

**DIARY OF WHITE HOUSE LEADERSHIP
MEETINGS -- 91st CONGRESS**

September 16, 1969

We convened at 8:40 a. m. RMN introduced the subject matter by saying that an administration with a hostile Congress has two ways of assessing a legislative record. First, one can emphasize the importance of a good battling record in the passage of bills proposed by the administration or second, one can urge the Congress to act and educate the electorate on the issues involved, regardless of the prospects of legislative success. He said that within two weeks a decision would be made on a presidential message concerning the legislative program. We have won all of the difficult issues to date, but now the partisan lines are beginning to form.

Ford reported on a sampling of sentiment during the Congressional recess. He said that people in his District like the Administration, but that Congress is suspect. The Administration has more pluses than minuses in foreign affairs, but Vietnam is still uppermost in the minds of all. On the domestic scene, inflation is the principal issue. If the election were held today, RMN would do better than he did last November.

Scott reported concerning his visit to 20 Pennsylvania counties. Essentially he agreed with Ford. He said that the people want to get out of Vietnam but without disgrace. In addition to inflation, the domestic issue of most concern is tax reform. He suggested the Republicans might usefully employ the technique adopted by Truman in attacking what he called the "do-nothing" 80th Congress. Issues of the 70's will be made by what Congress fails to do. He suggested that the President name someone to draft a resolution extending condolences of the Joint Leadership to Mrs. Dirksen.

Agnew agreed that Vietnam is still the principal foreign affairs issue. Domestically, he said that school desegregation



and busing of students was a source of much concern in all parts of the country. He feels that the Administration cannot win, no matter which direction it takes; that the best hope is to neutralize the issue by being fair to all sides and directing public attention to welfare reform, revenue sharing and other features of "New Federalism."

Rhodes said that his people expressed strong dissatisfaction with inaction in the area of wages and prices. Mrs. Smith said that in the northeastern part of the country, inflation is even more discussed than Vietnam. Arends pointed out the need to get the message across to the country that this Congress is controlled by Democrats rather than by Republicans. Ford reminded the problem the Republican Leadership has in taking the lead to criticize Democratic inaction in Congress. This frustrates their efforts to work with their counterparts in support of urgent Administration measures later.

Morton said the differences of opinion among members of the executive establishment should be muted because public controversy furnishes ammunition to our opponents.

Young suggested that the Administration can help itself most in rural areas by writing a good record on agriculture, and the President suggested that he sit down with Mr. Belcher, Arends and others in the Congress who are knowledgeable in the subject and advise the Secretary of Agriculture in his efforts to draft a new farm program.

Tower said that the Republican Party faces serious trouble in the business community, and this is best reflected in his efforts to raise money for the Senatorial Campaign Committee.

Cramer reported on a poll taken in Florida which showed that the Administration has the confidence of 68% of the people and that the most pressing issues in order of priority are Vietnam, cost of living, civil disorders, law enforcement and student busing.



Wilson said that his impression is that the Administration enjoys a favorable image across the country. However, he suggested that the Administration not be too timid and that it might be useful to create minor controversies which would assure adequate news coverage.

The President recognized Harkin to explain five charts, listing in green the issues on which favorable action has already been taken or is expected in this session. Listed in red were the issues on which favorable action was not expected in this session of Congress. These include:

I. National Security and Foreign Affairs -- Nuclear Treaty, (G); IDA, (G); ABM, (G); Foreign aid, (G); Export control, (G); and Draft, (R); II. Human Needs and Inflation Control -- ~~Surplus~~, (G); Tax reform, (G); Manpower training, (R); Welfare reform, (R); Revenue sharing, (R); Food stamps, (G); Older Americans, (G); Hill-Burton, (G); Mass transit, (R); Unemployment insurance, (R); Student loans, (G); Education, (G); OEO extension, (G); Social security, (R); Coal mine safety, (G); Occupational safety, (R); ~~Population~~ growth, (R); ~~and~~ Water quality, (G); III. Other Major Proposals -- Grant consolidation, (G); Reorganization authority, (G); Debt increase, (G); Postal ~~reform~~, (R); Electoral reform, (R); ICC reorganization, (G); Bank holding company, (G); Voting rights, (G); Airports, (R); Maritime authorization, (G); Postal rates, (R); D. C. Crime, (R); 1969 Trade Act, (R); and Farm, (R); ~~and~~ Crime Control -- Witness immunity, (R); Illegal gambling, (R); Organized crime, (R); Drug control, (G); Wagering tax amendments, (R); and D. C. courts and bail reform, (R); and V. Appropriations.

