

Bentsen to Oppose Ralph Yarborough In Senate Race

AUSTIN (AP)—Former Congressman Lloyd M. Bentsen Jr., got into the Senate race today saying he would make Sen. Ralph Yarborough's stand on the Vietnam War a major issue of the campaign.

"I do not believe Sen. Yarborough is contributing to a solution for this war, and I do not believe his actions contribute to the best interests of this nation," Bentsen said. "In seeking the Democratic nomination to the Senate, I offer the people of Texas an alternative."

Bentsen, 48, a wealthy Houston businessman, is the first Democrat to announce formally for the Senate seat held by Yarborough since 1957.

Yarborough held an Austin news conference last week and made it plain he planned to seek re-election but did not formally announce.

Rep. George Bush, Houston Republican, has called a news conference for Jan 13 to announce his campaign plans. He says he is "99 per cent sure" of making the Senate race.

Robert Morris, president of the University of Plano, said in October he would be a Republican candidate.

After the Austin news conference, Bentsen accompanied by his wife, a former national Democratic committeewoman, began a 19-city, three-day tour with other appearances Tuesday in Dallas,

Fort Worth, Odessa, San Angelo, Abilene, Wichita Falls, Lubbock and Amarillo. Thursday he will be in Beaumont, Port Arthur, Lufkin, Tyler, Longview and Texarkana.

"My name is not a household word in Texas but I certainly expect to do something about that," Bentsen told reporters.

Bentsen said he supported President Nixon's program to end the war in Vietnam, including gradual troop withdrawal, improving the South Vietnamese army, limiting U. S. offensive operations, and strong effort to convince Hanoi that peace is the U. S. objective.

Bentsen said Yarborough now calls the Vietnam War "legally

and morally unjustified . . . yet he consistently supported President Johnson policies."

"If Mr. Yarborough wants to join Eugene McCarthy, George McGovern, Edward Kennedy and the other Senate doves, that is his privilege but he ought to at least be honest about it," Bentsen said.

Bentsen evaded reporters' questions about his reported considerable wealth. "All we would do is satisfy curiosity by answering that question," he said when asked if he was a millionaire.

"The Senate is in need of a new kind of leadership," Bentsen said. "Texas in particular no longer receives in the Senate the kind of respect it deserves . . .

and has lost much of the political influence it held at one time."

Bentsen charged that Yarborough, who has been senator 12 years, has been unable to achieve or furnish for Texas or the nation the effective leadership demanded by the position of Senator from Texas.

He charged that Yarborough had been a divisive influence in the Senate, "pitting group against group," and that Yarborough had also divided the Democratic party in Texas. He said Yarborough used many issues that affect all segments of the population for the purpose of dividing the people by labeling such issues as "conservative" or "liberal" instead of working toward a solution.

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