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CLAUDIA "LADY BIRD" JOHNSON ORAL HISTORY, INTERVIEW XXV
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CLAUDIA TAYLOR JOHNSON

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(3) I hereby assign to the United States Government all copyright I may have in the interview transcripts and tapes.

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Claudia Taylor Johnson 6/20/02

Claudia Taylor Johnson Date

by Patti Howell

Allison Fawcett 5-10-2011

~~Archivist of the United States~~ Date

Assistant Archivist
For Presidential Libraries

Appendix A

Attached to and forming part of the instrument of gift of oral history interviews, executed by Claudia Taylor Johnson, and accepted by the ~~Archivist of the United States~~ Assistant Archivist For Presidential Libraries on 5-10-2011.

Mrs. Johnson's Oral History Interviews:

May 26, 1975, with Merle Miller
June 25, 1976, with Merle Miller
June 29, 1976, with Merle Miller
January 30, 1977, with Merle Miller
February 14, 1977, with Merle Miller
August 12, 1977, with Michael Gillette
August 13, 1977, with Michael Gillette
August 14, 1977, with Michael Gillette
February 4, 1978, with Michael Gillette
April 1, 1978, with Michael Gillette
August 6, 1978, with Michael Gillette
October 9, 1978, with Michael Gillette
January 23, 1979, with Michael Gillette
January 24, 1979, with Michael Gillette
January 25-26, 1979, with Michael Gillette
February 27-28, 1979, with Michael Gillette
August 19, 1979, with Michael Gillette
September 2-3, 1979, with Michael Gillette
September 9, 1979, with Michael Gillette
November 13, 1979, with Anthony Champagne
January 4-5, 1980, with Michael Gillette
January 29-30, with Michael Gillette
September 20, 1980, with Michael Gillette
September 26-27, 1980, with Michael Gillette
February 6-7, 1981, with Michael Gillette
February 20-21, 1981, with Michael Gillette
August 10, 1981, with Michael Gillette
August 23, 1981, with Michael Gillette
September 5, 1981, with Michael Gillette
November 15, 1981, with Michael Gillette
January 2-3, 1982, with Michael Gillette
January 10, 1982, with Michael Gillette
January 30, 1982, with Michael Gillette
March 15, 1982, with Michael Gillette
March 19-20, 1982, with Michael Gillette
March 22, 1982, with Michael Gillette

March 29, 1982, with Michael Gillette
August 3-4, 1982, with Michael Gillette
September 4, 1983, with Michael Gillette
December 30, 1984, video and audio interview with Michael Gillette
January 4, 1985, video and audio interview with Michael Gillette
February 23, 1991, with Michael Gillette
March 4, 1991, with W. C. Trueheart
March 8, 1991, with Michael Gillette
August 1994, with Harry Middleton (six interviews)
November 5, 1994, with Harry Middleton
January 23, 1987, with Nancy Smith
August 18, 1987, with Lou Rudolph, Jim Henderson, and John and Sandy Brice
August 19, 1987, with Lou Rudolph, Jim Henderson, and John and Sandy Brice
August 20, 1987, with Lou Rudolph, and John and Sandy Brice
August 1994, with S. Douglass Cater
March 22, 1985, with Louis S. Gomolak
July 16, 1996, with Jan Jarboe Russell
July 17, 1996, with Jan Jarboe Russell

INTERVIEW XXV 1949-1950

DATE: January 2-3, 1982

INTERVIEWEE: LADY BIRD JOHNSON

INTERVIEWER: MICHAEL L. GILLETTE

PLACE: LBJ Ranch, Stonewall, Texas

Tape 1 of 2

J: Life at 4921 Thirtieth Place, Northwest, in the spring and summer of 1949 was rich and full. I remember it as a good year. In our household there was Zephyr [Wright] to do all the cooking, and a nice young woman called Patsy [White], from Austin, who was the nurse and maid.

G: How did you acquire Patsy, do you recall?

J: Patsy, on one of my trips to Austin, and I forget just how, I think she wanted the excitement of going to Washington, and she stayed with us some four or five years, as I recall.

Then we had a tall, gaunt black man who lived somewhere in the neighborhood and who worked for lots of families up and down the street, named Lewis, who was exceedingly able, a good human being, but he never quite got his desserts from life, because he was an alcoholic. He had a patron. He lived with an old army officer in a house on his estate until finally--well, when he would get drunk it would be bad. But sober, he was the most industrious, capable person, no end to the things he could do, painting, gardening, climbing the tallest ladder to clean the highest windows, and so

courteous and nice. I look back on it and I think that's one of the chances I missed to be a better human being, not to reach out to him more, although we did some.

So it was a well-staffed household, within our limitations, and everybody very busy and *lots* of company, always visitors from home and then lots of casual dinners for staff, newspaper friends, other senators. We began to branch out more in that year.

The children's doctor was Dr. John Washington, who would come any time of day or night, if he felt that tone in your voice that said, "I'm scared. This child is very sick." And I'll always remember him with love. He was a descendant of George Washington. He always himself looked like he needed two ice cream sodas and a blood transfusion, but he kept on going, night and day. I took the children to him until finally one day Lynda Bird, at about age eleven or twelve, announced, very ruffled, that she wasn't going back anymore because some people in there had mistaken her for--well, they didn't think she was a patient; they thought she was bringing her little girl or something. She was a very physically big, grown-up girl by the time she was twelve.

And Dr. Radford Brown, whom I also remember with the greatest affection, he was my doctor. Lyndon always took his problems to Bethesda [Naval Hospital], or ultimately to Mayo's [Clinic], as indeed did I. But Radford Brown was a specialist in gynecology and obstetrics.

G: Was he in Baltimore?

J: No, right there in Austin [Washington], a very courtly, elegant gentleman, a wonderful line between caring and totally professional arm's distance. I considered him my friend, though, for many years.

And then Dr. Lawn Thompson, whom we knew socially, who was very attractive, and went to all the fun parties, and whom we would indeed call on for general purposes, for a visiting relative who got sick or for ourselves or for anybody. He was a general practitioner and very much a society man around town.

I spent a lot of my time running the house, marketing, trying to get all the groceries and all the house improvements, being just the purchasing agent for a family of four, getting the most for the dollar. I was an avid bookkeeper. Not that I ever had a budget, but I always wanted to know where it went. I still probably have records that show every utility bill or telephone bill or a purchase of furniture going back to heavens knows when, at least I had them until not long ago.

G: So you managed the finances, in other words?

J: Indeed I did, all of that, the income and the outgo, and around time for the income tax was always a very stringent month of preparing material for Walter Jenkins and Mildred Stegall and Mary Rather. I don't remember at what time Mildred entered our life, but when she did, that's what became her responsibility.

The talk that spring and summer--well, as you look back, it is so hard to divide, as I have said, the relatively trivial from the long-lasting deep philosophical trends, but there was sure a lot of talk about "5 percenters" and scandal on plane contracts on the B-36, and gifts of deep freezes and inappropriately large gifts.

Then one of the most controversial things was that President Truman proposed to reappoint Leland Olds to the Federal Power Commission, and that raised a big storm. Everybody who was an oilman, especially as I recall independent oilmen, considered him

really the black beast. The communist thing, you know, was rising to a boil during that year.

G: Did LBJ ever know Leland Olds? I mean, had he known him before?

J: No, to the best of my knowledge, no, and was never favorably inclined toward him. However, considering his temperament, he was a pretty judicious fellow. He didn't want to lynch folks; he wanted to arrive at their philosophies and make a cautious decision.

G: Now, Leland Olds had been a staunch advocate of public power, and I wonder if it was hard for LBJ to oppose him when he had been a public power supporter on the one hand, and yet perhaps not inclined toward some of the Texas natural resource interests on the other.

J: I don't know. That's an interesting point. I do not remember him as one of those people connected with public power who figured in our struggles and in our gathering around the dinner table to discuss "how can we do more for REA [Rural Electrification Administration]?"

G: He chaired the hearings and everything on the Olds nomination. Did he ever talk about the basis of his opposition to Olds, or why he didn't think Olds should be reappointed, to you?

J: I can't say that I precisely remember him doing it. I think one of the most telling phrases about Olds that I can recall was Charlie Francis, who was never at a loss for words, who said something about, "If every cutthroat and thief is entitled to be judged by a fair and judicious tribunal, it certainly looks like a business that produces useful material and pays taxes has a right to be judged by a fair tribunal, and this man is not. He's got his mind

made up long before he ever hears the facts."

So the people that we heard from pretty regularly at home, who kind of took the temperatures of the folks, were Sam [D. W.] Low down in Houston, J. Ed Johnson in Brownwood, I believe, and Ed Clark in Austin, and of course Ray Lee and Stuart Long, also in Austin. Lyndon appointed Ray Lee to an interesting position that took him to Austria--rather, he got him appointed, of course, is the correct phrase--as public news officer for some military-related job.

The legislative events of that spring and summer: price supports for farmers ground on and on. It's amazing to remember that one of our problems were those huge surpluses of storable products, grains and things, that the government paid the storage on. Not, "How are we going to feed ourselves and feed the world?" but, "How are we going to get rid of all this glut of stuff we've already produced?" Well, the problems of the world do change. NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] was coming into being, the long torturous steps of being proposed by [Harry] Truman and nations signing it, and then its having to go through both bodies. And foreign aid, both the foreign economic aid, and then also military assistance to the NATO signatories, that was the grist for Lyndon's mill. He was always on the side of strong national defense. He was also always eyeing the military with a cautious eye, for fear they were not dollar conscious and getting their money's worth.

A lot of things were begun by Truman that never came to fruition, and that, as you look back here in 1949, it took all the way to the middle sixties to get some of them done. And some of them are not yet done. A compulsory health insurance program was one of

those things he started. And the military unification bill certainly did produce a lot of heat. There was an awful lot of squabbling among the services and a lot of cartoons about a shotgun wedding. Louis Johnson was a tough secretary of defense, and he got battered over the head quite a lot. I remember my relief every now and then when I would pick up a newspaper and see an angry headline using the word "Johnson," and then I would find out it wasn't Lyndon Johnson; it was Louis Johnson, which is indeed a very unfair way to look at it. (Laughter)

Tidelands, over and over, forever and ever, ground on.

