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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

DEDICATION OF THE DIRKSEN WING OF THE
ILLINOIS PUBLIC LIBRARY

AUGUST 19, 1975

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS -- PEKIN --

THANK YOU, SENATOR BAKER (SENATOR BAKER INTRODUCES YOU)

MY DEAR FRIEND, LOUELLA

GOVERNOR WALKER

SENATOR PERCY

SENATOR HRUSKA

SENATOR RANDOLPH

MAYOR WALDMEIER

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, INCLUDING MY OLD FRIEND, LES ARENDS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

NOTE: BOB MICHEL IS IN RUSSIA AT YOUR URGING.

AS ONE OF THE MANY AMERICANS WHO KNEW AND LOVED

EVERETT DIRKSEN, I AM PLEASED TO BE IN HIS HOMETOWN OF PEKIN FOR

THE DEDICATION OF THIS BUILDING IN HIS HONOR.

*Phyllis
Horsman
Rambold*

*Lesmond
Wallick*

Rev. Walker

HOW DELIGHTED HE WOULD BE THAT THE DEDICATION COINCIDED WITH

YOUR THIRD ANNUAL MARIGOLD FESTIVAL.

THIS CITY REALLY LOOKS

BEAUTIFUL TODAY WITH SO MANY THOUSANDS OF EV'S FAVORITE

FLOWERS IN BLOOM.

I WANTED TO BE HERE TODAY IN A SPECIAL CAPACITY;

NOT AS PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, NOT AS FORMER PRESIDENT {

OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE, BUT AS THE SPOKESMAN FOR A VERY

EXCLUSIVE FRATERNITY -- MINORITY LEADERS OF THE UNITED STATES
CONGRESS.

UNFORTUNATELY, OUR FRATERNITY HAS BEEN OVERWHELMINGLY

REPUBLICAN IN RECENT YEARS, THOUGH WE KEEP TRYING TO RECRUIT MORE

DEMOCRATS. WE TAKE COMFORT IN THE OBVIOUS FACT THAT LEADING

THE MINORITY IN THE HOUSE OR SENATE IS A MUCH MORE DEMANDING JOB

THAN LEADING THE MAJORITY.

AND IF EVER A MINORITY LEADER COULD BE SAID TO DOMINATE EITHER

BODY, THAT MAN WAS SENATOR DIRKSEN.

HE WAS A POWER TO BE RECKONED WITH, AND HE DID IT NOT BY THE

NUMBERS OF HIS MINORITY BUT BY THE SHEER POWER OF HIS UNIQUE

PERSONALITY, HIS PERSUASIVENESS AND PROFOUND GIFT FOR FRIENDSHIP,

AND HIS CONSUMMATE LEGISLATIVE SKILL.

WHEN I WAS ELECTED MINORITY LEADER OF THE HOUSE IN
1965, EV DIRKSEN WAS ALREADY THE SAGE AND SEASONED MINORITY
LEADER OF THE SENATE. I WAS THE NEW BOY, BUT HE NEVER PUT
ME DOWN. INSTEAD, HE TOOK ME IN.

I MET ALMOST EVERY DAY AND SOMETIMES OFTENER WITH THE
MASTER AND HE TAUGHT ME THE TRADE. HE KNEW AS MUCH ABOUT
THE HOUSE AS I DID AND EVERYTHING ABOUT THE SENATE. HE KNEW
EVERY WHEEL AND COG THAT MAKES THE CONGRESS TICK. AND
HE KNEW A THING OR TWO ABOUT PRESIDENTS, ^{also} ~~too~~.

EVERY COUPLE OF WEEKS, WE WOULD HOLD A TWO-HEADED
PRESS CONFERENCE THAT WAS KNOWN AS THE "EV AND JERRY SHOW."
IT REALLY SHOULD HAVE BEEN KNOWN AS THE "DIRKSEN AND COMPANY"
SHOW BECAUSE YOU KNOW WHO WAS THE STAR.

I WAS A SPEAR-CARRIER AND I MUST SAY WE USED TO AIM SOME
SHARP ONES IN THE DIRECTION OF THE JOHNSON WHITE HOUSE --
BUT EV'S WERE ALWAYS SOFTENED WITH A CHUCKLE.

IT SEEMS THAT SOME OF THE LEGACY OF HOMESPUN
HUMOR LEFT IN THIS PART OF ILLINOIS BY ABRAHAM LINCOLN WAS
REBORN IN EVERETT MCKINLEY DIRKSEN. HE HAD A LITTLE QUIP
OR STORY FOR EVERY OCCASION.

HE WAS THE ONLY POLITICIAN I HAVE EVER KNOWN WHO COULD WALK
INTO A PRESS CONFERENCE LIKE THE PROPHET DANIEL AND WALK OUT
LEAVING THE LIONS ALL PURRING AND WITHOUT A SCRATCH ON HIM.

I LEARNED A LOT FROM EV, AND IT IS ONLY FITTING THAT
OTHERS SHOULD LEARN FROM HIM ALSO.

THE DIRKSEN RESEARCH CENTER, WITH MEMENTOS
AND PAPERS FROM HIS LONG AND PRODUCTIVE CAREER, WILL
ENABLE GENERATIONS OF STUDENTS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW THE
U.S. CONGRESS WORKS.

THE SENATOR BELIEVED THE OPPORTUNITIES TO EXAMINE THE PAPERS AND
DOCUMENTS OF TOP LEGISLATORS WERE TOO LIMITED. HE HAD THE
IDEA FOR A RESEARCH CENTER LONG BEFORE HIS DEATH. I AGREED WITH
HIM ~~THAT~~ THAT STUDY OF THE CONGRESS HAD BEEN NEGLECTED.