Allott said that there is little prospect of Congress acting on all appropriations bills before Christmas. The Democrats are engaged in a deliberate plan to string out legislation so that the President's legislative program cannot be considered this year. It is impossible to meet the October 31 deadline for tax reform.



Ford predicted trouble with foreign aid. Taft agreed. He said that former advocates are now reacting to popular disenchantment, linking their sentiment with the 75% construction cutback, inflation, etc. He recommended considering a freeze or deferment. Rhodes added that Passman's figures concerning budget requests and appropriations in the pipeline had been verified.

Ford said that the draft reform will not be acted upon until after the military procurement bill has been completed and then only after the Senate has acted first. He recommended a Presidential pronouncement raising the 7% social security increase to 10%.

Moynihan reported that the telegram response supporting welfare reform, revenue sharing and manpower utilization programs was tremendous. The volume is second only to that received by the White House when LBJ announced his resignation. 582 editorials supported the program; and only 25 were hostile.

Blount said that the response in the South had all been responsive.

RMN interjected to say that leaders should remind the people that this is a Republican program, and that if they fail to do so, the Democrats will steal the best parts.

Scott said that he had found unanimous support for the work requirement and work incentive features of the welfare proposal. Rhodes urged the President to deal with the social security issue now. Wilson agreed.

Ford said that Blount has the commitment from 14 of the 26 Committee members that the postal reform bill will be considered. Blount said that the postal pay bill will trigger a total annual pay increase, including classified workers and the military, of \$1 billion. The President said that this issue



will be considered again at a special joint leadership meeting scheduled at the White House next Friday morning.

Laird said that draft reform has as much political mileage as any other political issue in the youth community. He explained that the policy will be to continue to call for legislative action, and if none is taken by January 1, to resort to administrative action to the extent the law will permit.

RMN said that in addition to postal pay, draft reform and law enforcement would be considered at the Friday meeting. RMN then explained the announcement that will be issued today concerning additional troop withdrawal from Vietnam. He emphasized that it was necessary to consult with all nations contributing troops and with the leaders of South Vietnam. His consultation provided the opportunity for a leak, and this explains the comment that Ky made. Ky's comment is inaccurate. The troop ceiling (as distinguished from actual body withdrawal) will have been reduced by two steps by 65,500 by next December. The actual body withdrawal will have been over 60,000. In a short briefing of the present Vietnam situation, the President disclosed that following Ho's death, he had received a telegram from Fulbright recommending that the President send a personal representative to the funeral. The President flatly refused and for the same reason he would have refused a similar invitation with respect to Hitler's funeral.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:45 a. m.

RICHARD H. POFF

RHP:MJ



HOUSE ACTION, PERIOD AUGUST 11 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 15, 1969

Monday, August 11, 1969

MARYLAND LAND TRANSFER

The House considered by unanimous consent and passed by a voice vote, H.R.10420, to permit certain real property in the State of Maryland to be used for public purposes generally.

D. C. REVENUE ACT

PASSAGE

The House passed by a voice vote H.R.12982, to provide additional revenue for the District of Columbia.

The House agreed to an amendment that exempts court personnel from the personnel freeze.

The House also agreed to an amendment that kills language that would prohibit the City Council from setting tax rates on real and personal property.

RECOMMIT

Prior to passage, the House rejected a motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on the District of Columbia.

Tuesday, August 12, 1969

RULE AMENDMENT

The House agreed to H.Res.495, amending rule XXXV of the House of Representatives to increase fees of witnesses before the House or its committees.

INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITY

By a record vote of 196 yeas to 132 nays, the House agreed to H.Res.269, authorizing the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service to conduct studies and investigations within its jurisdiction.



U. S. FISHING FLEET IMPROVEMENT ACT

RULE

The House adopted H.Res.515 by a voice vote, providing one hour of debate.

PASSAGE

The House passed H.R.4813 by a voice vote, to extend the provisions of the U. S. Fishing Fleet Improvement Act.

The House agreed to an amendment that limits expenditures for FY 1971 to \$100,000.

Wednesday, September 3, 1969

RULES AGREED TO

H.Res.516, providing for the consideration of H.R.7621 to amend the Federal Hazardous Substances Act to protect children.

H.Res.517, by voice vote, for the consideration of H.R.10105, the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act Authorization.

H.Res.518, providing for the consideration of H.R.12085, to amend the Clean Air Act to extend the program.

NATIONAL TRAFFIC AND MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY ACT AUTHORIZATION

By a record vote of 321 yeas, the House passed H.R.10105, to amend the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966, to authorize appropriations for FY 1970, 1971 and 1972.

