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April 12, 1960

Remarks of Rep. Gerald R. Ford, Jr.  
1960 Northwestern University  
MOCK POLITICAL CONVENTION  
Evanston, Illinois

Approximately 25 years ago at the University of Michigan I participated in campus political activity and a Mock Convention and like you was oppertuned to join battle in the political arena. In 1935 voters, young and old, Democrats, Republicans, and Independents were subjected to the political and economic views of such men as Senator Huey Long, Dr. Townsend, Henry Wallace, Norman Thomas, and Howard Scott of technocracy fame. In this turbulent political environment, after carefully analyzing the pros and cons, I made up my own mind to be a Republican. This decision I have never regretted.

In 1960 each of you are offered similar opportunities to be a part of America's political life. I hope it means more than dutifully casting your vote regularly in local, state, and national elections. It should encompass active participation in the party organization of your choice and in addition becoming a candidate for public office. I strongly urge that each of you maximize your interest in the broad spectrum of politics. May I say with emphasis the development of your political philosophy and the selection of your political party are matters of major concern.

I am here this evening to help focus your attention upon the Republican record and to urge serious consideration of the sound basic principles upon which that record rests.

As responsible young people on the threshold of a new and different life, you have a keen personal interest in the policies and practices of the Federal Government. The Republican Party offers you a program of "Opportunity with Security." It is an invigorating program dedicated to the preservation of individual freedom for each and to the promotion of the general welfare for all.

What more can any Federal Administration offer to its young people than a period of peace, ample opportunities for employment, good wages, an expanding economy, a stable currency, a responsible handling of all governmental affairs, freedom of individual action, and a healthy community life?

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PEACE! The young people in the audience have fortunately not been called to battle line military service. Previous generations in America have known the horrors of war. Since 1900 we have had two world-wide military struggles and Korea. Eisenhower has known war; he helped to win one in Europe. Ike also stopped on honorable terms

the fighting in Korea. But more significant, he has kept the peace. This peace offers each of you the opportunities which war only destroys. This peace provides you the prime security on which all other aspirations are built.

Bold action in Berlin, Lebanon, and Formosa has thwarted the Communist aggressor. Cooperative action through the United Nations and with our allies has preserved the free nations of the world.

I can say categorically as an 8-year member of the Committee on Defense Department Appropriations that the United States is by far the most powerful nation on earth. As President Eisenhower recently said, we have "an indestructible force of incalculable power, ample for today and constantly developing to meet the needs of tomorrow."

May I say parenthetically, don't be fooled by Democratic claims that we have not and are not spending enough for national defense and space exploration. If it is true, this is a fraudulent political charge from the Democrats because from 1955 to the present Democratic-controlled Congresses with substantial majorities have slashed Ike's defense budgets by \$3.5 billion. In the last two years the Democratically dominated House and Senate have reduced the National Aeronautics and Space Administration budgets by approximately \$80 million.

Any enemy foolish enough to provoke war will be annihilated. There is no deterrent gap now nor will there be one. It is Republican policy to maintain a powerful defense posture with overwhelming retaliatory force but only to insure the peace. The peace which gives you "opportunity with security." Mr. Butler may explain or excuse this, but the facts remain: we are at peace!

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EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES! When I left college in 1935, graduates were begging for jobs. By 1952 that had been changed, and today and during the last several years trained and talented people, whether from the schoolhouse or the shop, are in great demand. Today, there are 5 million more jobs in America than there were in 1952 when Ike was elected. This means 5 million more opportunities for you and other young people throughout the country.

And earnings are up! In 1952 the average weekly wage of industrial workers was \$67.97. In 1960 it is over \$90. This is an increase of 23 percent. In 1952 only 26 percent of American families earned over \$5,000. Today almost half have an annual income over this figure. Furthermore, engineering graduates in 1950 were offered beginning salaries of about \$255 a month. The University of Illinois today reports that its engineering majors are being offered \$525 a month to start. You can look forward to ever greater material rewards for your employment efforts. It is Republican

policy to promote and encourage an economic climate conducive to full employment, high wages, and adequate returns on savings and investments.

