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(Eufaula, Oklahoma)

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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
AND MRS. LYNDON B. JOHNSON  
AT DEDICATION OF EUFAULA DAM  
EUFAULA, OKLAHOMA

(AS ACTUALLY DELIVERED)

MRS. LYNDON B. JOHNSON: Friends, I feel like I am seeing a dream come true because for years I would hear Senator Bob Kerr talk about his plans for his State -- dams, water, soil conservation, flood control -- and here I am with one of the dreams that has come true. It is beautiful.

This is the happiest part of my husband's job for me, getting to go around the country with him and come to know it better.

Thank you for letting me share this wonderful day with you.

THE PRESIDENT: Governor Bellmon, Senator Monroney, Senator Edmondson, Governor Connally of Texas, Congressman Albert, our Great Majority Leader, Ed Edmondson, and other distinguished members of the Oklahoma Delegation to the Congress, all of whom are making a great contribution to our country -- and I want to say on behalf of all the people of this Nation that we, the people of the United States, are deeply in the debt of the people of Oklahoma for the quality of the men that they send to the United States Congress. I could talk about your Senators, Monroney and Edmondson; I could spend days talking about your House Delegation, particularly your Majority Leader; but I want to say that none of the things that we have accomplished this year, and this is one of the finest years, one of the finest hours of the United States Congress, could have happened except under the leadership of the Oklahoma Delegation, and particularly that fine, young Majority Leader, Carl Albert.

This is a great day for the Sooners. I thank you for letting a Texan have a little slice of it. But Texans and the people of Oklahoma alike share the memories of the days before dams like this remade the earth. I grew up on land like this back in Texas. I am going back to it when I finish here this evening. That land is thin soil, scrub oak and blackjack trees. The Pedernales River that runs in front of my little farmhouse was just a trickle in the dry season, but when the rains came down from the hills, the Pedernales always drowned all of us.

Many of us remember those days. We remember the want and the despair, the devastating cycle of flood and drought, the ruined crops and the dust bowl. Worst of all was the great waste, the waste of resources, the waste of crops, the waste of men and women.

I went to Washington then to serve in Congress under a great leader, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Over the years of progress which he began, we have seen our States change from

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brown to green, from dry, eroded country to grassy land dotted with lakes and pools. We saw a nation afraid become a nation of hope. We saw a people divided become a people united, and to the memory of that progress, and to the determination that our children will never suffer that neglect, I have come to the great State of Oklahoma today to dedicate this great dam to you great people.

I have devoted much of my 30 years of public career to the conservation of America's natural resources. So have Mike Monroney and Howard Edmondson and Carl Albert and Ed Edmondson. So did our great beloved friend, the giant of them all, Bob Kerr, who is watching down on us today. This dam was one of his dreams, and I only wish that he could be here with us.

You know, in 1940, after I had been in Congress several years, I looked up the number of homes with electric lighting in my State, and we had 59 out of every 100. Today we have 100 percent rural electrification. In Oklahoma they had 55 percent of their homes electrified in 1940. Today they have 100. In Louisiana they had 49. Today 100. In Arkansas they had 33, today 100. Arkansas had 45 percent of its homes that had running water in 1940. Today it has 72. Louisiana had 44 with running water. Today it is 87. Oklahoma had 46; today it is 89. Texas had 56; today it is 91.

The percentage of homes that use wood for cooking, 76 out of every 100 in Arkansas in 1940. Louisiana had 50; today it has 4. Oklahoma had 32 -- 32 homes out of every 100 used wood for cooking. Today only 2 out of every 100.

In the number of autos, Oklahoma had 387 autos in 1933. Today she has 982,000 -- three to one. Arkansas had 155,000; today she has 589,000. Louisiana had 190; today she has 1,042,000. Texas had 1,015,000 in 1933. Today she has 4,000,011.

The percentage of homes with refrigerators, Texas had 36 in 1940, per hundred. Today she has 98. Oklahoma had 31; today she has 98. Louisiana had 24; today she has 98.

