

FOR THE SENATE:

Everett M. Dirksen  
of Illinois

Thomas H. Kuchel  
of California

Bourke B. Hickenlooper  
of Iowa

Margaret Chase Smith  
of Maine

George Murphy  
of California

Milton R. Young  
of North Dakota

Hugh Scott  
of Pennsylvania

PRESIDING:

The National Chairman  
Ray C. Bliss

THE REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP  
OF THE CONGRESS

Press Release

Issued following a  
Leadership meeting

December 7, 1967

FOR THE HOUSE  
OF REPRESENTATIVES:

Gerald R. Ford  
of Michigan

Leslie C. Arends  
of Illinois

Melvin R. Laird  
of Wisconsin

John J. Rhodes  
of Arizona

H. Allen Smith  
of California

Bob Wilson  
of California

Charles E. Goodell  
of New York

Richard H. Poff  
of Virginia

William C. Cramer  
of Florida

"THE STATE OF THE CONGRESS"

RELEASE ON DELIVERY  
12:30 pm. Dec. 7, 1967

Statement by Senator Dirksen:

In our Appraisal of the State of the Union last January, Mr. Ford and I, speaking on behalf of the Republicans in Congress, assessed the situation in which we as a people then found ourselves, both at home and abroad. We refused, in concluding that assessment, to be dismayed or to despair. This, despite great provocation by this Administration since, we refuse to do now.

The sole objective of the Republicans in Congress in these past months, as over the years, has been the very best interests of all of the American people, at all times and on every issue. To help achieve those best interests we have had historic demands made upon us as the party of loyal opposition -- historic because we have been faced with certain problems unparalleled in the nation's annals, demands because they have compelled us from time to time to make harsh and unpleasant judgments and decisions in order that those best interests might be fully served and fully protected.

Most importantly, we have given unhesitating support to every requirement and need of our fighting forces in Southeast Asia and our armed services elsewhere in the world. This we will continue to do, however heavy the burden. Americans prepared to give their lives in conflict must be given by us every single item of weaponry and other support they may at any moment need -- and they will be.

The conduct of the conflict in Viet Nam is, as under our Constitution it must be, the full responsibility of the President in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief. Only he has the authority, only he has the duty, only he has the full information available for the execution of that responsibility.

The decisions made and to be made can and must be made by him and him alone.

In order, however, that his hand may be guided and strengthened in this, it is imperative that the most thoughtful discussion possible continue in the Congress and among our people to this end. Let it be emphasized anew, nevertheless, that as we search together for a solution to Viet Nam we demonstrate our unity of purpose by conducting such discussion in a fully free but a wholly orderly manner. Dissent is one thing; disagreement by violence is quite another. Dissent we encourage and approve. Violence, in any form and for whatever purpose, we condemn, now and hereafter.

We urge again that this Administration -- to a degree and with a vigor not yet evident -- look beyond Viet Nam and consider where we shall stand and with whom we shall sit when this conflict ceases. The Congress and the people have seen all too little evidence of genuine effort to explore and exploit the diplomatic opportunities available to us in this regard. Channels of diplomacy, economic and otherwise, still remain open for our use.

The Republicans in Congress have not been concerned alone with the war in Viet Nam. Other aspects of our foreign policy have been given equally sharp scrutiny. We have not hesitated to recommend or to implore an immediate re-shaping of it, whenever and wherever we have believed it necessary in the nation's interest.

In the Middle East -- a tinderbox of appalling nature -- Republicans have hoped for months for the adoption by the Administration of the atomic desalinization plan placed before it some time ago by Americans of unquestioned ability and patriotic purpose. We are now informed by the Department of State that this extraordinary project -- which might well change the entire atmosphere in the eastern Mediterranean -- is "not politically feasible". This we cannot believe. The proposal represents a thoughtful, practical instrument for peace without parallel in recent years. It might well provide the means of achieving political and economic stability in the Middle East. As Americans, we urge the retrieval and adoption of that proposal and its implementation at the earliest possible time.

