

1944 Chronology

January

CTJ (Lady Bird Johnson) in Washington

1/2 **LBJ (Lyndon Johnson)** scheduled to speak at Hyde Park Baptist Church (Austin).

LBJ visits wounded servicemen McCleskey Hospital in Temple.

1/3 LBJ speaks at the Capitol, sponsored by the Austin American Legion.

1/4 LBJ makes speeches in San Marcos and Lockhart.

1/6 LBJ meets with Austin city councilmen on planning for postwar employment of returning servicemen. "I don't want to see another leaf-raking program [after?] the war."

1/10 LBJ just returned to Washington from Texas; was down in district visiting for about 20 days. Connally has already left for school in Georgia for approximately 60 days, then is to be assigned to carrier duty.

Buck Taylor has already announced for the Tenth Congressional District seat.

Emily Crow has been visiting CTJ in Washington.

1/11 LBJ phoned Pa Watson, FDR's appointments seeking a brief appointment with FDR. FDR replies: "Sneak him in the back way for 5 minutes."

1/26 Annual meeting of Austin Chamber of Commerce.

LBJ trying to avoid opposition and unnecessary campaign.

February

2/3 Majority of Texas delegation in the House followed Eugene Worley's lead in test vote on federal ballot for absentee servicemen. 12 members, LBJ, supported Worley's federal bill when they voted force an on-the-record roll call; vote fails, 233-160.

2/7 Congress passes \$2 billion tax bill, 8 [billion?] short of the amount requested by the administration.

Rumors in Texas that LBJ won't run for re-election.

2/13 Becky Alexander is born in Fort Worth.

- 2/14 Jimmie Allred writes LBJ letter of thanks for treatment LBJ gave him in Washington when he was there and for “wonderful gathering out at your home.”
- 2/16 Banquet of New Dealers in Austin, attended by Texas federal, state and county officials, and members of the Texas bar sympathetic to the fourth-term campaign. Speakers included Dan Moody, Jimmie Allred, Tom Miller, LBJ, Alvin Wirtz.
- 2/17 Death of Rep. Schuetz (D-Ill.) elevates LBJ to fourth-ranking member of Naval Affairs Committee.

Early 1944 (maybe Late 1943)

- LBJ worked with Gus Mauerman, mayor of San Antonio, trying to get a West Texas airline linking Houston, Austin, San Antonio and El Paso. Their efforts were unsuccessful.
- 2/18 FDR vetoes anti-subsidy bill, then wins enough support in the House to sustain the veto. LBJ, in Texas, was paired to vote to sustain the veto.
- 2/22 FDR vetoes tax bill.
- 2/24 House overrides FDR’s veto of tax bill. Senator Alben Barkley resigns as majority leader in break with FDR over veto, is immediately re-elected. Senate votes to override the veto the next day.
- 2/26 Democrats meet Saturday night at Hotel Adolphus, call for continuation of national Democratic leadership, lash out at Republicans. Headline speaker: Robert E. Hannegan, chairman of Democratic National Committee. Other speakers included: Harry Truman, Coke Stevenson, Ed Pauley, Myron Blalock, W.A. Brooks, Hatton Sumners and LBJ. The dinner climaxed a month-long fundraising drive for the DNC.

March

Early March

- Pat Adelman chosen as general manager of KTBC; Harfield Weedon enters service.
- 3/4 LBJ “just returned from a brief jaunt in Texas.”
- 3/9 Wirtz writes LBJ that he has heard bad reports about the situation in Sam Rayburn’s district. Herman Jones reports to Wirtz that if the election were held now Rayburn would lose. Oil men are putting on a terrific drive to defeat Rayburn.

