

THURSDAY, JANUARY 5, 1967 - page 1

Thursday, January 5th. This is indeed the Valley of the Black Pig. A miasma of trouble hangs over everything.

9 If I had to draw a graph of when it began, or when it at least seeped through to me, I would say about December 10th. There are the big troubles of Vietnam, and the teetering balance between inflation and possible inflation, and then there are a whole flock of little troubles like gnats. Today it is Peter Hurd breaking into print once more about the portrait. My sympathy and disappointment and regret ~~about the portrait~~ is rapidly dissipating as he launches into more and more interviews. And Bill Moyers departure is giving the Press a picnic. 9 As far back as I can remember there has been a concerted attempt on the part of the Press to pit Lyndon against somebody. Long, long ago when the Speaker was the old giant, and Lyndon was a young up-coming power, there was a repeated attempt to set them against one another. Later to set Lyndon against Allan ~~Shivers~~. Only that one worked, ^{briefly.} Later still to set Lyndon, now the old giant, against a younger, growing, John Connally. It is a part of his talent, and forever to his credit, that Lyndon has not permitted these things to take place. # And now the persistent nibbling attempt to set Lyndon and Bill Moyers against each other.

Jan. 5, 1967 -- page 2

Bill

There are stories that ~~Lynda~~ has really brought in all the ~~for~~ fine fresh bright liberal ideas -- an attitude hardly calculated to endear him to the rest of the staff -- and that his departure will be a loss from which it will be impossible to recover. Well, it will if they can work it that way. It will indeed be a sore loss. I remember with affection those long hours of work, years of friendship, keen, fast mind laced with wit. We are going to miss him so much, and I hope that we and he and all the staff will weigh all this wave of publicity judiciously and philosophically.

I spent the morning working on a possible answer, brief, to Peter Hurd. The picture was too big. I had taken him to stand in front of the one of Thomas Jefferson, and told him I hoped it would be that size. The Capitol was too brilliantly, unrealistically lit. Actually the dome floats in the night like a great pearl. A brief statement and then no more.

And then I worked on the list for the Vice President's dinner.

And then about two o'clock I simply went to sleep and slept nearly two hours. A funny reaction to trouble.

Later I recorded in my little sitting room office. In came Lynda, fresh from Acapulco. The very spirit of '67 wearing mesh hose and little girl flat shoes, and very short, very bright clothes, looking so chic and gay. She told me about being the

Jan. 5, 1967 - page 3

(Merle Oberon)
house guest of the Bruno ~~to~~ Paolina. John Wayne was there. She liked him very much. Very conservative, but he had spoken quite kindly of her father, and Dolores Del Rio who she says is beautiful and such a lady. She has succeeded I believe in detaching herself from our life to the extent that she no longer worries too much. She does what she wants within the limits of decorum and good judgment and is becoming really grown up. How I do love her.

// Muriel came over about seven. She had asked me earlier if she could cook a steak for just the two of us. I suggested we bowl and then just drop in the office and see. After a drink we went to the bowling alley, and she beat me roundly two and a half games. Shooting 137 one time to my 105 or so.

And then Lyndon called and he said yes he could go to the Humphreys ^{for} a steak. We picked up the Vice President and the four of us arrived at their apartment a ~~little~~ little before ten. It was very gay and carefree. They are such fun. ⁷ We all felt like things couldn't get much worse, so let's just take off a couple of hours and enjoy each other. So we analyzed the Senate and its leadership past and present, the coming session, the things we needed to do. It was a sort of spirit of drawing together in time of trouble. We moved in a sort of simple, un-presidential sort of a way -- no motorcycles, no doormen. I don't think anybody even knew we went. It was fun -- kind of a night

Jan. 5, 1967 -- page 4

out.

At twelve o'clock we were back at the White House, and tonight Lyndon did not do his night reading. We went to sleep.

Tomorrow will be time enough to take up the problems. //

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