EV KNEW HOW A SINGLE PIECE OF LEGISLATION COULD HAVE A LASTING
IMPRINT ON OUR SOCIETY. HE BELIEVED MORE HISTORICAL ATTENTION
SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE DRAFTING AND APPROVAL OF FEDERAL
LEGISLATION.

WITH THE DIRKSEN PAPERS AND THOSE OF OTHER CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS,
THIS CENTER WILL GIVE STUDENTS IN THE MANY UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES
IN THIS AREA A SPECIAL VIEWPOINT ON AMERICAN HISTORY.

ONE OF THE MOST FASCINATING AREAS OF STUDY IN THE
DIRKSEN PAPERS WILL BE TO TRACE JUST HOW INFLUENTIAL A SINGLE
DEDICATED MAN CAN BE. HIS CAREER SPANNED ALMOST FOUR
DECADES AND SIX PRESIDENTS.

FROM THE "FIRST HUNDRED DAYS" OF PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT
TO EV'S EVENTFUL TEN YEARS OF SERVICE AS MINORITY LEADER IN THE
SENATE, SENATOR DIRKSEN PARTICIPATED RIGOROUSLY IN THE ENORMOUS
SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CHANGES OF THOSE YEARS.

I'VE SOMETIMES WONDERED WHETHER EV DIRKSEN EVER
REGRETTED THAT HE PROMISED HIS MOTHER NOT TO PURSUE A CAREER ON
THE STAGE. BUT HE GOT AROUND IT BY PLAYING ON A MUCH LARGER
STAGE, AND WE WERE LUCKY TO HAVE BEEN IN HIS COMPANY.

I THINK IT'S WONDERFUL THE TAPES OF THE SENATOR'S
SPEECHES WILL BE AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS, BECAUSE HIS VOICE AND
PRESENCE WERE PART OF HIS POLITICAL MAGIC.

THE PERSON WHO KNEW AND LOVED HIM BEST, LOUELLA,
HIS WIFE AND PARTNER OF 42 YEARS, WROTE THIS OF EV:

"MY HUSBAND LOVED LIFE. IT SEEMED TO LOVE HIM ALSO.

HE WAS AWED BY THE BEAUTY OF THE FLOWER AND THE SPOKEN WORD.

HE COULD CULTIVATE THEM AS NO OTHER MAN COULD. HIS FLOWERS

CONTINUE TO GROW. HIS WORDS STILL ECHO."

I WAS LOOKING THROUGH MY OLD FILES OF SOME OF EV
DIRKSEN'S WORDS FROM THE "EV AND JERRY SHOW" THAT I COULD
INCLUDE IN THESE REMARKS. I THOUGHT MAYBE I COULD FIND
ONE OF HIS HILARIOUS STORIES ABOUT HIS ADVENTURE AS AN ARMY
BALLOONIST IN WORLD WAR ONE OR A PARTICULARLY FUNNY JOKE.

INSTEAD, I FOUND A COMMENT WHICH EV SAID HE HAD POUNDED
OUT ON HIS TRUSTY PORTABLE BECAUSE HE WAS IN A PHILOSOPHICAL
MOOD. IT WAS IN 1968, A FEW DAYS AFTER THE ASSASSINATION OF
SENATOR ROBERT KENNEDY. THERE WERE RIOTS AND VIOLENCE ALL
ACROSS THE LAND.

SENATOR DIRKSEN SAID:

"THE TIME HAS COME TO RETHINK OUR HISTORY. IT
SHOULD HAVE EMPHASIS IN EVERY SCHOOL, CHURCH AND FORUM IN THE
LAND. THE LEGACY WHICH IS OURS CAME FROM THOSE WHO WERE
HERE BEFORE US.

INTO THIS LAND THEY BUILT THEIR SKILLS AND TALENTS, THEIR HOPES AND

DREAMS, THEIR TEARS AND SACRIFICES. TODAY WE ARE THE TRUSTEES

OF AMERICA. UPON US IS A TWO-FOLD DUTY. THE ONE IS TO THOSE

WHO CAME BEFORE US AND GAVE US THIS LAND FOR OUR INHERITANCE.

THE OTHER IS TO THOSE WHO SHALL COME AFTER US.

"PERHAPS THREE WORDS CAN STATE THE WHOLE CASE,

DEDICATION, DISCIPLINE AND DUTY."

I KNOW THAT THOSE WORDS, SPOKEN AS ONLY EV DIRKSEN

COULD, ARE SOMEWHERE IN THIS EDIFICE, REMINDING AMERICANS OF

THEIR CONTINUING NEED FOR DEDICATION, DISCIPLINE AND DUTY.

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YES, LOUELLA, "HIS WORDS STILL ECHO."

THANK YOU.

END OF TEXT

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

POSSIBLE AD-LIBS FOR DIRKSEN RECEPTION:

Who can ever forget Ev Dirksen's marvelous voice?

They didn't call him the "Wizard of Ooze" for nothing.....

Listening to Ev Dirksen was like taking a shower in
warm molasses!

I notice that some people are calling this the Dirksen Center
but I know that Ev would have loved that name THE EVERETT
McKINLEY DIRKSEN CONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP
RESEARCH CENTER. Ev never would have used two words
when seven would do.

One of the memorable experiences of my life was being a
part of the Ev and Jerry Show on television. As I remember it,
it had a very simple format. Ev used to talk and I used to listen.

Ev might have been called Mr. Marigold, but on that show
he was no wallflower.

Ev always wanted to make the marigold our national flower.
Unfortunately, one state said it wanted a rose instead of a marigold.
Another state said it wanted a carnation instead of a marigold.
Another state said it wanted a daisy instead of a marigold.
And Alaska said, "What's a marigold?"