



ILLUSTRATED BY BERNARD FUCHS

How Lyndon got himself in trouble

By Sam Houston Johnson

EDITED BY ENRIQUE HANK LOPEZ

LYNDON, LADY BIRD AND I arrived at the white penitentiary located at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue in a special helicopter on January 5, 1964. Lyndon had brought me back to Washington with him after Christmas vacation at the ranch.

That beautiful presidential mansion didn't seem like a penitentiary at first sight, but I soon found that it was. Somewhat amused by the White House security measures, my friend Marie Wilson once said, "I'll have to bring you a big cake next time—with a steel saw inside it." Marie knew exactly what I meant when I gave the guard at the East Gate my favorite signal, raising my two wrists together as if they were handcuffed and yelling, "Back to my cell on the second tier."

A FEW WEEKS AFTER I reached Washington, the Bobby Kennedy problem began to simmer, and it came to a boil in July, 1964. Everyone knew that

Kennedy wanted to be the vice presidential candidate in the coming elections, and some of his followers apparently felt he had a God-given right to his party's nomination. The well-organized Kennedy machine was busily engaged in creating a "spontaneous" ground swell for Bobby. No one was more keenly aware of this effort than Lyndon, and he was dead set against it. Nor for a single moment did he ever consider having Bobby Kennedy as his running mate. And the reasons were quite obvious.

- a) Lyndon hated Bobby.
- b) Bobby hated Lyndon.
- c) Lyndon didn't need Bobby to win.
- d) Lyndon didn't trust Bobby.
- e) Bobby didn't trust Lyndon.
- f) And each of them knew damned well he was hated and mistrusted by the other.

Under these circumstances, it was naive of the RFK crowd to think they could force their man on

continued

©1968 BY SAM HOUSTON JOHNSON. ADAPTED FROM THE FORTHCOMING BOOK, "MY BROTHER LYNDON," TO BE PUBLISHED BY COWLES BOOK COMPANY, INC.

the President, and their so-called "ground swell" was being organized against all historical precedent. Bobby pretended that he disapproved, but I have never in my life seen a campaign that couldn't be stopped by a candidate who didn't want it. No politician ever gets drafted against his will. Consequently, any mild disclaimers by Bobby were simply an outward acknowledgment of the time-honored rule that no one actively runs for Vice President.

I know that the delegates to the national convention legally nominate the vice presidential candidate, but that is all sham. The presidential candidate—and only he—selects the man. That's the way it should be. A Vice President could raise all kinds of hell if he should suddenly decide to oppose the President, especially if the President were ill or absent for other reasons. There are all kinds of opportunities for a scheming, dissident Vice President to sabotage the President and to wreck all semblance of unity within his administration. A President might also be double-crossed by a man of his own choosing, but that is less likely.

Even though the presidential nominee has the final say about his running mate, he still might feel it necessary to choose someone he doesn't completely want. I seriously doubt that my brother was John F. Kennedy's personal preference (he certainly wasn't Bobby's choice), yet JFK had to give some practical consideration to the Southern and Protestant vote. He also knew Lyndon was better prepared for the Presidency than anyone else, including himself. Once having made his choice against the advice of certain bleeding-heart liberals and labor leaders, he ordered the convention to nominate Lyndon.

Four years earlier, when he was nominated for the second time, Adlai Stevenson tried a different method: He actually gave the delegates a free choice on the vice presidential nomination. The ensuing Kefauver-Kennedy floor fight may have been a nice dramatic touch at an otherwise dull convention, but it was mostly a sign of weakness and poor judgment. Not long after the convention, I heard Lyndon telling Sam Rayburn that Stevenson had been a damn fool for running such a risk. Mr. Sam agreed.

We could all rest assured Lyndon wouldn't run that kind of risk—he wasn't about to let Bobby Kennedy establish an independent power base inside his Administration. My brother's only concern was how and when to squelch the campaign. Quite obviously, it would be best to wait until shortly before the convention in late August, when it would be too late for the Kennedy people to stage a comeback.

HAVING CAREFULLY PUSHED the Bobby problem onto a back burner, Lyndon could devote himself to the much more important problem of an overall strategy for the November election.

Some news columnists would argue that the voters didn't really love Lyndon—not the way they did JFK. But I don't think a politician expects people to fall all over him; all he wants is their vote on Election Day, with or without hugs and kisses. And Lyndon could count on the votes. Some polls showed him getting 77 percent in Maine, with 50 percent of former Nixon supporters saying they would desert their Republican ranks and vote for LBJ.

The figures that gave him the most satisfaction were the ones that showed he could win quite easily without having Bobby Kennedy as the vice presidential candidate. According to any Quayle poll, none

of his potential running mates—(Kennedy, Humphrey, Stevenson, McCarthy, Dodd, Pastore, Wagner) could add or subtract more than two percent to or from the probable vote for LBJ. He could pick any partner he wanted. "Look't here," he said one night at the supper table, waving a news clipping over his coffee, "I don't need that little runt to win. I can take anybody I damn well please."

He wouldn't have made that kind of statement in public, for he was generally pretty closemouthed about his resentment against any of the Kennedys or their clique. If nothing else, his pride wouldn't allow him to reveal how much they had humiliated him.

One particular incident that he wasn't likely to forget for a long time occurred when Air Force One arrived in Washington just after the assassination. Realizing how important it was to establish a sense of continuity, my brother naturally wanted to accompany the casket from the plane to the ground in the cargo lift, along with the Kennedy family. But Robert Kennedy shoved him aside, flatly refusing to let him, thus giving millions of television viewers the clear, unmistakable impression that he resented the new President as an unwanted intruder. I could feel the shame and humiliation Lyndon must have felt at that moment. I mentioned this to him several months later and noticed his mouth suddenly drawn tight.

"That's all past," he said. "I don't want to talk about it." I really couldn't tell how much or how long he resented that public snub (or the many other snubs that must have preceded it), because he has always managed to keep such things to himself.

Lyndon said that Gene McCarthy and God "talk Latin to each other."

A MEMORIAL FILM to John F. Kennedy (with a personal introduction by Bobby) had been scheduled for the first evening session of the Democratic National Convention, an arrangement that could lead to trouble. We all knew this highly emotional film could easily trigger a draft for RFK as Vice President and that Lyndon might be forced into crushing the move before millions of television spectators. So Lyndon invited the Arrangements Committee to the White House, looked at their proposed schedule and then casually told them he preferred to have the Kennedy film shown later in the week when he could be there himself. They got the point right away. The film was rescheduled for the evening after the nomination.

