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Duquesne University, 8p.m. Monday, Jan. 8, 1968

Topic is "Issues of 1968"

--Basic issues in '68 as in all recent presidential campaigns will be peace and prosperity. Will center on the basic question: "Which party (and which candidate) do the people have the most confidence in? Which party (and which candidate) can best handle the Vietnam War and the overall problems of war and peace; which can do the best job of promoting prosperity and price stability?"

--All of these questions are interrelated and will affect the final outcome. If the people lack confidence in the present Administration on Vietnam, they may vote for a change in administrations. If the people become convinced they would be better off economically under a Republican administration, they will vote for a change.

--The specific issues will take shape...and change...and take on added or differing dimensions as the election approaches. The President, because of the tremendous power of his office, will be in a position to alter events or to make them appear more favorable to his party as election time draws near. For this reason, it is very difficult to defeat an incumbent President.

--If the Vietnam War still is in progress when the people go to the polls in '68 Vietnam will be an issue--a highly complex issue. It seems virtually impossible that the Republican nominee, whoever he may be, will propose withdrawal as a choice. The issue will be which candidate the people feel is best equipped to bring the Vietnam War to an early but honorable close. There will be many cross-currents, of course. Many Americans believe Lyndon Johnson made a tragic mistake in involving the United States in direct combat in Vietnam. Others feel he was right to send U.S. troops into combat in Vietnam but that he condemned this Nation to a long, bloody and costly war of attrition by setting a course of gradualism, instead of hitting hard and fast to end the war quickly--without resort to nuclear arms. Some believe he took the proper course and are resigned to a war of attrition.

--Some Americans contend the Vietnam War is immoral and oppose it on that account. This ignores the realities. All wars are immoral in the broad sense. To oppose the Vietnam War on the ground it is immoral is to remove it entirely from the

context of the international power struggle. This again ignores the realities. If South Vietnam passes into the Communist orbit, the balance of power in Southeast Asia will shift to some degree in favor of the big Communist powers... notably Red China. Communist takeovers in other Southeast Asia nations may well follow. The situation is not as critical now as when Sukarno held sway in Indonesia and allied himself with Red China while making war on Malaysia--but the Asian power struggle still makes imperative the American effort in South Vietnam. Some may argue it was a mistake to send large numbers of U.S. troops into combat in South Vietnam, but the die is cast. It would be catastrophic for the United States to yield the field to North Vietnam and the Vietcong and to pull out of South Vietnam. This would be an unmistakable signal to the big Communist powers that the American people have no stomach for the task of thwarting Communist aggression even where U.S. interests are involved. It would make U.S. commitments throughout the world meaningless. It would spell the beginning of an era of neo-isolationism of the Walter Lippmann type--a return to the Fortress America philosophy which encouraged Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy to attempt world conquest.

--There are those who say the Johnson Administration's past record in Vietnam is unimportant...that the only question which concerns us is how to get the war over with. It's true the most vital questions in connection with Vietnam are how best to build a durable peace and whether the present Administration can be trusted to do so. But in this context, an American can only judge the Administration in power on the basis of past performance. The Johnson Administration has not earned the people's trust. In fact, the Johnson Administration's handling of the Vietnam War has destroyed the people's trust and produced in this country a crisis of confidence.

--In retrospect, that crisis of confidence had its inception during the 1964 presidential campaign. It seems certain that both the American people and Northvietnamese leaders were misled when Lyndon Johnson declared in 1964 that "we are not going to send American boys nine or ten thousand miles from home to do what Asian boys ought to do for themselves." He also implied he would never order the bombing of North Vietnam by saying, "There are those who say you ought to go north and drop bombs." It is evident that North Vietnam took these statements at face value. It appears that even now North Vietnam's leaders do not believe

President Johnson's statements, as witness the following quotation from the July 3, 1967, issue of "Vietnam Courier," an English-language propaganda paper published in Hanoi:

"Everyone knows the worth of Johnson's denials, for he was the man who, in 1964, declared before the American electorate that he would never order the bombing of North Vietnam and would never send American troops to fight in Vietnam."

--President Johnson's deceptive statements encouraged North Vietnam to accelerate its attempted takeover of South Vietnam. This in turn led us to take decisive action in early 1965 to keep South Vietnam from collapsing.

