

BIRTHDAY

December 22, 1965
Dallas Townsend
(taken from carbon,
original misplaced)

Another birthday today - at the Texas White House.

Lady Bird Johnson - fifty-three years old. And perhaps for the first time since that fateful day in Dallas - first lady in her own right.

Mrs. Johnson the moving force - behind passage of the recent highway beautification bill. A cause in which she has made more than thirty speeches - in the past year. Along the way - her natural shyness - giving way to a new image. A friend noting that now when she gets up to speak - "her knees don't knock so much anymore."

In any case, her principal job, of course - that of helpmate to the President. Serving as his "eyes and ears" on travels throughout the country - while assisting in the countless projects that have become a part of the Great Society.

Not the least of her duties - that of keeping tabs on her husband. Seeing that he watches his health - watches his

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waistline - and takes an occasional nap - an occasional rest.

No nagging necessary. Lady Bird simply reminds the

**President - "if you can't run yourself - you can't run the
country."**

It works - everytime, we're told.

LAOS

The government of Laos today banned further distribution in that country - of the newspaper Tairath. Largest news daily - in neighboring Thailand.

The reason - publication of an article in Tairath - predicting an imminent coup in Laos. Further reporting that Laotian Premier Souvanna Phouma - was ready to flee the country.

This part of an "enemy plan" to create confusion - said the Laotian government. Newsmen at the scene noting, however, that the government palace ~~is~~ at Vientiane - has been under extremely heavy military guard in recent weeks.

COMMON

DeGaulle has agreed at last - to end his six-month-old boycott of the European Common Market. And France soon will announce plans - to attend a Common Market Foreign Ministers meeting next month in Luxembourg. The announcement today - in Paris - from so-called "responsible French government sources."

The same sources hinting at the possibility - of a future summit meeting of the six member-nations of the Common Market. To settle once and for all-the crisis that has paralyzed the trade alliance since June Thirtieth.

DIMBLEBY

The world-famous "Voice of Britain" / for the past two decades - stilled forever, according to a dispatch today from London. Richard Dimbleby - Britain's top radio and television commentator - critically ill with cancer.

Dimbleby's son reporting that he is even now "sinking into a deep sleep" - from which he will never awaken.

The fifty-two-year-old Dimbleby - a fixture at almost every great national event in Britain - since World War Two. Up to and including - the state funeral of Sir Winston Churchill last January. At a time when he himself - was entering the terminal state / of his own affliction.

DAHOMEY

Another military coup today in the tiny nation of Dahomey - formerly French West Africa. Army strongman General Christophe Soglo - seizing control of government for the second time in less than a month. Dissolving Parliament, all political parties and all local government - pending enactment of a new constitution.

The coup - announced officially by Radio Cotonou. Made necessary - said Soglo - by continued bickering and feuding among civilian authorities. Who have been unable as yet to establish a stable government - in the five years since Dahomey achieved its independence.

TOT

From Springfield, Florida, near Pensicola - the story today of a would-be robber. Who picked on a "Tot" - and ended up with a big knot on his head.

The restwhile gunman - one John Franklin McBride. Walking into Tot's Bar in Springfield - pointing a rifle at barmaid Mattie Lou Shiscavage ^ and demanding all the money in her cash register. Whereupon Mattie Lou - gave him "what fer." Seizing the rifle and clubbing him over the head with it - until she broke the stock.

When police arrived - they took McBride not to jail - but to a hospital. Where at last report - he was still in serious condition.

Mattie Lou described by police - as "a pretty hefty gal."

HAIR

A stiff sentence was tempered with mercy today - in Turin, Italy. Where an Italian judge suspended a ten-month jail term - levied against Giovanni Gentile - for having shaved his wife's head.

The judge suddenly lenient - when Gentile explained the motive for his crime. He shaved his wife's head, said he, when he discovered she had spent his unemployment check - at the hairdresser's.

VIETNAM

The United States and South Vietnam - apparently ready to accept a Christmas cease-fire in the Vietnamese war. This according to a report today from Washington- with formal confirmation expected shortly in Saigon.

In the meantime - the war goes on. American bombers equipped with flickering, green electronic eyes - knifing through darkness and fog today. To blast a vital rail bridge - near Haiphong. The pre-dawn raid - fourth American bombing attack in six days - within the industrial heartland of Communist North Vietnam.

ASTRONAUTS

Space champs Frank Borman and Jim Lovell of the Gemini-Seven - today completed a series of medical tests at Cape Kennedy. Doctors certifying that the two men came through their space endurance test - in the best of physical condition. The astronauts promptly flying back to Houston - for a Christmas reunion with their families. To be followed by more - ■ briefing.

EXPERIMENT

Plans for a novel experiment aimed at solving an age-old problem - were announced today in Rome. The External City to ban all traffic from its central shopping district - for a week beginning Monday. The twenty-block "golden triangle" of Rome - to serve solely as a "pedestrian island." Roman traffic officials insisting, what's more, that if the temporary ban eases traffic-and doesn't ruin business-it may become a permanent one.

Local observers - doubtful, however, for all the attempts through history to solve the Roman traffic mess - only one was ever successful. That by the barbarous Gauls - in three-ninety B.C. When they settled the problem - by burning the city.

HOME FOLLOW VIETNAM

In a war-related incident here at home - a U.S.

Army officer was convicted by a court martial today at Fort

Bliss, Texas. Second Lieutenant Henry Howe of Boulder,

Colo~~rado~~^{rado} - found guilty of disrespect and conduct unbecoming

an officer. For having taken part in a demonstration - against

the war in Vietnam. Preliminary sentence - subject to

review - set at two years of hard labor, a dishonorable

discharge, and forfeiture of all pay and allowance.

GOLDBERG FOLLOW HOME

Meanwhile, a press conference at the United Nations - for U.S. Ambassador Arthur Goldberg. Presumably to summarize the twentieth session of the General Assembly - which ended early today. But also concerned largely - with the war in Vietnam.

At one point - an Asian correspondent expressing the fears of "non-white" observers - as he put it. Fears - said he - ~~that~~ if there were any further escalation of the war - "the United States would not hesitate to use the atomic bomb."

Goldberg reply: The use of atomic weapons in Vietnam - "has not been contemplated and is not conceivable." Indeed, he went on, the United States "wants to use NO weapons of war in Vietnam." Our goal, he asserted, is simply that aggression shall cease.

TRANSPORT FOLLOW ROME

Speaking of traffic - British Prime Minister Harold Wilson today fired his transportation minister. A man named Tom Fraser - who has been involved in a number of highway controversies in recent month. The latest over an order that would have permitted British police to take roadside breath tests - in their war on drunken drivers.

A turn for the better? We'll have to wait and see.

His successor, you see, a woman - who doesn't drive.