The policy works. You have opportunities and security. More jobs are available than ever before. Wages and salaries are up. Real income, and that's what counts, is mounting. Business is at a high level and moving steadily forward with confidence. This is Republicanism in action. Mr. Butler may explain or excuse this, but the facts remain: your opportunities for secure employment at good wages were never better. These opportunities are here because the American people, employers and employees, have an abiding faith in our system with its sound leadership in the White House.

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FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY! Republicans are dedicated to preserving the value of your dollar. We believe that you want the dollar you earn today to be a dollar tomorrow or next year. We know that only with a stable dollar can you save and plan for your future. We know that constant deficit spending by Uncle Sam destroys your savings and your plans.

The record on inflation is clear. The cost of living went up 50 percent in the 7 years of the Truman administration. From 1939 to 1952 the purchasing power of the dollar declined from 100¢ to 52¢ for an average loss of nearly 4¢ a year. This was no accident. It was consistent with governmental policy and practice of that era. In contrast, during the 7 years of the Eisenhower Administration the cost of living has risen only 9 percent. The purchasing power of your dollar declined only about 1¢ a year. Again, this was no accident. This relative stability was basically achieved by determination to adhere to sound theories of economics and by affirmative action against "the spenders." This stability was achieved by saying "NO" to many special interest groups who wanted their cut of your tax money. Inflation, which always robs the pockets of the poor and grabs insidiously from the savings of the aged, has been slowed down to a crawl by the common sense of fiscal integrity--of insisting that Uncle Sam do his utmost to live within his income.

To spend into debt may be easier, more palatable, and even more popular. But Republicans view the future as well as the present. No member of the Congress or the Executive Branch of the Government for the past 30 years should be proud of the \$290 billion debt our generations have left to you. Republicans want our federal government to pay its own way. If we are to have, we should pay. If the "spenders" will increase taxes to pay the bills, we will hold our fire. As responsible college men and women, you understand this simple truth, I'm sure.

Let me assure you that I am setting up no "straw men." Those in control of the Congress have proposed legislation which would add \$152.3 billion to normal spending over a five-year period. On the other hand, they have proposed no legislation to supply the funds.

Some Democrats in the Congress have called Ike and the Republicans "penny-pinchers." Let me remind you that President Eisenhower has recommended expenditures for 1961 of \$79.8 billion with approximately 55 percent of every tax dollar devoted to national security. Only three budgets in the history of our country have carried greater expenditures, one was the Eisenhower budget of 1959 and the others were World War II budgets. \$79.8 billion is not peanuts. As you and your parents know, it takes quite a chunk of money out of every pay check. You who have struggled or are struggling with Form 1040 know, too, that it takes too many of your dollars to make \$80 billion for Uncle Sam.

It is Republican policy to keep as much as possible of your own hard-earned money in your own pocket for disposal as you please. As college young people at the threshold of a working-earning experience, you want to keep as much of the fruits of your labors as possible. The "political spenders" want Uncle Sam to grab more. Republicans want you to keep more. Mr. Butler may explain or excuse this, but the facts remain: Republicans demand a fiscally responsible government, less spending, and less taxes. Republicans want you to have personal opportunities with security.

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INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM: We are often told that college students are "liberal" in their political thinking. We may have trouble defining the word "liberal." But I know that the historic "liberal" was the one who defended the rights of the individual. Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, Grover Cleveland, Woodrow Wilson fought to protect the individual citizen against great power of any type--governmental or economic. It is the Republican Party which today continues this fight to protect you as an individual. It leads the crusade for you as a person against domination and control by big government, big business, or big labor.

