

E. Goodell (R, N.Y.) [*q.v.*] and Robert P. Griffin (R, Mich.) [*q.v.*]. He frequently supported the Kennedy Administration's foreign and defense policies but remained opposed to most New Frontier domestic legislation. [See EISENHOWER, KENNEDY Volumes]

On Nov. 29, 1963 President Johnson appointed Ford to the seven-member commission headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren [*q.v.*] to investigate the assassination of John F. Kennedy. After the panel's report became public in September 1964, Ford defended its conclusions and in 1965 co-authored *Portrait of the Assassin*, which supported the Warren Commission's contention that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in the President's murder.

The Republicans' disastrous showing in the 1964 elections convinced many House members that their leadership needed a new image. The "Young Turks" persuaded Ford to oppose Halleck, although both the Indiana Republican and he shared similar voting records. The conservative Americans for Constitutional Action gave Halleck an 86% rating and marked Ford 83% right on the same issues. But younger House Republicans considered Halleck inattentive to their views, and liberal members strongly condemned his unofficial coalition with Southern Democrats. Ford promised his colleagues a more open and positive leadership that would make every member "a sixty-minute player." In addition, the ruggedly handsome Ford appeared an attractive alternative to the 64-year-old, overweight Halleck, who bitterly assailed the confrontation as a "beauty contest." By a vote of 73 to 67, Ford unseated Halleck on Jan. 4, 1965. However, the Party caucus then defeated Ford's candidate for minority whip, Peter H. B. Frelinghuysen (R, N.J.) [*q.v.*] and elected Leslie Arends.

Ford worked to end the House Republicans' silent partnership with Southern Democratic committee chairmen, which prevented important legislation from reaching the House floor. Instead, the new Minority Leader wanted Johnson's Great Society proposals brought out of committee in order to permit House Republicans a chance to vote for or against the legislation.

He urged his colleagues to offer positernatives to White House legislation the Southern Democrats vote with fine," he wrote in January 1965, "but will be voting for a Republican position."

The new strategy failed during the Congress because the massive Democratic majority enabled the President's either to defeat, or when necessary, corporate Republican amendments: Great Society legislation and then a full credit for each bill's enactment. In the Ways and Means Committee he on the medicare bill, Chairman W Mills (D, Ark.) [*q.v.*] agreed to amendments covering the cost of doctors' services and drugs in the measure proposed by the Committee's ranking Republican, Rep. W. Byrnes (R, Wisc.) [*q.v.*]. Reported of committee with the Byrnes provision a narrow 70-68 majority of GOP House members voted for medicare in July. Ford alone of Michigan's nine-member publican congressional delegation against the law.

The Republican gain of 47 House seats in November 1966 gave Ford an opportunity to demonstrate his leadership. Through hard work and an honest, going personal style, he could use to bridge the geographic and ideological differences among House Republicans endorsed the policy recommendations of Reps. Goodell and Albert H. Qui (Minn.) [*q.v.*] to replace general assistance to localities with a "block grant" appropriation to the states. A vigorous lobbying campaign, the Administration defeated the Republican effort to include the block grant system in the 1967 education aid bill. However, the House agreed, for the first time, to implement the block grant method in the Control and Safe Streets Act in August 1967. In May 1967 Ford again expressed the need for ending the conservative coalition, "to drive Southern Democrats into the arms of the Administration—where they belong." But during the 90th Congress the coalition enjoyed a vigorous revival. According to *Congressional Quarterly*, the Administration won only 25% of the votes on social issues in 1965 and 32% in 1966; y