G: Do you think that one of the reasons LBJ went on that Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee was because of the tidelands controversy?

J: I suppose so. He was on the side of the Texans naturally. On the other hand, it wasn't a thing that he was going to live and die by, as other things have been in his life, and as it was, let us say, to Price Daniel.

There were a lot of good little things that took place. For instance, when they began to disperse the army, the build-up of the army, of course, had produced a lot of plants and facilities that when they were phased [out], when the war was all over, they were surplus, and one of those was a magnesium plant in Austin. I have sitting on the shelf in this very room, used as bookends, some of the first magnesium from the plant in Austin that was given me by one of the superintendants or some personnel out there. I don't even know what magnesium is, or where we got it from. But in the huge war effort this plant came into existence in Austin. Then, it was phased out in this year and the University of Texas very cannily came up with a request that they be allowed to purchase

it for some very minor sum, and Lyndon worked, worked, worked on it. He liked that sort of thing, because he felt that it could be put to some constructive use.

G: It was still a public institution?

J: It was land and it was a lot of buildings, and the use of the buildings could be changed if indeed you didn't need to mine or produce any more magnesium. So what it became was Balcones Research Center [now the Pickle Research Campus]. I think the University got it for five million dollars or some modest sum.

G: Do you recall who at the University he dealt with on that?

J: Yes, I think his name was [C. Read] Granberry. Then I think it was when Dr. [Theophilus] Painter was president.

G: Do you recall how he worked to get that for the University, who he--?

J: Not precisely, but it seems to me that Paul Porter for a while was in the Surplus Commodities--was he, do you recall that?

G: I don't know.

J: Before he went to Greece as an ambassador. He was not a regular ambassador. He was kind of, "Let's work on supporting these people in their struggle against communism."

G: He [LBJ] had been, as a congressman, I suppose, the leader of the Texas delegation in getting things for his district--

J: He never ceased when he went into the Senate to be aware of the personal and local needs of his state. Of course, looking back, I think it was perhaps the year that he began to emerge from the chrysalis of regionalism into nationalism, but not at the expense of forgetting the folks back home. He was really looking for chances to help them.

G: Do you think that the Tenth District still thought of him as their congressman in terms of their own needs? Whenever they had an interest like this, do you think they came to him?

J: Well, he very carefully--he had a strong sense of the man who has the job must have, or at least share, the plaudits. He shares the work, and he shares the thanks for the work. Homer Thornberry, of course, had taken his seat, and whenever he received--and he did receive--an awful lot of requests for help from the people that had been writing him for twelve years--he'd, say, "buck the letter," as the expression was, to the congressman, and he would tell them that's what he was doing, but he'd say he would be surely standing by to help in any way he could.

There was one good chink in the wall of--well, I don't know, anyhow, civil rights did begin to make a forward step at that time. As you will remember, Harry Truman pushed and pushed, but was not able to get very far in civil rights. But, one big step went forward it seems to me, and that is desegregating the army. I remember Virginia Durr talking about how that was going to do a lot for the black man everywhere.

G: Do you recall what she said about it?

J: Just that she was real glad about it. Of course, you couldn't walk into a group where Virginia Durr was without her beginning the conversation on the whole subject and coming up to anybody who had any power to do anything about it, which she always thought Lyndon did.

G: Did he ever express an opinion on that?

J: Oh, he was glad of it.

G: Really?

J: He thought it was just. If they fight, they had the same rights of everybody else.

I remember sitting in the gallery, with Grace Kerr and several other people, watching the discussions of the natural gas act--you know, that was all, of course, bound up with Leland Olds--and having this sense of, "This is the most important thing before us." Actually, I guess it was one battle in a long, long war and not the most important thing, but it sure roused a lot of passions.

The whole communist thing was beginning to boil up. The Alger Hiss trial was going on. I remembered Alger Hiss from having met him at--sort of a slim, poetic, academician-looking person--a few Georgetown parties. His brother was much better known to us and our circle of friends, and I can't remember his brother's name now. But I remember very well his sister, Miss Anna Hiss, who had taught physical education at the University of Texas. She was his older sister, and she had finally become, I guess she was dean, but a woman of great dignity and presence and poise. There were some scholarships named after her. Anyhow, she was quite a person at the University.

G: Did she ever come under suspicion?

J: Heavens, no! I should not think so at *all*. To look back and think of a brother of somebody like Miss Anna Hiss, all that happening to him is just incredible. And of course a lot of our friends didn't believe he was guilty of anything. I cannot say that I ever knew. I just don't know. I watched the passion, and it was a scary and rather ugly time in our life, and I remember one time driving by a courthouse, I guess it was the federal courthouse, where the Judith Coplon trial was being held. You could almost

sense the hostility of the people who were standing around there watching. President Truman referred to it as a mood in the country, as a "wave of hysteria." I guess that was a good description.

Meanwhile, David Lilienthal, whom we had known and knew later, and I must say I liked him, he was coming under a lot of angry feeling for mismanaging the Atomic Energy Commission. A lot of people were testifying for him, and a lot against him, and he finally just resigned and said, "I don't want to have anything to do with a job that you--since it is a public job and I cannot speak out and express my opinions, I'd just rather depart from the job." Then the names of a lot of Hollywood actors and authors and educators who had been listed by the FBI were introduced in this Judith Coplon trial. That was on everybody's tongue, and "Do you believe they are guilty?" A lot of passion and steam on both sides.

Then two federal judgeships came open--two new ones were created, I think was the way it was--in South Texas. And our old friend Jimmie Allred, I'm delighted to say, was named to one of them. Actually, there were several people that Lyndon would have liked to see get them. Judge [Dudley] Tarleton, who had supported him in South Texas, was one, and then Senator Connally, of course, very much wanted his son, Ben Connally, to become a judge. Although Lyndon had never been a friend--just didn't know Ben Connally so far as I can remember--he had a lot of respect for Senator Tom Connally and he thought he had earned the power that he had. He was also a little bit scared of him, as most people were, because he could cut you up.

G: Do you think that was also perhaps a condition for the Allred appointment? Tom

Connally wouldn't support that unless his son were appointed to the other judgeship?

J: Could have been, could have been. I don't know. I know the appointment that gave Lyndon the most pleasure was making Cliff Carter federal marshal.

G: I want to ask you one more thing about the Allred thing. Of course, he had been on the bench earlier.

J: *Yes*, and got off the bench to run against Pappy O'Daniel, after LBJ was defeated by O'Daniel in 1941. That was an unexpired term, and so it came up again I forget, but during the war years.

G: 1942, I think.

J: 1942?

G: Well, what was LBJ's attitude toward getting Allred back on the bench?

J: Yes, that he very much wanted to do it. From 1937 on, Jimmie Allred had been our good friend.

G: There is some indication from the documents, too, that he really was responsible for Allred's appointment. Do you know anything about that?

J: Well, I think he did everything he could. And of course, it's usual, at least it was in those days, for a president to look to the senators in such appointments. Not that he necessarily appoints their man, but he listens to them, very carefully.

G: Was he able in such matters to exert influence on Tom Connally, do you think, in working a deal with him? Connally would have been the senior senator.

J: Yes, and Connally was one who was used to wielding power and loath to turn loose of it. However, I think he recognized in Lyndon a strong comer and treated him with respect,

and I know Lyndon recognized him as an old giant and treated him with respect. I think they just kind of worked it out between them.

G: Was there anyone in Connally's office that might have been helpful, too in these--?

J: I have forgotten just when--I think Arthur Perry was there until Senator Connally left. If so, Lyndon would most certainly have worked with him, and Arthur Perry would have been a deft, capable practitioner of dealing between the two men, his boss and his personal friend.

G: You were mentioning the Cliff Carter appointment, too. Do you recall the circumstances of that?

J: Just that for a long time Lyndon had had a great liking for Cliff and a great respect for him and a feeling of obligation, because Cliff just went way out on a limb for Lyndon every time Lyndon was in need. He was a rare man, a man of great integrity and loyalty, and perhaps maybe a little bit naive. Lyndon was always scared somebody was going to get up on his trusting side and put him in a bad light. Fortunately, that never happened. I mean, he was just such a good human being he didn't expect people to be underhanded.

It was a *fine* social season for me. The embassy tours, as a wife of a senator, I was asked to participate in them more as a hostess, and I took great pleasure in taking constituents to them. Somewhere along the line, but I may have already mentioned this, that is when I reached a policy decision not to put my name on something unless I was really going to it, or going to contribute time or money or something substantive. Because I would get one of these embassy invitations and it would say "under the patronage of" and list a couple of Supreme Court justice wives or cabinet wives, and I

would think, sure, those ladies would be standing at the door to receive for the entire time, you know, along with the hostess of the embassy. Or maybe they would divide themselves up among the five or six embassies that were on view. So I would take my constituents by the hand and we would march around from embassy to embassy, and not very often did I run into any of these ladies. (Laughter) It took quite a while to dawn on me that you sometimes lend your name to things and that is all of it, which was a practice I did not like.

G: It seems you've been pretty discreet in that respect, too. He didn't--

J: No, he was extremely discreet and perhaps he might have been a little more generous with it. If he knew anything about it, and if he could really work on it, he did lend his name, but just as far as going on the letterhead of every good organization, he didn't very much.

All that spring, alas, he was plagued with what seemed to be recurrent kidney stones, or at any rate, infection. Health-wise it was not a good spring for him, but he was so busy, so excited, so interested in his job, he just never could find the time to go to Mayo's.

And all the annual events kept rolling around, the Congressional Club reception for the Speaker and the Congressional Club breakfast for the First Lady, Mrs. Truman, and the Senate wives' invitation to lunch at the White House as well as their own Red Cross luncheon for the First Lady. But the most glamorous event of that spring, as I remember, was the Tom Clarks' dinner for President and Mrs. Truman at Anderson House. It, as you will recall, is this *great* old mansion on Massachusetts Avenue that was

built--I don't know whether it was in the 1880s or--anyhow, quite a long time ago, by an exceedingly wealthy man. High ceilings, broad stairways, imposing drawing rooms; looks, oh, something like a European palace or a monastery. It had become, by this time, the House of Cincinnati, that is, the offices of the Revolutionary War, their descendants belonged to a very high-class club all through the years. They, the Order of the Cincinnati, did lend this place out, for a sum, I suppose, to have a few very exceptional parties. It's quite possible that Tom Clark may have been a member of the Order of the Cincinnati. You wouldn't have heard it from him because he was such a modest man. But in any case, they did have a party there for President and Mrs. Truman. The tables were decorated with delightful little miniatures of a whistle stop train. I sat by General George Marshall. It was a red-letter day in my life. The house itself, the company, it was mighty big time for a little girl from Karnack.

