

PRESS CONFERENCE, MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.  
September 24, 1968 - 3 p.m.

Vice President Humphrey. Ladies and gentlemen, I have a statement which I would like to make first. And then, of course, the questions.

Mr. Nixon says the American working man has been on a treadmill the last few years. I believe he has his dates somewhat mixed. The fact is that the American working man was very much on a treadmill during the Nixon-Republican years and it is only since 1961 that he has begun to move forward. So I thought today I would review that Republican treadmill of 1953 to January 1961 and review the steady steps forward since 1961 to 1968 as it relates to our economy.

Take a look at the facts. Since early 1961, purchasing power per person after taxes, after allowing for price increases -- in other words, real income -- has risen by about one-third -- 32 percent. This is like an extra 17 pay checks every year. This is what Mr. Nixon calls that Democratic treadmill.

During the eight Nixon-Republican years, the raise was barely one percent a year, approximately nine percent as compared to the Democratic 32 percent.

Mr. Nixon says that the tax burden is the heaviest in our history and once again, he faults himself by poor memory or deliberate misrepresentation of the facts.

What a short memory. The fact is that the Democratic Johnson-Humphrey administration has lowered taxes. All persons and corporations will pay \$16 billion less in taxes in 1968 than in the tax rate of the Nixon Year of 1960 still prevailed.

In 1964 and 1965, federal tax rates were lower by \$11 billion for individuals, \$3 billion for corporations. This year, even after the temporary increase of the surtax, American families are paying much less in income taxes than in 1960, the last Republican year.

I must say that Mr. Nixon is either very poorly informed or deliberate misrepresenting economic statistical information.

A family with \$5,000 income pays \$130 less taxes in 1968 than in 1960. A family with \$15,000 income pays \$269 less in taxes this year than he would have paid in the last Republican year.

Now, those are the facts. If Mr. Nixon is unaware of them, I shall see that they are readily made available to him. Mr. Nixon says the country has been losing its gold, but he forgets when the gold train started, when they started to pull the plug out of Fort Knox, and it was under the last Republican Administration.

In the last three years under the Nixon Republicans, the annual liquidity deficit -- that is, the gold out-flow, averaged \$3.7 billion per year. It has never been that high under any Democratic year. The country lost far more of its international reserves between 1952 and 1960 up to January '61 than between 1961 and 1968. So even on the point of gold, Mr. Nixon is found to be faulty.

It was one of the Nixon-Republican messes left to the Democrats.

Now, there are a few other things that Mr. Nixon forgot to mention. Like employment, for example. It has increased by more than 10 million jobs since 1961, at higher wages than any Republican year.

In the eight Nixon-Republican years, the increase was about \$4 million. So we have done two and a half times as well, a 250 percent increase. Take a look at unemployment. It was seven percent of the work force in 1960, and it has declined to 3.5 in 1968, the lowest in 15 years. If the rate of unemployment were as high now as when the Nixon Republican Administration left office, nearly 3 million people who are now at work would be tramping in the streets looking for jobs. That is the price that we would be paying for a Nixon economic policy.

And profits for American business. During 1953 to 1960, they were at a steady level with no increase. But from 1961 to 1968, they more than doubled. Now, those are the facts that Mr. Nixon knows but which he refuses to speak. I might add that while all of this was going on, this administration of which I am proud to be a member, the Johnson-Humphrey Administration, increased investments in education by 300 percent, from three -- from \$4 billion to \$12 billion. We increased investments in health by over 300 percent -- from \$4 billion to \$14 billion; a little over 20 million Americans are protected by Medicare, and last year, over seven million received benefits under it.

More than 600,000 disabled citizens have been employed under our program of vocational rehabilitation. Headstart and other pre-school programs have brought education and health care to more than two million children.

In another area, on manpower training, and I note this because Mr. Nixon takes a dim view of our efforts in the poverty program. He contributed a great deal to the intensity of poverty. He has had very little to say about its alleviation.

