

FOR RELEASE UPON DELIVERY  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1964 - 12:00 NOON CST

REMARKS BY MRS. LYNDON B. JOHNSON  
MCALESTER, OKLAHOMA

There are many reasons I am happy to be in McAlester. It is always a special pleasure to be with Congressman Carl Albert, who is so close to my husband, and whose work as majority leader of the House of Representatives, was largely responsible for making the 88th Congress what the President calls a great "can-do Congress."

Proof of Congressman Albert's ability is the genius he showed in guiding through the House such key administration bills as the anti-poverty act, far-reaching higher education and vocational education proposals, the farm bill and many more pieces of legislation of deep import than I can name. McAlester can be truly proud of its native son.

I'm glad to have traveled here with your Senators Mike Monroney and Howard Edmundson and their wives. These men, too, were an important part of the "can-do Congress."

Another reason I am glad to be here is that I feel I know McAlester and the surrounding area because I learned about it from a dear friend of yours, my husband's and mine, the late Senator Bob Kerr. Last September at the dedication of Eufaula Dam, the President told us of Senator Kerr's dreams for the future of this region and they are my husband's dreams too.

The President has a vision of how government and private industry, working hand in hand, could bring lasting prosperity to this region that has known a great many ups and downs in the past. The cotton and coal that brought initial prosperity, gave way and McAlester had to be sustained by WPA through the trying depression era.

During and after the war came the Naval Ammunition Depot, an influx of private industry, and growth of the cattle business to revive McAlester and put it on sounder economic ground. Now with the prospect of low cost water transportation, a redevelopment of coal, the arrival of steel mills and the petro-chemical industry, these dreams are on the road to reality.

Recently, when my husband was here in Oklahoma, he said that both Oklahoma and the nation need Fred Harris in the Senate. I believe I can tell you why the President feels so strongly. It is because Fred Harris has acquired the experience and legislative know-how serving in the state senate that will make him an effective United States Senator.

Since my husband became President, he has not only had the wonderful help of a "can-do Congress" but also he has had immeasurable assistance from his loyal Cabinet officers. I am happy to have with me today the wives of three members of the Cabinet who are typical of the hard-working wives of members of this administration and women everywhere who give time to their communities.

In Washington these ladies do outstanding work acquainting newly arrived diplomatic families with the marvels of the supermarkets and the mysteries of the coin operated laundromats as well as showing them the glistening white Capitol and the splendid National Gallery of Art. And they take everyone from foreigners to 4H Club members to see the model kitchen at the Department of Agriculture.

MORE

They have also given help to possible school drop-outs by sitting hour after hour with youngsters of low-income and sometimes broken families, helping them with remedial reading so that they have a better chance to become self-sustaining, useful citizens. They have also worked in the Widening Horizons program to help teenagers find summertime jobs and part-time jobs.

I would like them to step up and take a bow so you'll know them and I hope you have a minute to shake hands and chat before they go: Margie McNamara, wife of Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara; Jane Freeman, wife of Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman; and Jane Wirtz, wife of Secretary of Labor W. Willard Wirtz.

I said earlier there were many reasons I was glad to be here and the most important of these is to see so many good Americans -- the first Americans -- Indian Americans.

Indian art and culture is part of the nation's treasure, and wonderful Indian lore endures to inspire future generations. The five greatest ballerinas in the nation come from Oklahoma and all have Indian blood.

Recognition of the nation's debt to its native Indians has come late but it has come. And now we all face the hopeful but challenging future together.

Not long ago, the President told a delegation of visitors: "Every night when I go to bed I ask myself what did we do today that we can point to for generations to come, to say that we laid the foundation for a better and more peaceful and more prosperous world?"

It is not the sort of thought that sends a man off into a dreamless sleep, but it is the kind of question a man worthy of high public office must ask himself if the nation he serves is to move ahead.

My husband is widely known as a busy and active -- yes, and even urgently active man. But he is something else. In this campaign he is a tomorrow-man, a builder-man, a going-ahead-man; a man unafraid to run that race with racing time that must be run by all -- all men and nations who do not wish to be left in the slack waters of history.

The President started his career in Congress in the depression years and neither of us can forget the marks of poverty that scarred the country. My husband has brought with him to the White House many lessons of the past, learned in depression and war and handed down from his forebears who pioneered the Southwest. This more than anything lies behind the programs he has fought for, what he calls the requirements of a Great Society.

He is a man who believes problems are there to be solved not simply deplored. And he has chosen to stand with him in this campaign a man who shares this belief -- Senator Hubert Humphrey, who remembers the depression and devastation of the dust bowl as my husband does, and who has worked along side him for 16 years in the Senate to make sure we never see those days again.

The experience my husband offers for the awesome job of the Presidency is 24 years in Congress, evenly divided between the House and Senate, three years as Vice President and 11 arduous, demanding months as your President during which he has put all the intellect, energy and determination he has into keeping this country on a steady course in a restless, changing world.

MORE

I am proud of that record, I believe you approve of it and I hope you want it to continue.

As this Administration is dedicated to peace, so it is dedicated to the concept that peace must be the concern of every man and woman.

As the President has said, "We know that the people of the world prefer reasoned agreement to ready attack . . . They know we envy no neighbor, covet no territory, and look for no satellites."

This Administration works to enlarge the lamp of liberty in the world. Such a policy must be the work of many hands. Together -- with patience and determination -- we will secure the foundations of a peaceful world.

#####