

November 27, 1963

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TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND JOE ALSOP

LBJ I want to tell you for that most wonderful...and how grateful I am... for that beautiful article..I don't deserve it but I appreciate it. You know I'm not as frustrated as that Baptist preacher when he showed up one morning and they gave him a car...and he got up on the pulpit and he didn't know what to say and he didn't expect them to give him a Ford automobile... poor little church..and he said "I just want you all to know that I don't appreciate it, but I do deserve it."

Laughter... But...I do appreciate it and I don't deserve it.

JA Yes, well all I can say is that I didn't want to bother you..I was trying to get a word through Bill Moyers and get the word to Lady Bird...be watching you there.. thinking about Phil with a couple of my colleagues..started out.. you know..eager to be a failure...and remained to applaud a triumphal success and I came back to lunch with Kay..all I can say is we both had a darned good cry..

LBJ Well I had to restrain myself all during the period.. you and Phil.. Jackie came over and visited me this afternoon..told me about being at your house one night at dinner and how.. what you and Phil had said about me and how touched she was..and how she remembered it and what the President had said to her several times about it... we just kind of had a real lovely session for about 30 minutes..here. We're going to name Cape Canaveral, Cape Kennedy and ...

JA Yes. Kay and I after your speech this morning..she lunched with me..and we both sort of had a ridiculous cry..because Phil wasn't there to see how right you've been.

LBJ Did you see what she sent me that he had written?

JA No, I didn't.

LBJ We'll have to...some night..

JA Your speech was a triumphant success..and I have to tell you because I'm going to write it...I've never thought...but it was excellent...everything was wonderful..and John Monet who came to lunch later..

LBJ Hope you'll remember me to him...I was with him with Bill Fulbright..when we were..

JA Well, he'll be here until the 6th..

LBJ Well maybe I'll get a chance to see him. I'll try to work it in..he'll be here till the 6th. Bill Fulbright and I spent some time with him in 1960

JA I remember...and it was..I was just so proud..if that is not the wrong word ...of my country..of you know..and I kept thinking about how everyone abroad was going to be impressed. It was a wonderful success. It really was and Kay looked at these damned Republicans..when you were asking them to do the things they've been refusing to do...and kept thinking of "in the ranks"....and it was a great success.

LBJ Thank you my friend. Thank you.

JA And a wonderful beginning. And don't think of anything I write..I never write, you know...

LBJ I know. Thank you my friend.

JA And good luck to you and let me come and see you.

LBJ Sure will, sure will.

JA Thank you

LBJ Bye

JA Bye

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PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S NOTES ON CONVERSATION WITH  
JOE ALSOP NOVEMBER 27, 1963

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The President: "I want to tell you...how grateful I am for that beautiful article..I don't deserve it but I appreciate it. ...I 'm not as frustrated as that Baptist preacher when he showed up one morning and they gave him a car...and he got up in the pulpit and he didn't know what to say as he didn't expect them to give him a Ford automobile -- poor little church -- and he said 'I just want you all to know that I don't appreciate it, but I do deserve it.'"

Alsop said: "Kay and I after your speech this morning..she lunched with me--and we both...had a ridiculous cry -- because Phil wasn't there to see how right he'd been...Your speech was a triumphant success...it was excellent...everything was wonderful...I was just so proud...I was just thinking how everyone abroad was going to be impressed...A wonderful beginning...good luck to you and let me come and see you."