

The original documents are located in Box D31, folder “Bob Price Appreciation Dinner, Plainview, TX, April 17, 1971” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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CONGRESSMAN
GERALD R. FORD
HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER

**NEWS
RELEASE**

--FOR RELEASE AT 6:30 P.M. SATURDAY--
April 17, 1971

Excerpts from a Speech by Rep. Gerald R. Ford, R-Mich., at a Bob Price Appreciation Dinner, Saturday evening, April 17, 1971, at the Alcove Restaurant, Plainview, Texas.

The Seventies are a time of breathtaking change and a time of monumental challenge.

Tonight I will talk with you about the greatest challenges of the Seventies-- the challenge of Communist aggression in Indochina and the search for an enduring peace; the challenge posed by the economy, where we must wrestle with the hangover from the inflationary binge of the late 1960s while making a transition from wartime to peacetime; and the challenge of governmental reform, where we must restructure government so it becomes the servant and not the master of the people.

Despite the cries of "pullout now" we continue to resist Communist aggression in Southeast Asia and to work for meaningful peace in that war-torn region of the world

Our goal in Vietnam is to make it possible for the South Vietnamese to determine their own future--not to have it imposed upon them by Communist leaders in Hanoi.

With the solid success in Cambodia and the reasonably good success in Laos and the continued gains in Vietnamization, we have moved close to that goal. Prospects are good that we will see the survival of a viable and independent South Vietnam.

Anyone who wants to see the South Vietnamese government gain the upper hand against the Communists cannot help but be heartened by the progress we have made.

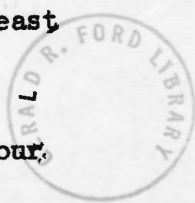
As for those who shout "pullout now," they would write off completely the investment we have made in Southeast Asia toward a full generation of peace. They would throw in the towel at the very moment when success is in sight. They would capitulate just when our objective is near at hand.

We are withdrawing from Vietnam in accordance with a carefully thought out plan. The President has drawn our forces in Vietnam down by nearly 250,000 men--and the withdrawals will continue at a faster pace.

It matters very much how we end our involvement in the Vietnam War. It is easy to have peace simply by saying to the enemy, "It's all yours." I say we should end our involvement in Vietnam in a way that stems the Communist tide in Southeast Asia. And that is what we are doing.

Our withdrawal from Vietnam has, of course, had a tremendous impact on our

(more)



economy. Defense spending cuts reduced employment in 1970 by 600,000 in private industry, 400,000 in the armed forces and 100,000 in Pentagon civilian jobs.

We have cut Vietnam spending in half--and we have deliberately cooled off the rest of the economy to bring inflation under control.

Now we must stimulate the economy while continuing to fight inflation. And we are doing exactly that. What we need now is an upsurge in consumer confidence to get the economy rolling. We will take whatever measures are necessary to accomplish our goals.

There is another challenge perhaps more difficult to meet than restoring vigor to our economy.

I speak of providing all of our citizens with an opportunity to participate in American society and to shape the governmental decisions affecting their lives. I speak of easing the tremendous tax pressures at the local level which are creating almost unbearable burdens for our citizens.

Today we are living through a crisis caused by too much government--a paralysis of social progress caused by a mountainous Federal bureaucracy in Washington--a crisis caused by too much money and power in the hands of Federal bureaucrats.

While the government in Washington has become muscle-bound, State and local governments have been struggling with problems the bureaucrats can't solve. And the cost of State and local government has skyrocketed.

State and local spending has jumped 372 per cent from 1950 through 1969--from \$28 billion to \$132 billion.

State and local taxes, on a per capita basis, have spiraled from \$105 in 1950 to \$380 in 1969, an increase of 262 per cent.

States have increased major taxes 300 times during the last decade.

In the last two decades Federal aid to state and local governments has risen from \$2.5 billion to over \$30 billion. And yet the local problems remain.

The Federal categorical grants-in-aid system has more than 500 different spigots, thousands of administrators and a jungle of regulations.

How do we escape from this jungle? How do we put the money where the problems are?

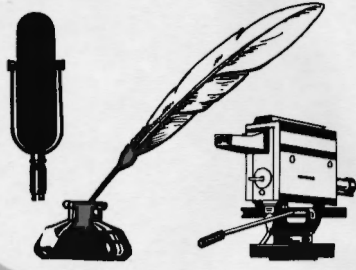
The answer is the President's program of Federal revenue sharing--an extra \$5 billion or more a year without strings attached and \$11 billion allocated for local solving of rural and urban problems on a broad basis of aid, with the red tape slashed away.

Here is an opportunity to alleviate the fiscal crisis facing our states, cities, counties and townships. Here's a chance to reduce the pressure for state and local tax increases. Here is a chance to make state and local government work and build a better America.

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