

1945 Chronology

December 1944 – January 1945

Both **CTJ (Lady Bird Johnson)** and Lynda Bird are sick at Christmas.

January

Early January

Controversy over Coke Stevenson's appointments to the Board of Regents. Coke is nominating Texas Regulars. **LBJ (Lyndon Johnson)** is following the situation closely.

1/3 Congress convenes. LBJ writes: "We are trying to get reservations back to Washington this week and it now appears that we will have to accept them on any day they are available. At any rate, I am over-due in Washington.

House of Representatives votes 207 to 186 to put the Committee on Un-American Activities on a permanent basis.

Mary Rather is working for Judge Elkins in Houston. Apparently Ben Powell helped arrange it, so that she could be close to her father.

1/19 LBJ, CTJ and Attorney General of Texas, Grover Sellers, and his wife attend Inaugural dinner. Correspondence shows that LBJ requested tickets.

1/20 FDR and Harry Truman sworn in on White House porch.

1/22 LBJ writes: "Lady Bird and Lynda seem to be very well in spite of the terrible spell they had at Christmas." LBJ gives dinner at his home in Washington for Texas Attorney General Grover Sellers. Guests include: Harry Truman, William O. Douglas, Fred Vinson, Navy Secretary Forrestal, Marvin Jones, Robert Hannegan, Arthur Bagby, Ed Clark, Albert Jackson, William Kittrell, Arch Underwood, Sam Rayburn, Representatives Pickett, Combs and Lyle.,

1/23 LBJ went to see Grace Tully to tell her that the Federal Judge in Austin had died and to remind her of Alvin Wirtz' desire for the job and his support of FDR.

1/26 Senate Commerce Committee rejects FDR's nomination of Henry Wallace to be secretary of commerce. Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes writes FDR suggesting that Alvin Wirtz be appointed federal district judge to fill vacancy in Texas.

1/28 House Naval Affairs Committee Saturday night began a nationwide investigation of the uses the navy is making of its hundreds of thousands of civilian workers. Investigation, powered by subcommittee headed by LBJ, will probe for

absenteeism, labor housing, loafing, and draft determent abuses in navy yards and plants. Investigation followed assertion by Chairman James M. Mead (D-NY) of Senate War Investigating Committee that he found loafing in Norfolk Navy Yard.

February

- 2/2 LBJ: "Last night the House passed the Work-or-Fight Bill."
- 2/3 Big Three conference (FDR, Stalin, Churchill) opens at Yalta.
- 2/4-11 President Roosevelt, Premier Stalin and Prime Minister Churchill met at Yalta and agreed (1) to crush Naziism and German militarism; (2) to establish popular governments in liberated countries; (3) to make Germany pay reparations in kind for war damages; (4) to set up occupation zones in conquered Germany; (5) to call U.N. conference at San Francisco, California, April 25; and (6) to broaden base of Polish and Yugoslavian governments.
- John Connally on *USS Essex*.
- 2/10 LBJ flies to Dallas.
- 2/11 LBJ goes to Austin, stays through Wednesday 2/14, sees Ida Nell Connally and takes her out on Tuesday 2/13.
- Yalta agreements signed.
- Mrs. Sam E. Johnson has appendicitis operation at Brackenridge.
- 2/28 LBJ en route to Austin.

March

Early March

- LBJ in Austin to visit ill mother. When she is moved from hospital he leaves. LBJ spends almost 3 weeks in Austin during his mother's illness.
- 3/1 Senate confirms nomination of ex-Vice President Wallace as secretary of commerce.
- Special joint session of Congress hears FDR, reporting on Yalta Conference, declare U.S. must collaborate in world peace organization or face possibility of third World War.

- 3/16 Apparently "family" is ill in Austin. Sam Rayburn talks to DeGuerin and tells him to tell LBJ that if family is better and he can afford to leave it would be well if he were in Washington.
- 3/19 LBJ still in Austin.
- 3/20-3/21 LBJ returns to Washington and the office.
- 3/21 Controversial issues over agriculture appropriation bill beginning; close questions on May bill.
- 3/23 Senate rejects nomination of Aubrey Williams as Rural Electrification administrator, 52-36.

