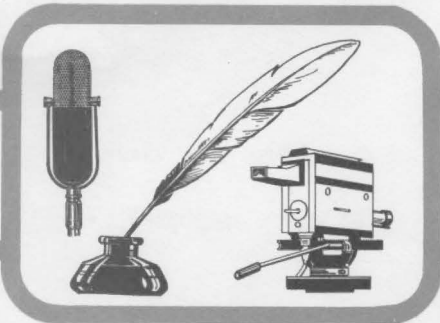


The original documents are located in Box D20, folder “Masonic Banquet, Detroit, MI, May 1, 1966” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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No-Nothing speech



CONGRESSMAN
GERALD R. FORD
HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER

**NEWS
RELEASE**

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SPEECH EXCERPTS--MASONIC BANQUET, DETROIT, MICHIGAN

There are two basic issues in American government today--the restoring of proper balance between the three branches of the federal government and a rebirth of strength and vigor in state and local governments.

Framers of the Constitution sought to guard against some of the developments we see today--a Congress overshadowed by the Executive Branch, a Supreme Court which is making law through some of its decisions, state and local governments which are in danger of becoming mere appendages of the federal government.

The American political system now is like a pinball machine that somebody has tilted to make it pay off his way. The people must see that the machinery is righted and made to function as the authors of the Constitution intended.

There is danger in an excessively powerful central government, although many Americans seem to have lost sight of that fact.

The wise men who laid the foundation of our political system gave strength to each of the three branches of federal government in a system of checks and balances. They gave the states a dual sovereignty in relation to the federal establishment.

Over the years there developed the major political parties. This two-party system, when properly functioning, makes its own unique contribution to the system of checks and balances.

The system is out of whack. It's like a machine with a bearing that's out of round. The defect threatens to wreck the whole machine--the entire structure of American life.

* * *

There are two movements afoot which could go far toward correcting present imbalances in our political system.

These are a study of ways to improve and strengthen the machinery of Congress and bipartisan proposals to return a percentage of federal income tax revenue to the states when the Vietnam war ends and this becomes feasible.

A third correction could be largely realized in the 1966 elections--a strengthening of the two-party system after the wrenching maladjustment which occurred in November, 1964.

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SPEECH EXCERPTS

From the work of the Joint Committee on Organization of Congress may come recommendations which will help Congress regain the eminence it once enjoyed in the legislative process.

From the proposals for federal revenue-sharing with the states may come a rejuvenation of state and local government. Such revenue-sharing, with no strings attached, has the endorsement of governors of both parties, political scientists, and many economists. It was first proposed by Dr. Walter Heller, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers under the late President John F. Kennedy.

Congress now is often placed in the position of an errand boy doing the bidding of the White House. This is unhealthy for the country. The Congress should be originating legislation as well as improving and approving or rejecting those measures sent to Capitol Hill by the President.

The Joint Committee on Organization of Congress may find ways to free congressmen and senators from time-consuming chores and thus help make each member a more effective legislator.

The purpose of the federal revenue-sharing proposal is, of course, to give the states and local governments the means to do the things that can be done best at the local level.

* * *

Most Americans occasionally worry about the fact that the federal government keeps getting bigger and bigger--but only occasionally. And for the most part, they see no threat to their own individual freedom.

It is difficult for the individual American to realize how tremendously the federal government has grown and how the role of the states and local governments has shrunk. It is also difficult for him to understand that the greater the number of local decisions indirectly made by the Executive Branch in Washington, the less he has to say about how his community, his state, and his nation are being run. It's just as simple as that.

The power to tax is the power to destroy, and power flows to where the money is. If the states and local governments must increasingly look to the federal government for grants-in-aid circumscribed with federal regulations, their powers will be increasingly diminished.

Federal grant-in-aid programs have grown in numbers from 18 to 140 different programs in the last 31 years--and in dollars from \$126 million in 1935 to \$14 billion today.

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The minority party in America must be imaginative, dedicated and alert. But it must also receive added strength from the electorate if the steeply tilted majority in Congress is to swing back toward a more sensible balance.

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