

FOR THE SENATE

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of the Policy Committee
Leverett Saltonstall, *Chr*
of the Conference
Thruston B Morton,
Chr Republican
Senatorial Committee

PRESIDING OFFICER
The Republican
National Chairman
William E. Miller

THE JOINT SENATE-HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP

Press Release

Issued following a
Leadership Meeting

May 26, 1964

FOR THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES

Charles A. Halleck,
Leader
Leslie C. Arends, *Whip*
John W. Byrnes, *Chr*
of the Policy Committee
Gerald R Ford, Jr.,
Chr of the Conference
Clarence J Brown,
Ranking Member
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Bob Wilson,
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Congressional Committee

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STATEMENT BY SENATOR DIRKSEN:

It is clear that the military situation in Viet Nam is deteriorating which, coupled with Communist moves in Laos and Cambodia, constitutes a grave threat to all Southeast Asia. It is also clear that while the Johnson Administration falters in indecision, the United States is a party to another treadmill conflict that parallels the experience of the Korean War of a dozen years ago.

An examination of the record of American policy statements on Viet Nam over the past two years offers an insight to the continuous setbacks we have suffered in Southeast Asia --

On April 30, 1962, Under Secretary of State Ball said we faced a "long, slow arduous" war in Viet Nam. Three hundred and fifty-eight days later (April 22, 1963) Secretary of State Rusk repeated the warning declaring no "quick" victory could be expected. Nevertheless, as if to counteract news reports that the war was going badly, the White House publicly announced 163 days later (Oct. 2, 1963) that the United States would withdraw 1,000 American troops in the next three months, and a "major" portion by the end of 1965.

Seventy-nine days later (Dec. 20, 1963) the troop withdrawal policy was abandoned when Secretary of Defense McNamara assured Saigon that American military personnel would "stay as long as needed," a position re-emphasized by President Johnson in a subsequent statement (Jan. 1, 1964).

Notwithstanding these policy declarations, Secretary McNamara was telling Congress 28 days later (Jan. 29, 1964) that he still hoped for the troop withdrawal by the end of 1965. Two weeks ago the tune had changed again with Mr. McNamara declaring the Viet Nam war "will be long, hard and very difficult" and "we should not delude ourselves into thinking it won't." Now Secretary of State Rusk this past week-end has warned the Communists that if they continue their aggressions the United States may "expand the war."

If, as is evident, it is difficult for Americans to understand this vacillating American policy, how demoralizing it must be for the Viet Nameese. We only know that indecision in Washington is dribbling away both American lives and American prestige in Southeast Asia. We think the time has come for President Johnson to announce a firm policy and pursue it with vigor.

(Halleck statement - page 2)

Probably the greatest hoax perpetrated on the American people since Franklin D. Roosevelt promised in 1932 to cut the Federal budget 25 percent is the current "snow job" picturing President Johnson as a disciple of "economy" in government. Here are a few facts:

For the first three months he was in office, President Johnson spent more money than any President in history -- \$24.3 billion. This is \$2 billion greater than the late President Kennedy's peak quarter -- \$22.3 billion (December - February, 1962-63).

President Johnson is currently spending \$2 million a day more than President Kennedy and \$50 million more a day than former President Eisenhower.

President Johnson is actually spending \$99.9 billion this current fiscal year but is hiding \$1.6 billion of the spending by selling Federally-held mortgages and other assets to private investors so the spending won't show in the budget. For the next fiscal year President Johnson will actually spend the all-time record amount, in peace or war, of \$100 billion but hopes to hide \$2.3 billion of it by a similar disposal of government assets.

President Johnson has requested from Congress appropriations for the next fiscal year starting July 1 greater than President Kennedy or any other President ever demanded or received from the legislative branch in its history.

Despite all the publicity about turning off lights in the White House and reducing the Federal payroll, Mr. Johnson's so-called reductions have been unmasked by Senator Harry F. Byrd of Virginia who wrote the President last week that he noted the Federal payroll had been reduced by 14,848 employees on temporary public works projects out only by 845 elsewhere.

Finally, Mr. Johnson has boasted to the press that Congress is "finding that our budget requests did not contain any padding," despite the fact that the House of Representatives -- thanks to a Republican Task Force -- has already cut more than \$3 billion out of his requests and we are not through yet.

If any further proof of the "snow job" is needed, let it come from Secretary of Treasury Dillon who only yesterday asked Congress to increase the Federal debt limit from \$309 billion as of June 30 to \$324 billion for the coming year, an increase of ~~\$15~~¹⁵ billion to take care of Mr. Johnson's "red-ink" spending. As P.T. Barnum said, "There's a sucker born every minute."