The original documents are located in Box D13, folder "Annual Republican Lincoln Day Dinner, Butler, PA, February 9, 1950" of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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## SPEECH TO BE GIVEN FEBRUARY 9, 1950 AT THE ANNUAL REPUBLICAN LINCOLN DAY DINNER AT BUTLER, PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. Chairman, honored and distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen -Being with you this evening on this occasion is a real privilege. I would be remiss in my responsibilities if no mention at this time were made of my good friend and yours, Congressman Louis E. Graham. a new member of the Congress I have had, as do all of us freshmen, a difficult time and little opportunity to know and thoroughly appreciate all of my colleagues. Circumstances, principally the question of time. limit your sound appraisal of only the best in the House. I can truthfully and honestly state, and without equivocation, that Louie Graham is one of the soundest and most mature members of the House of Representatives. You should be proud of his record as we are proud to number him among our colleagues on the Republican side of the aisle. My comments are not based on long standing friendships or personal affection but rather on a critical analysis and appraisal of the work I have seen done on the floor of the House.

In the months following one of the blackest Tuesdays in the history of this country, namely November 2, 1948, it was my subconscious feeling that the United States was on the brink of disaster with little or no hope of recovery. It seemed to me that people of our nation had lost a golden opportunity on November 2nd to snatch from the hands of selfish minority groups the controls of our Government. Through indifference and a failure to undertake our responsibilities as citizens, we fumbled the ball on that infamous day.

In the days, weeks and months following November 2nd our feelings enshrouded our conscience. We knew as citizens and as members of a great political party that we had been remiss in our responsibilities. The shock of defeat was such a blow many thought no recovery was possible. This attitude was understandable if not desirable.

The long, uphill road and battle began in the Congress early in 1949.

Through near historic efforts, I believe, Republican members of the Congress averted further disaster. We licked in practically every instance the "handout state" programs of the Administration. This struggle which was

carried on on your behalf became infectious, and in recent months a new spirit among Republicans has permeated our nation. In addition, and this is most important, this new attitude has seemingly taken hold of the imagination of that great group of citizens who consider themselves independent voters.

A year ago Republican rallies and dinners were performa performances. We went through the routine with little hope for future successes. Today

I am glad to report to you that Republican gatherings are attended by citizens of all walks of life, of all ages, who believe they have a mission and a crusade.

Let me give you several examples. On January 21st, in the City of Detroit, the largest and most enthusiastic GOP dinner and get together was held in the history of the Party in the State of Michigan. We did not delve on our dismal past performances, but rather spoke of our future achievements.

I can assure you that every Republican from the State of Michigan who attended that meeting, and even those who were turned away for lack of facilities, and there were many, believe that our mission can be accomplished in the crucial months ahead.

On Monday night, February 6th, the Republican women of the District of Columbia put on the most succeesful political rally in the annals of the nation's capital, the cost of the function a mere \$2.20, that including a grass roots dinner, excellent speeches by our leaders, and an evening of good entertainment. It might be mentioned that we who attended, and there were over 10,000 in the arena, paid our Federal tax in order to participate in this stirring event. In passing, I might mention that our Democratic friends, who are having their annual Jackson-Jefferson Day Dinner with a tariff of \$100 per plate, are not assuming their share of the tax burden. For some unknown reason, probably best known by the Administration, the

I would like to give you still another example of a reborn enthusiasm. In my home town, Grand Rapids, Michigan, we are having the largest Republican Lincoln Day Dinner in the history of the community. A year ago at our Lincoln Day Dinner we had difficulty in corralling 350 for the occasion.

In 1950, 2 weeks in advance of the Dinner, 1600 dinner tickets have been sold and it is estimated that 2,000 or more citizens will attend the speech making as the guests of the Committee.

Needless to say, I am certain that you who are here this evening have a similar attitude as best illustrated by the enthusiasm and determination that I see among you.

As a young men, I am one of those who became of voting age after the New Deal came into power, and as a result have had no opportunity to point to the White House and say "A Republican who believes in our American way of life now occupies the highest and most respected office in the world." All of my contemporaries are in the same category and as a result have never had the opportunity to appraise the difference between sound administration and maladministration. Because there has been no opportunity to contrast good and evil, it has taken a longer time than normally would be necessary for the younger generation to see that our future success depends upon a change in authority in the White House and in the Congress.

