

FOR RELEASE AT 12:00 NOON (CST)
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 1966

REMARKS BY MRS. LYNDON B. JOHNSON
TO OMAHA MAYOR SORENSEN AND "OPERATION ALERT"
OMAHA, NEBRASKA

Governor Morrison, Mayor Sorensen, and Members of
Omaha's "Operation Alert":

How well I remember the moment when Omaha won the 1965 National Cleanest Town trophy. It is thrilling for me today to be able to visit your fine city and see first hand all the work you have done. Today's meeting is proof that beautification is sweeping the country. From East to West and North to South cities have set up outstanding beautification committees. In fact I am particularly proud of the one we have in Washington.

But, Mayor Sorensen, this is the first time that I have heard of a public official deputizing every employee in the city as beautification ambassadors--and the enthusiasm I see here, is abundant. evidence of the wisdom of your citywide approach to improvement.

For beauty is really everyone's business. It adds a lilt to our lives, or its absence is the bleakest kind of impoverishment. How thrilled I am to have this chance to meet all of you who have taken the Mayor's call for beauty to your hearts, and are working beyond the call of duty because you care about your community and the quality of life here.

One of the most rewarding facets of being in public life is that people write letters and share their suggestions and successes with you. A letter I cherish typifies the selfless commitment each of you has made. It is from a lady in Los Angeles who told me about an unnamed bus driver who had eleven minutes to wait at the end of his line. He used the time, first to pick up trash and litter, and then to bring grass and flower seeds and plant them. By using just a few minutes of spare time every day, he transformed a barren dumping ground into a small park that delighted the eye of every passerby.

Omaha has not just one, but over three hundred beauty-minded employees, and there is truly no end to the good that

Operation Alert can accomplish. High standards of public service are very important to the President, and I know he will be proud to hear of this remarkable program when I get home to tell him about it.

The best recipe for a project as succesful as Operation Alert is to "stay alert" and not rest on your oars after one good deed. The most vital ingredient Omaha has is each of you.

Through your efforts this city is already a lovelier place in which to work and play and to enjoy all the fruits of a great civilization.

Keep it up, because what you have begun here can transform the face of an entire city and the results will be a reward of beauty to stir men's hearts everywhere.

#