

1965

SATURDAY, APRIL 17

Saturday, April 17 was marred only by the news that the McNamaras couldn't stay the whole weekend-- must leave right after noon. Early in the morning the four of us rode around our ranch and on into the Martin ranch, stopping to see Leila a moment and picking up Dale on over into the Dantz ranch, ^{the family} he of whom Lyndon has told that tale these many years about "dose children have got to wear dose awful names all dare lives and den dey never got de heifer calf." Mr. ~~Vance~~ ^{Dan} had named his children Jay and Olla after a neighbor Jay Chapman under the impression that they were going to receive a present of a heifer calf. The Dantz ranch, almost adjoining us, we had never seen or at least Lyndon hadn't since his childhood days when he said he had ridden every step of it with his Uncle Clarence. It was one of the prettiest we have seen anywhere, almost park-like, well cleared, large liveoaks, thick grass and a beautiful quilt, a pattern of pink, yellow, blue, white flowers--more phlox than I have seen nearly anywhere. No doubt about it, it was good land as land goes in these parts and it was close at hand. Lyndon wants it and Dale wants it.

We had to get back to the ranch in time for Lyndon to make a statement on tape for the press. About forty of them were gathered in the front yard at 11:45. I had ordered cookies and coffee put out on the front porch, but here I got a D minus as a hostess because telephone calls from Lynda or Luci kept me inside and there sat the cookies and coffee and out

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in the yard was the press with no one and right on time Lyndon emerged, made his statement, they dived for their cars and we have cookies for a week.

I gather the statement was planned as sort of a counter-move, a chess play, to Senator Fulbright's statement or speech about Viet Nam approximately this-- that we ought to cease bombing for a few days to give a chance for negotiations to start. He has the peculiar position of being our supposed leader in the Senate on Foreign Affairs and is diametrically opposed to Lyndon's policy in Viet Nam-- an embarrassing situation. The statement spoke of the "conflict whose beginning was obscure and whose end is not in sight. We have asked for talks on peace. There is no answer, no answer from Hanoi, no answer from Peking. You cannot talk to people who do not want to talk. We will not get out, we will not stop bombing unless there is an indication that they are willing to talk." He reiterated our readiness for negotiation but emphasized that it takes two to negotiate and both willing and then he said that due to the pressure of Congressional business, he would postpone impending visits from ^{Ayub Khan} ~~Ayub Khan~~ from Pakistan, and from Shashtri of India and any others until the early Fall. How hard it is to say just what you mean. Foreign aid is up in the Congress. It is going to be hard enough to pass it anyway. It may be impossible, and repeated presence of Foreign Chiefs of State and their possible public expressions here would not be helpful to this sensitive business of guiding it through the Congress.

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When it was over I hugged the McNamaras goodbye. I had a quick lunch and flew into Austin to get a hairdo and then with about thirty minutes to spare, because we were waiting for a passenger who was an expert on coastal bermuda grass, I drove out to Laguna Gloria, a picturesque Italian Villa on the banks of Lake Austin, that used to belong to Clara Driscoll Sever^{er}, wealthy, eccentric, legendary character of some five decades ago. Now, it is an art museum, the headquarters of the Texas Fine Arts Association. Today they had an exhibit sponsored by Wellesley, the works of school children. I noticed them all the way from the second grade to the eleventh grade-- watercolor, oils, pen and ink, collages, delightfully humorous, gay, weird, bright landscapes, mood pictures, portraits. I would have loved to have bought, bought, bought. Some of them were so funny. Then I hurried back to the airport in time to get with Marianne Means and Mr. Brush, the grass man, and fly back to the ranch to drop off Mr. Brush, returning to Johnson City to meet with Neva and Betty Anne and Mr. Carter at the Johnson City House, walk over the grounds, and let Neva and Mr. Carter know how very grateful I am for the high class job he was doing. My particular mission was to put out the small magnolias raised from seeds from the handsome magnolias at The Elms, sentimentally cherished by me as a reminder of the three ^{past} ~~last~~ years. We selected a spot to plant one at the Johnson City House, and then one at the birthplace house and then stymied at the ranch. We finally chose a very second-rate spot in the back yard. Then the three of us picked up Marie and Marvin and helicoptered to the beach house, boat

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riding back for a fish dinner at the Haywood on the terrace. Lyndon and Wesley, Marianne and the Moursunds had had an evening of boating, and looking and talking, banking and politics and ranching and laughing at old time stories. On these evenings Lyndon is a ^{raconteur} ~~reconnoiter~~ par excellence. Many of his phrases, I wish I had a tape recorder handy. They are so earthy and colorful and true and fresh though often rough. He is having one of the best times he has ever had in his life. I am grateful for it. I want to prolong it. I look at him in profile. He is so much too heavy.

I do not know whether to lash out in anger or sarcasm or gently remind him for the nine hundred and ninety-ninth time. But now I see him yearning toward the days of peace and retirement toward a life much along the pattern of these last three days. I strain even more at what I know is an obstacle to such a life--these twenty-five pounds or so of overweight. James and Mary and Gertrude have been wonderful on this trip, the meals so good. The fish dinner tonight to my taste couldn't be equaled in Maxims. [REDACTED]

After dinner, Marvin, Mariallen, Neva and I played bridge while Lyndon went peacefully to sleep on the couch, a great asset, a great wealth. He can go to sleep for a ten minute catnap or an hour--anywhere that he can stretch out or sometimes even sitting straight up in the car.