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REPUBLICAN GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION  
PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA, FRIDAY,  
DECEMBER 6, 1968.

*Mr. Vice Pres Elect Agnew*

*It has been a hard  
I have brought  
from your office  
+ documents*

DISTINGUISHED GOVERNORS AND  
GOVERNORS-ELECT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

IT'S BEEN A LONG YEAR AND A HARD  
ROAD TO PALM SPRINGS FROM PALM BEACH, WHERE  
LAST I WAS PRIVILEGED TO MEET WITH YOU.  
BUT IT HAS BEEN A YEAR OF SOLID SUCCESS FOR  
OUR PARTY AND BRIGHT PROMISE FOR OUR COUNTRY.

NOWHERE HAS THE VIGOR OF RESURGENT  
REPUBLICANISM BEEN MORE EVIDENT THAN IN THE  
RAPID EXPANSION OF THE REPUBLICAN GOVERNORS  
ASSOCIATION. I CONGRATULATE EACH OF YOU  
AND ESPECIALLY THANK GOVERNOR JOHN CHAFEE  
FOR HIS FINE LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNOR REAGAN  
FOR THE HOSPITALITY THAT HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE  
RICHEST RESOURCE OF THIS GOLDEN STATE.

A YEAR AGO GOV. NUNN BROUGHT

ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S NATIVE STATE BACK INTO THE FOLD. I REMEMBER SUGGESTING WE OUGHT TO ADD ILLINOIS AND, SURE ENOUGH, GOV.-ELECT OGILVIE DID IT, IN SPITE OF MAYOR DALEY'S NEW ELECTRONIC VOTING MACHINES.

THEY'RE REALLY VERY SIMPLE. JUST TWO HANDLES YOU CAN PULL.

ONE SAYS "STRAIGHT DEMOCRATIC TICKET."

THE OTHER SAYS "CAUTION!  
50,000 VOLTS."

WE HAVE A LOT TO BE THANKFUL FOR AS REPUBLICANS, AND A LOT TO DO AS AMERICANS.

A GREAT NATIVE SON OF CALIFORNIA IS THE PRESIDENT-ELECT. ONE OF YOUR OWN DISTINGUISHED NUMBER IS THE VICE-PRESIDENT-ELECT. NEXT YEAR THERE WILL BE 31 REPUBLICAN GOVERNORS IN STATES REPRESENTING TWO-THIRDS OF THE NATION'S PEOPLE, AND IN EIGHT OF THE 10 MOST POPULOUS STATES.

I AM HERE TO REPORT ON THE CONGRESS, AND I WOULD DIG A CREDIBILITY GAP DEEPER THAN DEATH VALLEY IF I PRETENDED NOT TO BE DISAPPOINTED THAT PRESIDENT NIXON WILL NOT START OFF WITH A REPUBLICAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. I AM DISAPPOINTED, BUT NOT DISMAYED. TAKING MY CUE FROM DICK NIXON'S OWN CAREER, I STARTED <sup>out</sup> MY CAMPAIGN FOR A REPUBLICAN CONGRESS IN 1970 JUST ONE MONTH AGO TODAY.

IN THE SENATE THE NEW LINEUP WILL BE 42 TO 58, EIGHT VOTES SHY OF CONTROL; IN THE HOUSE IT WILL BE 192 TO 243, 26 VOTES SHORT OF A MAJORITY. BUT THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT WE ARE STILL GAINING STRENGTH ON EVERY FRONT; FROM LESS THAN ONE-THIRD OF BOTH BODIES A LITTLE OVER TWO YEARS AGO THERE HAS BEEN A NET INCREASE OF 52 REPUBLICAN SEATS IN THE HOUSE AND 10 IN THE SENATE.

~~THE SAME REPUBLICAN TREND IS UNDERWAY IN~~

~~STATE LEGISLATURES AND OTHER STATE, COUNTY AND CITY ELECTIVE OFFICES WHERE PARTY STRENGTH IS BUILT.~~

WE ARE NOT HERE FOR POSTMORTEMS, BUT PERMIT ME A FEW FOOTNOTES ON THIS SOMEWHAT CURIOUS NATIONAL ELECTION. IT'S ALMOST UNPRECEDENTED, BUT 58 OF THE 59 NEW REPUBLICAN CONGRESSMEN ELECTED IN 1966 SURVIVED IN 1968. ONE WAS A VICTIM OF REDISTRICTING. THIS NOT ONLY TESTIFIES TO THE CALIBER OF OUR RECENT REINFORCEMENTS BUT TO THE TEAM SPIRIT THAT PREVAILS IN OUR HOUSE LEADERSHIP, ~~WE PUT THEM TO WORK AND THEY WENT TO WORK WITH A WILL.~~

THE 20 NEW REPUBLICANS ELECTED IN 1968 ARE OF THE SAME QUALITY. ~~IN MY EARLY ESTIMATION~~ THEY COME FROM 14 STATES AND EVERY PART OF THE COUNTRY; OUR GAINS, THOUGH OFFSET BY LOSSES, WERE NEITHER ISOLATED NOR SECTIONAL.

