

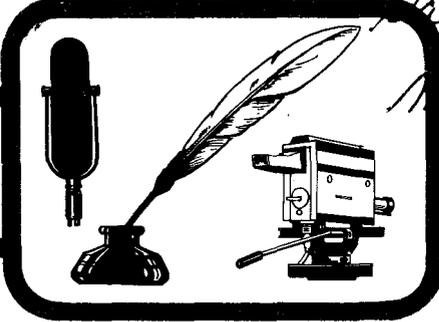
The original documents are located in Box D33, folder “Republican Victory '72 Dinner, Memphis, TN, September 26, 1972” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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**CONGRESSMAN
GERALD R. FORD
HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER**



--FOR RELEASE AT 6:30 P.M. TUESDAY--
September 26, 1972

Excerpts from a Speech by Rep. Gerald R. Ford at a Republican Victory '72 Dinner at the Sheraton Peabody Hotel in Memphis, Tenn.

I "buy" the polls -- I really do -- and I am not saying this because this is billed as a victory party.

There is danger in the polls for the Republican Party, the danger of overconfidence and complacency. And we must fight against this.

But I believe the polls are an accurate reflection of what Middle America is thinking about the Presidential race.

What the polls reveal is that the radicals have captured the Democratic Party, and the American people are aghast.

The polls also show that the American people recognize the Republican record during Richard Nixon's first term as President for what it is -- a record of splendid achievement which promises greater advances as the President builds toward a generation of peace and promotes a genuine prosperity.

The facts are clear. The President has kept every promise. The President has taken a country deeply enmeshed in a horrible war and has ended our ground combat role in that war while moving toward a negotiated peace. He has brought all but a minimal American ground contingent home from that war -- more than half a million men -- while thwarting a Communist takeover in Vietnam. At the same time, he has built a foundation for peace by making historic journeys to Moscow and Peking. And he has achieved a cease-fire in the Middle East. This President -- Richard M. Nixon -- will rank among the greatest peace-makers of all time.

Here at home the President has brought relative calm to a Nation he found torn by dissent and disorder.

At home, the President has dampened the fires of inflation; he has cut the rise in the cost-of-living in half.

Here at home, the President has generated an upsurge in the economy which has pushed total employment to nearly 82 million. That's an alltime record. We have created 2,600,000 new jobs in just the last 12 months. That's the greatest

(more)

job creation in a 12-month period since the end of World War II. Against a background of 500,000 men returning from Vietnam and seeking employment...against a background of reduced defense spending and sharply-reduced war-related jobs, that is a tremendous accomplishment.

What's most important is that real wages are climbing in America. Real wages are going up at the rate of 4.5 per cent a year for all production workers. That's in sharp contrast to the four years before Richard Nixon entered the White House -- days when real, spendable earnings dropped for all workers despite heavy increases in paper wages.

The voters know all this, and they are not going to exchange the real progress we are making in this country for the radical schemes proposed by the President's opponent.

I'll tell you why the polls are so lopsided in the President's favor... because the choice this fall is clear. The choice is between widely differing political philosophies. The choice is between the progressive policies of a clear-eyed statesman, Richard M. Nixon, and the wild ideas of a fuzzy-thinking extremist, George McGovern.

What do Americans want as they stand on the threshold of this election? The polls tell us they want the steady progress of the Nixon Administration, not the on-again, off-again schemes of his opponent. The polls tell us the American people don't want McGovern because they know it means misgovernment.

The American people want peace through strength, not a peace we beg for, not peace on the enemy's terms.

They want prosperity based on sound economic policies, not a phony prosperity tied to make-work projects bought with hard-earned tax dollars.

They want genuine reform of a scandalous welfare system, not a new escalation of welfare tied to redistribution of income.

They want a President who will hold down Federal spending and hold the line on taxes, not one who would wildly expand Federal outlays and double the average citizen's Federal income tax bill.

They want a President they can be proud of, not one who preaches retreat abroad and radicalism at home.

They have a President they can be proud of -- and they're going to keep him.

I think, too, the American people want this President they're proud of to have the Congressional support he needs to carry out his policies -- and that's why I'm dreaming of a Republican Congress.

Now a word of caution. Considering the President's great record and the advantages of incumbency, it would be easy to look upon the President as a shoo-in. But just remember that big leads in the polls have a way of evaporating. Remember, too, that in 1968 Richard Nixon was elected President of the United States by approximately two votes per precinct. Let's keep these things in mind as we go about the business of reelecting a great President and giving him a Republican Congress.

So get your organization into high gear. Get Republican voters registered. Get discerning Democrats to vote our way this year -- to cast their votes for sound government and against McGovern.

The President's reelection depends on it. And so does the future of your country.

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