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Speech by Rep. Gerald R. Ford

Amen Corner, Pittsburgh April 10, 1965

FOR RELEASE ON DELIVERY
at 8 P.M. EST., April 10, 1965

There is absolutely no ~~parallel~~ parallel between acceptance as a ~~member~~ member of Amen Corner and an obscure political happening in Washington not so long ago.

I have learned that a person never knows when, if, or how, he is to become a member until one day he is given a hearty pat on the back and told he is an "Amener." I am told there are no rules to follow or test to pass.

~~.....~~
Earlier this year on Capitol Hill I was given less than a hearty political pat on the back in ~~being~~ ^{being} elected Minority Leader of the House by a landslide vote---the count was 73 to 67.

Unlike qualifications for becoming a member of Amen Corner, there was a test for election as Minority Leader. The way I passed it has been described as a triumph. Others say I have a shaky mandate.

Whatever name is tagged on my smashing political victory, it shows that



all you need is an allegation of virtue, a moderate amount of hard work and lots of luck.

~~That~~ An Amener ~~is~~ never learns why he was elected to membership.

[H] I have often questioned these past busy weeks why 73 members of the House voted me to a position of leadership. I can think of many reasons why the 67 others voted "no".

In any event, the skyrocketing victory---or the nervous triumph--- I achieved in January, and the unbroken record of successes since then, have encouraged me to appear here tonight as an authority----on the problems of the oppressed minorities.

Those of you who are sports fans may know that football is my first love. I am only a politician because of job security!

But since Michigan---my alma mater---beat Oregon State in the Rose Bowl by 27 points, and, three days later Ford walloped his opponent by only 6 points, perhaps I chose the wrong profession!

I have often wondered where I would now be if I had accepted Curly Lambeau's offer in 1934 to play pro ball with the Green Bay Packers----- perhaps on the Supreme Court bench.

It's true that the new House Republican leadership hasn't won any spectacular legislative successes. This has been appropriately noted by some members of the Nation's press.

But, we never campaigned on a platform ~~pledging to double~~
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 our numbers and slice the ~~opposition~~ in half before November 1966 by
 some strange ~~sleight~~ of hand or magic.

The numbers on each side of the aisle in the House have remained the same since November third---- 140 Republicans to 294 Democrats. The odds are rough. The balance is lop-sided. But, to coin a phrase---with a little different twist--- "we shall overcome."

Before ~~tipping you off~~
 tipping you off on some of our strategy to overcome king-sized obstacles, I think you should know that what I am about to tell you may touch off one of those raging controversies that are part and parcel of Amen Corner's history.

The ~~debate~~
 debate may reach the temperature of a space capsule's nose cone, but to quote from the Genesis of Amen Corner, I hope there will be "the same happy, smiling faces and the same warmth of handclaps all around, that prevailed before the last ~~argument~~ argument."

To give you a general idea of the overwhelming odds facing us, I start first with the White House with all its troops who try to spoon-feed the press and try very hard to clobber us.

The President has virtually unlimited resources for working his will--- a veritable army of experts, authorities, researchers, propagandists and the like.

He is also king pin of the branch of government that employes 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ million civilians and controls the destiny of 2 million 600 hundred thousand military personnel. These two groups have an annual payroll totalling \$28 billion.....and together they will spend more than 127 billion tax dollars in fiscal 1966.-----I wish R^epublicans had this kind of campaign fund!

This awesome power and the vast apparatus, if used improperly, could mean the withering away and eventually the death of the two-party system.

We are also faced with political judo and arm-twisting from the White House with ^{its} iron-fisted ~~control that stretches up~~ control that stretches up P^ennsylvania Avenue to Capitol Hill.



Perhaps one of the best examples of present Presidential armlock on ^{some} Democratic members of the House was ~~an~~ ^{a quick} ~~switch~~ switch in votes on ~~the~~ sending surplus food to Col. Nasser of the United Arab Republic.

On the first roll call of the 89th Congress, 76 Democrats joined Republicans in the House by voting with us to restrict the amount of public money to be involved in the food program.

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This brute-force power and ^{dominance of} ~~the~~ a political party and its leader ~~in the industrial countries of the world~~ ridicules the legislative process.

The way things are going ^{on the Democratic side,} the idea that a Congressman is elected to represent the people and to serve the Nation is becoming a will-o-the-wisp myth.

Certainly it is true that there is nothing constitutionally ordained about running our government through two great political parties.

But, almost from the start our Nation made such a choice.

It was a wise ~~decision~~ decision. We avoided the chaos of a multi-party system. We avoided the loss of freedom of the single-party system. And, we built into government an additional set of checks and balances, which *are* getting out of kilter.

The strength of a second political party is needed to provide the electorate with legislative alternatives and a remarkably high level of honesty and frankness.

How do we overcome the present topsy-turvey imbalance of power in Congress?

One place to start is with the Committees on Government Operations of the House and Senate, which ~~should have broad investigating authority.~~ have broad investigating authority.

~~These committees should be under control of the minority party~~
These committees should be under control of the minority party to make our Federal government function better and to help all Americans *learn* the facts.

Here would be a genuine vehicle to assure that the voice of the minority would be heard, ~~and~~ The majority would be constantly on notice that its actions, or inactions, were subject to effective, critical review.

And, the public would know that any cover-up or wrongdoing would be improbable, if not ~~improbable~~, impossible.

It is safe to speculate that with such a set-up there would be more public confidence that the real Bobby Baker story had been told.

It has been said that an optimist is one who tells you to cheer up when things are going his way. Well, despite the 2 to 1 majority against us and the clobbering we have been taking, ~~some people~~ ~~there is no point in~~ there is no point in Republicans saying "what's the use?" That's no answer for the American people or ourselves.

Fortunately, there is a constructive ferment right now in the Republican Party. We are beginning to gain ground, not lose it.

We have already made some reorganization of our internal machinery in the House.