In manpower training, there were no manpower training programs in the Nixon years, nor did he advocate any. No manpower development training programs, no vocational training programs for unemployed workers. There were no American workers in government-sponsored training programs. Today there are one million being reached in adult training alone, and more than 800,000 have already been trained and are on the job, and nearly 800,000 youths have received training under the National Youth Corps or Neighborhood Youth Corps.

We presently have a budget of over \$2 billion for manpower training alone. These are some of the social dividends of 90 months of consecutive prosperity.

So I fault Mr. Nixon this afternoon, first of all on his philosophy; secondly upon the absence of a program; and thirdly, on the misrepresentation of the facts.

Now, I might conclude with just a friendly suggestion as to how we can clear this all up. For several months now, Mr. Nixon has been saying that he thought debates among presidential candidates were a good thing. He said he was for them, particularly as long as it was amongst Republican candidates. Now, however, he refuses to accept my challenge to debate him. I would prefer to debate Mr. Nixon on prime time network television. However, if that is not possible, I am willing to debate him at the Whittier Elks Club or in the offices of the National Association of Manufacturers, or in his Fifth Avenue Apartment or just to make it folksy, out at Waverly here in Minnesota.

Failing a Humphrey-Nixon debate, I propose a Muskie-Agnew debate the nominees for the vice presidency. I know that Senator Ed Muskie

would be happy to meet the governor in the state house at Annapolis or maybe to the Governor's liking, at the Baltimore County Sheriff's office, or on the Mason-Dixon line, or even in a network studio.

The Humphrey-Muskie team is ready to debate anywhere, anytime, under any auspices.

Alternately, I would be willing to debate both Mr. Nixon and Mr. Agnew at the same time. If they feel that one man versus one man is unfair, I will take on two at once. Now, there is a reason for that. Nixon can give the soft answers and Agnew could give the hard answers. And I would give the right answers. So that the Humphrey-Muskie position on debates may be known, I have stated it as best I could today.

Now, we are ready to do this anytime. If any of you gentlemen of the press and the media can be of help, I would like to get on with this and I think it would be good to know where Mr. Nixon stands on the issue. Now, I am ready for your questions.

Question: Mr. Vice President, there are those who make a case that even though Richard Nixon's Vietnam policy is not known, at least a Nixon administration would provide a change. What can you offer to voters who wonder what kind of a policy you would follow that would succeed where President Johnson's policies apparently have not succeeded in ending the war in Vietnam?

Vice President Humphrey. First of all, I think that if Mr. Nixon, is saying to the American people that he can provide a change in policy, it would be good to know what policy he plans on changing and what changes he is going to make. This business of declaring a moratorium on every significant issue in order to put yourself above the battle may be all right for a president-emeritus, but not for a presidential candidate. A presidential candidate should come to grips with the issues and not dance around the fire. If Mr. Nixon knows how to end the war, and I recall some months back where Mr. Nixon said that he had a plan to end the war, and I remind my friends of the media of that statement when Mr. Nixon said early this year that he had a plan to end the war. Well, if he has one, he owes it

to his country to make that plan available, because every American that I know of in his public position would like to see this war ended and would like to bring about peace.

I stand on the platform of my party, the President stands on that platform. I believe that the platform of the Democratic Party on Vietnam offers both the flexibility that is necessary to the next President for adjustments if they are needed, for alterations of policy if they are required by the situation which may prevail, and also calls upon the next President to recognize that there are always risks in peace making. But they are risks that are worth taking. It is my view that the platform of the Democratic Party that relates to the cessation of bombing, to free elections in Vietnam, to the rehabilitation of the economy, to the matter of withdrawal of foreign forces, to the de-Americanization of the conflict -- that that platform is a sensible approach to peace making in Vietnam.

Let me add this, that I am still very much of the opinion that the negotiations in Paris can be and will be productive. I have great faith in our team of negotiators and no man has a greater stake in peace than the President of the United States. This President -- and no man that I know of is more desirous of peace than this President, Mr. Johnson. And I am going to support his endeavors. If he does not succeed, then when I become the President, as I have said, as any new President surely would, I will reassess the entire situation, militarily, politically, economically, diplomatically. And I will do whatever I can to try to bring this conflict to an end, but to do it in such a way as to achieve our objectives, namely the safety of South Vietnam and their right of self determination.

