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Tuesday, April 11 (Note deletions)

AN ADDRESS BY MINORITY LEADER GERALD R. FORD, R-MICH.
BEFORE THE CALIFORNIA COLLEGE REPUBLICANS CONVENTION
MIRAMAR HOTEL, SANTA BARBARA, CALIF.

I ~~have come~~^{want} to tell you about a great opportunity--an opportunity to become political missionaries in an age of young people who care much about problems and little about blind allegiance to political parties. ~~In short,~~^{you have an opportunity to become} political missionaries to people who think.

Let's face it, Republicans are definitely in the minority in this country. This poses a tremendous problem for the Republican Party--as a party.

But, even now, there are many signs the American people are open to reason, ready to buy what we have to sell. The minority has solid hopes of becoming the majority.

The 1966 elections proved that, and if I didn't believe it I wouldn't be standing here.

I am here because you gentlemen are the trumpets of hope. You are the messengers of the Republican Party. You are the conduit through which party leaders can transmit to the American people the truths on which you and I base our political faith.

You are intelligent. You are vocal. You are articulate. The leaders of the Republican Party need you.

You are the Republican Party's best hope for the future. I say that because you are or will soon become part of what I call the New Electorate, the young people who will become the majority in this country in perhaps 20 years. YOU are WHERE THE VOTES ARE, as a study made by the Senate Republican Policy Committee has indicated.

What did that study reveal? It pointed up the fact that in the last two years alone nearly six million young people celebrated their 21st birthday. It also showed that party identification is weakest among voters in their early and middle 20's.

The world belongs to the young. America belongs to the young. I say that with joy in my heart despite my thinning hair.

The young are a new power group in American politics. And the most significant aspect of this development is that it opens up a great opportunity for the Republican Party.

This is the opportunity I cited for you earlier. It is an opportunity to make America's new voters Republicans, to sell them on the Republican Party before they become "set in their ways," as the mountain folk say.

Now how do we do that? I think the answer is that we must talk with them in terms of their own problems, issues that are meaningful to them.

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It's not enough to tell them why YOU are a Republican. You must inform yourself on what your Party is doing, what its policies are, what its ongoing program is...and sell Republicanism as the course that is right for the country.

I firmly believe we DO have the answers, and I sense that a majority of the American people are beginning to realize it. They are just "beginning to see the light," as the popular song goes, and so what you and I must do is to achieve a break-through. We have to bring the message home, make it stick, make it pay off at the ballot box.

You DO have to have something to sell. It's fine to talk about faith in the individual, the right to live your life without government interference, the soundness of the free enterprise system, the fact that the United States has an economic system second to none, a belief in economics based on sound money and avoidance of inflationary deficits. But I don't know that you'll win many votes with these appeals unless you tie them to a bread-and-butter issue, pin them to something people can see and smell and touch.

Let me try something out on you to show you what I mean.

In a few years--in some cases, in a few months--you will leave the halls of learning and embark on a career. Whatever that career, you will be paying Social Security taxes.

In that context, let me tell you about the Johnson Administration's proposal to raise Social Security benefits an average of 20 per cent--and, of course, to raise payroll taxes. This is legislation that affects not only America's elderly but its young people

Our elderly need an increase in benefits. They need help badly. But we must also realize we are now reaching a moment of truth on the question of the payroll tax burden.

For many years Americans have taken the attitude..."So what if Social Security taxes go up; I'll get it all back some day when I need it the most."

Now, for the first time, the shoe is beginning to pinch. People are beginning to realize that there must be a limit to how high Social Security taxes are permitted to go.

The President's proposal is a very ambitious plan--and inequitable to young people.

Under his proposal, payroll taxes would rise steadily over the next 20 years until they reached a maximum rate of 5.8 per cent to be paid by every wage earner or salaried worker on every dollar of his pay up to \$10,800. Every employer also would pay this same levy--for a combined employee-employer payroll tax of 11.6 per cent.

To put the President's plan into dollars and cents terms, the maximum that

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could be deducted from a person's pay would jump from the present \$290.49 to \$343.20 next year, \$390 in 1969, \$450 in 1971. By 1988--20 years hence--it would be \$626.40--more than double the present amount.

Is there a pot of gold for the young at the end of the Social Security rainbow?

