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Barbara Cline
Archivist

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4:06pm

President Johnson to

Mr. Drew Pearson

in Bismark, North Dakota

A - What are you doing out there -- making speeches?

B- Yes, I spoke in Spokane, Washington, last night, and Bismarck tonight, telling them about you.

A - I thought you would like to know that three years ago there were only three leaders in the room who thought Open Housing would pass -- nobody thought open housing would pass. We just passed it in the House of Representatives, and I want to thank you for what you have done. It just passed the House of Representatives, but some of these great liberals don't do much about it.

B - Congratulations; that is wonderful.

A - I appreciate all that you have done to help. I have a problem. Larry O'Brien is resigning to go and help Bobby -- help him in Indiana. They put so much pressure on the boy. We have 8 or 9 months to go over there and I want to get somebody that is true and loyal, and somebody who has earned it. I know I will catch some Hell from the Rowland Evanses, but I am thinking seriously of naming Marvin Watson because I owe him more than anybody. He is competent and able. He works with the liberal people. He has been kind of _____. They have hit at him. But everybody in Congress likes him. I have talked to Mike Mansfield and Yarborough.

B - My reaction is you will get a little Hell for it, but I think you are right. The chief trouble with Marvin is he is so silent. He is a wonderful guy. He does not talk enough. He is the opposite of O'Brien.

A - He does that on instructions. He is the other way if you want him to be.

B - I guess I haven't known that. I think highly of him. Some of the people in New York say he doesn't give. He listens politely, but doesn't give.

A - That is true because he could not say anything to them with my situation what it was. He hesitated to be a hypocrite and say you go ahead and stick your neck out, and the Boss will saw it off for you.

B - He has been a wonderful and loyal friend.

A - He is about the about the ablest one I have over here. He runs a tight ship over here. I am giving serious thought to it, and I wanted you to know about it, and about civil rights, and I wanted to get your judgment.

mr