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SPEECH BY REPRESENTATIVE GERAID R. FORD, JR. AT ANNUAL
LINCOLN DAY DINNER, FIFTEENTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT,
DETROIT, MICHIGAN, FEBRUARY 14, 1950.

Pull yourself together
MR. TOASTMASTER, HONORED AND DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I consider it a real privilege to be with you on this occasion and sincerely hope that this meeting is but the take-off for success and victory for our Party in this District and the State of Michigan in 1950.

We meet to remember a common man who became great. He was a common man with common attributes, raised to the highest power and implemented by character and self-education.

As we meet in this annual fellowship to pay tribute to Abraham Lincoln the same considerations arise which have addressed themselves to every generation since his passing.

What manner of man was he that so eminent an historian as H. G. Wells should catalogue him as one of the six greatest characters of all mankind and place him beside Christ, Confucius and Buddha?

Why should we continue to return to his wisdom and inspiration for guidance after the elapse of four score and five years since his passing?

What was the grand design of his life which somehow enthralls each generation and enhances his place in history?

If we could experience the miracle of looking through his eyes and from his heart, what course would we as a nation pursue both at home and abroad?

He was a common man whose words and deeds made such lasting impression upon mankind that he belongs not to one nation or generation but to all nations and all generations and is worthy of our deepest devotion.

We in the Republican Party have a special debt of gratitude to Abraham Lincoln for it was Abraham Lincoln's sincere belief and unfailing devotion to

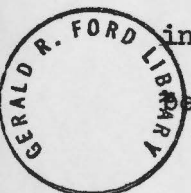


a great principle which brought into being a new political party pledged to make all men free and equal. Lincoln himself led the nation in establishing complete freedom from the bonds of slavery just as the Republican Party today is now dedicated to keeping the people free from the bondage of Government. The nation was saved from ruin in Lincoln's day by his firm convictions that his principle was right and it was his strength of character, patriotism and tolerance which led the way in preserving the Republic.

We face the same or similar obligation today, the obligation to save, protect and better our nation and the world. This nation was founded on the concept of constitutional freedom and order, liberty under law. These are the most practical and most successful principles ever devised by the plan of man for the welfare of the nation. Just as Lincoln sought to protect and re-establish these principles, the challenge is before us today to follow his aims and achieve his goals to keep American wholly free and remove the menace which would eventually make our people serfs to the state.

Lincoln's entire thinking in times of crisis was for the good of the people as a whole. He possessed no hatred, no desire for violence, nor any trace of retaliation. He sought only to preserve the Union, establish complete freedom, and make sure that a free American moved on for the benefits of generations to follow.

Lincoln's interest in the whole question of freedom was not limited merely to striking the shackles from the Negro. Repeatedly he sounded the principle of freedom and individual liberty in all affairs of the nation, pointing out that a free society is a just, generous and prosperous system which clears the way for all men to improve their lot. At the same time he warned against inroads in the political power of freedom. On this he said: "Let them beware of surrendering a political lot which they already possess and which



if surrendered will surely be used to close the door of advancement against such as they and to fix new disabilities and burdens upon them till all the liberty shall be lost."

This was the grand design of his life, a pattern of freedom in all things for all men.

There are some who say that today is a new age, that the people in Lincoln's time did not face the issues of human welfare and economic stability before us today. History, however, teaches that every generation has to face the same issues between the powers of possessive government and the rights and privileges of free men.

The Republican Party is still the Party of freedom. We will not ^{slyly} bring into being the Trojan horse of collectivism which is being offered to the American people by the present Democratic Administration. Our stand on the great principle of liberty and opportunity has never fallen. Today the Republican Party is the one single means of carrying on the battle for the preservation of fundamentals which established our nation and made it the envy of people throughout the world. *I hope + trust that we will not shirk our duty in this hour? could.*

In the months following one of the blackest Tuesdays in the history of this country, namely November 2, 1948, it was my feeling, as much as I hated to admit the fact, that the United States was on the brink of disaster, with little or no hope of recovery. It seemed to me that the people of our nation had lost a golden opportunity on November 2, 1948 to snatch from the hands of selfish minority groups the controls of our government ^{through miserable} indifference and a ^{shameful} failure to undertake our responsibilities as citizens we fumbled the ball on that infamous day.

