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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
TEXAS STATE FAIR

HALL OF STATE BUILDING.

12:37 P.M. CDT

Governor Briscoe, Mrs. Briscoe, Governor Connally and Mrs. Connally, Mayor Folsom, Wayne Gallagher, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

It is always great to be back in Texas, and especially in Dallas, and I thank you.

I am deeply honored to have the privilege of opening your world-famous State Fair. John Connally has just given me a preview of the livestock barns. John is an expert on cattle, swine and sheep, just like he is an expert on national security and Government from Austin to Washington, D. C., and thank you very much, John. There is a lot left to see, but I have learned one thing: When Texans talk about the fine things you produce in Texas, whether it is cattle or cotton, spaceships or sheep, pecans or petroleum, you are really not bragging, you are really just being modest. Even your peanuts taste better to me. (Laughter)

I am told you produce pretty good football teams. Good luck this afternoon. Nobody wants to stand or sit in the sun on a beautiful football Saturday in October and listen to a long Presidential address. I will tell you what. When we have the Ford-Dole inauguration down in Washington next January, you all come.

Let me take just a minute to thank you for your Texas hospitality and heartwarming welcome. I wasn't surprised -- I have been here before, it is always great. But it is wonderful to be among Americans who are just born friendly and hospitable.

Texans are born patriotic, also. I first got to know a great deal about Texans when I was, of all places, in the middle of the Pacific. In that war, America's survival and the fate of freedom in the world were in the steady hands of great Texans and great Americans like Chester Nimitz and Dwight D. Eisenhower.

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The Texans that I knew personally on the ship which I served had the same high caliber of character. On our carrier, we not only had plenty of native Texans but a lot of men who trained here in the State of Texas and are probably Texans now. We did everything on that ship except fly the Lone Star battle flag.

When I first went to Congress I learned the ropes from legislative giants like Mr. Sam Rayburn and Lyndon Johnson. I made good friends like George Mahon, George Bush, John Tower and Tiger Teague, among others, from your great State.

What always impressed me the most was the way Texans put their country above their political party when America's fundamental interests were at stake. I saw them time and again rally around the President, whoever he might be, when he was dealing in the high stakes of peace and war.

The corroboration and support that Speaker Sam Rayburn and Senator Lyndon Johnson gave to President Eisenhower when he was Commander-in-Chief became my example when President Johnson faced those same tough calls on foreign policy and national security, and although we had our differences, Lyndon Johnson never distorted the truth when discussing the tough issues affecting America's strength.

In the coming weeks and future years, I really hope that this bipartisan tradition of responsibility and unity beyond the water's edge can survive in American politics. It is an important part of our national strength, as Texans taught me.

You never heard a Texan tell the world our country is not strong any more. You never heard a Texan proclaim that America is not respected any more. You never heard a Texan allege that the American people have lost their pride in America's strength and its moral integrity.

It isn't only the eyes of Texas that are upon us. The eyes of the whole world are on the United States of America this year, not just for the Fourth of July when we celebrated a glorious 200th anniversary, but also on November 2.

We are on display as much as all the entries in this great Texas State Fair. We have been the world champion of liberty and self-government for the last 200 years.

We are proud of our trophies. We are proud of our material strength and even more of America's moral strength. We are respected for all of these and many other things. Let's get our third century off to a good start skipping over the little things but standing together tall and strong on the big things that affect us at home and abroad -- big things like peace through strength, peace with freedom. That is the spirit that made Texas great, that made America great. That is the spirit we can show the world in 1976.

Thank you very much.