

"THE HOUR OF REMEMBRANCE,"  
OKLAHOMA MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION, 1963

By H. Milt Phillips\*

Today we meet here to honor those who have made outstanding contributions to our great State of Oklahoma. The Oklahoma Memorial Association makes a splendid contribution to our State through your dedicated efforts to keep alive the rich traditions, the cultural heritage, of our Oklahoma. You reward with generous recognition, individual effort of our citizens who contribute to our economic, professional and cultural growth as the years roll by.

We pay specific tribute today to the late U. S. Senator, Robert S. Kerr; General Patrick Hurley; John Porter; and Mrs. Virgil Browne.

The late Senator Robert S. Kerr; Oklahoma lost a native son whose "Land, Wood, and Water" program will live for centuries. Senator Kerr's contribution to Oklahoma's veterans, state government, and to the nation is one of the most distinguished of any native son.

General Patrick J. Hurley proved to the world that an Oklahoma boy could come from the coal mines of this state and rise to the highest position in government. The driving force which Pat Hurley demonstrated all his life has contributed to the "image" of Oklahoma throughout the nation and to the world. Oklahoma lost a devoted son when Patrick Hurley passed to his reward.

John Porter was one of those Oklahomans whose contribution to the economic welfare was over and above most of those in his profession. A newsmen and an astute businessman,

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\* Mr. H. Milt Phillips, Vice President of the Oklahoma Historical Society, is well known as the member of its Board of Directors who has led and actively sponsored the establishment of the Microfilm Department in the work of the Historical Society, with the former Newspaper Department successfully re-organized and with 1,000,000 pages of old and current state newspapers microfilmed annually. Mr. Phillips is also well known in the Oklahoma business and publishing field as editor and publisher of *The Seminole Producer* at Seminole. *The Chronicles* here presents his address in "The Hour of Remembrance" program of the Oklahoma Memorial Association given in the Historical Building at 11:00 a.m., Friday, November 15, 1963. This is an annual program of the Oklahoma Memorial Association, in which tribute is paid to those members of the Association who have passed on during the year, as a part of the Association's commemoration of Oklahoma's Statehood Day on November 16 (or convenient day nearest November 16), each year.—Ed.

John Porter was ever ready to contribute his abilities and talents to his community and to his fellow Oklahomans. We have a better economy and a better state because John Porter labored and served here.

Mrs. Virgil Browne, that distinguished mother, homemaker, and civic leader contributed to the culture of Oklahoma as perhaps no other individual has contributed. She, her family, and her loyal friends made so many contributions because of her inspiration and leadership, that it would be impossible to enumerate all of them here today.

We also honor those many fine Oklahomans who belonged to this state by choice—who came here to better utilize their talents and abilities and to reap for themselves the benefits which their individual effort could provide in a new frontier state.

Many of the outstanding among those citizens have their names permanently inscribed upon that distinguished Honor Roll you provide, Oklahoma's Hall of Fame.<sup>1</sup> We know there are many who also served—who also contributed—whose names we never knew nor will ever know. We honor them, too, in this brief Memorial Service today.

This week it has been my privilege to attend here in our Capital City two state-wide meetings. Both of those meetings had as their primary objectives the development and improvement of Oklahoma's commerce and industry. Their concern was our economic growth and well-being.

The men and women from all sections of Oklahoma attending those meetings were dedicated in their efforts to build a bigger and a better economy for Oklahoma. Certainly we can agree those objectives are laudable. Their efforts give you and me the assurance our children and grandchildren will enjoy a better Oklahoma over the years ahead.

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<sup>1</sup> The Oklahoma Memorial Association held its annual "Hall of Fame Banquet" at the Sheraton-Oklahoma Hotel in Oklahoma City, Friday evening, November 13, 1963 when the following well known citizens were honorees and inducted formally with ritualistic program into "Oklahoma's Hall of Fame": Major Gordon Cooper, Astronaut, Shawnee; Hon. W. P. Atkinson, Builder, Midwest City; Dr. Herschel H. Hobbs, Pastor First Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, Charles B. ("Bud") Wilkinson, Oklahoma University football coach; Judge Orel Husby, President of the Oklahoma Memorial Association, Ada; Dr. Ben G. Henneke, President of the University of Tulsa, Tulsa. The first "Oklahoma Hall of Fame Banquet" was held in 1926 commemorating Statehood Day, November 15, by the Oklahoma Memorial Association organized by Mrs. Anna B. Korn on September 27, 1927. The "Hall of Fame Banquet" has been held annually under the leadership of Mrs. Korn, and this event with the "Hour of Remembrance Program" held in the morning of the same day together makes an outstanding commemoration in Oklahoma.—Ed.