The percentage of farmer-owned occupied farms, Arkansas had 37 that had home ownership out of every 100. Today she has 76. Louisiana had 33; today she has 75. Oklahoma in 1930 had only 38 out of every 100 farms owned by the man that lived on them. Today not 38 in Oklahoma, but 80. And Texas was 38 in 1930, and 78 today.

So you can see the progress that we have made with the help of men that you have sent to Congress in that period of 20 or 30 years in home ownership, in lighting our homes, in improving our standard of living, and to the memory of that progress and to the determination of the people who led the way, I salute you today.

Our very first President, George Washington, looked at the vast possibilities of harnessing our great rivers AND prayed, "Would God that we may have the wisdom and the courage to improve them." Improve these rivers as you have done. For years we ignored his warning. Reckless exploitation and ruthless plunder lay waste the rich earth. But then some far-sighted men, men of every party and of every section, men like Theodore Roosevelt, men like Franklin Roosevelt, men like John F. Kennedy, men like Robert S. Kerr, men like Mike Monroney and your House Delegation, all began to act and to protect and to develop the natural resources, not only of Oklahoma, but of all the Nation, and the result has been a



fuller and a richer life for all of our people, and a much better life for those people that will grow up. These men knew that conservation was not a "pork barrel", that it was not "made-work", that it was not a giveaway. It was an investment in the future of America. It was the best kind of economy. In this way we could assure our children the natural resources.

I remember coming to Oklahoma to help dedicate Bob Kerr's book, "Land, Wood and Water," on which the strength of our Nation and the prosperity of our people depended. The Government has a responsibility never to waste taxpayers' money, but the Government also had a responsibility never to waste the Nation's resources. The real wasters, the real spendthrifts, are those who are neglecting the needs of today and destroying the hopes of tomorrow. Our country just cannot afford this kind of waste.

Only 35 years ago we began to open up the Ohio River Basin. Then men of little vision cried out against this as "pork barrel". They were against this progress. Well, we ignored their warnings. We moved ahead. Since World War II alone, over \$21 billion of new industry development has taken place in the counties along the Ohio and its navigable tributaries, and one of the great statesmen of Ohio is here today. He not only participated in developing the State of Ohio, he has been one of the ringleaders in developing the State of Oklahoma. I want to call his name. His name is the Honorable Mike Kirwan, Congress from the State of Ohio. Stand up, Mike.

New jobs and new business, and a steadily improving life, have come to all the people of the area. Men like Congressman Kirwan have not been content just to look after their own State or their own section. They have been men with national vision. As a result of their national vision you have the monument here to them today.

So that is the story of the development of the United States, and that is the story of the development of the Arkansas River Basin. The Eufaula Dam is a key part of the development of the Arkansas River. It will provide a new link between the Southwest and our industrial heartland. It will provide relief from devastating floods and give us electricity to homes and businesses. It will mean new industry, new jobs, and new opportunities for the people. It will mean a stronger Oklahoma, a more prosperous Oklahoma, a richer Oklahoma, and a stronger United States.

That development will go ahead, and as President, I am here to promise you that it will go on schedule.

I just had to break my budget one time this year. I had a very prudent budget. I had \$1 billion less in the budget this year than last year. I was determined to keep it that way until Mike Monroney, Carl Albert, John McClellan and all this bunch of highjackers from Oklahoma came down there and pounded that Cabinet desk one afternoon and it cost me \$14 million, but it got your Arkansas River development back on schedule.

But I would like to look beyond the celebration of today to the challenge of tomorrow, especially to your growing need for water, for this is a land which knows the meaning of water. By the year 2000 more than 300 million Americans will require 888 billion gallons of water a day. This is three times what you are using now. We cannot meet that challenge by looking backwards. We cannot meet it by finding things wrong with our Government. We cannot meet it by complaining.

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We must meet it by dreaming and executing those dreams. We must meet it by looking forward to the real, and to the men of tomorrow. We must meet it first by going full speed ahead at every level of government in the comprehensive development of our river basins. We cannot approach the problems of water conservation and flood control and recreation and navigation on a piecemeal and divided basis. We must develop river basins as a whole, to use all of our resources while preserving scenic values.

