

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 1952

Mr. DIRKSEN. Mr. President, one of the first special assignments I had in the House of Representatives was as a Member of the Select Committee on the Reorganization of the executive branch. I became initiated into the intricacies of the situation and the prolixities of the remedies. Subsequent to that time the Brown-Lodge resolution was introduced, bearing the name of Representative BROWN and the Senator from Massachusetts [Mr. LODGE]. Then the so-called Hoover Commission was organized.

While a member of the subcommittee on Treasury-Post Office Appropriations, I should say, in all candor and in all fairness to that committee and to its very

distinguished chairman, Representative CANFIELD, of New Jersey, that the investigations taking place at the present time were initiated by that subcommittee. I recall our investigation of the internal revenue office in Boston, and I also recall some other investigations which were made, but it was out of those preliminary investigations that other data were adduced which finally brought this matter to the front page.

In connection with the work of the Subcommittee on Treasury-Post Office Appropriations, I had some hand in compiling the report on the appropriation bill for the fiscal year 1949, and in that report we wrote this language:

The most serious defect in the organization and operations of the Bureau is the fact that the men who are charged with the actual collection of the revenue, the collectors, are political appointees. The Commissioner, who administers the entire Bureau, does not have effective control over the collectors throughout the country. Whether collectors of internal revenue actively attend to the affairs of their offices or merely bask in their patronage appears to be largely a matter of their own volition.

The committee recommends the enactment of legislation whereby the appointment of collectors of internal revenue would be removed from the patronage system and placed under civil-service laws and regulations. This would be a major progressive step in the operations of the Bureau, even though the administration of the civil-service system is badly in need of widespread improvements.

That language, Mr. President, appeared in the report of the Subcommittee on Treasury-Post Office Appropriations for the fiscal year 1949, when I was a member of that subcommittee. Since that time I was out of congressional service for a couple of years, and I enlisted myself in the service of the Citizens Committee on the Hoover Report. In that connection I made a great many radio and platform appearances and sought as best I could to devote my feeble talents to the business of energizing the interest of the people, in the hope that our approaches and our endeavors in the field of Government reorganization would be real rather than illusory.

In all candor, Mr. President, I feel, in view of the record, that I ought to support the plan which is now pending. I say that for a number of reasons. In the first place, it comes within the pro-

visions of the Reorganization Act of 1949. I have endeavored to examine the broad provisions of that act, and I think the plan in substance conforms to those provisions and those requirements.

When all is said and done, there must be some vehicle with which to start; there must be some authority under which to approach the business of eliminating patronage and the political factor from the Internal Revenue Bureau. I believe that no matter how broad the scope of the plan, with good administration the objective can be accomplished. I believe, also, that it would serve to provide greater flexibility of operation.....

So, to continue this very brief appraisal, I think the plan would develop greater stability in the Internal Revenue. At the present time there is a high rate of turnover. I become rather distressed by the fact that employees of the Bureau of Internal Revenue so often have feelings of their own instability. That follows partly, of course, by reason of the fact that if they are political appointees, they are never secure. So I hope the merit system will be extended to these employees so as to give them a sense of stability, because they are responsible for the duties they discharge in the Bureau. In truth and in fact, Mr. President, I believe the adoption of the merit system would diminish the rate of turn-over in the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

If the program is honestly administered, and the selection of personnel is made on a competitive basis, certainly it ought to bring people of better talent into the Government. I do not go so far as to say that it is assured that every

one who may be employed will be honest, or that his integrity will be unassailable and unimpeachable. I doubt whether by legislation that can be accomplished. But I believe that from the standpoint of capacity, if the examinations are properly conducted and if the job standards prescribed for these positions are properly written and applied by the United States Civil Service Commission, we cannot help getting better talent into the Bureau.

While perhaps the plan is not identical with the recommendations of the so-called Hoover Commission, yet in substance it reaches out toward precisely the same objective which was aimed at in the Hoover Commission recommendations. I would not expect the plan to be identical, but I do know what the objective was. So, under this vehicle, at least, it is possible to move in the direction of that plan. If the expected result does not follow, that is a horse of another color. But at least the instrumentality will be available.

As I have said, the plan itself is certainly not a guaranty of honesty and efficiency. But good administration, I think, will carry us in the direction of the goal we seek to achieve.

I wish to mention one other thing. As I recall some of the processes of Re-

organization Plan No. 26—and I recall them rather vaguely, to be candid—that plan was general in scope, but at least the plan which is now before the Senate would be implemented somewhat, I think, by the one that was adopted earlier. The adoption of this plan certainly would not impair the power of Congress with respect to the Bureau.

Congress can abolish the Bureau of Internal Revenue. It can abolish every position in the Bureau. It can create a wholly different instrumentality for collecting revenue, and put it under some other agency or department of Government. If Congress desires so to do it can take the Bureau out of the Treasury Department.....

I do know that unless there is adopted a plan which is implemented by the will of the executive branch, we will be on dead center, and will not go anywhere. Certainly some progress can eventuate. If it does not, then the only conclusion which can be drawn, Mr. President, is that there was complete failure on the part of those who sent the plan here in the first instance.....

Mr. President, I have only one other observation of importance I wish to make at this time, namely, that if the plan fails of adoption, the result will be to shatter the hopes of literally thousands of people who have given of their time, their talent, and their energy to develop a consciousness on the part of the public of the recommendations made by the Hoover Commission. I have journeyed from my home to Chicago, back to Washington, and to Baltimore, to New York, and elsewhere, and have spoken on the radio, simply to help create interest in the necessity for Government reorganization.

Consider a man like Bob Johnson, who headed the Citizens' Committee for the Hoover Report, trying to get four or five hundred people who would be willing to make a study of the questions involved, and then devote their time and talents to visiting different sections of the country in order to impress on the minds of the public the necessity for contacting their Representatives in Washington and stimulating interest in what the Hoover Commission reported.....

Mr. President, if by rejecting this plan we turn down the people who have so unselfishly given of their time to the recommendations of the Hoover Commission, they will simply say, "It is no use. We have given ourselves freely and energetically to build up a case for this movement, which has been supported by some of the finest organizational talent in the country, and the Congress turns us down." It will be destroying a hope which it will be difficult indeed to re-create.

So, Mr. President, under these circumstances, based upon very considerable experience in this field, and for the reasons I have stated, I feel duty bound to support the plan that is before the Senate.