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ADDRESS BY REP. GERALD R. FORD, R-MICHIGAN
BEFORE THE AMERICAN MINING CONGRESS
AT THE STATLER HILTON HOTEL, WASHINGTON, D. C.

Gentlemen, I am most happy to be here. I feel right at home, talking with members of the American Mining Congress. Not too many people are aware of it, but Michigan is a mining state. We don't only make automobiles. In Michigan's Upper Peninsula, we also scoop out the iron and copper ores used to make some of the parts that go into producing a gleaming new family chariot. We even had a few coal mines in the Lower Peninsula of Michigan at one time.

But you hear enough about mining from each other and the experts. I'm supposed to be an expert on politics, and it's politics that I'm supposed to talk about today. You know, of course, that there really are no experts--only people who are believed to know more about something than somebody else.

I am a politician. Those who view politics abstractly define it as the art of government. Others have less kindly definitions for it.

One view everyone agrees on. To be successful a politician must develop an instinct--call it politician's intuition, if you will--which guides him when the evidence on which to base a quick judgment is unclear. It's similar to but not quite the same as divine revelation.

A clergyman I know advised a politician friend of his to go out into the rain, lift his eyes heavenward, and pray for divine guidance.

The politician did this and the next day he sought out the clergyman. "I followed your advice," he said, "but there was no revelation. All that happened was that the rain poured off the brim of my hat and down my neck and I felt like a darned fool."

"Well," the clergyman replied, "wasn't that quite a revelation for your very first try?"

If anything I say here today sounds political, it will not be so by design. I will simply be expressing my honest personal views. If they appear weighted in one direction, they will nevertheless represent my personal convictions as to what I believe best for our Nation--your country and mine.

With those words as a backdrop, let me give you my assessment of what the 90th Congress probably will be like.

First of all, the new Congress should reflect the wishes of the voters as expressed last Nov. 8.

If the 90th Congress does actually mirror the election results, it will be a New Direction Congress. I say that because the Nov. 8 election was a victory



for the Republican Party--and the Republican Party, in my view, is pointing the way to a New Direction in the Nation's affairs.

Some have called the 90th a "Stop-Look-and-Listen Congress." In a sense this is true, but the 90th Congress certainly is not going to stop responding to the needs of the country.

But I do think the people want Congress to STOP tossing federal dollars at every problem on the domestic horizon at the same time that we fight a \$2 billion-a-month war in Vietnam.

The American people also want Congress to LOOK at what it did in the last two years, do a diligent job of assessment and appraisal, and then act to correct the wrongs in our present approach.

The people want Congress to LISTEN more carefully to the sounds coming from the grass roots in this country and to be guided accordingly.

In that sense, I think the 90th Congress will be a stop, look and listen Congress. By that I do not mean that the 90th Congress will refuse to take any new steps. It will be alert to the needs of the country, but it will meet those needs prudently.

Republicans will not seek to dismantle the Great Society.

Our goals for this great Nation are the same as those of President Johnson. It is only our approach that is different. And it is this difference that nurtures the two-party system and promotes healthy political competition in this country.

In my view, Mr. Johnson's so-called Great Society is neither a just society nor a good society.

The basic approach of the two major parties is different, and when Republicans minister to the country there is a gentler laying on of hands. We do not believe that all state and local problems should be subjected to federal solutions. We do not believe that federally-directed, centralized problem-solving is necessarily the best way to cure the ills of modern America and its sprawling megalopolises. We believe the federal government should not intrude itself into the affairs of the states and local governments and individual American citizens any more than is necessary to give them the kind of direction and help needed to help them help themselves.

The 90th Congress, like the 89th, will labor under the shadow of the Vietnam War. Republicans will continue to support the Johnson Administration's basic policy in Vietnam, but we cannot help but ask questions about the direction or lack of direction sometimes apparent in that policy. I say 'sometimes apparent' because all too often it is impossible to tell just what the Administration's objectives are in Vietnam. Just as there has been no answer by the Johnson

Administration to the question, "what price victory?" so there has been no clear answer in the Johnson Administration to the question, "what price peace?"

The American people are demanding answers, and the answers are not forthcoming. One of the questions they are asking is whether the United States should ever get into a war it has no intention of winning. Fighting a \$25 billion-a-year war with only a vague hope that somehow there may be negotiations and somehow those negotiations just might result in national security for South Vietnam is not very satisfying to them. They have despaired of winning the war, but they want desperately to win the peace.