G: Had you known Marshall before?

J: Oh, I had seen him many times, and met him many times, in gatherings. I think that is the one and only time that I was ever side-by-side with him for as long as an hour and a half.

G: That is right across the street from the Cosmos Club, isn't it?

J: Yes.

G: Elegant place.

I was going to ask you about Mrs. Truman, since her name keeps coming up. How would you appraise her contributions as first lady, and what did you think of her at the time, do you recall?

J: Well, in spite of Mrs. Roosevelt's expectations of what a first lady should do, [they] were not really what they have become now. Everybody was sort of relaxed about Mrs. Truman, including me. She didn't demand that we go out and join her in making the world a better place. Her interest was Harry, and her daughter, and her circle of friends, a very good common sense person. Surprisingly, in the receiving line and in dealing with the Congress, she worked at it. She was warm. I remember going down the line and she--you know, you shouldn't really expect people to know you in a receiving line when it's three hundred long, six hundred long, a thousand long, one reaches a state of just living through it. But I remember being greeted so warmly by her and glowing afterwards. She knew me. Which of course, what she knew was my name, Mrs. Lyndon Johnson.

And this spring we had some very special visitors. Among them were Dorris and Diane Powell from Karnack. Dorris is my lifelong friend, as you know, and Diane was her daughter, who was at that time, gee, somewhere between ten and thirteen, probably eleven or twelve. We did the whole town, all of the sightseeing, and went to lunch at a lot of attractive places with the 75th or the 81st [Clubs], or just us perhaps and a few friends. There were a lot of delightful eating places in Washington frequented by women particularly at lunchtime, like Normandy Farms out in the country where they had copper on the mantel and a beautiful rural setting and marvelous popovers. Collingwood, which is a great white-columned mansion on the way to Mount Vernon on the banks of the Potomac. Olney Inn, which I came later to enjoy so much on my way out--or maybe it was going on then--to the Olney Summer Theater. Olney Inn is now burned down, but

for many years it was well known as a place to dine, lunch or dinner, and well worth the drive. And then lots of other little places like the Iron Gate and the Parrot.

So Dorris and Diane and I got on the train and went up to New York, and saw some plays and went to some museums. Lyndon, I think he went with us for about twenty-four hours, but not for long. Toots Shor had a very well-known eating place in those days, frequented by a lot of people of the theater and the sport world. We went to dinner there one night, and Toots came over to my table, as he always did, stopped by the customers' tables, and I said, "Toots, tell me, are there any celebrities here tonight? I want to point them out to my friends." He, with his very affable smile, said, "You're the only one I see tonight." (Laughter)

At Milo and Theron Perkins' for dinner we would always encounter some of the best conversation. They were two old New Dealers from the very beginning. Then there was a newspaper man named Bob Sherrod. Was he with *Time*? I forget. I think so. We'd go to his house for cocktails, and indeed, we went to a goodly number of newspaper people's houses, to the Carpenters' of course, and to Marshall McNeils'.

And then the glittering side of life I got into by an occasional dinner at the F Street Club. Senator Millard Tydings, who was chairman of Lyndon's committee, defense committee. It had become the defense committee by that--Armed Services, hadn't it? The F Street Club was *the* place to go. Old. Its elegance was perhaps a trifle faded, but its position in the town was an illustrious one. It was a scene of some of the most sought-after parties, and I was always a happy guest.

Then an annual event for several years was a garden party at Tregaron, which was

the home of the Joseph Davies, Mrs. Merriweather Post Davies at that time. It was always in a beautiful part of the spring, possibly May. The grounds were superb. The number of gardeners, I hate to think how many. I have heard, and the figure thirty sticks in my mind.

G: Is that Hillwood?

J: No, Hillwood was where she went after the divorce, and I think he kept Tregaron as a part of what he received after the divorce, and he soon, in the course of time at least, sold it, and it, alas, has seen many less suitable uses. But in those days it was a great and handsome house and superb grounds, and he had a Russian *dacha*--how do you pronounce it? Anyhow--bungalow on the grounds which was completely furnished with things they had brought back from Russia. She had brought back *worlds* of art objects, which she kept in the house, more elegant things: jade, paintings, Fabergé, beautiful things. His, as I recall--and he took me out there himself, just the two of us strolled out there and went through it and he just talked about it--was furniture and household arts.

In another annual event of the spring, which I have at least mentioned, but which I think this was the very first year that we went to it, was dinner at Berryville, Senator [Harry] Byrd's at Rosemont. That broad veranda, that white-columned house, looking out to the Blue Ridge and to the apple orchards stretching in front of us will always stick in my heart as one of the loveliest events of my life. There's a sign in the front yard, "Welcome, drive in," or something like that, right by the front gate, which I think was both marvelously hospitable and, in the light of today, very daring. I don't know whether it's still there or not, but I'm sure a great many strangers did drive in and just drive around

the circular path, because it was a beautiful drive lined with dogwood.

G: What was the occasion, do you recall?

J: He would just have a party every spring for his fellows in the Senate, his friends among them. Obviously it would take more than one party. I think he probably would have two or three. They were always on Sunday. It was always lunch. There would be a mixture of a few newspapermen, the more stable and important type, a few local Virginia gentry, his several sons. His wife was only once a part of the gathering in all the years that I went. She was an invalid, although she did not die until I think it was in the mid-sixties. But she was not a part of it. But every room in the house I would walk through lingeringly and look at the family pictures and just absorb it. He would wear, if the weather was warm enough, a white, what we called ice-cream suit. He was a proud conservative without apology, courtly, staunch friend. He and Lyndon understood each other, liked each other from the very beginning, were very frequently at odds philosophically and voting-wise.

G: He was chairman of the Finance Committee, is that right?

J: Yes. And he had a few things that people don't often think about him. He was a great friend of the National Park Service, and every year he would give what they came to call "Byrd House" along the Appalachian Trail during its long winding path through Virginia. This was just a little place where if you were hiking the twelve hundred miles from Maine to Georgia and you got tired and night overtook you or something, where you could find shelter. Just a very rustic little house.

Of course we saw a good deal of the Texas delegation. It was a close-knit

organization all the years that we were in it. We would go to dinner at Gene Worley's at least once a year and they were always absolutely gourmet affairs. We'd have crab in the backyard, just tons of crab, or we would have Mexican food. If it was wintertime, everybody would eat far too much. It was purely Texas talk at those, and Texas newspaper people and House members. We also would go to the [Lloyd] Bentsens'. I remember going to dinner at their house. He was a young member of Congress at that time. They were so young and handsome, a striking couple. They had been on a trip to Canada. They showed us their home movies afterward. They had a habit of buying a new house about every two years. I never have seen so many attractive houses.

There was a Texas congressman named Ken Regan of rather brief tenure, but with a very striking wife, a handsome woman. After he died, she remained in Washington. The Speaker was always squiring some lady around, never a bit serious in my opinion, although I'm sure he enjoyed it very much, but that's about as far as it was going. She was one of those he would squire around, after she became a widow.

Our old friend Tony Buford would come up from St. Louis sometimes and always come to dinner at our house. When we went home to Texas on the train, as we did for many years, one always stopped in St. Louis. It was unavoidable. You stopped and changed and usually Tony Buford would come down. If it was a long wait, say like three or four hours, and the children were young, we would drive out to his house and I would bathe the children and let them run around, because it was a--I forget just how long it was to Texas by train, but it was two days and one night, I think, or could have been two nights and one day.

G: Tony Buford must have been a business associate with the station, or did they do business with him?

J: Well, he was Gussie [August] Busch's right-hand man, his lawyer and the one who dealt with all his public relations, until finally there was a break between them, which was a great sadness to a lot of the friends, us among them. That's how we knew him, and he was helpful to us with the Busch advertising, Budweiser, on KTBC. When we got into buying cattle later on, we bought some from him and vice versa. He was a friend of Stu Symington. He was just one of our nucleus of friends.

My little old house at 4921 Thirtieth Place was abundantly used. I was always one of the hostesses in the course of a few years to the 75th Club or the 81st Club or any club that I belonged to. One of the fun times was to go down the Potomac on that great big tourist ship when the 81st Club leased it, and all the members, with wives and husbands, went down for an evening cruise. I cannot remember if Lyndon were along, and it was most unlike him if he were. But going down the Potomac was a joy for many, many years, although most of the first times of course were on a public cruise ship.

Certainly, one of the most glittering events was to get invited to Mrs. Joseph Davies' for a small lunch, where there were not more than eight people. I feel sure somebody must have backed out at the last minute, or how would a young congressional Senate wife like me get invited? But she began to reminisce, and as you know, she was the daughter of the Post family that really launched cereals into the American diet. But they began with a drink called Postum, not cereals. That was their first product, and Postum was for everybody who didn't want coffee because of the caffeine. All children

in my time drank Postum, at least all the children that I knew. I never touched coffee until I was in the University. She always served Postum at her house, along with coffee after dinner. One butler would carry Postum and one coffee. Predictably, the Postum didn't get many customers.

G: Was it a hot drink?

J: Oh, yes. And it was not unlike coffee. I don't even know what it was made out of, grains I feel sure.

She told a fascinating story about how her father came in from his business day one evening and in sitting around the table talking to his family said, "Well, I certainly did meet a wild man today. There's a fellow named Henry Ford, has got this bicycle shop, and he says he's going to produce a horseless carriage, and he wanted me to help finance him." She said that apparently he was thinking about it and he did not know whether it was just a wild scheme that would come to nothing--and it did have some appeal. He was uncertain whether he was passing up a great chance, or whether this was just a ridiculous fluke. Well, he came down on the side of continuing to work on his cereals and did not back Henry Ford. But he certainly did perfectly all right in his own fiefdom. But wasn't that an interesting [story]?

G: It sure is.