March

Question of LBJ for governor.

- 3/26 Party tonight.

April

- 4/1 U.S. Army invades Okinawa.
- Easter recess
- LBJ trying to get rest.
- 4/8 Bill Deason and Jeanne Fitzpatrick marry at Ft. Myer, Virginia and have reception at Johnsons', then leave for Texas.
- 4/11 CTJ has been ill with cold and fever but is better now. Ray Roberts in Washington working on LBJ's subcommittee.
- 4/12 LBJ just back from New York City. FDR dies of cerebral hemorrhage in Warm Springs, Georgia; Harry Truman sworn in as president.
- 4/13 LBJ passes on to Rayburn the suggestion that the latter make a nationwide speech to steady the people's nerves.
- 4/14 National day of mourning for FDR.
- 4/16 President Truman makes first speech before joint session of Congress, declares he will carry out FDR's war and peace policies.
- 4/17 Truman signs third extension of Lend-Lease.

4/19 LBJ to head back to Texas. Lynda Bird has been ill with fever from ear infection for a couple of weeks. LBJ planned to attend Jackson Day Dinner in Austin with Tom Connally as speaker, and another Jackson Day Dinner in Houston where LBJ will be speaker, but both were postponed after FDR's death until after the San Francisco conference.

4/25 United Nations Conference opens in San Francisco. Delegates from 46 nations attend. President Truman gives short address by telephone from White House.

4/28 LBJ letter to Stanley Marcus re: death of FDR: "I am enclosing . . . an interview I gave the night of his death which appeared in the New York Times The next 90 days will tell which direction we go from here."

Mussolini put to death by firing squad of Italian partisans.

May

5/1 Hamburg radio reports that Adolf Hitler has fallen in battle at his command post in the Chancellory in Berlin.

5/3 Secretary Ickes takes possession of Pennsylvania's anthracite mines on order of President Truman and called on miners to resume production of coal. Truman vetoes resolution which would have continued the deferment of large numbers of agricultural workers. In less than 3 hours, House sustains veto.

5/7 Germany surrenders, official announcement made May 8, V-E Day.

5/8 V-E Day.

5/10 Vinson appoints LBJ chairman of special subcommittee to study Naval properties in British Isles, Europe and North Africa. LBJ to Commander Bird: "I have plans to leave the U.S. within the next 2 or 3 days for a rather extended inspection tour. Will likely be away from my office from 4 to 5 weeks but will not have an opportunity to visit over in your area."

5/15 LBJ en route to Europe for inspection trip. John Connally writes LBJ that his earlier plans to return to Washington had been thwarted by the Bureau of Personnel. In a 7/10 letter to Jim Rowe, LBJ writes: "As he probably told you, we had expected him this way in April but now he will probably stay there until August."

5/23 Churchill resigns in preparation for a general election in England. President Truman reorganizes Cabinet: Tom Clark succeeds Francis Biddle as attorney

general; Louis B. Schwellenbach succeeds Frances Perkins as secretary of labor;
Clinton P. Anderson succeeds Claude Wickard as secretary of agriculture.

LBJ's trip to Europe:

Subcommittee consisted of LBJ, Rep. Michael J. Bradley (Pa.), Rep. F. Edward Hebert (La.), Rep. W. Sterling Cole (NY) and Rep. William E. Hess (Oh.); Donald Cook, on loan from Securities and Exchange Commission, to act as special counsel; Col. Donald J. Ramsey, U.S.N. and Col. Joseph W. Knighton, U.S.M.C., as aides.

