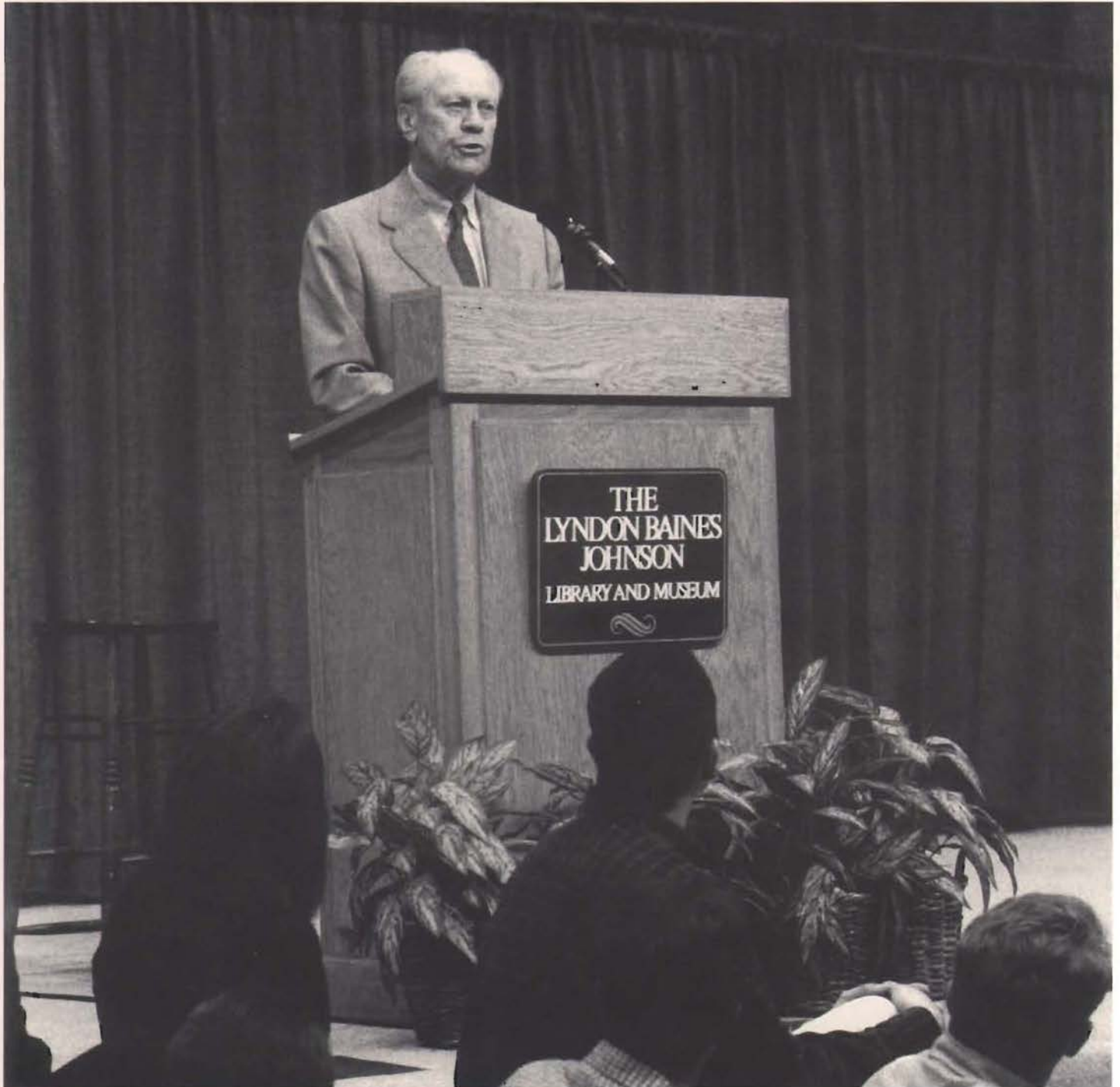


AMONG FRIENDS *of LBJ*

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Former President Gerald Ford addressed an overflow audience of students and Friends of the LBJ Library, reflecting on the strengths and weaknesses of the American political process distilled through his own long experience in the public arena. He was this year's

Harry Middleton lecturer in the series created by Lady Bird Johnson in the name of the Library director. His speech climaxed a symposium on U.S. Political Parties (pages 2-5).