Today, you and I come together on an entirely different mission. We are here to honor the Memory of men and women who have contributed over and above the call of duty in the development of our Oklahoma. The contributions of those we honor today were not solely in the fields of economic development, although that was important to a growing and developing state.

The contributions which were made by the men and women we honor here today were in the fields of literature, the arts, in the Humanities—in the cultural well-being of a great state. Down through the centuries of history it has been the humanities which have left that indelible mark upon any nation, upon any people. Not alone, of course, but predominantly, the cultural attainments have ranked as the most important features of any civilization history records. That is why we here today recognize the many accomplishments of the specific individuals and the larger group whose names we do not know—the accomplishments of building a sound economy, as well as the accomplishments in the cultural fields.

May we, for just a moment, make a comparison which we believe is significant today. We would speak of events with which all of us are more or less familiar. Week by week and month by month we are reminded of the progress being made by dictator nations. The progress of nations living under the iron fist of communism gives much of the free world concern.

It is here we would begin the comparisons. The progress of which we read so much in the dictator nations, is in the fields of technology, of science, and, yes, in space. Much of that progress we must admit is related directly to war and the military.

In accomplishing the many successes in technological fields, the Russians, for instance, have developed a successful system of education. This Russian educational system we have heard so much about is devoted entirely to the technical, the economic—almost none of it to the Humanities.

We hear many people say, we must attempt to match the Russian educational system. Many citizens of the free world are alarmed at the progress being made by the dictatorships in the fields of technical education. The dictators who keep their people enclaved behind an iron curtain are straining every muscle to build greater war machines—bigger space vehicles—become more proficient as astronauts.

Just a few days ago I had the privilege of hearing a distinguished educator—an economist—a Doctor on the faculty of one of our great Universities in Oklahoma. He said the Soviet

Union is making tremendous progress in the fields of technology. But the Russian rulers fear for their people to study the Humanities. They want the people of the Soviet Union to know nothing of the culture, the economic well-being, the living standards of free people of the world.

The Soviet Union and its satellite nations want their people to know nothing of the culture of other nations of the world. They want the people of the enslaved nations to know nothing of the Bible. And therein lies the Achilles Heel of the dictator nations, this distinguished educator believes.

What do these things I have recounted here have to do with our assembling here today? It has this, I believe—and I hope you agree—that today we honor those whose contributions were far beyond the economic betterment—the material improvement, the military accomplishment. We honor here today men and women who knew the culture of their own people and the culture of other people of the world. We honor men and women who knew and appreciated the freedom and the dignity of the individual.

So, I presume upon your time to make this comparison because it gives greater stature to those whom we honor and to their accomplishments and their talents and their abilities.

We honor those who have made contributions in the professions, in the field of literature, in all of those vast fields we call the Humanities. And we honor those who have made, and helped to preserve, the history of this great State of Oklahoma.

Those we honor were the leaders in developing the economy, the professions and the culture of this state. For this we must be forever grateful. We must impart to those who come after us a deep appreciation for all the things these men and women have done for us—the heritage they left us.

We must instill in our children and in our grandchildren an appreciation for those intangibles as well as the tangibles which have made Oklahoma a fine state, a proud state, a happy state.

Unlike the dictator nations, we pay tribute to those who made contributions to our spiritual welfare. And unlike the Soviet Union we honor those who make contributions which serve the individual, the family and not alone the state.

These are the things on which my thoughts dwell this day because here another day shall come and another shall stand where I stand now, and others will sit where you sit now. They, too, will pay tribute to those who have made a great Oklahoma.

And among those who will be honored on that tomorrow will be those whom we honor in the flesh tonight—those whom we honor who are out over our state and their names are unknown to us here—but we honor them because of the contributions they have made to the citizenry and to the free institutions of a great state.

To each of those who stood where I stand now and to each of those who sat where you sit now, to all who have paid tribute and who have honored their fellow men and women for accomplishments in all the fields of human worth, human endeavor, let us this day pay tribute and humbly express an appreciation for the heritage they have left us.

To each of those who gave unselfishly yesterday, and are honored here today, we must credit with much of the accomplishments and achievements of tomorrow.

To those who have answered the "Final Call" and stand by our Master's side, may we say humbly and gratefully, "Thank you for that wonderful yesterday, which gives us this today, and holds our hopes for an even greater tomorrow." May the souls of all rest in Peace, filled with the knowledge that we who are yet here remember and appreciate them and what they did, and today hold them in Reverence and Appreciation.