



President Lyndon Johnson with political strategist Larry O'Brien and...

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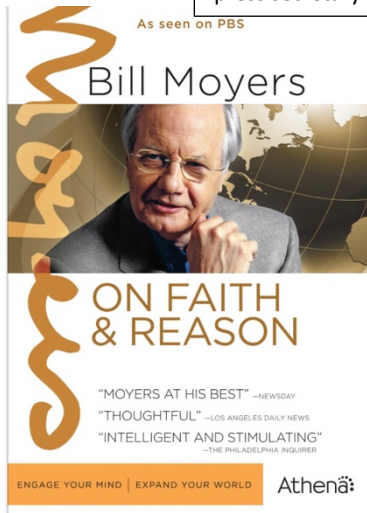
press secretary Bill Moyers

Paul Krugman wonders why rural whites “support politicians who tell them lies they want to hear.” The answer is obvious: Truth is no match for lies when one’s tribal identity as a white person is felt to be under attack.

Lyndon Johnson knew this sad fact back in 1960, [telling his aide](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/23/opinion/rural-rage.html) Bill Moyers: “If you can convince the lowest white man he’s better than the best colored man, he won’t notice you’re picking his pocket. Hell, give him somebody to look down on, and he’ll empty his pockets for you.” Bryan L. Tucker, Boston. <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/23/opinion/rural-rage.html>



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Bill Moyers had a polished Southern manner of delivery that matched his erudition and decency, eloquence and elegance, effortless. There was nothing “Southern” about Bill Moyers to not like; Lyndon Johnson was the opposite of him, but also an enigma, doing “progressive” things one would not expect from a charismatic, ruthless Texas politician ever ready to be crude and bully. Maybe this was how he was able to accomplish them. Bill Moyers and LBJ came from opposite directions to meet in a middle ground to somehow work together for, mostly, good. TJB

Hyperbole was to Lyndon Johnson what oxygen is to life. Bill Moyers



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