

1968

THURSDAY, JANUARY 11

I began to wake up and get to work. It is like being in the land of the lotus-eaters here. I shook myself loose and rose from the couch of sloth. Lyndon was going into his office in Austin to meet Lawson Knott of GSA, and Gowd of AID and Ramsey Clark from Washington. The weather was still bitter cold and gray but we could go by helicopter. Luci and Lyn accompanied us-- poor lamb, not very well bundled up. He pulls off his cap the minute you put it on him and we flew into Bergstrom. Lyndon suggested that I take Lawson Knott with me. I was headed to see the Library site, a great idea. I want very much for him to feel a part of it all along as it progresses. So Lawson and I drove in, stopped by the Perry-Brooks building and picked up Max. We arrived at the LBJ Library site close to 12:30 on the bitterest cold day--never looked worse, gray and dreary and a huge muddy hole in the grounds. All of the buildings have been cleared off of it now except the old KA house and a half skeleton of one apartment house and the trees I noticed with great delight were protected with fencing. They also showed signs of having been worked on by tree surgeons. Max said yes, the University had made a contract with Mr. Caldwell he thought to do every one on the site. Later we came up on two men in a tree sawing away. They told me they used to work with Mr. Irb out at the ranch. We met a fine looking man in a hard hat who was a representative of the architects and of

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the University on the job and then another, Mr. Malloy, I believe his name was, who was foreman for the construction company who had the contract.

We walked around and tried to get the site level where the podium will be of the library itself, outlined with the little steel posts, the long shape of the building that houses the School of Public Service, the University's archives, their collection of Texana and their Latin American collection and at the far south end of it a group of trees that we had personally saved when Mary Lasker and I had walked over the site in May. The entrance had been replanned, the steps changed to let the trees stand. I felt quite possessive about them and then we went to the old KA house and on the south side of it there is a rickety fire escape, sort of a stairsteps that mount clear to the very roof of the building and it is on the highest hill around, a superb view of the Capitol, and the main building and the mall and a good part of the fourteen acres that make up this site. Lawson was very interested and knew a lot about the library, more about some of the acquisitions than I did, including a recent gift of a nine page handwritten manuscript by Mrs. Sam Johnson commenting on a book about Lyndon's life. It turned out to be Booth Mooney's book. How remarkable that he asked her to write it and she wrote in that detail and that he should have saved it. We took Max back to his office and Lawson and I went to the Federal Office Building and up to Lyndon's handsome suite. Ramsey was

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still in the office with Lyndon and Mr. Gowd waiting. It was close to 2:30 by the time they had gotten up so I sent the men in some cokes and snacks and lunched myself on the kitchen table, planned the hanging of some pictures, and then left taking Kevin Smith, the photographer and the movie man with me. We returned to the Library site and I introduced them to the Foreman, I described everything I hoped they would take pictures of. I hope to do this two or three times in the course of the building and it will never look worse, and then went on to the beauty parlor.

Lyndon was waiting for me before I finished and I left in great haste to join him back at the Federal Building. We called Paul and Dolly Bolton to see if they could drive out and have dinner with us. With Luci and Lyn we flew back in the gray day to the ranch. This is the longest period of gray weather I ever remember here at the ranch. We got back with a little daylight left close to six and Lyndon and Pat and Jesse and I got in the car and drove through the Martins until the last wintry light of sunset was gone. We always loathe to go home to see the day end. We stopped and picked up Lela Martin and took her home to have dinner with us and there were Dolly and Paul and a bright roaring fire. That is one of the pleasures of this long gray period. My Daddy used to say it is the right time to sit around the fire and tell tales. I had wanted to make a forward step in the library and the obvious one was to talk to Paul about what he was doing with the audio-tapes. He had an indoctrination and his tape

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recording machine and his list of people and was momentarily hung up waiting for a ruling from the Attorney General as to whether the tapes would actually belong to the University if the University is paying for them or to the Library, added more people to the list. Dolly and I had a happy time talking about flowers and bird-watching and the wedding and everybody we knew. We had a good dinner, they left early and we were in bed by ten o'clock.