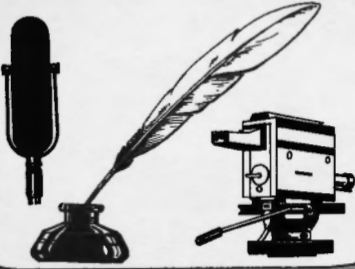


**The original documents are located in Box D19, folder “Michigan Academy of General Practice, Detroit, MI, March 9, 1966” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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

# NEWS RELEASE

Detroit, Michigan  
March 9, 1966  
Michigan Academy of General Practice

Speech excerpts  
Release for AMs  
March 10, 1966

Three cornerstones of our American political system are in some jeopardy at this crucial point in national and global history. Suffering from a serious erosion of balance are:

- \* The system of checks and balances in the federal government,
- \* Relationships between the federal government and the 50 states,
- \* The two party system.

The importance of the three cornerstones to the strength of our political fabric must not be under-estimated. The wide swing of political pendulums and public opinion must not destroy any one of them.

Tragically, we find crumbling of power and fading prestige in the Legislative branch, a change of intended direction in the Judiciary, and an awesome buildup of strength in the Executive arm.

\* \* \*

The shrinking potency of the states can be attributed in part to archaic state constitutions, inadequate sources of revenue, a lack of dynamic and resourceful leadership at the state level.

This new pattern of federal control is most vividly illustrated by the Johnson-Humphrey poverty program, but there is a similar trend developing in the areas of primary and secondary education.

-more-



Minority party leadership realizes that under our system no party can be doctrinaire, sectarian, narrow in its appeal...and still attract a majority of the electorate.

The high middle road of moderation, with unselfish unity, is not only common sense for a political party it is also representative of the people and in keeping with the underlying genius of the American political system.

With this format of moderation we aim to correct the imbalance in our two party system. We are dedicated to restoring vigor and competition in the political arena so that the cornerstone of two-party government will again function for a better America.

\* \* \*

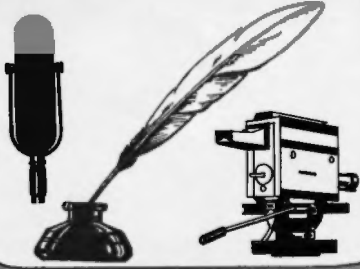
The people of this Nation are losing patience with the majority party that is bogged down in disagreement on policy as its leading figures are engaged in petty feuds. The people are losing patience with an Administration that vacillates and dodges and shifts position in an attempt to please all the conflicting elements that make up the majority party.

The question voters must answer is whether a party so badly divided, torn internally by disagreement, subject to schizophrenic impulses as it tries to satisfy its divergent elements can provide leadership needed in the present crisis.

\* \* \*

The responsibility of the American people is to keep our Republic as intended by the builders of the Constitution. I believe they will meet the challenge.

# # #



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# # #

READING TEXT

Michigan Academy of General Practice  
Detroit, Michigan March 9, 1966

Three cornerstones of our American political system are in some jeopardy in this crucial period of national and global history.

There may be other fundamental American political concepts that are suffering from the serious erosion of imbalance in government, but

I will limit my observations to the following:

1. The system of checks and balances in the federal government, or the abdication of responsibilities in the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches;
2. The relationships between the federal government and the 50 states;
3. The two-party system.



Detroit:

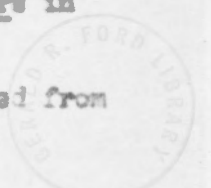
Each of these three cornerstones has contributed significantly to America's freedom and progress. All but one are constitutionally ordained. Their importance to the strength of our political fabric must not be under-estimated. The wide swing of political pendulums and public opinion must not destroy any one of them.

The first cornerstone was built in Constitution Hall by the wise drafters of our Federal Constitution almost 200 years ago. Their theory was to separate power..... to give specific responsibilities to each branch of national government...to give each strength and authority.

I hasten to add---there was to be no measure of superiority---one over another.

The provisions in the historic document were designed to provide a strong bulwark against the concentration of power in the hands of one person, one group, or one segment of our government.

The architects of the Constitution were understandably concerned with concentrations of power. They knew first-hand of the tragic dangers in the mis-use of power. Most of them---or their forefathers---had fled from tyranny, oppression and autocracy in Western Europe.



They had suffered severe privation and maximum danger to discover and establish a new land of freedom.

In drafting a document for the governing of a new nation, they insisted on safeguards--among them a balance of power among the three branches of government.

It is obvious from their deliberations that we should have a strong President heading the Executive branch; a strong Congress representing the Legislative branch; and a strong Judicial branch headed by the Supreme Court.