For President Ford's address, see enclosed insert.

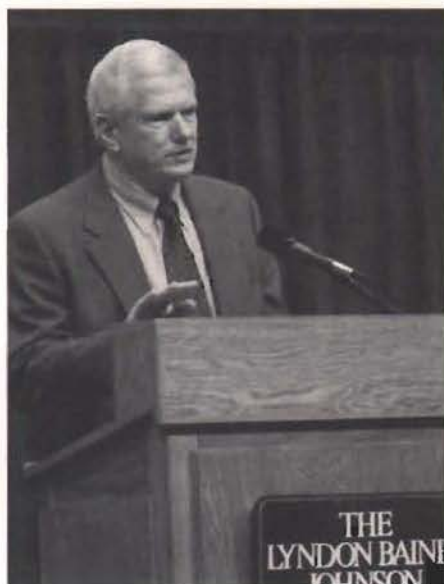
Symposium Poses Question:

By Ted Gittinger
Staff Historian

Are the Democratic donkey and the Republican elephant headed for the endangered species list? A lively collection of academics, journalists, and former governors Ann Richards of Texas and Jerry Brown of California met in the LBJ Auditorium to consider whether those political animals still have any useful role to play in our country's future.

Political scientists William Crotty of Northeastern University and Walter Dean Burnham of the University of Texas led off the morning session, with Robert Strauss, former Chairman of the Democratic Party and one-time Ambassador to the Soviet Union. The three joined in agreeing that, overall, the political culture in Washington is, to say the least, unhealthy. Scandals involving campaign finance and sexual high-jinks present a sorry spectacle, while low voter turnout may indicate that the popular reaction to it all is, "a plague on both your houses." The recent increase in poisonous political invective has done nothing to improve the situation.

Yet disagreement between the parties is not necessarily bad, asserted



William Crotty: "Without [political parties], democracy is not possible in today's world."

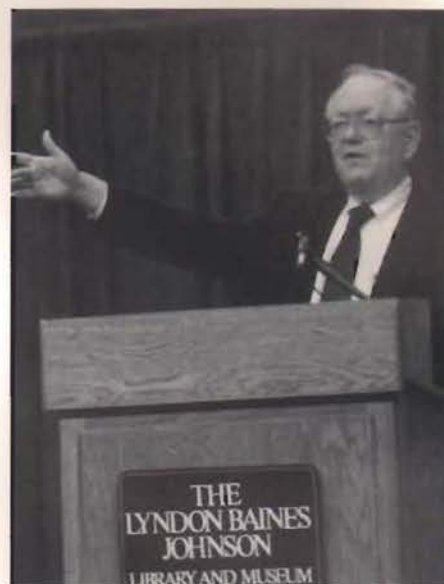
Strauss. "We need partisanship in this country. We need different flavors." Burnham attributed the increase in voter apathy to a loss of faith in politics as usual, pointing out that "People don't bother to vote because the system doesn't offer much. Voters feel drowned out by the lobbyists and private contributors." But while the situation cries out for reform, unless some crisis mobilizes the populace, none of the three morning speakers saw any truly fundamental change in the offing.

George Christian, former press secretary to President Johnson, chaired the afternoon session, which featured spirited exchanges between Jerry Brown, Ann Richards, academics James Reichley of Georgetown University and Larry Sabato of the University of Virginia, and journalists Meg Greenfield of the *Washington Post* and Marianne Means of *Hearst Newspapers*.

Only Brown predicted the demise of the two-party system. "In its current situation," he warned, "I cannot see the disintegration of the Democratic Party." Pointing to a great "disconnect" between the political process and a huge number of American citizens, Brown charged that this schism is growing, aggravated alarmingly by the widening gulf between the nation's economic haves and have-nots.