The Research and Planning Committee under Charlie Goodell of New York is working on long-range policy. We are creating special task forces on major substantive issues in such rapid succession that one observer said we are setting up "an anti-poverty program for Republican intellectuals."



John Rhodes of Arizona, with a beefed-up staff, is Policy Committee chairman. This ~~group~~ ^{reorganized} group ~~deals~~ deals with current, day-to-day, legislative problems.

Armed with legislative ammunition supplied by both these groups, we will win on some issues in this Congress. Republicans will build a record for a substantially stronger representation after November 8, 1966.

Republican strategy in the House will be diversified. We'll be grateful for any Democratic support, North or South, East or West. To compete with the Administration, we are offering:

1. Opposition to Administration's aims and methods when we think both are wrong; but never obstructionism just for its own sake.
2. Constructive alternatives to Administration schemes when we feel they are tackling the right problems, at home or abroad, in the wrong way.
3. Workable programs, developed through our task forces, to meet the many problems the Administration is ignoring or neglecting.

--and I add that we refuse to concede Democrats have a monopoly on ideas for solving domestic and foreign difficulties.

more



4. Wholehearted support for the President when we think he is right. Viet Nam policy in the past few weeks is the prime example of this attitude. More and more Republicans staunchly backed the President while more and more Democrats were riding side-saddle, ~~side-saddle~~ changing their tune to favor immediate negotiation and tail-between-our-legs withdrawal all the way back to Pearl Harbor.

On the domestic scene, we recall that the Congress has enacted three laws on Civil Rights since 1957. Progress has been made in the South because there is a growing public conscience and sense of justice.

Yet, even in 1964 far too many eligible Negroes of voting age were not registered to vote in eleven Southern states. For some part of the 2,800,000 who are unregistered, the franchise is ~~unattainable~~ ^{unattainable} regardless of their qualifications. On some islands of resistance, the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution is still being flouted.

~~Republicans,~~ ~~Republicans,~~ insisting this violation of constitutional rights must end prior to the 1966 election, are doing something about the deplorable situation.

We have ~~refused~~ ^{refused} to rubber stamp an Administration proposal that came to Capitol Hill on the heels of a dramatic appearance by the President before a Joint Session of Congress.

Ignoring the President's impassioned plea, that also included a direct finger-pointing order to adopt his law, we introduced voting rights legislation this week as an alternative to the Administration's wishy-washy, and possibly illegal, bill.

The Republican bill does not penalize the innocent states and localities where discrimination is virtually non-existent. The Administration's controversial bill would shackle such areas as Alaska and parts of Maine where discrimination in voting is known not to exist.

Our bill applies wherever discrimination is a festering public sore, quickly in need of cure. The Administration ~~with~~ the bill that was shot to the Capitol from the White House would apply only to a limited number of states which have literacy and other tests. And by the way, it has been widely noted that Texas--for some reason or another--is excluded from the Administration's proposal.

The Republican bill would abolish unreasonable ~~standards~~ standards for registration and voting without interfering with the reasonable requirements established by the states. The Administration's bill would not.

Comprehensive in scope, the Republican proposal calls for speedy action. The Administration's version has all the earmarks of creating a legal tangle ~~resembling~~ ^{resembling} ~~resembling~~ ^{panel} a ~~pan~~ of worms and the possible establishment of another federal bureaucracy loaded with ~~hand-out~~ ^{thousands of} hand-out patronage jobs.

Finally, our bill offers a constitutional, comprehensive, effective remedy for the evil of disenfranchisement of any citizen because of race or color.

In drafting a voting rights bill, or other ~~constructive~~ ^{constructive} alternatives, Republicans are fulfilling our duty to the 43 percent of the American electorate who put us in office, and to the people of our Nation who face growing, ~~rising~~ ^{rising} smothering Federal domination and erosion of their liberties...unless an articulate, hard-working opposition functions effectively.

The overall blueprint for Republican legislative action is founded on the hard truth that our party to win in 1966 must earn and regain the



respect of many millions of voters.

We cannot make a strong comeback by sitting on the sidelines waiting for an international or domestic catastrophe to produce a call for a change of leadership.

It is our profound conviction that something more than talk of unity and consensus is demanded by the challenges of our times.

We subscribe to the observation of the late Senator Robert A. Taft in 1951 that "if you permit appeals to unity to bring an end to ~~unity~~ criticism, we endanger not only the constitutional liberties of our country, but even its future existence."

We raise the question of whether it is enough in these days of danger and turmoil for our President to act as a consensus politician instead of a statesman who leads.

Waiting for a consensus can...and often does...~~mean~~^{mean} ignoring the little problems until they become big ones.

It can, and does, mean inaction until ~~the flamboyant~~ flamboyant, irresponsible riots spread across our land, or ~~the~~ Communist aggressors plunder, pillage and kill in Southeast Asia.

It was only after sit-downs and lie-downs in the White House, in the Justice Department Building in Washington, across Pennsylvania Avenue, and many other places that the President came forth with a dramatic gesture he said was aimed at insuring voting rights.

As recently as January, the President was referring with satisfaction--- according to some well-known columnists with access to the rose garden outside White House offices----to our policy in South Viet Nam as one of "creative inaction," which may be the understatement of the century.

To me, this is a fantastic concept---better described, perhaps, as "dynamic paralysis."

Yet this attitude was reflected in the State of the Union Message, which suggested that the international scene was so improved that we could all but forget it in favor of domestic affairs.

We believe in keeping the ball on the opponent's goal line--- not backpedaling to our 20-yard line before starting the next play, especially when such international political quarterbacks as Nasser and Sukarno thumb their noses at us with seeming impunity *and tell us to go jump in the lake.*



When the Administration's foreign policy is firm and decisive on the side of freedom and in the national interest, the President can count on Republican support. At any time he wavers from this position, we will oppose him.

If ever there was a time for a broad-gauged revival of genuine bi-partisanship in foreign policy in the spirit of the late Senator Arthur Vandenberg, it is right now.

