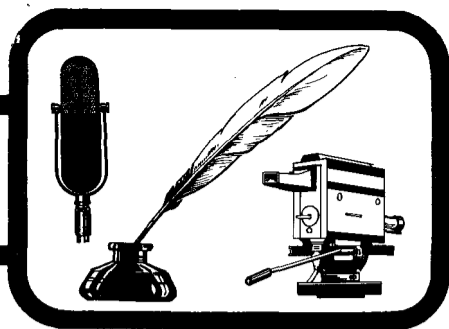


The original documents are located in Box D24, folder “Republican Dinner, Muskegon, MI, May 17, 1968” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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CONGRESSMAN
GERALD R. FORD
HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER

**NEWS
RELEASE**

--FOR USE IN SATURDAY AM's--
May 18, 1968

Excerpts from a Speech by House Republican Leader Gerald R. Ford, R-Mich., at a Republican Dinner Friday evening, May 17, 1968, at Muskegon, Mich.

The Johnson-Humphrey Administration has become notorious for what I call the "performance gap."

This is the gap that measures the unbridgeable distance between two points under the Democrats--promise and performance.

Nowhere does this gap yawn wider in the Johnson-Humphrey Administration than on water--the difference between what ought to be done about water pollution and what the Administration is doing.

Right now the Administration actually is trying to push through Congress a bill which would wreck Michigan's efforts to launch a bold new program aimed at cleaning up the state's waters.

This legislation would forbid pre-financing by the State of the Federal Government's cost-share of the water cleanup program, restrict federal aid to metropolitan areas of 125,000 population, and require financing through taxable revenue bonds.

I agree with State officials that these amendments to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act would ruin our chances to launch a meaningful attack on water pollution in Michigan through referendum on the \$355 million bond issue.

I pledge here and now that I will do everything in my power to get these anti-Michigan amendments dropped. And I think the chances we will be successful are good.

The fact that the Johnson-Humphrey Administration would seek to penalize states like Michigan and New York for trying to get the jump on water pollution in the absence of sufficient federal funds is absolutely unbelievable.

But this is the kind of nonsense this country has been subjected to with the Democrats in charge. And take a look at all the other "benefits" the Johnson-Humphrey Administration has conferred upon us. The cost of living rises at an annual rate of 4 per cent or more. Home mortgage rates are the highest in 50 years. The dollar is in deep trouble at home and abroad. Billions of dollars more leave the country than come in each year--and foreigners swap those dollars for our dwindling stock of gold. The dollar no longer is as good as gold. In fact, our paper money has become exactly that, because the

(more)

gold backing has been removed from it. The taxpayer carries a heavier burden than ever before in our history--and is about to have an even greater load placed on his back. Our farmers produce more but make less, because the cost-price squeeze has made them prime victims of inflation.

Poverty continues to stalk our rural areas and our cities despite the War on Poverty launched with high-sounding rhetoric by Democratic politicians just before the 1964 elections. I say Democratic claims of success in the Poverty War should be measured against the row upon row of tents and shanties in the Poor People's Resurrection City in Washington's West Potomac Park.

While the problems remain and the cities simmer and fester with the miseries of the slums, an atmosphere of lawlessness prevades the land.

In the last seven years the national crime rate has gone up nearly eight times as fast as the population. And still the American people wait for a Democratic-controlled Congress to act. I can assure you they would not be waiting for action if Republicans had been in power.

There is a desperate need for new leadership in America, the kind of leadership that will make our streets safe again and the kind of leadership that will save the dollar and help make the American worker's wages fit his family's needs.

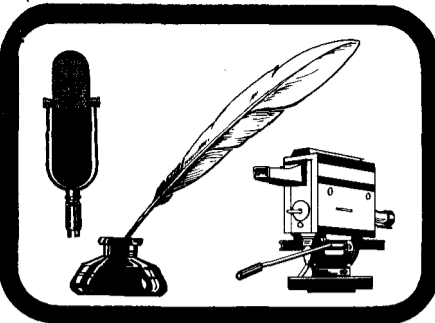
We need a crackdown--a crackdown on the criminal activity throughout America which makes Americans hide in their homes at night and a crackdown on the fiscal irresponsibility in Washington which raises the old specter of boom and bust.

I think the people are fed up with the Democratic Party. They're fed up with higher and higher prices, higher and higher taxes, higher and higher interest rates, higher and higher crime rates, more and bigger riots, and greater and greater violence.

But that's not the only reason they will turn to the Republican Party in November. They will vote Republican in November because the Republican Party has fashioned a program that offers the Nation genuine progress.

That program would provide good-paying jobs for the hard-core unemployed and the underemployed by triggering a nationwide on-the-job training program by industry, establish a Domestic Development Bank to make investment capital available to white and non-white businessmen alike in the central cities, and bring homes--not promises or public housing--to the low-income poor. We would build a New America with the best formula for progress ever devised--helping people to help themselves. We are building--and that's why we will win.

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