It is now becoming apparent, however, that some of our leaders in the younger generations are realizing and appraising the gravity of the situation. Instead of being sold a false bill of goods by the Administration's propagandists we are presently seeing a rebirth of young GOPism on our college campuses and in our communities. In the Middle West, for example, a determined group

of young Republicans have taken the time and effort to present a thoughtful platform entitled "The Opportunity State". At the same time, and working independently, another group of young Republicans in New York State has prepared what they call "A Blueprint for a Better America". I submit to you that these two young groups, and there may be many more with which I am not acquainted, have started a grass roots movement to rekindle the fires in the hearts and minds of our young people. I recommend most highly that you aid and abet any and all new movements of this sort for both the Party and the nation need such help. Frankly and in all sincerity, some of the most constructive and concrete thinking I have seen among Republicans has been evidenced by the work of the young GOPers in New York and on the campus in Ann Arbor, Michigan. No one here tonight probably agrees in toto with every provision in the Michigan platform or the New York blueprint, but under no circumstances should we destroy their initiative by being disdainful of their determination to present a real platform to those of their own generation.

Our real purpose in gathering here this evening is to pay tribute to one of the greatest Americans in our nation's history. At the same time it is highly appropos for us to draw lines of distinction between the political

philosophies of the Party founded by Abraham Lincoln and the present

Democratic administration. I have entitled my speech "The Present

Democratic Administration - a Menace", and I feel that if Abraham Lincoln

were here with us during these tumultuous and confusing times his attitude

toward those now in authority in Washington would be identical with ours.

Abraham Lincoln believed in the preservation of the Union and the fundamental

American way of life. Today we are faced with an equally grave crisis and

unless all of us are willing to contribute of our time and means, the nation

that Lincoln preserved will inevitably tumble over the precipice toward

statism.

So much has been written about this great leader of the American people,

Abraham Lincoln, that today he stands as one of the symbols of real

Americanism. What made Abraham Lincoln a legend? What did he accomplish

to deserve such a niche in our history? Why is he treated with such great

reverence by all of our people?

You are all familiar with Abraham Lincoln's **rights** rise from the back woods of Kentucky to the office of President of the United States. He was a man of kindness, simplicity, intelligence, statesmanship, integrity, and deep

religious conviction. Unfortunately some of his recent successors in that high office have lacked to a surprising degree a number of these necessary and desirable characteristics. I condemn no man for any individual failings, but I feel it is tragic for the American people and the world at large, and in these critical times, that our President cannot be above backroom political trading and lacking in essential qualities for true leadership.

Today more than ever before we need to survey Lincoln's life to evaluate what he said and what he did. As the first President elected by the Republican Party, Lincoln gives us the answer or answers to the trouble that is presently raging in this country as to whether or not we should preserve the American concept or way of life in favor of a new philosophy, term it what you will. Some call the present Administration's program socialistic. Others define it differently. Regardless of the definition, it must be admitted that the Administration does not believe in or stand for principles that have guided our people to the pinnacle in the short span of 174 years.

In reality there can be no compromise. The Republican Party does not necessarily disagree with some of the Democrats in the goals we seek to achieve.

The basic difference is in the means by which a better standard of living may be obtained for all of us. This difference is reflected in the completely dissimilar political and social philosophies prevailing within each Party.

The choice between these two philosophies lies with the American people. It is an alternative between self-help and the handout.

The leaders of the present Democratic Party pursue relentlessly their policy of unlimited Federal spending for the purpose of appeasing pressure groups which command large blocks of votes. The Administration's program is not one of prudently conceived assistance to the individual in need but is rather a program of creating a reliance upon Government from the cradle to the grave. The inevitable result has been the slow but never-ending destruction of self-reliance and individual incentive. By demagoguing appeals to the something-for-nothing instinct, the Democrats in the past have and will in the future endeavor to obtain widespread support of their program. We in the Republican Party firmly believe that the American people are self-reliant and independence-loving citizens and that they, if the facts were known to them, would resent being classified as the objects of permanent charity.

