

REMARKS OF MRS. LYNDON B. JOHNSON
DEDICATING THE SYLVANIA RECREATION
AREA, IRONWOOD, MICHIGAN

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Office of the Press Secretary
to Mrs. Johnson

THE WHITE HOUSE

What a magnificent part of the world this is! And I know Senator Hart must be gratified to see the dedication of this project for which he has worked so ardently.

Surely it was a place such as this that the poet Byron had in mind when he wrote:

"There is a pleasure in the pathless woods
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society, where none intrudes
By the deep sea, and music in its roar;
I love not man the less, but Nature more."

And, in turn, man seems to love his fellow man more when he can -- from time to time -- escape him. That is what makes the creation of Sylvania Recreation Area both necessary and important.

For these woods of maple, birch, hemlock and pine and these sky-blue lakes are within reach of some ten million people who live a few hours drive away.

I hope they don't all come on the same day! But for summertimes, and weekends, this can be balm to the city dweller. And I daresay, he will love his fellow man the more for having been here.

I am so pleased to know that the young men of the Ojibway Jobs Corps Conservation Center have made a real contribution to preserve these woods and to build the picnic tables and other facilities that make it enjoyable to so many. Like 15,000 others in rural Job Corps Conservation Centers, they are working, learning, and growing. No higher compliment can be paid to an individual.

I envy you your place of work. I grew up in the piney woods of deep East Texas and I remember so well how nice it was to return home from school and feel that carpet of pine needles underfoot, to be startled by a rabbit jumping out, to come upon a clump of violets by a stream.

What has been done to obtain Sylvania for the people is symbolic of a nation that cares enough about our outdoor heritage to save some of it.

Sylvania was acquired through the Land and Water Conservation Fund law passed by Congress in 1964. My husband, like Secretary Freeman, is very proud of this legislation because it is making new outdoor areas like this one available to the public that puts high value on outdoor experiences.

There are other jewels in this lovely northland, such as the Apostle Islands area in Ashfield and Bayfield Counties of Wisconsin. The President and Senators Gaylord Nelson and William Proxmire have proposed that this superb string of islands be designated as a National Lakeshore to provide recreation for residents and visitors to the Upper Great Lakes area. Let us hope that this scenic necklace of islands will also become part of our people's national heritage.

In the larger sense, the Benchmarks of Beauty which are across our continent serve as gentle reminders that the natural architecture of God has yet to be equaled by man.

No one for a moment would minimize the great scientific advances of our age, but it is well to remember that they can create neither a prairie in spring nor a forest in autumn.

So, in addition to the recreation, I hope that future visitors who come here by bus, by car, by foot will pause and consider how they can pass on their heritage of beauty in turn; and will take Sylvania as some evidence of how we tried to pass on ours.

The woods and streams have been called nature's own cathedral, and in dedicating them, therefore, for the use of the nation, we again ask the Lord's blessing as He bestowed it upon our bountiful land.

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