

1964

Friday, September 4th

Began with Abigail McCarthy coming over in the morning for a cup of coffee. Of all the ninety or so Senate wives, she is one of my real favorites. For character, intelligence, and just plain goodness.

Her mission was two things. First, she wanted to tell me that she had heard I was worried about how she might feel and she wanted me to know that Lyndon's choice of Humphrey for Vice President made no difference in our friendship. She couldn't have been more clear-spoken and gracious about it, and it was very clear that it had made no difference in her friendship for the Humphreys themselves.

But there was that undertone there that for a week or so there had been a sense of strain of their friends and promoters trying to push them on or stir up animosity or make them feel hurt at each other or with us. That's something we've lived with all our lives, the press and many of our friends trying to pit us against somebody with whom we naturally worked. Once against Allan Shivers, for many years against the Speakers, for years, more or less, against John, and latterly against President Kennedy. One has to learn to ride it out with a smooth sail, and I intend to do

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all I can to remind them both how great I think they are.

Abigail's other mission was to say that she hoped that we could find a job for Lou Engle. She needs it, is highly capable, she wants to remain in Washington. I hope so, too, and won't forget it.

And then, at 11:30 there arrived a group to talk about the proposed Whistle Stop, beginning in Washington and going, as first outlined, forever across the world, or so it seemed -- that is, it lasted 10 days and covered 14 States. Liz and Bess were there, Scooter, who will be hostess on the train, and Woody -- oh, indignity of all things -- this Vice President of the air line has been asked to be the Manager of the Train Trip! And Joe Moran, who will be in charge of advance men. The transportation men from the White House and two actual train men, one of them a Mr. Dewey, who had arranged -- what a delightful name that was! -- President Truman's own Whistle Stop, the famous one back in 1948.

We met for three hours. First, by my own insistence and after much, much discussion, we whittled down the trip to four days. Next, the decision was, should it end in Tallahassee, Florida, or should it go on through Mississippi, Alabama, and to New Orleans, Louisiana, ending there. I was very anxious that we concentrate

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heavily on North Carolina, give Virginia more stops than we had planned, and it was everybody's agreement that we concentrate heavily on Georgia.

Bill Brawley, who is really the papacita of the whole thing, who is in charge of the South, I gather, for the Democratic National Committee, was very much in favor of continuing on, with at least one or two stops through Alabama, Mississippi, and into New Orleans, and that is what we finally agreed on.

It was a profitable, long session, and I found when it was over, how dead tired I was. I invited Scooter and Liz and Bess to join me for lunch in the Queen's Room. Lyndon came in for a minute. After that I worked on the mail and then went in to have a nap with Lyndon.

And then a good long talk with Luci, whom I have been missing. And tomorrow she is leaving early in the morning for New Orleans. I had so much to catch up on with her, and all to hear about New Orleans. We had a delicious hour together. That little girl has grown more in this last year than she has done in any comparable two or three years. But then I remember with me, the year 17 was a terribly special year. Finally, just as it was getting dark, I went out around the South Grounds for a walk, my favorite thing to do.

We had asked Jake Pickle and Sherman Birdwell to come over and have dinner with us. They passed me as I walked around for the

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second lap, and got out and walked with me. Lyndon joined us for the third lap, and then we went upstairs for a quiet, home-folks sort of dinner, with two who started out with us in the NYA days back in 1936.

At the doorway as we started in we had met two of Walter Jenkins' children -- one, Beth, leaving next week for college, another off at boarding school -- and that was enough to remind us four oldsters of the passage of time.

Our guests left early, and it was eleven o'clock bedtime for us. Oh, blessed event!