That still wasn't enough. Suddenly, rumors started floating around Washington hinting that Jackie Kennedy would dramatically appear at the convention to "help Bobby." Whether true or not, Lyndon realized it was time to take more direct action. Bobby Kennedy would have to be told he wasn't going to be Vice President, and, if possible, he should be persuaded to take himself out of the race. On July 29, my brother asked Kennedy to meet him at the White House at 1 p.m. Lyndon sat behind

his big desk, Kennedy in a chair to his right. In a less formal, friendly chat, they would have sat at the rocking chair and sofa at the end of the Oval Office.

As Lyndon later recalled, Bobby was rather stiff and uncomfortable, and he was obviously unhappy when he was told he had been eliminated from the list of prospective candidates. He gulped like a fat fish pulling in a mouthful of air. Lyndon's imitation of him was pretty amusing. Then, for some reason or other, Kennedy brought up the Bobby Baker case as if to show that his name on the Democratic ticket would somehow soften the effect of a possible scandal. Well, that didn't faze Lyndon one bit. He simply reminded Kennedy that there were too many Republicans involved with Baker, so that the GOP candidate wasn't likely to harp on it. The flak would hit both parties.

Since Kennedy hadn't volunteered to announce his own withdrawal, Lyndon asked McGeorge Bundy, a family friend of the Kennedys, to talk with him about a simple statement to the press, announcing he had other plans. But Bundy wasn't very successful. In fact, he alienated some of the faithful, who immediately tagged him as a no-good traitor.

With no recourse left to him, Lyndon called a press conference and told the reporters, "I have reached the conclusion that it would be inadvisable for me to recommend to the convention [as my running mate] any member of my Cabinet or any of those who meet regularly with the Cabinet."

Later on, my brother told a few reporters that he wasn't directing it at Bobby Kennedy, but I doubt that anyone took him seriously.

Shortly before the convention, I came down with something resembling the Asiatic flu and reluctantly checked into the Army hospital at Ft. Meade, Md. I had decided not to go to Atlantic City, knowing it would be hectic, tiring and dull. Then, just after the convention got under way, I got a call from Lyndon, asking me to accompany him and Lady Bird, probably on Thursday.

"I've got this damned cold, so maybe I better stick around here and rest a while," I told him.

"Well, you might be OK by then, so we'll just leave it open," he said. "But now that I've got you on the phone, I might as well get your ideas on who I should pick for Vice President."

Now, I knew damned well he had probably made up his mind several weeks back, but I decided to go along with his cat-and-mouse game. As a matter of fact, this would be a good chance to smoke him out the way our daddy would do it. Having already assumed it was Hubert Humphrey, I tried my old reverse-elimination gambit.

"I kinda like Senator Pastore myself," I said. "He made a damned good speech this evening."

He actually snorted when I said that. "God-dammit, Sam Houston, what in the hell's gone wrong with you? How could an Italian from a dinky state like Rhode Island possibly help me?"

"There's Adlai," I said. "He's got the egghead vote good and solid."

"Don't need him," said Lyndon. "With Barry Goldwater running, I look like a Harvard professor to the eggheads."

"Maybe you oughta get a Catholic like Gene McCarthy. He's awful strong in the Midwest."

"He's not exactly what I'm looking for. There's something sort of stuck-up about Gene. You get the impression that he's got a special pipeline to God

and that they talk only *Latin* to each other."

"How about Mayor Wagner or Daley?"

"With Goldwater running, I don't have to worry about the big-city vote," he said.

"Well, hell, Lyndon," I said with a fake whine in my voice, "that leaves only Hubert, and you sure ain't picking him, are you?"

That really got him. He didn't expect such a negative attitude. "Now what the damn hell have you got against Hubert?" he asked.

"Plenty, Lyndon," I said. "I've got plenty against him. For God's sake, he's been fighting you for years. No one's bugged you more on civil rights, and look at the way he's always harping about the oil people. He's a damned maverick, Lyndon."

Now that was a pretty extreme picture of poor old Hubert, but it really drew my brother out of that damned secret shell of his.

"Damn it, Sam Houston, you've got him all wrong," he said. "Hubert's a good man. I've made a goddamned Christian out of him. He's gone along with me on a lot of things. And you can bet your bottom dollar he ain't no Kennedy man. He also happens to be a helluva good campaigner."

"He talks too much," I said.

"Don't worry about that," he said.

"I'll get Muriel to keep him short."

"So you've already made up your mind," I said, smiling to myself.

"Not yet," he said, forgetting I wasn't some stupid reporter he wanted to string along. "I'm keeping it open a while. There's more people I want to talk with." The moment he hung up, I called my friend Col. Pete Scoles and told him to put all the money he could bet that Hubert Humphrey would be Vice President. But Pete couldn't get anyone to bet him. They all knew he was my best pal and that I had probably given him some inside dope.

Meanwhile, Lyndon kept talking to people right up to the last moment, holding Humphrey in suspense until the day before he was nominated. And by "consulting" with everyone about his choice for Vice President (scores of governors, mayors, senators and janitors got personal phone calls), Lyndon flattered them into thinking their opinions really mattered, which is always

good politics. "You might have a point there, George. I'll certainly keep it in mind, and I'm much obliged to you for telling me." Then George could go tell his friends—and the local newspaper—that the President himself had called him to get his views on Senator Peewinkle as a potential running mate. That's great stuff for people out in the boondocks, and it works pretty well with a few city slickers from places like New York and Chicago. No one's immune to the glamour of the White House.

There were some people on his staff who thought Lyndon used the phone too often, that it was some kind of strange addiction. They simply didn't understand his technique. They took all his "trifling" phone calls at face value, not realizing that the mere act of calling was often more important than anything he had to say. It was his way of "press-

ing the flesh" through the telephone wires.

POOR OLD BARRY GOLDWATER was the best campaign manager Lyndon ever had. About a month before the Republicans' mass suicide at the San Francisco Cow Palace, my brother had told Marianne Means that he considered Goldwater the toughest man to beat, and she actually believed him—quoted him word for word in her newspaper column. When I started to tease her about it later on, Marianne blushed a little but insisted that Lyndon was probably sincere when he said it.

Knowing how he really felt about Barry, I still can't figure out how he managed to keep a straight face when he told her that, even though I've seen him bluff his way into winning a big pot in a poker game with only a pair of deuces in his

in Boston or that he failed to promise diplomatic relations with the Vatican at the Baptist Convention.

With that kind of opposition, Lyndon could have stayed home without a moment's worry. The only thing that posed even a mild threat—and it was only temporary—was the Walter Jenkins affair.

Jenkins had gone to a cocktail party given by the Washington Bureau of *Newsweek* Magazine on October 7. Leaving the party alone at about seven o'clock, he wandered over to the basement of the YMCA. The newspapers later revealed that the Y was a fairly notorious hangout for homosexuals, and the District had a kind of Peeping Tom operation staked out in the basement and steam baths.

