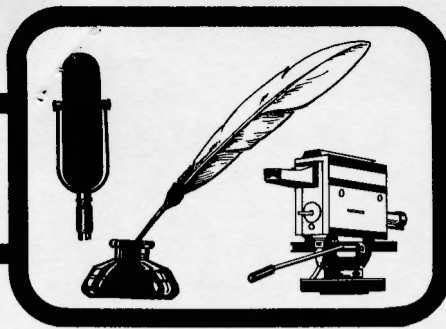


The original documents are located in Box D23, folder “15th Congressional District Lincoln Day Dinner, Dearborn, MI, February 24, 1968” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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CONGRESSMAN
GERALD R. FORD
HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER

**NEWS
RELEASE**

--FOR SUNDAY AM's RELEASE--

Excerpts from a Speech by Rep. Gerald R. Ford, R-Mich., at a Michigan 15th Congressional District Lincoln Day Dinner Saturday Evening, Feb. 24, at Dearborn, Mich.

With an amazing lack of modesty, President Johnson recently compared himself to a great Republican president, Abraham Lincoln.

Speaking at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D. C., Lyndon Johnson said: "We live in a time that Lincoln would have well understood. Sad, but steady... always convinced of his cause...he stuck it out. Sad, but steady, so will we."

Since Lyndon Johnson has invited comparison with Abraham Lincoln, let's oblige him.

Would you attach an "honest Lyndon" name-tag to the man whose protegee was the notorious Bobby Baker of Senate influence-peddling fame, the man whose Administration has produced an ever-widening Credibility Gap?

As Lincoln once said: "If you once forfeit the confidence of your fellow citizens, you can never regain their respect and esteem. It is true that you can fool all of the people some of the time; you can even fool some of the people all the time; but you can't fool all the people all the time."

How fittingly those words describe what has happened in America under the Johnson Administration!

We have seen a crisis of confidence develop in this country from the time peace candidate Lyndon Johnson told the American people in 1964 he would not "send American boys to do the job that Asian boys should be doing" to recent weeks when the Viet Cong seized the initiative in Vietnam and smashed the pacification program there while the Johnson Administration described these events as an allied victory.

How does "Lay-it-on-the-line Lyndon" sound to you? Does anyone really believe that Lyndon Johnson has been candid and forthright with the American people?

The chief reason there is a Credibility Gap between the Johnson Administration and the American people is that the people have been misled nearly every step of the way on Vietnam, and the same can be said about a number of other issues.

The American people simply are not getting truth in government from the Johnson Administration. Without truth in government, there can be no confidence in government. Without confidence in government, the Nation finds itself in great peril.

(more)



Are the American people interested in honesty in government? They're not getting it from the Johnson Administration.

Take a look at the record. There is a stench in the Agency for International Development that emanates from acceptance of kickbacks from foreign contractors and favors from party girls, falsification of travel vouchers, purchase of \$260,000 of worthless battery additive for South Vietnam, allowing a Minnesota firm to unload nearly \$4 million of junky gearmaking machinery in India, and other cases. In the Small Business Administration we find special handling of a bidding eligibility certificate so that a \$13.3 million Post Office Department contract went to a now-defunct firm, again located in Minnesota, in a deal that went sour and smacks of favors returned for political favors received.

The smell of scandal now enveloping the Johnson Administration is seeping out from high places--in fact, a place right next to the ultimate seat of power.

The Johnson Administration has done a lot of explaining. It has a lot more explaining to do.

Why does the President brag about 84 months of what he calls uninterrupted prosperity when it is splashed with the blood of Vietnam and when his own Labor Department reveals that inflation has robbed the American worker of every so-called wage gain he made during the past two years?

Why did the President do nothing about inflation in 1966 when demand was running wild and why does he now seek to ram an income tax increase down the throats of the American people after the price spiral damage is done?

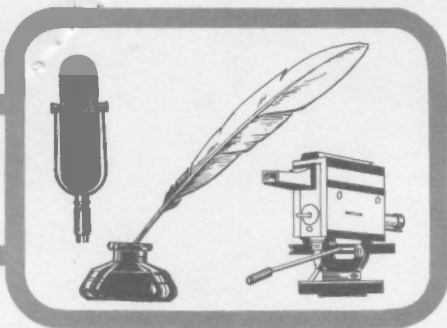
Why does the Administration carry out its spy ship operations so carelessly that this Nation is humiliated by a fifth rate Communist power?

President Johnson has compared himself to Lincoln. Let him ponder the words of Lincoln when he said: "History is not history unless it is the truth."

Lincoln and the Republican Party led this Nation through the soul-rending crisis that was the War Between The States. Now we are threatened with a second civil war--between the forces of law and order in this country and the black militants.

Remember Vice-President Humphrey saying he might lead a revolt himself if he had to live under slum conditions? There is no excuse for the conditions he spoke of. But there also is no excuse for a Vice-President of the United States encouraging rioting by his words.

Today the American people are looking to the Republican Party to reunite our country--a nation torn apart by stresses and strains at home and bloody strife abroad. I believe the people long for a new leader who will...in Lincoln's words... "rise with the occasion." We will meet the challenge.



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