

JOINT SENATE-HOUSE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

SENATOR DIRKSEN - REPRESENTATIVE HALLECK

September 3, 1964

STATEMENT BY REP. HALLECK: The 1964 Democratic Convention has come and gone and with it the American people now find themselves presented with a political hoax that will go down in history as the year of "plenty amid poverty" and "poverty amid plenty."

Few will forget the maze of oratory, all the way from the President down to the declaimers on the Democratic platform, who in one breath told us we have never had it so good and in the next told us we were surrounded by misery.

It's about time the American people woke up. For 32 years Democratic candidates for President have traded on human misery each election year for political purposes and in the final analysis they have evidently solved nothing in this respect. In 1935 Democratic President Roosevelt told us that with a population of 128 million one third, or 43 million, lived in poverty. In 1964, Democratic President Johnson tells us that one-fifth of a 191 million population is living in poverty, a figure not far from the 43 million.

In those 32 years the Democrats have controlled Congress 28 of the years and have controlled Congress - the White House - 24 of 32 years. Mr. Roosevelt talked about the WPA and FWA, but the poverty

and unemployment continued without abatement until World War II. Mr. Truman talked about "full employment," but poverty and unemployment resumed after World War II until the Korean War. Now Mr. Johnson talks about the "war on poverty" while, according to his own statements, poverty and unemployment continue.

This is political chicanery at its worst. Billions upon billions of dollars are spent each election year by Democrats in the name of poverty. But nothing is solved. We only pass more debt onto our children and their children. Is war the Democrats' only solution?

The Democratic National Convention, staged-managed from beginning to end, has come and gone, and we and the world are told that poverty and unemployment are still with us. We ask a simple question: Why should the Democrats in 1964 get by with 32 years of failure?

STATEMENT BY SENATOR DIRKSEN: Gentlemen, good morning.

Do I see any ladies?

For three decades the Democrats every four years have issued their "election year tranquilizers" - - things are really better, but they are also bad, so elect us and they'll get better. This year we have a whole new array of election year tranquilizer pills - "Job Corps," "Work-Training programs," "Work-Study Programs," "Community Action Programs," "Special Programs to combat Poverty in Rural Areas," "Employment and Investment Incentives," "Family Unity Through Jobs," and "Volunteers for America."

My friends, you name it and the Democrats have got it in 1964 if it sounds like it might get a vote - all for a cheap billion dollars of your money. It's called the "War on Poverty Package." And there's not one permanent durable job in the whole phony bundle.

The Democrats can't even get their statistics straight. On April 7, 1960 Democratic Presidential Candidate Kennedy said 17 million Americans went to bed hungry every night. In January this year, the National Policy Committee on Pockets of Poverty reported 20 million Americans lived in poverty. On January 20, President Johnson put the figure at 35 million - an increase of more than 100 percent in four years during all of which a Democrat President occupied the White House and Democrats controlled the Congress.

Now Mr. Johnson tells us we are going to eliminate poverty by spending a billion dollars this year. Well, the Federal government

is already spending \$31 billion a year in relieving hardship and the states are spending another \$13 billion - which makes a total of \$44 billion. By adding just one billion dollars more, Mr. Johnson said, we will solve the problem of poverty. Does anyone really believe this?

Of course, hardship is a concern of all of us and has been throughout the history of this nation. That's why we have manpower training, and expanded vocational education, and scores of other programs to combat distress. It is a cynical business when we are told in an election year that a one-percent increase in expenditures and a political slogan are going to end poverty.

QUESTION: (Inaudible)

SEN. DIRKSEN: Oh, there are a great many in nearly every field. I think Bob Taft over in the House has compiled a whole list, and as I recall there must have been at least 40 or more.

QUESTION: ... aimed at -

SEN. DIRKSEN: Well, when they are aimed at relieving distress or energizing income, or relieving hardship, you have to be prudent, of course, in anything that deals with poverty and unemployment and distress, because, after all, it's one single bundle.

QUESTION: (Refers to President Johnson's remarks about the "frontlash.")

SEN. DIRKSEN: Well, I can only say the "frontlash" and the "backlash" must have collided up in Michigan on Tuesday and who knows how it came out. But they elected a State's Attorney up there on one side, nominated a Congressman on the other, but when you look at what the voters did with respect to giving homeowners the right to do as they would with their own property, I ask you how are you going to rationalize that result.

QUESTION: Mr. Halleck, are you satisfied with President Johnson's ordering the FBI to investigate the express charges against Bobby Baker?

REP. HALLECK: No, I'm not. I don't know whether it's particularly the business of the FBI... the FBI is a very great organization, has the complete confidence of the American people. But

I am among those who believe that the investigation of the Bobby Baker incident was cut off too soon and that some of these things ought to be investigated - not by the FBI but by a proper Congressional Committee.

QUESTION: In your statement are you accusing the American voter of being too gullible or even too stupid?