Mr. Smith?

Question. Mr. Vice President, did we understand you correctly that President Johnson stands on the Vietnam plank of the Democratic Platform?

Vice President Humphrey. It is my understanding that the President has no objection to our platform plank. I have never heard him

say so and Mr. President is not a man that is without willingness to express his point of view on all matters of national security.

Question. Mr. Vice President, in recent days, you have mounting an additional attack on Mr. Nixon, particularly as it related to the '52-1960 period. Now, do you think his position in the Eisenhower Administration was any more in control of the policies of that administration than, say, your position has been with the Johnson Administration.

Vice President Humphrey. No, I do not, but I am proud of our administration. I am proud of its economic record, of its social record, of its domestic record. And I think that what we have done in terms of international policy has been in the best interests of this nation's security. And I submit that I am willing to take credit for the 90 months of consecutive prosperity if Mr. Nixon is willing to take credit for the three recessions of the Republican Party from 1953 to 1960. The fact is the fact. The fact is that the economy was relatively stagnant in 1953-60. The fact is that \$175 billion worth of income was lost because of unemployment. The fact is that the economy lost approximately \$50 billion a year because of unused productive capacity for eight Republican years. And Mr. Nixon, if he is to hold me accountable for this administration, I hold him accountable for his administration. And I submit that the American people have a stake in a prosperous economy, a developing economy, and an expanding economy. And that is what we have offered since John Kennedy became President and Lyndon Johnson succeeded him.

Yes, sir, Mr. Miker?

Question. Mr. Vice President, once again today the North Koreans demanded that the United States apologize before they would consider releasing the crew of the Pueblo. What do you think the United States should do in this matter?

Vice President Humphrey. Well, I have stated my position on



other occasions. I will be happy to repeat it.

It is my understanding that we have not violated international law. From what I have read of the intelligence reports and the reports of our official agencies -- the Department of Defense, the Department of the Navy, the Central Intelligence Agency, Department of State -- we did not violate the territorial waters or enter the territorial waters of North Korea. In other words, we were within our rights under the laws of the seas.

Now, if that is the case, and I have no reason to believe that it is not, then I do not believe that we should submit to nothing short of blackmail. Because once you start that, there is no end to that trail and that pattern.

If, however, there is any evidence that anyone can bring forward that inadvertently, we might have violated territorial waters, then as a great power, we should be willing to admit it and be able to make whatever statement is necessary to clarify that situation. If that would lead to the release of the members of the crew of the Pueblo, that would be a blessing. But I am sure that the members of the crew of the Pueblo would not want their nation to violate its sense of international integrity by submitting to a charge of blackmail on the part of North Korea in order to obtain their release.

Now, again, I want to make it clear that if there is any evidence that we have inadvertently, through any period of time -- not at the particular moment of the interception of the Pueblo, but during the Pueblo excursion in that area, if we violated territorial waters and we have that evidence, then we should frankly acknowledge it as a great nation.

Question. They say we have and we say we have not and this thing just seems to be going on and on. Where does this all end? Do we get to the point where we just say yes?

Vice President Humphrey. I am sure the Commander in Chief, the

President of the United States, is more anxious than any other citizen of this land to seek the release of the crew of the Pueblo.

I am sure that if he has any evidence that indicates that we have been in error, he will be the first to admit it, because we would like to save those men and we would like to have the return of that ship. I might add, however, that we had a similar experience with the Soviet Union in the latter days of the Eisenhower Administration. The crew of the RB-47 was intercepted in the waters over the Baltic, and picked up and taken in, incarcerated, held in custody in the Soviet Union. Some months later, with the inauguration of President Kennedy, Khrushchev released members of that crew.

Now, why that happened -- there are many interpretations. I am hopeful that if the Pueblo crew is not released before January 20, when I become President, they will want to see to it that the crew is released on that occasion.