In the days, weeks and months following the election in 1948 ^{some} respective consciences were pricked a bit by our gross negligence. We knew as citizens and as members of a great political Party that we had been remiss in our



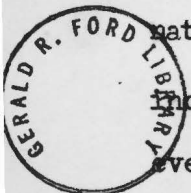
responsibilities. The shock of defeat was such a blow many thought no recovery was possible. This attitude was understandable if not desirable.

The long uphill road and battle began in the Congress early in 1949. Through near historic efforts Republican members of the Congress partially averted further disaster. We licked in practically every instance "hand-out state" programs of the Administration. This struggle carried out by your members of Congress became infectious and in recent months a new ^{feeling of hope} ~~opportunity~~ among Republicans has permeated our nation. In addition, and this is most important, this new ^{enthusiasm} ~~attack~~ has seemingly taken hold of the imagination of that great group of citizens who consider themselves independent voters.

A year ago Republican rallies and dinners were performa performances. We went through the usual routine with little ^{vim vigor} ~~enthusiasm~~ or hope for future successes. Today, I am glad to report to you that Republican gatherings are well attended by citizens of all walks of life, of all ages, who believe they have a ^{mighty} mission and a crusade.

Let me give you several examples. On January 21st in the City of Detroit, the Republican Party had the largest and most enthusiastic G.O.P. Dinner ever held in the State of Michigan. ^{As you well know} We did not delve on our dismal past performances but rather spoke of our future achievements. I can ^{a few well timed + appropos blows were aimed at our Democratic opponents.} assure you that every Republican in the State of Michigan who attended that meeting, and even those who were unfortunately turned away for lack of facilities, and there were many, believe that our mission can be accomplished in the crucial months ahead.

On Monday night, February 6th, Republican women of the District of Columbia put on the most successful political rally in the annals of the nation's Capitol. The cost of the function, a mere \$2.20, and that price included a grass roots dinner, excellent speeches by our leaders, and an evening of outstanding entertainment.



Further, I would like to give you still another example of a reborn enthusiasm in the ranks of our Party. In my home town, Grand Rapids, we are having this year the largest Republican Lincoln Day Dinner in the history of the community. A year ago at our Lincoln Day Dinner we had difficulty in corraling 350 for the occasion. In 1950, one week in advance of the Dinner, 1600 dinner tickets have been sold, and it is estimated that ^{an additional} 2,000 or more citizens will attend the festivities as guests of the Committee ^{with seats in the balcony to hear our speaker, the former governor of Minnesota, Harold Stassen.}

It is the same story all over the country, and needless to say I am certain that you who are here this evening have a similar attitude toward our mutual problems as best illustrated by the enthusiasm and determination I see among you.

As a young man, ^{or at least relatively so} I am one of those who became of voting age after the New Deal came into power, and as a result have had no opportunity to point to the White House and say "A ^{a man} Republican who believes in our American way of life now occupies the highest and most respected office in the world." All of my contemporaries are in the same category and as a result have never had the opportunity to appraise the difference between sound administration and maladministration. Because there has been ^{concrete} no ^{to} opportunity contrast good and evil, it has taken a longer time than normally would be necessary for the younger generation to see that our future success depends upon a change in authority in the White House and in the Congress.

It is now becoming apparent, however, that some of our leaders in the younger generations are realizing and ^{understanding} ~~appraising~~ the gravity of the situation.

