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I S S U E S A N D A N S W E R S

SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 1967

GUEST: Senator Everett M Dirksen (R. Ill.)

INTERVIEWED BY:

Bill Lawrence, AEC Political Editor

and

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MR. LAWRENCE: Senator, are we going to have that six-percent tax surcharge that President Johnson proposed the other night?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, Bill, frankly I don't know. I could give you several answers because nothing is absolute in my book but I will give you a qualified answer. When we were at the ranch about five or six weeks ago, we had a full day's discussion, virtually, of the budget on the possibility or the necessity for a tax increase, but it hinges entirely upon what your deficit is going to be. If you had a manageable deficit you wouldn't have to have a tax increase. But at that time we were talking about a possible \$13 billion deficit in 1967 and a \$20 billion deficit in 1968. I think if anything those figures are really below the Treasury figures.

1 Now if we can reduce spending to a point where you could
2 manage your deficit, you wouldn't have to have a tax increase
3 but I have grave doubt that you can find enough in that budget
4 to cut out so that your deficit will be manageable. And
5 either one, of course, whether it is a tax increase or a
6 heavy budget deficit, it is going to be a depressant to
7 business and that means it will be a depressant so far as
8 employment is concerned.

9 MR. LAWRENCE: Well, Senator, are you saying, then, that
10 we won't know about the tax increase until we have gone the
11 whole road of the appropriations procedure?

12 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, I would say you won't know for
13 sure whether that is going to be the case until you see what
14 the Appropriations Committee can do with the cash in the
15 administrative budget.

16 MR. LAWRENCE: Well, this would mean, though, that the
17 House and the Senate especially would be putting off action
18 on the President's tax increase until well after July,
19 wouldn't it?

20 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, as a general thing they always do.
21 I have no recollection that we had a tax bill that came
22 early in the year.

23 MR. CLARK: Senator, the Republican leader of the House,
24 Jerry Ford, has called the proposal for a tax increase a
25 tragic mistake, a mistake for the President even to propose it.

1 I take it you wouldn't go quite that strongly.

2 SENATOR DIRKSEN: No. The question is, can you avoid it.
3 Now you take your choice. You know, the President quoted
4 from Thomas Jefferson. He said that you embrace a great evil
5 in order to avoid a greater one. And that is the kind of a
6 fix we are going to be in. Here will be two evils. A
7 heavy deficit and the possibility of a tax increase. Which
8 one do you embrace? From the standpoint of its impact on the
9 economy, I suppose the effect is going to be about the same.

10 MR. LAWRENCE: I get the impression from what the Demo-
11 crats say, Senator, that it is rather unlikely the President
12 can even get a tax increase.

13 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, wasn't that the case before,
14 when we had this very heavy tax bill? But when all the
15 chips were down, when all the testimony had been in and you
16 saw what you were up against, it was no longer a question of
17 theorizing. You were confronted with a condition and what
18 do you do with it, you try to solve it. And it had to be
19 solved then by a tax increase. That may be the case this
20 time.

21 MR. CLARK: Senator, Republican leaders talked all last
22 year about making deep cuts in the Johnson budget before
23 raising taxes, and of course you never succeeded in making the
24 budget cuts. Don't you think now you were wrong in not
25 supporting a tax increase last year?

1 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Who knows? Hindsight, you know, is
2 always better than foresight. But there again your problem
3 is, when you start cutting the budget, where do you cut?
4 Space? Do you cut the road program? Do you cut the
5 poverty program?

6 We cut the poverty program three quarters of a billion
7 dollars last year. We cut Foreign Aid by \$250 million.
8 Those are areas where you can make cuts that really amount
9 to something. To just go about this business of cheese-paring
10 and finding a million here and a million there, while it
11 is very useful it doesn't add up to very much when you get
12 through. You have to find the money where the large expendi-
13 tures really are.

14 MR. LAWRENCE: Speaking of Space, Senator, on this program
15 last week, Senator Mansfield said he would welcome some
16 deep cuts in space spending. Do you agree with him?

