

A Sample of Quotations of Gerald R. Ford

Following is a selection of quotations of Gerald R. Ford drawn from various periods of his public life:

Foreign Policy

I strongly support the Administration in its new policy toward China. This is a reversal of my policy, but it is also a reversal of the country's policy since 1949 under five or six previous Presidents. I applaud the President's willingness to abandon a policy that hadn't worked and open the door to a new policy that has some encouraging prospects . . . I strongly support the President's efforts to achieve a detente with the Soviet Union. It bothers me that some people, both on the right and the left, are apprehensive or are raising questions about it. I think it is wrong to challenge a policy that could lead in Salt II to a meaningful reduction in arms production by both of the two super-powers. I agree with the Administration that in 1973 and 1974, until we get mutual troop reductions, we shouldn't pull out substantial forces in NATO. So, in the field of foreign policy, my views are virtually identical with those of the President. (Nov. 16, 1973.)

Vietnam

I have never been able to understand why they [the Johnson Administration] have not more fully utilized our capability to destroy significant military targets in North Vietnam. This is one way to convince the North Vietnamese and the Vietcong that the price of continuing aggression is too high. I believe that . . . we could more effectively utilize this tremendous power that we have with conventional weapons. (Jan. 16, 1966.)

"Why are we pulling our best punches in Vietnam? Is there no end, no other answer except more men, more men, more men? Would the American people believe that . . . after two and one-half years of U.S. bombing of North Vietnam . . . only three out of every 10 significant military targets had ever been struck by U.S. airpower? Why are we still pulling our airpower punch? (Aug. 8, 1967.)

The legislative branch of the Federal Government must play a larger role in decisions of war and peace . . . the role clearly delegated to the Congress by the Constitution of the United States . . . In situations where the Congress endorses a military action taken by the President, the Congress should set forth the United States commitment in precise terms—not hand the executive a blank check of the Tonkin gulf variety. (July 16, 1971.)

Impeachment

The Constitution says, in the case of a President, a President may be impeached for treason, bribery and other high crimes and misdemeanors. In my judgment . . . there is no current evidence that I am familiar with that falls within the definition of impeachment under the Constitution. (Jan. 6, 1974.)

Law and Order

There is and has been an atmosphere of permissiveness in this country, a mistaking of license for liberty and an overconcern for the rights of the accused at the expense of the injured. This imbalance must be corrected. It won't be

corrected by the Johnson-Humphrey Administration or by soft-headed liberals in Congress—but only by Republicans and others who recognize that law and order, with justice, must prevail in America. (May 25, 1968.)

Wiretapping

Wiretapping and electronic eavesdropping worry all Americans who prize their privacy. Properly used, these are essential weapons to those who guard our nation's security and wage ceaseless war against organized crime. The Congress, the President and the courts must promptly spell out the permissible limits of their use. (Jan. 20, 1967.)

Busing

There should be no forced busing of school children great distances from their homes to achieve racial balance. (Jan. 25, 1972.)

Student Radicals

The previous Administration did not implement the legislation to withhold funds from those students who are

involved in campus riots . . . It is our general impression that these militants, small in number, are really using Fascist tactics in depriving the rest of the students the opportunity to get an education. The whole approach of the Administration will be aimed at this Fascist group that want to deprive students of an opportunity to get an education. (March 8, 1969.)

Government Information

To maintain that the executive has the right to keep to itself information specifically sought by the very people the executive is supposed to serve is to espouse some power akin to the divine right of kings . . . Congress cannot help but conclude that executive privilege is most often used in opposition to the public interest. (April 3, 1963.)

Truth is the glue that holds Government together, and not only Government, but civilization itself. (Nov. 1, 1973.)

Vice Presidency

The constitutional duties of a Vice President are few, and his statutory duties, while numerous, do not really

define his role. It is trite and cynical to sum it all up by saying the Vice President does whatever the President wants him to do, and no more. I have a different idea, I hope a broader one . . . I believe I can be a ready conciliator and calm communicator between the White House and Capitol Hill, between the re-election mandate of the Republican President and the equally emphatic mandate of the Democratic 93d Congress. I believe I can do this—not because I know much about the Vice Presidency—but because I know both the Congress of the United States and the President of the United States as well and as intimately as anybody who has known both for a quarter century. (Nov. 1, 1973.)

Richard Nixon

We must, as a nation, elevate the moral and ethical attitudes of our people. I am sure that our new chief executive will be deeply concerned with the moral tone not only of the Presidency but of the nation. Above all, he will seek to lead, not to dictate. (Dec. 4, 1968.)

I believe President Nixon, like Abraham Lincoln, is a man uniquely suited to serve our nation in a time of crisis. Every action taken by Mr. Nixon since he took the oath of office as President bears out the confidence, the feeling of trust I have in the man who now leads this nation. (Feb. 10, 1969.)

