

Republican party comeback

Senator Hiram L. Fong Papers

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Statement Submitted by
U. S. Senator Hiram L. Long (Hawaii)
For Publication in Book Edited by
Prof. Daniel P. Parker, City College
of New York
March 1965

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Like Job -- but to a lesser degree -- having suffered several severe setbacks, we Republicans can rise from the depths of defeats to new victory.

To find our way back, we must demonstrate to the American people that we Republicans are determined -- and able -- to apply the humanitarian and just precepts of Abraham Lincoln, father of our Party, to the issues and problems of today.

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In view of the tremendous defeat of our national ticket, the heavy losses in Congress, particularly in the House of Representatives, the losses in Governor's seats and in State Legislatures, the Republican Party must, first, learn how to win and, second, take the necessary steps to win.

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This is the essence of Republicanism. Yet the Republican Party has failed to win the support of the majority of the American people in national election after national election.

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In the stormy present, we Republicans cannot clothe ourselves in Constitutional platitudes and remain aloof from the real and pressing problems of people. We must face up to these problems and offer sensible solutions. Actions speak louder than words. What we Republicans do and say we will do, to solve the problems of health, housing, education, unemployment, old age needs, natural resource conservation and development, pollution of air and water, agriculture, and all the other pressing problems of our modern society will determine whether we will gain and retain the trust and faith of the people. If we Republicans fail to meet the human needs and human aspirations of our countrymen, our Party may dwindle in to nothingness and America may become a one-party Nation with all its tragic implications.

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To be effective, Republicans must seek staff assistance on Committees of Congress and, where the Democratic Majority denies us sufficient help, we must call on the brains and know-how of specialists on campus, in business, labor, and other organizations to help us.

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There are 50 other elements -- the Republican organizations in each State of the Union.

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What is involved is revitalizing the Republican Party from precincts on up.

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It is time we had a Party strong enough to carry our national candidates to victory.

In every area and at every level of Government, our Republican Party units should find out what the voters want -- and then do their best to serve them.

If a conservative platform and conservative candidates are what Nebraska voters want, the Republican Party in Nebraska should give them the best conservative programs and the best conservative candidates it can find.

If a liberal program and liberal candidates are what New York voters want, the Republican Party should give them the best liberal combination it can produce.

If a moderate program and moderate candidates are what Michigan voters want, the Republican Party in Michigan should give them the very best moderate team it can produce.

Our Republican Party is a confederation of 50 State parties, each of which has its own identity and shapes its own image. What might win majority support in Kansas might lost in Hawaii, so Republicans cannot be so foolish and shortsighted as to disparage those who may disagree with them in other States.

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As odd as the Democratic Party is, it has been able to get together to win elections. It is difficult to imagine anything as far apart as New York City's Tammany Hall and the Southern plantation aristocracy. They represent two directly opposite points of view.

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As the Republican Party in Congress and in State after State becomes more a "can-do" party, more constructive and more forward-looking, our Party image will improve, not only within the States but throughout the Nation, and we will gain voter good will.

Our future depends not only on the Republican record in Congress but on Republican Party improvements at the grass roots. These are twin necessities. The time to start is now.

Lincoln showed us the way to the affections of the people.

It is up to us today to follow his example -- and once again the Republican Party will march along the victory trail in America.

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