

## **ALC President Will Hayes:**

Good evening. Tonight we are honored to have two distinguished public servants to talk with us. It's a pleasure to have with us once again, our dear friend and neighbor -- Alice Lloyd alumna-- Representative Carl D. Perkins. A man known to all of you and a man who knows all your names and those of your family members as well. Representative Carl D. Perkins has ably represented this area, eastern Kentucky, in the Congress of the United States for 20 years now and he has so done much for the people of eastern Kentucky and the nation.

I recently heard the story of a young researcher, a graduate student in Washington, who asked Carl D. about how he saw his job representing the people of eastern Kentucky. Carl D. said to him, "why don't you come home with me this weekend --- you can come with me, help with the driving. We can talk along the way and then you can come with me as I visit my constituents." So early Friday morning they got in Carl D's car and they made the long drive from Washington D. C. to Hindman. By the time they got to Carl D.'s home it was 9 or 10 at night. Carl's wife cooked up some supper for them and then they went to bed. No sooner had the young man gone to bed and got to sleeping, he told me, there was a knock on the door. It was Carl D saying, "Come on, it's time to get up." "Time to get up? it's still dark outside." The tired young man thought to himself. Another knock on the door, "time to get up. We gotta go. Gotta go now, or it'll be too late to see everyone we want to call on." So he got up got dressed, got back in the car and off they went. They'd traveled a few miles when Carl stopped the car at a house along the road. It was still dark outside and in the house when they knocked on the door. A light went on and the door opened and they were invited in for breakfast. After hearing from the man and his wife over breakfast they got back in the car and drove to another house nearby. And another breakfast invitation. Well, the young man told me, this was repeated at every house all morning long. There was no way to refuse the hospitality. By morning's end they had eaten 5 or 8 or ten breakfasts. The young man told me, "I was absolutely stuffed. I was doubled up in pain, about to burst. I'd never eaten so much in my life."

It's my great pleasure to welcome a man that has worked tirelessly for all of us in eastern Kentucky, Carl D. Perkins.

**CONGRESSMAN CARL D. PERKINS:** Thank you Will. I'm just thrilled to be here tonight and be able to show you off to Senator Kennedy. I've had the privilege of working with and counting as my dear friends Senator Kennedy and his brother the beloved late President. And they too have worked hard for people of eastern Kentucky and their interests. After hearing me talk so often of the great people of eastern Kentucky, and of how special this college is to me, President Kennedy had promised me he would come here and visit and he'd scheduled the visit for December of 1963. And, of course, due to the ensuing tragedy he never was allowed to make that visit. So it is very significant to me

and very special that Senator Kennedy is here tonight. And I'm very moved to be able to accompany him on this trip and show him some of the best people in the world, people,

We are a poor people. But the kindest biggest hearted people in the world. because we're poor people, we've got problems. But Senator Kennedy and I are working in the congress of the United States to come up with programs to help the poor people. I've been working hard and we've achieved alot. But I know, I've got to work harder. We need better access to Pippa Passes. We need a new road that can connect you to Hindman without having to go over the mountain. I know that and I'm working to get it for you and with all of us working together I know that we will get it.

Now, on this visit Senator Kennedy is looking into the federal war on poverty programs and what they've done for the people of this region. Right now in Knott county only 5% of the people who are eligible for food stamps are taking advantage of the program. And as we travel around we are trying to find out whether the program is being administered to get people in need on to the program. It's a new program and people have to know they can get on it and they have to be encouraged to get on it, if they are eligible. They have to be encouraged by everyone in the community and particularly by those administering the program. If there's anyone you know that is having a hard time, and who should be benefitting from the program I want to know about that. And I want you to come up to me tonight and tell me about it. Now the same goes for the work training programs. If there's anyone you know who's been cut off the WET program, the Happy Pappies, I want to know about that. because i've talked to Shriver and I've talked to Willard Wirtz, the secretary of labor, and they've promised me that no one would be cut off these programs if there's no jobs. And we've got to have jobs. We're going to keep trying to get private industry into the area and until we do, we're going to do every thing we can to generate government programs that will put people to work and make a positive contribution here in the mountains. Senator Kennedy and I have both backed the creation of a federal jobs program, where the federal government would put people to work building up the area. We've backed legislation of this sort, but we just haven't had the votes.