--The bombing now has been going on for nearly three years, and President Johnson has committed 525,000 American military personnel to serve in South Vietnam. While ordering the bombing of the North, the President impaired its effectiveness by putting a long list of significant military targets off-limits. He continued this policy until nearly the middle of last August.

--Now North Vietnam has indicated it will talk peace if the bombing is stopped unconditionally. We should remember that negotiations merely for the sake of negotiations can produce tragic results, as the peace talks in Korea proved in 1953. Many Americans have forgotten that three-fifths of the 142,277 American casualties (including nearly 54,000 dead) in the Korean War were suffered after the peace talks began at Panmunjom.

--In the aggregate, the Johnson Administration has failed in Vietnam. The overall challenge is one of nation-building, and at that task the Administration has failed. While military success is vital in Vietnam, the ultimate victory there will not be a military one. The victory will be in seeing a viable government established in Saigon, one the Southvietnamese people can support. The mere fact that elections have been held in Vietnam is an all-too-shaky foundation for such a government. Thorough-going reforms must be carried out if the Saigon government is to win the support of the people and stand up against unrelenting Communist efforts to seize power.

--Vietnam is a key issue for 1968 because it will affect the course of our Nation's national and international life for years to come. In foreign affairs, it will color the stand we take in various crises, like the Mideast situation.

The Administration early last summer simply trusted to luck as war threatened in the Mideast. The Israelis scored a smashing victory last June but the Soviet Union has built on the defeat of the Arab nations by sending in advisers as well as new arms and thus making the Arabs far more dependent on Soviet military might than in the pre-war period. Our preoccupation with a war of attrition in Vietnam appears to be paralyzing us in the Mideast.

--Vietnam affects our domestic lives because it is costing this Nation the lives of thousands of its young men, is bringing pain and suffering to millions of Americans, and involves a monetary drain of \$25 billion a year.

--The high cost of living will be a key issue in 1968. The Democrats have no solution for the high cost of living except an income tax increase. Republicans would put our fiscal house in order and thus restore relative price stability. We would do this by doing what the Democrats have refused to do--adopt a system of priorities, review all existing programs to determine to what extent they are serving the needs of the Nation, eliminate, defer, cut back, alter, prune where such action is indicated, examine all proposed new programs in the light of priorities, attack national problems in partnership with the private sector and not on the basis of a total government approach, confer responsibilities upon the states and...at the earliest feasible time...launch a system of sharing federal income tax revenue with the cities and the states so they will be better armed financially to attack their problems in a scheme of priorities best suited to their needs.

--We must manage our money better. The Johnson Administration has mismanaged the economy. They have sown the whirlwind through irresponsible spending and borrowing policies--and we now are reaping the whirlwind in the form of a steady surge of inflation, some of the highest interest rates in a hundred years, an attack on the American dollar by foreign speculators and an embargo on foreign travel that may result in retaliatory action by other nations. Republicans would deal with this fiscal crisis by moving toward a balanced budget as rapidly as this could be done without causing serious dislocations in the economy. That would also be the best longterm way to deal with the balance of payments crisis precipitated by the Johnson Administration's irresponsible fiscal policies. The Administration's proposals for halting the gold outflow are short-term, not a

permanent solution. The dike will break if the present Administration is continued in office and persists in spending far more than the Treasury takes in. We have had seven consecutive years of deficit spending at the federal level. The last time the budget was balanced was when Dwight Eisenhower was President. A balanced budget should not be considered sacred. But certainly we should balance the federal budget in times of strong economic growth. In fact, at those times we should achieve a surplus and apply it to the national debt--a debt which now has climbed to \$345 billions, an increase of \$60 billions since the Democrats took over the White House in January 1961. This year alone the deficit will run close to \$20 billion.

--President Johnson's proposed income tax increase is an issue. It is an issue because the President is using Congress as a whipping boy for refusing to approve it. He is trying to use the proposed tax increase to make Congress the scapegoat for inflation--inflation primarily due to his excessive spending. It won't work. The American people know the Johnson Administration should pull in its belt instead of pursuing a guns and butter policy in time of costly war. One reason Congress has balked at increasing taxes is the fear more revenue might encourage more Johnson Administration spending. Another reason is that the tax increase could have an adverse impact on the economy at a time when wages are going up faster than productivity, industry profits are being squeezed, and production costs are pushing up prices. In that set of circumstances, a tax increase could result in price increases.