In the American people's interest, we have continued to hold the line against a unilateral "building of bridges" with the Communist nations of the world. It is neither sensible nor safe to strengthen in the

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slightest degree the hand of an enemy which is at this moment striking down young Americans in Viet Nam -- and in every corner of the globe conspiring actively for the destruction of free America. Where and when, in the Senate as in the House, we have taken this stand, we have done so for this reason and no other. If, in the months to come, we should be given good and convincing reason to expect otherwise of the Communists, we shall be pleased indeed to reassess our own thinking in this somber regard.

The State of the Congress today is one of vexation and deep-seated concern as we look about us here at home. We see an Administration wholly blind in its belief that the enormous costs of the war in Viet Nam can and will be borne by our people while at the same time the Administration seeks unrestrained license to promote and finance multi-billion dollar social programs. These have in too many instances proved valueless or dangerous or both. Yet we are asked to support more and more such projects stamped out in the same socialistic mint.

At this very moment the international air is filled with conversation and concern regarding the "defense of the dollar" now that the British pound has been devalued. The record is crystal-clear that the socialistic experiments and experience of Great Britain in recent years have been the primary reason for the near collapse of her economy. A continuation and multiplication of the so-called Great Society's experiments could bring identical results here. Socialism and a sound economy simply will not mix. Despite our nation's enormous resources our economy cannot long stand such abuse.

Let me make it quite clear, as we have done repeatedly, that ours is not and has not been opposition for its own sake. The legislative record in both the Senate and the House is studded with Republican proposals for meeting our urban and other domestic needs, proposals which have found their counterparts in the programs of Republican Governors from coast to coast. The Congressional Record and the nation's news media have documented these regularly. Mr. Ford and the House Republican Policy Committee have recently provided the press and the public with a detailed and comprehensive review of House Republican accomplishments thus far in this session of the Congress. I shall, within a few days, present an equally thorough report of the efforts and achievements of the Republicans in the Senate.

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In summary, we Republicans in Congress have directed our efforts at home and abroad to making the most of our people's tax dollars in the achieving of maximum defense and sound economic progress. The mere spending of additional billions -- which seems to be this Administration's only talent -- will not, without sound economic planning, fully competent management and plain, old-fashioned horse sense, solve the fearful problems we face. Such a policy can achieve nothing but a total erosion of our people's confidence in their leadership and of their faith in our country's future.

In the months ahead, as in these months past, the Republicans in the Senate as in the House, will continue to hew to these policies and principles, convinced that the elections of 1966 gave us just this mandate, confident that the elections of 1968 will confirm it.

In the words of a latter-day Englishman, not of the socialistic breed: "Give us the tools and we'll finish the job".

"THE STATE OF THE CONGRESS"

STATEMENT BY REPRESENTATIVE GERALD R. FORD

New direction -- new ideas -- new vigor. These the Republican Minority in the House have contributed in marked degree in this first session of the 90th Congress. Our chief interest and concern has been not only the best possible defense of the nation, the full support of our fighting forces in Southeast Asia and the cutting-back of reckless, wasteful non-essential Federal expenditure. Our equal interest and concern has been what lies ahead of us as a people -- what course our government will take -- or be forced to take -- in the years immediately ahead.

Last January, in offering my domestic Appraisal of the State of the Union, I listed, on behalf of the Republicans in the House, 40 specific recommendations for action. These were not merely alternatives to proposals made by others. They were, in greater part, specific program proposals. 30 of these were purely domestic in nature; 10 related to our national defense. As of this date, in the House, we have made visible and heartening progress with 24 of these. This has resulted in great part from 96% Republican solidarity on roll call votes in support of House Policy Committee positions. As a Minority, we consider this a good record and we intend to improve upon it in the months ahead.

The heart and core of our united Republican effort has been the sharp cutting-back of Federal expenditures for non-essential purposes. Our position in this has not changed. And we are not convinced by belated promises of this Administration to take action in this direction. Our original and continuing position was and is that Federal expenditures should be reduced not less than 5 billion dollars in this fiscal year. We know that it can be done, if the Administration truly wishes it.