Senator Vandenberg, who was my fellow townsman in Michigan, was largely responsible for my getting into politics. ~~His thoughtful~~

His thoughtful concept of the Nation's best interests in foreign policy matters served the American people well. It is a philosophy which I would be honored to help expand beyond current policy in troubled South Viet Nam and elsewhere in the world where the Communist threat not only grows, but nears the explosion point.

Foreign policy in the Vandenberg pattern means genuine ~~consultation~~ consultation across political party lines ~~incorporating~~not just using the Republicans for deliberate after-thought window-dressing.



Neither does it mean a mere summons to the White House in a moment of crisis, and then calling in the press corps to announce Republican endorsement of an Administration policy already determined.

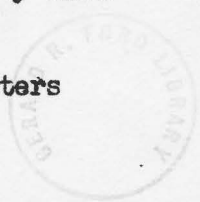
Nor does it mean foreclosure of Republican criticism of foreign policy when we are convinced the Administration is wrong.

Some of our problems, particularly a lack of unity, have been created by Republicans. On behalf of America's future, I suggest that the present political imbalance---however self-inflicted---is not a good thing.

Under our system, no Party can be doctrinaire, sectarian, narrow in its appeal or misrepresented to have such an image, however unfair the charge might be---and still attract the majority of the electorate.

The high ground of moderation with unselfish unity and without political family squabbles is not only common horse-sense for a party---it is also representative of the people and in keeping with the underlying genius of the American political system.

The day-to-day rebuilding of Republican policy and the Party must begin in the Congress---and because all the House must face the voters



next year, the heaviest burden of the task must be carried by the Representatives.

We aim to correct the imbalance--to re-establish two-party government. Far from lamenting our fate, House Republicans are wide open to fresh ideas and confident that new approaches, full participation and renewed dedication can earn friends for our party, and make an important contribution to the future of America.

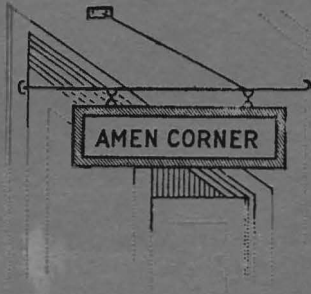
In seeking a resurgence to a position of strength for the good of our country, our Republican Party would do well to be what the creed of Amen Corner describes as a friend.

We should be, in the words of the creed, "the elixir of hope, the antidote for despair, the tonic for depression, the medicine ~~which~~ besides which the doctor's pills are futile."

Thank you for inviting me to this historic rendezvous where I'm told questions are never settled, but debates covering a wide range of subjects are waged in a spirit of sociability.

#





Annual Dinner
of
The Amen Corner
1965

Hon. Gerald R. Ford



Creed



THE creed of The Amen Corner enshrines the quality of Friendship in these lines:

"A friend is one who is for you always, under any circumstance.

"He never investigates you.

"When charges are made against you, he does not ask proof; he asks the accuser to clear out.

"He likes you just as you are.

"He does not want to alter you.

"Whatever kind of coat you are wearing suits him. Whether you have on a dress suit or a hickory shirt with no collar, he thinks it's fine.

"He likes your moods and enjoys your pessimism as much as your optimism.

"He likes your success.

"And your failures endear you to him the more.

"He wants nothing from you except that you be yourself.

"He is the one being with whom you may feel safe.

"With him you may utter your heart, its badness and its goodness.

"You don't have to be careful.

"Although you may sometimes seem to neglect and forget him, he ignores the slight.

"Nothing can cause his faith in you to waver.

"He keeps alive your faith in human nature.

"It is he who makes you believe it is a good universe.

"When you are vigorous and spirited you like to take your pleasure with him; when you are in trouble you want to tell him.

"When your time comes you want him near.

"You give him without reluctance and borrow from him without embarrassment.

"He is the elixir of hope, the antidote for despair, the tonic for depression, the medicine besides which the doctor's pills are futile.

"He is your friend."—



*Annual Dinner of the Amen Corner
in honor of its retiring*

President

George F. Pott

Saturday evening, April 10, 1965

Penn-Sheraton Hotel

Menu

*It is very nice to think
The world is full of meat and drink.*
—R. L. Stevenson



Silver Coupe of Fresh Fruit

Mandarin Orange Garni

Potage Sante'

Broiled Filet Mignon, Bercy, Mushroom Cap

Au Gratin Potatoes, Parmesan Crusted

New Peas, French Style

Mixed Green Salad with Tomato Wedges

Roquefort Cheese Dressing

Bombe Plombiere aux Marrons, Melba Sauce

Petit Fours

Mocha Des-Princes

N. B.—Gratuities provided for by the Banquet Committee

Program

*Democracy is on trial in the world, on
a more colossal scale than ever before.*
—C. F. Dole



National Anthem . . . Led by Thomas McCaffrey, Jr.

Call to Order Robert J. Dodds, Jr.
TOASTMASTER

Invocation . The Right Rev. Monsignor Andrew J. Pauley

Dinner

Address of Welcome The Hon. Joseph M. Barr
MAYOR OF PITTSBURGH

Greetings from the Governor of Pennsylvania .
The Hon. George I. Bloom
SECRETARY OF THE COMMONWEALTH

Report of Election Committee . The Hon. Elder W. Marshall

Our Retiring President Alvin E. Dillman

Response George F. Pott

Fred E. Obley Award Presentation . . Walter F. Schulten

Response Fred C. Foy
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, KOPPERS CO.