Question. The tenor of your campaign so far has been, if you will, liberal, while the mood of this country seems to have turned conservative. Does the mood of the country have to change before November 5 for you to win, or do you think you can win in spite of it?

Vice President Humphrey. Well, I have prided myself on a sense of political integrity, and hopefully, political consistency -- that is, consistency to my philosophy, my political attitudes. What I have tried to do is project a policy, a philosophy that I believe has directed itself toward continuing the social progress this country has made. I realize that there are those who say that the mood of the country is conservative. If it is, then I hope to be able to change the mood of that country, because I believe it is for the good of the country to proceed with our programs of social betterment, to help our cities, to clean out these slums, to improve the quality and quantity of education, to try to bring our people into first-class citizenship.

I really believe what your question implied, and I know that this is what I have read, that the conservatism mood means that

there is<sup>a</sup>/considerable attitude of resistance against rapid social change, particularly in race relations. I believe that those changes are well on the way and it is my duty, my moral duty and political privilege, to encourage those changes in an orderly manner. When it comes to law and order, I yield on that issue to no one. I have been a man of law and order all of my life. As the Mayor of this city where you are today, I established a record here for law and order, for law enforcement, for fair treatment. I also established a record for fair employment practices, for a council on human relations, for better jobs, for vocational training, for better parks, better living for our people.

So they had both. They had safety in the streets, they had law and order in the City of Minneapolis. Organized crime, its back was broken. The racketeers were driven from our midst. Labor-management disputes were not settled with rocks and bricks but at the bargaining table, and at the same time, the City made progress in housing, parks, and education, jobs, health, better living.

Now, that is the kind of a program that I have asked for the country. If that is liberal, then put the tag on it. What I think it is is sensible. I think it is constructive, I think it is sensible. This is my life. It is what I have stood for all of my life. And I think it is a winning philosophy.

Why do I say so? Because we have stuck with it for 20 years and it has been succeeding. And I believe the time that has come now to see that the further progress continues.

Question. In your Cosmos Television conference yesterday, you said that as a result of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia there was a great necessity for strong NATO DEFENSES. My question, sir, is in terms of manpower and resources, does this suggest an increased American commitment in Europe. Does it also suggest your administration urging increased commitment from the NATO alliance?

Vice President Humphrey. I am sure you are familiar with my position and I have never been for unilateral United States weakening



of NATO. Any statement I have ever made was on the basis of a mutually agreed-upon reduction of forces between the Warsaw pact countries on the one hand and the NATO countries on the other. I do not believe that programs of arms control and disarmament are effective if it is a one-way street or on one side. They must be mutual between the respective adversaries.

The invasion of Czech just reminds us once again that some old habits are still around and that the world is a dangerous place and an unpredictable place. Therefore, it is my belief that the officers of NATO, council members, ministers of NATO, government heads, should re-examine the NATO structure in terms, first, of its defense capability; secondly, its political viability and usefulness. I believe NATO SHOULD BE AN EFFECTIVE DEFENSE SHIELD FOR Western Europe as well as an effective instrument for peaceful engagement to the East.

What does that mean in terms of American manpower? We have been the one nation that has kept its commitment to NATO. I happen to believe, and I said frankly yesterday, not with any rancor or out of irritation, as was indicated in one column, but as a matter of fact that the NATO allies now have the responsibility to do their share in strengthening the NATO defenses.

After all, the immediate threat is in Europe. To be sure, a threat to Europe is a threat to us and we are partners and we will keep our word. But it is not good enough for the United States to keep its word if others are not going to do their part,

So strengthening NATO MAY REQUIRE SOME MORE HELP FROM US. But before that arrives or that decision is made, it is my view that the European partners in NATO should re-examine their own commitments and should upgrade them.

Question. Mr. Vice President, would you, as a presidential candidate, have any objection to the United Nations taking a vote on our bombing of North Vietnam? And if such a vote was taken, what kind of weight do you think should be given by the Americans

should be done with this problem?

Vice President Humphrey. I don't think it would have any effect. The United Nations to date has not been very effective on the Vietnam CRISIS. This struggle is not similar to, is not under UN direction such as the one in Korea. At this time, it might be less than helpful. It might injure the negotiations.