REP. HALLECK: No, the American voter is not gullible or stupid - sometimes we wonder - but what I'm saying is in my statement is that we've had this same sort of vote-bait operation, the Poverty Package in my opinion is nothing but another billion-dollar boondoggle... and will not (as Senator Dirksen has pointed out) provide one single durable job. The only reason you can talk about some of these things is that maybe some final jobs might accrue, but I just don't see them.

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Herb, returning to your question for the moment... you see, when the FBI investigates, they put on a man or half a dozen or a dozen and they run down all the records. But obviously there is NOT within the FBI technique the holding of a hearing where you put witnesses under oath and make your testimony public. So it's quite a different operation and it falls very peculiarly within the domain and within the jurisdiction of either branch of the Congress.

QUESTION: (Inaudible)

SENATOR DIRKSEN: No, John, I had a discussion with the Majority Leader about it and I may say he was very honestly under a misapprehension with respect to the so-called "Cooper Resolution Committee." He thought that that was actually embedded in Senate Joint Res 187 - that would be the Resolution out of Rules Committee -

to which I offered the substitute. And it was not until Staff checked it for him that he became aware that the Cooper Resolution was a simple Senate Resolution and that it stood by itself and did authorize this Committee of six. He very promptly then said that he would take it up with his Policy Committee at once. I have not undertaken to take the initiative because, after all, we are the minority and it is for them to make the first move in the matter.

QUESTION:Mr. Halleck, do you anticipate that as soon as the Senate passes the legislation about care for the aged... (rest of question inaudible).

REP. HALLECK: I don't think anything in the way of hospital care (that's what it is) for elderly people under Social Security, I don't think it will finally be enacted into law. I have never believed that that sort of a proposition would prevail in the House of Representatives. I think the close vote in the Senate indicates the correctness of my position.

Now, I suppose the matter will go to Conference. Some have felt that if the Senate wanted to tack on this completely different proposition and run the costs up in the combined bill to way above the 10 percent that everybody has said is the maximum to which we ought to go, that they ought to take the responsibility for killing the very worthwhile Social Security amendments and improvements that were adopted in the House of Representatives.

But I think better judgment is that we should try as best we can to bring to passage those improvements in Social Security in the

hope that in that process we will not be burdened with a completely different sort of a situation which is involved in the amendment that was put into the bill in the Senate.

QUESTION: You don't think you can reach a modified compromise?

REP. HALLECK: I don't think so.

QUESTION: Charlie, have you heard any rumours they might try to... (rest of question inaudible).

REP. HALLECK: Well, there are a few ways that that might be undertaken, Jerry, but I would say, first of all, probably there will be unanimous consent request to send the bill to conference.

QUESTION: (Inaudible)

REP. HALLECK: Well, many people have tried to make it an issue heretofore, and I suppose the people who believe in that sort of an approach will undertake to make it an issue again, but there are a great many people who do not feel that that is the way to move. And so as to what the political consequences will be, I don't know. But personally my position has been very clear from - - every since the matter was first proposed.

SEN. DIRKSEN: Tony, I'd like to amplify that answer for you a little. We had all three of these Medicare substitutes before the Finance Committee in a single session. Those sessions began at 10 o'clock and ran until 12. It didn't take very long for the Committee to dispose of them, and in almost every case with respect to the Javits substitute, the Gore substitute, which was the nearest thing to the King-Anderson Bill and also the Ribicoff substitute, the vote was

roughly two to one against.

Now, we had VERY LITTLE testimony, but when you stop to consider what is happening to welfare programs in nearly every other country and what the tax burden is at the present time, certainly this merits a lot more attention than it has had by the Senate Finance Committee. Now they have gone into it to some extent over on the House side. I've had occasion to examine some figures recently with respect to Belgium, Holland and Italy, West Germany, France and Britain, and frankly the results are staggering in terms of taxes. And the burden it puts on the economy of the country... all of that ought to be thoroughly examined into before we venture further down the road.

Now referring to what Congressman Halleck said... there has been a disposition to believe that when you pierce the 10 percent tax limit - meaning 5 percent on the employee and 5 percent on the employer - you're in trouble. But we're up to 10.4 now... it could very well be 10.6... and this might be only a beginning before we get through as they undertake to add other things to the Social Security Program.

As a result, we're not thinking about this in terms of a campaign issue... we're thinking about the burden upon the country and the future and what it can conceivably do to the whole question of the incentive. I think some of the figures relating to the migration of doctors out of Great Britain - particularly the graduating classes from the medical schools - the seeming lack of interest in building new hospitals and that sort of thing... is really a shocking picture. And if it should happen here, why, I think people would be up in arms.

So I just end that little discussing by saying when they continue to emphasize that you've got to treat old people with dignity, I just ask this question: Is it dignified to put old people in the medical assembly line and give them a two, four, or six-minute diagnosis and then shove them out of the office? That's precisely what's happening.

QUESTION: Last weekend - walking through a cow pasture on the LBJ ranch - Senator Humphrey spoiled his shoe and cried he had just stepped on the Republican Platform.