Introduction of Guest Speakers

"Balance in Government" . . . The Hon. Gerald R. Ford
MINORITY LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

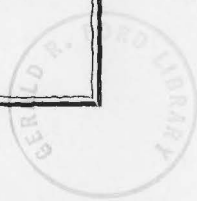
"Potomac Potshots" The Hon. Hugh Scott
U. S. SENATOR FROM PENNSYLVANIA

"America's Challenge" The Hon. Vance Hartke
U. S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

Induction of New President

Benediction The Very Rev. A. Dixon Rollit, D.D.
DEAN OF TRINITY CATHEDRAL

Amen



Officers 1965

GEORGE F. POTT - - - - - PRESIDENT
 A. M. PIVIROTTO - - - - - VICE PRESIDENT
 WILLIAM E. BENSWANGER - - - - - TREASURER
 GREGG L. NEEL - - - - - ASSISTANT TREASURER
 DOLLY BRANCHIK - - - - - ACTING SECRETARY

Past Presidents

FRANK J. HARRIS, ACTING*
 SAMUEL S. ROBERTSON*
 JOHN P. HARRIS*
 EUGENE L. CONNELLY*
 DENNIS A. HARRIS*
 JOHN J. MURRAY*
 GEORGE W. MCCANDLESS*
 J. HOWARD DEVLIN
 WILLIAM M. FUREY*
 JOHN F. O'TOOLE*
 RAYMOND D. EVANS*
 LOUIS C. CLARK*
 WILLIAM E. BENSWANGER
 ROY A. MACGREGOR*
 GREGG L. NEEL
 JOHN S. HERRON*
 WILLIAM S. GILES*
 ARTEMAS C. LESLIE
 KARL M. KNAPP
 JEROME EDLIS
 ROY G. BOSTWICK*
 FRANK WILBUR MAIN*
 EDWARD CRUMP, JR.*
 WILLIAM K. ALLEN*
 ELDER W. MARSHALL
 THOMAS MCCAFFREY, JR.
 EDWARD J. PRIDDEY*
 CHARLES J. MARGIOTTI*
 JOHN B. NICKLAS, JR.
 JOHN W. EICHLEAY
 WALTER F. SCHULTEN
 DOMINIC NAVARRO*
 RAYMOND F. HOFFMANN*
 JOSEPH W. HUBBARD*
 THOMAS P. JOHNSON
 FRANKLIN A. WEST
 THOMAS H. EVANS
 PAUL B. REINHOLD

* Deceased

Banquet Chairman, A. M. PIVIROTTO

Music

ANEURIN BODYCOMBE - - - - - At the Organ

Genesis



THE Amen Corner is not a club. Don't forget that.

It is something that just happened, and, without rhyme or reason, might happen in any well-regulated wide-awake, self-respecting urban community.

It happened to Pittsburgh in 18—let me see,—well, as far back as the memory of this scrivener runs, debates to the contrary notwithstanding, there has been about town a coterie of boon companions, men of many minds, without regard to race, creed, politics or previous condition, who have gathered nocturnally, quite haphazardly, at some place of convenient rendezvous, to discuss as the spirit moved them, any subject under the rising or the setting sun, and, without let or hindrance, apply to the arts forensic any system of logic or reason, which, the individual in his sovereign right, might elect.

Membership in the Amen Corner is one of the difficult mysteries of the day. There is no set formula and no rules of procedure are made to guide the ambitious tyro who would have his name inscribed on the roster of membership. Indeed, the only information on this head which is available is that to gain the open sesame one must be a one hundred per cent man. In truth manhood is the acid test which the Corner prescribes, apparently in secret, for one never knows when, if, or how, he is to become a member until some day he is slapped on the back, hale fellow-like, and is told that he is an "Amener."

That's the simple, frank process, but, like the higher degrees in some of the fraternities, the reason why one has been elected is never disclosed.

"Many are called but few are chosen" seems to be quite literally the maxim of this unique fraternity of good fellows.

The progenitor of "The Corner" was called "The Steps" and its place of concourse then was at Liberty Avenue and Sixth Street.

One dark night some scalawags, out of tune with that splendid spirit which preserves the best traditions and usages of an epoch, wantonly and without ruth, moved "The Steps" to make room for the ignoble and sordid march of progress,—moved them no one knew whither.

Up to Grant Street to the offices of one of the group the fathers of the Amen Corner trekked and metaphorically pitched their tent.

Not long thereafter this same iconoclastic march of progress—to be exact, in the fall of 1915—the William Penn Hotel offered a rendezvous which the dispossessed members of "The Steps" grasped with an appreciation of the hospitality extended, in a way that warmed the cockles of the heart of the genial Boniface.

"Come over to the William Penn" said he, "and meet in a corner of the lobby."

So, they came, and out of "The Steps" there evolved The Amen Corner.

On its roster, as active or honorary members, are ambassadors to and from the Old World, Governors, Senators, Judges of all the Courts, clergymen, lawyers, business men, politicians, literati, artists, actors, musicians, and notables in greater or lesser degree in nearly every profession, vocation and avocation.

Many brilliant prandial functions have marked the history of The Amen Corner. Annually the president is honored with a testimonial dinner. That's why we are here tonight.

But nightly, and now daily since it has its own spacious quarters on the club *floor of the Wm. Penn Hotel,—the real zest of membership in The Amen Corner may be judged from the casual gatherings and the open discussions that animate them.

Controversies rage on every conceivable subject. Questions are never settled. That's too much to expect from "men of many minds."

But though the disputation may work itself into the velocity of a typhoon or the heat of argument may rise to the temperature of Hades, and, the end of the day may leave some sorely tried tempers and furniture may be a bit awry, the day after dawns with the same sunny skies breaking through Pittsburgh's changeful atmosphere, and the same happy, smiling faces and the same warmth of handclasps all around, that prevailed before the last argument.

*(Now the Penn-Sheraton)

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Whatever name is tagged on my political victory, it shows that all you need is an allegation of virtue, a moderate amount of hard work and lots of luck.

Like an Amener, who never learns why he was elected to membership, I have oftener wondered these past busy weeks why 73 members of the House voted me to a position of leadership. I doubt that it was my television personality, Maybe they really believed the automobile ads---best year yet to go Ford!