The President of the United States has been my friend from the time he was a second-termer from California in the House and took time to make a freshman from Michigan feel welcome. (Nov. 1, 1973.)

Congress

Congress is often the scapegoat for the sins of American society because Congress is the people in microcosm. (June 9, 1968.)

Executive Branch

In my judgment, today we find an erosion of the power and prestige of the legislative branch, a change of the intended direction of the judiciary and an awesome build-up of strength and use of this power in the executive arm . . . There is a growing apprehension that there is a potential and real danger in the burgeoning power of the Federal Government's Executive branch. (Nov. 8, 1968.)

Lyndon Johnson

President Johnson has proved himself guilty of an arrogance of power—arrogance toward the press and the American people. (June 5, 1966.)

It is President Johnson's war [Vietnam] because the President plays everything too close to the vest. He has an unhealthy passion for secrecy. (June 18, 1966.)

Americans

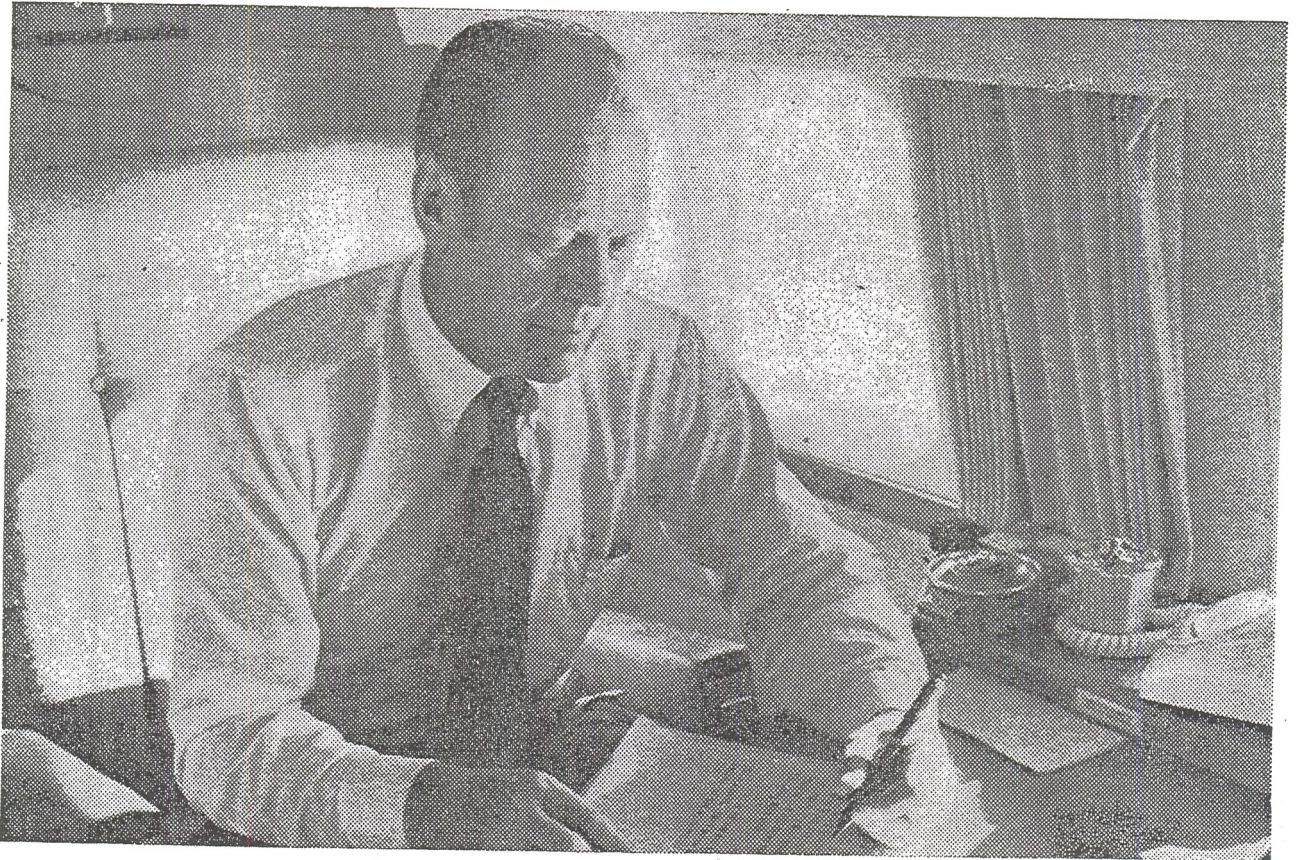
I have a strong abiding faith in the good judgment of the American people. When alerted to dangers to their Government, they respond. (Nov. 8, 1965.)

Gerald Ford

I am a Ford, not a Lincoln. (Dec. 6, 1973.)

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on Various Issues and Individuals



Vice President-Designate Ford working on a speech as he flew to a Republican dinner in Wisconsin in October

The New York Times/George Tames