Most Americans prefer to rely primarily upon their own industry, ability and

decision to provide not only the necessities but also the luxuries of life rather than to rely upon the uncertain benevolence of government. Abraham Lincoln believed then as he would now in the Republican point of He is quoted as having said: "The legitimate object of government is to do for a community of people whatever they need to have done, but cannot do at all, or cannot so well do, for themselves, in their separate and individual capacities. In all that the people can do individually do as well for themselves, Government ought not to interfere." Republicans are constantly reminded by unthinking people that all segments of our society are now better off economically speaking than they were in the days before the present Administration. I ask you, is that a true statement? Statisticians can show that we may be slightly more prosperous, but if the end result is complete loss of individual opportunity, is temporary economic success worth the cost?

Many citizens rightfully ask the question, What has happened to the American people that they should allow the United States to reach a point to which we may never return. We have gradually traveled the path of regimentation and government control in a piecemeal but nevertheless unchanging course.

I could recount for you some of the legislation that has been enacted during the past 18 years that would prove my point. I think it best, however, to call to your attention some of the proposals that lie ahead for in them the real danger is most evident. The answer to the success or failure of the Republican Party depends upon our making aware to the American people the specific faults and failings of our Democratic friends.

A sound analysis of the Administration's basic legislative program would convince you that it is not in accord with the concepts of Abraham Lincoln.

Mr. Lincoln at one time made the following statement — "You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging threats, you cannot strengthen the weak by weaking the strong, you cannot help the wage earner by pulling down the wage payer, you cannot establish sound security on borrowed money, you cannot

statements are the complete antithesis of the present philosophy prevalent in the Administration. I believe the Republican point of view on all issues coincides with that expressed by Mr. Lincoln and is in contrast to the policies of the Democrats.

We Republicans have been accused of "Me-tooism". I deplore the use of the

for a number of reasons, but principally because it does not define our Party's program. On February 6,1950, the Republican Party issued a Statement of Principles and Objectives. The 1950 Statement coincides with the ideals so often expressed by Abraham Lincoln.

partisan approach with full consideration and recognition to the legislative partisan approach with full consideration and recognition to the legislative branch of our government. We are opposed to secret commitments such as those entered into at Yalta. We vehemently and vigorously believe in stopping the spread of Communism. Our Party does favor an extension and expansion of world trade, but we question the soundness or the advisability of such a program where it will imperil the living standards of our own people. The

program where it will imperil the living standards of our own people. The United States should not allow the flooding of our markets with goods produced by cheap labor to the inevitable detriment of our national security and the economic status of our individual workers.

In recent weeks it has been vividly called to our attention that seemingly responsible officials in our State Department have been guilty of treasonous conduct. Furthermore our present Secretary of State, well knowing that a

fair and equitable trial had been granted to Alger Hiss, refused to admit of achievely

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the reprehensible conduct of a former associate. Loyalty and compassion are commendable personal qualities but Mr. Acheson's words pertaining to Mr. Hiss do little credit to a man occupying such a high official position. Secretary Acheson has impaired his usefulness as a governmentax official been converted perging and by induction converted by his comments concerning the activities of a man who has betray on, his Treason is not a pardonable offense in the eyes of the American people. Unless the Secretary has the desire to retract his comments on his attitude toward Mr. Hiss, Mr. Acheson should resign. On domestic matters the issue is clearly drawn between us and our Democratic In our new Statement of Policy there is a statement demanding a balanced budget and a general reduction of our mounting tax burden. is indeed a shame on the American people that at a time of relative prosperity this nation is faced with pending bankruptcy. Canada, our neighbor to the north, has led the way and made a phenomenal record in reducing taxes and balancing the budget. To the contrary, the present Administration's record is one of increased taxes, increased annual deficits, and mounting national

The Republican Party in its Statement of Policy stands four-square with the American Farm Bureau.

indebtedness.

We condemn the Brannan plan which aims at nationalizing agriculture.

The program set forth in the GOP Policy Statement advocates a fair

price for the farmer's products at the market place by a system of price

supports only when the need is apparent and with emphasis on the funda
mental concepts of free enterprise.