J: Well, back to the more substantive side of our life. President Truman, as I mentioned, launched, or tried to launch, a lot of things that just didn't come to fruition. He tried to begin a Department of Welfare. That didn't come about until whose time, Kennedy's? Or was it Eisenhower's? It was Eisenhower's. It was Eisenhower's, because Oveta Culp

Hobby was the first in it. The Postal Department was already in some trouble, but as we know it now it was just nothing of any importance. But he tried to reorganize it along more businesslike lines. And a truly long range thing that he did was his Point Four program, technical aid to underdeveloped countries. That was something that had a lot of appeal to Lyndon, because he could have written the old proverb about give a man a fish and he'll eat for a day, and teach him how to fish and he will eat for the rest of his life. He was a great believer in self-help, and in training, in the high hope that people were trainable and could pull themselves up by their bootstraps.

Something interesting happened in that spring, or maybe it was already midsummer when it happened, and that is the Senate chamber, which had been under reconstruction with the Senate still continuing to hold sessions in it, big braces being put up and supporting beams and things, finally reached the point where the Senate had to move out of it, to finish the construction. They moved into the Old Supreme Court chamber, and some very interesting sessions were held there. I have a keen mental picture of Lyndon standing to address the floor in that small area. I don't know how long that went on, and it certainly must have been months or even one or two years. But they moved into there, if I'm not mistaken, in the summer of 1949.

Lyndon had worked on the President's housing bill and had spoken for it, and it did pass. I don't know how long-term important it was. And overseas it seems like nothing good was happening.

G: Did LBJ predict the loss of China? I mean, did he feel like the communists were coming in?

J: No. He did not. His mind, which did indeed turn so much to the east, to Asia, by the early sixties, had not grappled with the problems of that direction yet, or if they had, I don't remember it. But of course it was constant headlines, the fall back, fall back, fall back of the Nationalist China under Chiang Kai-Shek. The phrase one used was "old China hands." There were certain senators, there were certain lobbyists, and good friend, Tommy Corcoran was among them, who were faithful devotees of China, as in Nationalist China, and who kept on sounding the alarms and beating the drums that the Russians were going to take over that vast country and that we better watch out. And of course, that was the year that Red China came to birth, under Mao Tse-tung and Chou En Lai. So I guess that was the biggest thing that was happening abroad, but also in Hungary Cardinal [József] Mindzenty was being convicted of treason and sentenced to life imprisonment.

And finally NATO, after much, much wrangling, the Senate ratified the NATO treaty.

Things that especially meant something to us were Tom Clark's nomination to the Supreme Court. Lyndon spoke in his support. It was ratified without too long. I remember there were some of our more liberal friends who were *dismayed*, but we tried to ease them.

Back home, Governor Beauford Jester died, suddenly and tragically, of heart disease. A young Lieutenant Governor, a friend of ours, often a friend and sometimes an opponent through the years of our life, Allan Shivers, succeeded him.

G: Had you known him at the University?

J: No, I hadn't. As I look back, I think that I had known him as a name, and as a B.M.O.C., a Big Man On the Campus, but I hadn't really known him.

G: Do you think that LBJ, at the time of Beauford's death, perceived Shivers as a real coming power in Texas?

J: I expect he did; I don't know for sure. You may recall that in that period of his life he was known as pretty much of a liberal person. Oh, he had a lot of dash and he was handsome, and he did have the reputation of being liberal. I think I'm right in that. The years and. . . .

G: Did he feel, I wonder, that Shivers would be a competitor later on, or the fact that he was now in the governor's office--?

J: He was not looking for competitors and he was wanting to pull the sting out of any possible competitors, and I'm sure he only looked at him with interested and welcoming eyes and respectful eyes. No, I don't--he was never one to be looking for the person around him who was going to unhorse him.

Some good things happened in Lyndon's always well-loved project of public power. He got some more money to build transmission lines. Actually there were some good things happening at home, too, Lyndon felt. He thought there was a lot of legislation in Texas on education and health and roads that was going to raise everybody's status in life. He always put a direct relation between the economy and the progress of civil rights, so to speak, or the underprivileged, the black and the brown folks. If there was better education to pass around for everybody, and more farm-to-market roads, it was going to serve them well, along with everybody else. The economy to him

was the weapon with which you could do and achieve so many things that needed to be done.

And our office space--sometime that year we got ourselves another little room upstairs, because the mail kept on flowing in in vast amounts. He had about fourteen or sixteen people, and they were in two rooms, and he had the third room. And so when he got this other room on another floor--I think it was--no, I don't remember where it was, but way upstairs--it reduced him.

G: Do you think the mail was extraordinary for a senator or do you think it was simply because he was unaccustomed to having this much mail, having been a congressman? Or how would you explain the [inaudible]?

J: Well, actually, having represented roughly three hundred thousand people as a congressman and then coming to represent, I don't know what Texas was then, but possibly eight million, I don't know. At any rate, you had that many more folks whose votes you had sought, whose acquaintance you had sought. And you'd said to all of them, "Write me your views," and they did.

G: I gather he ultimately went out and bought electric typewriters and things like that.

J: Yes, if he just absolutely couldn't get them from the government, he didn't let that stand in the way of him running the office right. He had a philosophy, which I'm afraid, though always a goal, surely he couldn't always have achieved it, and that is answer a letter within twenty-four hours after receiving it. Everything was stamped in on the day it was received. If it meant that you had to go to the departments and try to obtain some of the answers, he would write them and say, "I am going to ask the Department of

Agriculture," the department of so-and-so, "to investigate this matter and we'll get back to you." So he, I must say, in part generated some of that mail by sending them this first temporary answer. Then he generated a lot of it, within the limits of his staff's ability, of writing people who graduated from high school. He'd done that in days in the House. I cannot believe we carried that into the Senate, but I do know we made an attempt to write every one of our friends who were seriously ill, who got married, who had a baby, any major event in their lives. If the news came to him either through the newspapers or through other friends back home, he would attempt to write them the appropriate letter of congratulations or condolence or whatever. So he generated some, but he sure got a lot.

G: Did this carry over into personal correspondence, too? Did he, for example, expect you to write friends or relatives so often, or answer a letter within a certain period of time?

J: Well, he didn't carry it so far as expecting me to, but he sure encouraged me to. (Laughter)

As the summer wore on to the end--I think it was in August or September--John [Connally], who had promised to come up for a year, began to want to get ready to go home. Nellie was going to have another baby; this was number three. She wanted to go home and buy a house and get settled. I think maybe she left in August, and he left in September, August or September. Mary [Rather] took a trip to Europe, a big wonderful trip. I'm sure, as always, Walter Jenkins was overworked, but somehow they managed to carry on.

There was a momentous and awesome announcement from President Truman sometime that summer or early fall, and that is that an atomic bomb had been detonated

in Russia. I remember that shook us and scared us and added to the hysteria that was already manifest. I don't know how big it was or how the news came to us, but that was before we were in the business of throttling our own intelligence agencies.

G: I don't think we talked about [James] Forrestal's suicide. Do you recall that?

J: Oh, yes, I do, I do, and I think maybe we have mentioned it. I do indeed because he was a character on the stage for whom I had so much sympathy and applause. I liked him as a human being and as a public servant. As we all know, he plunged to his death from his hospital room in the tower of Bethesda Naval Hospital, and a lot of things that were unclear before became clear then. I guess we could all remember instances where he had seemed just overburdened and like he was about to crumble. Of course, we remembered that one about the time we got on his yacht, having been invited to be his guests for dinner, and somebody else was using the yacht and there was no dinner party. We went back home and checked our calendars and sure enough, it was the day. And then that graceful and pathetic note from him about "I can't blame my secretaries. The aberration is at the top."

So, the year continued richly on the home front. Leila Clark came up to visit us and stayed a while. We took a quick run down to Texas on Wesley West's plane. He and Neva had come up. That plane was a part of my life for many years. The symbols on the wings, how could I ever forget them, but I have for the moment. His pilot was named Big Deal because he was always telling some big story, big bluff, hardy handsome man that gave you a sense of assurance.

In our business life we had come to know Sol Taishoff, who was the editor of

Broadcasting, and who happened to be our neighbor, living a few blocks from us. We went to his home occasionally and I remember going to his daughter's wedding. Very interesting to see a real Jewish ceremony, and very sweet.

One of the most bright and amusing people I had known was Gwen Tucker, whom I had known first as Gwen Scott, the wife of Dr. Arthur Scott at Scott & White [Hospital] in Temple. She was a very avant-garde person, in dress, in language, in thought, and very warm and totally likeable. She and Mrs. Sam Johnson liked each other very much. There was nobody more straight-laced and sort of conservative in domestic relations than Mrs. Johnson, but they were both truly intellectual people and they liked each other. She came to visit us with her new husband, who was St. John Tucker and a descendant of one of those families who still owned their old home in Williamsburg, and some of them still lived in it and had been there since the Revolutionary War. Gwen, a most unlikely character for political endeavor, had helped us in the campaign. She'd been a real worker.

Lyndon went off on a lot of the stag events that men did in those days. For instance, there was an annual fishing trip somewhere on the coast of Virginia, and I think probably there was more talking than fishing. Then one time we went down in the summer to the beach somewhere in Virginia with Senator [Warren] Magnuson and his current lady-love and a newspaperman, I think Collingwood was his name. He was on the air, a broadcaster.

G: Was that Charles?

J: Yes, Charles Collingwood. Why they took along a couple like Lyndon and me, because

they were much--it was a racier life than we were acquainted with, but great fun, delightful folks. Took a lot of years to lure Magnuson into matrimony. In fact, I think it was when we were in the White House that he finally succumbed. He'd been having a succession of young starlets, models or beautiful young ladies in his life from 1937, when we first knew him, on.

An interesting event was to go out to Drew Pearson's farm. He was by turns our friend and supporter and our enemy and--well, I think he just wanted to correct and get back on the right path a young man that he really liked. I think he really always did like Lyndon. I cannot say the same of his later partners. His early partner I can.

G: Bob Allen?

J: Bob Allen.

G: Did LBJ understand Drew Pearson, do you think?

J: Oh, *yes*, I think he understood him. They suffered each other for their differences. Lyndon would get mad at him, too. But deep down I think there was always a friendship between them.

G: He seemed to feel that Drew Pearson would distort things.