Ann Richards strongly disagreed with Governor Brown's conclusion, and suggested instead that there is simply no alternative to our two-party system. She readily assented, however, that some cleaning up is in order—and then predicted that her recipe for reform was probably unrealistic: Richards' proposals:

- Reduce voter boredom and improve turnout by having fewer annual elections.
- Set longer terms and eliminate term limits. Electing greenhorn politicians over and over will not solve our political problems.
- Funnel campaign funds through the parties, rather than allowing direct contributions to candidates.



Walter Dean Burnham: "Will we reform our political system? I would bet that you may get cosmetic reforms, but the fundamental issues are unlikely to be addressed."



Robert Strauss: "I am very sanguine about the future of political parties, because what else are you going to do? In a democracy, chaos is the alternative."

Will American Political Parties Survive?

- Institute real campaign finance reforms. Why, asked Richards, is this program unlikely to be tried? Because it is too risky politically, she concluded. "...[A]nyone who does it is putting their neck on the line."

The journalists on the panel, Meg Greenfield of the *Washington Post* and Marianne Means of the *Hearst Newspapers*, took some good-natured criticism, and gave as good as they got. Governor Richards teasingly professed that she was in awe of the difficulties which journalists have to meet every day, just to write the required number of column inches. "Can you imagine," asked the former governor, "such an extraordinary task as having to make all that stuff up?" When the general laughter died down, Meg Greenfield gleefully

retorted, "I think we should accept that compliment... It was not easy making up all that stuff about the Lippo contributions, nor about the guy who was wanted by Interpol, who was in the White House having coffee with the President."

Historian Michael Beschloss declined to wrap up the loose ends of the conference, as he said had been his original mission. "There are no loose ends," he said. Instead he outlined his own mix of hopes and predictions for the national political process:

- Perhaps a hybrid system for nominating presidential candidates, including state caucuses as well as conventions, would be an improvement. (We are not likely to get this, Beschloss believes.)
- The First Amendment could be changed to permit real limits on

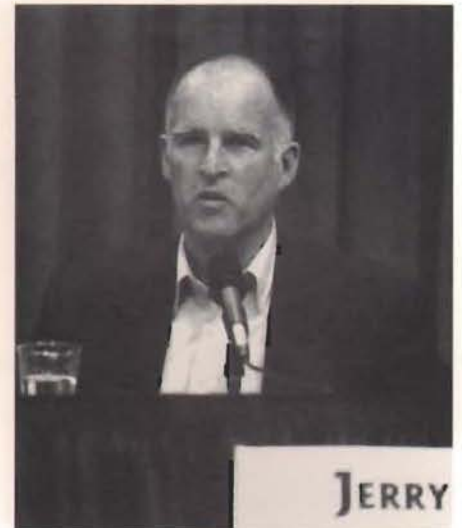
campaign spending. This, too, seems unlikely.

- The parties could arrange for authentic instead of pro forma primaries, so that candidates may really debate the issues and do not have to pretend to be what they are not, in order to please one faction or another.
- A return of strong congressional leadership may yet lead to the parties' adopting viable party platforms which have real chances of becoming legislation.
- Barry Goldwater's role in the 1964 campaign should teach us that there are worse things than standing on party principle, and losing. There is at least the hope that politicians recognize those occasions when their party's principles are worth a defeat.





This symposium was covered by C-Span, which plans to run it in May (date not yet determined).



Ann Richards: "In the sixties, they said that the Republican Party was dead as a doornail. Two years ago it was predicted that the Democrats couldn't elect anybody to public office anywhere, much less to the presidency. Which shows how much we know."

Edmund G. Brown: "The race issue is a time bomb and a crisis that is being swept under the rug, and unless the party system can deal with that, then the party system is irrelevant."



