

MINUTES OF THE SEVENTEENTH MEETING OF THE JOINT
REPUBLICAN CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS CALLED FOR JUNE 8,
1961 at 8:30 A.M. IN THE OFFICE OF SENATE MINORITY
LEADER, THE HONORABLE EVERETT MC KINLEY DIRKSEN

Members Present:

Senators Dirksen, Saltonstall, Kuchel
Representatives Halleck, Arends, Byrnes, Brown Hoeven, Miller

Also Present:

Robert Humphreys, Bryce Harlow, Mark Trice, Harry Brookshire,
Robert Allett

The Members assembled at 8:15 a.m. for the purpose of discussing the format for today's meeting, due to the fact that NBC had requested that the entire meeting be filmed. It was understood that after editing, certain excerpts would be shown on June 18, 1961.

The Presiding Officer, Congressman William E. Miller, called the meeting to order at 8:48 a.m.

The following agenda was presented for consideration:

President Kennedy's Meeting with Khrushchev

Geneva Conference on Nuclear Testing

Legislative Matters

This being the first meeting presided over by Congressman Miller, Senator Dirksen and Congressman Halleck joined in congratulating him on his election as Chairman of the Republican National Committee and stated that they are extremely happy to have him occupy the Chair as Presiding Officer. The Chairman expressed his thanks for their generous expressions and stated that the number 1 business of the meeting was President Kennedy's meeting with Krushchev.

Senator Dirksen informed the members of the meeting of the recent White House briefing by the President upon his return and after general

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discussion and comments by all members present, a previously prepared statement was read. Following the discussion the Chairman stated that apparently all were in accord that the statement represented the opinion of the group and it was agreed that it would be given without change at the press conference. A copy is attached hereto.

The Chairman then stated that the number 2 subject on the agenda was the Geneva Conference on Nuclear Testing. Congressman Halleck was recognized and he read to the membership a previously prepared statement on the subject. After general discussion on the subject it was the understanding that no effort is being made to pre-empt the decisions of the President, and hope was expressed that President Kennedy would see it. The prepared statement was adopted unanimously.

The Chairman then stated that the third subject on today's agenda is Legislative Matters.

Before recognizing Congressman Byrnes the Chairman stated that in line with the previous expressions it was necessary to keep a strong posture at home and a fiscal soundness that allows us to remain leaders in the free world. Congressman Byrnes stated that yesterday the House Policy Committee discussed the subject of the extension of Korean excise taxes which involves 3.5 billion dollars. He stated that the Republicans agreed they should be extended with the exception of the transportation tax on passengers which involved 300 million dollars. This decision was reached after evidence was presented that this tax was creating a serious burden on the troubled transportation industry.

Congressman Byrnes stated that the Aid to Education bill was the other item discussed and that the general feeling was that the bill as presented cannot be supported. Questions were raised concerning future

budget deficits and Congressman Byrnes stated that future projections as to costs never have been made but that they were working on the figures now.

Congressman Halleck stated there was very little enthusiasm on the Republican side for the bill, and that if it should be defeated a bill in regard to impacted areas would be passed.

The Chairman recognized Congressman Hoeven who spoke briefly on the Omnibus Farm bill and stated that item 1 was the main object of controversy. He stated that the present bill was so vulnerable that it would not be reported out by the Democrats until its provisions were changed. He stated that the legislation was being constantly re-written and that the best cost estimate was 12 or 15 billion dollars a year. The Chairman stated that it is good for America that the bill has not been reported out.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:38 a.m.

Mark Fricc.

Acting Secretary

Approved by the
Presiding Officer
June 14, 1961