

REMARKS BY SENATOR LYNDON B. JOHNSON
TO THE OKLAHOMA PRESS ASSOCIATION
OKLAHOMA CITY, JULY 2, 1960

Lyndon B. Johnson:

I appreciate your kindness and generosity in asking me here to visit with the Oklahoma Press Association: the OPA.

The last encounter I had with the OPA was when I visited Lady Bird's home at Christmas. We went out to buy some sausage and when I got through I asked the man how many stamps you got there. He said he didn't know what I meant. I said: "The OPA requires stamps. I want to give you whatever stamps you need." "Oh," he said, "OPA--well, they haven't put it in over here yet."

Well, I see you've got it in up here and it is wonderful for me to see people like Pres Moore and Bill Atcheson and the rest of you who have been so kind and fine to me through the years.

One of the things the Oklahoma press should be proudest of is your Junior Senator Mike Monroney.

We borrow him every now and then to come down to Texas to make speeches for us.

We always work closely with all the members of your Democratic delegation, that fine Democratic whip who is the strong right arm of Sam Rayburn--Carl Ablert--was in my office the other day.

The only thing I know that could improve Texas is, since we've got so many Texans that have gone to Oklahoma, I do think we would profit a whole lot if you would call us and raise us and send more Oklahomans to Texas.

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You know these Congressmen and Senators are not always on the best terms. All public officials are not always on the best terms, but when my colleague got elected we were trying to get along the best we could and represent the state of Texas. One day he came up to me and he was smiling from ear to ear. He said: "I want you to know you are one of the greatest Senators in this party and I am very grateful to you." And, I said: "What have I done now?" He said: "You got Bob Kerr to make a speech on my education bill and that is what passed it."

So, it's not a one-way street. Bob Kerr did pass Senator Yarborough's education bill and we try to believe in the doctrine of reciprocity.

When you need us you can count on us.

When Ed Livermore asked me to come down here today, I turned to Bob Kerr and asked him what about it. He said: "Lyndon, these are newspaper folks and if you want to make news, the best way to make it is just announce your candidacy."

CANDIDACY

Well, I am going to make that announcement today.

I AM AN AVOWED CANDIDATE.

If nominated I am going to conduct the most thorough, diligent, winning campaign any man can carry on for the nomination of United States Senator from Texas.

Now, I haven't come down here to talk to you about nominations for other things. I think though we do have some inter-related responsibilities. Maybe you would want to get into the question period. If so, we'll exchange our ideas.

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It is your job to reflect as well as you can, my activities and the activities of all elected officials.

I want to handle my job as well as you handle yours, but neither one of us are going to do very well unless we trust each other, unless we have a mutual respect for each other.

I hope in this interchange of ideas today you will come to understand something about the problems we have in government and in the country.

I hope you will because before we are newspapermen, before we are Senators, we are first of all Americans.

AMERICA MOVING FORWARD

As Americans all of us have common hopes, common dreams, common aspirations.

All of us want our country to be strong.

We want our people to be prosperous.

We want our children to have opportunities.

Above all, we want freedom to survive and flourish.

Within a few months, we Americans will make the decision which will either give substance to our hopes and dreams or relegate them to history.

There was never a time when America had greater need for imagination, initiative, ingenuity, clear-sight and logical thought.

THE REAL ISSUE

There are some who would define the issues in the forthcoming election

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as survival. I do not agree.

Americans are never going to be content just to survive.

If our ancestors had not set our goals so high themselves, we in Oklahoma and Texas would still be living in log cabins and traveling by the one-horse shay.

The real issue is whether America is going to continue to advance.

Whether America is going to seize the opportunities that are before us to make a better life for our people and for the people of the world.

Whether we are going to strengthen not only our own freedom, but whether we are going to merit a position of leadership in the world at large.

The alternative is to sit back, stand-pat, decide America doesn't want to travel first class, attempt to shape our destiny on the basis of what America cannot do, rather than what America can do.

This is a fateful choice because of the times in which it is being made.

We are just entering the fabulous sixties.

It is a decade in which all of space may not be the limit of our possible achievements.

In many respects international relations in the last decade were dominated by fear--of nuclear explosive capabilities. Atom bombs, hydrogen bombs were rattled. People were threatened. Over all of us there was a dark pall of gloom. Humanity appeared headed to destruction.

THE HOPE OF THE SIXTIES

But, the decade of the sixties gives us a new hope. Our scientists

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and our technicians have made a daring leap forward.

They have broken the bonds of the earth's atmosphere and leapt into space itself.

Only yesterday or the day before, we launched one of our most daring and one of our most successful experiments.

There is enough in all of this, for all of us to do.

Perhaps for the first time in recorded history, we have an opportunity now, soon, this year, next year, to establish a lasting, a true peace in the world.

There is no magic formula. There are no secret weapons or arms control programs that will bring us to this goal in a matter of days or weeks.