Instead of ^{swallowing} ~~being sold~~ a false bill of goods by the Administration's propagandists we are presently seeing ^{arise} a rebirth of young GOPism on our college campuses and in our communities. In the Middle West, for example, a determined group of young Republicans have taken the time and effort to present a thoughtful platform



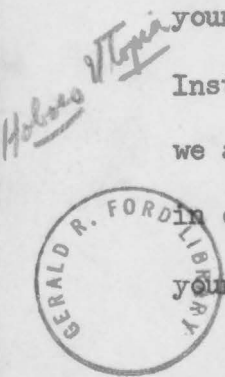
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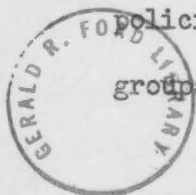


entitled "The Opportunity State". At the same time, and working independently, another group of Young Republicans in New York State has prepared ^{what} ~~that~~ they call "A Blueprint for a Better America". I submit to you that these two young groups, and there may be many more with which I am not acquainted, have started a grass roots movement to rekindle the ^{of Americanism} fires in the hearts and minds of our ^{youth.} ~~young people.~~ I recommend most highly that you aid and abet any and all new movements of this sort for both the Party and the nation need such ^{in the long pull ahead} help. Frankly and in all sincerity, some of the most constructive and concrete thinking I have seen among Republicans has been evidenced by the work of the young GOPers in New York and on the campus in Ann Arbor, Michigan. No one here tonight probably agrees in toto with every provision in the Michigan platform or the New York Blueprint, but under no circumstances should we destroy ^{such} ~~their~~ initiative by being disdainful of their determination to present a real platform to those of their own generation.

How can we account for the widespread enthusiasm that is now rampant among us as Republicans and also among that vast group of individuals who call themselves independent voters. I believe it is an appreciation that the Republican Party's point of view is sound ^{+ the one hope for the preservation of the Republic} and desirable. The Republican Party does not necessarily disagree with some of the Democrats in the goals we seek to achieve. The basic difference is in the means by which a better standard of living may be obtained for all of us. This difference is reflected in the completely dissimilar political and social philosophies prevailing within each Party. The choice between these two philosophies lies with the American people. It is an alternative between self-help and the "hand-out".

The leaders of the present Democratic Party pursue relentlessly their policies of unlimited Federal spending for the sole purpose of appeasing pressure groups which command large blocks of votes. The Administration's program is not one

*Best made
some suggestions
G.O.P. should
have Democrats
belly flop*



of prudently conceived assistance to the individual in need but is rather a program of creating a reliance upon government from the cradle to the grave. The inevitable result has been the slow but never-ending destruction of self-reliance and individual incentive. By demagoguing appeals to the something-for-nothing instinct, the Democrats in the past have, and will in the future endeavor to obtain widespread support of their program. We in the Republican Party firmly believe that the American people are self-reliant and independence-loving citizens, and that they, if the facts were known to them, would resent being classified as the objects of permanent charity. Most Americans prefer to rely primarily upon their own industry, ability and decision to provide not only the necessities of life but also the luxuries of living rather than to rely upon the uncertain benevolence of Government.

Many citizens rightfully ask the question, What has happened to the American people that they should allow the United States to reach a point ^{from} ~~to~~ which there may be no recovery. It is admitted we have gradually, traveled ^{to some extent} the path of regimentation and government control in a piecemeal but nevertheless unchanging course. I could ^{recollect} ~~recount~~ for you some of the legislation that has been enacted during the past 18 years that would prove my point. I think it best, however, to call to your attention some of the specific proposals of the present Democratic Administration that lie ahead for in them the real danger is most evident. The fundamental answer to the success or failure of the Republican Party depends upon our making aware to the American people the specific faults and failings of our Democratic friends *and the programs they espouse.*

We Republicans have been accused of "me-tooism". I deplore the use of the term for a number of reasons, but principally because it does not define our Party's program. As I said previously, we may have the same objectives and goals as Democrats but we have a far different approach or method of seeking ^{the} solutions.



