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REMARKS OF MRS. LYNDON B. JOHNSON AT THE
DEDICATION OF POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE

Office of the Press Secretary
to Mrs. Johnson

THE WHITE HOUSE

Secretary Udall, Governor Brown, Mr. Hartzog, friends at the oceanside:

I hope you are all comfortable, and enjoying, as much as I am that strong salt breeze and roaring surf. This is a thrilling place, and Governor, I am so glad you invited me here to catch the ocean air, and see for myself this Pacific palisade that is now a National Seashore belonging to all of America.

The story of the preservation of Point Reyes as a National Seashore is a bright star in the galaxy of conservation achievements of the 1960's. It began with thousands of concerned citizens who knew these limber grasses and dramatic cliffs, the vistas and mood of the sea, and realized that these things would be sullied and destroyed, if positive steps to preserve them were not taken.

The story includes the vision and leadership of Secretary Udall, who knew how few acres of Pacific seashore were open for public use, to the late Clem Miller, who authored the legislation, and to Governor Brown, who advanced the cause of a national seashore every step of the way.

No one knows better than the grass-roots conservationist the value of a believer in the Governor's chair!

In the past, Point Reyes has been described as a "land that time forgot." Today its quiet isolation is the same, even though it is a famous National Seashore. We are here to celebrate the fact that fifty or one hundred years from now, if we do our work well, it will still be the same untrammelled shoreline.

The National Park Service holds this piece of the American earth in trust for the nation. I hope it will be protected from bumper-to-bumper traffic, and remain always a place of peace.

For one of the dominant facts of modern times is that Americans, who, traditionally, have been close to the land, now live and work farther and farther from natural surroundings. Every person wants a sense of "place" and a place where he can be at repose. For many, many Americans that "place" of refreshment will be land owned by all the people -- parks, seashores, refuges of one kind or another. It is of paramount importance that we save and set aside enough sanctuaries for the future. The growing needs of a urban America are quickening the tick of the conservation clock.

I have always felt that the myth of Hercules and the giant, Antaeus, had a message for modern times. Antaeus, if you remember, was the son of the Sea God, and his mother was the Earth. He was invincible so long as he remained in contact with his Mother Earth. According to the story, Hercules discovered the source of Antaeus' strength, lifted him from earth, and crushed him in the air.

The crushing forces of our age are different, but they are no less destructive unless places like this one remain where people can keep in

touch -- and in tune -- with the land and the sea, and their own peace of mind.

As Thoreau wrote so long ago, and so appropriately:

"We must be refreshed by the site of inexhaustible vigor, vast and titanic features, the sea-coast with its wrecks, the wilderness with its living and its decaying trees, the thunder-cloud, and the rain which lasts three weeks and produces freshets. We need to witness our own limits transgressed, and some life pasturing freely . . ."

North of here, a few hundred miles, is another dramatic area worthy of national park protection -- and, of course, you know I speak of the redwoods. Those trees are immortality living amongst us. I hope I have the privilege of visiting it as a national park some day.

This is one of the most enjoyable evenings in my memory, with the light glinting off the surf, and the vitality of these tides. I cherish the opportunity to be in Marin County, where conservation is a way of life.

Let us dedicate Point Reyes National Seashore to the vitality of the American people, and to generations yet unborn who will come here -- with the continent at their backs and gaze afar, into immensity.

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