

VICE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS, MARCH 29, 1968, WHEN THE PRESIDENT APPOINTED HIM
CHAIRMAN OF THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL ON RECREATION AND NATURAL BEAUTY

Mr. President and Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Rockefeller, and Mrs. Humphrey.
Mr. President I have already started taking advice and I really look forward to it. I am going to give you your first present, Mrs. Johnson. I shall be very brief. But I do want to say this. You have given our country a sense of mission about its beauty. This is a very beautiful country. Everybody that travels through it know's it is beautiful and some of us travel through it a great deal. And yet all of us that travel about feel a little guilty when we see it untidy, not by the hand of providence but by the hand of man. And the purpose of the President's Council on Recreation and Natural Beauty is for the hand of man to try to repair some of the damage that man has made to God's gift to all of us this beautiful land of ours. If we could select our song that we would like to have it would be American the Beautiful and it tells so much about this country. Mr. President, your beloved wife, our first lady has literally lifted the eyes of the American people to some very wonderful horizons. There are hundreds of courthouses in this country that are looking a lot better these days because you asked somebody to plant some flowers and put some shurbery there. There are literally thousands of miles of highway and boulevard and parkway that are really beautiful now because somebody cared. I think what Mrs. Johnson has taught us is that we should care for our country. That we should care for the heritage that is ours. Sometimes I am privileged to talk to conservationists.

And a conservationist is a steward and we are all, in a sense, stewards of the heritage that is ours from nature and providence. And anyone that disspoil the land or the people really commits a terrible crime and a great evil.

Mr. President, I think that we have been engaged in a process of recreation and natural beauty in this country under your Administration. The word recreation means re-creation, the restore, the soul, the spirit, the body, the mind. And in some of the things that are not related to the President's Council on Recreation and Natural Beauty, there is some work of beauty going on. I hope you will permit me to say this, that when a unemployed teenager that's a school drop out gets a job, that's improving natural beauty. That brings natural beauty, because there is beauty there, if it's not filled with hate and bitterness and despair. And when we take care of youngsters that never had a chance and give them a better education, and their eyes become a little brighter and there is a smile on their face, what more beautiful thing is there than a child with bright eyes and a smile. And I talk to youngsters that tell me that their school is their fun, right here in Washington. So that's natural beauty, so we take care of the seashores, and the parks and the land, but the most wonderful thing about natural beauty is people. And when you can blend together this wonderful nature of ours, that we have-- this landscape and all it means and all that man creates and with his hands with this human personality and this human spirit, then we really have re-creation and recreation and natural beauty. And the President has permitted me as his friend and associate to chair this President's Council as I do his Youth Opportunity Council. As I do as we met today Mr. President on our Physical Fitness and Sports Council. These are all related to human work restoring value of human life, taking human waste and making it human

worth. We are going to take this heritage of ours and make it more worthwhile. And I really look forward to working with you Mrs. Johnson. I have been working with your husband and I like that, but I know this is an extra dividend. This is a very happy day for me. Thank you very much.



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