

FOR RELEASE AT 6 P.M. Friday, October 9, 1964

SPEECH BY MRS. LYNDON JOHNSON  
At depot in New Orleans

FRIENDS:

What a wonderful, fabulous way to end four unforgettable days. And, I see you have brought to the depot just the person I wanted most to see!

Eight states, sixteen hundred miles, and 47 speeches ago, when we left Alexandria, I said this was a journey of the heart. And truly it has been that.

But it has been even more, for I have felt the thrill that any American feels when he travels through a part of the country he knows well and loves well, the exhilaration of seeing an "on-goingness" of life, a forward motion of this country, a keeping-in-step with the times.

I found this spirit of progress not only in the bustling cities along the route, but also in the small rural towns where the super highways and airlines do not always go.

This was, however, not only a sentimental journey, but a political trip. I came because I wanted to say that for this President and his wife, we appreciate you, and we care about you, and we have faith in you.

We have too much respect for the South to take it for granted and too much closeness to it to ignore it.

I am aware that there are those who would exploit its past troubles to their own advantage. But I do not believe that the majority of the South wants any part of old bitterness. And the more I have seen these past few days, the more I know that is true.

What is afoot in this coming election is not really a contest between two political parties---both great parties---in the way we have known such contests

in the past. What is at issue instead is a contest between the philosophy of "yes certainly" and the philosophy of "no, never!"

We are testing as a nation whether we shall move forward with understanding of each other, and each other's needs, ever increasing our total power--economic, social, military--in common trust and faith; or whether we shall move backward, toward a denial by each of the other's needs, into a national climate of fear and distrust and dislike. This is, I believe, a contest between the positive and the negative.

Between the Yes and the no.

This land of the South, which is my land, will not--I believe--turn back from its steady proud road ahead.

When we look away to Dixieland, we shall always look away with eternal pride in its unforgettable gallantry, its great legend of chivalry which will always thrill the sensitive around the world.

But I know and I found on this trip that while the memories of the South are as old as Thomas Jefferson, their spirit is as young as Lyndon Baines Johnson.

Thank you.