

3:14 p. m.
November 29, 1963

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TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND DAVID LAWRENCE
(to Mr. Lawrence)

DL: Yes sir.

LBJ Lyndon Johnson. I want to tell you what I've told you a good many times before..but, I just want to repeat it. I think first, you've got the best magazine in the business and I think you were extremely imaginative and quite partial and generous to me during this trial I went through the last two or three days...as they always have been...and second, to tell you how much I appreciated your own personal confidence and how hard I'll try to be worthy of it.

DL Well, thank you very much and all of us have been thinking about you..and you can hardly imagine how much everybody has shared the feeling that you're undertaking a tremendous responsibility and yet how everybody feels you've had the training for it...that's the big point that ..goes into my mind and with the parliamentary system and so on..here we have a man that trained in our parliamentary system...who has come at the right moment to use his background and knowledge..and I think it is a fortunate coincidence for the country. I was going to write something about it..because I think by sheer accident we happen to have the benefit of it.

LBJ Well, you've got a strong following in the country and one that believes you because you do what you think is best for America and I appreciate it and I'll try to be worthy of it and I've been here 32 years but a lot of fellows.. it takes them longer than that to learn a lot and I've got a lot to learn. I'd like to ask this of you and I'll keep it quiet..if you don't mind..once every two or three weeks...whenever something comes to you..just jot down with your pencil or write me two or three little points and say I wish you'd give some thought to instructing the Armed Services on frugality or getting out a memo to the Cabinet on this...anything you think is good for the country..is good for me and if you'll do it and pass it in to me, I'll appreciate it when we get moved in...we'll have a little meeting every once in awhile.

DL Well...it is very nice of you to suggest that and I'll be delighted to do it..I've always been hesitant to do those things...

LBJ No...you've been here a long time and you've helped me when I was just a Senator with the Preparedness Committee and I want you to...I need it now more than I've ever needed it before...no man is equal to this job..it is just too much for him..I've been with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, The Chairman of the Atomic Energy waiting on me now...have met with Home...I've got to have Erhardt in December...

LBJ
Contd

I've got to have Sengi Ellvi in January... I've got to have Home of Great Britain in February... and I've to have DeGaulle sometime early in the winter... and no man is just up to it... he's got to have other people helping him and you've got the wisdom of experience around here and I've just got to have your help..

DL Well, it is very nice of you and I appreciate it ever so much.

LBJ Well tell Owen Scott and Carson Lyman.. that I'm going to arrest them if they don't let me hear from them once in a while..
Tell them to keep on putting out that good magazine..

DL You bet... laughter.. and thank you ever so much for your thoughts.

LBJ You can believe what you read... in it.. it is not full of propaganda..

DL May I say this... everybody who listened to you and watched you on television got from the presentation the feeling of confidence. I had it with my own members of my family.. who hadn't followed things too closely... but it did convey confidence to them and that was the big thing needed in this particular moment, you know..

LBJ Well, I appreciate it... I'm going to send you.. I guess maybe you've already seen it, I gathered from that interview... I'm going to send you a little article I wrote for the Southwest Quarterly several years ago on my philosophy

DL Good

LBJ It is kind of a peculiar one.. but if you have a chance some night and you can't go to sleep some night and instead of taking a sleeping pill.. read this and it will put you to sleep..

DL Well that is fine. You know we had a picture of you in color that we made in 1960... we put in the magazine this week and it was the best selection we could have... and we had it ready..

LBJ Well, I'll send you this little book .. the Quarterly.. and then we'll talk about it when you have a chance... don't forget though.. that memo every once in awhile and tell Owen Scott and Carson Lyman.. he's an old friend of mine and he and Bill White used to run around with me when I was a Secretary.. before I ever went to Congress.. when I was just a doorkeeper and employee.. I knew Carson... you tell him I said hello.

DL I certainly will.. he's due back here.. he's been down in Georgia but he'll be back in a day or so...

LBJ And I'll call you when we get over to the other House and we'll have lunch some day. Bye

DL OK... goodluck, Sir.

PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S NOTES ON CONVERSATION WITH
DAVID LAWRENCE

NOVEMBER 29, 1963

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The President said: "I want to tell you what I've told you a good many times before....I think, first, you've got the best magazine in the business and I think you were extremely imaginative and quite partial and generous to me during this trial I went through the last two or three days....and second, to tell you how much I appreciated your own personal confidence and how hard I'll try to be worthy of it.

Mr. Lawrence: "...All of us have been thinking of you and... everybody has shared the feeling that you've undertaken a tremendous responsibility and yet how everybody thinks you've had the training for it....here we have a man that trained in our parliamentary system, who has come at the right moment to use his background and knowledge...I think it is a fortunate coincidence for the country.Everybody who listened to you and watched you on television got from the presentation the feeling of confidence...members of my family, who hadn't followed things too closely, but it did convey confidence to them and that was the big thing in this particular moment."

The President asked Mr. Lawrence to give him memos from time to time of things that he thought would benefit the country.