I imagine the farmers in this county and this area are similar in many respects to those in my own district. We have a strong Grange and a strong Farm Bureau. Our farmers in Michigan are not selfish predatory citizens who disregard the legitimate point of view of the urban consumers and the welfare of our national economy. Our farmers and those of you in this district who live in rural areas want above all class a fair share of our national income without entire reliance on government subsidies, and above all else deplore the trend toward regimentation of our agriculture. We in the Republican Party need have no apology for the basic philosophy in most of the provisions in the Labor Management Relations Act of 1947, better known as the Taft-Hartley Act. Our new Policy Statement stands four-square for the Taft-Hartley approach in contrast to the Administration's

inequitable Wagner Act. No one denies that the Taft-Hartley Act can be

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amended to eliminate certain inequities. I can assure you that a sincere attempt was made by the Members of the Congress in our Party during the last session to amend the Taft-Hartley Act where proven inequalities existed. Members of the Democratic Party with an alleged fiendish allegiance to the Wagner Act refused to cooperate in any honest effort to change the existing law. Furthermore, despite the statement in the Democratic platform that the Democrats would repeal the Taft-Hartley Act and substitute in its stead the Wagner Act, when the vote on such a motion was made in the House only 37 Democrats so voted. This is but another example of broken platform pledges, for Mr. Truman and his followers repeatedly promised that if given the leadership in this country in 1949 and 1950 they would destroy the Taft-Hartley Act.

The Republican Party, as did Mr. Lincoln long ago, realizes the government's obligation to those who are in need. In our 1948 Party platform and again in the recent Party Statement, we indicated our approval of a sound and fair program of security of our older citizens. It would be most unwise to embark upon changes in our Social Security Program without the full benefit of

thorough study. We favor expanded coverage and increased benefits, but we

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deplore the financial unsoundness of the program as it now exists. No one denies that this country has room for improvement in expanding our nation's health. The Democratic Administration says this problem must be attacked and solved by the President's prepaid compulsory health insurance The Administration is anxious and willing to embark upon a dupliprogram. cation of the socialized medicine program inaugurated by the labor socialist government in England. We in the Republican Party admit the need of improvement but deny most emphatically the necessity of adopting that experiment which has so miserably failed in Great Britain. We can and will meet the challenge with the help of all interested segments of our people. doctors, the dentists, and the various technicians in the field of health are making a strenuous and determined effort to cooperate with those in public office so that the American people will be given the finest medical care and attention without resorting to governmental red tape and regimentation. The Federal Government can and should assist the various states and communities so that expanded medical care will be available to those unable to

afford voluntary health insurance. In addition, an all-out effort should

be made to expand and strengthen voluntary nonprofit health insurance programs.

One might go on indefinitely, but rather than take further time I would like to set forth what I consider to be the goal of our Party, the promise we should make to our people, the threat that will engulf us if affirmative action is not taken in our position generally. For your information and guidance I submit the following:

Our goal at home - An opportunity society that offers each individual a maximum chance for achievement, wellbeing, and security.

Our goal abroad - A world at peace working out the common problems of mankind through effective international organization in a spirit of mutual trust and cooperation and with an increasing regard for the dignity of every man.

Our Promise - At home - Increasing economic prosperity with a renewed faith in moral values. New energy sources, new products and new production techniques can greatly improve the material well-being of each citizen in our time. But the pursuit of material wealth must be accompanied by a

family and the nation.

exchange of goods and ideas among nations affords the best hope for maintaining the peace and raising the standard of living in all countries.

renewal of spiritual and moral values on the part of the individual, the

Our Promise Abroad - A community of free nations living at peace.

The Threat at home - Gradual surrender of individual freedom. In our country, the danger to our democratic way of life lies chiefly in our adopting schemes for attaining economic security which compel or result in the surrender of individual freedom.

