

The original documents are located in Box D28, folder “19th National Banquet, Order of Ahepa, Washington, DC, March 9, 1970” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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Remarks by Rep. Gerald R. Ford, Michigan, Republican Leader, U.S. House of Representatives, at the 19th National Banquet of the Order of Ahepa, at 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 9, 1970, at the Sheraton Park Hotel, Washington, D. C.

Mr. Vice President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a great pleasure to be in such distinguished and congenial company.

Tonight we honor the foremost American of Greek heritage--Spiro T. Agnew, the Vice President of the United States.

Although not of Greek background, I feel very much at home in your fine company because actually Greece is in the heritage of every American and of every civilized man.

Greece was the cradle of Western Democracy and the nursery of the Christian religion.

Both ancient and modern Greece feel fiercely about the independence and worth of the American spirit.

I envy and congratulate you and thank you for the great contributions which Americans of Greek blood have made to this country.

For example, there is Vice President Agnew. When you think about it, it seems odd that a little over a year ago dozens of jokes were being written about our honored guest.

At that time his name was anything but a household word.



Now, some of these same characters wish they had left well enough alone.

Only a year ago some critics were printing millions of bumper stickers which read, "Spiro Who?"

Today, we are swamped with orders for a bumper sticker that proudly proclaims, "Spiro, My Hero."

I am greatly pleased by this terrific turnout to honor the Vice President.

We are here to salute him and to praise him.

Ted Agnew is a man of great courage. His public image is strength and conviction.

Dr. Gallup says that the Vice President is one of the most admired men in America.

Fortunately, he wound up a few points behind President Nixon and Billy Graham.

I can imagine the reaction in the White House if number two in the government had been number one in the polls.

It was said of Demosthenes that he perfected his oratorical style by practicing a speech with pebbles in his mouth.

Well, Ted Agnew does it better.

He chews up television celebrities.



The Vice President sees what is happening in America and tears open the eyes of all of those who will not see, those who shut themselves off from the knowledge that revolutionaries are at work trying to tear down everything our forefathers have built up and everything that a decent and sensible American holds dear.

Demosthenes, a great orator like the Vice President, once said:

"You cannot have a proud and chivalrous spirit if your conduct is mean and paltry; for whatever a man's actions are, such must be his spirit."

The Vice President has exposed the self-righteous revolutionaries in this country for the mean and paltry human beings they are.

He has appropriately directed our attention to their destructive and violent actions.

Because Ted Agnew tells it like it is, he has become the hottest speaker on the dinner circuit, and we are glad to have him on our side.

As proud as Ahepa is of Ted Agnew, I am sure that Ted is equally proud of Ahepa, of being a member of your splendid organization.

Indeed, any one man can be proud to be a member of Ahepa and to dedicate himself to the objectives of your organization.



Ahepa clearly is patterned to promote the Hellenic ideals of respect for the rights of man, service to others and devotion to the principles of democratic government.

With their many great humanitarian projects such as war relief and relief to the victims of natural disasters, members of Ahepa have nobly served their fellow man, and thus have served well not only our Nation but the world.

I salute not only the Vice President but the great organization which honors him here tonight.

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~~Ahepa~~ 3/9/70

M. J. Office Copy

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Some wonder that members of Ahepa are terribly proud of him.



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Ahepa clearly is patterned to promote the ideals of the model city-state, the Hellenic ideals of respect for the rights of man, service to others and devotion to the principles of democratic government.

With their many great humanitarian projects such as war relief and relief to the victims of natural disasters, members of Ahepa have nobly served their fellow man, and thus have served well not only our Nation but the world.

It is a great privilege to be here with you tonight and to join with you in honoring Vice President Agnew, the most distinguished Ahepan among many distinguished Ahepans.

I salute not only the Vice President but the great organization which honors him here tonight. And I thank you for allowing me to be part of this most happy occasion.