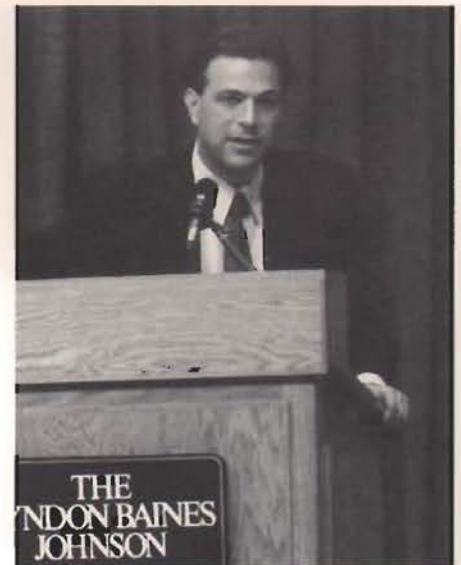
James Reichley: "What is going on now is much like what was going on in the 1850s and 1920s: a sense of alienation, of disenchantment with politics. And from both those periods a leader emerged and a new majority party was formed. Nothing that has happened so far would indicate that will not happen again."

Larry Sabato: "We will have political parties, because as our founders discovered, it's really the only way to organize as freewheeling a democracy as we have."



Meg Greenfield: "I am more of the opinion that the two major political parties are becoming more and more empty shells of themselves."

Marianne Means: "There's a fat chance that we'll ever get campaign finance reform. The Democrats want to reform the corporations out of the business, and the Republicans want to reform the labor unions out, and I don't think they'll ever come to an agreement."



Michael Beschloss: "[Not] many people [would] suggest that we go back to smoke-filled rooms and the bosses."



The volunteer program at the Library has completed its 17th successful year. Volunteers work as docents, giving tours to visitors and in all other areas of the

Library. At their recent annual luncheon seven volunteers were recognized for their decade of service. Pictured with Mrs. Johnson, in clockwise order from the back

row, are: Ruthie Presnal, Mary Sue Bethea, Dottie Warren, Norma Crozier, Margery Ogden, Naomi Howard-Holt, Mrs. Johnson, and Mary Gowen.

Veteran newscaster Walter Cronkite whose recently-published memoir, *A Reporter's Life*, quickly became a best-seller, spoke at the Library in a format considerably different from the one he perfected in his long career. This time, he was on the answering end. A panel consisting of Harry Middleton, George Christian and Don Carleton, director of U.T.'s Center for American History, fed him questions from the audience.

Some of the topics covered, and Cronkite's answers:

The most important event of the 20th century...

...At least certainly the event that will be remembered 500 years from now, be taught in schools, with

a date children will have to remember, was man's landing on the moon.

The reason for the public's distrust of the media today.

The problem is a very, very complex one, with many facets. One of the facets is actually the growth of consumer journalism...

It burst loose about 30 years ago, when newspapers began having consumer columns and looking at products and services as to how well they met their advertised claims and how well they served the public who had paid good money for those services.

With that, we also created a group who were antagonistic to the press—large and small firms [who were] revealed as putting out shoddy merchandise, shoddy service. That's one aspect of the problem, it seems to me.

Another aspect of it is, quite frankly, that President Nixon won his battle against the press, and it's only coming to light now. He conducted a conspiracy against the free press in this country that is documented in his tapes and in many writings since then.

It turned out that those attacks weren't ad lib, extemporaneous anger, but had been carefully organized, orchestrated in the White House to try to bring down press credibility.

By bringing down the press credibility, it was Nixon's belief that he could raise his own credibility. Kind of like that old, simple experiment in first year physics—if water goes down on one side of a U-tube, it's got to come up in the other. That was what he was after.



Reflects on Media

It, I think, planted the seeds of public discontent with the press, made it a politically correct attitude to attack the press when the press seemed to be attacking an administration.

The press itself has indeed become more aggressive politically. The Woodward-Bernstein era of investigative reporting has caused a lot more revelations on the part of the press of peccadillos in high places, both in business and in government, that have offended many—one political party or the other at any given moment—so that all of this has led to a critical mass among the population that has brought down this credibility of the press.