In any event, the skyrocketing victory---or nervous triumph---I achieved in January, and the unbroken record of successes since then, have encouraged me to appear here tonight as an authority---on the problems of the oppressed minorities.

Those of you who are sports fans may know that football is my first love. I am a politician only because of job security!

But since Michigan---my alma mater--- beat Oregon State in the Rose Bowl by 27 points, and three days later Ford walloped his opponent by only 6 points, perhaps I chose the wrong profession.

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But, we never campaigned on a platform pledging to double our numbers and slice the opposition in half before November 1966 by some strange sleight of hand or magic.

The numbers on each side of the aisle in the House have remained the same since November third--- 140 Republicans to 294 Democrats. The odds are rough. The balance is lopsided. But, to coin a phrase---with a little different twist--- "we shall overcome."

Before tipping you off on some of our Republican strategy aimed at overcoming king-sized obstacles, I think you should know that what I am about to tell you may touch off one of those raging controversies that are part and parcel of Amen Corner's rollicking history.

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The President has virtually unlimited resources for working his will--- a veritable army of experts, authorities, researchers, propagandists and the like.

He is also king pin of the branch of government that employes 2½ million civilians and controls the destiny of 2 million 600 thousand military personnel. These two groups have an annual payroll totalling \$28 billion....and together they will spend more than 127 billion tax dollars in fiscal 1966.----I wish Republicans had this kind of campaign fund.

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-more-



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One place to start is with the Committees on Government Operations of the House and Senate, which have broad investigating authority.

These committees should be under control of the minority party to make Federal government function better and to help all Americans learn the facts.

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It is safe to speculate that with such a set-up there would be more public confidence that the real Bobby Baker story had been told.

It has been said that an optimist is one who tells you to cheer up when things are going his way. By this standard we could hardly be classed as optimists. But, despite the 2 to 1 majority against us and the clobbering we have been taking on voting our views on Democratic-sponsored legislation, there is no point in Republicans saying "what's the use?" That's no answer for the American people or ourselves.

Fortunately, there is a constructive ferment right now in the ^Republican Party. We are beginning to gain ground, not lose it.

We have already made some reorganization of our internal machinery in the House.

The ^Research and ^Planning Committee under Charles Goodell of New York is working on long-range policy. We are creating special task forces on major substantive issues in such rapid succession that one observer said we are setting up an "anti-poverty program for Republican intellectuals."

John Rhodes of Arizona, with a beef-up staff, is Policy Committee Chairman. This reorganized group ~~deals~~ deals with current legislative problems.

Armed with legislative ammunition supplied by both these groups, we will win on some issues in this Congress. Republicans will build a record for a substantially stronger representation after November 8, 1966. Meanwhile, we will create proposed legislation aimed at solving problems before they happen.

~~Standard~~ Republican strategy in the House will be diversified. We'll be grateful for any Democratic support, North or South, East or West. To compete with the Administration, we are offering:

1. Opposition to Administration aims and methods when we think both are wrong; but never obstructionism just for its own sake.
2. Constructive alternatives to Administration schemes when we feel it is tackling the right problems, at home and abroad, in the wrong way.
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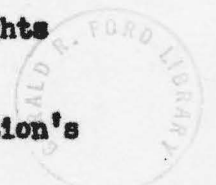
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We should be, in the words of the creed, "the elixir of hope, the antidote for despair, the tonic for depression, the medicine besides which the doctor's pills are futile."

Thank you for inviting me to this historic rendezvous, where I'm told questions are never settled, but debates covering a wide range of subjects are waged in a spirit of sociability.

#

CRAIG TRUAX
CHAIRMAN

MRS. PETER K. HONAMAN
VICE CHAIRMAN

M. HARVEY TAYLOR
CHAIRMAN EMERITUS

PHILIP L. CORSON
TREASURER

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NATIONAL COMMITTEEMAN

MISS SARAH ANN STAUFFER
NATIONAL COMMITTEEWOMAN

MRS. LOUISE RUSSELL
SECRETARY

MRS. CAROLINE SHAW TATOM
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

March 4, 1965

Mr. James M. Mudge
Room H230
The Capitol
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Mudge:

Enclosed is some information on the "Amen Corner"
in Pittsburgh where Congressman Ford is scheduled to
appear in the near future.

If you need anything more please let me know.

Sincerely yours,

John Paget
JOHN PAGET

JP/ck
Enclosure

"Balana in Government"
speech





Genesis

THE Amen Corner is not a club. Don't forget that.

It is something that just happened, and, without rhyme or reason, might happen in any well-regulated wide-awake, self-respecting urban community.

It happened to Pittsburgh in 18—let me see,—well, as far back as the memory of this scrivener runs, debates to the contrary notwithstanding, there has been about town a coterie of boon companions, men of many minds, without regard to race, creed, politics or previous condition, who have gathered nocturnally, quite haphazardly, at some place of convenient rendezvous, to discuss as the spirit moved them, any subject under the rising or the setting sun, and, without let or hindrance, apply to the arts forensic any system of logic or reason, which, the individual in his sovereign right, might elect.

Membership in the Amen Corner is one of the difficult mysteries of the day. There is no set formula and no rules of procedure are made to guide the ambitious tyro who would have his name inscribed on the roster of membership. Indeed, the only information on this head which is available is that to gain the open sesame one must be a one hundred per cent man. In truth manhood is the acid test which the Corner prescribes, apparently in secret, for one never knows when, if, or how, he is to become a member until some day he is slapped on the back, hale fellow-like, and is told that he is an "Amener."

That's the simple, frank process, but, like the higher degrees in some of the fraternities, the reason why one has been elected is never disclosed.

"Many are called but few are chosen" seems to be quite literally the maxim of this unique fraternity of good fellows.

The progenitor of "The Corner" was called "The Steps" and its place of concourse then was at Liberty Avenue and Sixth Street.

