

MINUTES OF THE FOURTEENTH MEETING OF THE JOINT
REPUBLICAN LEADERS CALLED FOR MAY 1, 1961, AT
9:30 A.M. IN THE OFFICE OF PRESIDENT EISENHOWER
AT GETTYSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

Members Present:

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

Member Absent:

Senator Bridges

Also Present:

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

President Eisenhower presided at this meeting and called it to
order at 9:30 a.m.

From 9:32 a.m. to 9:40 a.m. three groups of four each still
camera photographers were admitted to President Eisenhower's office
for pictures of the leadership group. At 9:40 the leadership
meeting proceeded.

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

Senate Report - Senator Dirksen

House Report - Congressman Halleck

Political situation - Chairman Morton, Leaders, DDE

a. Congress

b. National

General Comments - DDE

The President welcomed the Republican leaders and expressed his
approval and pleasure of the continuation, after he left office, of
the former White House Joint Congressional Leadership meetings. He
recalled his suggestion and desire that Republican leadership meetings

be continued after change of the Administration and indicated approval of the position and procedure that they had followed this Congress. The President referred to his position in the political picture and indicated he has no further political ambitions - that his only interest is to help the Republican Party in the future in any way that might be possible for him to do so. He said he is interested in avoiding the Republican Party being labeled as conservative or liberal. The President advised he had written a series of articles for the Saturday Evening Post, the first appearing in the May 13th issue. In these articles he is endeavoring to outline the future course that he believes the Republican Party should pursue. Also, he is preparing a credo of about 10 points stating his beliefs and principles that the Republican Party should follow to avoid the charge of being a divided party. He said this credo is based on the policies and principles he had practiced in public office.

Laos and Cuba

The President's remarks regarding Laos and Cuba, while very broad, included certain specific technical and detailed comment and were of such a nature that in all probability they should not be included in these minutes. Any persons with legitimate further interest in what President Eisenhower said on these two subjects can inquire of Mr. Bryce Harlow who made a shorthand record of the President's comments.

The President reviewed his visit with President Kennedy and he said he told Mr. Kennedy it is his feeling the people of the United States would stand back of him in his efforts to combat communism in this hemisphere, and the President added this is as far as "I would go".

The President cautioned and urged the Republican leaders to keep an accurate record, for future reference, of any conversations they might have with the President in White House conferences on matters such as Laos and Cuba.

The President outlined his public appearance schedule for the near future and said his first public speech would be the June 1st \$100 plate dinner meeting in Washington, that this speech would be confined to unity in the Republican Party, and he would also confine his political remarks to the 1962 election and avoid reference to the 1964 campaign.

Legislation - Senate

Senator Dirksen reviewed the legislative program so far in the Senate - Civil Rights, Budget, Aid to Education, and Judges.

The President indicated keen interest in the legislative endeavors of this Congress.

There was general discussion of the legislation providing for the addition of Federal Judges and Senator Dirksen and Congressman Halleck assured him references had been made many times on the Senate and House Floors to his willingness to appoint the additional badly needed judges on a 50-50 political basis if the Democratic Congress would have passed a bill.

On the subject of Aid to Education, the President indicated he is and always will be opposed to the Federal Government getting into the paying of teachers salaries, and he questioned Federal aid to education proposals that would give one child a school lunch, "haul" them to school and other things while other children were denied the same "simply because they belong to a certain church."

Legislation - House

Congressman Halleck reviewed the legislative situation in the House this session and told the President that he and the Republicans in the House had been trying to maintain and continue his legislative policies and recommendations. Congressman Halleck cited the position they had taken in the House on Depressed Areas, Minimum Wages, and Unemployment Compensation was practically the same that he, President Eisenhower, had recommended last Congress.

President Eisenhower, commenting on the present legislative situation this Congress said, based on his observations from Gettysburg, that President Kennedy was apparently "listening more to his professors and task force people than to his Democrat Congressional leaders."

The President indicated he is against extension of OASI legislation.

Congressman Byrnes discussed the tax situation briefly.

National Politics

Senator Morton reviewed the present national political situation and expressed optimism, with which the President concurred, regarding the Republican chances in 1962 election.

Congressman Halleck told the President that if he were a candidate he would be overwhelmingly elected and that it was his feeling the American people would feel better through this Cuban-Laos crisis if he were President.

The President again indicated he wanted to help wherever he could in connection with the '62 elections.

There was general discussion about inviting other than the regular members of the Joint Leadership group to participate in future leadership meetings but no decision was reached.

At 11:20 a.m. President Eisenhower adjourned the meeting to permit Senator Dirksen and Congressman Halleck to proceed with their 11:30 a.m. Hotel Gettysburg press conference which preceded the President's 11:50 press conference at the same place.


Harry R. Bookshie
Acting Secretary

Approved by the
Presiding Officer