



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 87th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Ceremonies Commemorating Issuance of Sam Rayburn Commemorative Stamp

REMARKS

OF

HON. RAY ROBERTS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 26, 1962

Mr. ROBERTS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on September 16, 1962, the late Honorable Sam Rayburn was honored in his hometown of Bonham, Tex., in a ceremony observing the first issuance of the Sam Rayburn commemorative stamp.

It was my distinct privilege to participate in the ceremonies and to have the high honor of introducing the principal speaker, the Honorable LYNDON B. JOHNSON, the Vice President of the United States, who served as a Member of the House of Representatives with the late Speaker. At this point in the RECORD, I would like to include my introduction of the Vice President, along with his remarks:

ADDRESS AND INTRODUCTION OF THE VICE PRESIDENT BY CONGRESSMAN ROBERTS OF TEXAS

Judge Moore, Mr. Vice President, Postmaster General Belen, Senator Yarborough, Mr. Bentsen, Mrs. Bartley, Mrs. Thomas, and friends, we are gathered here to honor the memory of a great man.

Sam Rayburn walked among his friends with modesty and good fellowship, yet he stood tall among the statesmen of the world. His image as a true world leader grows with each passing day.

I am honored to stand in the edge of his reflection and to follow a few steps along the road which he chartered.

The nationwide and worldwide clamor for the stamp that is being issued today is coming not only from the collectors who realize that it will be a stamp of historic significance, but from people who have never saved a stamp in their lives. These are the people who shared our deep regard for the Speaker, Sam Rayburn—people who never had the

opportunity, as you and I had, to know him personally, but admired him as a great American.

Always a man to shun personal publicity, he dismissed with gruff good will all public demonstrations in his behalf.

History only acknowledges modesty, though, and does not hesitate to reward greatness.

Even though Mr. Rayburn would have scoffed at the idea, as long as history of the United States is written, there will be an important chapter for Speaker Sam Rayburn.

As his successor as Congressman of this great Fourth District, it is an honor and a privilege to be here to pay tribute to his memory.

I feel a great sense of responsibility today. I am here to present a member of one of the most justly famous legislative teams in our history at a ceremony honoring the other member of the team.

For many years two names dominated the legislative scene. They were Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn and Senate Majority Leader LYNDON B. JOHNSON.

The luster that was attached to those names did not arise solely from legislative skill or political leadership. The Rayburn-Johnson combination was much more than that. It was, in fact, the symbol of responsible, patriotic leadership in which the long-range needs of our country are always to be placed above the temporary exigencies of party necessity.

The relationship between these two men was one which began long before the events which placed them on the national and international scene. The friendship of the late Speaker Rayburn with the Johnsons began with the Vice President's father and was one that continued throughout his life.

It was a relationship that was fortunate for the two men, because they found within each other mutual sources of strength in their common dedication to the service of their country. It was also a relationship which was fortunate for the country because between the two of them they demonstrated so

that all could see that the American system was so strong it could survive the strains of heated partisanship and still maintain a common front against the enemies of freedom.

Both were men of humble beginnings. But both were also men of persistence and perseverance. Their close relationship continued even after LYNDON JOHNSON left the Senate to serve in the high office of Vice President of the United States, and in a real sense I think the relationship continues today, because Sam Rayburn is a man who will never really leave us.

As a Texan, I am very proud that two of the most distinguished statesmen of our century have been Texans. And I am very proud of the honor that has been accorded to me today.

As our Vice President, LYNDON B. JOHNSON has established a record without parallel in our history. He has conducted delicate and difficult diplomatic negotiations in the far corners of the globe. He has been entrusted with sweeping responsibilities in the vital field of outer space. He has been assigned the task of assuring equal employment opportunity to the lowly who must have an advocate. He has been present in the highest councils of our Nation, where his voice has been heard in some of the most crucial decisions of our times.

It is my honor, it is my privilege, to present to you that great Texan and that great American, the Vice President of the United States, LYNDON B. JOHNSON.

ADDRESS BY VICE PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON

A MAN TO REMEMBER

It is a privilege to be here with so many Texans, all of whom knew and loved Mr. Sam Rayburn, as the Post Office Department honors the Speaker with his commemorative stamp.

The real strength of a man can be determined by the way his works are carried on beyond his life and the manner in which his neighborhood honors his memory.

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP

Bonham, Tex., was the Speaker's home; the House was his working place and his life, but the whole of the United States was his neighborhood.

With us today we have the strongest evidence of the ties he made during his stewardship in our behalf.

The Post Office Department tells us that few first-day stamp issuances have created the interest that this one has.

The Sam Rayburn Foundation and its program of scholarships and fellowships for political science is making swift, steady strides toward a successful start.

His hometown friends, his home State friends, and his friends from all the other States stand ready to carry out his wishes in the foundation and at the museum here in Bonham.

GAVE EARLY PROMISE

Sam Rayburn gained the opportunity to use all of his many fine talents because the people of his home saw in him the raw elements of greatness that he developed to the finest degree.

From the earliest days of statehood, Texas has shown uncommonly good judgment in sending to Congress men who have had the ability and capacity for high national responsibility and it is my firm belief that the greatest of them all was Mr. Sam Rayburn.

Every day I am reminded that it is to my everlasting benefit that I had the great privilege of walking with him a considerable way down the road.

660170—86236

For the Speaker, the road ended last November 16. We miss him now very much. The country misses him.

But we can find wisdom and strength from the lessons he taught and the heritage he left.

RESPECT FOR PEOPLE

He taught responsibility. He was an example of devotion to country and dedication to duty. As he was never stampeded by pressure, he was never held back by fear. He sought always the public good rather than courting mere public approval. These are good things to remember.

But the heritage he left is a heritage of respect for the people which ought to be the hallmark of every public career.

There was never a person in the United States who couldn't see the Speaker. It caused consternation in his staff, but he made his own appointments, at times on the back of the first envelope he pulled from his pocket.

He read all of his own mail. He once told me: "When someone writes me on tablet paper with a lead pencil, I figure what he's writing about is pretty important to him."

TEXT FOR LEADERSHIP

The House of Representatives was his alpha and omega. Political writers for years to come will endeavor to analyze Mr. Rayburn who held sway over the House longer than any other mortal.

And they can turn to him for their text: "You can't really say how you lead. You feel your way, receptive to those rolling tides of sentiment. And if a man can't see and hear and feel, why then, of course, he's lost."

The Speaker could do all three. He was part of the good earth.

He furnished much of our straightforward thinking and talking. He was made in the same stalwart, forthright mold that marked our Nation's founders.

FAITH IN MAN

He was younger than most of us. What he disliked more than "old fogies," as he put it, was "young fogies."

He believed in staying always alert to new ways to serve social progress and human freedom.

In his last speech in the House—the day he doubled Henry Clay's record as Speaker—he stood in the well so familiar to him and said: "I have so much faith in human beings. I know that people are good folks."

SERVANTS AND MASTERS

One evening, reminiscing with friends, he put it well. He recalled how good people always had been to him. He talked of Flag Springs, the little town in the old Fourth District where he attended a one-room school.

"All of us are just a little way from Flag Springs," he said. "You know I just missed being a tenant farmer by a gnat's heel."

Whether we come from San Antonio or McKinney, from Graham or Johnson City—each of us is "just a little way from Flag Springs." So long as we remembered that—so long as we remember that we in public life are only servants, that the people who send us here are the masters—then we shall be worthy of the trust vested in us and this Republic shall endure.