

1968

MONDAY, JANUARY 15

Monday, January 15 was a day of transition. Gone were the leisurely days at the ranch, the big marathons that lasted sometimes until one o'clock in the morning -- and there had been four nights in a row. Lyndon had lost sixteen pounds and about seven inches in the waist. He had swum almost every day in that covered swimming pool and done exercises and ridden that bicycle. Somewhere there is a line--a happy country has no history and that is the way it had been at the ranch--no history, at least nothing particularly significant for me but quite happy now that it was behind me.

I did sleep until 9:30, but from then on, it was a very busy day. I spent the morning with Liz and Bess and Ashton going over innumerable invitations, evaluating them, seeing a proposal Liz had about the best trips to take. How to spend my time. What groups to see. I signed an enormous stack of mail. With Lyndon I watched part of last year's State of the Union message on TV. Then, at 3:30 Lyndon had lunch with George Christian and I joined them. I think I mildly reproached him for the late lunch hour and he said something so typical and rather plaintive. "I have been in a hurry all of my life. I have never had time to stay in one place as long as I like. I have been fighting an uphill fight all of my life". I could understand it so well because I knew that his mind was leashed as though to a Siamese twin, with that inescapable problem of how and when do I face up to this running again or getting out.

Monday, January 15 (Continued)

At 5:00 John Walker came to see me so we had tea in the Lincoln sitting room in front of the fire and I showed him the list of acquisitions for the White House in the last four years and he helped me evaluate the ones he thought were the most significant, little vignettes, human interest about them. We talked about ways to make the show mean more--the Barbara Walters thing I am doing for TV. Simone was with us. I talked about the feeling I had for all of them, the course I thought the show should take to let the Country know that it was an ongoing program and would last, like the White House, as long as this Country and this Mansion lasts. But many wonderful things have come in in the last four years and others were needed. He is one of the gentlest, smoothest, most genuinely helpful people I know. When he left I went back to work. The accumulation of Christmas mail was gigantic.

I went to the swimming pool for thirty laps. It was ten o'clock when Lyndon came home for dinner and this typical of our Washington night. Then I had some exercises and a massage with Chief Mills and was in bed about midnight.