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STATEMENTS

MADE BY

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AND

REPRESENTATIVE GERALD R. FORD

FOR

THE REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP
OF THE CONGRESS



PRESENTED BY MR. DIRKSEN

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September 22, 1966

By Senator Dirksen:

Mr. President, our Question of the Week:

Can we Afford Your Automatic-Democratic Congress?

Seldom has the hypocrisy of numbers been better illustrated than in the voting during this past week on the civil rights bill. The Republican minority and its Leadership in the Senate have been indicated and damned by the Johnson-Humphrey Administration and its Democratic majority for having killed the civil rights bill. How, conceivably, can men of intelligence and good will so overlook that same simple arithmetic to which Mr. Ford has just made reference?

There are 67 Democrats in the Senate. There are 33 Republicans. This being so, how under heaven, can it be concluded that the Republicans defeated civil rights? Had the Johnson-Humphrey Administration truly wished it, had the Democrats in the Senate truly sought it, the proposed Civil Rights Act of 1966 would, without doubt, at this very moment, be the law of the land. As one writer put it in comment on the classic question of "Who killed Cock Robin?" it had to be a Democratic arrow—not that of the Republican minority.

Happily for the Nation's best interest, fortunately for the freedom of the individual, the Republican minority, outnumbered as it was, reflected the will of our people to a degree that made converts of regular Democrats and resulted in a vote that assured the right of every American to preserve the integrity of his own judgment and to determine the future of his own home.

The will of the people in this instance prevailed, but it could never have done so if a determined minority had not made clear the issues involved and in so doing won the respect and the response of many others.

It is unwise, it is dangerous and it can be disastrous, when an overwhelming majority is permitted to prevail without question or hindrance. Only as a majority is repeatedly questioned and checked by a strong minority can the foundations of this Republic be preserved. That we, a present minority, would welcome majority status is undeniable, but until that inevitable day we believe it all-important to the American people that our numbers and our hand be strengthened sufficiently to outlaw forever from Capital Hill the push-button, the computer, the soulless rubber-stamp.

Therefore, Mr. President, our Question of the Week:

Can we afford your automatic-Democratic Congress?

THE CREDIBILITY GAP

March 31, 1966

By Representative Gerald R. Ford:

There's no longer a "credibility gap"—it's become a credibility canyon—and it's widening between the Johnson-Humphrey Administration and the American people with every week that goes by.

Dateline, March 15, the New York Times:

Secretary of the Treasury Henry H. Fowler indicated today that he believed that there had been excessive alarm in business circles about the boom economy.

Dateline, March 23, the New York Times:

President Johnson, citing some decline in business indicators, made clear today that he was not yet convinced that a tax increase was needed to slow down economic expansion and inflation.

Dateline, March 24, the Baltimore Sun:

In a notable exhibition of Administration teamwork, Henry H. Fowler, Secretary of the Treasury, today reiterated what President Johnson said late yesterday—there is no reason at the moment to ask for an anti-inflation tax increase.

And yesterday, March 30, following announcement of a 0.5-percent nationwide cost-of-living increase, the front pages of the press across the country reported that the President favors a 5- to 7-percent tax rise if one is needed. How do you spell "credibility"? What can we believe?

The Johnson-Humphrey Administration must take about \$5 billion annually out of the economy if inflation is to be checked and a recession prevented. It does not have the wish, nor the wit, nor the will to reduce expenditures, hence it must increase taxes.

The checking of inflation could be achieved, as Republicans have long maintained, by a reduction of wholly unwise Federal expenditures and by other essential fiscal, monetary, and economic reforms.

The Johnson-Humphrey Administration has elected the alternative of new taxes.

Dateline, March 30, the Wall Street Journal—"Consumers Boil About Widespread Increases; Many Attempt a Revolt." Whom can we best believe on the high and rising cost of living—America's home-makers and wage earners or a Democratic Administration that will not see, will not hear, and will not believe these frightening facts of economic life?

June 9, 1966

By Representative Gerald R. Ford:

James Reston in the New York Times on May 17 last, wrote:

What he (L.B.J.) wants is worthy of the faith and confidence of the Nation, but this is precisely what he does not have, because his techniques blur his conviction * * *. He is mixing up news and truth * * *. He is confronted, in short, with a crisis of confidence * * *.

This statement expresses a point of view and a deep regret, both of which we fully share.

On May 25, 1966, 19 distinguished Republican members of the House of Representatives, including the entire leadership, cataloged and summarized on the floor of the House the detailed reasons why this crisis of confidence has resulted. We have seen this in almost every aspect of the domestic scene. It has been revealed in the

President's budget messages and management. It has appeared in the war on poverty. It has emerged relative to the NASA program. It was vivid in wage-price guidepost disputes with labor and with management. It was startling in his action on surplus sales of industrial stockpiles and farm products. It became bewildering in Federal job multiplication figures. It surfaced again in appointments to high level offices. It proved shocking in the President's uncertain assessment of the economy. In all these categories of confidence doubt has developed and the American people have, not at all surprisingly, steadily lost faith in a President who is rapidly losing touch with them. *A consensus of no confidence is coming to pass.*

Constructively, positively, let it be recorded here and now that the Republican opposition wants with all of its heart and energy to support the President of the United States when he is either right or of the right intent. In such cases it will always do so, but the Republicans in the Congress—and, indeed, the Democrats in Congress as well—cannot know what is right or of right intent in the President's policies unless they have the facts upon which to base their judgments. The facts are all too seldom given us by this Administration.

