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Excerpts from a speech  
by Rep. Gerald R. Ford (R-Mich)  
at Lincoln Day banquet  
Cincinnati, Ohio Feb. 12, 1965

Abraham Lincoln talked often of the people, who were so close to his heart. Republicans care about the people---our record proves it.

For example, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 would have died without Republican action. The first version, spawned on the Democratic side of Congress, was so unjust, unreasonable and unsound that even the Administration gave it the cold shoulder.

Republicans hammered out changes, corrections and additions to the law---- respecting the dignity of man.

\* \* \*

Republicans must have creative ideas and constructive proposals to solve admitted national problems.

As a political party, we must earn the confidence and trust of the American people.

Republican task forces are currently developing ideas in many areas, including economic opportunity, Congressional reform and financing.

The goal is to get results with real meaning for every American by helping guide the Nation toward freedom, security, peace and well-being---with fiscal responsibility.

\* \* \*

We must vigorously, and with courage, attempt to reverse the growing trend of having too much federal control over States, counties, cities, towns and small communities.

Too many of my Democratic friends do not seem to realize that a government big enough to provide hand-outs in a broad give-away, is big enough to take away the freedom of individuals.

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As I read Lincoln, he would question the "Great Society", not on its lofty aims, but on the basis that it really means more government control and heavy centralization in Washington, with more of our hard-earned substance seized in taxes and more of our decisions made by bureaucrats.

\* \* \*

Republicans in Congress have presented a plan, which would vitrually eliminate the burden of health care for senior citizens faced with prolonged, catastrophic illness. It is a voluntary program and is based on financial fairness.

The Administration's widely-debated "medicare" plan is compulsory. The benefits would be minimum and disappointing to those who expect so much. Under the Johnson proposal, payroll taxes on every worker would skyrocket.

\* \* \*

The Republican Party in 1966 can expect victories. Like Lincoln, we must have the strength, the courage, the ability, the ideas and positive outlook to come back.

We must meet difficulties head-on with creative ideas, with energy, with unity. The time to start is right now.

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