The Tax Foundation has made an analysis which indicates that a 21-year-old American putting in 44 years of work and paying in to the Social Security Trust Fund at today's tax levels would pay \$33,496 in taxes and interest to the fund. If he lived 13 years after reaching age 65, that worker would collect just \$19,704 in benefits.

Lyndon Johnson would impose an increasingly heavy payroll tax on young Americans despite the fact they will get the short end of the stick when they retire.

What's the answer? We must achieve a balance between benefits and the tax burden.

We need improvements in our Social Security system. Our elderly today are the victims of Johnson inflation triggered when the Administration failed last year to halt the swift rise in the cost of living.

But it is irresponsible for anyone to call for benefit increases averaging 20 per cent and to dump the increased tax burden on our young people. It's Social Security politics with a vengeance.

It's time to look at the entire Social Security System, consider the intent of the original Act, and ask ourselves where we go from here.

This is something you can talk about with young voters or prospective voters--the fact that high federal payroll and income taxes are destroying individual initiative in America.

You can talk ~~about~~ about Vietnam and the proud record of the Republican Party in unswervingly supporting every sound effort to thwart Communist aggression there and to give the South Vietnamese the freedom to make a life of their own choosing.

You can lay that record alongside that of the other party--a party so deeply divided on Vietnam that its voices of dissent encourage the Communists to keep fighting and thus prolong the war.

This is a tragedy that shakes the Nation. It brings to mind the immortal words of Lincoln: "A house divided against itself cannot stand." I say a party divided against itself cannot lead--cannot effectively lead the country in war or out of war, cannot lead the people to an honorable peace.

These are the issues as the Republican Party seeks to offer responsible leadership to the American people. These are the issues, and there are many more.

There's the question of whether we should continue pouring out federal aid through a grant-in-aid system which is proving so ponderous as to be practically unworkable.

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Republicans offer a New Direction in federal aid to local units of government-- federal tax-sharing which skirts the federal bureaucracy and makes some layers of it ripe for the pruning knife. This would reduce the cost of operating the federal government. It would speed up the process of problem-solving by making federal funds available to states and cities without filtering project applications through several layers of bureaucratic fat.

There is the spectacle of our cities, rotting under the weight of problems long unsolved despite an estimated \$100 billion in federal aid over the years. Republicans know the job is just too big for government alone. Billions in private capital are needed. Business has a social responsibility to help rebuild our cities-- and there's money to be made in it, too. In addition to renovating and rebuilding, business could bring its technological genius to bear on countless urban problems. The result would be a kind of "cities industry," generating a rebirth for our asphalt jungles.

We need a true government-business partnership if America is to climb out of the stagnation and decay into which its great cities have sunk. Federal tax-sharing is part of the answer, for it ultimately would provide our cities with many more federal billions than they now have to work with and would let them use these funds in line with their own priorities.

Air pollution and water pollution are dangers that demand an all-out assault by government and industry. We need standards and we need strong enforcement so that companies in one state are not placed at a competitive disadvantage with those in another as they invest in pollution controls. The other party would just swing a big stick. Republicans believe the country would move much more quickly toward clean air and water if we coupled enforcement with incentive. Give industries a tax break on the cost of air and water pollution controls and let's move swiftly to clean up our air and water. And let government set an example. Government itself is guilty of polluting our air, in some instances.

What I am doing here is pointing up the differences in the philosophies of the two major political parties by translating them into specifics.

To put it broadly, ours is a responsible party--a party that encourages individual responsibility, individual initiative, strong local and state government, a strong federal government which so exercises its power as to forge a partnership of progress with state and local units of government and with private industry.

The other party sees the federal government as the receptacle of all wisdom, the fount from which billions flow in unceasing flood for every conceivable project man can devise, the Mount Olympus where reside the gods who direct the affairs of the menials in the state capitals and the cities of the Nation.

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We--you--have an opportunity to change all that. The Republican Party has a real opportunity to win in 1968--to win the White House and control of the House of Representatives.

This will take desire, money, work and that most precious and easily lost ingredient, unity.

We must build the Republican Party from a minority party to a group which holds the reins of power. We can do that if college Republicans here and throughout the Nation will rise to the responsibility that is theirs--the challenge to go out into the wilderness of young Democrats and come back with some scalps. The future of the Republican Party, ladies and gentlemen, is in your hands. Thank you.

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