

REMARKS OF CONGRESSMAN BOB DOLE
LINCOLN DAY DINNER - ORANGE COUNTY REPUBLICANS
ORLANDO, FLORIDA
Friday, February 12, 1965

speech

THE GREAT ANXIETY

As I gaze upon those gathered together here for a Republican tribute to Lincoln, it is obvious we are starting a comeback.

Politics is often a bitterly-serious business but I've often felt that, if we can't occasionally laugh at ourselves, it's time to quit.

With that in mind, our predicament following last November's defeat reminds me of the story about my good friend Gus Johansen who was running for re-election last year in Michigan. At every stop along the campaign trail, he would conclude his speeches by saying, "I will appreciate you folks helping me out." They did -- he was defeated. Next year he will run again for Congress I trust and instead of asking the voters to "help him out," he might better say this time, "help me in."

Yes and to illustrate there are no hard feelings over the November election, I want to pay a tribute to our President.

Without any qualms whatsoever, I want to state publicly that we're all indebted because of his Administration -- even generations yet unborn.

Moreover, it looks like the Great Society is going to make this

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a land of plenty -- owe plenty, tax plenty, spend plenty, and waste plenty and in 1966, switch plenty seats in Congress.

There's spunk left in the Grand Old Party, as illustrated at a recent Democratic fund-raising dinner where an old farmer kept interrupting the Democrat orator to boldly announce that he was a Republican.

"And why are you a Republican, may I ask?" the orator finally asked.

"My father was a Republican, and his father before him," the farmer answered.

"Well," said the orator, finding the opening he'd been waiting for, "suppose your father were a fool and your grandfather were a fool. What, according to your reasoning, would you be?"

"I'd be a Democrat," replied the farmer

In a more serious vein, Republicans all over the country are celebrating Lincoln Day at a time when more than ever the world looks and waits and looks again to the United States for guidance and inspiration in the fight to preserve and extend freedom.

We mark this occasion as Americans who are motivated and governed by the basic principles established for us nearly two centuries ago.

We accept these principles as minimum goals because, rather than imposing restraints on human progress, they invite the broadest implementation by the self-governed to meet the challenges of any age.

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I am certain that if Lincoln were alive today he would warn against complacency and drift. He would caution that America cannot maintain its position as a symbol of hopes for all mankind if only lip service is paid to the grand design outlined by our Founding Fathers. In this spirit, Republicans humbly acknowledge a responsibility to serve the Nation in all things dedicated to the common good.

To paraphrase a famous political observer, recent reports about the death of the Republican Party have been greatly exaggerated. The very intensity of the debate among Republicans about our Party's future is convincing evidence that the Grand Old Party is alive and kicking.

The question preoccupying all of us is, Where do we go from here -- and how do we get there?

I suggest two steps: (1) to keep in mind that the differences between Republicans today are not one fraction as great as the common interests which bind us together as a Party; and (2) to build a stronger Party on the basis of our common interests, not our differences.

It will not be easy. Nothing worthwhile ever is. But haven't we been seeking an easy solution to our problems? Haven't we tended to bask in the reflected glories of past victories, past leaders, past strategies?

This is not to say that we cannot learn from the past and from those who have gone before. I believe we can profit by studying the life of the man whose birthday we celebrate today.

Abraham Lincoln did not come to success effortlessly. He

worked hard and long for his honors, overcoming disappointment and defeat again and again.

Beginning in 1832, at the age of 23 he made his first try for public office by running for the Illinois State Legislature. He lost.

Undaunted, young Abe Lincoln made his second try for the Illinois legislature two years later and won as the Whig candidate. He served in the State legislature until 1841.

Lincoln sought the Whig nomination for Congress from Springfield in 1843, and was defeated.

But he was not the kind of man who gave up when he decided he wanted something. Three years later in 1846 he was elected to the U. S. House of Representatives, the only Whig member from Illinois.

