

**The original documents are located in Box D24, folder ““Tell It Like It Is” Symposium, Southwestern University, Memphis, TN, March 1, 1968” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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"Tell It Like It Is -- A Minority View"

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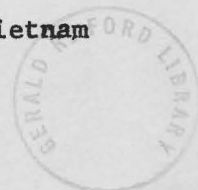
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The American people are a moral people. They want to be told how it is and where we go from here. They become deeply disturbed when the truth is hidden in a thicket of contradictions and misleading statements by Government spokesmen.

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The gap opened up when Lyndon Johnson campaigned as a peace candidate in 1964-- although it was not then readily visible. Now a book has been published which documents the fact that on no less than five occasions during the 1964 campaign President Johnson indicated he would never send large ground forces to Vietnam.

For instance, on August 29, 1964, he told the Nation: "Some others are eager to enlarge the conflict. They call upon us to supply American boys to do the job that Asian boys should do. They ask us to take reckless action which might risk the lives of millions. We don't want our American boys to do the fighting for Asian boys. We don't want to get involved in a nation with 700 million people and get tied down in a land war in Asia."

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Let's tell it like it is.

The housewife would say that the cost of living has gone up nearly 15 per cent in the last seven years. It costs her \$11.43 to buy what \$10 would buy in 1960.

The American people find themselves plagued with cost inflation, price inflation, massive federal deficits piled one on top of another, some of the highest interest rates in a hundred years, a dangerously low gold supply, and repeated attacks on the dollar.

Deficit spending--the spending of borrowed money--has added \$70 billion to the national debt since 1960, the last year the federal budget was balanced.

The present Administration is responsible for \$60 billion of those accumulated deficits and currently offers us the prospect of \$20 billion deficits "back to back" unless we raise income taxes.

The economists are largely agreed that the economy will turn soft in the second half of 1968 and that a sizable increase in income taxes at that time might be dangerous.

Meanwhile Social Security taxes have been raised and State and local taxes are rising steadily--so that the combined federal, state and local tax burden



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The economy has deteriorated to the point that the steadily rising cost of production--and not excessive demand--is the primary push behind the steady rise in the cost of living.

The inflation we now are experiencing is a direct result of Administration failure to cool off the economy when it became overheated in 1966.

It is because the Administration failed to fight inflation in 1966 and left that job to the Federal Reserve Board that we now are paying record-high interest rates on all of our credit and mortgage purchases.

The Administration's proposal to fight inflation with an income tax increase was not sent to the Congress until August 1967--after inflation caused by excessive demand had changed to inflation caused by excessive production costs. It was too late then and it is too late now, the wrong medicine in point of time.

The whole burden of the inflation pressing so heavily on the American people--the demand-pull kind in 1966 and the cost-push kind in 1967 and 1968--rests on the Administration and its failure to take timely action to halt the price-wage spiral at its inception.

The burden also rests on the Administration for following a guns and butter policy in time of war.

President Johnson recently cited his accomplishments in social welfare fields. He measured those accomplishments not in terms of concrete results but in terms of the billions of federal dollars thrown at problems which continue to confound federal planners.

He proudly states that while the Administration spent only \$19 billion for health, education and welfare in 1960, this was raised to \$23 billion in 1964 and bumped to \$47 billion this year.

He notes that federal programs for the poor totalled only \$9 billion in 1960, climbed to \$12 billion in 1964 and now total \$28 billion.

He points with pride to the fact that Administration spending of \$3 billion on government training programs in 1960 rose to \$4 billion in 1964 and now has climbed to \$12 billion.

I am just as eager as President Johnson to lick the ancient enemies of the people--poverty, hunger and ignorance. But has massive federal spending restructured American society? What are the results? Where are the benefits?

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Now there is an escalating arms race on both sides as police prepare for new outbreaks of rioting in the summer of 1968 and Negro militants plan guerrilla terrorist tactics.

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If we tell it like it is in America in this year 1968 we see many problems-- problems that threaten to tear us apart as a people, problems that demean us in the eyes of the world, problems that threaten us with collapse as a nation.

This is a time of crisis. That is why we need more than ever before to tell it like it is--to face up to the fact that the path we have followed in the last few years has produced the threat of a war between the races at home, stalemate in Vietnam, humiliation at the hands of North Korea, the distrust of the Israelis and the Arabs due to our non-policy in the Middle East, a sundering of the once-strong ties that bount NATO together, danger that the Soviet Union will upset the balance of power throughout the world and surpass us in nuclear capability, a weakening of the dollar both at home and abroad.

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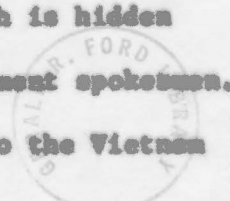
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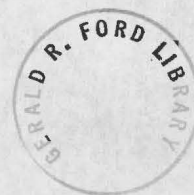
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