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REMARKS BY MRS. LYNDON B. JOHNSON
ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

Friends:

It is always a special pleasure and privilege to visit Pennsylvania. I always think of this as a land of super-women.

I am certain nothing could make all of us prouder than to see Genevieve Blatt sworn in as a member of the Senate.

Here we have a woman candidate who qualified in every way to be a Senator. She has been in public life ever since she got out of law school. She has experience in both city and state government.

She has been a loyal party worker. She is a proven vote-getter. I came here to tell you the President is proud to have her on the ticket.

And he will be even prouder to have her in the Senate!

He is counting on all of you to put her there. She is what my husband fondly calls a "can-do" woman.

The President believes in women. He has declared his "Profound belief that we can waste no talent, we can frustrate no creative power, we can neglect no skill in our search for an open and just and challenging society."

At his very first Cabinet meeting he announced: "The day is over when top jobs are reserved for men." His very first appointment was a woman from trade union ranks, Esther Peterson, Assistant Secretary of Labor, to be his Consumer Advisor. We are proud to have her here today and always, to protect our interest as the nation's largest consumers. For if you, your government and business are not mindful you can lose over the counter what you gain over the bargaining table.

Among the hundreds of women who have been appointed and promoted, we can count the first woman member of the Atomic Energy Commission and the Interstate Commerce Commission, Assistant and Deputy Assistant Secretaries of Agriculture, State, Defense, Ambassadors and many others.

The Federal Government has truly become a showcase for equal employment opportunities for women. We know that our great President Kennedy, when he created the Commission on the Status of Women, envisioned our participating as full partners. Because of this President's determination women will no longer be the forgotten sex in labor, in business or in Government. And, I know you will justify his faith in you.

It is a good time to be a woman. I am proud to be in the company of so many women who, as members of the great working force of our country, have added stature and distinction to our record. It is more than coincidence that since women first became of major importance in the labor force, our standard of living has tripled. We have participated in the forward thrust of the economy, we have held high the torch of progress. We have lived our lives in the full awareness of our responsibilities to our neighbors and to our nation.

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We Democrats are always looking ahead. We know that there are problems to be met, but we face them. As my husband has said, "Problems are there to be solved, not simply deplored."

The industrial problem of automation touches us all. But as homemakers we know that the automation of our housekeeping chores has set us free; we have used these benefits to do more things to enrich our family life. We know we will solve the problems of automation of industry as we resolved the coming of the industrial revolution by making it into an instrument of progress.

As the Secretary of Labor has said: "The economic alternative to automation would be stagnation. The answer to whatever human problems it poses is education." It is not without pride that I remember the first major bill signed by my husband as President. It was the bill, you may recall, not only for increased assistance to higher education, but more specifically for a much broadened vocational educational program.

Since then there have been many other measures to brighten the educational glow. The poverty bill provides for job training and job re-training. All measures aimed at raising our standard of living indirectly help raise our standard of education. It is not enough to be able to operate a giant electronic brain, someone must think of ways to put it to work for the good of humanity.

Whatever the future innovations of education and of labor, I know that Pennsylvania will be in the lead. This is a state of firsts; the first craft association in 1724, the first trade union in 1794, and the first labor publication in 1828.

Pennsylvania will stay in the lead as long as there are communities like Allentown and public servants like your late beloved, Mayor John T. Gross. The lamppost gardens, the handsome town houses and the new Civic Center eloquently testify to the fact that he was not only a dreamer, but a doer. It was his determination and foresight that brought Allentown the coveted title "An All-American City".

The spirit of Mayor Gross of Allentown is the spirit of the Democratic Party. I would be remiss if I did not point out that this region and our nation's future will be more vitally served by the Democratic Party.

There is a very real issue facing the voters of this country on November 3. It is the large question of whether we shall move forward or repeal the history of the United States since the days of the New Deal. Are we to reverse the direction pointed by the Roosevelt Administration in the very first hundred days? My husband remembers these days clearly and sharply, for these were the days when he first came to Washington.

Are we to go back to the time when the Federal Government accepted no responsibility for the hungry and the dispossessed; to the time when there was no social security, no unemployment insurance, no minimum wage; when bank deposits were uninsured and labor had no right to bargain collectively for better wages and working conditions? Are we to go back to the jungle when the strong were free to prey on the weak? Are we to have Government for all the people or Government only for the fortunate? Are we to have the Great Society or the great surrender?

I think I know your answer. And I know we can all participate in the building of a Great Society.

Whether you do this by yourselves or in conjunction with others, by your talents or by your powers of perseverance -- and sometimes by both -- as women you will add to your deeds the grace of understanding and the strength of your hopes. For it is women who will give the Great Society its permanence and its continuity. We are its keepers and guardians, and we know we have work to do.

Eleven months ago on a dreadful day that shook our country, my husband became your President. Since then he has tried with all that is in him to keep our country on a steady course of economic prosperity, to face the world with firm strength, and to seek practical ways to help those Americans still in need.

And now I just want to leave you with this thought:

In his acceptance speech the President said: "This is a dangerous and difficult world in which we live. I promise no easy answers. But I do promise this: I pledge the firmness to defend freedom, the strength to support that firmness, and a constant, patient effort to move the world toward peace instead of war."

It is our privilege to choose our leader. In doing so, we make a conscious choice in shaping our personal destiny. Thomas Jefferson said: "Let the people know the facts and they will decide wisely." History has proven him right.

I believe in our President. And I believe in your right to choose and in your wisdom to do so wisely.

Thank you.

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