

MINUTES OF THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE JOINT REPUBLICAN
CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS CALLED FOR FEBRUARY 16, 1961,
AT 9:00 A.M. IN THE OFFICE OF THE SENATE MINORITY
LEADER, SENATOR EVERETT MC KINLEY DIRKSEN

Present:

Senators Dirksen and Morton
Representatives Halleck, Arends, Byrnes, Brown, Hoeven

Members of the meeting but not present:

Senators Bridges, Saltonstall and Kuchel

Also present: Mark Trice, Harry Brookshire, Rollis Nelson
and Bryce Harlow

The Presiding Officer, Senator Thruston B. Morton, called the meeting
to order at 9:09 A.M.

The agenda for the meeting, as previously agreed to by Senator Dirksen
and Congressman Halleck, is as follows:

1. President's Press - TV Conference
2. President's Gold Message
3. Farm Program
4. Time of meeting

(8:30 or 9:00; Press Conference 10:00 or 10:30)

The Presiding Officer spoke of the recent withdrawal by President
Kennedy of the pending Postmasters nominations. He stated that he
understood the action to mean that the existing Civil Service register
would be thrown out and he raised a question of the legality of the action
taken. He stated that this should be documented for next week's meeting
and Harry Brookshire was to look into the matter and attempt to ascertain
the facts.

Senator Dirksen stated that at the Press Conference a statement
should be made for the support of the position which President Kennedy
had taken with regard to the Congo situation. There was no objection.

Meeting of the Joint Republican Congressional Leaders - 2 February 16, 1961

Senator Dirksen stated that he had received a letter from Secretary of Defense McNamara in reply to one which he sent to the Secretary in regard to the relative military strength of the United States versus Russia. Several paragraphs of the letter were read and after discussion it was decided that excerpts should be read to the Press. Senator Dirksen stated that his letter as well as the reply of Secretary McNamara would be printed in the Congressional Record.

Congressman Halleck informed the meeting that Congressman Miller, Chairman of the House Campaign Committee, had telephoned him regarding Senator Goldwater and he attending the meetings of the Leadership Committee. The matter was thoroughly discussed from all angles and it was decided that Senator Dirksen would talk with both Congressman Miller and Senator Goldwater in regard to the matter. However, the general consensus of opinion was that they should attend the meeting only on an invitation basis at such times as the Committee invited them to sit with them.

The Committee then considered the recent remark of Secretary of the Interior Udall with regard to public power and Secretary Goldberg's recent nation-wide tour. It was the consensus of opinion that Secretary Goldberg was trying to pin a depression label on the Republicans and the question was how to offset it.

Congressman Halleck remarked about the President's recent statement to the business executives and the completely opposite statement by Secretary Udall in regard to the Administration's position on public power. Congressman Halleck read to the meeting a prepared memorandum dealing with the so-called depression, with the conclusion that the President was "trying to push the panic button".

Meeting of the Joint Republican Congressional Leaders - 3 February 16, 1961

There was agreement that this statement should be read to the Press.

Congressman Halleck raised a question about the Federal Judgeship bill and after discussion it was generally agreed there would be support for any bill increasing the number of Federal judges where need was shown.

Congressman Brown raised a question about legislation in regard to unemployment legislation. It was stated that the Republicans did practically the same thing in 1958 and if the legislation contained sound financing there should not be too much objection to it.

Senator Dirksen spoke briefly on the task force reports with regard to the farm program. No decision was reached as it was decided to await the President's message on the subject.

Congressman Hoeven spoke of a meeting in the Speaker's office in regard to extension of the sugar act for 21 months and of the decision to prevent the windfall from going to the Dominican Republic. He stated that the latter action was contrary to the wishes of the Democratic Leadership at the last session of the Congress. In the light of the fact that this was an executive meeting it was thought best at this time not to mention it to the Press.

After a brief discussion on the time of the meeting of the Committee, it was suggested that next Thursday the meeting be set for 8:30 A.M. with the Press Conference at 10:00 o'clock.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 A.M.



Acting Secretary

Approved by the
Presiding Officer
February 22, 1961