The press itself has, of course, contributed to a degree, and that has been a result of the attempt in the press, to hold onto a diminishing readership, and on television, to hold onto diminishing ratings.

In the press, the result has been an attempt to featurize reporting. Instead of [traditional reporting] we get a sort of an O. Henry approach to every news story. The punchline's at the end somewhere.



One more reason—in television, the problem is the vastly truncated time that is given to any reporter to try to tell an important story.

The increasing concentration of media ownership in the hands of a few conglomerates.

The situation is very serious. These organizations are not journal-

istically trained organizations. They're not aware of anything like journalistic ethics. I don't think that they either appreciated them or would appreciate them if we tried to force them upon them. They are in this business for profit only.

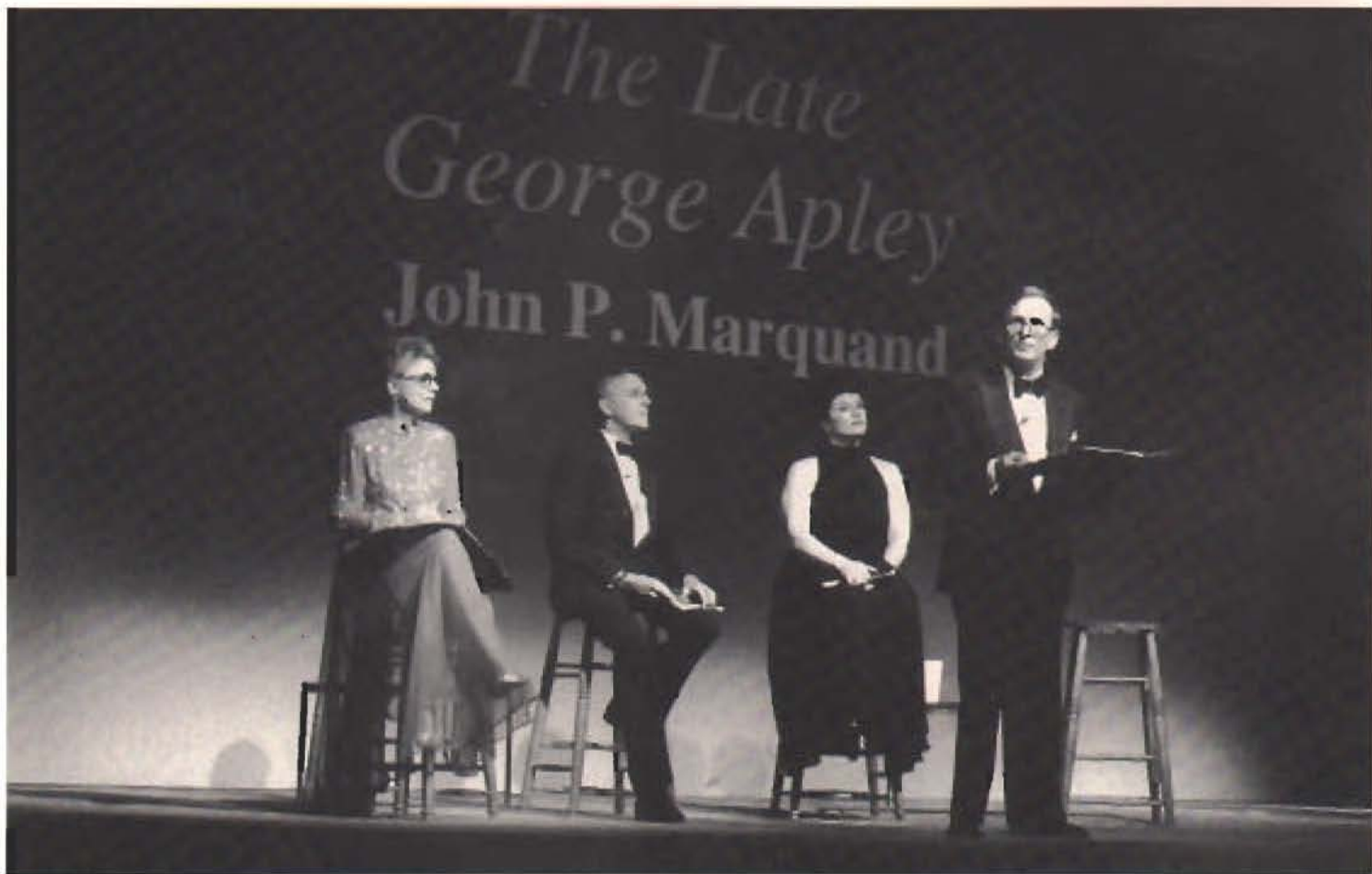
This is in contrast to the early pioneers of the networks. They did understand the responsibility that they had in running news departments. And they hired people who were professional journalists, and they left them alone. The news departments were probably the freest form of journalism from advertiser or political pressure that we've ever had in this country in those first golden years of first radio and then television, until this megaownership began creeping in.