In my judgment, the Nation today has drifted from the resolution and intent woven into the Constitution. Tragically, we find an erosion of power and fading prestige in the Legislative branch...we see a change of intended direction in the Judiciary, which has arbitrarily elbowed its way into areas outside its jurisdiction...and we see a terrifying build up of strength in the Executive arm.





He raised an arm of caution to the courts by suggesting they might stay out of the thicket of political matters relying in such cases on the "ultimate sound judgment of the conscience of the voters."

I favor a strong and firm attitude by our courts....to bring reason, order, and respect for the law. As one reviews the recent decisions of our highest court there is deep concern for the rights of the individual or the minority. This is proper but at some point those in the majority have reasonable and legitimate rights.

Another cornerstone in America's political system is the relationship between our states and national government. Those who met in Constitution Hall represented sovereign states and commonwealths. Their purpose was to create a document for a new nation that would permit the federal government to assume those responsibilities essential for the national welfare...the common defense and a postal system among them. It was intended that the traditional role of local government be retained.



We in the minority party leadership realize that under our system no party can be doctrinaire, sectarian, narrow in its appeal and still attract a majority of the electorate.

The high middle road of moderation with unselfish unity is not only common sense ~~fixer~~ for a political party, it is also representative of the people and in keeping with the underlying genius of the American political system.

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Prior to the dinner, a number asked for my observations on Viet Nam. Without getting into politics here's what I think as an American.

We have seen demonstrations in Washington and elsewhere. We have seen the placards asking "why die for Viet Nam?"



Detroit


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How many of us remember similar questions raised by irresponsible voices more than 25 years ago. They asked— "Why die for the Sudentland?"... "Why die for Danzig?"

We know now...and many did then—that these voices were serving the purposes of Hitler's Nazi aggression. As the placard-carriers cried for peace at any price, the seeds of Buchenwald, Belsen and Nordhausen were taking root.

Today, draft card burners and those who blockade shipments of military personnel and supplies cry for peace at any price while the seeds of Communist atrocity take root. Yet the appeasers speak of morality.

Some are concerned with the physical uncleanliness of the irresponsible protesters. I am not so much concerned with their personal hygiene as with their moral sterility. But, if their words and actions of a tiny minority of exhibitionists may lead to a miscalculation by the enemy as to America's determination, how much more dangerous are the discords coming from the governing party in our Nation's Capital. We know any miscalculation by the Communists in Peking, Hanoi and Moscow could have frightening and devastating consequences for all mankind.



The people of this Nation are losing patience with the majority party that is bogged down in disagreement on policy and in petty feuds among its leading figures. The people are losing patience with an Administration that vacillates and dodges and shifts position in an attempt to please all the conflicting elements that make up the majority Party.

The public has long tolerated the divisions within the majority party that produce conflict in matters of domestic policy. Now, however, deep disagreement on foreign policy has appeared. It leaves the public confused, apprehensive, and angry.

Why the uncertainties and misunderstandings and fears about the war in Viet Nam? In great part they are the result of the inability of the party in power to agree on whether Americans should be in Viet Nam at all, what our Nation is trying to achieve there, and whether the right means are being used.

Can a party so badly divided, torn internally by disagreement about the path the Nation should follow, subject to schizophrenic impulses as it tries to satisfy its divergent elements, provide leadership need in the present crisis? Let me answer this way:

As a former football player and coach, I cannot help but relate the majority party division and discord over Viet Nam to a football game.

Imagine if you will the Administration squad playing a championship game against the Big Red team. The consequences are great and the stakes high. The head coach, LBJ, before the kick-off, is painfully pleading for unity. In the huddle on the first play the team's new quarterback, Harry-Up Hubert, calls the signals.

At this moment, left guard Fulbright raises his head and with a voice that clearly carries to the opposition, disputes the played called by LBJ and HHH. When the play is run, left guard Fulbright actually goes off in the opposite direction.

In the second quarter, left end Bobby Kennedy stalks from the huddle and announces to all who will listen that he is going to start his own game of touch-football with his own team at the other end of the field.

If this isn't enough trouble for LBJ and Harry-Up Hubert, on almost every play the roll-out left halfback Wayne Morse deliberately trips that flash ball-carrier, Whipping Boy Russell Long.



Whenever there is a time-out, water boy Bill Moyers dashes on the field to save the day by stuffing a wet sponge in the mouths of all he can corral.

Just as this lack of teamwork would be disastrous in a football game, in the serious Viet Nam situation it can lead only to prolongation of the war, undermining the morale of our fighting men, and encouragement of the Communist aggressor.

I have talked as though I am fearful, apprehensive and pessimistic.

I am...but to a very limited extent. I am optimistic, for I have a strong faith in the good judgment of the American people. When alerted to dangers ~~for~~ to their government they respond.

-end-