THE THIRD-PARTY THREAT IN THE SOUTH DID NOT, AS FORECAST, DISRUPT THE STEADY ADVANCE OF A TRUE TWO-PARTY SYSTEM ~~THERE~~; WE ACTUALLY GAINED IN VIRGINIA, MARYLAND, TEXAS AND NORTH CAROLINA.

FINALLY, YOU MAY RECALL MY WARNING A YEAR AGO IN FLORIDA THAT THE NEXT PRESIDENT MIGHT VERY WELL BE CHOSEN BY THE HOUSE. ~~WITH EACH STATE HAVING A SINGLE VOTE.~~ THE DEMOCRATS THEN CONTROLLED 29 DELEGATIONS TO OUR 18, WITH THREE EVENLY DIVIDED.

WE CONCENTRATED ON THESE CLOSE DELEGATIONS, AND SO DID THE DEMOCRATS. WE GAINED ONE DELEGATION -- NEW MEXICO'S -- AND TIED UP TWO MORE, CUTTING THE DEMOCRATS DOWN TO 26, A MINIMAL MAJORITY. BUT FIVE OF THOSE WERE WALLACE STATES. PROBABLY IF THE ELECTION HAD GONE TO THE NEW HOUSE IT WOULD HAVE BEEN AS DEADLOCKED AS THE

*thanks to Dan Camp*

ELECTORAL COLLEGE.

IT DIDN'T HAPPEN. BUT WE COULD BE IN THE MIDST OF A DEADLY DANGEROUS CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS RIGHT NOW IF IT HAD -- AND IT CAME VERY CLOSE.

LET'S FIX THE ROOF BEFORE THE NEXT CLOUDBURST. [ I INTEND TO PRESS FOR PROMPT ACTION IN THE NEXT CONGRESS ON AN ELECTORAL REFORM AMENDMENT AND HOPE YOU GOVERNORS WILL GET BEHIND ~~ITS~~ RAPID RATIFICATION. ]

SO MUCH FOR MIGHT-HAVE-BEENS. WE <sup>are</sup> <sub>here</sub>

[ ~~ARE HERE NEITHER TO CONGRATULATE NOR TO COMMISERATE OURSELVES BUT~~ ] IN THE SPIRIT OF PRESIDENT-ELECT NIXON'S INAUGURAL THEME -- "FORWARD TOGETHER."

[ ~~I LIKE THAT IDEA.~~ ] THAT IS THE WAY WE HAVE BEEN MARCHING THESE PAST FEW YEARS AND LOOK HOW FAR WE HAVE COME. REMEMBER THE ENDLESS ARGUMENTS AFTER OUR CLOSE 1948 AND

1960 PRESIDENTIAL DEFEATS ABOUT WHAT FACTOR MADE THE BIG DIFFERENCE? NOBODY AGREES <sup>even now</sup> ~~YET~~, BUT AS FOR 1968, THE ANSWER IS OBVIOUS.

THE REPUBLICAN PARTY THIS YEAR PRESENTED ~~[TO THE VOTERS]~~ AN IMAGE OF RELATIVE UNITY AND HARMONY; THE DEMOCRATS ~~[GAVE A DISTURBING DEMONSTRATION]~~ OF DIVISION, DISCORD AND DISARRAY. FROM THE FIRST PRIMARY THROUGH THE MIAMI BEACH CONVENTION AND HIS CLOSING CAMPAIGN, DICK NIXON HAMMERED HOME THE IDEA THAT ONLY A PARTY THAT COULD UNITE ITSELF COULD UNITE THE COUNTRY. NOW, WE HAVE TO MAKE GOOD ON THAT PROMISE.