- 3/15 House passes the “states-rights” soldier vote bill and sends it to FDR.
3/19 Lynda Bird Johnson born at Garfield Hospital, 7 lbs 7 oz. CTJ and Lynda will be in hospital a week. Aunt Effie and Mrs. Sam E. Johnson are visiting.
- John Connally is recovering from emergency appendectomy.
- 3/26 After conference with War Food Administrator Marvin Jones, LBJ announces that WFA will begin an emergency egg buying program throughout Texas on Monday to insure producers a return of 26 cents/dozen. LBJ says price would fall to 20 cents/dozen without relief.
- 3/29 LBJ and Ewing Thomason named to Post-War Military. Planning Committee.
- 3/31 FDR permits “states-rights” soldier voting bill to become law without his signature but calls it inadequate and appeals to Congress to amend it in order to provide for a wider and freer use of the federal ballot.
- April**
- 4/3 Supreme Court rules by 8 to 1 vote that Negroes cannot be legally barred from voting in the Texas Democratic primary.
- 4/5 LBJ helps Gene Autry get transferred to Air Transport Command.
- 4/8 LBJ to Raymond Brooks: LBJ reports that CTJ is not feeling well, the baby does not know the difference between night and day, LBJ got food poisoning and Zephyr Wright has appendicitis; LBJ her to the hospital. LBJ is on his way home to nurse and cook.
- 4/12 After conference with Marvin Jones, Fred Vinson and OPA officials, LBJ announces that federal price authorities have tentatively agreed to a 2 cents/lb. ceiling increase on the price of poultry.
- 4/13 LBJ has just been appointed as a member of a special committee, Post-War Military Policy Committee, and “we have our first meeting tomorrow.” He expects “this to be the most important committee in Congress for many years.”
- Congress had a short Easter recess, but LBJ did not go home because CTJ and Lynda had not yet left the hospital and he did not want to leave them.
- 4/15 LBJ writes Herman Brown: “After spending last month at Army and Navy I think we are going to get good news for Regs Robbins probably next week; Don’t notify your Fort Worth New Deal friend yet. . . but don’t let him get his check back.”

- 4/17 LBJ writes to Wirtz. "Lady Bird is much, much better, and the cook has recovered. . . . For the time being we seem to be getting along very well."
- 4/26 On FDR's orders, Army troops take possession of Montgomery Ward and Company after Sewell L. Avery, company chairman, and company directors refused to obey an order of the National War Labor Board to extend an expired contract with CIO union of Mail Order, Warehouse and Retail Employees.
- 4/28 Secretary of Navy Frank Knox dies.
- May**
- Rumors of LBJ for Secretary of Navy.
- 5/4 Mary Rather leaves for Texas. Her mother passed away suddenly. She will be in Texas until first of June.
- 5/5 Income Tax simplification bill passes U.S. House unanimously. House votes to create a special committee to investigate the Montgomery Ward seizure.
- 5/6 Democratic County Convention in Austin.
- 5/9 John Connally leaves Washington preparing to be attached to a squadron. Wasn't able to get Nellie and Kathleen settled in Texas before he left.
- Government terminates possession of the Chicago plants and facilities of Montgomery Ward and Company, as National Labor Relations Board election, held in the plants to decide whether the union represented a majority of workers of the company, is won by the CIO.
- 5/16-5/17 LBJ expects to be home for about 10 days.
- 5/17 Senate confirms nomination of James Forrestal as secretary of the navy.
- 5/20 LBJ in Dallas, en route to Austin, where he is met by Ed Clark, one of the leaders of the group seeking an instructed delegation for FDR. LBJ will spend 2 or 3 weeks in his district.
- 5/23-5/24 Texas holds two rival, irreconcilable Democratic conventions after party splits sharply on whether or not to send a delegation to the national convention instructed for the re-nomination of FDR. LBJ leaves regular Texas convention and joins FDR supporters, was making plans to attend the national convention.
- 5/25 LBJ addresses convention of 3rd and 4th class postmasters in Austin.

- 5/26 News report: LBJ issues formal statement re: bolting of state convention, says persons in control of convention were not “true Democrats.”
- 5/29 LBJ to speak at Bastrop High commencement exercises.
- June**
- 6/2 LBJ makes radio broadcast statewide from Austin re: split in the Democratic Party in Texas. Mary Rather evidently in Austin working on speech.
- 6/3-6/4 LBJ at Hotel Adolphus in Dallas.
- 6/5 LBJ returns to Washington.
- 6/6 D-Day.
- 6/10 LBJ writes Pa Watson requesting brief off-the-record conference with FDR. Watson writes FDR that LBJ is leaving for Chicago “tonight.”
- 6/11 John Connally writes that he will be attached to a ship permanently soon.
- 6/13 Democrats lose majority in the House for the first time in 13 years.
- 6/14 Disney Amendment, which would raise the price of crude oil 35 cents a barrel, is defeated. LBJ votes against the increase.
- House of Representatives, by voice vote, adopts bill to continue price, rent and wage controls for a year beyond June 30, after defeating cotton amendments but accepting amendment giving federal district courts jurisdiction over OPA regulations with the power to enjoin enforcement.
- 6/19 Wirtz and Allred argue the mandamus suit in the Supreme Court, expect a decision on 6/21. The suit was intended to see that pro-Roosevelt presidential electors get their names on the primary ballot.
- 6/22 FDR signs “G.I. Bill of Rights” authorizing broad program of benefits for veterans of World War II.
- 6/22 Congress recesses until 8/1.
- 6/24 LBJ writes: “I am trying to get up to NYC next week before going to Texas for the summer.”
- 6/26 LBJ hopes to leave Washington for Texas in next 10 days.