SEN. DIRKSEN: Well, Herb, that's an old dish, because I used to tell a story like that twenty years ago ... standing on a manure spreader and saying to a great crowd in the country: "I'm delighted I can stand on a Democratic Platform and talk to you."

QUESTION: The GOP National Committee says it has received indignant calls and that language isn't dignified for a candidate.

SEN. DIRKSEN: (Laughs) Well, who am I to say... who am I to say whether it's dignified in this easy accelerated age.

REP. HALLECK: That isn't the only thing Humphrey is going to step on before he gets through. (EVERYBODY TALKS AT ONCE)

QUESTION: (Inaudible)

SEN. DIRKSEN: Very definitely the cloture petition will be offered on Tuesday on the amendment to the Foreign Aid Bill... on Thursday.

QUESTION: (Inaudible)

SEN. DIRKSEN: Well, Bob, I have not undertaken to make a nose count. And, incidentally, I ought to ask who wrote for the Wall Street Journal the other day after I was up in the Press Gallery? Because he said it looked like Dirksen was losing some faith in his cause because he said among other things that he wasn't sure that he had votes for cloture. I never said I had votes for cloture. I'm as confident as I'm standing here this morning that we're going to get well above a majority, whether we'll get two-thirds is going to depend in some measure in how many will be out-of-town. After all, it IS the Labor-Day weekend, members in particularly candidates will be making speeches. But we may get two-thirds of those present and voting.

QUESTION: Thursday -

SEN. DIRKSEN: On Thursday, yes. But in any event, the bill will be there and the amendment will be there - and if they want to continue to filibuster, it's quite all right.

Now, you remember I targeted October 2, Friday, as a possible adjournment date. It may be that you'll have to order your Thanksgiving turkey for Washington rather than for home. And I don't know - you promised last year that you would set up a Christmas tree in the Press Gallery and you never did it, and I'm going to hold you to it this year.

QUESTION: We were all over the the House Gallery watching Mr. Halleck with the Foreign Aid Bill.

SEN. DIRKSEN: Yes, but you didn't keep faith by getting this Christmas tree and Christmas cake. And I still think that you

all owe me -

REP HALLECK: You know, that's rather interesting about that Christmas Eve Session and I don't think they've sold a bushel of wheat under that arrangement yet. What was all the shouting about?

QUESTION: (Not audible)

SEN. DIRKSEN: The case? Well, the apportionment case will be pending before the three-judge court - and so long as there is a case pending, any governor, any attorney general, any state legislator, can go in and file an application for a stay of proceedings. And in the absence of what in the amendment is referred to as "highly unusual circumstances," he will be entitled to a stay, and that of course will take care of the situation.

QUESTION: (Inaudible)

SEN. DIRKSEN: Today's Thursday. Yes, the vote will come a week from today. Under the rule there is an intervening day. You file it on Tuesday - it lays on the desk for a day - on Thursday the President pro tem automatically puts the question to the Senate.

QUESTION: Senator, is Senator Mansfield joining in this -

SEN. DIRKSEN: I haven't asked him to, Tony.

QUESTION: (Inaudible)

SEN. DIRKSEN: That is substantially correct. Give me a little latitude and let me say nearly everyone.

REP. HALLECK: Senator, why not offer the House past bill as an amendment to the Foreign Aid Bill?

SEN. DIRKSEN: You mean the Tuck Bill?

REP. HALLECK: Yes

SEN. DIRKSEN: It's on the calendar. It has to be motioned, of course. But it's easily vetoed if it goes to the White House. Foreign Aid is quite a different thing.

QUESTION: (Inaudible)

SEN. DIRKSEN: Well, that depends entirely upon my esteemed friends who are carrying on the filibuster, the same friends, incidentally, who carried on the filibuster on the satellite, and the same friends who, incidentally, were so chagrined and full of bile that others should carry on a filibuster on the civil rights bill. I helped to break the filibuster on the satellite bill by getting on my knees to some of my associates on my side of the aisle, and, as you know, I had a small part in breaking the filibuster on the civil rights bill. So if the Lord is willing, maybe success will crown our efforts and we'll get this one broken, too.

QUESTION: (Inaudible)

REP. HALLECK: I'm sorry, I didn't quite make that out... didn't quite understand that.

QUESTION: (Still inaudible)

REP. HALLECK: I would say on our side there is a great desire to get home. As a matter of fact, I think that's the only right attitude to take. We in the House of Representatives - we have to stand for election every two years - I think the people are entitled to have a look at us and have us say to them what we believe in and what we think ought to be done. Now, of course, if the people in

charge of this Congress and they're the Democrats - not the Republicans - can't get the thing adjourned in time to give us that opportunity, why, the responsibility is theirs.

Now as to political implications... of course, I suppose the farther we go the more political implications will be involved. And I seriously doubt whether that's too good for the country. But, in my event, the responsibility is not ours. I am one who has complained very bitterly about the failure to wind up the session, but there isn't very much I can do about it.