--Whichever way you slice it, this country has been suffering from a painful case of inflation for two years and is headed for more trouble. The economists call it inflation; the housewife calls it higher prices. What it all adds up to is that the Eisenhower dollar has shrunk to 85 cents under the Democrats in terms of what it will buy. Every American who put a hundred dollars in the bank in 1960 has seen the principal amount of that deposit shrink to 85 in terms of its purchasing power. The Johnson Administration's solution: Raise federal taxes. This despite the fact that taxes collected at all levels of government (federal, state and local) topped \$200 billion in fiscal 1967, the Social Security tax will bite deeper beginning this month, and tax increases are being proposed or made effective in several dozen states as the cost of state government goes up. In my own state of Michigan, a new state income tax went into effect this month.

--The status quo in our cities will be an issue--sharply rising crime rates, riots that hit 120 of our cities last year and threaten again in 1968. Parts of our great cities have become jungles although Democratic Administrations have poured billions upon billions of federal dollars into them in a parade of programs ostensibly designed to fight slums, unemployment and grinding poverty. The Democrats have employed costly urban renewal programs which have proved to be a subsidy for downtown businessmen while turning the poor out of their dwellings. They now are moving to expand urban renewal programs in a grandiose scheme which was labeled Demonstration Cities until that title became embarrassing. We still have the same problems, along with a fantastic number of programs controlled from Washington. We still have to find the answer. Republicans propose a new partnership for progress, a partnership between all levels of government and the private sector as well. This partnership must go to work to make the poor productive, give all employable Americans a decent job, and make our cities livable. In attacking crime, the Johnson Administration proposed to hand the Attorney General X-million dollars and let him dole it out to local police departments. House Republicans brought the states into the war on crime, ordered a coordinated attack on crime on the basis of state plans and priorities. The Johnson Administration has virtually left organized crime unscathed in its approach to the crime problem, insisting that wiretapping be restricted to cases involving the national security. Republicans propose that wiretapping be permitted under court order in cases involving major crimes. We also will push legislation dealing specifically with loan-sharking, narcotics peddling and organized gambling, the major money makers for the Mafia-type crime syndicate. To forestall riots, Republicans propose to put behind bars the incendiaries who organize, plan and incite riots in various states...and to attack the root causes of unrest in the cities by rebuilding the slums with the help of private enterprise.

--Last November the Republicans pulled ahead of the Democrats for the first time since 1957 as the party rated best able to deal with the Nation's most serious problems. The Gallup Poll reported that 52 per cent of the people gave the Republican Party the nod, and 48 per cent favored the Democrats.

--I am not above quoting a Democrat when he is right. Recently, former Undersecretary of Labor Daniel Moynihan said: "We have too long been prisoners of the rhetoric that Republicans don't know anything about the social problems of the

nation, or in any event don't really care. This is not only a falsehood, but... it is seen by the electorate to be a falsehood."

--The 1966 elections showed that the American people are coming to realize and that the R in Republican stands for Responsibility that Republicans are offering constructive and realistic solutions for the Nation's problems. We face the issues of 1968 eagerly and unafraid.

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Vietnam Note

On April 4, 1959, then-President Dwight D. Eisenhower said in a speech at Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pa.:

"Strategically South Vietnam's capture by the Communists would bring their power several hundred miles into a hitherto free region. The remaining countries in Southeast Asia would be menaced by a great flanking movement. The freedom of 12 million people would be lost immediately and that of 150 million others in adjacent lands would be seriously endangered. The loss of South Vietnam would set in motion a crumbling process that could, as it progressed, have grave consequences for us and for freedom."

"Vietnam must have a reasonable degree of safety now--both for her people and ~~her~~ for her property. Because of these facts, military as well as economic help is currently needed in Vietnam.

"We reach the inescapable conclusion that our own national interests demand some help from us in sustaining in Vietnam the morale, the economic progress, and the military strength necessary to its continued existence in freedom."

Jerry, the North Vietnamese leaders must have felt that Ike meant business. They probably doubted JFK's determination to some extent and then were definitely misled by LBJ, just as were the American people, by the statements Johnson made during the 1964 presidential campaign. I am convinced in my own mind that conditions in Vietnam never would have deteriorated to the point reached in early 1965 if Johnson had not led North Vietnam to ~~believe~~ believe he would not intervene in South Vietnam in a meaningful way.

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