Questions. Mr. Vice President, the hecklers have kept your campaign and your speeches disrupted and off key. What can you do in the way of an effective approach for it? Is there anything you can do?

Vice President Humphrey. It is not easy to speak when there are organized groups of hecklers, these are not just hecklers. These are highly disciplined, well organized agitators, many of them anarchists, many of them I am not sure what. The numbers are not large. Their qualities of audibility are rather large.

I want to make it clear from this platform as I shall throughout this country that I believe that some of these groups are determined to destroy the effectiveness of the Democratic Party and indeed to destroy this country. And I don't intend to let them do it. In spite of them, I am going to continue. I have no intention of being driven away from a public meeting or platform by the irresponsible, premeditated, disciplined actions of a group of hard core hecklers, demonstrators, and some of them highly motivated destroyers of the political system that is ours. I will stand my ground.

In fact, I consider their animosity and their hostility to be a tribute to my character, my purpose, and my program, if they were to say a kind word, I would be suspicious of who I am and what I am and what I am saying.

Might I turn to the other extremists, that just as we have this hard core group of nihilists or anarchists that try to break up meetings and have threatened to do it all over America, have threatened to lie down in voting --boths and most likely will, demanding that the police will drag them out so they can accuse the

police of brutality, saying that they will break up meetings, that they will heckle my speeches --there is another group, the racist crowd, the men who will frequently cloak themselves in sheets, those that believe this country can be two countries, separate and unequal, And that racist crowd is another group of extremists. They have heckled me in Michigan and I gather they will do it in other places. If they do, I am going to remind them of what I say to you today, that in spite of them, it will be my purpose to heal this nation, to reconcile the differences between the vast majority of our people. I will not be driven away.

I must say that their heckling is a compliment, even if it is distressing, and it is about time that the American people find out what kind of extremists are working the fringes of American life, and they are on the fringe. In fact, they are in the gutters of American life.

Question. Mr. Vice President, Governor Agnew said he has apologized for saying you are soft on communism. Do you accept his apology and how do you evaluate it?

Vice President Humphrey. Oh, I have never had hard feelings toward Governor Agnew. He just got hold of one of Mr. Nixon's old speeches, that is all.

Question. Mr. Vice President, it was disclosed today that a Senate resolution is being prepared to declare there is no vacancy on the Supreme Court. Senator Dirksen is working on this and he is conferring with Paul Porter. How do you view this development in the Supreme Court case?

Vice President Humphrey. I really don't know about it and I would rather not comment since I am quite unfamiliar with it. I don't seek to avoid your question. If you will ask me after I have had a chance to read about it, I will give you an answer.

Question. Mr. Vice President, on the plane the other day, we were given the benefit of some being privy to your thinking about what is the most serious dilemma in your campaign. Will you tell us today what you think it is?

Vice President Humphrey. I don't think we have a dilemma, I think we have a hard job ahead of us. That is all about. This party that I lead today has been in turmoil for months. There has been a very severe contest, serious contest and severe in its intensity within the party. We can not overlook that.

Secondly, it's fair to say that at this particular point in time, the Administration does not command a majority popularity poll.

Thirdly, the convention, the Democratic convention, was late, very late, giving me very little time as the candidate of my party to organize, to have at least a month or so to prepare for the campaign itself. These are some of the factors that we face. And I'm facing up to them. And how?

Well, we're bringing the party back together. I'm happy to report to you that we're getting splendid cooperation from the different segments of the party: from the Kennedy group, if you wish to put them by groups, from the McCarthy group, from the party regulars. We're getting splendid help and in spite of what I have read in some places, we're getting very good help from the southern states, from those areas where we have have any chance at all of carrying them.

We're getting very good help from the Congressmen. I read a story this morning that somebody said the peace candidates were not looking around for us. That may be so, but if you would like to see the letters we get asking us to come into their districts, you would see it very differently.

We're doing quite well. The first week of my campaign was putting pieces back together. We had to start earlier than I had hoped, but it was necessary to get moving.