For many years to come we must keep our defenses strong.

We must keep our powder dry.

We cannot afford to lay down our guard because we have learned from sad experience that weakness is not respected in a world where dictators are loose or where the Communists rule.

Personally, I believe our defenses should be stronger than they are.

I would like to see a more adequate airborne alert so our planes won't get caught on the ground as they did at Clark's Field in the Philippines.

I would like to see progress on missiles.

I would like to see a better and more adequate airlift.

I would like to see us improve our anti-submarine warfare.

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I would like to see our army modernized.

At the same time, we cannot allow our minds to become obsessed with defense.

We must not deceive ourselves into thinking nuclear hardware and international ballistic missiles are going to maintain peace.

At best, these weapons are only to hold the balance. We must use the time they permit us to take vigorous steps toward peace.

Unless we do this we will not be worthy of our American heritage.

DR. HENRY BENNETT

We learned something about it from one of the great giants of his time, one of the great leaders of your state, the late Dr. Henry Garland Bennett.

I remember when I was with the NYA back in the early 30's, I pulled kids out of box cars and picked them up back of garbage cans where they had gone to hunt for something to eat.

I remember when boys from Oklahoma came down and would stay up nearly all night talking about Dr. Bennett.

What an inspiration he was to so many young men. What a service he rendered to the world.

He was a man of vision.

He was aware of the fact in this world of almost three billion people, more than half of them make less than \$50 a year.

Millions of them live literally on the edge of starvation.

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He envisioned a program that taught people how to help themselves. This clear-sighted concept was the basis for the point four program which he administered and which he was running when the good lord called him.

Egyptians were shown how to increase the results of their work by five times simply by using a long-handled sythe.

Indians scratching the hardened overworked soil were taught to increase their production many times simply by the use of a plow.

Bolivians were taught the fundamentals of irrigation for their dry and sunbaked fields.

Never has any foreign policy paid such rich dividends both to the United States and to the people of the world.

Our country gained in friendship and those who were helped gained in physical wellbeing, self respect and dignity.

This is the real road to peace.

While we have a field of tanks, guns, airplanes and bombs to give us protection, the vision of Dr. Bennett is the real road to peace.

THE ROAD TO PEACE

The first step on that road is to look to our own strength.

I am not just referring to military strength, I am referring to economic, moral and spiritual strength.

We do not have that kind of strength and we're not going to have it as long as there are rivers to be developed.

We do not have that kind of strength as long as there are minerals

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and soil resources remaining to be developed.

We do not have it as long as there are children whose education is limited and less than adequate, as long as our elderly people are left to waste, sickness and in want.

One of the greatest speeches I ever heard in tribute to our elderly citizens was made by an old friend of mine that I saw in the lobby, I heard him make it in the United States Senate, Josh Lee, and I saw him awhile ago. I just wish I could be as eloquent today as he was then.

Now, I think it is about time for us in Oklahoma and Texas and the rest of the nation to try a new step in foreign policy.

We here in the Southwest live in a land of opportunity.

We've had practical experience with new adventures, new opportunities. We know they are meaningless unless there are men of daring, men of vision, who are willing to get out, roll up their sleeves and take advantage of it.

SENATOR ROBERT KERR

Lady Bird is a wonderful sweetheart. That's my wife, Mrs. Johnson. She's a lovely mother. She's as fine a wife as a public servant could have and she's an excellent business-woman.

Everytime she gets a little gloomy she goes down to the Senate restaurant and has a lunch talk with Bob Kerr.

She does this because she believes Bob is a man who has faith in tomorrow. He has a program to do something about it too.

Lady Bird says she believes confidently he could put out the fires of

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Hades with a bucket of water.

We need some of the kind of vision that carried him from a log cabin to the United States Senate.

We need some of that vision which made him one of the most influential giants of our time and the most eloquent speaker in the Senate.

We need someone to take that step for us in leading the world.

We need the kind of perseverance over adversity that this Negro lady I talked to this week has.

She is in her seventies and she called on me when the youth conference was in Washington. She told me she was the daughter of a slave. She said she couldn't go to school until she was twelve years old. On her first day in school she didn't have a pencil or tablet, her parents were so poor. She had to write on the sand or on a board when she was learning how to make her first numbers and her first letters. This same Negro lady has just given the Dallas Community Chest a half million dollars.

THE DANGERS OF COMMUNISM

My second visitor last week was 84 year old Chancellor Adenauer of West Germany.

He came to warn us again as he has so many times of the dangers of Communism.

If any man ought to know something about it, he ought to because I guess there in Berlin you have the greatest demonstration of the two philosophies to be found anywhere in the world.

On the one side you have West Germans living as democratic people

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would live. On the other side, you have the East Germans living as slaves. In five minutes you can see the truth.

You ride down the street in West Berlin and you see people with a spring in their step and a smile on their face, their chin up, their chest out and a hope for tomorrow.