J: Oh, *yes*, he certainly did. I'm sure he did. And through Drew we met an interesting Greek named George Vournas, who had a farm out there close to Drew's. He would have a sort of a fiesta in the summertime called a mastia [could be referring to "pascha," a Greek Easter feast that can be held in late spring], where there would be lamb on the spit and those honeyed cakes for desserts, you know, real Greek food, and a lot of congressmen and newspaper people.

Another of the glittering events of that year was also on the Potomac, but this time not on the big public boat but on the President's yacht, the *Sequoia*. Roberta Vinson had a luncheon for the new minister to Luxembourg, Perle Mesta. President Truman was very generous about letting people who were close to him use the *Sequoia*, and the Chief Justice, well, he had been secretary of the treasury, hadn't he, Vinson of Kentucky. I forget at just exactly which point he went to be chief justice. At any rate, he was forever a great friend of Truman's and Lyndon's. There were two Vinsons in our lives, Carl Vinson of Georgia and Senator [Fred] Vinson, later Secretary Vinson, later Chief Justice Vinson. So my love affair with the *Sequoia* goes back indeed to1949--oh, no, earlier than that, because we had been on it, very privileged to be on it, with Forrestal. Gee, I guess it goes back to 1948 or even when Lyndon was a congressman.

Occasionally, we would do something in the way of a brief vacation, like go down to White Sulphur Springs. That, too, I always remember with just a--for that workaholic, Lyndon, to get off and go down to White Sulphur Springs was really a break of pace. He would always take one or two couples that he was close to, maybe staff. I know he took the Thornberrys at least once, maybe more. And we did it that summer. He loved to play golf. He seldom got to play, but he loved it. And he always loved the water, a swimming pool or the beach.

G: Where--would you stay at the Greenbrier?

J: Oh, yes. And sometimes in the hotel, sometimes in a cottage. When we went with Charles Marsh and Alice--well, I think we probably stayed with them in two separate cottages, and also at another time in the hotel.

G: Would he take work with him on these occasions?

J: I do not recollect him taking work on these occasions. I think he would throw himself as wholeheartedly into exercise and laughing. There was always business talked, but not business done as in getting out your briefcase and writing notes.

Among the small dinners that we would have at our house, a likely crowd would be Dick Russell, and Speaker [Sam] Rayburn and Senator Magnuson and maybe a sprinkling from the House of Representatives besides the Speaker. He early became a closer friend of Thornberry's. He'd known him all along, but it was only after he went to Congress that they became intimate.

I got the children's portrait painted by a lady named [Jean] Reasoner, I forget just when it was. Maybe this year, 1949, might have been when I got Luci painted, or maybe it was Lynda. But at any rate, it was both of them. Lynda couldn't have behaved worse. She sat up in her chair and growled at us, and was eating cereal and finally flung some of it at us, and finally put her little head down on the high chair top and went to sleep. (Laughter) I don't know where that portrait is today. I had it for many years and I would give a lot to retrieve it.

G: What does it look like?

J: It looks very much like her older daughter, Lucinda, looks. She got the same lady, incidentally, to paint Lucinda, after the lapse of however many years that is. Now Luci couldn't have been more gentle and adorable when she had her portrait painted. Everybody did who could; Miss Reasoner just painted the whole town.

So, in September, I began to get back into the two-house syndrome. I don't know

just when, but I think around Labor Day I went home to Dillman to stay there virtually from then on through Christmas. The children were not yet of an age where school was a problem. So the things that drew me back to Texas were the business, my father, and I don't know, just the pull of wanting to be at home some, just a reluctance to belong to Washington and to know where home was. So life would change down there. I would always take Zephyr and Patsy with me. We would switch gears concerning myself with KTBC and reading the reports and having the customers out to dinner instead of the congressmen, and constant talk with Jesse Kellam, and going to football games, and giving tickets to one's customers for that, and maybe having them out for cocktails afterwards, or for--[to] pick up dinner. Having parties in the backyard for the children. Halloween was always a high point of the year.

That was a marvelous house. That backyard in which we had lights strung up and a telephone hung on a tree, and a vast amount of lawn furniture, not a bit fancy, but quite comfortable. It was a great place to play and to sit in the evenings and have outdoor supper and drink beer. I'm sure I've mentioned before watching Luci toddling around in diapers picking up everybody's discarded beer bottle and tossing it and upending it before we could get to her and sampling the contents. I think it must have been at the end of the campaign of 1948 that I finally got installed the slide for the children. At any rate, we had very substantial swings, and a very substantial slide, which stood there for all the years that we used the house, and for many years thereafter I would drive by and see them. Lots of children grew up in that backyard.

Another thing that we did for fun was to go down to Brackettville, as we did

several times in this fall of 1949. Brackettville is a glorious natural spring, deep and cold and abundant and beautiful, in a sort of a natural limestone swimming pool. It's been enlarged, to some extent, by man, and walks put alongside, and great big shoot-to-shoot built, and picnic tables, and huge pecan trees shaded it. It had been an army post in early--gee, I'm trying to remember, was it an army post before the Civil War, or was it one of those to protect the mail and the settlers as they went west? At any rate, Robert E. Lee, I think, had been stationed there once. The George Browns had bought it long, long ago when it had become declared surplus from the army and turned it into kind of a recreation spot where they would bring a lot of their friends to shoot dove in the fall, to swim or picnic or rest all summer. They had given houses to several of their closest people, including Senator [Alvin] Wirtz. Other people had bought houses and many rented houses. These were big, substantial old dwellings built by the army for officers back in, good heavens, 1870 or something like that, maybe before the Civil War, 1850. That will take a bit of looking up. But it was just a heavenly spot for children because you could roam free, and my children in that fall were a little bit too young to fully enjoy it, but we went each year, either staying in a house with first Herman and Margaret, later George and Alice. And then sometimes they would invite us to go down and just use it as we chose for ourselves, and we did some of each.

Tape 2 of 2, January 2, 1982

J: A sizeable part of our time and worry was taken up in that fall of 1949 with some of my own business, or rather, it was my daddy's. Daddy had entered a business arrangement with a contractor whose name, I think, was [?] Evans to back him in certain building jobs,

but the contractor had used my daddy's financial statement far more widely than Daddy had ever intended. Apparently he had gone from one bank, to another bank, to another bank, and had not mentioned the loans that had already been made, and it obligated Daddy for a very sizeable amount of money. When it finally began to come to light, it was a pretty bad situation. I don't remember exactly how Daddy told me, and I know it must have been very painful for him to tell me at all, because he was always the one who could do everything. But he was actually looking for some help. Lyndon couldn't have been more eager and ready to try to give him the help through our own lawyers, Senator Wirtz and his firm, and through our ability to arrange credit, going on the note ourselves. I think he got a large loan from Judge [James] Elkins' bank in Houston. It took many visits and many legal hours and much perusal of figures to separate us from this partnership and try to pay the debts, and in the course of it he acquired from this contractor--

(Interruption)

--his obligations to us several pieces of property which were pretty much white elephants and which we carried for years: a building in Tyler, Texas; that may have been where we also got the creosote plant from, I'm not sure, down in Navasota; I think maybe a cold storage plant in Taylor, Texas. It was all a long time ago and very dim indeed. It may be also where we acquired a piece of property in Missouri. It was a sad episode in Daddy's otherwise very successful business life. He simply trusted somebody too much and without proper watchfulness or investigation.

G: Was their joint venture together somewhat of a construction [project]?

J: It was, a partnership. The man was a contractor. He would engage to build a building. In fact, actually he built the Steck Building in Austin, which has since been considerably enlarged. It cost him far more than what he had contracted to build it for, and I think that was probably what brought to light his--well, let us call it poor judgment.

G: Was President Johnson's role primarily lining up some legal help?

J: Yes. Trying to disentangle him from this and all the legalities and also trying to arrange for a very large loan, which he did, from a bank in Houston. I believe it was Judge Elkins' bank.

But the whole bad story had eventually a delightful, zany end. Daddy, in going through his old safe there in his office at Karnack, came across some Franklin Life Insurance stock which he had bought *many* years before for a small amount, and entered it in his statements in the intervening years for about the amount he'd paid for it. Meanwhile, it had grown enormously, so he sold it, and he paid the note out. I am sure that was one of the proudest days of his life. We had all thought it would take him *years* and much strain and effort and probably selling some things that he didn't want to sell in order to pay that debt. He got out from under it in not more than six months or a year, just by discovering this hidden nest egg.

G: Did he have business troubles after that or was this just a one-shot [thing]?

J: This was really just a one shot. The troubles of the rest of his life were that--well, concerned mostly his wife's health, Ruth, and his own finally fading health. He'd been [an] exceedingly vigorous and healthy man. Nothing made him prouder than to go and have his annual checkup and come back with a self-satisfied smile, saying, "The doctor

said I look like a man of thirty-six," or something like that. But finally the years overtook him and arteriosclerosis. Of course, he didn't die until October of 1960, but the last four or five years were years of increasing problems with loss of circulation in his legs and all like that.

Well, I think that takes us up to the first of October, so I shall have to stop for a while.

(Interruption)

G: January 3, [1982].

J: The fall of 1949 was sort of a general pattern of our lives, with me spending most of the time in Austin and Lyndon between Austin and Washington. There was a wonderful trip to Brackettville early in October. [In] fact, I think we went to Brackettville two or three times that fall. Old Fort Clark was located there. There was a quadrangle where the men used to march and these splendid strong stone army buildings.

(Interruption)

Fort Clark at Brackettville had been founded in the l850s for frontier defense. I don't know when it was abandoned, but as I've said, the Browns had bought it, sort of for recreational purposes, for their business friends and their wide-ranging family. We were fortunate enough to go there many times. The children explored all the old army buildings, in one of which Robert E. Lee was supposed to have been stationed. Also, General [Philip] Sheridan, who made that statement that if he owned Texas and Hell, he'd rent out Texas and live in Hell. There would be movies in one of the great old houses on the quadrangle. The men would go dove hunting in the first week of the season, and that

was usually a time when women didn't go along on the party. George Brown gave this party every year for, oh, from twenty or more years, and Lyndon was always a guest, even after he ceased to shoot. He was a guest, I suppose, all the years of his life that he could possibly make it after he and George became friends.

G: When was the last year that he went, do you know?