Although the specific accusation was never made public, Jenkins was arrested and later booked (along with an Army veteran) on a rather vague charge of "disorderly conduct."

Of course, Lyndon had to face up to the possible political consequences of the sudden scandal. Perhaps an instant public-opinion poll would offer some clue as to what direction he should take, and there was no one he trusted more in such matters than Oliver Quayle.

Working through most of the night, Quayle drafted the appropriate questions and organized a nationwide telephone poll that got under way the next morning. By midafternoon, he had sufficient findings to indicate there had been no visible negative reaction to the Jenkins case. LBJ could resume his campaign without having to concern himself—at least publicly—with the problem of Walter Jenkins.

WHEN THE VOTES were finally tabulated, Lyndon had won by a margin of 13,951,320 votes, polling 43,126,218 against Goldwater's 27,174,898. It was the best percentage (61 percent) and the largest number of votes that any President ever got. Proving that his coattails were exceptionally long, Lyndon helped elect 48 new Democratic representatives and three new senators. One of them was Bobby Kennedy. Looking back on that joyous, triumphant night, it's almost impossible to believe that things would change so drastically in the next four years.

WITH THE INAUGURATION BEHIND HIM, Lyndon resumed his man-killing schedule in the Oval Office.

He channeled a flood of bills through the House and Senate and received grudging acknowledgment for these accomplishments from most newspaper columnists and television commentators. I think my brother was subjected to greater and different pressures than most Presidents before him—some of which he brought upon himself and others that were unjustly and cruelly thrust upon him.

First of all, he was a Texan—and that alone was enough to curse him in the eyes of a vast number of snob reporters throughout the country. His accent, his manner, his country-boy candor, all worked against him.

Whenever it could, the press deliberately tried

continued



hand. I wonder if he ever apologized to that sweet, trusting woman for pulling her leg that way. Even more curious than Miss Means' momentary lapse was the Republicans' apparent conviction that Barry was the toughest man to beat. Obviously, they couldn't have anticipated the kind of campaign he would run: that he would ignore Social Security when talking before a group of retired pensioners in St. Petersburg, Fla.; that he would condemn the TVA as communism in Tennessee, which had prospered from cheap electric power; that he would talk against the anti-poverty program in West Virginia and against reapportionment in a grossly under-represented city like Atlanta. I got to thinking that his speeches and travel plans were being prepared by the Democratic National Committee. I'm surprised he didn't propose compulsory birth control

to picture him as an uncouth prairie-town bumpkin, with no dignity or social graces. And once in a while, Lyndon seemed to be perversely and defiantly courting their disdain, as if to say, "Here's what I'm like—just an ordinary Joe from Johnson City—and if you don't like it, that's your problem."

So he playfully picked up a dog by its ears, and offended millions of oversensitive dog-lovers.

He pulled up his shirt and showed some reporters the big scar from his gall bladder operation, no doubt distressing a lot of squeamish old ladies.

He went swimming in the nude in the White House pool, causing great concern among some church groups.

He raced along a country road at 90 miles an hour, sipping beer from a can and scaring hell out of some women reporters in the back seat of his Lincoln Continental sedan.

Lyndon must have realized that each of these incidents would get a negative public reaction. Anyone with his keen sensitivity to popular attitudes would know. Therefore, I'm convinced that each episode was a conscious or subconscious act of defiance, a compulsive strain against the tight discipline that is constantly demanded of a President. He also wanted to show he was not ashamed to be himself. However, the repeated and widespread publicity given to each of these events simply proves that the news media were all too ready to emphasize even the most trifling false steps by LBJ.

Yet in all fairness to the press, I must frankly say that Lyndon himself did a great deal to irritate them. He was often testy and petulant when there was no reason to be. Aside from his quick-tempered reactions to certain piddling matters that he should have ignored or simply joked about, my brother's main problem with the press was the so-called "credibility gap." There were several things he did—some of which were purely capricious—that caused White House correspondents to regard him with a certain degree of suspicion: he often hinted the opposite from what he meant, omitted important elements of some report, made outright denials of things that were obviously true, avoided direct answers to simple, straightforward questions, needlessly kept the press guessing about certain things he planned to do, waited until the last minute to tell them where he was going and often treated reporters as if they were "the enemy."

He was not, however, unique in this respect. Every President we have ever had, with no exception, has done the same things. Sometimes our national security has required them to make evasive statements or tell outright lies. And sensitive domestic issues have also required oblique statements.

What the press clearly resented were Lyndon's occasional lapses on matters of no consequence whatsoever. Back in 1966, for example, he had obviously planned to make certain campaign appearances for candidates in California, New York and perhaps Illinois. The press knew the Secret Service had been dispatched to check security measures, and local officials had been informed of his probable arrival time. But when Lyndon got back from an exhausting conference with the South Vietnamese leaders in the Far East, he decided not to go through with the campaign schedule.

Then, rather than simply saying he was too tired or was getting a cold or Asiatic flu (any such excuse would have been acceptable), he told the

press that he had never made any definite plans to campaign in the aforementioned states. I don't know whatever prompted him to say that, but it was certainly a mistake. It was, in a sense, an insult to their intelligence and a rather needless fib—especially since he didn't smile when he said it.

That particular incident left him wide open to charges of *credibility gapitis*, on a matter that wasn't worth lying about. He also annoyed the press when he was cat-and-mousing on his choice of a vice presidential running mate in 1964. Having already decided on Hubert Humphrey, he asked both Hubert and Sen. Thomas Dodd to fly back from the convention, evidently wishing to give the impression that Dodd was also seriously being considered. Some of the reporters hurriedly filed stories on Dodd's background and even speculated on why LBJ might choose him. They probably felt like fools when they found out it was just a ploy and naturally resented my brother for leading them up a blind alley.

The Kennedys, on the other hand, have all enjoyed unusually friendly treatment by many of the same journalists who bugged LBJ. The news media have always participated in the Kennedy mystique, sometimes to their own chagrin. For years, they assiduously pictured Jackie Kennedy as the very essence of womanhood—the perfect, loyal and regal presidential wife, then the tragic, still perfect, widow—but when she suddenly married a rich old Greek who wears funny dark glasses and pants baggier than Lyndon's, some of the press did a complete flip-flop. She's probably the same person she has always been, a very attractive, slyish woman; but our news media can't bear it when one of their heroines or heroes quite humanly fails to conform to their mystical "image."

Of Fulbright, Lyndon said, "Hell, he can't even park a bicycle."

MY BROTHER NOT ONLY inherited a going war from Kennedy but he also inherited Kennedy's principal advisers—Dean Rusk, McGeorge Bundy and Robert McNamara—all of whom supported the domino theory and therefore advocated a strong and continuing effort against the Vietcong.

