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CARDS

MONTGOMERY, ALA.

JUN. 18, 1965

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, U.S.

PUBLIC DOCUMENT

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Gerald R. Ford
M.C.

Speech cards gop

Montgomery, Ala.

June 18, 1965

& excerpts

MICHIGAN.



Excerpts from a speech by Rep. Gerald R. Ford (R-Mich)
"Foreign Policy"
Montgomery, Ala. June 18, 1965

Congressional Republican Leadership will continue to support the President in his firm and resolute stand against Communist aggression in Vietnam and elsewhere.

We favor measured, meaningful military steps, which have been ordered by the President. However, we would oppose wild, unbridled expansion of the conflict in Vietnam to chase an impossible fantasy of unconditional Communist surrender.

Although everyone hopes for an end to the fighting, bloodshed and death on the jungle battlefields of Southeast Asia, negotiations on our part from a position of military weakness would mean surrender without meaning. It would mean American and South Vietnamese lives had been given in vain. It would mean the United States toppling from its position of world leadership into the bottomless canyon of mediocracy and weakness.

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Most members of Congress--Democrat and Republican--are not expected to have full knowledge of the inside, secret military day-by-day strategy of the war in Southeast Asia. Neither the public at large nor Congress has any idea at this time how far the Administration plans to stretch its military effort.

The combat decision-making rightfully belongs to the President as Commander-in-Chief. This is among the heavy burdens of his high office.

The President makes the military decisions, including targets to be bombed, the number of American troops to be committed on land and in the air. It takes a Presidential order to expand our efforts in Vietnam to a larger-scale ground and air war. He---and he alone---is responsible for military victories or defeats.

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Republicans in the House of Representatives, who are faced with overwhelming opposition in voting strength on legislation and awesome power in the executive branch have at least five major duties and responsibilities.

First, we must exert our influence in a positive manner to help guide our Nation toward freedom, security, peace and well-being within the framework of sound fiscal responsibility and the Constitution.

Secondly, we should support the Administration when it is right, oppose it when it is wrong, at the same time presenting constructive alternative proposals.

Our third duty is to expose any failures of the present Administration to keep promises made during the 1964 election campaign.

The fourth responsibility is to strive for a strong two-party system to overcome the present imbalance of power in the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government.

Finally, we must work with dedication and zeal to maintain and strengthen unity in the Republican ranks.

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Republicans must convince citizens in all segments of our society that we are concerned with their problems, that we care about them individually and collectively.

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As a Party we must insist that America regain its leadership in the world. Our foreign policy should be based on principle, power, patience and perseverance.

Our Nation cannot capitulate to Communist pressure in Viet Nam and we cannot withdraw. If we retreat our defense line would be at Pearl Harbor. We cannot permit the Pacific Ocean to become a Red Sea.

* * *

There has been talk of a split in the Republican ranks. I answer this by saying reunification is already well under way. The division is less sharp in our party than among Democrats.

It appears that the majority of Republicans believe in the philosophy of the high middle road of moderation.

By organizing our strength, rallying our forces, creating new ideas and earning the respect of the American people, we can expect victories in 1966 and a resurgence of strength.

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Rumblings of discontent and disenchantment with the way things are going in the alleged "Great Society" are spreading across the land.

The sounds of unrest, signalling a great awakening of the American electorate, offer the Republican Party one of the most important opportunities in years to regain strength.

For example, millions of Americans are learning with dismay that the Democrat-controlled Congress has sand-bagged them with more taxes arbitrarily taken from their paychecks.

Congressional action so far---with Democrats cringing under White House political whiplashing---means Americans will have less money to spend on necessities, slimmer bank accounts, and more choking federal control of their lives.

* * *

The United States as a country, every citizen as a member of a free society, and our form of government would be in jeopardy if one political party becomes so strong that it is unchallenged.

Although outnumbered 2 to 1 in Congress, Republicans are a forceful, optimistic, articulate, and united team that will have more members after 1966 elections.

* * *

There is growing national concern about the present imbalance of power in government. A strong two-party system and more balance of strength are essential to the protection of the individual and his best interests.

* * *

The Republican Party to have a resurgence of strength and to win victories must: recover fumbles made by the Administration---be a constructive, responsible force using new ideas to create better legislative proposals---recruit more members and enlist more intelligent, articulate and personable candidates---establish basic positions to broaden the base---reassert our principles that demand preservation of individual freedom and human dignity--- build better communications with the public at large---raise money to finance a strong effort.

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If we fail, we will fail the American people. Winning means contributing in great measure to the strength, the welfare, the health, the growth, the prosperity, the well-being of every citizen in the United States and in the society of the free world nations.

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