

REMARKS BY SENATOR LYNDON B. JOHNSON
DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION, SPOKANE, WASHINGTON
MAY 25, 1960

LYNDON B. JOHNSON:

My beloved friends of many years, Senator Magnuson, Senator Jackson, Governor Rossellini, my fellow Democrats.

From outward appearances it is difficult to tell whether this is a Convention of the Democratic Party in the State of Washington or a meeting of the United States Senate.

I am glad to see so many of the Senators.

We've had more State Conventions in the last twenty four hours than we've had in the Senate.

I am particularly glad to see my old long time friends Senator Symington and Senator Kennedy are out here.

I wish to express to them both my gratitude that they were willing to give up their weekends with their families and dig right down into their diamond pockets to pay their own way to come 3,000 miles across the United States just so they could be with their Leader in the Senate.

You know Maggy has seniority over me.

He was appointed to Congress a little more than three months before I got there.

He got there in January '37, and I arrived in April.

Maggy and I have been very close.

He was kidding me a little bit this morning when he saw me.

He said:

"Lyndon, I'm a little bit sorry about what Jack had to say about you

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last night. I didn't know what to do but....."

My blood pressure went up pretty high.

I rolled up my sleeves and got ready to give a good defense of myself.

But before I could, Maggy in that good assured way of his just walked away.

As he did, he said:

"I was just kidding you.

"I just wanted to see if I could spark you a little bit."

I said:

"Maggy, that reminds me of a story I heard around the Texas Legislature in the early days of the Roosevelt Administration when we were trying to economize.

It goes something like this:

One of the Senators called up an old judge who had served for years in the District Court of Dallas.

The Senator said: "Judge, I just wanted to tell you we passed a re-Legislation here tonight and we abolished your District."

The Judge said: "Now why would you do a thing like that?"

"We had to save money," the Senator replied.

The Judge said:

"Well, you didn't do it without a hearing did you?"

The Senator said:

"No, we had a hearing and the Committee recommended the action on the

basis of the evidence it heard. The first man they heard was the President of your Bar Association."

The Judge said: "Now, let me tell you something about the President of that Bar Association. He's a shyster. He's been representing the criminal element around here for years."

The Senator said: "We also heard what the Banker said."

The Judge said: "Let me tell you about him too. He and his daddy and his daddy's daddy before him have been userers for years. They've been living off the money of widows and orphans for three generations. They're no good."

The Senator said: "We also had the President of the Civic Improvement League."

The Judge said: "I can tell you a few things about him. He's been mixed up in every scandal -- one right after another -- in Dallas. Why, he'd have been in jail long ago except that his rich father pays protection for him to the police."

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Finally, the Senator said: "Well, Judge, I have a devil of a confession -- I was just kidding you. They didn't abolish your Court at all. They offered an amendment to abolish it, but I defeated it 11 to 5 in the Committee. You're safe -- the Court still stands."

The Judge said: "Senator, you oughtn't to treat me that way. You've made me say some unkind things about three of the dearest friends I ever had."

Now Maggy almost had me saying some unkind things about one of the best men I know.

But, I didn't come out here just to tell you stories.

I came out to touch on three subjects very briefly.

THE TASK AHEAD

It's very important that we select a leader of this nation who will do something about utilizing our human resources.

We must re-write our Social Security Laws.

We must evolve a program for our people, including a National Aid Program for the aging.

I could spend the afternoon outlining for you what we ought to do for the young, for the old, for our farmers, for our workers, for all our people.

(more)

There is only one Wall Street but there are hundreds of Spokanes and Seattles in the nation.

The Democratic Party is the responsible Party.

The Party for all the people.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The next subject I'd like to mention is our natural resources.

I made a luncheon speech over here today and I told about the eighteen millions the United States Government has underwritten and guaranteed on F.H.A. Loans for housing.

They had to do it because most Bankers avoid it.

Banks don't like to lend money and if they do lend it they want some insurance.

For this reason, Uncle Sam, under the Roosevelt Administration, provided an insurance for banks where Uncle Sam would guarantee the F.H.A. Loan.

We take half percent of the interest for paying in funds to take care of the loan.