Now, Alice Lloyd, as we all know, is a special college, and the college expects a lot of it's students, not only as students, but as citizens. It's a place where students are encouraged to develop their skills and along with their skills, their commitment. And, I truly believe that without what I learned at Alice Lloyd, and from Alice Lloyd, I would never have been able to achieve the things I've done throughout my adult life. But right now I'm going to turn over the floor to Senator Kennedy, so he can talk to you and find out for himself the kind of young leaders that are being grown here at Alice Lloyd.

**SENATOR KENNEDY:** Thank you, President Hayes and Representative Perkins. It's a true pleasure to be with you all tonite and in this beautiful mountain setting. And as Carl said, he's been priming me for being here with you.

I arrived in Lexington earlier today, and we've had a long day of hearings and meetings with children in their school rooms and roadside stops, visiting individual families in their houses. And all along the way I've gotten to see your beautiful Appalachian hill country.

On one level, my visit is official Senate business. I'm a member of the manpower subcommittee of the Senate labor committee, and in the last year we've taken a series of trips, conducted a number of "field hearings", like this one, in different parts of the country. And through these field hearings we've conducted an extremely careful, extremely extensive inquiry into poverty conditions and poverty programs around the country. And so, these field hearings are very important, because we've been able to go to the Mississippi delta, we've been able to go to the central valley of California, to native American reservations in New Mexico, and to coal mining regions of Pennsylvania and now we're here. And we've been able to go to the people who are living in poverty in those regions and we've been able to see those people and most importantly hear from them about their lives and their problems. We saw conditions of extreme poverty wherever we went, men and women without jobs and without hope, without decent housing and without enough to eat.

And nowhere in America is the irony of poverty and of plenty, of riches and want, more pronounced than it is here in these mountains. This is one of the richest places in the nation, one of the richest places in the world. Only in the diamond mines of Africa is there a place on earth with greater natural wealth than exists here in Appalachia. The coal that comes from these hills fuels the factories and the homes of this nation. Yet the wealth of this country, has been allowed to leave this part of the country, without returning wealth to vast majority of the people who live and work here. Corporations have grown vast and their investors have enjoyed huge profits, but, most of that money has left the region. And even that's remained within the region, has not been distributed properly, and that situation is intolerable.

This situation must be changed if the region and its people are to prosper as a whole, as Harry Caudill, sitting here with us tonight, and many others, people born and raised in this region, people who love this region have eloquently and forcefully said.

And it is people like Harry Caudill and like Representative Perkins, who are needed to improve conditions in the region, to improve the conditions of everyone in the region and particularly those people living in poverty; without adequate food, decent housing, transportation or access to healthcare and

education. And as I look around this room, and at you, I see the people who are the Harry Caudill's and Carl Perkins' of tomorrow. You are the future leaders of the the region and the future of eastern Kentucky is in your hands. You are members of an elite group, people with a college education. Only a very small minority of people throughout the world are able to attain a college education. You are privileged individuals. The education you attain here at Alice Lloyd will give you the critical thinking skills and the confidence to speak up for your region, for the good of the region and it's people. The education you receive here will give you the opportunity to become lawyers, doctors, teachers engineers, biologists and nurses. It will prepare you for the professional phase of your education and your life.

Most importantly, the education you receive at Alice Lloyd stresses, and instills in you, the ethic of service to your community. It is Alice Lloyd's fundamental belief that with education comes responsibility, a responsibility to use your learning not only for self betterment but for the betterment of the entire community. And in this she echoes the sentiment of another Bostonian, my brother, President Kennedy, who said famously in his inaugural address, "ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." So, I urge you study hard, pursue your educational and career dreams and give your self the satisfaction of using your skills, your knowledge and you commitment to tackle the problems of your community. Challenge yourself to make eastern Kentucky the place that you love, a better place for all eastern Kentuckians.

