

The original documents are located in Box D20, folder “Republican Gala, Washington Hilton, June 7, 1966” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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REPUBLICAN GALA REMARKS--JUNE 7, 1966

Thank you very much, Dick.

Betty and I are very happy to be here with you tonight. We're most flattered, but also embarrassed by all this fuss and attention.

Naturally it is great to be introduced by Dick Nixon. I know of no one who has traveled farther or worked harder to help elect Republican candidates to Congress over the years than Dick Nixon. We are all most grateful for this unselfish effort.

But, I should warn you, Dick, that you may be about to lose your title.


As I go around the country, people keep telling me that the man who is doing the most to help elect Republicans this November is none other than Lyndon B. Johnson!

After the dazzling introduction Dick has given me, I can hardly wait to hear what I am going to say. Most after-dinner speakers, including myself, need no introduction--just a quick ending---and you will be glad to know I've arranged for that.

I am most grateful for this recognition tonight, but all here are honored guests--especially the donors. Let me assure you that all of my Republican colleagues with the help and assistance of the contributors will be marching shoulder to shoulder for the next five months to prove that our gala ticket printer is a prophet.

I don't know how closely you examined your ticket for this affair, but I am listed on them as the "House Majority Leader." I apologize to my good friend Carl Albert for this premature disclosure of any long-range plans. But I confess it would be nice to join my distinguished colleagues Speaker Joe Martin and Charlie Halleck in having the pleasure of leading a Republican majority as well as the loyal opposition.

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GALA REMARKS

I hope all of you are thoroughly enjoying the evening. By this time I suspect the Gala is developing a bit of a glow.

That reminds me of a former congressman I knew long ago when Washington was a really hard-drinking town. This congressman had helped to give Washington its reputation as a place where liquor, good and bad, was consumed in quantities. When the old boy was on his deathbed, he said feebly to a friend of his: "Jim, bring me a glass of water. Before he dies, a man ought to be reconciled with his enemies."

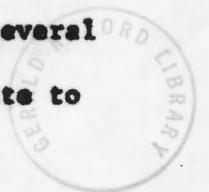
Seriously though, since winning this new job in January 1965 by the landslide margin of 73-67 I have made some progress at least at home. My wife Betty actually has come to like these new responsibilities. There was a time when she was like the wife of a candidate I know who ran for office and was defeated. After the election he put an ad in the local newspaper that read: "I want to thank everyone who voted for me, and my wife thanks everyone who didn't."

Let me pay tribute to all of my House Republican colleagues and to their understanding wives who sit so patiently many a late evening while our skeletonized ranks try to stop the White House steamroller.

A special salute also to the members of the Republican Congressional Committee and its most able chairman, Bob Wilson. This is the hundredth birthday anniversary of the Congressional Committee. It has survived from the first Johnson Administration over a hundred years ago to the second, many hope the last with the L.B.J. brand.

We hope the Committee will go on doing its fine job forever. Bob Wilson's most understanding wife Jean is here, and the wives of several other previous chairmen may also be present! I think it is appropriate to give them a fine hand.

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GALA REMARKS

We also owe a special vote of thanks to Ollie Bolton and Lang Washburn who have worked tirelessly to make this Gala rally gala.

Happy Birthday, Bob, and to the Republican Congressional Committee-- many happy returns come November 8.

And now I am going to make you a promise, one that I think will turn out to be prophetic. This is going to be a year Republicans will never forget, because it is going to be the year of the elephant. I thank you all.



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