

The original documents are located in Box 1, folder “9/27/74 - LBJ Memorial Grove Groundbreaking Ceremony” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Oct. 2

Paul Theis called and said that the LBJ Memorial Library would like to have the original of the President's reading copy of his speech at the LBJ Memorial Grove Groundbreaking Ceremony. We decided there would be no harm done in letting them have the original as long as we saved a copy.

Send to: Art Lamb
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20242

LBJ MEMORIAL GROVE
GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY

IT IS AN HONOR FOR ME TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS
CEREMONY, NOT ONLY AS PRESIDENT, BUT AS AN OLD FRIEND OF THE
MAN WHOSE MEMORARY WE HONOR TODAY.

BUT, BEFORE TALKING ABOUT THE MAN, THERE ARE A
FEW WORDS, I WANT TO SAY ABOUT OUR FORMER FIRST LADY, WHOM
I AM VERY HAPPY TO SEE HERE.

NO ONE HAS DONE MORE TO BEAUTIFY AMERICA THAN
LADY BIRD JOHNSON. AND THE COUNTLESS TREES AND FLOWERS THAT
WERE PLANTED ACROSS THE COUNTRY, THANKS TO HER EFFORTS, ARE
A TRUE REFLECTION OF A WARM, WONDERFUL PERSON WHO WAS A
GREAT FIRST LADY.

LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON -- LONG BEFORE HE ENTERED
THE WHITE HOUSE -- HAD ALREADY MADE HIS MARK ON HISTORY AS
A GREAT MEMBER OF THE HOUSE AND LEADER OF THE SENATE.

AS SENATE MINORITY AND MAJORITY LEADER DURING
PRESIDENT EISENHOWER'S YEARS IN OFFICE, WHENEVER AMERICA'S
WELFARE WAS CONCERNED, HE ALWAYS PUT COUNTRY BEFORE PARTY.

HIS COOPERATION WITH THE EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION
ON MATTERS OF FOREIGN POLICY AND NATIONAL SECURITY WAS
OUTSTANDING -- A MODEL OF BIPARTISAN STATESMANSHIP.

HE WAS A BIG MAN, A STRONG MAN. AND IT WAS
THAT STRENGTH, COUPLED WITH HIS FAITH IN HIMSELF -- AND HIS
EVEN STRONGER FAITH IN AMERICA -- THAT SAW HIM THROUGH HIS
PRESIDENCY.

AS MUCH AS LYNDON JOHNSON LOVED HIS NATIVE STATE
OF TEXAS AND HIS RANCH ALONG THE PEDERNALES, I THINK PART
OF HIS HEART AND A LOT OF HIS INDOMITABLE SPIRIT NEVER LEFT
WASHINGTON.

NOW IT HAS A HOME, IN THIS BEAUTIFUL SETTING
OVERLOOKING WASHINGTON ACROSS THE POTOMAC. FROM THIS
PEACEFUL, INSPIRING LOCATION, WE CAN SEE THE GREAT DOME OF
THE CAPITOL, WHERE LYNDON JOHNSON FIRST ROSE TO PROMINENCE.

WE CAN SEE THE JEFFERSON MEMORIAL -- MONUMENT TO
THE GREAT AUTHOR OF THE DECLARATION OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

WE CAN SEE THE LINCOLN MEMORIAL -- THE SHRINE OF
A MAN WHOSE VISION OF FREEDOM AND HUMAN DIGNITY FOR ALL
WAS SO MUCH A PART OF LYNDON JOHNSON'S OWN LIFE.

ONE OF THE GREAT HEROES OF THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES, GENERAL "STONEWALL" JACKSON, EXPRESSED THE FEELING OF THIS MOMENT AND THIS PLACE IN HIS SIMPLE, POIGNANT LAST WORDS, UTTERED MORE THAN A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

"LET US CROSS OVER THE RIVER," HE SAID, "AND REST UNDER THE TREES."

LYNDON JOHNSON HAS CROSSED OVER THE RIVER FROM
THE BUSY, DEMANDING WASHINGTON WHERE HE GAVE HIS ALL.
AND A PART OF HIS SPIRIT WILL ALWAYS REST HERE, SHADED BY
TALL TREES TO MATCH HIS STATURE.

FOR THOSE OF US WHO KNEW HIM PERSONALLY, THIS
WILL ALWAYS BE A VERY SPECIAL PLACE. BUT FOR MILLIONS OF AMERICAN
OF THIS AND FUTURE GENERATIONS, WHO NEVER KNEW HIM IN LIFE,
THIS GROVE WILL ALSO BE A PLACE OF PLEASURE, REST AND COMFORT --
A PLACE WHERE THEY CAN PAY SILENT RESPECT TO THE MEMORY OF A
PRESIDENT WHO SERVED HIS COUNTRY AND HIS COUNTRYMEN WELL.

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