~~[ WE MUST, INDEED, GO FORWARD TOGETHER NOT MERELY AS REPUBLICANS, FOR WE ALREADY HAVE SHOWN WE CAN DO THAT WITHOUT FORFEITING THE HEALTHY INTERNAL COMPETITION AND CLASH OF VIEWPOINTS THAT KEEPS A PARTY ALIVE AND ALERT TO THE PEOPLE'S REAL NEEDS. ]~~



~~WE MUST GO FORWARD TOGETHER AS AMERICANS, DRAWING EVER WIDER THE CIRCLE OF OUR PARTISANSHIP TO ENCOMPASS A MAJORITY OF CITIZENS WHO WILL NOT ONLY VOTE FOR US BUT JOIN WITH US, TO BRING FRESH AND REALISTIC SOLUTIONS TO OUR VEXING PROBLEMS, AND TO TRANSLATE INTO PUBLIC LAW AND POPULAR WILL THOSE BASIC HUMAN NEEDS OF PERSONAL SECURITY, EVEN HANDED JUSTICE AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TO GET AHEAD IN A CLIMATE OF FREEDOM AND MUTUAL RESPECT.~~

IN THE 90TH CONGRESS, ~~[I BELIEVE]~~ THE REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP AND THE REPUBLICAN MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE SHOWED A RESPONSIBLE DETERMINATION TO GO FORWARD TOGETHER. ~~[FOR A BETTER AMERICA]~~ WITH OUR SUPERIOR TEAMWORK AND MORALE, WE COULD ON MANY OCCASIONS HAVE SIMPLY ROADBLOCKED ANY ACTION ON ADMINISTRATION PROPOSALS. INSTEAD, WE WORKED TO IMPROVE THEM THROUGH THE

GIVE-AND-TAKE OF THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS,  
AND OFTEN WE DID. THERE IS NOT TIME TO GO  
DOWN THE LIST, BUT AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE  
WAS THE OMNIBUS CRIME BILL WHOSE MAJOR  
REPUBLICAN FEATURES EMBODIED THE SOUND  
PRINCIPLE OF BLOCK GRANTS TO CUT THE STATES  
IN ON THE ALLOCATION OF FEDERAL FUNDS.

THIS HAD THE BACKING OF MOST GOVERNORS OF  
BOTH PARTIES. *if not all*

*At the critical moment in the House  
consideration of the bill the support of the Democrats was vital. Our*

PERHAPS, IRONICALLY, WE WERE *Teamwork  
made this legislative  
possible*

PENALIZED FOR OUR RESPONSIBILITY. THE 91ST  
CONGRESS WILL BE VERY MUCH LIKE THE LAST  
ONE -- EVIDENTLY PEOPLE THOUGHT IT WAS A  
PRETTY GOOD CONGRESS IN TERMS OF LEGISLATIVE  
PERFORMANCE. STILL, WE LOST MANY A CLOSE  
ROLLCALL IN THE 90TH CONGRESS BY THE MARGIN  
OF OUR NOVEMBER GAINS. ~~AS REPUBLICAN~~

*and* ~~LEADERS PLEDGED TO SUPPORT THE NEW NIXON  
ADMINISTRATION IN EFFECTING RESPONSIBLE  
CHANGE IN WASHINGTON, SENATOR DIRKSEN AND I~~

~~WILL BE IN A FAR MORE FAVORABLE POSITION  
NEXT YEAR THAN AS THE DUBIOUS MINORITY  
CHAPERONES OF THE FINAL FREESPENDING  
JOHNSON-HUMPHREY FLING.~~

AS HIS FRIEND AND FORMER  
COLLEAGUE IN THE HOUSE, I CAN SAY SIMPLY  
AND SINCERELY THAT I BELIEVE RICHARD NIXON  
WILL BE A GREAT PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED  
STATES, A GREAT LEADER OF A GREAT PEOPLE.  
IT WILL TAKE ALL THE KNOWHOW HE ACQUIRED  
DURING 14 YEARS ON CAPITOL HILL TO DEAL WITH  
A DEMOCRATIC-CONTROLLED CONGRESS, BUT I AM  
CONFIDENT HE WILL LEAD US FORWARD TOGETHER.

PROGRESS AND GOODWILL IS WHAT  
THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WANT AND WILL DEMAND,  
AND NARROW PARTISANSHIP WILL BE SELF-  
DEFEATING. CERTAINLY YOU GOVERNORS, WHO NOW  
SPEAK FOR TWO OUT OF EVERY THREE CITIZENS,  
ARE STRATEGICALLY SITUATED TO STRENGTHEN  
AND SUPPORT THE NEW REPUBLICAN PRESIDENT

IN THE DOMESTIC PROGRAMS OF REDIRECTION AND REFORM OVER WHICH WE HAVE LABORED SO LONG TOGETHER. WE MAY NEVER GET ANOTHER CHANCE, IF WE FAIL NOW.