- 6/28 Governor Thomas E. Dewey overwhelmingly chosen by Republican convention. John W. Bricker unanimously nominated by Republicans [as vice president] after he removed himself from contest with Dewey for presidential nomination and seconded Dewey's nomination.
- 6/29 LBJ in Washington. Mary Rather and Pat Adelman in Austin. Senator Wirtz also in Washington.
- July**
- 7/1 LBJ en route to Austin from Washington. Buck Taylor stepping up his campaign against LBJ.
- 7/3 Rebekah Bobbitt is very ill--3 blood transfusions. LBJ gives her \$100.
- 7/4 LBJ attends July 4 celebration at Barton Springs. 10,000 hear Lt. Col. Miller Ainsworth describe his wartime experiences in Italy and North Africa.
- Dorothy Nichols working in Washington for LBJ.
- 7/3-7/5 LBJ in Austin office, on the second floor of the new federal building, which will serve as local headquarters until 8/1.
- 7/6 LBJ in Lockhart in the morning at the Business and Professional Men's Club, in Luling in the afternoon and Smithville in the evening at a Veterans meeting and barbecue.
- 7/7 LBJ in Granger at a Catholic gathering. CTJ christens submarine in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. (See photos.)
- 7/8 LBJ in Taylor. Political stump speaking rally sponsored by the Austin League of Women Voters scheduled at Wooldridge Park for 7:30. LBJ had not yet accepted but was expected to.
- 7/9 LBJ in Austin.
- 7/10 LBJ in Austin office in the a.m., meets with the Texas Power Reserve Electric Cooperative at 1:30 at the Austin Hotel, gives speech at 2 p.m. He spends balance of the afternoon at the Austin office; Brenham delegation is coming to Austin.
- 7/11 LBJ in Georgetown in the a.m., addresses the Southwestern Assembly at 11 and tours Georgetown and other towns in Williamson County in the afternoon.

- 7/12 LBJ in San Marcos in the morning, attends a joint luncheon of the Kiwanis, Lions and Rotary Clubs, and a barbecue in Austin in the early evening.
- 7/13 LBJ in Austin office in the morning, meets with Lions Club at noon with Bascom Giles. He's in Bertram in the afternoon and a Burnet courthouse meeting at 8:30.
- 7/14 LBJ in Marble Falls and Johnson City in the a.m. and in Austin early evening for barbecue.
- 7/15 LBJ still staying at the Driskill Hotel. His sisters Rebekah and Josefa are at the Scott & White Hospital in Temple. Mrs. Sam E. Johnson is in Temple.
- 7/17 Kellam has dinner with CTJ, Lynda Bird and Bill Deason.
- 7/18 LBJ in Brenham at noon for Rotary Club meeting, and barbecue at night. Democratic National Chairman Robert Hannegan ruled that anti-fourth term Texas Democrats be seated on the Democratic National Convention's temporary roll call, over the pro-FDR delegation. This action gives anti-fourth term delegation the right to name the Texas members of the credentials, rules and permanent organization committees of the convention.
- LBJ announces that he will not attend National Convention in Chicago. Rayburn also will not attend due to a tight race in his district.
- 7/19 LBJ in Giddings, barbecue in evening.
- News Report: Pro-FDR delegates to the National Convention are awarded badges enabling them to enter convention floor, where they lobby to be accepted as the official delegation.
- 7/20 LBJ in Elgin. Both Texas delegations are seated at the National Convention. Texas' 48 votes are split between them. Later Texas cast 36 votes for FDR and 12 for Harry Byrd.
- Democratic National Convention adopts platform and re-nominates FDR, who accepts in a radio speech from a naval base on the Pacific Coast.
- 7/21 Democratic National Convention nominates Senator Harry S. Truman of Missouri for vice president.
- 7/22 LBJ defeats Buck Taylor in Texas Democratic primary, but lost Washington County by approximately 200 votes. LBJ called CTJ at 12:30 election night disappointed with results. Congressmen Kleberg and Patton were defeated. LBJ flies back to Washington for a few days right after the primary (leaves on 24th).

7/27 LBJ leaving Washington today and returning to district. CTJ and Lynda remain in Washington.

7/29 FDR completes secret 4-day visit to Pearl Harbor where he conferred with Admiral Nimitz, General Douglas MacArthur, Admiral William Halsey and others, in plans for intensified action against the Japanese.

