I was the senior Republican present. I am sorry about this incident. Secretary Fowler, I thought, has been a friend of mine for many years and I really deplored, terribly, this outburst. I will forgive him, but I see no excuse for it and it did not help his case.

Now, as to the merits—as long as he did challenge me—the fact is that I have stood with the minority on this committee for years and perhaps it might be of interest that an analysis of the 2 years during which I have been the ranking Republican member on Labor and Public Welfare indicates that the minority was never more together there than it is now and has been for the past 2 years. Many of the things I advocated, my party has been against, many they have been for. That is the fate of everyone. I guess it is the fate of every Senator or Congressman including the chairman of this committee, and I honor them for it. I would not pick on them for it.

I do think that a case was made of the kind of personal sort, and it seems to be almost an attempt to divert attention from the merits. I had my say on that and I hope neither of us will bring the question up again, although I will be happy to debate it ad infinitum if Secretary Fowler desires it. If he does that is fine with me.

The allegation that the Republicans had a position different from mine on a tax increase is simply untrue. The fact is that though there was evidence to that effect in the House, the Senate minority leader was for a tax increase and I call attention to the President's press conference on February 26 where the President of the United States was asked this question: "What is your reaction to Senator Dirksen's statement earlier this week that a 5-percent tax increase is in the offing?" Then in July we have again in the Congressional Quarterly a flat statement that Senate Minority Leader Everett Dirksen urged the President to increase taxes to dampen inflation.

As Secretary Fowler admits, this view was backed by the leading experts at the time. The Council on Economic Advisers itself was pretty much bound by the administration. They seemed to me at least hearing their testimony last year, to lean toward tax increase and there was a tremendous body of opinion for it.

Now, finally, and I shall not deal with the matter beyond that, I would like to make just one other statement.

It seems to me that the primary economic explanation the Secretary gives for the apparent contradiction that interest rates this year are going down while last year they were going up—which he claims justifies the policy which I assume was his, he espoused—is that this year the demand for credit is softer, whereas last year interest rates were pushed up by too many conditions which could have been abated by a better fiscal policy.

The Federal Reserve Board had to use its muscle because the administration was not using its muscle in the form of a tax increase. This resulted in a disastrous burst of inflation which is now leading us to an economic softening as witnessed by the drop in housing starts—probably the single most deleterious economic fact which developed in that time.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I think the Secretary had better think pretty coolly and not let his anger run away with his reason. The administration is putting forward a tax increase proposal with all this heat, whereas the Council of Economic Advisers sat here the other day and