From what I heard during numerous breakfast and dinner conversations with Lyndon and Lady Bird, I gathered that McGeorge Bundy had considerable influence in shaping our policy in Vietnam and the Dominican Republic. He was also one of the Administration's principal spokesmen for that policy. Eventually, Lyndon and his "favorite hawk" had a slight falling out, though not with respect to our stand on Vietnam. Some people say Bundy was pushing too hard to become Secretary of State, but I imagine it was something more personal than that. Perhaps, as my Aunt Jessie would say, he was letting his britches ride too high.

Whatever their final feelings may have been, I think you would have to say that Bundy was a fairly loyal LBJ man. I, for one, can't say the same for McNamara. From the very beginning, Lyndon relied to a great extent upon the expertise and advice of McNamara, who seemed deeply committed to a firm and aggressive policy in Vietnam. McNamara seemed to be a tough, pragmatic man who was able to view the war with the cool eye of a top-notch systems analyst. He made several trips to the battlefield, flanked by his top aides, and on the basis of his personal observations and careful technical calculations, he made some convincing arguments for a continued escalation of our military effort.

Adlai Stevenson once criticized McNamara for opposing the so-called "U Thant initiative with Hanoi" in 1964. He told Eric Sevareid that McNamara "flatly opposed the attempt. He [McNamara] said the South Vietnamese government would have to be informed and that this would have a demoralizing effect on them; that government was shaky enough, as it was. . . ."

I think that was a logical assumption on McNamara's part: Thant's plan would certainly demoralize Saigon. But then McNamara tried to deny he had said it. And that's precisely why I developed my doubts about him and subsequently wrote a long memorandum to my brother expressing those doubts.

Quite obviously, there were two McNamaras—a hawk and a dove. It was fairly common knowledge around Washington that when he was around certain liberals, his Kennedy friends, McNamara would reveal all sorts of doubts about our course in Vietnam; but when he talked to Lyndon, he was the gung ho advocate of increased military pressure, always ready to prove his point with impressive charts and figures. He wanted it both ways. He wanted to be an agonized liberal and a tough pragmatist at the same time.

If he really felt this country was on the wrong course, he was obviously deceiving his President and doing a great disservice to all of us. But if he was actually sincere in his advice to Lyndon, he had no business expressing contrary views to dovish liberals in order to curry favor with the Kennedys. Although Lyndon took no immediate action on my memo castigating McNamara for his wishy-washy, double-dealing attitude and his covert loyalty to Bobby Kennedy, I am sure my brother had increasing doubts about him. None of us were a bit unhappy when Lyndon finally greased his path to the presidency of the World Bank.

Perhaps history will show that Bundy, McNamara and Rusk were mistaken in their advice to Lyndon, and Gen. William C. Westmoreland and Gen. Creighton W. Abrams underestimated the enemy's will and capacity to fight. But certainly no man can say that Lyndon acted arbitrarily, that he was shooting from the hip like a Texas sheriff. He not only consulted at great length with his inherited Kennedy brain trusters, he also sought the outside counsel of people like Dean Acheson, Clark Clifford and Abe Fortas. Later on, he had the advice of a brilliant professor from MIT, Walt Rostow.

Believing that his policies would prevent even greater casualties at some future date, he was naturally hurt and angered by those who called him a bloody warmonger. It was some comfort to know that the public-opinion polls showed heavy majorities in favor of stopping the Communists now, but

continued on page 51

the mass demonstrations and certain televised Senate hearings were bound to affect him.

His entire family—even I—was exposed to the same flak. Several times, as I was sitting in a restaurant or bar minding my own business, someone would come up to me and make horrible accusations about my brother. Two or three of them had obviously stoked their courage with liquor. "Watch me tell that sonofabitch off," they would say to a wife or girl friend. "I don't give a damn who he is—President's brother or no President's brother."

I was publicly insulted at Williams College by a grandstanding member of the faculty, whose hatred of my brother seemed pathological. It was a very tense and embarrassing moment for me and just a bit frightening. When supposedly mature people get that impassioned and virulent, you can never tell what may happen.

Two or three days later, I mentioned the incident to Lyndon, not to point out any personal dangers but merely to let him know about the intensity of feelings aroused by the war. "Stay away from those meetings," he told me. "You can't tell what kind of nuts are floating around these days."

"It wasn't as bad as you think," I said. "He was just blowing off steam. He's probably the meekest Milquetoast in town."

"They can be the most dangerous ones. You can't be too careful about those quiet little guys. They often carry the deepest grudges—against everybody. So don't go taking any chances. After all, you're my brother, and that alone might be enough to make some crazy bastard go off his rocker."

I couldn't tell to what extent, if any, Lyndon worried about being assassinated, but I must frankly say I worried about it occasionally. In an atmosphere of hatred and violence, anything can trigger a sick mind, and there was certainly plenty of hatred simmering near the surface during my brother's last three years in the Presidency. Rabid feelings could easily influence at least one lunatic, one man out of 200 million. That's all it would take. Another Lee Harvey Oswald nursing who knows what kind of grudges against the world at large, some small, insignificant nobody hungering for the instant prominence of a presidential assassination.

One also had to consider the violent mood in Washington itself. Aside from the periodic invasions of peace groups who came to picket the White House, the ever-increasing racial conflicts added an atmosphere of explosive tension. More than once, when the subject came up at breakfast or dinner, Lyndon would wearily nod his head and look away with a baffled expression in his eyes.

Some of the anti-Vietnam critics showed the same kind of irresponsibility when they insisted on calling it "Lyndon Johnson's war." It was conveniently forgotten, certainly de-emphasized, that he was continuing a policy set by Kennedy and relying on the advice of the same experts Kennedy had chosen—Rusk, Bundy and McNamara.

As everyone knows, Sen. J. William Fulbright accused Lyndon of going far beyond the intended scope of the Tonkin Gulf resolution, and his Senate Foreign Relations Committee was used as a convenient platform for continuous public assaults against our Vietnam policy. To say that my brother was annoyed with the Arkansas Senator (he was called "Halfbright" around the White House) would be a gross understatement. He oc-

asionally reminded people that Harry Truman had called Fulbright "an overeducated sonofabitch."

My brother was never too impressed with Fulbright, probably because he knew him too well and realized he was naive and inept in the day-to-day maneuvering inside the Senate ("Hell, he can't even park a bicycle"). But I'm afraid he was sometimes overly impressed with certain other people who had more formal education than he had.

Bright, scholarly men like McNamara, Bundy and Foras had a lot of influence on his thinking because he regarded them as part of an intellectual elite. There was a hint of awe in his attitude toward them. He knew he was basically as smart as they were—smarter in some respects—but their way of talking and their whole educational background—Harvard, Yale and all that—somehow got to him more than it should. He had known plenty of bookloving ignoramuses with Phi Beta Kappa keys from fancy colleges, had seen them pull damn-fool boners on the simplest matters, yet he could suddenly be self-conscious about his own limited schooling at a small Texas college.

