

1965

Sunday, May 16th

May 18 - Dr. Williams (W.H. Gardner)
May 16 - Aug of Byrd family
May 19 - Brooke Astor
May 21 - Hershorn
June 6 - Noble Samuel

I wished & ready
to give to Library
(But ch. turned down
pages w/HM)

CSJ May 1988

When I crawled into bed with Lyndon for coffee, he passed me a sheet from the Situation Room, which was headed 4:25 A.M. I asked him if he was called at that time. He said yes, and two or three times more. So it has been a very attenuated night.

The situation in the Dominican Republic seems like a sack full of firecrackers that someone has dropped a match in. The papers are full of carpings and recriminations about McGeorge Bundy not showing up for the teach-in Saturday afternoon and speculations as to where he might be.

I watched a part of the program on TV, and it was almost enough to shake your faith in the intellectuals. One wonders if there is a necessary relationship between intellectual attainment and good judgment and experience. I watched Arthur Schlesinger a while on Saturday and was quite favorably impressed with him, although I understand he took some swipes at us before I tuned in. But I must weigh that against the continuing efforts of friend and foe to say ^{"Sik'en Sik'en"} ~~Siccum, Siccum~~, at all the Johnson adherents and all the Bobby Kennedy adherents.

Lyndon asked me where I'd like to go to church and I said the closest Episcopal church that had an eleven o'clock service. So we wound up at little St. Anne's in Smithburg, which was just as small

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as St. Barnabas. The minister, young, very nice, and I think a bit flustered, stood with us at the door as the flashlights popped. It's getting to be a familiar setting in how many little churches across the country!

And then we were back at Camp David presently, and June and David Brinkley and I had a couple more quick games of bowling. Then Lyndon and I, with ^{Him?} ~~Beagle~~ on a leash, flew to Senator Byrd's home in Berryville. It's one of the institutions of Spring for these last 16 years, much looked forward to. That lush and lovely setting in an apple orchard, white-columned house, the Blue Ridge in the distance, pink dogwood. The chopper set down in the meadow, and there was Senator Byrd in a white[^] ice-cream suit[^], with his three sons and their wives -- the whole family on hand to meet us.

It is a way of life that may be departing this society, but a very pleasant one. I love Senator Byrd for many reasons. The sign beside the entrance to his beautiful, tree-shaded, dogwood-banked estate that says, "~~The~~ Visitor's Welcome." The simple outspoken way he attests that he's an unreconstructed Conservative. His gifts to the

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Park Service on his own birthday every year of a Rest Lodge along the Appalachian Trail. A colorful, irreplaceable figure in American politics.

Senator Harry Byrd, Jr. wanted to know all about Luci, their Apple Blossom Queen of last year. And at least a dozen of the guests, neighbors from surrounding Virginia, told me what a wonderful Queen she'd made and asked me about her.

^{Him}
~~Beagle~~ promptly got into a fight with Senator Byrd's cocker spaniel. On the white-pillared front porch I had a drink, took movies, talked with the Kuuchels, the Senator McCarthys, the Edward Longs of Missouri, the Clifford Caseys. And a remarkable old gentleman, quite blind, who owned Ashlawn, the home of President Monroe, and told me all about how he had bought it one hundred years to the day after Monroe himself sold it in 1830. It seemed that Monroe is the first of the great Presidents who died on July 4th, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson the other two. He plans to leave it to the public in some way, probably with the State of Virginia, because he told me that "You know, 90% of the history of this country took place in Virginia," and then went on to document the statement.

I sat at Senator Byrd's right, his three sons and their wives and Lyndon and some of their closest Virginia friends, and the Kuuchels were with us.

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The dinner was the same as it always was. If it was any different I would be hurt. Virginia ham, the wonderful crabmeat casserole, fried chicken, hot biscuits and gravy, strawberry short cake on that handsome family china.

Senator Byrd introduced -- and how appropriate that he should -- the maid who always took care of us year after year. We met several of the help and I was delighted to give them autographs.

The youngest Byrd son, Beverly, is married for the second time, to a British girl. In talking about my trip into Virginia, she said she didn't see why Americans wanted to go travelling abroad when they had everything bigger and better in the United States.

We left about three-thirty, driven back to the meadow by almost the whole family of Byrds. And the thought is always in my mind that this is a ceremony, a ritual, and I will be sad when the Spring comes that there is no longer the reason to go to the Byrds for Sunday dinner.

We were back at the White House by four. Lyndon had a serious meeting -- more than four hours he was in his office, seeking a solution to the problems of the Dominican Republic and our relations to it.

I went to the pool and had 20 laps, and then after 10 dinner with just the two of us, and to bed.