There is another problem we have had which is now, I'm happy to tell you, being readily corrected. That was finances. We came out of the Chicago convention broke not only broke, deep in debt. We have had to engage ourselves in financial-- setting up of dinners, fund-raising events. All of this has been the kind of in-shop work, in-house work that should have been done, let's say, a month ago. But when our convention was over about Labor Day, when Mr. Nixon had already had better than a month, had six weeks to be under way, you can see some of the difficulties. But we're making ground.

I happen to believe that a short campaign such as the one that I'm going to wage with intensity will be very effective. I'm not at all sure but what Mr. Nixon's generous generalities and plentitude of platitudes will wear very thin. And I intend to engage him in the specifics.

Now there are only six weeks left. By this time six weeks from now, we'll know who the next president of the United States may be. This may be a rather historic occasion for you, gentlemen. You may have the first chance to see him.

Question. Mr. Vice President, there have been many reports around the country of apathy in some areas of traditional Democratic strength, including the black community, across the country. In

many areas, you are running up against very quickly, or already, registration deadlines. Registration is reported very low in some of these areas of traditional Democratic strength. Is there anything you can do if your campaign does take wing in these final weeks of the campaign to get the strength that has been traditionally Democratic in these areas?

Vice President Humphrey. First, I don't believe that that is true, what you are talking about. I have been campaigning in elections for a long time, since 1943. It's pretty much like football. Nobody got really excited about football until last weekend. I know the professionals and the commentators and the writers were writing about football last last July. But the ticket buyers, the people who attend the games, were reading last week. That is about like voters. People have been busy. Mothers and fathers were getting their kids back to school the last couple of weeks, getting their sons and daughters back to college. They are closing their lake places here in Minnesota. They just haven't had time for politics.

In the black community, we have had tremendous registration: the polls show I'm getting 85 to 90 per cent of that registered black vote. I'm very proud of that, very pleased with it. I do not consider this campaign is characterized by apathy. I do not believe that the Madison Avenue fabricated crowds of Richard Nixon's represent votes. He has more balloons floating than he has ideas, and he has more confetti than he has votes. I'm not interested in floating ideas. I'm not interested in that brainstorm of confetti. I'm interested in the outpouring of votes. I intend to have the ideas and to have the votes.

And I'm pleased to tell you that this period has given me some encouragement. I have here the results of a series of polls that were taken. I don't say polls are controlling; they are interesting. When you like them -- when they're in your favor, you like them better than when they're not. But they do have some factor of trend.

The polls say that Mr. Nixon is ahead, and I think he is at this time. We have spent a little money making our own survey. And by the way, we have been doing this all the months up to the convention and our private polls, taken by reputable polling firms, have been almost identical to the national polls that were taken if they were taken in the same period.

We have made a little survey state by state. Our information is based on polls and on reports from the people in the field. In summary, it shows a close contest with Mr. Nixon, as of the last week, slightly ahead. Mr. Wallace also shows strength. I was encouraged to see reports yesterday showing me ahead in Michigan, Minnesota, and Missouri. I might add that Minnesota has picked the winner in every presidential election from McKinley through Johnson, except in 1916, when by one tenth of one per cent of the vote, Mr. Hughes carried this state over Wilson.

I might also add that in the 20th century, no man that has lost Michigan and Missouri has been elected. The undecided voters in the Michigan and Missouri polls are heavily Democratic. So that looks good to me.

The field interviewing for these polls was conducted from September 8 to 15, a rather weak period for me as confirmed by yesterday's Harris poll. Yet even during this period, I was ahead in these states, and I must say that I'm enjoying this campaign.



I also came even with Mr. Nixon in Texas on their poll. And we have other polls that show us within one or two per cent in several of the key states.

