.

About eleven o'clock Senator Dick Russell and Marianne  
Means just came out and we sat down in the big living room looking out  
through the picture window down onto the valley of Maryland and Senator  
Russell began to try to get us placed geographically and he said, I think  
we are close to Antietam. Then he began to recite the story of a great  
Civil War battle. General Robert E. Lee had distributed his orders to  
his Generals. One luckless General had lost his. They had been found  
in the forest, wrapped around a couple of cigars, by a Yankee Sergeant,  
taken to McClellan. At first McClellan thought they were a hoax. Then  
he acted upon them, gathered his troops and there ensued the bloodiest  
battle of the Civil War, one of the bloodiest of all times. Later on when

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I was telling Lynda Bird about it and how interestingly Dick Russell told it, I said, "Honey, that is one of the reasons I want you up here because you know so much about history, you like it, you like politics, and I want you to listen to these people I listen to." And she said, "yes, Mama, and if McClellan had had sense enough to round up all of his troops and pitch right in aggressively, he could have ended the war two years before he did!" I asked Senator Russell about that after I had gotten off the phone call with Lynda and he said, "That's entirely right. He could have."

We had a late lunch, a very short nap, a little bowling. We tuned in on my TV show, which was a catastrophe. It was as bad as I had thought it was going to be, that is, the bits from Pennsylvania were good. I liked them. The whole week was good, but the five minutes with me there in the library I looked just as old and just as frenetic and just as tired and just as unprepared as I was and if I am not smart enough to get the moral out of that, then I am not smart at all. No more unprepared things, no more things when I am not well briefed in what I am going to do.

For once, I read all the articles in the paper about my trip to Pennsylvania, enough to even satisfy Liz. Dorothy Mc<sup>Carle</sup>~~Carle~~ had an especially good one and Nan Robertson's was nice. I guess the best thing about today is that there was actually some time for reflection, some time to think about the changes that have come into our life. The

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one thing, some of the physical aspects of how these agonizing days affected me. I have been cold all the time. I wanted a sweater when nobody else has wanted a sweater. I haven't had any appetite and I have lost five pounds. That part of it is good. Another part that is good is that I find that we say grace at the table all of the time. Lyndon looks around and chooses somebody and we just naturally do and that is fine, a little while for contemplation in a day is a thing much to be desired. I believe if we could have about one and a half days like this after seven, I would have steam enough to tackle whatever else that takes place.