- 5/14 Monday. Committee leaves National Airport bound for Bermuda Naval Base.
- 5/15 Tuesday. Bermuda: inspection tour of naval installations; meets Mr. Murphy, acting Governor General of Bermuda in Hamilton.
- 5/16 Wednesday. Bermuda: discussions re: surplus property. Committee leaves for the Azores.
- 5/17 Thursday. Committee arrives in Azores Island of Terceira, 5:15 a.m., leaves for London 7 a.m., arrive 4:21 p.m. in London. Met by Admiral Stark and other naval officials. Stays at Cumberland Hotel, tours city and views wreckage.
- 5/18 Friday. London: meets with American Ambassador John G. Winant. Flies to continent, landing at Orly Field outside Paris 6:50 p.m. Stays at the Hotel Rafael and has short tour of city.
- 5/19 Saturday. Paris: Admiral Kirk gives group use of his plane, DC-3. Committee flies to Rheims, meets with General Eisenhower and Lt. Gen. Lucius Clay. On return to Paris they meet Paul Porter, FCC chairman, at Orly Field. That evening return to Paris and attend the Folies Bergere.
- 5/20 Sunday. Paris: Committee meets American Ambassador Jefferson Caffery and dines with Vice Admiral Allan Kirk.
- 5/21 Monday. Paris: Group scheduled to fly to Bremen but postponed due to poor weather conditions. Spends day at Rafael working on outline of report on surplus property.
- 5/22 Tuesday. Flies from Paris to Bremen, Germany, tours submarine yard area, dines with Admiral Robinson at his residence.
- 5/23 Wednesday. Bremen. By car to Bremerhaven, a port city. Group tours barracks of the German Navy before returning through Bremen to Paris.
- 5/24 Thursday. Paris: trip to Munich postponed. LBJ brings Texas Red Cross girl [Jerre Wilke?] to lunch.

- 5/25 Friday. Paris: committee flies to Marseilles, has lunch, then on to Naples, where they stay at the Parco Hotel. They have conference at Admiral Glassford's headquarters re surplus property, and later dine with the Admiral at his residence.
- 5/26 Saturday. Naples: group flies over Anzio beachhead to Rome, met by Commander Ziroti, senior U.S. liaison officer, before going to the Grand Hotel. That after- noon they meet Pope Pius XII and receive beads and have rosaries blessed. They later attend a reception given by Ambassador Kirk in their honor, held at Palazzo Barberini. Commander Kirk gives dinner for congressional party at Grand Hotel.
- 5/27 Sunday. Rome: sightseeing tour of Rome, including visiting caves where German atrocities had been committed, also Coliseum, Roman Baths, old Roman Wall, Palazzo Venezia, catacombs.
- 5/28 Monday. Rome: group flies to Naples and has lunch with Ambassador Glassford, then fly on to Palermo, Sicily where they are met by Captain Nichols. They visit naval installations.
- 5/29 Tuesday. Group flies from Palermo to Bizerte and Oran, North Africa. They are met there by Commodore C.M. Yates, and tour Oran installations, stay at Grand Hotel.
- 5/30 Wednesday. Fly from Oran to Port Lyantey, North Africa to visit air installation. Drive to Rabat, visit the old City, or Medinah, drive on to Casablanca, Morocco to stay at the Plaza Hotel. That evening they have dinner with the Admiral.
- 5/31 Thursday. Group flies to Marseilles and tours the city.
- 6/1 Friday. Committee flies to Cannes where they stay at the Hotel Carleton. They drive to Nice and back.
- 6/2 Saturday. Cannes: Group writes first half of report on surplus property, dealing with France, Italy and North Africa.
- 6/3 Sunday. Cannes: Group flies to Paris.
- 6/4 Monday. Group goes to Munich and visits Dachau.
- 6/5 Tuesday. Group rides to Salzburg, visits underground City of Berchtesgaden in Bavarian Alps, Hitler's hideout.
- 6/6 Wednesday. Group flies from Paris to Southampton, then on to London by car.

- 6/7 Thursday. Group flies from London to Exeter, studies supply situation there, then they drive from Exeter to Heatfield, location of the Construction Battalion Center. Then on to Coypool, used as an annex to the storage facilities at Exeter. Then they go to Plymouth to inspect the installations there, and dine with Commander Korns, returning afterwards to Exeter.
- 6/8 Friday. Group leaves by plane for Prestwick in Scotland and drives to Roseneath, where large U.S. Navy training station is located. They have lunch there and then drive to Inveraray, Lock Lomand and Edinburg.
- 6/9 Saturday. After sightseeing in Edinburgh group flies back to London.
- 6/10 Sunday. Group tours London again and attends farewell party at the apartment of Lt. George Sprowse, U.S.. Navy.
- 6/11 Monday. Group flies from London to Iceland, Newfoundland and then on to National Airport, arriving on Tuesday morning. Jerre Wilke and Nancy Gatch (daughter of Rear Admiral Frank Gatch) fly back with the committee.
- 6/12 Committee arrives back in Washington. They file their report, entitled: "Navy Surplus Property in the Mediterranean Area and the British Isles." (back in the United States:)

