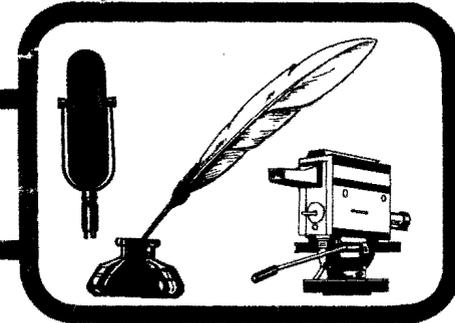


The original documents are located in Box D27, folder “GOP Fund-Raising Dinner, Lakewood, OH, October 9, 1969” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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CONGRESSMAN
GERALD R. FORD
HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER

**NEWS
RELEASE**

--FOR RELEASE AT 6:30 P.M. THURSDAY--
October 9, 1969

Excerpts from a Speech by Rep. Gerald R. Ford, Republican Leader, U.S. House of Representatives, at a GOP Fund-Raising Dinner Thursday evening, Oct. 9, 1969, at Lakewood, Ohio.

President Nixon took the gloves off last Jan. 20 when he entered the White House. He had to -- be found a mess when he took over the Presidency.

Dick Nixon waded into the mess and the result is a far-ranging array of hard-hitting reform proposals.

The President has accomplished much by Executive Order, but the bulk of his proposed reforms require legislative implementation. Where is the cooperation we need from the Democrats? If we wax charitable, we must say it is slow in coming. We can only conclude that Democrats in Congress are guilty of foot-dragging.

Reform is the watchword of the Nixon Administration, but the Democrats have been too busy trying to carve up Republicans to pay much attention to Nixon reforms.

If the great Nixon reforms -- reforms the people want -- are not forthcoming, then the blame will lie squarely on the doorstep of the Democrats in Congress.

Those reforms are before the Congress, and the need now is to implement them -- welfare reform which will turn all able-bodied Americans from welfare to Workfare; draft reform which will make the selective service system as fair as possible until we can establish a truly volunteer army; postal reform which will create a government-owned self-supporting postal corporation in place of the present impossible system; poverty program reform which keeps the Office of Economic Opportunity as an innovative agency but spins off successful anti-poverty programs to old-line Government departments; manpower training reform which consolidates Federal manpower training programs for greater flexibility in funding and offers the administration of manpower training centers to the states as they are ready to handle it; tax reform which takes millions of poor citizens off the taxrolls, reduces taxes for millions of other low-income Americans and prevents the wealthy from escaping taxation; a New Federalism which provides a percentage slice of Federal income tax revenue for cities and states with no strings attached.

While the Democrats in Congress have been mighty slow to take up Dick Nixon's reform legislation, some leading Democrats have been quick to make a political issue of the Vietnam War.

I personally never thought I would live to see the day that two dozen congressional Democrats -- Senators and members of the House -- would closet

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themselves behind closed doors to plot how they could throw their weight behind Vietnam War protest demonstrations on Oct. 15.

Every word that I have read about the Sept. 26 meeting indicates that some Democrats, the national chairman and others, are determined to play politics with Vietnam.

Not only is Fred Harris quoted as saying "it's time to take the gloves off on Vietnam," he is also reported to have said, "we (the Democrats) will hold Nixon responsible if he turns South Vietnam over to the Communists."

I find it utterly fantastic that leading members of the other party would seek to make political capital out of a war in which the integrity of America is at stake. And to think that they would even try to slice it both ways!

There once was a time when politics stopped at the water's edge. This is a policy of which the American people heartily approve.

Today we see the unbelievable -- an American President having to urge his Vietnam critics to let him make his negotiations with the enemy credible.

Those of us with an ounce of common sense know that the advocates of immediate unilateral withdrawal or of withdrawal by a deadline date are cutting the ground out from under our negotiators at Paris.

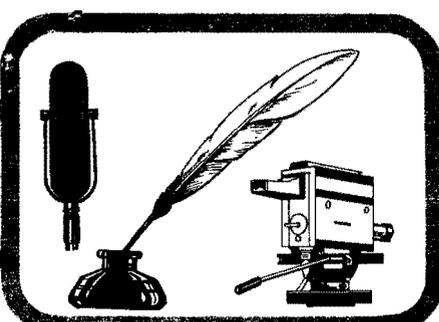
Why not let our program of Vietnamizing the war work while we continue to pursue the peace negotiations in Paris? Over time, the enemy will see the wisdom of a negotiated settlement simply because the South Vietnamese government is becoming increasingly capable of dealing with Communist insurgency on its own.

Meantime we have leading Democrats associated with the likes of David Dellinger, Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin, men who have made it clear they want North Vietnam and the Viet Cong to win the Vietnam War. Since these Hanoi-oriented American radicals have already had dealings with North Vietnamese leaders, the natural development would be for them to appeal to Hanoi and Moscow on Oct. 15 for an end to the Vietnam War.

Heckling and harassing the President, whether for political gain or other reasons, will not bring the Vietnam War to an end any sooner. Instead it will delay an end to the war by encouraging the other side to believe they can win just by hanging on and refusing to negotiate.

Let us all, not as Republicans or Democrats but as Americans, close ranks behind our President and help him bring us peace with honor in Vietnam.

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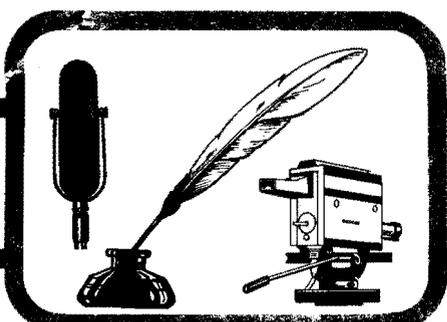
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