You cross the line and you see how Communism has taken its toll. You see no hope, no future.

We should not ignore the Communist world because they are trying to envelope all of us.

We should bear in mind one third of the world is free, one third is Communist, and we are fighting for that other third. How should we fight for it.

I tried to outline how I would fight for it. It is the way Dr. Bennett would fight for it.

Instead of pouring millions down the drain and sending antiquated tanks and wornout planes, I would go out to those people that make less than \$50 a year, I'd take them doctors, teachers, flour, scythes and show them democracy in operation.

A CHALLENGE TO COMMUNISM

The Soviets boast of their medical science. Why don't we in America challenge them to join the doctors of the western world in an attack on cancer and on the other dread diseases that are killing and crippling.

The Soviets boast of their advances in rocketry and satellite techniques.

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Why don't we challenge them to join the scientists of our country in developing communication satellites that will open new vistas of understanding.

Why don't we challenge them to join us in developing the arid regions of the world. We are now watching the leadership of little Israel who is undertaking the multiple project of attempting to extract the salt from sea water at a cost of about forty cents per thousand gallons. If this project is a success we can turn all the deserts into gardens of Eden.

Challenge after challenge should be hurled at the Soviets and should be hurled now. If the Communists refuse to accept these challenges the world can judge them and take a new reading on their good faith. If the Soviets accept the challenge then together we will enter a new era of peace. We learned the value of such cooperative enterprise in World War I and we learned it in World War II.

People who work together in great projects of this kind are unlikely to want to fight.

One condition, of course, would be that the actual work must be performed by technicians, not by Communist politicians.

If I leave you with only one thought here today I want it to be that the promise of the fabulous 60's is the promise of hope and the promise of peace.

THE 1948 ELECTION

One of the great optimists that I know, one of the most responsible

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liberals I have ever met, has presented me to the people of his state.

I remember that fateful year 1948.

Late one afternoon I came home and Lady Bird said: "Lyndon, the Judge has issued an injunction to keep your name off the ticket. They are just going to leave the Republican's name on the ticket."

We had thirty-one lawyers in different courthouses fighting a great legal battle because they called me "land-slide Lyndon." I won by eighty-seven votes.

She said: "If you think we've got troubles, you ought to hear about Senator Kerr. They have moved into Oklahoma with all the Senate grabbing records and supoening people." She said: "Poor Senator Kerr." I said: "Honey, we've got enough troubles to worry about without worrying about Senator Kerr." Next morning about daylight I went out, got the paper, proved I was right. The Dallas News said I didn't have to worry about Bob Kerr. The investigators had left Oklahoma enroute to Texas.

CIVILIZATION'S GREATEST DECADE

Now, we are a blessed people. We enjoy advantages today that even our mothers never envisioned for us.

If we have the daring, the imagination, the vigor, we can during our lifetime transform this into the greatest decade in all the history of civilization.

We can use the tools that have been given us to explore outer space.

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I remember when I told the Democratic Conference that two years ago, the newsmen covering the conference went to a very prominent newspaper man who handles press releases for a very prominent citizen and asked him whether he had any comment on my speech. The newspaper man replied: "The President is going to let Senator Johnson occupy outer space, he's going to keep his feet on the ground."

In about sixty days he was up there with me.

I am very thankful the last few weeks have revealed we have made outstanding achievements in the field of space.

I think under our leadership we can relieve the world from the threat of starvation and misery if we will just carry through on Dr. Bennett's program.

I think under our leadership we can conquer the killing and crippling diseases.

On July 2, 1955 at about nine P.M. my blood pressure went to zero. Thanks to the knowledge of medical science, the doctors came, thinned my blood, put me under an oxygen tent and they say, now, my heart's better than ever.

THE "CAN-DO" PHILOSOPHY

I remember the Wednesday after the Saturday night experience, Lady Bird came to the hospital looking worried. There had been a lot of stories in the papers about how critical my condition was. I wanted to figure out what my chances were. So I said: "I know the odds are ninety-nine to one

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I won't make it." And, she said: "Quit being so pessimistic. You've got a fifty-fifty chance." She had that Bob Kerr "can-do" philosophy.

I said: "Well, if I've got that much of a chance what's making you look so worried?" She said: "That little tailor you ordered those two suits from keeps bothering me. He calls up and wants to know what to do about the suits. "

I thought for a minute how Bob Kerr would answer something like that, then I said: "Tell him to make them up, we'll use the blue one whatever happens."

THE TIME TO PREPARE

Now we've got a great job ahead of us and it is not just spending a lot of money.

We've got to keep our eyes in the stars and our feet on the ground.

We've got to realize we are living in a world where the Communists outnumber us eighteen to one.

We've got to realize we eat more, wear more, live better and have more luxuries than any other people in the world. So did the Greeks and the Romans and we can fall just the way they did. Where we go and how we go is going to depend on the preparation we make now.

Thank you and God bless you.