BUT IF WE SERVE THE PEOPLE WELL, WE MAY AGAIN BECOME THE MAJORITY PARTY THAT ABRAHAM LINCOLN -- A MINORITY PRESIDENT ELECTED IN A TIME OF VIOLENCE AND FEAR AND DOUBT -- LEFT AS THE LEGACY OF HIS LEADERSHIP.

② YOU KNOW, I REMEMBER STOPPING ONCE AT A FARMHOUSE IN CENTRAL ILLINOIS WHICH DISPLAYED AN "ANTIQUES" SIGN ALONG THE ROAD. WHILE MY WIFE WAS POKING AROUND THE OLD GLASS AND FURNITURE, I SPOTTED A HUGE AXE AND PICKED IT UP AND FELT THE EDGE AND HEFTED IT.

THE OLD MAN WHO KEPT THE PLACE LOOKED ME OVER AND SAID:

"WOULDN'T WANT TO SELL THAT. <sup>π</sup>USED  
TO BELONG TO ABE LINCOLN."

"WELL, IT'S STILL IN MIGHTY GOOD SHAPE FOR SUCH AN OLD AXE," I SAID.

"OUGHT TO BE," THE FARMER SAID.  
"IT'S HAD THREE NEW HEADS AND PLENTY OF NEW HANDLES."

WELL, THAT'S HOW IT IS WITH OUR REPUBLICAN PARTY.

IT'S STILL THE PARTY OF ABE LINCOLN, BUT IT'S HAD A LOT OF DIFFERENT HEADS AND A LOT OF DIFFERENT HANDLES. AND NOW IT'S GOT ANOTHER NEW HEAD -- PLENTY OF NEW HANDLES -- AND IT STILL IS IN MIGHTY GOOD SHAPE.

THANK YOU FOR INVITING ME; NOW LET'S GO FORWARD TOGETHER.

-- END --

REMARKS OF REP. GERALD R. FORD OF MICHIGAN  
REPUBLICAN LEADER OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TO THE REPUBLICAN GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION  
PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA  
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1968

Friday P.M. Release  
December 6, 1968

Distinguished Governors and Governors-Elect, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It's been a long year and a hard road to Palm Springs from Palm Beach, where last fall I was privileged to meet with you. But it has been a year of solid success for our party and bright promise for our country.

Nowhere has the vigor of resurgent Republicanism been more evident than in the rapid expansion of the Republican Governors Association. I congratulate each of you and especially thank Governor John Chafee for his fine leadership and Governor Reagan for the hospitality that has always been the richest resource of this Golden State.

A year ago Gov. Nunn brought Abraham Lincoln's native State back into the fold. I remember suggesting we ought to add Illinois and, sure enough, Gov.- Elect Ogilvie did it, in spite of Mayor Daley's new electronic voting machines.

They're really very simple. Just two handles you can pull.

One says "Straight Democratic Ticket."

The other says "Caution! 50,000 Volts."

We have a lot to be thankful for as Republicans, and a lot to do as Americans. A great Native Son of California is the President-Elect. One of your own distinguished number is the Vice-President-Elect. Next year there will be 31 Republican Governors in States representing two-thirds of the nation's people, and in eight of the 10 most populous States.

I am here to report on the Congress, and I would dig a Creditability Gap deeper than Death Valley if I pretended not to be disappointed that President Nixon will not start off with a Republican House of Representatives. I am disappointed, but not dismayed. Taking my cue from Dick Nixon's own career, I started my campaign for a Republican Congress in 1970 just one month ago today.

In the Senate the new lineup will be 42 to 58, eight votes shy of control; in the House it will be 192 to 243, 26 votes short of a majority.

(more)

But the important thing is that we are still gaining strength on every front; from less than one-third of both bodies a little over two years ago there has been a net increase of 52 Republican seats in the House and 10 in the Senate. The same Republican trend is underway in State legislatures and other State, county and city elective offices where party strength is built.

We are not here for postmortems, but permit me a few footnotes on this somewhat curious national election. It's almost unprecedented, but 58 of the 59 new Republican Congressmen elected in 1966 survived in 1968. One was a victim of redistricting. This not only testifies to the caliber of our recent reinforcements but to the team spirit that prevails in our House leadership; we put them to work and they went to work with a will.

The 20 new Republicans elected in 1968 are of the same quality, in my early estimation. They come from 14 States and every part of the country; our gains, though offset by losses, were neither isolated nor sectional.

