

FOR RELEASE ON DELIVERY
SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 1964 - 5:00 p.m. MST

MRS. JOHNSON'S REMARKS AT JACKSON LAKE LODGE
GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK, JACKSON, WYOMING
"SALUTE TO WOMEN RECEPTION" GIVEN BY
SENATOR AND MRS. GALE MC GEE

I am delighted to be with you tonight in a State famous not only for its sagebrush, but for its sage women. There are always certain audiences with which one feels a special pride, as I do in this gathering of alert and informed women.

We share many bonds, you and I. Texas cowboys came over the famous Texas Trail to settle in your spectacular valleys. Some of your herds are descendants from our stock, some of your manner of speaking is kin to ours, phrases coined on the open ranges of our spreading, fenceless spaces.

One might say that we are joint heirs to a community property to the miles of sky and space, to a language fashioned in the silence of solitude, and to a love of the vast plains that seem to talk to the horizon.

Besides the grandeur of your landscape, you have the proud heritage of your pioneers who were first to give women their rightful place as partners and citizens. Your men were farsighted and your women resourceful. They had the imagination and the courage to set political precedents for all of us.

Almost one hundred years ago, Esther Hobart Morris, that enterprising and forceful housewife, parlayed a good dinner into a commitment to work for passage of women's suffrage. How fitting that her likeness now stands in Statuary Hall in the Nation's Capitol along with other heroic men and women who took giant steps for progress.

They rightly call Wyoming "the Equality State". There never was a time in Wyoming's history when woman wasn't man's full partner. She had to be. In your early history, there was no room for faint hearts or fluttering females. Women helped wrangle the cattle and stake out the homesteads. They sat on the juries as long ago as 1870, and pronounced sentence on cattle rustlers, horse thieves, and murderers. They won the frontier alongside their men and settled down to hold it.

Theirs was a versatility bred of self-reliance and nurtured in the heady air of this wonderful country. They were extraordinary men and women. They bequeathed us an extraordinary legacy.

Women have served you well in so many capacities, in the State legislature, as mayors, as superintendents and directors of education. Wyoming today ranks near the top in per capita outlay for education, and its standards are among the highest. You sent one of your professors, Gale McGee, to Washington where he has become one of the most respected, the kind of Senator of whom all Americans can be proud.

I am proud to call that lady of indomitable spirit, Nellie Tayloe Ross, a friend. And though we are reluctant to admit it, she became the first woman Governor just one month ahead of Texas' first lady, Ma Ferguson.

Her example has continued to inspire Wyoming women in public life. Here today, we accord special recognition to six women currently active in public service. These include two officials of the State of Wyoming: your Secretary of State, Mrs. Thyra Thomson, and your State Treasurer, Mrs. Minnie Mitchell; in Washington, D.C., Miss Velma Lindfor with the Department of Agriculture and three women leaders in the Wyoming State legislature, Edness Kimball Wilkins and Verda James of Casper, and June Boyle of Laramie.

The pioneer ideal of womanhood continues very much alive today. I can see it in the faces in the crowd. We see it in the deeds of those we honor at the reception. And, may I add that much good has come of their faith and daring. This country counts on your faith and is confident of your courage.

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