June

Early June

- Bill Deason stationed in Kwajalein atoll.
- 6/11 Gene Autry writes LBJ: "It certainly was a pleasure to see you again in Washington. I enjoyed very much being with you at Mr. Rayburn's party and having lunch with you in the Speaker's dining room. I certainly appreciate everything you did concerning my Army discharge and if there is ever a time when I can be of assistance to you please do not hesitate to call on me."
- 6/13 CTJ is rushed to hospital for an emergency operation the day after LBJ returns from Europe. Her temperature reaches 106 Friday night. She receives blood transfusions from John Lyle and Irving Goldberg. Her temperature returns to normal Monday (6/18).
- 6/16 In telephone conversation with Mack DeGuerin, Ed Clark mentions that people in Texas think LBJ is leading candidate in the race for governor now, despite the fact that Beauford Jester, John Lee Smith and Coke Stevenson may be in the field.

- 6/21 Admiral Nimitz announces that after 82 days of fighting, the battle of Okinawa has been won.
- 6/24 CTJ is brought home from the hospital, will have to stay upstairs for two weeks.
- 6/26 U.N. Conference in San Francisco comes to a close after an address by President Truman.
- 6/30 Clinton P. Anderson becomes secretary of agriculture.

July

- 7/1 Tom Clark replaces Francis Biddle as attorney general; Robert Hannegan becomes postmaster general.
- 7/3 James Byrnes is sworn in as secretary of state. Truman submits U.N. Charter to Senate and urges that body to ratify it quickly, as only way to achieve enduring peace.
- 7/7 President Truman and Secretary of State Byrnes leave by cruiser for Big Three Conference in Potsdam.
- 7/9 Allred says he will not be a candidate for governor if LBJ runs.
- 7/10 Ed Clark and John Redditt arrive in Washington. In a letter to Jim Rowe dated 7/10, LBJ describes the mood in Washington: "It is a different town today, as your letter indicates you so well know. There is little to stimulate one to doing unbelievable things and such accomplishments as we are likely to make will be of the routine type. . . . My own course in political life is yet to be charted. We are giving serious thought to going back to the hill country in Texas and making our contribution to a better world from that spot."
- 7/17 Potsdam Conference begins.
- 7/23 Fred Vinson becomes secretary of treasury.
- 7/28 U.N. Security Charter ratified by U.S. Senate, 89 to 2.
- 7/29 Clement Attlee replaces Churchill at Potsdam Conference after Churchill's defeat by the Labor Party in England.

August

- 8/2 Potsdam Conference ends, issues communique outlining Peace terms for Germany.

- 8/5 LBJ returns to Austin and opens office. CTJ stays in Washington. LBJ wrote: "It seemed too short a time after her serious illness to take her."
- 8/6 Hiroshima bombed.
- 8/8 Russia declares war on Japan.
- 8/9 Nagasaki bombed.
- 8/14 Japan surrenders unconditionally.
- 8/18 Over 1200 people hear Senator Tom Connally speak at Jefferson Day Dinner in Austin. Governor Coke Stevenson, Mayor Miller and LBJ also speak at gathering. Speeches were given on national radio hook-up.
- 8/23 LBJ writes Aubrey Williams about possibility of his running for governor. Also writes: "Lady Bird and the baby are still in Washington. They'd planned to come down before reconvening but at that time we didn't know we'd win a war in August."
- 8/31 Post War Planning Conference held in Austin by LBJ for leaders of 10th District. 400 people attend from all over the district. (See Stuart Long note.)

September

- Sept-Oct. LCRA electricians on strike.
- 9/2 World War II ends officially as Japanese envoys sign formal surrender documents aboard U.S.S. Missouri.
- 9/5 Congress reconvenes. LBJ returns to Washington in early September.
- Bernard Baruch urges the appointment of a "Works Director" immediately to avert disaster through what he called a lack of preparation for "human demobilization."