The third-party threat in the South did not, as forecast, disrupt the steady advance of a true two-party system there; we actually gained in Virginia, Maryland, Texas and North Carolina.

Finally, you may recall my warning a year ago in Florida that the next President might very well be chosen by the House, with each State having a single vote. The Democrats then controlled 29 delegations to our 18, with three evenly divided.

We concentrated on these close delegations, and so did the Democrats. We gained one delegation -- New Mexico's -- and tied up two more, cutting the Democrats down to 26, a minimal majority. But five of those were Wallace States. Probably if the election had gone to the new House it would have been as deadlocked as the Electoral College.

It didn't happen. But we could be in the midst of a deadly dangerous Constitutional crisis right now if it had -- and it came very close.

Let's fix the roof before the next cloudburst. I intend to press for prompt action in the next Congress on an electoral reform amendment and hope you governors will get behind its rapid ratification.

So much for might-have-beens. We are here neither to congratulate nor to commiserate ourselves but in the spirit of President-elect Nixon's Inaugural theme -- "Forward Together."

I like that idea. That is the way we have been marching these past

(more)

few years and look how far we have come. Remember the endless arguments after our close 1948 and 1960 Presidential defeats about what factor made the big difference? Nobody agrees yet, but as for 1968, the answer is obvious.

The Republican Party this year presented to the voters an image of relative unity and harmony; the Democrats gave a disconcerting demonstration of division, discord and disarray. From the first primary through the Miami Beach convention and his closing campaign, Dick Nixon hammered home the idea that only a party that could unite itself could unite the country. Now, we have to make good on that promise.

We must, indeed, go forward together -- not merely as Republicans, for we already have shown we can do that without forfeiting the healthy internal competition and clash of viewpoints that keeps a party alive and alert to the people's real needs.

We must go forward together as Americans, drawing ever wider the circle of our partisanship to encompass a majority of citizens who will not only vote for us but join with us, to bring fresh and realistic solutions to our vexing problems, and to translate into public law and popular will those basic human needs of personal security, even-handed justice and equal opportunity to get ahead in a climate of freedom and mutual respect.

In the 90th Congress, I believe the Republican leadership and the Republican Members of the House showed a responsible determination to go forward together for a better America. With our superior teamwork and morale, we could on many occasions have simply roadblocked any action on Administration proposals. Instead, we worked to improve them through the give-and-take of the legislative process, and often we did. There is not time to go down the list, but an outstanding example was the Omnibus Crime Bill whose major Republican features embodied the sound principle of block grants to cut the States in on the allocation of Federal funds. This had the backing of most Governors of both parties.

Perhaps, ironically, we were penalized for our responsibility. The 91st Congress will be very much like the last one -- evidently people thought it was a pretty good Congress in terms of legislative performance. Still, we lost many a close rollcall in the 90th Congress by the margin of our November gains. As Republican leaders pledged to support the new Nixon Administration in effecting responsible change in Washington, Senator Dirksen and I will be in a far more favorable position next year than as the dubious minority chaperones

(more)



of the final freespending Johnson-Humphrey fling.

As his friend and former colleague in the House, I can say simply and sincerely that I believe Richard Nixon will be a great President of the United States, a great leader of a great people. It will take all the knowhow he acquired during 14 years on Capitol Hill to deal with a Democratic-controlled Congress, but I am confident he will lead us forward together.

Progress and goodwill is what the American people want and will demand, and narrow partisanship will be self-defeating. Certainly you Governors, who now speak for two out of every three citizens, are strategically situated to strengthen and support the new Republican President in the domestic programs of redirection and reform over which we have labored so long together. We may never get another chance, if we fail now.

But if we serve the people well, we may again become the majority party that Abraham Lincoln -- a minority President elected in a time of violence and fear and doubt -- left as the legacy of his leadership.

You know, I remember stopping once at a farmhouse in central Illinois which displayed an "Antiques" sign along the road. While my wife was poking around the old glass and furniture, I spotted a huge axe and picked it up and felt the edge and hefted it.

The old man who kept the place looked me over and said:

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"Well, it's still in mighty good shape for such an old axe," I said.

"Ought to be," the farmer said. "It's had three new heads and plenty of new handles."

Well, that's how it is with our Republican Party.

It's still the party of Abe Lincoln, but it's had a lot of different heads and a lot of different handles. And now it's got another new head -- plenty of new handles -- and it still is in mighty good shape.

Thank you for inviting me; now let's go forward together.

# # #

*M Office Copy*

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