Despite all the riches under ground, the most important riches of the area are above ground: they are the people of the Eastern Kentucky. It is your understanding coupled with your creative thinking that can find the creative solutions to the problems that exist. You can find the opportunity in the problem, open it up, articulate it and bring new things into existence. And by doing so create a new brighter future for all the people of eastern kentucky.

And we've come here , as i've sai d to hear from the people of the region so that we in the federal governemnt can contribute to this progress. But we need to hear from you in order to know the right thing to do. We can't come up with the right answers from Washington, and that's why we're here . To become informed and to bring your insights and ideas back to Washington, so that we in the Congress of the United States will be able to contribute to and support your ideas. So, I want hear from you, now. I want to know how you see things and what you'd like to see done in the region, so that it can reach it's full potential and provide a good life for all the citizens of the region.

RFK: (recognizing a young woman in the audience) Yes.

**QUESTIONER #1:** (She stands). "Senator Kennedy, what do you think about the Viet Nam war?"

RFK: (stage note from Lawrence Baldrige: So the first question she asked was, "Senator Kennedy, what do you think about the Viet Nam war?" And he kinda fell backward 'oh my god' , and then he composes himself and he comes forward a little bit and he said, )

(stage note from Lawrence Baldrige: And then he goes into a pretty long session on it,)

**RFK:** I think, You've heard what I've said about the Viet Nam war, and what I said in Chicago last Thursday. What has become undeniable in the last few weeks , is that our enemy has been able to strike savagely and at will across all of South Vietnam. This attack, the Tet Offensive, has finally shattered the mask of official illusion with which we have concealed our true circumstances, even from ourselves. The Vietcong will probably withdraw from the cities, as they were forced to withdraw from the American Embassy. Thousands of them will be dead. But they will, nevertheless, have demonstrated that no part of or person in South Vietnam, is secure from their attacks.

For years we have been told that the measure of our success and progress in Vietnam was increasing security and control for the population. Now we have seen that none of the population is secure and no area is under sure control.

This has not happened because our men are not brave or effective, because they are. It is because we have misconceived the nature of the war: it is because we have sought to resolve by military might a conflict whose issue depends upon the will and conviction of the South Vietnamese people. It is like sending a lion to halt an epidemic of jungle rot.

You cannot expect people to risk their lives and endure hardship unless they have a stake in their own society. They must have a clear sense of identification with their own government, a belief that they are participating in a cause worth fighting for. Political and economic reform are not simply idealistic slogans or noble goals to be postponed until the fighting is over. We have an ally in name only. We support a government without supporters. Without the efforts of American arms that government would not last a day.

(stage note from Lawrence Baldrige: and while he's giving that, someone, Mr Justice, in the audience stands up, with his fist raised, and says):

**Mr Justice:** ( yelled out) , I know what they ought to do about the Viet Nam war, we ought to bomb them. Let's do like what Truman did, let's bomb them. Drop a bomb and wipe 'em out."

(stage note from Gary Johnson: Gary was very embarrassed. His wife was angry and said they would never invite their neighbor Mr Justice to go with them anywhere again.)

**RFK:** It does not serve the interests of America to fight this war as if moral standards could be subordinated to immediate necessities.

(stage note from Gary Johnson: Mr. Kennedy continued to speak a few minutes -- then -- just laughed out loud. )

**RFK:** (stops talking. Laughs out loud. Then questions audience:)

**RFK:** How many of you think we should keep the war going as it is?

(RFK raises hand ) Raise your hand if you think so.

**RFK:** (facetiously) Any more votes for dropping the bomb?

**RFK:** Do you think we should pull out of Viet Nam <now>?

(RFK raises hand ) Raise your hands .

(RFK takes in the result -- and then continues)

**RFK:** The escalation policy in Vietnam, far from strengthening and consolidating international resistance to aggression, is injuring our country through the world, reducing the faith of other peoples in our wisdom and purpose and weakening the world's resolve to stand together for freedom and peace.