I think the next Administration is going to have to institute a program which will allow Uncle Sam to say to local citizens:

"You go and develop that project.

"We'll assume the responsibilities.

"We'll guarantee the repayment of the loan if there is any.

"You just start the hammers going."

We must reap the benefits that are waiting for us in the fields of

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atomic power.

We must reap the benefits waiting for us from communications and weather control in space.

We must do this but it requires ingenuity and imagination.

These are requirements the Republicans can't fill.

RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA

Mr. Gromyko says we're on the brink of war.

I have not come here this afternoon to tell you how dangerous the world in which we live is.

I will say however, that we ought to be prepared for every eventuality -- and we're not prepared.

Next week in the Senate we're going to be forced to award millions of dollars to our Defense Appropriations Bill so we can have a defence that will protect this nation from the threat of the aggression that faces us.

THE U-2

Without discussing the wisdom of the steps that were taken by this Administration prior to the Senate Conference, I think I should tell you I believe Mr. Khrushchev had all the information on the U-2 when he was in this country that he had when he went to Paris.

Mr. Khrushchev is the grand-daddy of all the world over.

He did all that shouting about a little unarmed plane with a camera on it while he's got microphones picking up conversations in our Embassies all over the world.

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Mr. Khrushchev is a poor person to talk about the American President.

Mr. Khrushchev is a poor person to be demanding of the American President an apology or statement of regret.

If there's going to be any apologizing, the man that ought to apologize is Mr. Khrushchev himself.

I'm against America apologizing.

I'm against America's President sending a statement of regret to this Communist Premier.

We want, above all, to avoid any opportunity of having it said this peace-loving nation ever wanted anything more than peace.

We didn't covet one acre of anybody's territory. When we got over there what happened? He demanded we apologize for coming instead of telling us that he ought to apologize for leaving.

I'm convinced that he's got trouble at home and because of that, I'm convinced he had two things in mind:

He wanted to divide us from our Allies.

Well, what happened?

His performance was so disgraceful we came away from the Summit with more support from our allies than we had when we went in.

He wanted to divide us at home.

He knew there was an election coming along in November and he knew there were some Democrats seeking office.

He knew there were some Republicans that could be drafted.

He thought this was a very opportune time to meddle in the domestic affairs of the United States.

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So, one of the first things he implied was he would like to wait for several months to have any conversations at the Summit.

His purpose was to set Americans against each other by giving the impression that he could do business better with the new Administration in January than he could with the Government of the United States at that time.

Well, what happened?

His attempt failed.

He doesn't understand our freedom of speech.

He doesn't understand we can think together without thinking alike.

He doesn't realize there is no pro-Kruschev Party in the United States.

We're not united on many things -- not even in our own families -- but we are united on one thing in America.

We're united against Communism.

I didn't vote for President Eisenhower, but he's President of the United States.

He's the only spokesman we have from now until January 20.

So, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Mr. Fullbright; the Democratic nominee of 1952 and 1956, Governor Stevenson; the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Mr. Rayburn and myself, as Democratic Leader of the Senate very promptly said to the President of the United States:

Tell Mr. Kruschev if he can't do business with the United States in May, he can't do business with us in January.

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THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE PARTIES

Somebody asked me one time what is the difference between the Republican Party and the Democratic Party?

I said:

One thing I can think of right away is we don't dislike their President.

We don't go around sniping and spiting and griping and investigating and trying to destroy the American President.

Mr. Khrushchev wants us to do this, but we're not going to do Mr. Hrushchev's work. We're going to settle this matter at the ballot box next November.

The wise leaders of our Party are going to select the Democratic Nominee in Los Angeles that to them appears to be the best qualified, the most experienced, ablest and most dedicated person available.

Once selected we're all going to work for his election.

We're going to elect the Democratic Ticket From the Court House to the White House.

DEMOCRATIC PROGRAM

The next Democratic Administration's going to have a program dealing with human resources.

It will have a program dealing with natural resources.

It will have a new foreign policy program.

We're going to have a leader who's dedicated and courageous and experienced enough to carry these programs out.

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We're not only going to gain the respect of all the free men in the world -- we're going to be their leaders and you're going to help us.

Thank you.

Goodnight and God bless you.