J: I think he actually went in 1972. It was there that I first really became--well, at least my acquaintance with Mrs. Herman Brown, Margaret, grew more intimate. She was--I think I've said this somewhere probably--the first intellectual woman I had known, just devoured books, the opinions of public men of the day, the issues of the day. She was a good foil for Herman, who was unlike his brother, George. He was just the toughest, most opinionated, outspoken man, charming man, but he could really speak wildly on the subjects of labor unions and communism and certain other things. George always spoke gently. Now when I say that Margaret was a foil for Herman, that doesn't mean that she was gentle. It just means that she espoused different ideas, in conflict with his sometime, but with so much--so well spoken, so well thought out, that sometimes she would just leave him sputtering. They were a marvelous pair, and George and Alice, in their different ways, a marvelous pair. Both women had a rare knack of creating a house of warmth and invitation on short notice, in strange places, with considerable use of the local, whatever the handicrafts of the area were, whatever the history of the place would make important for the household. Margaret was buying local artists' work before anybody I ever knew was. So, we made several happy trips down there in that fall.

Then one marvelous evening we went to dinner with the E. H. Perrys. They had a

house that was built like, good heavens, perhaps an Italian villa would be a good description of it. Anyhow, it was one of the last great houses built in Austin for a long time I expect; it was built right--the Depression was certainly very much on, because I remember being taken through it by them in the middle thirties, after Lyndon was in Congress even. He was one of the first wealthy influential important business leaders who ever got sold on Lyndon. They became fast friends, and were, until his death.

G: This house was over near what's now Hancock Center, isn't it?

J: Yes, it is. It's way out Red River [4100 Red River]. It later became a Catholic school, as so many great old properties do. It sat surrounded by acres of open country which were sort of his game--well, not game park, but you just approached the house through a long driveway. It was an establishment of elegance, but built at a time and without a continuing family, it was doomed to a short life.

As soon as we came back to town, my gears switched to thinking about KTBC, to planning on going to football games and taking good customers and out of town agencies. I spent a lot of time with Jesse Kellam.

Then a big event of the year was always the Halloween party, and that year with the children five and two and a half--well, five and a half and two and a half--we had Johnny and Kathleen Connally, and the two little Kellam girls, Nita Louise and Carolyn, and Peggy Pickle, Jake's daughter, and Molly Thornberry, and our kinfolks, Phillip Bobbitt and Rodney White, and Diane Deason and Carol Brooks, Max and Marietta's lovely adopted daughter, and Susan Phinney, and a little girl across the street whose name was Evelyn Coleman, who was the fast friend of Luci all of her young years. Oh, about

eighteen children, that big backyard could absorb any number of folks. It was almost always nice weather still in this beneficent climate of Austin on October 31. We'd always have a whole lot of mamas, and the mamas would have just as good a time as the children. The costumes were a matter of great concern, and my children were in turn a devil, a monkey, naturally, a witch, and later on, a princess. They were all handmade and many of them hung in the closet for years and years.

G: Did you make any of the costumes, or who made them?

J: Oh, alas, I cannot sew a stitch. I took it once in school and did poorly and vowed never to really try.

I was invited to the mansion to stand in line at a tea given by Mrs. Allan Shivers. It was always important to me to go to our great governor's mansion.

I started decorating Dillman, just as I had worked on the house in Washington.

I met a new friend, Liz Odom, whose sister-in-law, Vola Mae, Mrs. Jamie Odom, had been a friend of ours for a good many years and also her mother had--her mother-in-law I mean--had helped Lyndon in his first, I believe, and certainly in many campaigns. She was a schoolteacher for fifty years, lived next door to us at 2808 San Pedro. Liz was one of these bright and lively figures who would agree to go on a trip with you at a moment's notice and might even get in the car and say, "Now where is it we're going?" She was a joy to know. I would occasionally see Betty and Bob Long, old friends of mine since the early thirties when I'd been in the University. Once I even modeled in a style show, naturally for a charity. It was at a place called the Hitching Post. This was not the Junior League, but it was a charity that was kind of a counterpart of Junior

League. I think it's called Junior Helping Hand, in Austin, which a great many people belonged to.

Until Congress adjourned Lyndon stayed mostly at his post in Washington. A lot of things ground to an end. Truman signed the foreign aid bills and finally on the thirteenth of October they laid to rest the Leland Olds nomination, defeated it. It had probably taken up more hours and heat and time than just about anything, and philosophically it's very interesting, although you certainly couldn't compare it to something like the Point Four program and lots of the things that were going on.

G: He mentioned in his speech on the Leland Olds nomination that he had received a lot of pressure from former senators and from representatives of power companies to support Leland Olds. Do you have any idea who those people were who were lobbying with him to support the nomination or trying to get him to? One he mentioned was a prominent Washington lawyer.

J: No, I don't know. I think it must have been an interesting time for Lyndon because he had habitually not been a favorite of the big power people or the big oil people of Texas. He had had a very few faithful friends in the oil industry, and the gas industry, like Sid Richardson, but they had usually supported his opponent, and so he found himself in sort of strange company in this. But Leland Olds had made a lot of statements that sort of make the hair on the back of your neck rise, at least people like Lyndon who were somewhat old-fashioned and extremely patriotic and can see no good in communism, at least no good for us, for America. It was no quickly-arrived-at decision on his part in my estimation. I think he read it and studied it and pondered it and--well, he found himself

in strange company. At any rate, he must have been relieved when it finally came to an end.

Also, the whole communist thing was boiling up more. Alger Hiss, there was the second trial of him that got under way, and then a whole lot of communist leaders were brought to trial for advocating the violent overthrow of the government.

Another boiling controversy, that between the branches of service, I can't say it was over with, but at any rate, it got kind of tamped down when the greatly respected Omar Bradley was chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and he rebutted the navy's charges. I guess we were over the worst of their infighting by the end of that year. At any rate, it did finally adjourn in mid-October, and Lyndon got to come home for good, and then began what was always very important for him, the covering of the state. Because now it was the state that he needed to cover, and not just all the post offices of the ten counties.

He began to make trips around. He went to the REA [Rural Electrification Administration] convention in El Paso and to Mineral Wells with Allan Shivers and Bob Anderson. Bob Anderson had been a part of our life since NYA [National Youth Administration] days. He was a financier of--I guess you'd say he was a business manager of really excellent brain and excellent character. He was to become secretary of the treasury a little later under [Dwight] Eisenhower. Jimmy Allred had been confirmed and so he went down to Corpus Christi for that swearing in, he and John Connally. Naturally he went up for words of wisdom with Speaker Rayburn, to Bonham, and on this one I went along.

G: Do you recall that occasion at all?

J: I remember many times at that big old rambling white house, and it was always cold in winter when you got away from the fireplace. We always had real good fried chicken and hot biscuits, very home-type food. Miss Lou [Rayburn] always presided, like a duchess, but a country duchess. She was a woman very patrician in look and manner, and around her Mr. Rayburn never had a drink. (Laughter) I've forgotten what we, who were all used to having a drink when we got together, would do, but gee, surely we didn't go down to the car. But at any rate, he wouldn't even serve it in his apartment, at least I remember that went on for quite a long while, when she was visiting him.

He [Lyndon] always gave due deference to the press. He would go to the managing editors dinner and to all sort of organizations of the press. He saw a lot of his good old friends in the press. For instance, he'd go up to see Houston Harte in San Angelo for some kind of a civic luncheon and then go on with him to attend an oil men's gathering in Midland. Then he went over to Lufkin to see Ernest Kurth, at his request--I'm sure it must have been Ernest Kurth's request--to address the Texas Forestry Association. I don't know whether I've told you much about Ernest Kurth or not.

G: That's the Southland Paper Company?

J: Yes. Have I?

G: We've talked about him.

J: We have? Good. Because he was, for many years, a much looked-up-to and admired and important figure in our life. Then he would go and pay his respects, and indeed they were respects, to Amon Carter in Fort Worth, another one of his good newspaper friends.

He had, between [Harlan] Fentress and Harte-Hanks and Amon Carter, he really knew all the great old publishers and owners and the big papers of Texas. Tom Gooch of Dallas, the *Dallas Times Herald*, was a longtime and devoted friend.

G: Did he ever have any support in the *Dallas Morning News*?

J: No. For some reason they were always hostile. He was very arm's length and would make jokes about it and say he did better without their support. I don't remember him ever being acid or fighting them or certainly not ever using any power he might have had against them. Because he always hoped to win over all his enemies. But they were certainly never friendly.

G: How about Jesse Jones?

J: Jesse Jones was somebody he respected, but was at a distinct distance from. Now on the other hand, he was a great admirer of former Governor [William] Hobby, whose family owned the *Houston Post*, and looked to him for counsel. There's a good exchange of letters between them. Oveta, whom he--and Lyndon always liked women; he was crazy about Oveta. But even after she was the star in the family and Governor Hobby had declined into old age, he would seek him out and ask his advice and sort of pay special deference to him, which was nice and, I think, recognized and appreciated by them. Because a good friend of Oveta's said about her that she lived up to every obligation and every potential of growth that she had, and that's a wonderful thing to have said about one. She surely did live up to her obligations to the Governor.

Lyndon never forgot the teachers. He went to their convention. Speaking of his friends, his few friends in the oil world and his many friends in the press world at that

time, Amon Carter and Sid Richardson, I think they joined in this together. They used to have an annual party at--was the name of the place Far Hill? No, no, it was Oak Hill. Anyhow, it was a big, handsome establishment out from Fort Worth. The party was for men only. There is a wonderful picture of Sid and Amon riding in a wagon, old western wagon, all done up in western clothes, that I treasure. It was one of those marvelous annual affairs.

Lyndon's hands, which had been giving him a lot of trouble ever since he got back from the war, in August of 1942 I guess it was, sort of an eczema, which would break out at times. It was a tropical fungus which he acquired down in Fiji or something, someplace, which he couldn't get rid of. He finally made the acquaintance of Dr. [Jesse Bedford, Jr.] Shelmire in Dallas, and it was this fall, I think, that through Dr. Shelmire he finally got that particular physical ailment under control.

We spent a bit of time going over to East Texas and working on Daddy's business, as I have said. I think we were over there a couple of times, one in October and one probably in December.