Last week, a Vietcong suspect was turned over to the Chief of the Vietnamese Security Services, who executed him on the spot-- a flat violation of the Geneva Convention on the Rules of War. Of course, the enemy is brutal and cruel, and has done the same thing many times. But we are not fighting the communists in order to become more like them --- we fight to preserve our differences.

The photograph of the execution was on front pages all around the world-- leading our best and oldest friends to ask, more in sorrow than in anger, what has happened to America?

We are told, of course, that the battle for S Vietnam is in reality a struggle for 250 million Asians --- the beginning of a Great Society for all of Asia. But this is pretension. We can and should offer reasonable assistance to Asia; but we cannot build a Great society there if we cannot build one in our own country. We cannot speak extravagantly of a struggle for 250 million Asians, when a struggle for 15 million in one Asian country so strains our forces.

And we are told that the war in Vietnam will settle the future course of Asia. But that is a prayerful wish based on unsound hope, meant only to justify the enormous sacrifices we have already made.

The truth is that the war in Vietnam does not promise the end of all threats to Asia and ultimately to the United States: rather if we proceed in our present course, it promises only years and decades of further draining conflict on the mainland of Asia -- conflict which as our finest military leaders have always warned , could lead us only to national tragedy.

We have another more immediate interest: to protect the lives of our gallant young men, and to conserve American resources. The best way to save our most precious stake in Vietnam -- the lives of our soldiers -- is to stop the enlargement of the war, and the best way to end the casualties is to end the war.

Unable to defeat our enemy or break his will -we must actively seek a peaceful settlement. And we must be willing to foresee a settlement which will give the Vietcong a chance to participate in the political life of the country. Not because we want them to, but because that is the only way in which this struggle can be settled. What we must not do is confuse the prestige staked on a particular policy with the interest of the United States. nor should we be unwilling to take risks for peace when we are willing to risk so many lives in war.

A year ago, when our adversary offered negotiations if only we would halt the bombing of the North, we replied with a demand for his virtual surrender.

When the chance for negotiations comes again, let us not postpone for another year the recognition of what is really possible and necessary to a peaceful settlement.

Our nation must be told the truth about this war, in all its terrible reality, both because it is right-- and because only in this way can any administration rally the public confidence and unity for the shadowed days which lie ahead.

No war has ever demanded more bravery from our people and our government-- not just bravery under fire or the bravery to make sacrifices--- but the bravery to discard the comfort of illusion -- to do away with false hopes and alluring promises. Reality is grim and painful. But it is only a remote echo of the anguish toward which a policy founded on illusion is surely taking us. This is a great nation and a strong people. Any who seek to comfort rather than speak plainly, reassure rather than instruct, promise satisfaction rather than reveal frustration -- they deny that greatness and drain that strength. For today as it was in the beginning, it is truth that makes us free.

(APPLAUSE)

RFK: (Laughs / smiles sheepishly). You know three presidents have created our policy in Vietnam. And when my brother was President, I worked with him, so I am in some part responsible for the terrible course of events there and for

that I am deeply sorry. But, I know that if my brother had lived he would not be for the Viet Nam war. Before he died, he recognized the kind of problems we were getting into and had he lived he would have resisted escalation and the Americanization of the war.

Now, what other questions do you have?

**QUESTIONER #2: Lawrence Baldrige:** Senator Kennedy are you running for president?

**RFK:** "I don't have any answer for that. I really don't". Next question.

**QUESTIONER #3:** How can the people of Eastern Kentucky help bring industry to the area?

First, let me say that there are many things the government can and should do to encourage economic development in the area. They can build infra-structure, roads-- and this is being done. But more can be done. I'm in favor of offering tax incentives for businesses that relocate to rural areas. I believe public and private partnerships, such as the Bedford-Stuyvesant Redevelopment Corporation that I initiated in Brooklyn are the kinds of efforts that are needed. In Brooklyn I worked with community leaders from Bedford Stuyesant and brought them together with leading businessmen and foundations from New York, and together they initiated job training programs and got commitments from businesses. Those who were trained had jobs in their community to step into. So that is the type of thing that can be done and , in my view, should be done.