17 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, I have been looking at that Space
18 Program, I don't mind telling you, because I am wondering
19 whether or not there can't be a stretch-out. Does it really
20 make a great deal of difference whether we get to the moon
21 this year or next year, or the following year? I doubt very
22 much whether it makes a great deal of difference. And if we
23 reconcile ourselves to that thesis then, of course, there is
24 the place where you can make a very substantial cut.

25 MR. CLARK: Do you agree with the President that it is wise

1 to defer the basic decision on the so-called antimissile
2 missile system, even though the Soviet Union is going ahead
3 with such a program itself?

4 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Our difficulty and my difficulty is to
5 come to a conclusion on the basis of the rather inconclusive
6 testimony and evidence thus far.

7 Now I saw a report that the Soviet Union had in place and
8 had actually deployed this antimissile defense for 130
9 cities. Then I see another report that it was limited only
10 to Moscow. Now what is correct? Frankly, I don't know.
11 Does our CIA know? Have we had enough reconnaissance to
12 know what the picture is? And you can't solve a problem
13 unless you first know what the problem is.

14 MR. CLARK: The President in his State of the Union
15 Message, of course, mentioned only Moscow. Do you mean
16 maybe he didn't have enough information?

17 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Who knows? He certainly will have
18 more than I do.

19 Now I want to amplify that a little. That is the general
20 answer. When I think in terms of antimissiles and then, of
21 course, they are defensive weapons. Allegedly we have three
22 or four times as many warheads as they have. But if they
23 have enough to annihilate us and we have enough to annihilate
24 them, then what real difference does it make how many we
25 have and how many they have? Because you are looking at

1 coannihilation. That only means that more work has to be
2 done in the general disarmament field and in controls, in
3 the hope that this thing can be kept from escalating to a
4 point where no country can afford that kind of an expenditure.

5 MR. LAWRENCE: Senator, what do you see as a prospect in
6 the future for deescalation. Can we halt the bombing of
7 North Viet Nam, for example, to bring an end to the war,
8 there? Can we take other steps --

9 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, Bill, our trouble is, we take
10 bombing and we isolate it and think there is something de-
11 tached about it. When all is said and done, it is just another
12 approach, it is just another technique in the general art
13 of warfare.

14 Suppose somebody came along and said, "Well, now, put aside
15 your machineguns," or "Put aside your bazookas, because they
16 maim people and you destroy people in great numbers"?

17 Well, you'd look upon that suggestion as a little ab-
18 surd.

19 Now they say bombing hasn't been effective. You remember
20 from your own experiences as a soldier that when we
21 talk about fire superiority, you could shell the enemy for
22 weeks and weeks before you ever saw any results. And it was a
23 costly business to say the least.

24 Now nobody can tell me for one moment that bombing isn't
25 effective. You don't necessarily go for one target or

1 another. There are roads, there are bridges, as well as
2 industry to be bombed. And I can't imagine for the life of me
3 these very destructive things hurtling out of the air that
4 don't destroy something and to that extent at least immobil-
5 ize the enemy.

6 MR. CLARK: You have two of your new Republicans in the
7 Senate, Senator Brooke and Senator Hatfield today calling
8 for a suspension of the bombing. Do you want to apply that
9 word "absurd" to what they are saying?

10 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, not necessarily absurd to what they
11 say, because that is a matter of conviction with them. But I
12 am speaking only from what little background I have and from
13 my experience as a soldier. Once upon a time I was an
14 artilleryman on the Western Front and I know how we used to
15 expend shells day after day and week after week, night and
16 day, and you couldn't see it. There was no visible evidence.
17 And yet we knew, of course, that every time a high explosive
18 shell was torn apart about fifty feet above the ground and
19 then splattered out into a cone that something was being
20 destroyed and something was being hurt and that you were
21 doing that much damage to the enemy.

22 MR. LAWRENCE: I suppose the basic question is, though,
23 do you see anything easy that we can do to deescalate with
24 the Soviet Union?