There were always some appreciation dinners to go to if you were in the political world. One for Wright Patman certainly that year. Always some gathering to acclaim Speaker Rayburn.

Besides Brackettville, another marvelous piece of the Lord's world that we were privileged to go to was St. Joe's Island, which is a long stretch of land about fifty miles out of--I don't know, but anyhow, a long stretch of beautiful wild coast, one of the necklace of islands that extends down the coast of Texas, Padre, St. Joe, another one

that's just been taken into the Park Service. It belonged to Sid Richardson. He ran a few cattle on it. Mostly, he just went down there to hunt and fish and take a few friends and plan. He had a most remarkable house built on it. The architect was O'Neil Ford. It was built to withstand hurricanes, a huge white block of a house with a lot of grace and charm, but very avant-garde. It showed the hand of O'Neil Ford. It was very much a man's house, too, with huge rooms. Sid invited us there a number of times. Sometime that fall we went with the Bentsens. You only got to St. Joe's in a plane, or else you landed at some little bitty Texas coastal town and then took a boat. No commercial boat, I mean there was no regular passage over there. You had to arrange for the boat. So, when Sid got on this island he was pretty much the lord of those premises. You got off when he got ready to leave.

G: Was he the only resident there, or part-time resident, or were there other homes?

J: There were no other homes except the homes of his cowboys and the people who worked for him. He had a fabulous black cook, a man, who made what he called dollar pancakes. They were very thin and about the size of a dollar. You just loved to eat a whole plateful. In retrospect, looking back, I had an interesting view of that place when I sat next to Sid's nephew, Perry Bass, at a dinner honoring O'Neil Ford just the other day. Perry said how, just out of Yale and getting ready to tackle the business world, he had come back and Uncle Sid had detailed him to go down and ride herd on the project of building this house. And there was O'Neil Ford, conducting it. According to O'Neil, he didn't have a plan, I mean the sort of set of architectural plans that you would [have], didn't have a contractor. They just were out there with a whole lot of Mexican laborers making the

blocks of concrete and building it. He, Perry, spent all summer getting up at dawn and working until dark and getting blisters and working with and directing these Mexican laborers who--this was in the midst of--really, I don't know quite when it was, maybe it was very early on in the Depression.

Then they had many visitors in the course of the years there, including Franklin Roosevelt, who came to fish. The boat anchored off the coast, and he came in to a dinner there, maybe spent the night, I've forgotten. The walls of this vast old house were lined with a fabulous collection of western paintings, [Charles M.] Russell--

G: Probably some [Frederic] Remingtons.

J: Oh, Remingtons, lots of Remingtons. Others that I don't remember. Some bronzes. I think now of all those paintings, and there must have been thirty or more, and what they were worth, and that salt air, and the months of being shut up in what had to be, eventually, a hot house if it was shut. I have to laugh at the care one takes of splendid paintings now. But they survived. Oh, to walk that beach and just to see as far as your eye could reach, nothing of the works of man, but just a glorious lonely beach. It was a great thrill. We would come across big blue glass balls, which were--some of us said that they came from fishermen's nets, and then we said what fishermen and what ocean? At that point, there was great division. Nobody really knew. Somebody said from Spain or Portugal; somebody said from Japan. Somebody hooted with laughter and said the wrong ocean, the wrong side of the world. I really would be intrigued to know where those came from. Once we saw a weather balloon owned, no doubt, by some branch of the U.S. Government Weather Survey, but we didn't know what it was. It was just like

seeing an unidentified flying object, and it settled down on the beach and we approached it with great concern lest it explode.

G: Was LBJ relaxed in this sort of atmosphere?

J: Absolutely. He did one thing at a time generally, and if he was working, he was working with his whole heart and mind, and if he was playing, he was relaxing completely, enjoying, teasing, learning from whoever his companions were, or exercising. He was always a great sun lover and he loved to lie on the beach.

G: How did he keep from being interrupted all the time with business from Washington and things like that? Would he go, more or less, incommunicado or would he--how did he sever his telephone line, in other words?

J: At both, at Brackettville and at St. Joe's, he would just try to leave word with the office to handle everything they possibly could. The telephone communications were poor at both places, particularly at St. Joe's Island. I can't even remember whether we had a telephone. I am not at all sure one did, because there was no such thing as. . . . Well, in any case, you were marvelously severed from the world, particularly at St. Joe's.

Back on the home front, we would gather favorite friends for a party at Dillman. That old house, too, had a lot of living in it. The Connallys and Charlie Herrings and Bob Phinneys, and Max and Marietta Brooks were often with us, and the Gordon Fulchers and Jesse always, and the Paul Boltons and Bill Deasons, and the Thornberrys and some of his staff, old time staff and later staff. Early on were the [Mack] DeGuerins and the Sherman Birdwells. Bess Beeman was one of Lyndon's most faithful friends on the campaign front. She would come to the parties, too.

In the sport world, which Lyndon had not a close but a fond relation, would be people like Ox Higgins and some of Jesse Kellam's coaching friends. Jesse had been a coach before he became a. . . . And from the newspaper world Charlie Green, Buck Hood, and from my old life in the University, the Herman Joneses. Bess had been a big woman on the campus in my days.

Then sort of the second lawyer in our life and certainly until his death--Senator Wirtz was the first--but Everett Looney entered our lives. He was a fighter, a great brain, and a sort of a sad figure. Cute little Jerry Wilke, who became Mrs. Crockett English, she's another who would come to the parties there. Dr. Hugo Clint was the children's doctor, nice man. He, too, was one of those I could call at any time when I felt that it was really necessary. I hope I never abused it. I never had a really close doctor in Austin, oddly enough, like Dr. Radford Brown was in Washington. Dr. Joe Thorne Gilbert we just loved, both professionally and socially, but he made a big try at being a specialist, and all his old-time, just general [patients] who wanted a family doctor--we'd sometimes call on him.

During that period from 1945 on to 1952 I must have had several miscarriages and cannot remember quite when, except I do remember in 1952 one. But I think perhaps 1949 might have been another time, or maybe it was a little bit later. At any rate--

G: I think you were in the hospital in 1950.

J: Was it? They are not things I recall very well.

The aftermath of the fact that Russia had an atomic bomb, or so we had heard, brought into being the first flurry that I remember of talking about--maybe it was a

revival of civilian defense. David Lilienthal was the man who, before he left his post on the Atomic Energy Commission, was calling for civil defense plans.

It was a good year for the Democrats. There were elections, of course, in November, and we had a lot of victories. Lyndon saw a good deal of Stu Symington and Dick Russell in the course of the fall. They were still talking about the B-36 and its problems. Lyndon went from one end of Texas to the other to all sort of conventions and meetings, the West Texas Chamber of Commerce and the Farm Bureau. I would go to some of them with him, not to all, by any means. Our old friend Don Cook was confirmed on the SEC [Securities Exchange Commission].

Christmas rolled around and it was one of the prime Christmases of our lives. Lyndon wrote a letter to Bill Douglas, who had had a bad accident, had fallen off a horse and had a whole bunch of ribs crushed. It's a sweet and affectionate letter. He spoke of our Christmas as one of the best years of our lives, and, "How could you ask for more with good health distributed freely throughout our family." We had dinner with his mother at the house on Harris Boulevard where she lived out her life. We had a lot of the young folks there and all the kinfolks she could gather. She was a great one for gathering all of her children under her wing. Actually she was one of my most favorite people. I often said that if I had suddenly had three spare hours and was looking around for somebody to spend them with for pure pleasure, that she would be at the top of my list for somebody to call.

It was a sorrow to her, of course, that Sam Houston sometime in the past, I don't know just when he and Albertine got a divorce, but at any rate, the divorce had taken

place, and she had remarried, I think. Certainly Lyndon's complete sympathy and understanding was with her, his regret with Sam Houston, and he financed, as he had for many years, attempts to get Sam Houston back on a constructive path by sending him to some hospital for just a thorough checkup and for trying to do whatever could be done in those days for somebody who was an alcoholic. I don't know that we used the word in those days, but he was. It was a great waste that he was.

Lyndon began to go to Round Mountain. "Began" is not the right word, because he had been going out to see Wesley [West] for--gee, that must have started probably in 1943. But somewhere along the way he met A. W. Moursund--not met him, because they had known each other's families forever, but he renewed the acquaintance. They began to see more and more of each other. "Hunting" is a euphemism I feel sure, because Lyndon liked the company, and he liked sitting around the fire and drinking and talking and playing dominoes and making plans and talking about buying ranches which never did actually get bought, that is, not until he bought the one that is still our ranch, in 1951.

G: Did this, do you think, give him the enthusiasm that ultimately resulted in buying this ranch, the trips to Round Mountain?

J: I'm sure that the seeds were sown right there on Wesley West's ranch, which is a little piece of heaven really. I'm sure that out there Lyndon began to remember his own childhood and visits here to Uncle Clarence and Aunt Frank and began to want to have a home seat, so to speak. Funny that I didn't have sense enough to see it creeping up on us. I went through life really quite ignorant.

Then at the end of the year this two-homes trauma reasserted itself, because it was

always time to get packed and go back. My idea, as I often said early on in those years, of being rich was to have enough linens and china and silver and pots and pans and everything just to lock it up and put it in the closet and rent the establishment, and then go back to the other place, or else just catalog it and leave it out and rent it. But in any case, leave it there, not haul it backwards and forwards as we did for the first several years.

G: Did you have any difficulty deciding where articles of furniture would go, whether they would stay in the Washington house or come to the Austin house? Did you have pretty much two separate and distinct decorating schemes?

J: Definitely two distinct houses and sets of furniture as I remember, which were gradually added to as years went on, and the quality of them gradually raised, although everybody who will remember us in those years knew that we lived very economically. But we lived well in that we had always a good cook, always a bountiful table *I thought*, and lots of company and lots of pleasure in the company. But as far as elegance, I'm afraid it was very lacking and only became a part of our life later on.

So that winds up pretty much that good year which I have to look back on as one of the fullest and richest.

(Interruption)

1950. It seems like Congress begins later and later as the years go on. In 1950 it convened January the third and President Truman made his State of the Union January the fourth. Lyndon and I were already very well established back at home by New Year's Eve, as I remember. The New Year began with that living-in-two-houses theme. First I

went to Ben Murch School to see the principal and talk about Lynda entering. She would be six years in a little over two months and time for her to get started. Ben Murch was about two and a half blocks from where we lived and I could look forward to her beginning walking by the time she was seven or eight.

