

WH6411-03-6161-6162_B_scroller

Date: 1964-11-04

Participant: Lyndon B. Johnson

Participant: McGeorge Bundy

Participant: Bill D. Moyers

Start Time: 10:34

Place: LBJ Ranch

SCROLLER TITLE: "A Passion for Anonymity"

SCENE SETTER: Following the 1964 election, President Johnson discussed the recruitment of personnel and reviewed the job qualification that he prized most with National Security Adviser McGeorge "Mac" Bundy and presidential assistant Bill D. Moyers. For Johnson, the model of an effective adviser was Clark M. Clifford, who Bundy described as "the wisest man in the city."

President Johnson: And the man that's got a passion for anonymity usually is a man that comes out on top. If you want to see how to run Washington, if y'all just want to know the pitfalls and learn that par excellence, just look at Mr. Clark [M.] Clifford.

McGeorge "Mac" Bundy: There's no question [*unclear*]

President Johnson: He will not be on the record. He will not be seen with the President. He doesn't even want to play golf with him. He's willing to be with him every hour of the day and advise him every night. He won't ask a favor of him. And he just stays in the background. And when you say, "Won't you go over to the [Democratic] Party and give some advice?" He says, "Well, I will do anything that you want me to, but let me tell you the reasons why it's so much better that John [M.] Bailey do it."

Bill D. Moyers: [*Unclear.*] In fact, I think Clark agrees that his—he's been somewhat hurt by the fact that the press got out that he had tried to help Walter [W. Jenkins] that day.

President Johnson: I think it has.

Bundy: Yeah, [*unclear*].

Moyers: Yeah. And that he would have [*unclear*].

Bundy: Well, he is tremendously valuable, and I would say, on many of these things, and especially when you get to the question of appointments that are not the kind that Ralph [A.] Dungan's office handles, I think Clark's the wisest man in the city.

President Johnson: On strategy, on general policy, on right or wrong, or how things will be accepted, there's just not anybody that's equal to him. And I differ with him frequently, but—

Moyers: He doesn't mind your differing, and he wants to talk about it.

President Johnson: He's the best.

End of excerpt.

CITATION: “Lyndon Johnson, McGeorge Bundy, and Bill Moyers on 4 November 1964,”
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vol. 2, ed. Kent B. Germany, et al.] (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014–).