By March, 1968, we were bogged down in what seemed like an endless war. The Bundy-McNamara-Rusk-Rostow policies of semi-escalation had not worked. Lyndon had been caught in limbo between the totally conflicting views of the doves and hawks. He didn't want to tuck tail and run, but he still resisted the advice of some of his generals who wanted to bomb Haiphong and escalate the bombing of Hanoi.

I frankly think his biggest mistake was allowing himself to be caught in this nowhere position. He should have gone with the hawks for an outright victory or he should have pulled out.

Whenever or however I could, I would conduct my own little public-opinion polls among taxi drivers, waiters, clerks, insurance adjusters, Government workers, tailors, bartenders, shoeshine boys and a few personal friends. The results weren't very encouraging. One bartender expressed a view that I heard from many other people. "I'm bored with this war," he said. "I don't even read about it any more. We keep fighting over and over again for the same goddamned little villages. We force them out one day, and the next night the VC are back again. What the hell kind of war is that?"

Then, of course, there were people who were disgusted by our inability to bear a "dinky little old country nobody ever heard about."

And there were those who felt we had no business being there, who called it an immoral, imperialistic venture.

Knowing how depressed he felt about the growing discontent among the millions who fully supported him back in 1965, I didn't want to tell Lyndon the remarks I heard in my informal surveys. Actually, I didn't have to—he knew what they were. As a master politician with long experience in feeling the public pulse, he obviously knew that neither friend nor foe was satisfied with the bogged-down situation in Vietnam. But public opinion didn't bother him half as much as the casualty reports from the battlefield.

Sitting down to breakfast with him and Lady Bird, I could always tell what kind of news had come from Vietnam. Pretending not to know he had had another restless, worried night, I would try to make light conversation about any silly thing that

came to mind. It seldom did any good. His mood remained somber and uncommunicative. Lyndon naturally couldn't permit himself to show any sign of weakness or doubt about Vietnam. He had to be outwardly confident, firm and unruffled by the mixture of good and bad news from the front.

Lyndon talked to Pat Nugent—a few days later, Pat volunteered for Vietnam

ALTHOUGH THE 1968 elections were several months away and Lyndon had not yet announced his plans, I was given office space at the Democratic National Committee and asked to serve as an informal liaison man between the committee and Lyndon. Some of the regular staff probably felt I was a sort of spy or hatchet man. Others may have assumed my brother was just finding something for me to do. My attitude was that I ought to operate as much as possible in the background, because I felt that if I stayed away from the Democratic Committee, people could come and tell me things they wouldn't tell me there at the office. People could come to me very privately and air whatever gripes they had without going through the various echelons of Marvin Watson and Jim Rowe and the campaign staff, or through John Criswell at the National Committee.

I think Lyndon realized that in me he had someone who had no reason to hide anything. Some of his aides felt it was best not to broach any unpleasant subjects for fear that Lyndon would blow up. My concern was to give it to him straight and to relay, if possible, any feelings that other people had on their minds—good or bad. There were some exceptions—a number of gripes against Lyndon himself that I kept under my hat because they were the kind of criticisms he couldn't do anything about. They would merely irritate him—perhaps make him mad as hell—without serving any useful purpose. This was particularly true after the Tet offensive in late January and early February, when all the Monday morning quarterbacks in America came forth with the most severe criticism we had ever gotten.

The gloom around the White House was so thick, you could slice it with a knife. Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was sent to Saigon to confer at great length with General Westmoreland, and he came back with a request for 200,000 more troops, in addition to the 525,000 already authorized. To determine how Wheeler's new requirement should be met, Lyndon appointed a special task force headed by Clark Clifford, who had been designated to succeed McNamara. Other members of the group were Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Secretary of the Treasury Henry Fowler, Under Secretary of State Nicholas Katzenbach, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Nitze, General Wheeler, Gen. Maxwell Taylor, CIA Director Richard Helms and Walt Rostow.

Though they were instructed simply to devise continued

a means for training and deploying the additional 200,000 troops, their frank, vigorous discussions inevitably touched upon the fundamental question of the need for this substantial increase. Having probed all the grim aspects of the situation, Clifford wrote later, "... after these exhausting days, I was convinced that the military course we were pursuing was not only endless, but hopeless...."

Lyndon had heard more optimistic views from Rusk, McNamara, Rostow and some of his generals, but now he was beginning to feel the sharp cutting edge of Clifford's mind. With the McCarthy people hacking away at him from all directions, the hawks demanding more aerial bombing, the casualty figures mounting day by day, the bad news he got from his old and trusted friend (who had no ax to grind) was all the more depressing. Lyndon's eyes were almost always bloodshot now, his face drawn and haggard. Nothing seemed to be going his way.

DURING A VISIT to Puerto Rico, Lyndon managed to get in a few rounds of golf with his first son-in-law, Pat Nugent. I don't know precisely what they talked about as they strolled across the course at the air base, yet it's interesting to note that a few days later, Pat Nugent volunteered for an immediate assignment in Vietnam. I'm not saying that LBJ pressured the boy—or that he pressured Captain Robb, his other son-in-law, who also went to Vietnam—but I certainly remember telling Lyndon that it was politically embarrassing to have them both several thousand miles away from the fighting while the sons-in-law of other people were getting shot at every day. Now if Lynda had married that actor named Hamilton (neither Lyndon nor I could ever remember his first name), the situation would have gotten rather complicated. He had a special deferment to support his destitute mother, who would have had a terribly hard time keeping that huge Hollywood mansion without his help. I really don't know how my brother would have handled a touchy matter like that.

ASIDE FROM THESE MINOR distractions, Lyndon had to concern himself with Bobby's bid for President. Lyndon was not anxious to buck the Kennedy machine head on. This was especially true during the early weeks of 1968, before Bobby announced his candidacy. Lester Hyman, the Massachusetts state chairman, wanted Lyndon to run in the primary or to allow someone to stand in for him. "Otherwise," he told me, "McCarthy will walk away with all the delegates."

"Well, he can't enter the Massachusetts primary," I said. "That will only antagonize the Kennedy people. In order to oppose McCarthy, my brother would have to fight him on the Vietnam issue. And since Bobby now agrees with Gene, he would also have to attack Bobby—in his own state."

Kennedy's decision to run was certainly no surprise to me. Just after the Tet offensive, I told Lyndon that Bobby would be his chief opponent. "Bobby wants Gene to find out how cold the water is before he takes a plunge," I said. But in spite of the bad news from Vietnam, Lyndon didn't think that either McCarthy or Kennedy were serious threats. The New Hampshire primary election was a real shock, and I saw no point in denying it. As the final results started flashing across the TV screen, I dictated the following memorandum:

"There is no question but what we suffered a defeat in New Hampshire, and I do not think there is really anyone to place the blame on. The only thing that could have been salvaged was the way the delegates were chosen. It appeared that too many Johnson men wanted to get their foot in the door, but you can't really hold anything against them for wanting to be 100 percent for Johnson. Therefore, I think New Hampshire served us well, inasmuch as we can profit by the mistakes that were made."