One dark night some scalawags, out of tune with that splendid spirit which preserves the best traditions and usages of an epoch, wantonly and without ruth, moved "The Steps" to make room for the ignoble and sordid march of progress,—moved them no one knew whither.

Up to Grant Street to the offices of one of the group, the fathers of the Amen Corner trekked and metaphorically pitched their tent.

Not long thereafter this same iconoclastic march of progress—to be exact, in the fall of 1915—the William Penn Hotel offered a rendezvous which the dispossessed members of "The Steps" grasped with an appreciation of the hospitality extended, in a way that warmed the cockles of the heart of the genial Boniface.

"Come over to the William Penn" said he, "and meet in a corner of the lobby."

So, they came, and out of "The Steps" there evolved The Amen Corner.

On its roster, as active or honorary members, are ambassadors to and from the Old World, Governors, Senators, Judges of all the Courts, clergymen, lawyers, business men, politicians, literati, artists, actors, musicians, and notables in greater or lesser degree in nearly every profession, vocation and avocation.

Many brilliant prandial functions have marked the history of The Amen Corner. Annually the president is honored with a testimonial dinner. That's why we are here tonight.

But nightly, and now daily since it has its own spacious quarters on the club *floor of the Wm. Penn Hotel,—the real zest of membership in The Amen Corner may be judged from the casual gatherings and the open discussions that animate them.

Controversies rage on every conceivable subject. Questions are never settled. That's too much to expect from "men of many minds."

But though the disputation may work itself into the velocity of a typhoon or the heat of argument may rise to the temperature of Hades, and, the end of the day may leave some sorely tried tempers and furniture may be a bit awry, the day after dawns with the same sunny skies breaking through Pittsburgh's changeful atmosphere, and the same happy, smiling faces and the same warmth of handclasps all around, that prevailed before the last argument.

*(Now the Penn-Sheraton)

Creed



THE creed of The Amen Corner enshrines the quality of Friendship in these lines:

"A friend is one who is for you always, under any circumstance.

"He never investigates you.

"When charges are made against you, he does not ask proof; he asks the accuser to clear out.

"He likes you just as you are.

"He does not want to alter you.

"Whatever kind of coat you are wearing suits him. Whether you have on a dress suit or a hickory shirt with no collar, he thinks it's fine.

"He likes your moods and enjoys your pessimism as much as your optimism.

"He likes your success.

"And your failures endear you to him the more.

"He wants nothing from you except that you be yourself.

"He is the one being with whom you may feel safe.

"With him you may utter your heart, its badness and its goodness.

"You don't have to be careful.

"Although you may sometimes seem to neglect and forget him, he ignores the slight.

"Nothing can cause his faith in you to waver.

"He keeps alive your faith in human nature.

"It is he who makes you believe it is a good universe.

"When you are vigorous and spirited you like to take your pleasure with him; when you are in trouble you want to tell him.

"When your time comes you want him near.

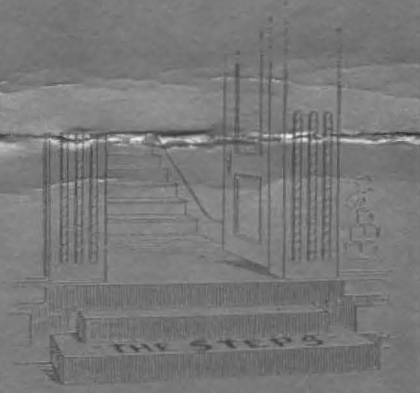
"You give him without reluctance and borrow from him without embarrassment.

"He is the elixir of hope, the antidote for despair, the tonic for depression, the medicine besides which the doctor's pills are futile.

"He is your friend."—



Annual Dinner
of
The Amen Corner
1962



April 10

Where You Don't Have To Be Careful

How Amen Corner Got Its Start

Place To Talk As You Feel

Some 200 professional men here know a perfect place to let their hair down and shake off the pressures of a hectic business day.

The spot is a spacious suite of rooms off the club floor of the Penn-Sheraton Hotel where they can plop down on comfortable orange leather chairs and speak their mind.

They are members of The Amen Corner—judges, clergymen, politicians, artists, industrialists, men of nearly every profession drawn together by the spirit of sociability.

Amen Corner wasn't founded—it merely happened.

One day before the turn of the century a handful of Downtown business companions decided to meet at the corner of Sixth Street and Liberty Avenue after working hours.

The nightly rendezvous to let off steam became a habit and "The Steps," as they chose to call themselves, became the forerunner of "The Corner."

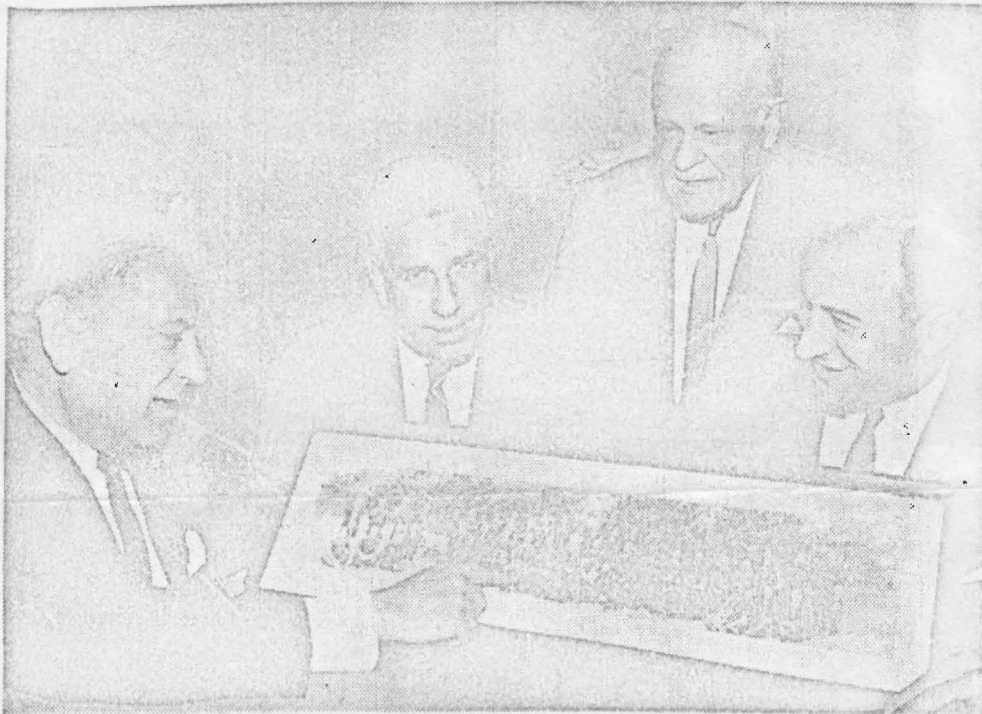
Discussions ranging over a multitude of subjects highlighted these casual gatherings, just as they do today.