To journalism students sitting on the steps in front of the auditorium:

I just want to say that this is one of the early lessons for the rest of your lives: You're always going to be in the most uncomfortable position that they can possibly find for you in the hall, but you're also going to be in the front row. And that's the advantage of what you're going to be doing in your life.



Other Programs at the Library



"A Literary Portrait of 20th Century America" was the Library's December program. Pictured from left: actress Karen Kuykendall, history professor Standish Meachem,

actress Barbara Chisholm, and Thomas Staley, director of U.T.'s Humanities Research Center, read selections from novels, plays and journalists' accounts tracing the

nation's journey through the 1900s. Sterling Price-McKinney at the piano provided musical transitions. Harry Middleton was moderator.



Toni Gillman delighted an audience with her one-woman show, a portrayal of Former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt.



A photograph of Henry Clay Frick and Helen Clay Frick is included in an exhibition now on display in the Library's museum. Titled "Art and the Camera; 1900-1940," the exhibit is on loan from the National Portrait Gallery. It features the works of a group of photographers who in the first part of the century experimented to make their pictures special works of art.

Photograph from the National Portrait Gallery



Pat Borders, Fletcher Burton, Judy Davidson-Englert and Larry Reed were among Library and LBJ

Foundation staff members who met with Mrs. Johnson at the LBJ Ranch, as is the annual custom, to

review past and planned Library activities.

Library Opens More LBJ Tapes

The Library opened another increment of tapes of President Johnson's telephone conversations covering the months of April, May and June 1964, shedding light on a number of the President's activities and concerns. Excerpts from a few of them:

ON GETTING VOTES

With Congressman Charles Vanik, April 7

LBJ: Charlie... I've got an ox in the ditch and you've got to help me beat the Republicans on this Farm bill... They are going to try to get 35 or 40 of my boys to join Charlie Halleck [Republican House Minority Leader] and beat me... if you'll help me, I'll help you, and I won't forget it.

CV: Well, Mr. President, I'm in a primary, a very difficult one... Can I help if I absent myself?

LBJ: Yes, sir... If you can't be for us, you can just not be there... Then

I'll tell the boys that we've got to find some way to help you.

CV: Fine.

LBJ: All right; then I can count on that?

CV: Yes. Thank you, Mr. President.

With Larry O'Brien, April 7

LBJ: Paul Rogers says that he'll try to help us... Aston Thomas says that he wants to help us, but that the Farm Bureau's after him... and he'll let me know by noon tomorrow. Charlie Vanik said that he can't vote with us at all—he's got a hell of a primary—[but] "you can count on my bein' absent." ... So he's absent. Wayne Mayes is definite... Now, that gives you 197. Have you got any more?

LO'B: Not now.

LBJ: All right... that's six in the well. How many absent?

LO'B: Let's see—absent—five plus one now—six.

LBJ: All right, absent—six. Well, that's 12. That's 209... We've still got five or six that we've got to go.

LO'B: Yeah, but they're there.