"Bobby, of course, sent his men up to help McCarthy and probably helped finance the campaign. McCarthy's people feel they won it without Bobby and don't want to give up any credit for what they did. Bobby has the image of an opportunist, and from here on out we will only solidify that image throughout the Nation. One of the dangers is that in the long run it will bolster McCarthy's image considerably when Bobby tries to take his delegates away from him. Congressman Resnick is waiting with a letter challenging Kennedy to a debate on Vietnam the minute Bobby makes his decision, which will be no later than next week. I think they have bitten off more than they can chew...."

My prediction in the memo was right on the button. Four days after McCarthy's victory, Bobby made a bashful admission of his urge to be President. Poor old Gene was cheated out of his moment of triumph. Some of the liberal columnists started calling Bobby a ruthless opportunist, and McCarthy's idealistic kids called him every dirty name they could think of.

"If Lyndon had gotten rid of McNamara in 1965, the Vietnam war might have ended by 1966."

FRANKLY HAD A grudging admiration for Bobby. He had always known that politics was a dirty, ugly game, and he played it according to the rules. His instincts told him he had to act quickly to stop the McCarthy boom, no matter how unethical or ruthless he might appear to the amateurs. As much as I disliked him, I had to admit he was a real pro—a tough operator who could play ball with Mayor Daley and still somehow convince a few naïve journalists that he was a saint. In his recent book, Jack Newfield quotes his hero (RFK) as saying: "Gene just isn't a nice person. In 1964, he was pulling all sorts of strings trying to get the Vice-Presidential nomination. Hubert Humphrey had been his friend for twenty years, and he was trying to screw Hubert. At the same time, Bob McNamara twice turned down the Vice Presidency because he felt I should get it. This is the difference between loyalty and egotism." That's what always amazed me about Bobby: he could be so self-righteous about other people's morals.

ONE FRIDAY, LYNDON AND Lady Bird left to spend the weekend at the ranch, and I had the penitentiary all to myself. Zephyr fixed us a spectacular meal, and I asked one of the servants to turn on

every light in the White House to celebrate the occasion. Had Lyndon seen his home shining in a blaze of glory with that shameful waste of electricity, he would have blown his stack. I'm sorry I didn't take a picture of it. Had he been disposed to poke fun at himself, it would have made a nice Christmas card.

ON THE AFTERNOON OF MARCH 31, 1968, I rode over to Baltimore in a White House limousine to meet with some Democrats who wanted me to discuss my brother's plans for the approaching campaign. Since Lyndon was scheduled to make a nationwide address on Vietnam that evening, I wanted to eat early so that we might all see and hear the speech. The main body of that speech was a surprise in itself. First of all, he set a ceiling of 549,000 American troops in Vietnam. Wheeler's request for an additional 200,000 men was flatly rejected. Secondly, we would accelerate our training and equipment of the South Vietnamese forces so that they could take over major combat responsibilities previously assumed by us. Third—speaking directly to Hanoi—Lyndon said we would greatly restrict our bombing of the North as an inducement to an immediate commencement of peace negotiations. He had been strongly influenced by Clark Clifford's serious misgivings about the war. Clifford's tough skepticism had finally undermined the faltering in-and-out optimism of Robert McNamara.

If Lyndon had gotten rid of McNamara in 1965, replacing him with a man like Clifford, the Vietnam war might have been ended by 1966 or early 1967—and my brother would have been unbeatable in 1968.

My friends in Baltimore clearly hadn't expected this sudden change in our Vietnam policy, and they most certainly didn't expect the clincher at the end: "I shall not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination of my party for another term as your President...."

Well, there it was. He had given up politics for peace. There were tears in my eyes when I heard it—and a smile on my lips. I was so relieved to know that he wouldn't have to put up with all the abuse he was bound to get during a long campaign, with thousands of demonstrators insulting him, cursing him, calling him a warmonger and a murderer.

Some Maryland Democrats who were watching the speech with me couldn't believe he had withdrawn. "Does he really mean it?" one of them asked me. "I mean irrevocably?"

"You heard what he said," I answered. "Neither seek nor accept. That sounds pretty definite to me." "Did you know it was coming?" someone else asked, staring at me suspiciously.

"Didn't have the slightest inkling," I said. "You don't think I would drive all the way to Baltimore to waste your time and my own if I knew he was pulling out? To tell you the God's truth, I don't think he decided this till the very last minute. He's been thinking about it—for some time probably—but I doubt that he'd made a hard-fast decision until this evening."

THE NEXT DAY, Lyndon insisted that I accompany him to Chicago, where he was scheduled to make a luncheon speech at the annual convention of the National Association of Broadcasters. Leaning toward me as the plane skimmed over the capital, Lyndon

asked, "What should I tell these broadcasting executives? I haven't decided what to talk about."

"This being the first of April," I said, "I think it's pretty obvious what you should tell them."

"What do you mean?"

"Just tell them 'APRIL FOOL! I was only joking last night. I'm going to run for President, after all.' Then you turn around and walk off the platform without saying another word," I said. "That will really set them on their ears."

He laughed, of course. And as the idea caught hold, we both started laughing and nudging each other. "Wouldn't that be a bitch?" he said, raring back in his seat with a huge guffaw. "April Fool! I can just see their mouths hanging open."

"You ought to do it," I said. "You really should."

Later on, as he was being introduced, Lyndon looked in my direction and gave me a sly wink, a big grin momentarily crossing his face. For a fleeting moment I actually expected him to do what I'd suggested. I'm sorry he didn't. That would have been a great gag and a perfect occasion for it.

THOUGH I WOULD HAVE preferred the April Fool play, I thought his speech was forceful and effective, much more natural than the bland, sterile crap his speech writers generally produced. He made an even more forceful impromptu talk to a few reporters who came back to Washington with us. Because of the suddenness of our trip, the arrangements for the press corps were inadequate, and some of them had to sit in the presidential section. Furthermore, the press bus had broken down on the way to the airport, causing a long delay that put Lyndon in a grouchy mood.

Surrounded by nine or ten correspondents, he let loose with a scorching, sarcastic lecture that stunned them, some of them, getting tears in their eyes—either in anger or shame. "Well, you fellows won't have me to pick on any more," he began, referring to his surprise withdrawal from the presidential race. "You can find someone else to flog and insult. And I want to tell you here and now that this damned credibility gap you've been harping about is something you've all created yourselves...."