Eventually the progress of a growing city forced The Steps to abandon their meeting place. Soon a person in some position of influence at the William Penn Hotel (now the Penn-Sheraton) noted their plight and invited them over to "meet in a corner of the lobby."

The Amen Corner evolved and the lobby nook eventually gave way to the suite—a large rectangular room flanked by smaller barroom and poker room.

Members' dues pay the rent and keep the cooler stocked.

Lining the walls are photographs of former Corner presidents. An impressive gallery, it includes Charles Margiotti, Bill Benschwanger, John P. Harris, Tom Johnson, Judge Elder Marshall, John Fichleay, to name only several.



RECALLING THE OLD DAYS of the Amen Corner through a photo from the early 1900s are four prominent members. Left to right are Thomas Johnson, a past president of the club; Thomas H. Evans, current president; Paul Reinhold, president-elect, and Common Pleas Judge John G. Brosky.

Each year the retiring president is honored with a testimonial dinner.

Members make an all-out effort to insure the affair's success and the guest list always includes two or three U. S. Senators.

Mayor Barr will be on hand as usual when the current president, Thomas H. Evans, president of Carnegie Gas, is feted April 6 in the Penn-Sheraton.

Paul B. Reinhold, civic leader and president-treasurer of Atlas Equipment Corp., is president-elect.

For 35 years until his death last Spring, U. S. Commissioner Fred Obley served as the Corner's secretary.

His assistant, Mrs. Dolly Branchik, became familiar with the records and The Corner decided to give her the job instead of bothering to train a new man.

Occupying a small office adjoining the suite, she sees members come and go throughout the day.

"We have men in their 30s and men in their 80s. Some of them, because of busy schedules, may show up only once a week," she said. "Then we have some octogenarians who drop in every day."

"Discussions are mostly about business and politics."

There are no rules to follow or test to pass to become an "Amener." Prospective additions to The Corner are quietly scrutinized. If they measure up, they're "in."

The qualities of friendship are set forth in the Corner's Creed, which defines a friend as someone who—

"...wants nothing from you except that you be yourself.

He is the one with whom you may feel safe.

With him you may utter your heart, its badness and its goodness.

You don't have to be careful . . ."



Speech by Rep. Gerald R. Ford

Amen Corner, Pittsburgh April 10, 1965

LOUSEY
Great, great man
KISS

Hartung
Murray
2/18 W. W. W.

FOR RELEASE ON DELIVERY

AT 8 P.M. EST., April 10, 1965

There is absolutely no parallel between acceptance as a member of Amen Corner and an obscure political happening in Washington not so long ago.

I have learned that a person never knows when, if, or how, he is to become a member until one day he is given a hearty pat on the back and told he is an "Amener." I am told there are no rules to follow or test to pass.

Earlier this year on Capitol Hill I ~~was given less than a hearty~~ political pat on the back in being elected Minority Leader of the House by a landslide vote---the count was 73 to 67.

Unlike qualifications for becoming a member of Amen Corner, there was a test for election as Minority Leader. The way I passed it has been described as a triumph. Others say I have a shaky mandate.

Whatever name is tagged on my political victory, it shows that all you need is an allegation of virtue, a moderate amount of hard work and lots of luck.



Like an Amener, who never learns why he was elected to membership, I have oftener wondered these past busy weeks why 73 members of the House voted me to a position of leadership. ~~I doubt that it was my television personality,~~ Maybe they really believed the automobile ads---best year yet to go Ford!

In any event, the skyrocketing victory---or nervous triumph---I achieved in January, and ~~the unbroken record of successes since then,~~ have encouraged me to appear here tonight as an authority ~~on the problems of~~ the oppressed minorities.

Those of you who are sports fans may know that football is my first *Cook / Player* love. I am a politician only because of job security!

But since Michigan---my alma mater--- beat Oregon State in the Rose Bowl by 27 points, and three days later Ford walloped his opponent by only 6 points, perhaps I chose the wrong profession.

I have often wondered where I would now be if I had accepted Curley Lambeau's offer in 1934 to play pro ball with the Green Bay Packers----- perhaps on the Supreme Court bench!



*Balanced
Constitution / Power
vs Use
Rumely*

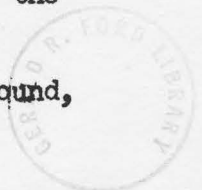
It's true that the ~~new~~ House Republican leadership hasn't won any spectacular legislative successes. This has been appropriately noted by some members of the Nation's press.

But, we never campaigned on a platform pledging to double our numbers and slice the opposition in half before November 1966 by some strange sleight of hand or magic.

The numbers on each side of the aisle in the House have remained the same since November third--- 140 Republicans to 294 Democrats. The odds are rough. The balance is lopsided. But, to coin a phrase---with a little different twist--- "we shall overcome."

Before tipping you off on some of our Republican strategy aimed at overcoming king-sized obstacles, I think you should know that what I am about to tell you may touch off one of those raging controversies that are part and parcel of Amen Corner's rollicking history.