The Threat Abroad - Breakdown in international relations. Failure of the
United States to develop a sound affirmative foreign policy to meet the threat
of Soviet imperialism and the revival of Fascism, and to assume its
responsibilities of world leadership, may lead to a breakdown in international
relations resulting in economic or military warfare between nations.
Our position is that the present Administration is neither realizing the promise
nor warding off the threat. Instead, it is creating a hand-out state which
slowly destroys individual initiative and enterprise, limits the right of
the individual to make personal decisions, and compels a surrender of individual
decision and action to a bureaucratic central government.

Our own position can be summed up in two main principles: "individual freedom with security" at home and "international responsibility" abroad.

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In the months following one of the blackest Tuesdays in the history of this country, namely November 2, 1948, it was my subconscious feeling that the United States was on the brink of disaster with little or no hope of recovery. It seemed to me that people of our nation had lost a golden opportunity on November 2nd to snatch from the hands of selfish minority groups the controls of our Government. Through indifference and a failure to undertake our responsibilities as citisens, we fumbled the ball on that infamous day.

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The long, uphill road and battle began in the Congress early in 1949.

Through near historic efforts, I believe, Republican members of the Congress averted further disaster. We licked in practically every instance the

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carried on on your behalf became infectious, and in recent months a new spirit among Republicans has permeated our nation. In addition, and this is most important, this new attitude has seemingly taken held of the imagination of that great group of citizens who consider themselves independent voters.

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I would like to give you still another example of a reborn enthusiasm. In my home town, Grand Rapids, Michigan, we are having the largest Republican Lincoln Day Dinner in the history of the community. A year ago at our Lincoln Day Dinner we had difficulty in corralling 350 for the occasion. In 1950, 2 weeks in advance of the Dinner, 1600 dinner tickets have been

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Needless to say, I am certain that you who are here this evening have a similar attitude as best illustrated by the enthusiasm and determination that I see among you.

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The choice between these two philosophies lies with the American people. It is an alternative between self-help and the handout.

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For example, on the issue of foreign affairs our Party advocates a bipartisen approach with full consideration and recognition to the legislative
branch of our government. We are opposed to secret commitments such as those
entered into at Yalta. We vehemently and vigorously believe in stopping the
spread of Communism. Our Party does favor an extension and expansion of
world trade, but we question the soundness or the advisability of such a
program where it will imperil the living standards of our own people. The
United States should not allow the fleeding of our markets with goods preduced by cheap labor to the inevitable detriment of our national security
and the economic status of our individual workers.

In recent weeks it has been vividly called to our attention that seemingly responsible officials in our State Department have been guilty of treasonous conduct. Furthermore our present Secretary of State, well knowing that a

Tair and equitable trial had been granted to Alger Hiss, refused to admit

the reprehensible conduct of a former associate. Legalty and compassion

are commendable personal qualities but Mr. Acheson's words pertaining to

Mr. Hiss do little credit to a man occurring such a high official position. Secretary Acheson has impaired his usefulness as a governmental official by his comments conserning the activities of a man who has betrayed his country. Treason is not a pardonable offense in the eyes of the American people. Unless the Secretary has the desire to retract his comments on his attitude toward Mr. Hiss, Mr. Acheson should resign. On domestic matters the issue is clearly drawn between us and our Democratic opponents. In our new Statement of Policy there is a statement demanding a balanced budget and a general reduction of our mounting tex burden. It is indeed a shame on the American people that at a time of relative propperity this nation is faced with pending bankruptey. Canada, our neighbor to the north, has led the way and made a phenomenal record in reducing taxes and belanging the budget. To the contrary, the present Administration's record is one of increased taxes, increased annual deficits, and mounting national indebtedness.

The Republican Party in its Statement of Policy stands four-square with the agricultural programs of the National Grange and the American Farm Bureau.

We condemn the Brannan plan which aims at nationalizing agriculture.

The program set forth in the GOP Pelicy Statement advocates a fair price for the farmer's products at the market place by a system of price supports only when the need is apparent and with emphasis on the fundamental concepts of free enterprise.