For a time his personal affairs and active law practice tended to supplant his political career. He did not seek re-election to the House in 1848. However, with the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, both encouraging the spread of slavery, Lincoln's political instincts were aroused. The Republican Party was founded and Abraham Lincoln became a Republican leader in Illinois.

In fact, at the first Republican National Convention in 1856, Lincoln received 110 votes for Vice President on the Fremont ticket. Two years later, Lincoln was the Republican candidate for Senator from Illinois against Democrat Stephen A. Douglas. The famed Lincoln-Douglas debates took place during this 1858 campaign, and Lincoln repeatedly

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showed his skill at beating the "Little Giant" in these historic oratorical contests.

However, Douglas received a majority of the votes of the Illinois state legislators, edging Lincoln by a vote of 54 to 46.

Abraham Lincoln had again been defeated. But a scant two years later he was elected the 16th President of the United States.

The lesson is clear for the Republican Party in 1965. We lost an election last November, a battle certainly, but not the war. We must not become so preoccupied with the why of our last defeat that we neglect the how of our next victory. The lessons of history strongly suggest that we can expect victory for our Party in the 1966 elections as the large flock of Democratic chickens come home to roost, as the Great Society begins to shrink under the test of time and as Republicans begin to concentrate their fire on the mishaps and misjudgements of the Democrats.

Some of us, discouraged and frustrated may ask, "why worry about 1966." Because, in my opinion, the people of our Republic are entitled to a strong competitive 2 party system. Because, in my opinion, a majority of Americans do believe in sound constitutional government -- freedom of the individual -- individual rights and responsibilities provided in a Free Society -- just to mention a few -- Because, we must resist -- yes even for those who may presently disagree -- the concentration of power in our federal government -- the continuing administrative efforts to control the news and manipulate public opinion --

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Administration efforts to "wink" at scandal in high places -- Vague
Administration "promises" designed too often for political purposes --
Because of grave responsibilities to generations yet unborn to preserve
basic freedom, and because of fundamental responsibilities to Republicans
(past - present and future) to strengthen our party.

It may be dubbed the "Great Society" by President Johnson, but
for those who must pay -- more descriptive terminology might well be
"The Great Anxiety". As proof their fear is not groundless think back
to the evening of January 4 when American television viewers were subjected
to "the longest uninterrupted commercial in history"

The Johnson State of the Union Advertisement outlined a plan
for creation of the land of milk, honey and sunshine for all -- parti-
cularly urban dwellers. In his 47 minute "live" program he pledged his
Administration to solve all problems, but failed to mention the cost.
He didn't say how much the withholding taxes, the Social Security taxes,
State and local taxes would have to rise to pay for Government programs
which will be applied to everything from A. to Z.

The message was a blueprint for further Federalizing nearly
every aspect of American life. An invitation to all to find a seat at
the public trough, and take what a beneficent father in Washington was
ready to hand out.

The President prescribed a liberal dose of "Federal Elixir" for
each and every American. No problem appears too difficult, that creation
of another Federal agency -- and throwing a few millions of tax dollars

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at it -- will not solve.

What did LBJ offer America? First, the State of the Union was not a discussion of the State of the Union but a recounting of the warmed over programs and proposals along with political payoffs owed various pressure groups that supported him. Of the 20 or so specific proposals three-fourths are extensions or improvements of existing welfare programs', Kennedy proposals Congress would not adopt, or such measures as the proposed excise tax cut advocated by Republicans, and the repeal of Section 14b of the Taft-Hartley Act pledged in the Democratic platform of 1960 and 1964.

Bolied down it amounts to increasing the anti-poverty program; pushing for Medicare; federal, state and local cooperation on highway and street beautification; the Appalachia plan; a new attempt to get more funds for education by skirting the church-state issue; more money for parks and recreation areas; heavier concentration on urban problems. There is nothing unique or earth-shaking about any of this. Every program he proposed appears designed to weaken the individual as an independent citizen, and make nearly every unit of Government dependent upon the jFederal Establishment.