Republicans have faith in the ability of citizens of local communities and of each state to meet and solve local and state problems. They don't think every tough problem must be solved by Uncle Sam with an outpouring of federal dollars. Republicans know that you have the best government when you as citizens and voters are close to it and active in it. We see no special merit in concentrating greater and greater power in Washington. We have faith that you as intelligent, responsible citizens have the ability to handle many of your own problems locally.

When we get to specifics on human rights and individual freedom, the picture is perfectly clear. Let me emphasize, it is not the Republicans who have been consuming days, and weeks, and months, and nights in the United States Senate to oppose civil rights--in this instance the Constitutionally guaranteed right to vote. Mr. Butler well knows this roadblocking of the legislative process came from the members of his Democratic Party. It is Republican policy followed by action both in the Congress and in the Executive Branch to guarantee to all citizens the rights and privileges of the U. S. Constitution.

In reference to the negro effort in the South, no responsible Republican leader could say, "If anyone came to my store and sat down, I'd throw him out....Private business has its own rights and can do what it wants." These are the words of a Democratic ex-President, a so-called "liberal" if you please. The Republican Party united and determined, is dedicated to "human rights." It believes in "opportunity with security" for all Americans.

The Taft-Hartley Act enacted by a Republican Congress over the veto of a Democratic President and the Landrum-Griffin bill strongly endorsed by a Republican President were designed to protect your individual rights as an employee and as a member of a labor organization. Republicans know that unions are here to stay; they acknowledge that unions are necessary and that they serve a good purpose with honest and dedicated leadership. Republicans insist, however, that unions exist to serve their members. The rights of each working man must be protected against any force which would harm or abuse him as a person. We believe in responsible unions as we believe in responsible management in order to offer each of you an opportunity with security.

I must point out one more fact in this connection. It is impressive to note that the Eisenhower Republican Administration has brought 12 percent more anti-trust suits against big business in the past seven years than the previous Democratic Administration did in its seven years. It is Republican policy to protect the individual rights of all American citizens. Mr. Butler may deny or explain this, but the facts remain: The Republicans are united in their fight on behalf of the individual's rights and freedoms.

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COMMUNITY WELFARE: Finally, Republicans know that as individuals we have group and community needs which can best be met by Government. Long ago Abe Lincoln of Illinois said, "The legitimate object of government is to do for a community of people whatever they need to have done, but cannot do at all or cannot so well do, for themselves ---in their separate and individual capacities."

In those areas where Uncle Sam is equipped to do the job and there is no acceptable or desirable alternative, the Federal Government should take over.

Let us not forget that:

More money has been apportioned to the states for highways under the Eisenhower Administration than during the previous 40 years.

More than twice as many school classrooms have been built during the 6 years of this Administration than during the 6 years of the Truman Administration.

Over 4 times as much money has been appropriated for medical research than under the Truman Administration.

8 million more Americans have Social Security today than had it in 1952 and benefits have been increased by 48 percent.

This has all happened under a Republican Administration. Mr. Butler may attempt to explain it away, but the facts remain: The Republicans offer you opportunities with security.

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Now when you and your fellow Americans enter that polling booth and solemnly cast a ballot you will decide whether to continue America on the course of peace as achieved by the foreign policy of the past eight years--a foreign policy which ended one war, has prevented others and has opened the way toward even sounder peace through developing negotiation at the highest level.

Each voter will also decide whether to continue America in the prosperity-for-all course which has been achieved by the domestic policies followed in the past eight years--domestic policies which have given the people the greatest number of jobs, the best pay, the least inflation, the steadiest prices and the most assured family security of our times.

The 1960s will rank in history as among the greatest of decades which holds, at its beginning, the twin challenges of the most awesome peril and most promising opportunity of all time.

The people will decide, I feel certain, to continue onward in sound and steady progress the policies which have avoided peril and reaped opportunity for our country and the free world in the past eight years.

In making these decisions, I have confidence that you and the American people will not choose, in this critical era, any untried candidate as a substitute for the demonstrated talent, experience, and success of Dick Nixon.

It is Dick Nixon who will carry forward the Republican policies for opportunity with security for all.