I imagine the farmers in this county and this area are similar in many respects to those in my own district. We have a strong Grange and a strong Farm Bureau. Our farmers in Michigan are not selfish predatory citizens who disregard the legitimate point of view of the urban consumers and the welfare of our national economy. Our farmers and those of you in this district who live in rural areas want above all else a fair share of our national income without entire reliance on government subsidies, and above all else deplore the trend toward regimentation of our agriculture. We in the Republican Party need have no apology for the basic philosophy in most of the provisions in the Labor Management Relations Act of 1947. better known as the Taft-Hartley Act. Our new Policy Statement stands four-square for the Taft-Hartley approach in contrast to the Administration's

inequitable Wagner Act. No one denies that the Taft-Hartley Act can be

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amended to eliminate certain inequities. I can assure you that a sincere attempt was made by the Members of the Congress in our Party during the last session to amend the Taft-Hartley Ast where proven inequalities existed. Members of the Democratic Party with an alleged fiendish allegiance to the Wagner Act refused to cooperate in any honest effort to change the existing law. Furthermore, despite the statement in the Democratic platform that the Democrats would repeal the Taft-Hartley Ast and substitute in its stead the Wagner Ast, when the vote on such a motion was made in the House only 37 Democrats so voted. This is but another example of broken platform pledges, for Mr. Truman and his followers repeatedly promised that if given the leadership in this country in 1949 and 1950 they would destroy the Taft-Hartley Act.

The Republican Party, as did Mr. Lincoln long ago, realizes the government's obligation to those who are in need. In our 1948 Party platform and again in the resent Party Statement, we indicated our approval of a sound and fair program of security of our older citisens. It would be most unwise to embark upon changes in our Social Security Program without the full benefit of

thorough study. We favor expanded coverage and increased benefits, but we

deplore the financial unsoundness of the program as it now exists. No one denies that this country has room for improvement in expanding our nation's health. The Democratic Administration says this problem must be attacked and solved by the President's prepaid compulsory health insurance program. The Administration is anxious and willing to embark upon a duplication of the socialised medicine program inaugurated by the labor socialist government in England. We in the Republican Party admit the need of improvement but deny most emphatically the necessity of adopting that experiment which has so miserably failed in Great Britain. We can and will meet the challenge with the help of all interested segments of our people. The doctors, the dentists, and the various technicians in the field of health are making a stremuous and determined effort to cooperate with those in public office so that the American people will be given the finest medical care and attention without resorting to governmental red tape and regimentation.

The Federal Government can and should assist the various states and communities so that expanded medical care will be available to those unable to afford voluntary health insurance. In addition, an all-out effort should be made to expand and strengthen voluntary nonprofit health insurance programs.



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One might go on indefinitely, but rather than take further time I would like to set forth what I consider to be the goal of our Party, the promise we should make to our people, the threat that will engulf us if affirmative action is not taken in our position generally. For your information and guidance I submit the following:

Our goal at home - An opportunity society that offers each individual a maximum change for achievement, wellbeing, and security.

Our goal abroad - A world at peace working out the common problems of mankind

through effective international organisation in a spirit of mutual trust and cooperation and with an increasing regard for the dignity of every man.

Our Promise - At home - Increasing economic prosperity with a renewed faith in moral values. New energy sources, new products and new production techniques can greatly improve the material well-being of each citizen in our time. But the pursuit of material wealth must be assempenied by a renewal of spiritual and moral values on the part of the individual, the family and the nation.

Our Promise Abroad - A community of free nations living at peace. The free exchange of goods and ideas among nations affords the best hope for maintaining the peace and raising the stendard of living in all countries.

The Threat at home - Gradual surrender of individual freedom. In our country, the danger to our democratic way of life lies chiefly in our adopting schemes for attaining economic security which compel or result in the surrender of individual freedom.

The Threat Abroad - Breakdown in international relations. Failure of the United States to develop a sound affirmative foreign policy to meet the threat of Soviet imperialism and the revival of Fascism, and to assume its responsibilities of world leadership, may lead to a breakdown in international relations resulting in economic or military warfare between nations.

Our position is that the present Administration is neither realizing the promise nor warding off the threat. Instead, it is creating a hand-out state which slowly destroys individual initiative and enterprise, limits the right of the individual to make personal decisions, and compels a surrender of individual decision and action to a bureaucratic central government.

Our own position can be summed up in two main principles: "individual freedom with security" at home and "international responsibility" abroad.



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