or at least most of us

close

For example, on the issue of foreign affairs, we have no quarrel with the ~~philosophy~~ ^{policy} of bipartisanship. In these crucial times we must be unanimous in our approach as to the ways and means of defeating Communism and totalitarianism. It is important, however, in carrying out the principle of bipartisanship that the executive and legislative branches of the Federal Government, ^{both Democrats & Republicans} work in partnership. The Administration allegedly believes in a bipartisan foreign policy but their record in the past few years is to the contrary. It is unfortunate but true that our foreign policy in many instances has been decided by the Administration in the Executive branch without any consultation with or agreement to by the members of the Legislative branch. The Republicans are opposed to this kind of bipartisanship. ^{if we as members of the minority party are to have a part of the burden for any errors or omissions, we must have} ~~and I know that we will fight to the end for our principle in this regard.~~ ^{something to say about the decisions.}

Further, the Republicans are opposed to any secret commitments such as those entered into at Yalta. I believe it was President Wilson ^{wisely} ~~who~~ ^{the U.S.} believed in open covenants openly arrived at. That great leader of the old Democratic Party well expressed the proper attitude and one which we as Republicans should follow in the years ahead. Many of our present troubles on the foreign scene result very definitely from ^{various} secret commitments ^{where Republicans had no voice in the negotiations.} ~~which are not the result of true bipartisanship.~~ If the Democratic Administration ~~does not want to take us into a full partnership, then we should go forward on our own with what amounts to a solid and firm foreign policy program.~~

On the issue of foreign aid, most Republicans believe in a sound program that aims at ^{the} economic rehabilitation of our Allies throughout the world in order that we can ^{eventually and peacefully} contain and ~~eventually~~ destroy Communism. This does not, however, preclude us from vehemently attacking ^{some specific policies or} the administration of our economic assistance programs when and where such programs break down and are not accomplishing the desired result.

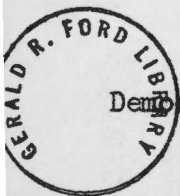
^{firmly} I believe the Republican Party has the proper approach to a policy of world trade. We favor an extension and expansion of trade throughout the world



but we rightfully question the soundness or advisability of such a program where it will imperil the living standards of our own people. The United States should not allow the flooding of our markets with goods produced by cheap labor to the inevitable detriment of our national security and the economic status of our individual workers. It is regrettable but true that the Administration would not permit the inclusion of minimum requirements in the Reciprocal Trade Extension Act that was approved by the Congress in 1949. The Reciprocal Trade program would not have been imperiled by the inclusion of the "peril point" and "escape clause" provisions, and at the same time the adoption of those specific ^{protective} provisions would have given some ^{basic cover} ~~protection~~ to our national security and the economic status of our individual workers.

While on the issue of foreign policy I would like to mention a word or two about the Alger Hiss ^{affair} ~~matter~~. In recent weeks it has been vividly called to our attention that a former responsible official in the State Department has ^{implicitly if not directly} been guilty of treasonous conduct. Furthermore our present Secretary of State, well knowing that a fair and equitable trial had been granted to Mr. Hiss, refused to admit or acknowledge the reprehensible conduct of a former associate and friend. Loyalty and compassion are commendable personal qualities, but Mr. Acheson's words pertaining to Mr. Hiss do little credit to a man occupying such a high official position. Secretary Acheson has impaired his usefulness as a Government official by his comments concerning the activities of a man who has been convicted of perjury and by indirection convicted of betraying his country. Treason is not a pardonable offense in the eyes of the American people. Unless the Secretary has the desire to retract his comments regarding Mr. Hiss, Mr. Acheson should resign. In this time of crisis there is no room for drooling sentimentality.