LBJ: All right; well, keep on.

LO'B: Right.



Library Archivists Linda Hanson and Regina Greenwell make the tapes available to members of the media.

ON THE GROWING PROBLEM IN VIETNAM

With Senator Richard Russell,
May 27

LBJ: What do you think of this Vietnam thing?

RR: Well, frankly, Mr. President, if you were to tell me that I was to settle it as I saw fit, I would respectfully decline and run on another ticket... It's the worst damn mess that I ever saw... I just don't know what to do.

LBJ: Well, that's the way I've been feeling for six months.

RR: I don't think the American people are ready to send our troops in there to do the fighting... If it came down to the option of sending Americans in there...or just pulling out, I'd get out. But then I don't know...

LBJ: I spend all my days with Rusk and McNamara and Bundy and Harriman and Vance, and all those folks that are dealing with it, and I would say that it pretty well adds up to them now [saying] that we've got to show some power and force, and that they won't...and in any event, that we haven't got much choice, that we are treaty-bound, that we are there, that this will be a domino that

will kick off a whole list of others, that we've just got to prepare for the worst. I have avoided that.

RR: It's a terrific quandary that we're in over there. We're in the quicksand up to our neck, and I just don't know what the hell to do about it.

With McGeorge Bundy, May 27

LBJ: I...stayed awake last night thinking of this, and the more I think of it, I don't know why the hell we—it just worries the hell out of me. I don't see what we can ever hope to get out of this...

McGB: It is an awful mess.

LBJ: I'm looking at this sergeant of mine...He's got six little kids. He gets out my things and brings in my night reading. And I just thought about his kids, and what the hell am I ordering him out there for?

McGB: One thing, though...

LBJ: Yeah...of course. If you start running [from] the communists, they may just chase you right into your own kitchen...

McGB: Yeah, that's the trouble. The rest of the—if this thing comes apart with us—that's the dilemma. That's exactly the dilemma.

ON HORSE TRADING



With Sen. Everett Dirksen [Senate
Republican Leader], June 23

ED: Gen. Graham [Chief of the Army Corps of Engineers] is going to appear before the Public Works Appropriations Subcommittee tomorrow morning. There is planning money in the bill for the Kaskia River Navigation Project. Now, all I want him to do is...say to the committee that the engineers do have construction capability for fiscal 1965 [but need] only \$25 or \$50,000—that will be enough to nail the thing down. The total cost of the project is, I think, \$30 some million... It is in that area of Illinois that is distressed... And it is going to be the making of the southern 10 counties of the State.

LBJ: Let me get on that and I will call you back... Now, you are not going to beat me on excise taxes and ruin my budget this year, are you?... Please do not beat me on that. You can do it if you want to and you can ruin my budget. But you are hollering economy, and I'm trying to balance it... If you mess me up on excise taxes, I will have trouble.

ED: Well, look at the pressure I am under.

LBJ: I know it, but you are also for good fiscal prudence... Please do not press me on that. Give me a few of your Republicans because I just do not have the votes to do it without you... Now, I will look into this [other matter] and see what I can do and call you right back.

ED: You are a hard bargainer.





Carol Channing, in Austin for her farewell tour of "Hello Dolly," attended a reception in her honor at the Library. Standing by the floor-

to-ceiling photo of her in the Library's "Images of the 60s" exhibit, the passage of three decades did not seem to alter her appearance.

Coming Events:

- March 20 An Evening with Katharine Graham
- March 27 An Evening with Charles Guggenheim
- April 7 An Evening with Martin Blumenson
- April 21 An Evening with Jake Pickle
- May 6 An Evening with Frank Vandiver
- May 29 An Evening with Nellie Connally

In Memoriam:

Lloyd Hackler, Asst. Press Secretary in the Johnson White House

Louis Martin, Deputy Chairman of the Democratic National Committee and Counselor to President Johnson

Willard Deason, Commissioner of the Interstate Commerce Commission in the Johnson years and long-time friend of the Johnsons

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