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REMARKS BY MR. FORD AT AIRLIE HOUSE LUNCHEON, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 4, 1966.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Welcome to Airlie House and welcome to the first general sessions at which we will be plotting how to take over the House of Representatives two years from now.

This is an occasion for some deep thinking and some serious talking, but also for a little celebrating. I'm sure you have some zip left over from New Year's Eve--zip that will give our Democratic friends a lot of trouble in the 90th Congress.

Speaking of zip, I know of at least one new Republican House Member who has an abundance of it. He was so full of zip on Election Night that he routed me out of bed at 2:30 in the morning to talk about the committee assignment he wanted.

He was understandably elated over his election--and we all certainly have a lot to be thankful for. In fact, there's a report that Santa Claus got back to the North Pole early this year because the Republicans had already been taken care of. Seriously, I don't think anybody gave us a thing.

The old gent with the whiskers and the red suit really gets around--and so do our spacecraft. You take Mariner 4, for instance. It has been orbiting the sun for two years now and has traveled about a billion miles. That's a pretty good clip, but really nothing compared to the records our Democratic friends achieve. It will take Mariner 4 about 653 years to travel a total distance of 326 billion miles. Already the Democrats have rolled up a federal debt of \$326 billion--and in just 35 years.

(MORE)



The Democrats have put the national debt into orbit but the news columnists today are writing about the high-flying Republicans. Well, we are flying high, but the people know we've got our feet on the ground.

You know, we've really arrived as a result of the 1966 elections.

We've even got Bob Hope and the other standup comics telling jokes about us. And when the comedians desert the other party, you can be sure they're in trouble.

Of course, times have changed a great deal. The House once barred a Mormon from taking his seat in Congress--and now we've got a Mormon who's planning on moving into the White House.

It's with a tremendous amount of pleasure that I look at the faces of all you new Republican members of the House. You can understand how really pleased I am when you consider what a scrawny bunch the Republicans were in the 89th Congress. Only 139 of us! Napoleon had it easier at Waterloo!

Well, now we're 187 strong, and I feel much more of a leader and much less of a minority. I'm sure that's also true of all the other members of the House Republican leadership. Among other things, we're here to get acquainted. So let me introduce the other members of the leadership team: The House Republican whip, Mr. Arends of Illinois; the chairman of the House Republican Conference, Mr. Laird of Wisconsin; the chairman of the House Republican Policy Committee, Mr. Rhodes of Arizona; the chairman of the Congressional Campaign Committee, Mr. Wilson of California; the chairman of the Research and Planning Committee, Mr. Goodell of New York; and the ranking Republican on the House Rules Committee, Mr. Smith of California.



Now that you've met the members of the leadership, we're ready to begin the serious business of this two-day orientation--a discussion of economic, foreign and military policy, and that highly important topic, The Problems of Getting Reelected. On that last topic, I hope we do a better job than the Democrats did at their orientation sessions for freshmen two years ago. That's it. Let's get to work.