It was in essence a message to Urban America -- where the votes are. Rural and Suburban American will pay the price for many of the programs designed to have their chief impact in metropolitan areas.

On January 25, three weeks after delivering the State of the Union message, Johnson sent Congress hls Budget for fiscal 1966.

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To the extent any budget bears the imprint of a President, Johnson's proposals for fiscal 1966 spending etch his economic, sociological and international profile with discernible clarity.

Last year's budget was set at \$97.5 billion. This year's prediction is \$99.7 billion.

Last year's deficit will total about \$6.3 billion. This year's estimate is \$5.3 billion.

Last year's cash payments to the public totaled \$121.4 billion. This year's outlay calls for \$127.4 billion.

Expressed in terms of increases over last year's budget, the 1966 requests do not at first appear excessive. But there are other criteria.

Expressed in terms of what we're buying for the money, the President's new budget lends itself to closer inspection -- as does the original bookkeeping peculiar to Mr. Johnson's attempt to create a conservative image.

What are we buying?

Less military research and development, for one thing. Less military personnel, less new weapons and equipment, less military assistance and less military operation and maintenance for another.

Also less help for farm income stabilization, for agricultural land and water resources, for farming and rural housing loans and for research and other agricultural services.

Less is allotted to conservation this year with reductions in land, water and power resources, less money for fish and wildlife.

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forests, and general resources surveys.

Less money is allocated for highways, commerce and transportation

Less money is provided for veterans.

Where does the increased spending go?

Largely for the downpayment on President Johnson's Great Society. More federal money for public housing, urban renewal and community facilities.

More federal money for welfare, public assistance, health services and research.

Much more for the "economic opportunity program" and for school-lunch, milk and food stamp operations.

More money from Washington for elementary and secondary education, for higher education, for aid to scientific education and basic research.

This is the thrust of the President's message -- more spending for welfare, for education, for health.

The Budget gymnastics were appropriately described in the January 31st issue of the Washington Star:

"The preparations of the 1965-66 budget had all the posturing of an Elizabethan morality play. Evil was personified as the \$100 billion dollar figure.

"The forces of Good -- the President, the Cabinet and other trusty aides -- armed with scissors and self-denial -- went out to do battle with the inevitable figures.

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"The President dramatized the struggle by taking his array of aides down to the Texas ranch before the Christmas holidays. Reporters were given steady details of the battle in a series of soliloquies and confidential asides that then found their way into headlines.

"Soon the President had the press pondering would he or wouldn't he stay under \$100 billion. One day he was losing, one day winning.

"After Act one on the Texas ranch came a series of messages to Congress on health, defense and education.

"In morality plays, the forces of Good always win. And they won in the finale last week. The President submitted a \$99.7 billion budget."

The preceding remarks should indicate my distaste for many Great Society programs. I know many of you who concur are wondering what can be done to stop or slow the trend.

Although outnumbered in both Houses of Congress by two to one majorities, it will be our duty during the next two years to continue to function as a vocal, yet responsible, opposition. To do otherwise would be to destroy the very fabric of our two-party system.

And, mark my words, there are those who would destroy our two-party system under the false label of what they euphemistically call a "great national consensus" or the "vast middle ground of American thought."

These are the same persons who are quick to label practically any opposition to the so-called Great Society as being either generated

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by extremists or smacking of disloyalty.

These are the people who have tried to create the national myth that the Great Society is, in actuality, equally attractive to Democrats and Republicans alike.

But, like the Pied Piper, their real purpose is to paint a false picture of something for everybody in order to lure Independents and Republicans into a permanent one-party structure of government. Just a quick glance at the history books will point to the decay and corruption that march in cadence with one-party rule.

The task that lies ahead won't be easy, but as Chairman elect Ray Bliss recently remarked, "When you begin pondering either the lateness of the hour or the length of the road ahead, you're all through in politics."