It was a tough, bitter scolding that made me squirm as if I were one of them. Knowing how he felt about many of the political reporters, I shouldn't have been too surprised, but I must frankly confess I was. When I noticed the grim expressions all around me, the tightened lips and hard-set eyes, I wondered whether he should have allowed himself to vent his long-simmering resentment. In retrospect, I imagine he would have wanted to apologize to them. But that's not his way.

He was still in a sullen frame of mind when he was informed that Bobby Kennedy had sent him a telegram (released to the press, by the way, before it was received at the White House) asking for an immediate appointment and expressing his "admiration" of Lyndon Johnson's decision to with-

draw from the race for the Democratic nomination.

"I won't bother answering that grandstanding little runt," he told one of his aides. "From now on, I shall refuse to answer or comment on any telegram that is given to the press before it gets to me. And that's a standing order."

In that same "ordering mood," he snapped a few instructions to people at the air base shortly after our arrival, and I suddenly noticed they weren't responding with their customary alertness and precision. There was a certain drag in their manner that made me feel they were already regarding my brother as a lame-duck President.

It pained me to realize that he himself was still unaware of their changed attitude. He was no longer the total boss. To them, he was just another leader on his way out. Knowing how difficult it would be

feel. With this thought in mind, I called Warren Spannaus, the state chairman of Minnesota, and asked him to advise Hubert to start a "demand movement" for LBJ.

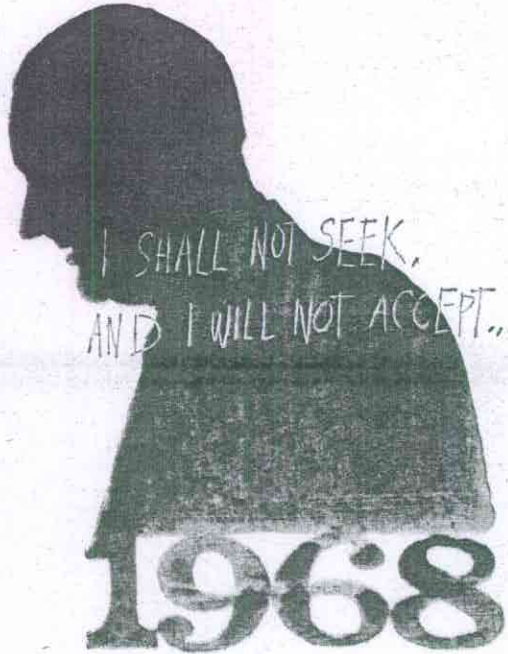
"I'm sure it won't change my brother's mind," I said. "He's undoubtedly determined to step aside. But I think it would make him feel better to know that thousands of Americans were demanding that he run again, and it can't hurt Humphrey one way or another, he'll still be Vice President if (by some miracle) the 'demand movement' works—or, what is far more probable, he'll get all the Johnson support for making a generous and loyal gesture." He asked if Lyndon was aware of my idea, and I said, "Of course not! He would chew my ass if he knew I was promoting something like this. But I'm doing it anyway. It's not the first time I've acted without

his permission." Spannaus thought it was a fine idea and promised to call Humphrey immediately. Hubert never made a move to follow my suggestion. Perhaps he thought it would queer his chances for the nomination, or that Lyndon would get angry at him. Whatever the reason, my little plan died on the vine.

Several weeks before they went to Mexico—prior to Lyndon's withdrawal—the Humphreys had come to dinner at the White House. Hubert seemed a bit nervous that evening, less talkative than usual. Perhaps he was worried about the poor showing we had made in the Midwest polls, no doubt expecting my brother to make a harsh comment about it. (Although he had not announced his candidacy for reelection, Lyndon's name had been included in the polls—and McCarthy was doing better than expected.) Sure enough, Lyndon did bring up the opinion polls, but in a roundabout way. As we were having our dessert, he looked at me with a mock-serious scowl. He said he had been meaning to ask me about the situation in the Midwest. I'd given him the idea that it was all tied up for him, he said, but the polls did not seem to bear that out. "Now, just a moment," I started to say, knowing damned well he was really digging at Hubert—that I was a mere foil. The old LBJ technique: using me to get at someone else.

"Now don't you go making excuses," said Lyndon, shooting a glance at poor old Hubert. He went on to tell me that Spannaus and others had promised to wage a big campaign out there and that he had expected much better results. By now, there were tears in Hubert's eyes, and his lips were trembling a little. He knew—and so did his wife Muriel—that my brother was actually needing *him* for failing to influence the Midwestern polls by a larger margin for LBJ. After all, Minnesota was his home state, and a Vice President is supposed to pull some weight, at least in his own region. Realizing that Lyndon might go on in that embarrassing vein for another half hour, I decided to cut him short by switching the subject.

Just after dinner, Lyndon excused himself to attend to some personal correspondence in his room, and he asked me to accompany him. (Lady Bird stayed behind to chat with Muriel and Hubert.) When we got up to his room, I realized that Lyndon continued



for a proud man like Lyndon to accept the lesser status of a lame duck, I went up to my room and bawled like a little kid who has just found out his father can't lick everybody on the block.

THE PERSON MOST LIKELY to benefit from the sudden turn of events was, of course, Hubert Humphrey. Although Lyndon was "officially neutral," we all knew he would throw his weight behind his loyal Vice President when it became necessary. The President always controls the machinery of his own party, unless he's politically naive or indifferent, and you certainly couldn't say that about Lyndon.

In view of his many obligations to LBJ, I felt that Hubert should make some outward gesture of loyalty to my brother, something dramatic that would ease the depression Lyndon would inevitably

merely wanted to get a massage before going to bed. "I thought we might talk a little while I'm getting my rubdown," he said.

"If you're thinking about Hubert," I said, "I want you to know I felt sorry for him, Lyndon. You were pretty hard on him."

"Hubert can take it," he said, stretching himself out on a rubbing table.

"I know he can—but it would be easier for him if Muriel weren't listening," I said. "As a matter of fact, I've been wanting to discuss some strategy with him, but not while she's with him."

"Call him in here," he said. "Lady Bird can stay with Muriel."

When Humphrey came into the room a few minutes later, Lyndon appeared to be dozing as a Naval petty officer massaged his back.

"I've been talking about the campaign with the President," I said to Hubert, "and I've got a few ideas he thought you might want to hear."

Glancing uncertainly at Lyndon, who seemed half-asleep, Hubert said, "I'd be glad to hear anything you have to say."

