

MINUTES OF THE EIGHTEENTH MEETING OF THE JOINT
REPUBLICAN CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS CALLED FOR
JUNE 15, 1961 at 8:30 A.M. IN THE OFFICE OF SENATE
MINORITY LEADER, THE HONORABLE EVERETT MC KINLEY DIRKSEN

Members Present:

Senators Dirksen and Bridges
Representatives Halleck, Arends, Brown, Hoeven, Miller

Also Present:

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

The Presiding Officer, Chairman William E. Miller, called the meeting
to order at 8:41 A.M.

The following agenda was presented for consideration:

Cold War versus New Frontier Spending
Effect of New Frontier Spending on our Form of Government
Leadership Meeting Procedures

The first item on the agenda was presented for consideration by the
Chairman and he recognized Senator Dirksen who stated that before reading
a statement he thought a brief summarization of the budgetary material
accompanying the statement would be helpful.

Senator Dirksen stated that the budget figures for the fiscal year
1962 are as follows:

The budget figures submitted by President Eisenhower
were 80.8 with receipts estimated at 82.3 and with the
revisions of March 28 and May 25 the present budget
figures stood at 89.6.

Congressman Brown commented that there could be a deficit of from
3.5 to 4.5 unless employment further picks up and there is a further
improvement in business.

Senator Dirksen then read the prepared statement in regard to the
fiscal picture which was unanimously approved, a copy of which is attached.

The Chairman then suggested that Mr. Halleck be recognized for the purpose of reading a prepared statement in regard to the No. 2 agenda item. After the statement was read Mr. Halleck stated that much mail is being received in regard to all of the "spending" of the Kennedy administration. A copy of the statement is attached.

The Chairman expressed the opinion that if the legislation on education can be handled in the right manner that great strides could be made. Congressman Halleck raised the question as to what position the Republicans should take in the House in regard to the school bill. The opinion was expressed that with impacted areas in the bill it would be less troublesome but it looked as though the best approach would be not to attempt to improve it but to make an effort to defeat the bill. If the bill were defeated the impacted area section could be treated separately and passed.

Congressman Halleck raised the question as to the best method of procedure with respect to the housing legislation. His opinion was that there was not sufficient votes in the House to defeat it and raised the question as to what the Conferees might do if satisfactory amendments were adopted by the House. Senator Dirksen replied that in his opinion there would not be sufficient votes in the Conference to save the amendments and that the bill would pretty much follow the Senate version. The suggested statement as read by Mr. Halleck was agreed to.

There was brief comment concerning the Cuban tractor deal. The statement was made that all the recent efforts were designed to get the President off the hook and to let the whole matter go gradually down the drain.

Senator Dirksen suggested that it might be wise to have a statement prepared giving a summarization of previous press releases in the light of current events in regard to tractors, a termination date suggested in regard to nuclear testing, and Laos.

There was discussion at length concerning the foreign policy speech made by Senator Mike Mansfield on Berlin made on Wednesday. The Mansfield speech had been followed by comments of Senators Humphrey, Morse and Kefauver.

The question was raised by Senator Bridges if this was the start of appeasement on the part of the Administration and whether or not these speeches were a trial balloon for a change in Administration policy.

The question was also raised as to whether or not the Mansfield speech had been cleared with the President and whether or not it was a clear departure from previous administration policy if the Senator did speak for the Kennedy Administration. Congressman Halleck stated that the President owes it to the American people to clarify the situation.

If the matter was raised at the press conference, it would be left in the hands of Senator Dirksen and Congressman Halleck to raise the question of appeasement and suggest that the President clarify the issue.

The Chairman then brought before the meeting the third item on the agenda. He raised the question as to the merits of having before the group different personalities from time to time and the feasibility of changing the image by not having it appear that only two or three persons are controlling the Republican Party.

While there had been no disagreement with the substance of the statements of policy previously issued, there had been some question raised as to the possibility of having wider participation in the meetings by others.

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Congressman Halleck spoke about the Freshmen in the House having better committee assignments and the constant effort to bring the younger ones to the forefront.

After general discussion of the matter and no decision reached, the meeting adjourned at 9:45 A.M.


Acting Secretary

Approved by the
Presiding Officer
June 22, 1961