There apparently will be an investigation of civilian deaths in North Vietnam in connection with our bombing of military targets there. I would suggest there also be an investigation of the deaths of civilian South Vietnamese bombed by Vietcong terrorists--and the deaths of American servicemen who have been the victims of terrorist attacks in South Vietnam. It completely amazes me that any American would aid and abet North Vietnam in its obvious propaganda campaign aimed at convincing the world that the United States, and not the Communists, is guilty of atrocities in the Vietnam War.

Apart from the sacrifice of American men in Vietnam, the 90th Congress will be deeply concerned with that conflict because of its tremendous cost and the ramifications this has for domestic spending.

Mr. Johnson followed domestic policies in 1966 which prompted me to remark, "You'd think there wasn't a war on." His latest statements lead me to believe he intends to continue in the same basic pattern.

This, I am sure, will produce a Battle of the Budget in the 90th Congress.

I am afraid that the Johnson budget for fiscal 1968 will be drafted in such a way that the true level of federal spending will be concealed from the public. It will be apparent only to those persons able to see through the kind of budget gimmickry that has characterized the Johnson Administration.

The 90th Congress has inherited a fiscal mess created by the Johnson Administration and an overwhelmingly Democratic 89th Congress which refused to face up to the problem of inflation.

Mr. Johnson pushed costly social welfare schemes through Congress under a cloak of budgetary deception.

He did this by employing devices which concealed the true level of projected spending and by refusing to give Congress true figures on the cost of the Vietnam War.

Now he is about to come to Congress with a request for \$10 billion or more in supplemental appropriations for Vietnam.

The Johnson Administration last year gave birth to a fiscal Frankenstein which will haunt the 90th Congress.

Spending cuts might have taken the edge off inflation in early 1966. If they had failed to do the job, a tax increase would have been indicated. But Mr. Johnson failed to take either action, and Democrats in Congress further inflated his already inflationary budget.

It must be recognized that the federal government has an obligation to restrain the economy to prevent or halt inflation as well as a duty to spur it to pull the country out of a slump.

This has been the great domestic failure of the Johnson Administration--its failure to take timely and adequate action against inflation. Thus was the New Economics sacrificed on the altar of politics. And this was accompanied by the Great Deception of the Great Society--playing games with the federal budget.

Currently the major economic issue is: Should we raise income taxes?

I think our first consideration should be the state of the economy. At present an income tax increase seems not only undesirable but dangerous. It could tip the country into a recession.

Caution should mark our handling of monetary and fiscal policy in 1967. We should keep the stethoscope constantly trained on the heart of the economy. It may well need a shot of adrenalin perhaps midway through the year, instead of a depressant.

The year 1967 will be characterized by labor unrest. Big contracts will come up for renewal. The unions will seek--and many of them will get--raises of from 5 to 7 or 8 percent. This is to be expected in the backwash of the inflationary wave that hit us last year and record-high profits.

I have always supported labor's right to strike, but it must be clear to all Americans that government machinery for handling national emergency strikes is inadequate. I believe most Americans want congressional action to improve the handling of national emergency strikes. This will be an issue in the 90th Congress.

The President promised to send emergency strike legislation to Congress last year. He failed to do so. Congress will be waiting for his recommendations in 1967.

A major issue which will be developed in the 90th Congress is that of federal grants-in-aid of the hat-in-hand kind as opposed to the Republican plan for sharing of federal revenue with the states and cities on a percentage basis and without strings. Republicans firmly believe revenue-sharing is the best avenue for solving most state and local problems. The problems vary from state to state and city to city. Therefore the solutions vary. It is wasteful of time, money

and human resources for city officials to keep preparing two-inch-thick application forms and go running from one federal agency to another in search of dollar help. They should get that help without being caught in paralyzing delays and a maze of red tape.

Interwoven with nearly all of the problems to be tackled by the 90th Congress will be the question of bringing federal expenditures under control.

If we leave income tax rates unchanged and the country does not slip into a recession because of the Johnson Administration's economic policy blunders of 1966 and late 1965, federal revenues should continue to grow by perhaps \$6 to \$7 billion a year in the administrative budget.

On that basis, Republicans will insist that by calendar year 1968 we bring expenditures into reasonable balance with these enlarged revenues.

We also must act to eliminate the overlapping of agencies and functions that now impedes the proper operation of our federal government and leads to waste and confusion. For that reason Republicans will press in the 90th Congress for the establishment of a new Hoover-type commission to study the federal bureaucracy and recommend ways of bringing order out of chaos.

The 90th Congress has its work cut out for it. Much of that work will be corrective. The 90th will be an oversight Congress--and by that I mean it will look over what's been done and yet not overlook what needs to be done.

If the new Congress is responsive to the wishes of the American people, it will be a cautious, prudent Congress, alert to problems but judicious in its approach to them. It will be a Congress that is truly representative. Thank you.

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