

The Gospel According to Bryce N. Harlow
From the Bryce N. Harlow Recognition Dinner
June 3, 1981

On Party Allegiance

When I first learned to read I became a Democrat. But when I came also to understand I turned Republican.

On Politics

Politics is a potpourri of unpredictabilities, ambiguities and opacities wreathed in prejudice, preconceptions, biases and phobias, the whole of it rendered suspect by rhetorical guile, deception, hypocrisy and sly selectivity in the use of truth.

On White House Service

When I began ricocheting around the White House I was six feet four inches tall. As you can see, I got out just in time.

It can be heady wine if one forgets that it's really the job, not the temporary occupant of the job, that's important.

Old soldiers may fade away, but erstwhile bureaucrats vaporize instantly once their names are stricken from the federal payroll.

On Presidential Power

The monumental power of the American presidency – a power for evil as well as good – is limited not so much by the Constitution as by the character and force of the man in the office.

On Business Lobbying

All of us in the room are individually and collectively hopeless, helpless, futile, down the tube and kaput if we try and do our congressional business the next two years ('75-'76) as we have done it with sporadic success in the past. It's awfully hard to sing bass when you've just been made a soprano – which is to say our old ways just won't hack it anymore.

On Business-Government Relations

In the aggregate, it is cajolery but it is power; and what it all comes down to is aggressive good citizenship in a representative democracy.