There are those in this Administration who appear to believe that half-a-truth is better than none. We disagree. Where the American people at home are concerned we must have the whole truth. Where the American people in their foreign interests and national security are concerned, we must be given every fact possible consistent with our safety. Given such facts as to domestic and foreign policy, we in Congress will, with all the people, be reassured that the soundest, the sanest, the best possible decisions will be made in the days to come.

As of this date, as the record so clearly proves, we have not been given and are not being given the vital facts of American life by the Johnson-Humphrey Administration. We do not charge the Administration with falsehood but we do claim it has failed to reveal the whole truth. This being so, this crisis of confidence is inevitable and the consequent danger to the American people is great.

Therefore, our Question of the Week:

Mr. President, What *can* we believe?

CREDIBILITY—PUBLIC TRUST

September 15, 1966

By Senator Dirksen:

Mr. President and Democratic Members of the Congress:

The American people are troubled, confused, and terribly uncertain as to the future. Their worry and their uncertainty have their basis in both the actions and the inaction of your Administration, to which they look hopefully for a leadership still sadly lacking.

The most recent of the nationwide surveys of public opinion confirms this fact, indicating clearly that in six vital areas of domestic concern—fiscal and monetary policy, civil rights, the war on poverty, the farm problem, the curbing of inflation, and labor-management relations—less than half of our people have been able to maintain their confidence in you over these many months.

On Thursday last you presented to the Congress and the people a five-point program hopefully designed to cool our Nation's growing

economic fever and to restore something of the promise a once healthy economy had.

Belatedly acknowledging as "a cruel and unjust tax on all the people" the inflation now raging throughout the country—inflation created in great part by your actions—you indicated, first, an intention to cut all Federal expenditures to the fullest extent possible. Inasmuch as this primary and fundamental brake on inflation was recommended to you by Republicans and documented in detail by us 9 months ago, why has this announcement of good intent been so long delayed? Specifically how—specifically where—and specifically when—will you order such budget cuts? Will you demand of your Democrat-controlled Congress that it take the action required on the eight appropriation bills still remaining before it? Will you slow down the multimillion dollar Great Society programs already in your hands? Will you, in short, act—now? Republicans stand ready, as always, to help in such actions.

Second, you recommended that the 7-percent investment tax credit be made temporarily inoperative. Could this have any possible effect on our inflated economy for at least another 6 months? Is your proposal a breach of good faith with the industrial, small business, and farm communities?

Third, you recommended suspension of the use of accelerated depreciation on structures started or transferred after September 1 of this year. Do you believe this a factor of consequence in limiting construction activity and costs? Upon what basis was this remarkable conclusion reached? Even if valid, how soon could it have any beneficial effect—if it had any at all?

Fourth, you urged the Federal Reserve Board to lower interest rates and so ease the tight money burden. How odd that your Administration and your Democrats in Congress, allegedly so devoted to low interest rates and loose money should for so long have made high interest rates inevitable by your reckless spending policies and programs.

Fifth, you urged deferment of certain Federal borrowing to alleviate credit pressures. Here again you have at long last but much too late endorsed a clear and firm Republican recommendation of many months ago. As a New York Times editorial put it last Tuesday, September 13:

Even more important, the decision is a sign that the administration may have finally realized that it cannot really be fiscally responsible so long as it indulges in financial gimmickry.

Why this delay, Mr. President? Why such uncertainty? Why such fear of the future?

This is exactly that uncertainty—that growing fear—that is spreading so rapidly among all our people. They are uncertain, they are bewildered as to the future—the future of the economy, the future of their jobs, the future of the Nation, the future of their children in every aspect of their lives.

Therefore, Mr. President and Democratic Members of the Congress, most sincerely and respectfully—

Our Question of the Week:

When will the trust and confidence of the people be restored?

September 15, 1966

By Representative Gerald R. Ford:

Mr. President and Democratic Members of the Congress:

As these problems multiply at home—and abroad—and as the uncertainty among our people grows, we look to the weeks ahead with apprehension and understandably wonder what the future may hold.

As increasing reference is made to a possible adjournment of the Congress by mid-October, election day, November 8, draws closer and we wonder more and more what the immediate period thereafter may bring.

From time to time, for example, you and your Administration and you Democrats in Congress have suggested a tax increase as one of the means available for checking inflation. Mr. President, do you plan to recommend to your Democratic Congress an increase in our already heavy income taxes, *after November 8?*

Equally often, spokesmen for this Administration, including yourself, Mr. President, have made reference to wage-and-price controls as an alternative inflation check. Most recently, a Democratic Senate leader urged that authority for standby controls be given you. Do you have in mind the imposition of wage-and-price controls, *after November 8th?*

In an address to the American Farm Economics Association, a prominent official of your Administration by inference wrote off as uneconomical and needless more than 2 million of America's small farms and farmers. Is it contemplated that this farm elimination program shall be undertaken by your Democratic Congress, Mr. President, *after November 8th?*

The rumor persists with each passing day that the antipoverty program of your Administration, so loudly hailed and so extravagantly administered, is under survey by the Bureau of the Budget, at your order, as the first step toward its dismantlement. Is this, too, something planned for action by your Democratic Congress, Mr. President, *after November 8th?*

Your Secretary of the Treasury and your Secretary of Commerce, in testifying this week before the House Ways and Means Committee on certain of your proposals identified them as "an essential and enduring part of our tax structure." Earlier in the year, they said they were opposed to any "tinkering" with these credits for economic purposes. Yet now, apparently under pressure, they blandly endorse such "tinkering." Will this "tinkering" continue, *after November 8th?*

Our people cannot long endure such uncertainties. They cannot live nor work effectively without trust and confidence. Therefore, Mr. President and Democratic Members of the Congress, most respectfully and sincerely,

Our Question of the Week:

When will the trust and confidence of the people be restored?