August

8/1 Both houses of Congress reconvene following mid-summer recess.

8/5 LBJ in district.

8/9 Rayburn calls all members back for 8/15 for important legislation.

8/11-8/13 LBJ spends from Friday to Saturday at Dam. Takes office staff on Friday and they returned to Austin on Saturday. Then group from radio station came out on Saturday and stayed until Sunday afternoon. Tom Clark is scheduled to come on the 17th and LBJ hopes to take him and others up to Dam for a special weekend.

8/17 LBJ and Mary Rather return to Washington from Austin on plane.

8/21 Three-power "Washington Conversations on International Organization" begins at Dumbarton Oaks mansion on the edge of Washington, attended by representatives of the U.S., Great Britain and Russia, including Secretary of State Cordell Hull, Andrei A. Gromyko, the Russian ambassador, and Sir Alex Cadogan, British Permanent Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

8/25 Paris is liberated.

8/29 LBJ has lunch with P.L. Smith in Chicago.

September

9/2 LBJ in Washington.

9/7 LBJ writes Bill Deason that all of the office force is in Austin, except Dorothy, [since] House will recess shortly. He hopes CTJ and Lynda will return to Austin with him. LBJ writes that he hopes to be able to get through most of the important legislation by the 15th. If so, he will be back in the district for a few weeks.

9/12 Judge M.O. Flowers dies.

9/13 Democratic state convention in Texas.

9/19

LBJ indicates that he is coming to Texas next week.

- 9/21 Congress formally adjourns until 11/14.
- Jim Ferguson dies.
- 9/23 State Supreme Court upheld today right of pro-FDR Democrats to have their new slate of presidential electors printed on state ballot instead of anti-FDR list which the Secretary of State was ready to certify. Court ruled that State Democratic convention of 9/13 dominated and controlled by pro-FDR adherents, had the power to make substitutions for the list agreed upon by May convention.
- 9/26 Churchill and FDR agree to aid Italy and outline plans for aiding it “diplomatically, financially and otherwise in a political and economic rebirth.”

October

- 10/10 LBJ writes: “Lady Bird, Lynda and I are here [Austin] and do not expect to go back to Washington until the middle of November, maybe not until January 1st.... Have enjoyed a couple of football games and am trying to spend Saturday nights and Sundays at Buchanan Lake with a few friends that I do not get to see as often as I would like.”
- 10/9 U.S., Great Britain, Soviet Russia and China announce decision of Dumbarton Oaks Conference to recommend creation of an international security organization to be called “the United Nations,” and to be empowered “to take such action by air, naval or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore internal peace and security.”
- 10/19 Governor Robert Kerr of Oklahoma speaks at a Democratic rally in Wichita Falls. Sam Rayburn, Allred, LBJ, Myron Blalock, W.H. Kittrell, Lindley Beckworth, and Wright Patman also attend.
- Fall LBJ working to get Major Allan Shivers released from the War Department in order to return to the Texas Senate.

November

- 11/2 Students march on Texas State Capitol in protest over UT President Rainey’s dismissal by the board of regents.
- 11/3 American Association of University Professors scores UT regents action, plans intervention. Students continue protest. Faculty reaffirms confidence in Rainey.
- 11/7 FDR elected to fourth term.
- 11/13 James Lawrence Fly resigns as chairman of the FCC.

- 11/14 Congress reconvenes after recess of 8 weeks. Warren G. Magnuson sworn in as senator.
- 11/22 LBJ to Deason: "We are all returning to Washington on the train Sunday. That is, all the office force is going. Lady Bird and your godchild will stay here because I hope to be back by the middle of next month to spend Christmas in Texas.
- 11/24 LBJ writes to Connally: "Glynn [Stegall?] has been sick, ordered to bed for two months, Washington office is closed."
- 11/27 FDR accepts resignation of Secretary of State Cordell Hull and appoints Under-secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius as his successor.

December

12/1 CTJ is in Austin working on radio business.

12/5 LBJ to meet with FDR.

Mid-December

Battle of the Bulge.

12/16 To Connally: "Lady Bird and Lynda are now in Marshall and I have hopes of meeting them down there next Wednesday.

12/18 LBJ leaves Washington for Texas He will arrive in Marshall 12/20, they will all drive to Dallas on 12/21 and to Austin the 22nd or 23rd.

12/19 Congress officially adjourns.

12/27 FDR directs War Department to take over headquarters of Montgomery Ward and Company in Chicago and probably 7 plants of the Company in other cities for refusing to obey directives of the National War Labor Board.