Thursday, September 4, 1969

CHILD PROTECTION ACT

By a record vote of 327 yeas, the House passed H.R.7621, to amend the Federal Hazardous Substances Act to protect children from toys and other articles intended for use by children which are hazardous due to the presence of electrical, mechanical or thermal hazards.

CLEAN AIR ACT

By a record vote of 332 yeas, the House passed H.R.12085, to amend the Clean Air Act to extend the program of research relating to fuel and vehicles.



VICE PRESIDENT'S PAY ADJUSTMENT

By a voice vote the House agreed to the Senate amendment to H.R.7206 to adjust the salaries of the Vice President of the United States and certain officers of the Congress, thus clearing the measure for the White House.

Monday, September 8, 1969

PEACE CORPS ACT

RULE

The House adopted H.Res.527 by voice vote, providing one hour general debate.

PASSAGE

By a record vote of 281 yeas to 52 nays, the House passed H.R.11039 to amend further the Peace Corps Act (75 Stat. 612), as amended.

RECOMMIT

Prior to passage, the House rejected by a record vote of 144 yeas to 186 nays Mr. Gross' recommit motion with instructions to reduce the authorized amount in H.R.11039 by \$11.1 million.

Tuesday, September 9, 1969

CAMPING - NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM

RULE (OPEN)

The House adopted H.Res.461 by voice vote, providing one hour of general debate.

PASSAGE

By a record vote of 334 yeas to 55 nays, the House passed H.J.Res.247, relating to the administration of the national park system.

INDIAN LAND (PUEBLO de TAOS)

RULE (OPEN)

The House adopted H.Res.462 by voice vote, providing one hour of general debate.



INDIAN LAND (PUEBLO de TAOS) Continued

PASSAGE

By voice vote, the House passed H.R.471, to amend section 4 of the act of May 31, 1933 (48 Stat. 108).

ELECTORAL REFORM

RULE

The House agreed to H.Res.491, providing for the consideration of, and six hours of debate on, H.J.Res.681, proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to the election of the President and Vice President.

Monday, September 15, 1969

CONSENT CALENDAR

The House passed H.J.Res.81 by unanimous consent, to provide for the development of the Eisenhower National Historic Site at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

SUSPENSIONS (TWO BILLS)

By voice vote, the House passed H.J.Res.775, to authorize the President to award appropriate medals honoring those astronauts whose particular efforts and contributions to the welfare of the Nation and of mankind have been exceptionally meritorious.

The House passed H.R.13194, Insured Student Loan Emergency Amendments of 1969, by a record vote of 322 yeas to 60 nays.

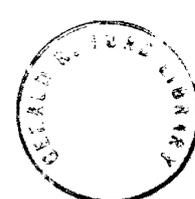
Tuesday and Balance of Week

Private Calendar

H.J.Res.681 - Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to the election of the President and Vice President.
(Continue Consideration Under Five Minute Rule)

H.R.____ - Legislative Branch Appropriation Act, FY 1970.

H.R.12549 - To Provide for the Establishment of a Council on Environmental Quality. (Subject to a Rule Being Granted)



Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

After careful consideration with my senior civilian and military advisors and in full consultation with the Government of Vietnam, I have decided to reduce the authorized troop ceiling in Vietnam to 484,000 by December 15. This compares with the ceiling of 549,500 which existed when this Administration took office. Under the newly authorized troop ceiling, a minimum of 60,000 troops will have been withdrawn from Vietnam by December 15.*

Since coming into office, my Administration has made major efforts to bring an end to the war:

- We have renounced an imposed military solution.
- We have proposed free elections organized by Joint Commissions under international supervision.
- We have offered the withdrawal of U.S. and allied forces over a 12-month period.
- We have declared that we would retain no military bases.
- We have offered to negotiate supervised cease-fires under international supervision to facilitate the process of mutual withdrawal.
- We have made clear that we would settle for the de facto removal of North Vietnamese forces so long as there are guarantees against their return.
- We and the Government of South Vietnam have announced that we are prepared to accept any political outcome which is arrive at through free elections.
- We are prepared to discuss the 10-point program of the other side together with plans put forward by the other parties.
- In short, the only item which is not negotiable is the right of the people of South Vietnam to determine their own future free of outside interference.

I reiterate all these proposals today.

The withdrawal of 60,000 troops is a significant step.

The time for meaningful negotiations has therefore arrived.

I realize that it is difficult to communicate across the gulf of five years of war. But the time has come to end this war. Let history record that at this critical moment, both sides turned their faces toward peace rather than toward conflict and war.

*Actually, the total reduction in authorized ceiling strength amounts to 65,500. But within the authorized ceiling, all units are shown at 100% strength. In actual practice, most units are slightly below full strength, so that actual strength normally is less than the authorized ceiling by one or two percent.