25 SENATOR DIRKSEN: No, there isn't anything easy at all.

1 MR. LAWRENCE: Is there anything hard?

2 SENATOR DIRKSEN: And if we drew back, if we just had a cess-
3 tion of bombing, how would they interpret that?

4 Now let me amplify that a little bit: Bill, I think we are
5 putting too much emphasis on bombing and not enough on the
6 greater problem that lies ahead. For practical purposes I
7 think we are top dog militariwise in Vietnam and that
8 part of it doesn't bother me any. The problem is what is going
9 to be the policy when something happens like a cessation of
10 hostilities? Suppose they quit. Or suppose they want to
11 negotiate. Do we let the Viet Cong sit at the negotiation
12 table? If you do, you might just as well say that for
13 practical reasons you are just about surrendering, and then how
14 do you justify all the sacrifice, all the blood, all the
15 money that has been expended over there? Because this has to
16 be another step. You sit around a table, you have to
17 agree to something, finally. And how long do you think that
18 kind of a deal with the Viet Cong sitting there, is going to
19 last? A few months, and then it is all gone. I don't know
20 that we have looked down the road sufficiently to chart the
21 course and make sure where we are going when the hostilities
22 are actually over.

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1 MR. CLARK: Senator Dirksen, the President also
2 called in his State of the Union Message this week for
3 passage of an East-West trade bill. Are you going to give
4 him any support on this?

5 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, I will have to reserve an answer
6 on it for the moment. Frankly I have been rather unhappy
7 about our East-West relations. How in the world do we do
8 business with them when overtly and in all their recitals they
9 make it appear that we are dogs, we are imperialists, they
10 actually want nothing to do with us except probably to
11 engage in trade, since this is the lushest market in all the
12 world. But where do we benefit, as a matter of fact? Because
13 that is bound to be cheap competition, and we are having
14 our troubles already. In that connection I simply mention
15 that the so-called Trade Expansion Act will expire on the
16 30th of June. It will have to be renewed. Now there is
17 going to be a real fight on that subject. You would be
18 surprised at the number of industries in this country that
19 are already feeling the sharp effects of foreign competition.
20 Now do we sharpen it and if we do, what do we get out of it?

21 I think the thesis of a quid pro quo is going to have
22 a very considerable appeal before we get through, and so I
23 don't set myself categorically against it as much as to say
24 that I am against everything and everybody. Certainly not.
25 But there has to be some value for our country. I think we

2 1 have been underdog too long and we have been giving of our
3 2 resources, we have been giving of our largess and we have
4 3 been getting so little in return, and certainly we have
5 4 gotten a minimum amount of good will.

6 MR. LAWRENCE: Senator, how about the Soviet consular
7 agreement?

8 SENATOR DIRKSEN: There you have another point. When I
9 first thought of that consular agreement I went back and
10 found the document that Litvinov, the first Ambassador,
11 and Franklin Roosevelt signed. And you should have seen
12 all the guarantees to which they affixed their signatures.
13 They weren't going to interfere with our internal affairs.
14 The ink was hardly dry before they were in here trying to
15 subvert and trying to infiltrate this country, and
16 they have been at it ever since. And then they
17 piled on top of it probably more than a hundred treaty viola-
18 tions.

19 How do you do business with people like that? Because
20 if you are going to do business, you have to do it at
21 arms' length if it is going to amount to anything. So what
22 do we give them now? A few more eyes and ears over here
23 in some of our selected spots, because after all the place
24 in Washington has not been free from people sent over
25 here who have been prying and snooping where they had no
business.

1 MR. CLARK: Senator, the big fight on the floor
2 in the Senate this week is going to be in the effort by
3 Democratic liberals to tighten the anti-filibuster rules.
4 Who is going to win this one?

5 SENATOR DIRKSEN: I can't tell you who is going to win
6 but I can tell you how I feel. I am opposed to a modification
7 of the Rule 22, and it is simply a case of trying to save
8 and keep intact the kind of a parliamentary system we have
9 today, and that has endured beyond any other constitutional
10 government on the face of the earth.

11 This government, representative government, in all
12 its glory, is the oldest without any significant change under
13 God's sun, and the reason we have it is because we haven't
14 made it too easy to rush through a lot of panaceas, and
15 the things on which they pant so hotly in order to shove
16 through as their brain children, and probably not for the
17 benefit of the country. I think Rule 22 has served a very
18 useful purpose, and I say if you have got a proposition that
19 has merit you can get cloture if you have to have it.
20 Didn't we get it on a major Civil Rights Bill? I
21 had to get on my knees a little, and beg a few Republicans
22 but we had more than the votes to spare. We could have
23 gotten it on voting rights if we had to. But it is civil
24 rights that provoked all this fight, and I proved, I think,
25 because I was in the forefront of every one of those civil

1 rights fights, and we proved that it could be done.

