

1967

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29

The third day of Lyndon's real Christmas vacation. We had come down to the ranch on Tuesday, the 26th. On the 27th and 28th, there had been shuttle flights of workers from Washington. Today, there is not. In the morning Lyndon's tailor brought him some clothes and lo and behold there was among them a tailored western suit for Patrick Lyndon Nugent, age six months. It was hilarious--all Lyndon's doings, of course.

The first big event of the day was the arrival of Dr. and Mrs. Christian Bernard. Lyndon was on the phone so I went in to meet them in the big living room to bridge the gap until he came. They were absolutely charming, completely natural--He, a mixture of poise and at the same time being rather awed at meeting the President and keenly intelligent, a sensitively, beautifully modeled face. He told a delightful story about being asked by a rather worshipful lady very admiring of the medical profession whether he had ever saved a life. He thought a minute and said yes. He could think of one life he had saved and she wanted to hear about it. He had gotten a call to go out and see a rancher way out of town. He arrived about sunset, a peaceful, idealic spot. The sheep were grazing in the valley, the farm house nestled among the trees, and as he walked to the door there was a goat tied to a stake in the yard. He went in and the rancher was indeed very sick. His fever was high, he had an inflammation of the chest. In the night it was worse. He did not know whether he could pull him through or not. He tried everything. About three thirty in the

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morning he and the rancher's wife were sitting at the kitchen table having a cup of coffee . She looked at him rather desperately and said "Doctor, have you tried everything." He said "Yes, I have." Then she said it wouldn't hurt, would it to try some of the old country remedies I knew as a child . For inflammation of the chest we used to kill an animal--probably a goat--and skin it and wrap the skin ~~around~~ around the chest of the patient and the heat would draw the fever out of the person. Dr. Bernard thought a minute ~~xxx~~ to himself . "Have I gone to school for seven years to practice skinning a goat and wrapping it around a patient's chest." He said quietly "well, let's wait one more hour and if the fever hasn't begun to go down then we will try that. An hour later they took his temperature . Fate was with him. He had passed the crisis . It was going down. The next morning when he got up the patient was much better and as the doctor walked out the door to go back into town he looked at the goat still tied to the stake and he said "goat, I have saved your life."

There was present in the back of my mind the memory that this man was from South Africa. Somehow you don't escape from that. That country stands out so and then there were two things that he said accented oddly. One, I asked him about heart donors . How young did they have to be and he said not over thirty because any time past twenty five --most certainly past thirty--the white Europeans would begin to have some sort of heart impairment, however minor. Then he said but that doesn't apply to Negroes. You could take their hearts on up to fifty because they remain healthy longer . I told him how much the papers

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had reported everything about the operation all the progress here-- headlines every day. He said "Yes, we had a feeling there were many people pulling for us all around the world --even people who hate our country .

The most interesting of all was to hear him tell how he had gotten his medical education as a result of NIH grants which Lyndon had been effective ten or so years ago in getting them legislated. This grant had enabled him to go to medical school in Minnesota, I believed it was. He referred to himself as a gopher and then later in Virginia--Mary Lasker had called me about it the day before-- with great excitement and pleasure.

Lyndon come in and from then on I didn't get a chance to get in a word ~~edgeways~~ edgeways. They hit it off, they both talked animatedly about the medical problems that face people and what we can do about them and then presently Lyndon said "would you like to ride around and see the ranch." Obviously they were delighted, almost with a little boy sort of attitude. It was refreshing. We toured the ranch and the Martin and then the Reagan. The ~~deer~~ deer performed wonderfully and then at the end of the runway I saw Joe Mashman and his star pupil Arthur Krim. Arthur was elated because he had just piloted the helicopter. I think he had taken off but had not landed. At any rate, he felt rather at ease in it. Lyndon got in the front seat with Joe Mashman, the Bernards and I in the back seat and up we went without an agent--very much to their dismay.

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We flew low over the ranch and Dr. and Mrs. Bernard were excited as could be. They said it was the first time they had ever been up in a helicopter. We settled down by the hanger and Mrs. Bernard and I got out and the gentlemen continued on and presently we all congregated for lunch, the Bernards--I was delighted that Lyndon had asked them to stay--and Jesse Kellam and Don and Jane Thomas. Shortly after lunch the Bernards left to catch a plane for London.

Later in the afternoon we set out on one of our open-end rides--Jesse, Lyndon, and I and the Don Thomasts. Lyndon counting deer and inspecting fences for holes, looking at the condition of cattle, and Jane and I chatting about her desire to find a stone house in the country and do it over, preferably ~~x~~ one of the old German ones with the outdoor staircase so we took them over to see the Jay Dance house on the top of the hill that looks down the long slope into the valley right to our ranch. I am so anxious for somebody I know and like to buy that house. I want to accumulate a half dozen neighbors like Arthur for the years we come back here.

A little before six Jane and I dropped out and drove back to the ranch. Mrs. ~~Burg~~ met me there and I had a shampoo and set and was conferring with Mary while I got my hair done on dinner. It had turned out to be twenty two and doing my seating and then we all congregated. The Washington shuttle had brought in Lynda and Chuck and Mary and Barry Beck. John had arrived, much to our delight. We love ~~xxx~~ for Marie to have some company and there was Joe Califano

and Jim Jones and the Larry Temples and Arthur Krim and, of course, Jesse and the Thomases and Mary Rather who had come over to help out while we were home for Christmas. I wish it could be longer. We had heard that the Wests were in residence and so we had invited Neva and Wesley and Dee and Gene over for dinner and the Moursunds. I lit the fire in the big fireplace as it was a bitter cold night with a huge new log and there was that ~~warm~~ wonderful air of holiday and excitement and of the pleasure of all being together.

We planted a sumac during the day, Mr. Swanson had, against the stone wall of the office on the west side and under the two aging liveoaks in the parking area. The planting is going nicely. If only it could all be done when Lyndon is not here. He teases me about planting trees and digging them up and planting some more and it's true. Of course, we had to dig up the Japanese legustrums which ~~✓~~ used to shield Mr. ~~K~~line's old shop and they are to go in to ~~shield~~ shield the new pump house.

We played bridge after dinner--two tables of us, and then close to midnight Warrie Lynn and her date drove in. The old house is really bursting at the seams so her date spent the night in the trailer and I shared a room with Warrie Lynn.