Mid-September

- Housing shortage in Austin: LBJ persuades UT Regents to accept 800 apartments that were surplus army barracks.
- 9/14 Ford Motor Company halts all production at its plants throughout the country and lays off 50,000 workers. Company says the action was caused by "crippling and unauthorized strikes" against companies supplying it with parts.

- 9/18 Secretary of War Stimson resigns and President Truman names Robert Patterson as his successor.
- 9/28 Truman by proclamation asserts the exclusive right of the U.S. to all mineral resources in the 759,000 square miles of the continental shelf, running to an offshore depth of 600 feet from the U.S. mainland, its territories and possessions.
- 10/8 Detroit without a major work stoppage for the first time in weeks as Ford and Hudson reopened their auto production lines after strikes that had halted supplies were terminated.
- 10/12 LBJ to fly to Texas with Admiral Nimitz, 4 a.m. Nimitz to arrive in Austin from Dallas, be escorted in a parade through university neighborhoods and down Congress Avenue, be entertained at a dinner before speaking that evening at Gregory Gym on the UT campus.
- 10/13 Admiral Nimitz to be driven to Fredericksburg and on to Kerrville to visit with hometown friends, return to Austin and leave that night. LBJ wrote to Admiral Nimitz on 11/5: "I had a late meeting in Austin Saturday afternoon and was about to become indisposed with a terrific cold. Therefore after the parade in Fredericksburg I explained to Admiral Sherman and returned to the Capital."
- Dr. Homer P. Rainey gives radio address on the problems of the South and the need for leadership.
- A struggle for control of the N.Y. waterfront between the AFL and the CIO entered the pier strike as members of the International Longshoremen's Association (AFL) started a back-to-work movement.
- 10/14 or 10/15 LBJ returns to Washington.
- 10/16 President Truman asks Congress to permit Puerto Ricans to vote on the question of independence, dominion, statehood or colonial status.
- 10/18 Army relinquished control of property of Montgomery Ward and Company in Chicago and six other cities seized in government order on 12/28/44.
- 10/30 House votes unanimously for peacetime U.S. Navy consisting of 6,084 ships and 12,000 planes; force would be larger than fleets of all other nations combined.
- November**
- Texas rumors that LBJ is planning to come out for governor and John Connally for Congress.

- 11/12 Cordell Hull wins Nobel Peace Prize.
- 11/13 Prime Minister Clement Attlee addresses joint session of Congress, warns that world civilization can only survive through strong United Nations.
- 11/15 Investigation of Pearl Harbor attack by joint congressional committee opens. Early disclosures show that U.S. broke Japanese code as early as December 1940.
- 11/19 President Truman asks Congress to act at once on a five-point health and social welfare program to give all citizens "a full measure of opportunity to achieve and enjoy health."
- 11/23 Rationing of meats, butter, and all other red point foods ends.
- 11/24 LBJ writes: "Sam Houston is home from the hospital, and although his leg is in a case and will be for some time he is not feeling too bad and is in good spirits."
- 11/26 LBJ introduces bill to amend surplus property act in order that veterans be given priority over all purchasers except federal agencies and to buy surplus property for personal use.

December

- 12/4 LBJ writes: "My own plans are still a little indefinite, as Congress may not recess until a day or so before Christmas. At any rate, I do count on a trip to Texas sometime around the first of the year."
- 12/5 Continued discussion of LBJ for governor. LBJ writes Gene Howe: "No decision has been made and likely none will be made until after the Christmas holidays."
- 12/7 Willard White cables LBJ from Frankfurt that he is returning home at once.
- 12/7 Stag party at 30th Place. Rayburn and Hannegan among guests.
- 12/19 President Truman nominates Eleanor Roosevelt, Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., Senator Tom Connally and Arthur Vandenberg as U.S. delegates to United Nations. Stettinius designated chief delegate; Truman also asks Congress to combine army and navy into single department of defense.
- 12/21 LBJ hosts dinner in honor of Senator Pepper of Florida to tell of his recent European tour.