

1965

Sunday, March 7th

We went to the Christian Church -- Lyndon and I and Lynda and Paul. The coffee hour afterwards always turns into a receiving line, and in no time at all half the States of the Union have been represented in the church-goers who file by. Lyndon has an absolute talent for finding the cutest, most lovable little girl or boy and striking up a conversation with them. This time was no exception.

There was a little girl in a red velvet dress -- I later found her name was Kimberly Frye -- completely uninhibited, big smile, who liked nothing better than to be picked up by Lyndon and bounced and kissed, all to the great delight of the photographers, who were also delighted as we filed out of the church to see Lynda Bird with a boy and soon were telephoning Liz as to his identity.

Shortly after we arrived at the White House, Secretary and Mrs. McNamara came. We went for a walk on the South Grounds -- Spring is promising soon. This was just a taste of exercise, and I didn't get any yes answers to my suggestion that we all swim, so we had lunch and Lyndon and Bob talked. VietNam, personnel, appointments coming up. He values and seeks his counsel and his judgment on a wider and wider spectrum of problems.

And then Margy and I slipped off and went swimming. We talked of Mrs. Kennedy. They had seen her skiing at Christmas-time.

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Skiing is a world where you get completely away from all your troubles, Margy said. Bob drops in to see her whenever he is in New York.

Later in the afternoon Lynda and Paul and I went bowling again, and once more I was above a hundred -- this time 112. I always feel better when I have some exercise.

Tonight the Bill Whites came to dinner, and the Jack Brooks and Congressman Pickle, and Clark Clifford -- Marny's cruising the Caribbean with old friends from St. Louis days, and the Jack Valentis. In talking about a certain Congressman, someone remarked, "He couldn't pass The Lord's Prayer in the House," and Jack Brooks said, "Not <sup>even</sup> ~~and~~ if the Lord returned and spoke in favor of it." It was one of those completely easy evenings when you can talk of anything and not feel that it will wind up in the paper.

For quite some time I have been swimming upstream against the feeling of depression and relative inertia. I flinch from activity and involvement, and yet I rust without it. Lyndon too lives in a cloud of troubles, with few rays of light. Now it is the Selma situation. Negroes are demonstrating for the right to vote, and the cauldron is boiling. Out in front of the White House pickets are marching -- a not unusual sight,

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but in this context with more poignancy than before, I think, because Lyndon is a Southern President, because he won with such a great vote from the Negroes last Fall, because the right to vote has been the key to the whole civil rights issue that he has hammered and hammered since '57. I am counting the months until March of '68 when, like Truman, it will be possible to say, "I don't want this office, this responsibility, any longer, even if you wanted me. Find the strongest and most able and God bless you. Goodbye."

In talking about the Viet Nam situation, Lyndon summed it up quite simply, "I can't get out, ~~and~~ I can't finish it with what I have got,

~~Do what~~ <sup>can I</sup> ~~and I can't finish it~~ what the Hell <sup>to</sup> do?"