G: Was it primarily because it was nearby that you selected it?

J: Entirely that. I guess it never occurred to me to do anything else but a private [public] school at that time. I grew up in a society where everybody went to public school except children who were troublemakers or who were children of broken homes. Anyhow, it was a good enough school as it turned out. The children later on referred to it as Hannukah Heights because the population of that area was heavily Jewish, a matter I never noticed until they called my attention to it years later. And a lot of foreign students.

That was the year we went to work on the basement with a lot of paint and put in more closets and new curtains and some furniture and fixed it up somewhat nicer for Patsy, and I think Patsy had acquired a husband by that time. But he didn't work for us, so it was still Patsy and Zephyr, and Lewis in the yard.

Very early in the year I had a luncheon with Mrs. [Jane] Ickes and Mrs. [Rachel] LaFollette and Isabel Griffin and Peggy Corcoran and Henrietta Hill and Betty Fulbright and Mary Ellen Monroney. Mrs. Thurmond Arnold, a fascinating character, one of those couples where the man and woman were equally bright. Mrs. Hugo Black, and that is--to save my life I can't remember for sure, but I believe at that time it was Josephine. Theron Perkins, always one of my favorite folks. Around about the sixth the Dale Millers had a

cocktail party honoring the Speaker. They had an apartment in the Mayflower where Texans used to gather for years and years, the scene of many intimate casual fun parties. Mrs. Truman had a tea in Blair House, not as thrilling as the White House, but interesting to get to see the inside of it. The Texas delegation had a dinner for the Tom Clarks, and there were the usual round of those stag affairs, the Alfalfa Club and something called the Touchdown Club, and the Radio Correspondents Dinner.

G: What was the Alfalfa Club?

J: Men only, where there was a lot of rather, I gather, heavy lampooning and joking and a membership that was sort of proud that they were members. It was somewhat like the newspaper--

G: The Gridiron.

J: The Gridiron. It was not newspaper people.

G: Were they all members of Congress or the Senate?

J: No. They were just, as I remember, they were just sort of a self-perpetuating group of people who liked and enjoyed each other. They might be congressmen or lobbyists or businessmen.

G: Was LBJ a member?

J: No, he really wasn't very much of a joiner, except to things that were absolutely in the profession he was in. He went to a lot of them though, but always as a guest. There were one or two things. He did belong early to that golf club, oh, what's the name of it? Way up at the--

G: Burning Tree?

J: Burning Tree, which was a club, but a great social sort of center for men to gather and make things happen. He was a member of that for a long time. He used to also get invited many, many years to go out to California to this club that would have a series of important speakers and live out in a beautiful wilderness area. You know that one I'm talking about? [Bohemian Grove] Still going on. A lot of cachet, a lot of businessmen and a great deal of the wealth of the United States belongs to it. Funny, can't think of the name of it. But in general, he was not a joiner.

I felt like the year had really begun when the Senate Ladies [Club] got together. That was sort of late that year. President Truman was a surprise guest at one of the luncheons for Speaker Sam Rayburn. Lyndon and Wright put it together. It was kind of a triumvirate in those days. Lyndon in the Senate and Wright Patman in the House and the Speaker in that uniquely important post.

Back home a good deal of things were happening. A. W. Moursund was about to become general counsel to the Pedernales Electric Co-op. There was a lot of talk about the new post office building. I suppose, really one of the early significant events and something that cast its long, long shadow across the next year or two was Senator [Joseph] McCarthy's actually charging center stage with a statement that there were some two hundred known Communists working in the State Department.

G: Do you recall LBJ's reaction to that speech? Or the charge when it was first made?

J: That he was concerned, he wanted to know more about it, but he didn't believe it. Senator McCarthy did some things early on that put Lyndon in the opposite corner from him. One of them, I think he took a bite out of Marshall, General [George] Marshall, did

he not, and that in Lyndon's eye made him pretty much suspect. Then the Speaker early formed a feeling of extreme hostility toward him and was never shaken. We listened very much to what the Speaker said. His feelings rubbed off on us a lot. Not always. And I can still remember a few instances where we were on opposite sides from the Speaker, and I question my judgment in retrospect. Usually we were on the same side with him.

G: Do you recall the basis of Speaker Rayburn's hostility to McCarthy? Was it based on his partisan attacks?

J: Yes. I think he actually questioned the patriotism and the integrity--and this I would have to go back and really look and read about, but those were two virtues that the Speaker [put] right up at the head of the list with him. McCarthy called some mighty close people some mighty ugly names, and I think that General Marshall was one of them. I'm trying to remember whether he ever actually said anything like that about Sam Rayburn himself. If he did, he was even more unwise than we've all come to know him to be.

The annual Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner rolled around. We bought as many tickets as we could. Bess Beeman's daughter, Marion Storm, came up, and Lillian Collier, both of them strong supporters of Lyndon. Marion Storm is one of those people that, although she's been dead now a good many years, people still talk about and remember. I was only around her a few times; her mother Bess I remember much better. We had a cocktail party for all of the Texans who came up for the Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner.

G: Do you remember the firing of Stuart Long?

J: No, I don't. I don't remember one thing about it. I just know that he was a stormy petrol, that he got under the skin of a lot of folks, that we were by and large his friend. Sometimes he regarded us as his foe; sometimes he just regarded us with a jaundiced and uncertain eye. When it came down to choosing between us and somebody else, I think he always chose us. Lyndon liked Emma, Stuart's wife, if anything a little more than he liked Stuart, and he respected Stuart's use of words and his ability to acquire a following. And mostly they were on the same side. Stuart was a good deal more of a labor man than Lyndon was, although Lyndon always tried to be everybody's senator and not to run anybody off.

G: The problem that Stuart Long recounted in his own firing, the problem of customers or advertisers being indignant with the news commentator's opinions or interpretations. It sounded like this might have also been a problem for you all?

J: Oh, it was a problem with us for years. Lyndon used to sort of look with a certain amount of raised eyebrows at the coverage that other people got on the station, our station, that he didn't get. He said, "Jesse, what do you suppose it would take for me to get as good coverage on our station as so-and-so gets?" (Laughter)

G: Well, what about Paul Bolton, for example? Did he have a certain amount of insulation in his newscasts? Did you ever have pressure to have him taken off the air or one thing and another?

Paul Bolton was sort of a dean of the newscasters around Austin, as I remember, and never did take out after anybody hammer and tongs. He was not a cruel man in any sense, and he was generally felt to have good judgment and manners of a gentleman. We

did get a lot of flak about his--he never did have a great newscaster's voice. We got flak about him all right, but we were not about to let him go.

One time, well, many times as years went by, but I think this was probably the first time that we were invited to dinner at Senator Bob Kerr's home. His wife, Grace, was a beautiful woman, a big woman, just as he in stature was a very big man. They always had lovely homes, and because she liked to decorate them, first and last I think they had three or four or more homes in their years in Washington. The dinner was beautiful, the house elegant, and not a drop to drink. We were sort of forewarned. We knew that was going to be the fact.

G: Senator Kerr didn't drink at all, is that right?

J: Oh no, and he didn't want anybody else to. I do not know the origin of that. I've heard he had a brother who was an alcoholic. That may be a myth. He was a very religious man and a very--what he believed in, he believed in vigorously. I think we had something, some sort of grape juice, a little glass of some sort of grape juice before dinner, which I must say it was a surprise to most Washington diners out. (Laughter)

The Congressional Club had its annual reception for the President and Mrs. Truman, followed right away by a big tea for just about everybody. I took one of the Speaker's sisters, Mrs. Bartley. They rotated in coming up, and there were three of them, Miss Lou being the head of the house.

The radio business let us into something of another social field, too, and that was the people in the broadcasting profession. A friend of ours was Frank Russell of NBC. He had a dinner honoring Mr. [Joseph Howard] McConnell, the president of NBC then.

We saw a good deal of Frank in those years. We saw Gene Autry, too, who had really come to us through politics, but who was himself in the broadcasting business.

I did a lot of work on my films. In those days Eastman Kodak had a store in which you could, for a fee, go in and rent their splicer and their equipment and cut your own films up, and I did that. I had just lots of reels of films. This was 1950 by then, and I'd gotten that camera, goodness, I think it was in either 1940 or 1941. Gosh, it was 1940, had to be 1940. I set about doing a real complete splicing and editing job and putting in titles, which of course were little--they were printed; they were not voice over.

G: Did you show these movies to your friends?

J: Oh, yes, it was frequently after-dinner entertainment or entertainment at the children's birthday parties.

G: One of the things that President Johnson worked on that spring was the natural gas bill. Reading through some of the correspondence one gets the impression that he really was working day and night on that, he and Senator Kerr together. Do you recall his activities there and was it a major occupation?

J: It was a major concern. Because he looked on it, in my opinion, as one of Texas' great and major resources and he wanted to see that Texas retained all the rights it was entitled to in the disposition of that resource. It didn't become entirely a national matter of regulation. I do not remember the ins and outs of it. I just remember a highly partisan field, and sitting in the gallery as I mentioned to you before, Grace Kerr and I and one or two more people, feeling that this was the most important business before the nation, and that if it didn't go the way we wanted it to, that all sorts of awful things would happen.

I guess I would have to be reminded over and over of that story I've told--I'm sure I've told you--about the man who came rushing into the Speaker's office. Speaker Sam Rayburn's office was pretty much open to the public, and anyone could see him that wanted to if they were willing to sit and wait their turn. Some young man came in to see him whom he didn't know, very agitated and concerned and saying that just this most important problem before the nation, matter of just great significance. The Speaker looked at him and said, "Did you see that man that walked out right past you just as you were coming in?" And he said, "Yes, Sir, I saw him." And the Speaker said, "Well, *he* had the most important matter before the nation, too," I guess meaning that everybody thinks his own problem is of paramount importance. We outlive so many of these problems, I guess it's only looking at them in hindsight that we can see anything of those that lived.

G: Do you think that President Johnson felt that President Truman would veto that bill that was passed, the natural gas bill?

J: I can't say at all. I just don't remember.

[End of Tape 2 of 2 and Interview XXV]