And another thing that people in the area can do, is exactly what you are doing, and that is getting an education. Without people with education this region is going to continue to suffer. People with education can make a major difference. If you look at California, for example, one reason for the enormous economic growth and development in California is the great investment that the state has made in it's educational system-- at the university, state college and junior college levels. There are great possibilities in Eastern Kentucky. But there have to be people who are going out to fight for Eastern Kentucky. And, the ones that are really going to make the difference are you -- the ones with education.

**QUESTIONER #4: What can be done to end welfare in the region, and replace it with jobs?**

let me say first, that I agree with you entirely, welfare is no answer to the problems of eastern Kentucky, What is needed is jobs. And as I just said, I think,



the leadership here, in the state can work toward creating public and private partnerships that will bring jobs to the region. And again, the people who are going to be able to envision, advocate and create these institutions are you. You are the people with the education and the commitment, the courage and the spirit to make these concepts realities. You must use your creativity to bring about a better future.

But, let me say this, both Carl Perkins and I believe that the government should be the employer of last resort. And that if there not enough good jobs generated by the private sector for the region, then the government should create those jobs. There are many important public works projects that would benefit the region enormously: the construction of roads, bridges, schools, housing, water treatment plants and sewage systems, to name a few. And Congressman Perkins and I have introduced legislation in the congress that would fund these public works, providing job training and employment at the end of the training, to create projects that would benefit the region and that would encourage the creation of private sector jobs as well. I believe it is the responsibility of the government to generate productive work for its citizens, and in so doing, to generate hope.

**QUESTIONER #5:** Would you support an the enactment of a severance tax on coal ?

(Stage note from Mtn Eagle:In attendance at the meeting was Whitesburg attorney and author Harry Caudill who suggested such a tax before a special committee in Washington several months ago.)

RFK: " I would support and vote for extraction tax on minerals, because, as I said earlier, absentee ownership groups are the ones that are really getting the profits while you're losing your wealth. I would support a severance tax in Congress. Senator Metcalf, of Montana, already has introduced a severance tax bill in the congress. This bill will return \$2.5 million a year to Kentucky if it is enacted into law, and I support these efforts and I will work for it's enactment.

Not only do the profits from the mining leave the state, generating vast profits for corporations in other areas of the country, but the extraction is done with enormous machines and few workers. The result is that the wealth leaves the area, the land is despoiled and the people are left jobless, demoralized and without trust in their government and our institutions. I think that that situation is intolerable. Hope cannot be restored, unless and until the government honestly supports the resurrection of hope. Then and only then can people, through their own efforts generate for themselves, an improved future. But, until the unfairness of the situation is recognized and rectified, this cannot happen. That is why the passage of the severance tax is so important and why once the money is returned to the state, it should go to the coal counties.

**Lawrence Baldrige QU# 2:** “Don’t you think, in your travels in Latin America, that there’s a lot of third world elements in eastern Kentucky, you know we’re a kind of colonial economy, based on one thing - coal? “

**RFK:** “yes”.

**Lawrence Baldrige QU# 3:** Mr Kennedy, being so wealthy, from such a wealthy family as you are, why is it you’ve come to such a poor area of America? What was your motivation for coming?

**RFK:** (stage note from L. Baldrige: And when I asked him that question, he was silent first. He kinda stuttered and then said,)

“ I don’t know.... I don’t know.”

( But what he was doing, he was refusing to take any credit for something that was really part of his inner motivation. He was really coming because , he loved people who had problems in this world. I felt it was religious. I felt it was based on his faith.)

**QUESTIONER # 6: What can be done to encourage others to stay, with us, to teach and work with our own people?**

Your commitment to stay in the mountains and serve demonstrates your spirit and courage. And it demonstrates the contribution of Alice Lloyd to the area and how great that contribution is. Again, if I can perhaps, end this session, as I began it--- by acknowledging Carl D. Perkins and what he’s accomplished, who is truly a great example of the service one educated man can give to Appalachia-or any region for that matter.

Carl D., President Hayes and all of you, thanks so much for questions, thoughts and ideas. I’m happy to have been able to share them.