The debate may reach the temperature of a space capsule's nose cone, but to quote from the Genesis of Amen Corner, I hope there will be the "same happy, smiling faces and the same warmth of handclasps all around, that prevailed before the last argument."



To give you a general idea of the overwhelming odds facing us, I start first with the White House with all its troops, who try to spoon-feed the press and try very hard to clobber us.

The President has virtually unlimited resources for working his will--- a veritable army of experts, authorities, researchers, propagandists and the like.

He is also king pin of the branch of government that employs $2\frac{1}{2}$ million civilians and controls the destiny of 2 million 600 thousand military personnel. These two groups have an annual payroll totalling \$28 billion...and together they will spend more than 127 billion tax dollars in fiscal 1966.----I wish Republicans had this kind of campaign fund.

This awesome power and the vast apparatus, if used improperly, could mean the withering away and eventually the death of the two-party system.

We are also faced with political judo and arm-twisting from the White House with its iron-fisted control that stretches up Pennsylvania Avenue to Capitol Hill.



Perhaps one of the best examples of present Presidential armlock on some Democratic members of the House was a quick switch in votes on sending surplus food to Cd. Nasser of the United Arab Republic.

On the first roll call of the 89th Congress, 76 Democrats joined Republicans in the House by voting with us to restrict the amount of public money to be involved in the food program.

After the Senate adopted the ^{softened} ~~same~~ version, and the measure came back to the House, Democratic support vanished into thin air. The bill supported by the President won by a vote of 241 to 161.

Forty four House Democrats switched their vote despite the fact there had been no change in circumstances

This brute-force political power and dominance of a party ridicules the legislative process.

The way things are going on the Democratic side, the idea that a Congressman is elected to represent the people back home and to serve the Nation is becoming pure, unadulterated fiction.

Certainly it is true that there is nothing constitutionally ordained about running our government through two great political parties.

Education
↑



But, almost from the start our Nation made such a choice. It was a wise decision. We avoided the chaos of a multi-party system. We avoided the loss of freedom of the single-party system. And, we built into government an additional set of checks and balances, *under operating circumstances* which are getting out of kilter.

The strength of a second political party is needed to provide the electorate with legislative alternatives and a remarkably high level of honesty and frankness.

How do we overcome the present topsy-turvey imbalance of power in Congress?

One place to start is with the Committees on Government Operations of the House and Senate, which have broad investigating authority.

These committees should be under control of the minority party to make Federal government function better and to help all Americans learn the facts.

Here would be a genuine vehicle to assure that the voice of the minority would be heard. The majority would be constantly on notice that its actions-- or inactions---were subject to effective, critical review. And, the public would know that any cover-up or wrongdoing would be improbable, if not impossible.



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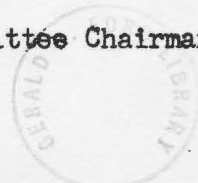
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Viet Nam

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In seeking resurgence to a position of strength for the good of our country, the Republican Party would do well to be what the creed of Amen Corner describes as a friend.



Amen Corner

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Amen Corner, Pittsburgh, April 10, 1965

FOR RELEASE UPON DELIVERY OF
SPEECH APRIL 10, 1965

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* * *

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We have refused to rubber stamp an Administration proposal that came to Capitol Hill on the heels of a dramatic appearance by the President before a Joint Session of Congress. Republicans in the House introduced voting rights legislation this week as an alternative to the Administration's inadequate proposal.

The Republican bill does not penalize the innocent states and localities where discrimination is virtually non-existent. The Administration's bill would shackle such areas as Alaska and parts of Maine where discrimination in voting is known not to exist.

Our bill applies wherever voting discrimination is a festering public sore, quickly in need of cure. The Administration bill would apply to a limited number of states which have literacy and other tests.

The Republican bill would abolish unreasonable standards for registration and voting without interfering with the reasonable requirements established by the states. The Administration's bill would not.

Finally, our bill offers a constitutional, comprehensive, effective remedy for the evil of disenfranchisement of any citizen because of race or color.

* * *

In drafting a voting rights bill, and other constructive alternatives, Republicans are fulfilling our duty to the 43 percent of the American electorate who put us in office, and to the people of our Nation who face growing, smothering Federal domination and erosion of their liberties.

#####

~~Talks Testimonial for Talcott~~ - 12th District

~~Monterey~~ - 12/5/65

Gov. of Virgin Island
X Rotary & Str. of Introduction
Introduction - X Great, great man
X Bureau of Internal Rev.
K 155

~~Monterey~~ - This is not my first experience
WW II U.S.S. Monterey

A beautiful ship - a little nostalgic
Wonderful people
Superb tradition

After a delightful visit
2 pint - Monterey Penn
Keosauqua area
Delightful people

Quality / not quantity

Best Talcott - "Thank" -

Board of Visitors Air Force
Banking + Currency
Agriculture

Steve
Mayer

~~Jack Westland~~ - Atomic Energy
Interior - Insular
NATO Parliamentary



FRANKLIN

Before talking about solutions - let me
mention several serious problems -
→

Three Basic Cornerstones of American Political System

- 1) System of "check & balances"
- 2) Federal - State Relationships
- 3) Two-Party System

Dangerously close
to one man / one party
Rule.

What is
Solution

Republican Party -

1) "sit on sidelines" - NO

Lincoln/ Eisenhower

2) Earn "respect" of our fellow
citizens

a) Legislative record

1) persistent opposing - NO
Spending - ^{pay for domestic}

2) Problems - ^{Dems - threaten}
a) ^{got big enough}
Solutions

3) Agree - Foreign Policy

b) Maximize "our areas of agreement"
We should stop reading people OUT
not a monolithic party
dissent + disagreement

~~Lindsay
Conservative G.O.P.~~

In 1966 - The odds we face are
like David against Goliath
Concentration of power in exec
A President who knows he has
Two to one in Congress