Second, we must step up our efforts to fight the destructive cycle of flood and drought. We have increased flood control programs by more than 50 percent, but we cannot rest on past achievements if we are to rescue our land from the ravages of nature.

Third, we must develop a national policy to attack the pollution of our water, and the pollution of the air that we breathe. This must require research, this will require increased construction of treatment plants and better methods of control. Polluted water is wasted water, and America cannot afford such waste.

Fourth, we will continue to press ahead with weather satellites, deep sea nuclear weather stations, and other scientific advances so that we can understand the weather and so that we can become its master.

Fifth, I am asking for early passage of the Water Resources Planning Act to help us look ahead to future patterns of water needs, to look ahead to plan our projects so that supply will be ready for demand.

Sixth, we will begin to draw fresh water from the oceans before very long. We already have plants in operation that are converting salt and brackish water into 2-1/2 million gallons of fresh water every day, and within a few years desalted water will be an actual reality for millions of Americans.

Three things, and three things only, sustain life on this planet. They are: a thin layer of soil, a cover of atmosphere, and a little rainfall. This is all that the good Lord has given us except one thing: He has given us a choice of what we will do with it. We can waste it. We can pollute it. We can neglect it. Or we can conserve it, and we can protect it and we can develop it and we can pass it along to our children, more promising, more abundant than we found it when we discovered America.

I know, I think, what your answer wants to be. I think I know what you ought to do about it. I think your answer is here in this great dam that was built because of your confidence, built because of your support, built not only to make life more pleasant and more productive and more prosperous for you, but for your children and for your grandchildren.

The West was not settled by men who looked back. It was not settled by men who called a halt to progress. It is not held by such men today. Let me say just one thing more:

It was about 10 months ago that we had a great tragedy in Dallas, Texas, and the awesome responsibility of being President of all the people of this country fell into my lap. Although I had spent 33 years in Washington, as a clerk, as a Congressman, as a Senator, as a Minority Leader, as a Majority Leader, as Vice President, I still felt inadequate to the responsibilities of leading 190 million people, and trying to provide hope and leadership for the other free people that live in a world that is made up of 3 billions.

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I asked for God's help and for yours. I have done my dead-level best. I have worked with everything that God gave me. I have spent all the energy that I had. I have tried to be careful and prudent. I have tried to be fair and judicious. I have tried to be farsighted and foresighted. I have tried to look forward and not backward. I have tried to develop the land that I would be proud of, and my children would enjoy living in. I found that we had much to preserve and much to protect.

We have the greatest system of government in all the world. We have the highest standard of living of any people anywhere. We have a minimum wage that says to our workers they must pay you this minimum and they must work you this maximum, and in just the short period that I have been in Congress we have gone from 25 cents minimum to \$1.25 minimum. Just the short time I have been there we are working less hours per day and less days per week, and less weeks per year. We have more time for recreation, more time for the luxuries of life that our fathers and our grandfathers had, to come out to lakes like this and dams like this.

We have a social security system that will give us a modicum of income when we reach our maturity and are no longer able to stay in the labor market. We are proud of the farm programs that we have had that have raised the income of our tenant farmers, that have raised our home ownership, that have brought us rural electrification. I flew over this afternoon from Muskogee and looked at all the little ponds that were filled with water that had been built here in just the last few years. I said to Senator Monroney he must be mighty proud of the efforts that he and other Congressmen from Oklahoma had made because that was a tribute not only to them, but to their people, that they had made this soil better, through their own efforts.

Well, there are voices that have questioned me about minimum wage. When I voted for the first bill it was 25 cents an hour, and they told me it would ruin me and they said it would ruin the labor organizations, too, but we are all here, and it looks to me like we are doing better at \$1.25 than we were at 25 cents.

I remember before I was elected when I was just a kid secretary talking to my Congressman about voting for social security, and I heard all the scare arguments and all the fright that they tried to put into men. They said it is socialistic, it is compulsory, it is evil, it will destroy our form of government. I think we are better for it. I think we are stronger for it. I think we are richer for it. I don't think many people would like to do away with either our minimum wage or our social security.