2 MR. CLARK: Have you mentioned all this to Senators
3 Hatfield and Percy, two members of your freshman class?

4 SENATOR DIRKSEN: I haven't, but I shall on the Floor.

5 MR. CLARK: They have said already that they are going
6 to vote for a change in rules.

7 SENATOR DIRKSEN: I suppose their sentiment is for
8 three-fifths instead of two-thirds, but I do not believe in
9 weakening that rule. I think it is useful and that we ought
10 to have it for the conservation and salvation of our country
11 and our system.

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1 MR. LAWRENCE: While we are on that subject, Senator, do
2 you see any meaningful Civil Rights bill coming up this year?
3 The President was kind of --

4 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, he used the words "Civil Rights"
5 in the message once and he used the word "equality" once, as I
6 recall, but there were no specifics, so I do not know whether
7 the Administration will offer something.

8 However, that doesn't keep any member of the Senate or
9 the House from flinging a bill into the hopper and then if the
10 appropriate chairman is willing and they get it out of
11 committee, you will have it on the calendars and then, of
12 course, it is up to the leadership to see whether or not it is
13 going to be taken up.

14 MR. LAWRENCE: The effort to get a big bill last year,
15 though, fell because they couldn't reach an accommodation with
16 you?

17 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Yes.

18 MR. LAWRENCE: Have you changed your view on open housing?

19 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Oh, no, I haven't.

20 MR. LAWRENCE: Do you think the President softened
21 perhaps on this?

22 SENATOR DIRKSEN: I don't know, but you see, my view on
23 open housing was simply that I thought, and I still think,
24 that thereby you will be liquidating the due process clause
25 in the Constitution of the United States, and that is one on

1 which they have never laid a finger from the day it has been
2 written into that document.

3 MR. CLARK: The President's words in the State of the
4 Union Message were, Senator, "We should find a solution to
5 fair housing so every American, regardless of color, has a
6 decent home of his choice."

7 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Yes.

8 MR. CLARK: Do you think that was a call for a new open
9 housing bill?

10 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Not necessarily. He might have had in
11 mind there that you approach it from the standpoint of private
12 enterprise. In other words, there are some projects already
13 under way. One in New York. I understand they have got one
14 coming into Washington. There are a number out in Chicago.
15 And my colleague, Senator Percy of Illinois, already has a
16 bill shaped up which will take that private approach in order
17 to accomplish that same objective.

18 MR. CLARK: Would you support the Percy bill?

19 SENATOR DIRKSEN: It is entirely possible. I haven't
20 seen the details yet.

21 MR. LAWRENCE: Senator, last week you were called as a
22 witness in the Bobby Baker case. You didn't get to testify,
23 but were you fascinated at the suggestion that a Democrat was
24 going around claiming to be collecting money to help you get
25 re-elected?

1 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Bill, a President said to me one time
2 in privacy, he says, "I shudder at the thought that sometime
3 a man will pop out of the woodwork and announce to all the
4 world, 'I dumped 50 or 100 thousand into your campaign fund.
5 Now, I want a job and I don't get it, so now I am going to
6 tell the whole wide world about it.'"

7 That is one of the things with which you are beleaguered
8 all the time, so maybe it is not so astonishing that a clerical
9 employee should go out and tell these people on the Pacific
10 Coast, "Look, you have got some fences to mend. If you want
11 any influence, you do it with some green money, and I know just
12 where it has to go." And they say, "Well, who?"

13 Well, right off the top of his head, he can name some names
14 That wouldn't be so difficult, and if you look over that list,
15 he picked out members of the Senate Finance Committee where
16 building and loan legislation, particularly as it relates to
17 taxation, is always considered.