Frankly, I think our campaign is coming just as it ought to. We don't need these campaigns that last three months. And the cost of those campaigns is incredibly high. We think that we can telescope our campaign in the next six weeks into an effective, hard-hitting program. And if you'll help me get Mr. Nixon on that television in a debate,

we can make it even better. We have had 16 regional meetings in this past week. We have had a state meeting, in every state. We have just released our campaign materials as of Monday, yesterday. We start on national television as of tonight. I shall intensively campaign throughout the country, as I did in Minnesota. I know how to win. And I haven't the slightest doubt that if we conduct ourselves in the temperament and the intensity that we have set for our standard, we can win this election.

Question. Thank you, Mr. Vice President.

OPENING  
STATEMENT

by Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey  
Press Conference  
September 24, 1968

Mr. Nixon says the American working man has been on a treadmill the last few ~~years~~ <sup>years</sup>. He's got his dates mixed. The fact is that the American working man was ~~very~~ <sup>very</sup> much on a treadmill during the Nixon Republican years. It is only since 1960 that he has begun to move forward again.

Look at the facts. Since early 1961, purchasing power per person, after taxes, and after allowing for price increases, has risen by one third; like an extra 17 paychecks every year. Some treadmill.

33%

During the eight Nixon Republican years, the rise was barely 1 per cent a year. That really was a treadmill.

9%

Mr. Nixon says the tax burden is the heaviest in our history. What a short memory. The fact is that the Democratic Administration has lowered taxes. All ~~American~~ persons and corporations will pay \$16 billion less in taxes in 1968 than if the tax rate of 1960 still prevailed.

*Johnson Humphrey*

In 1964 and 1965 Federal tax rates were lowered by \$11 billion for individuals and \$3 billion for corporations. This year, even after the temporary increases, American families are paying ~~hundreds of dollars~~ <sup>much less</sup> less in income taxes than in 1960, the last Republican year:

- A family with \$5,000 income, \$130 less;
- A family with \$10,000 income, \$174 less;
- A family with \$15,000 income, \$269 less.

Mr. Nixon says the country has been losing gold. But he forgets when the gold drain started -- under the last Republican Administration. In the last three years under the Nixon Republicans, the annual liquidity deficit averaged \$3.7 billion.

It has never been that high in any Democratic year. The country lost far more of its international reserves between 1952 and 1961 than between 1961 and 1968. It was one of the Nixon Republican messes left for the Democrats, ~~and in the last few years it has been brought under control.~~ *to the Democrats, and in the last few years it has been brought under control.*

Then there are a few things Mr. Nixon forgot to mention. Like employment -- *three* increased by more than 10 million jobs since 1961. In the eight Nixon Republican years, the increase was *about* ~~more like~~ 4 million.

Like unemployment -- *it was 7% in 1960 + has declined* ~~declined from about 7 per cent of the~~ work force in early 1961 to *3.5* <sup>*in 1968*</sup> per cent -- the lowest in fifteen years.

If the rate of unemployment were as high now as when the Nixon Republican Administration left office -- nearly 3 million people who are now at work would be tramping in streets looking for jobs.

*Profits - During 1953-60 - little or no increase  
1961-68 - more than doubled*

OPENING STATEMENT  
VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY  
PRESS CONFERENCE  
SEPTEMBER 24, 1968

For months now Richard Nixon has been saying he thought debates among Presidential candidates were a good thing. He was for them.

Now, however, he refuses to accept my challenge to debate.

I would prefer to debate Mr. Nixon on prime time network television. However, if that is not possible, I am willing to debate him at the Whittier Elks Club, in the offices of the National Association of Manufacturers, or in his fifth Avenue apartment. *or out a Navy*

Failing a Humphrey-Nixon debate, I propose a Muskie-Agnew debate.

I know Ed Muskie would be happy to meet the Governor in the State House in Annapolis, at the Baltimore County Sheriff's Office, or on the Mason-Dixon line. *or in a network Studio.*

Alternatively, I would be willing to debate both Mr. Nixon and Mr. Agnew at the same time. Nixon could give the soft answers.

Agnew could give the hard answers. Humphrey would give the right answers. So that is the Humphrey-Muskie position on the debates.

We are ready to do this anytime. Where do you stand on this issue, Mr. Nixon?

Now, I am ready for your questions.





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