On domestic affairs ^{all along the line} the issue is clearly drawn between Republicans and Democrats. The fiscal situation in this country should be of prime importance



to all of us regardless of Party, but unfortunately there is little concern exhibited by the President for the balancing of the budget and the reduction of the tremendous Federal debt. It is indeed a sham on the American people that at this time, one of relative prosperity, this nation is faced with pending bankruptcy. Canada, our neighbor to the north, has led the way and made a phenomenal record in reducing taxes and balancing the budget. To the contrary, the present Administration's record is one of ^{a request for} increased taxes, increased annual deficits, and mounting national indebtedness. In the last 20 years in only 2 years has there been a balancing of our expenditures and receipts. In both years the Republican 80th Congress was in control. In all other years the Democratic Administration had full authority. I respectfully submit, there can be no ^{claim} ~~intimation~~ that there is me-tooism on the issue of fiscal soundness.

The Republican Party stands four square with the agricultural programs of the two great farm organizations of the country, namely the National Grange and the American Farm Bureau. Our Party ^{along with the Grange & Farm Bureau} condemns fightfully the Brannan Plan

which aims at the nationalization of agriculture. The G.O.P. advocates a fair price for the farmers' products at the market place by a system of price supports only when the need is apparent, and with emphasis on the fundamental concepts of free enterprise. The 80th Congress enacted a good long-range agricultural program under the name of the Hope-Aiken Act. Our Democratic brethren slammed through in the closing hours of the 81st Congress a hodgepodge law

on this subject which is a credit to no one. *The present potato famine is the direct result of the Administration's program & maladministration by the Sec. of Agriculture.*

We in the Republican Party need have no apology for the basic philosophy ^{written} in the Labor Management Relations Act of 1947, better known as the Taft-Hartley Act. As a Party, we oppose the re-enactment of the Wagner Act with the innocuous amendments sought and desired by the Administration. No one denies

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Wallace -
Reaction -
New Deal -
Will Rogers -
Disinquinety

Low milk story -
Sustained



that the Taft-Hartley Act can be amended to eliminate certain inequities. I can assure you from personal experience during the first session of the 81st Congress that a sincere attempt was made by the Republicans and a few of the Democrats to amend the Taft-Hartley Act where proven inequities existed. Members of the Democratic Party in the Congress with a seeming fiendish allegiance to the Wagner Act refused in every instance to cooperate in any effort to change the existing law for the better balancing of the rights of labor and management.

No one denies that this country has room for improvement in expanding our nation's health services. The present Democratic Administration contends our health problems must be attacked and solved by the President's prepaid compulsory health insurance program. The Administration is apparently anxious and willing to embark upon a duplication of the socialized medicine program inaugurated by the labor socialist government in England. We in the Republican Party admit the need of improvement but deny most emphatically the necessity of adopting an experiment which has failed so miserably in Great Britain. Our voluntary health insurance programs in combination with Federal assistance to states seems to be a sound approach to the problem. The Federal government can and should assist the various states and communities so that expanded medical care will be available to those unable to afford voluntary health insurance. In addition, an all-out effort should be made to expand and strengthen voluntary nonprofit health insurance programs. The Republican Party has and will work with those American people who are interested in preventing President Truman's socialized medicine program from becoming law. It will be a bitter fight in the political elections in 1950 and 1952. The chips are down and those who do not believe in regimentation of our nation's health should flock to the Republican banner.



I could go on further giving you good examples of where there is a divergence of viewpoint between Republicanism and Democratic policies. I ~~only~~ assure you that in ^{only a} few instances are there identical approaches. We are not a "Me-Too" Party", if the American people will only take the time and trouble to understand the facts of the situation *and if we as leaders in the Party will consider it our duty & obligation to disseminate the necessary information.*

In closing, let me say that we as citizens of this country have a great obligation and a tremendous responsibility. When you as citizens are called upon to give of your time and money, remember that whatever you give whether it be time or money, or both, you are making a sound investment in good government by carrying the torch for the Republican Party. We approach the second half of the Twentieth century with an abiding faith in the ability of our Party and our people to meet and conquer each new problem as it arises. I am confident that our common goals and ideals can be achieved best under the principles originally espoused by Abraham Lincoln and ever since carried by the Republican Party.

*My thoughts
on sands of
time.*