Recalling the days when he had fought my brother on civil rights and certain other legislation, I expressed the conviction that he had a natural "in" with all the liberal elements of the Democratic party, that they owed him a special allegiance. "Now, we're expecting Bobby Kennedy to get in this race right soon," I said. "And he's going to be relying on support from these very same people. But you've got a more natural right to it—except that you haven't exploited it enough. You've let some of those damned fuzzy-brained liberals put you on the defensive. But you can't let them. You've got to call in these liberal friends of yours and get them in line—tell them the facts of life. You're going to have to convince them you're still as liberal as they are—without pussyfooting on Vietnam. You can't abandon Lyndon Johnson on that issue. You've got to back him and still prove you're liberal. . . ."

Humphrey kept glancing now and then at Lyndon, who simply went on pretending he was asleep. But from my angle of vision, I could see a flickering smile on his lips.

"You might point this out," I continued. "You might point out that you would be President if my brother should die, that they would have a proven liberal in the White House. . . ."

I went on in that vein for about a half hour, putting it as strongly as I could, without a single interruption from Lyndon. If I had said anything he didn't like, I'm sure he would have broken in with a gruff order for us to leave the room. "You two are ruining my rest," he'd say. "Go talk somewhere else." His silence was approval of what I was saying, and Humphrey undoubtedly knew it. He was doubly certain when Lyndon mumbled, "Good night, Hubert—see you, Sam," as we left the room.

I don't know what steps Humphrey took to win back the support of his former liberal allies, but I imagine it was easier for him after Lyndon bowed out of the race on March 31, even though he had to maintain an LBJ stance on Vietnam. Once in a while, he would falter, and my brother would have to let him know—directly or indirectly—that he was unhappy with such shilly-shallying.

I HAD BEEN WATCHING the returns from the California primary on television in my hotel suite, but

had turned off the sound to dictate a memo to my secretary on the final outcome. Then I saw the sudden frenzy on the screen, the look of horror on everyone's face. I turned on the sound and heard that Bobby Kennedy had been shot.

I was driven to the White House immediately. There were no lights on in the family quarters, so I assumed Lyndon was still unaware of what had happened. I was correct in that assumption: he had gone to bed an hour before it happened. When he was finally awakened, he stared at me with total disbelief in his eyes. "Oh, my God!" he said. "Not again. Don't tell me it's happened all over again."

The next few hours were a kind of controlled bedlam. Lyndon stood in the center of all the frenzied activity, his mouth set tight, his eyes clouded with concern. "We've got to protect Ted Kennedy," he said to one of his aides. "That family seems to be cursed. This may be a plot or just another madman like Oswald, but I'm not taking any chances. I want the Secret Service to provide protection for every candidate—including Teddy Kennedy."

"But he's not a candidate," someone reminded him.

"That doesn't make any difference," he said. "I want him protected anyway."

"The laws may not permit it, Mr. President. They're pretty specific about such—"

"I don't care what the law says! I'm going to have him protected if I have to issue a special executive order to do it. So you call the Secret Service right away."

As usually happens in such cases, he got his way without any undue fuss from the legal people.

THE DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN for the nomination was resumed under a cloud of unease and despair. The assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King and the President's sudden withdrawal had unsettled the party.

So long as he stuck with Johnson on the crucial Vietnam issue, Humphrey had the nomination locked up before the convention started. Any attempt by him to back away from our commitments in Southeast Asia would automatically work against him. We all knew he was being tempted, but nevertheless felt he would ultimately stay with LBJ. He knew, as did all the news media, that my brother still controlled the party machinery and that he was not about to accept the adoption of an anti-Vietnam platform or the nomination of a candidate who opposed his views. John Criswell would be handling the sound apparatus that's always so crucial in a convention. He could turn on or turn off the microphones on the floor, effectively squelching any moves by vocal dissidents to disrupt the proceedings.

Still undecided as to whether he would appear at the Stock Yard Inn for the big birthday party Mayor Daley had planned for him, Lyndon flew down to Texas to follow the convention activities on television. "I'm not going to let those smart-alecks take over that convention," he said, as we were nearing the air base at Austin. "I haven't worked all my life just to have my own party repudiate me at the last minute." There had been some talk of his storming the convention (with Harry Truman at his side) if things should start to break apart, a sort of melodramatic last stand by LBJ supporters. I was frankly opposed to any such action.

No one in the Johnson family wanted Lyndon

to go to Chicago, especially after we saw the televised scenes of angry mobs milling in the streets around the major hotels. Mayor Daley had surrounded the convention hall with barbed wire, and he had also planned for Lyndon to fly into the stadium compound by helicopter—but such security measures weren't reassuring enough for me. One quiet little maniac sifting through that maze, perhaps sneaking a badge from one of the delegates, could end my brother's life in a split second.

But aside from my natural concern for his safety, I had a vague fear that he might decide to let the convention nominate him if Hubert should suddenly falter. In that strange year of political upheaval, nothing would surprise me any more. I was especially fearful of such a development when I heard Governor Connally hinting that he might nominate LBJ. He was, of course, merely "keeping Hubert honest" on the Vietnam question; but in the heat and emotion of a Democratic convention, anything can get out of hand. I shuddered at the notion of Lyndon's waging a difficult, exhausting and dangerous campaign and then finally losing. What could be more humiliating than losing to Richard Milhous Nixon?

With the tension beginning to build at Chicago, there were certain disconcerting signs of an incipient revolt that could easily lead Lyndon to drastic action. Mayor Daley, whom the Kennedys had always courted, let it be known that he wanted Teddy to run. And Senator McCarthy offered to go along. I kept calling our people at the ranch and kept hearing their reassurances that Criswell and Rep. Carl Albert, the permanent chairman of the convention, had everything under control. With their expert hands on the sound-system controls, they could cut off any rambunctious rebels from the Kennedy-McCarthy states. The so-called "Teddy threat," which was blown up to major proportions by TV, never materialized. Early this year, Kennedy told a LOOK reporter that he never considered running. If that were so, why did he bother to set up a special command post under the skillful management of his brother-in-law Steve Smith? I seriously doubt that they were merely testing their machine for 1972. But they were practical enough to see that Lyndon's people had firm control of everything, that they had enough votes to give Humphrey the nomination on the first ballot.

Although he hated to miss the convention and his birthday party, Lyndon didn't go to Chicago. He tried to mask his feelings, but I knew how bitter he felt inside. He had hoped to make a graceful, triumphant exit from public life—he had certainly earned it—but we all knew that wouldn't be possible in the hostile atmosphere that hung over Chicago. There were a lot of die-hard LBJ foes inside the convention hall—and a certain meanness in the crowds I'd never seen before. I was glad my brother stayed home.

LYNDON HAS BEEN VERY QUIET during what the newspapers call his "exile" at the ranch. Wishing to give his successor a fair chance to launch his own programs, he has wisely refrained from any public comments on the Nixon Administration. But in the early part of 1970, I would expect my brother Lyndon to come out of hibernation with a number of strong statements on domestic and foreign affairs. We haven't heard the last of LBJ. END