As your President, I deal every day with the problems that affect your freedom and affect the peace of the world. Those problems may be remote from this peaceful site out there this afternoon. Not many of you get waked up in the night about Cyprus, or Zanzibar, or Viet Nam, but I never send a reconnaissance mission out about 11:00 o'clock, with our planes and our boys guiding them to take a look at what is developing, and realize they have to be back at 3:30 in the morning, but what promptly at 3:25 I wake up without an alarm clock, because I want to be sure my boys got back, and sometimes they don't come back. There are those that say you ought to go North and drop bombs, to try to wipe out the supply lines, and they think that would escalate the war.

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We don't want our American boys to do the fighting for Asian boys. We don't want to get involved in a nation with 700 million people and get tied down in a land war in Asia. There are some that say we ought to go South and get out and come home, but we don't like to break our treaties and we don't like to walk off and leave people who are searching for freedom, and suffering to obtain it, and walk out on them. We remember when we wanted our freedom from Great Britain, and we remember the people that helped us with it, and we'll never forget them. So we don't want to run out on them.

So what are we doing? We're staying there and supplying them with some of the things that we have, some of the things that the richest, most powerful nation in the world has developed. We have some tanks, some planes, and some helicopters. We have 20,000 men out there advising and helping them, and we're hoping that some way, somehow, these people that are invading them and trying to envelop them and trying to take their freedom away from them will some day decide that it's not worth the price and they will leave their neighbors alone and we can have peace in the world. But we are not about to start another war and we're not about to run away from where we are.

Now, our hopes for the future, our hopes for peace, rest on our strength, and I can look you in the eye and I tell you in truth and sincerity today that we are better prepared than we have ever been prepared in our lifetime, and we are prepared because of the strength that you are building here and the qualities that you bring to your work.

I ask each of you to look back to your own lives. Remember not too far back. Just look at the 30's that I was talking about a moment ago, or the early 40's, and see if there are any of you, if there's one among you, who are better clothed, doesn't make more money, doesn't pay more taxes and doesn't live in a stronger, a richer, a better and finer nation.

Now, what we have in the future and how we rank in the world will depend largely upon you people. If you invited me down here this afternoon and expected me to tell you all that was wrong with your country, and how we have failed, and how everything was in a mess, then you invited the wrong fellow. Today we have more fellows working than we've ever had in the history of the United States. They're living in better homes, they're eating better food and more of it. They are wearing better clothes, they are driving better automobiles, they have got more savings, they have got higher wages, they have got better income, their children are better educated, their health is better, their doctors are better, their hospitals are better, they have more of the pleasures of life.

The strength of America today, the strength of America in the years to come, will depend upon you and you must build that strength, because it depends upon the vision of the people, and on their willingness to look to the future and not to the past. Here's your look at the future. That's what you dreamed, that's what you want, that's what you have. Aren't you proud of Oklahoma? I am.

If any of you have martyr complexes, you are going to be disappointed. If any of you are distressed and depressed

with yourself and expect me to come down here and feel sorry for you, you are going to be disappointed. I'm proud of you. I recognize what you have done. I recognize what this Government has done with your help, and I want to tell you we not only have much to preserve and much to protect, but we have much to learn.

If you will just go back to the good book and practice some of the teachings of the Lord, if we will just follow the golden rule and do unto others we we would have them do unto us, if we just engage in a little introspection and look where we were and where we are, we won't be unhappy very long. We won't feel sorry for ourselves very long.

We have done mighty well. We have a lot to be thankful for, and one of the things that I am thankful for at present is the prayers and the support and the good will and the faith of God-fearing men and women like you, and like this great Delegation that you sent there to help me. We are not out of the woods. Some of our friends talk about a crisis a week. Well, sometimes I don't think they know much about the Government until we have a crisis a day and a crisis an hour, and we're always having crises. But we're not going to be cry babies. We're going to stand up like men and face them, and we're going to win.

We're going to win because we have faith and because we have the support of people and because we're builders and because we look forward to leaving this world a better place than we found it.

Thank you for inviting us here. I wish I could stay all day, but I have two other engagements along the road down here in Arkansas and back in Texas tonight, but if you will invite me back sometime, I'll bring my boat and we'll have a good sail together.

Thank you.

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