18 But I thought afterwards, now that you mention it, here
19 was Frank Carlson, for 15 or 20 years the head of the prayer
20 group here in Washington, and former Governor of Kansas; here
21 was Wallace Bennett of Utah, a former elder of the Mormon
22 Church. Well, getting a politician like me into it might
23 make a little more sense, but getting Carl Hayden into it, for
24 instance, the Dean of the House and Senate, who has been here
25 longer than anybody, and who is the soul of honesty, that was

1 indeed a very, very funny list, I thought.

2 MR. CLARK: Do you know of any Republican members of
3 Congress who got anything from Bobby Baker?

4 SENATOR DIRKSEN: I do not. I do not know a soul, and I
5 don't know anybody, anywhere, any time, that ever got any funds
6 from Bobby Baker. At least, I have never been acquainted
7 with it.

8 Now, while you raise that question, the press was trying
9 to get an answer from me on another question today and
10 didn't -- today -- this week, I should say. Had I ever gotten
11 any money from the late Senator Kerr. Certainly not. Not a
12 nickel. I can't imagine anybody on our side getting money
13 from Senator Kerr, or on his own side, for that matter.

14 I am not so sure but what a strict interpretation of
15 the law, the Corrupt Practices Act, makes it illegal to do so,
16 and makes it a punishable offense for one Senator to do it to
17 another, because you know what the implication is. If you had
18 a big money bag and you staked a number of campaigns, you would
19 have the Senate in the hollow of your hand. It just doesn't
20 make sense to outlaw that sort of thing.

21

22 MR. CLARK: There are three cases currently getting a
23 lot of publicity, all involving Congressional ethics to a cer-
24 tain degree; the Bobby Baker case, of course; the Powell case,
25 and the Dodd case, which is going to come up later this year

1 again in the Senate.

2 Does all this lead you to think that the Senate or
3 Congress needs a new Code of Ethics?

4 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Oh, I doubt it very much. It seems to
5 me that every man is his own ethic and people will find it
6 out soon enough and remove him from public life. It will take
7 a little longer.

8 Now, look at all the hullabaloo in the Powell case.
9 Well, the House of Representatives and the Senate are, under
10 the Constitution, the judges of the qualifications of their
11 own members and they can deal with it, just as we can deal.
12 Now we are dealing with a case, because we set up an Ethics
13 Committee. There it is, and I never pre-judge those things
14 because they have been gathering up testimony; they have been
15 examining bank statements; they have been subpoenaing all manner
16 of documents, so you don't pre-judge it because later on you
17 are actually going to be called upon to sit in judgment.

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19 MR. LAWRENCE: With your increased Republican votes in
20 both the House and the Senate -- you don't control either
21 one -- there is already a lot of interest in 1968, Senator.
22 Who is your favorite for the nomination?

23 SENATOR DIRKSEN: I have no favorite. It is too far in
24 advance of the convention. So many things can happen, and I
25 do not like to play favorites or tag anybody. That might

1 invite difficulty for him, the very fact that I might be for
2 him.

3 MR. LAWRENCE: You have been a king-maker before though,
4 Senator; you are not without influence. If you came out early,
5 don't you think that you could help pave the way for your
6 favorite?

7 SENATOR DIRKSEN: I love that term "king-maker" but I
8 have never wanted to be a boss, and I just go about carrying
9 party chores and doing what I think will be in the interests
10 of the party and the country.

11 MR. LAWRENCE: Do you have any doubt in your own mind
12 that, God willing, President Johnson will be a candidate for
13 re-election in '68?

14 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, I can only say that on the basis
15 of history it would be very singular, indeed, if he were not a
16 candidate for another term, particularly so because of his age.

17 MR. CLARK: The new junior Republican Senator from
18 Illinois, Charles Percy, suggested today that if there is a
19 favorite son from Illinois in 1968 it should be Everett Dirksen.
20 Would you agree with that?

21 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, that is a lovely speculation that
22 feeds my ego, I must say, but I said once before, the boat
23 left the dock quite some time ago.

24 MR. CLARK: Senator, I am sorry, we have reached that point
25 in the show, and we have all enjoyed this very much, where

1 our time is up. We have enjoyed very much having you with us
2 on ISSUES AND ANSWERS.

3 SENATOR DIRKSEN: It is good to be aboard.

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5 (Next week: Willy Brandt, Vice Chancellor and Foreign
6 Minister of West Germany.)

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