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March 24, 1966 - Thursday

REP. GERALD R. FORD ON FLOOR OF HOUSE

Mr. Speaker:

We have been told by the President of the United States that it will not be necessary to sacrifice his Great Society program in order to pay for the mounting costs of the war in Vietnam. We have seen his estimates in the fiscal 1967 Budget submission, and have noted that he would prefer that the Congress prune some tried and tested programs, such as the school milk program and Federal aid to land-grant colleges.

But until recently, I have not seen any estimate of what all the new and unproved Great Society programs are going to cost when they become fully implemented and are all added together. The first-year costs of most Federal programs are relatively small, but they have a way of growing bigger every year, and I can hardly recall during my 18 years here of one ever starting to shrink.

In the current (March, 1966) issue of the respected magazine, "Reader's Digest," an article by Mr. Charles Stevenson examines this serious problem under the title, "What Price--The Great Society?" The article reports that even if the war in Vietnam is brought under control, economists estimate conservatively that by 1975--just nine years hence--we will have a Federal budget of around \$204 billion and that welfare-state programs will account for more than half the total expenditures.

It also notes that state and local governments will be compelled to find matching funds so that their combined spending will soar during this period from about \$72 billion in 1964 to \$179 billion in 1975. I commend this interesting and informative article to the attention of my colleagues and all Americans who wonder why we Republicans are trying to hold down the high cost of government during this Great Society, or High Society, spending spree.

Under leave to extend my remarks, I include the article by Mr. Stevenson,

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