In the course of these debt-propelled Sixties, Federal spending has run wild. This Administration has shown no concern whatever as to the crushing burden its socialistic policies and programs have placed upon our people. And for this Administration to use the war in Viet Nam as an excuse is unfair and unworthy. While defense spending has risen by 68% since 1960, non-defense spending has increased 97% -- from 48.6 billion in fiscal 1960 to an estimated 95.6 billion for fiscal 1968.

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Let it be recorded here and now -- as on many occasions past -- that we Republicans are more than willing, indeed anxious, to provide for Americans in need at home to the full extent that the nation's resources and economy make it prudently possible. To us, the word "prudently" means simply: with a decent, common sense regard for what we and our children and their children can afford. The economic chaos which this Administration's policies and practices now threaten to produce will undermine and destroy America just as surely as will our enemies at home and abroad, if permitted to do so.

Consistent, in the American tradition, with our stand against government waste and extravagance has been our effort, encouragingly successful in this Congress, to transfer some measure of responsibility and control of the people's affairs from Washington to our states and communities. We are greatly heartened by our success, even though a Minority, in shifting a sizeable number of the so-called Great Society's programs away from the Federal bureaucracies and their categorical grants to our state and local officials through the Republican system of block grants. These make it possible for those at home, who know the problems best, to solve them with greatest speed and effect. The Comprehensive Health Act, the Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Assistance Act, the Juvenile Delinquency Prevention and Control Act, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Air Quality Act and the Meat Inspection Act, in their final House versions, provide concrete examples of this new direction and approach.

Last Monday, the House Republican Policy Committee published a detailed and comprehensive documentation of these House Republican accomplishments. I commend that release to your attention and review, now and in the months to come.

In 1966, the American people strengthened the Republican Minority in the House with unmistakable emphasis. We interpreted those results as a mandate to put a check-rein on this willful, wasteful Administration, to review and, where desirable, to modify its run-away programs and projects and to initiate proposals of our own that would restore sense and balance to public service. We believe our record to date represents a faithful response to that mandate for new direction -- new ideas -- new vigor.

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If, as I am confident we will, we continue to produce the Republican solidarity and good sense on major legislative items that we have thus far, we shall have done the American people a signal service and they will know it. Knowing it, they will, we feel certain, add to our Republican strength by their action at the polls next year.

In summary, our objectives and our accomplishments thus far in this Congress have been these:

(1) Full support of our armed services in Southeast Asia and elsewhere throughout the world;

(2) Insistence that this Administration, to the extent that it may still be able to do so, succeed in Viet Nam or be prepared to yield to a Republican Administration whose new direction, new ideas and new vigor might well offer our people and the world a more probable prospect of peace;

(3) Insistence upon the immediate establishment of a bi-partisan, blue ribbon commission of America's best experts to re-examine our short and long range defense posture in this time of national peril;

(4) To bring about a substantial reduction in non-essential Federal spending and to insist upon even greater reduction -- an objective in which we have the full and encouraging support of the distinguished Democratic Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee;

(5) To demand that this Administration's abuse of the American farmer cease and cease now -- and that its inflation-blind indifference to the American consumer come to an abrupt halt;

(6) To resist, until such satisfactory further reductions have been written into law, the Administration's proposed tax increase;

(7) To demand of this Administration whole-hearted backing of the initiative already taken by Republicans in Congress to make our streets and homes safe for our people;

(8) The continuing transfer of governmental authority, responsibility and control from Washington to the states and individual communities by the system of block grants already successfully initiated in a number of legislative areas;

(9) More and more to establish active, practical, effective co-operation between government and the private sector, as in the Republican-

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initiated Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962 and the Republican-proposed Human Investment Act of 1967;

(10) To continue to urge the reorganization and reform of the Congress, in order that it might better and more swiftly serve the needs of the American people and beyond this to assure by next year clean and orderly elections for all Federal offices.

The record of this Democratic-controlled Congress to date is far from impressive. Where it has succeeded in meeting our people's basic needs, it has done so in greatest part through Minority solidarity and singleness of purpose.

Our people deserve an effective, productive Congress. Republicans are determined they shall have it. We are fully prepared to do everything in our power to meet our people's fundamental needs -- in defense and in human well-being. In so doing, we are resolved to maintain that national economic good health required to guarantee the continuance of such services to ourselves and our posterity.