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REPORT TO THE PEOPLE
FROM YOUR CONGRESSWOMAN

FLORENCE P. DWYER - 6th District, New Jersey



1631 HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

Volume 4, Number 1

Thursday, January 14, 1960

The President has come to Capitol Hill, mounted the rostrum in the big chamber of the House of Representatives, and reported to the traditional half-cheering, half-silent gathering of representatives of the people his observations on the state of the union.

It was, as you know, a happy message. And it must have been a source of deep satisfaction to President Eisenhower that a message of hope and optimism, good will and firm resolve could be his concluding State of the Union address to Congress and the American people.

The important thing is, of course, that the hopeful picture the President sketched was due in large part to the soundness and success of the policies he and his Administration have pursued.

Consider, for example, the change reflected in last week's message from the time of the President's message a year ago. No signs of the recession are left as record-high levels of employment have been reached. Economists almost unanimously predict even more prosperous months ahead. Inflation has been checked and prices stabilized. The budget will be balanced and next year's budget is expected to return a surplus of \$4.2 billion, the second-highest surplus in American history.

Conditions abroad have likewise improved. Our free-world allies have prospered and are now ready to help share the burden of assisting the new and underdeveloped countries to economic and political stability. Our great military strength has discouraged further communist aggression. And our patience and good will--as well as our strength--have led Soviet leaders to consider seriously the easing of tensions as a matter of mutual self-interest.

Challenge to Congress

But the President did not indulge in a display of self-satisfaction. He did not tell the American people that "all's well with the world." He is far too realistic and responsible for such deception.

The heart of the President's message--and his challenge to Congress and the people--was his plea for national unity and a common effort to secure "brighter opportunity for our own citizens and world peace with justice for all."

To accomplish this, to nurture and fulfill the hopes of people for peace and prosperity will require unusual restraint on the part of an election-minded Congress. The things that have to be done to continue our progress cannot be sacrificed on the altar of election-year politics.

Many of these things the President specified in his message. Especially important, it seems to me, were his emphasis on the need to stay strong--to maintain effective deterrent forces that will permit us to negotiate settlements with the Soviet Union from a position of strength--and his continued concern that the country live within its budget and thereby avoid the deprivations of price inflation.

The President used a phrase that I believe is worth repeating here. Proposing that the prospective \$4.2 billion surplus in the next fiscal year be applied to the national debt, he called it "a reduction on our children's inherited mortgage." A glance at the budget will show what he meant, and should convince us forever of the wisdom of pay-as-you-spend government. For the coming fiscal year, taxpayers--and that includes everybody--will devote 12 cents out of every tax dollar to pay the interest charges on past debts.

Other Problems

In his concern to prevent inflation and live within our means, old-fashioned but fundamental ideas, the President did not--and the Congress should not--overlook other needs vital to the social and economic welfare of the American people. There are education needs to be met, especially in the area of school construction. Millions of our people are still being denied the basic rights and freedoms that belong to all Americans. The scandal of vast farm surpluses, diminishing farm incomes and high food prices has not yet been resolved. And extraordinary efforts are required to help improve the atmosphere of labor-management relations--lest our fight for peace abroad be compromised by our failure to get along at home.

This is by no means a complete index of the problems and issues facing the second session of the 86th Congress. But these are some of the big problems that will dominate the legislative year. They can be solved, and solved without breaking the budget or disrupting the pattern of our lives if only Congress will approach them in that spirit of responsibility and unselfishness and willingness to compromise which is characteristic of representative government at its best.

If this spirit dominates the new session, perhaps Congress can also find time to devote some attention to "lesser" problems--"local" ones like assuring adequate commuter railroad transportation, and protecting people from the needless destruction of homes and parks and the vanishing countryside because of improperly-located highways and airports.

In all these matters of public policy, "big" and "little", there is a common consideration involved--the place of human values. Even though there is frequent disagreement about specific needs and values of people, the test is still a reliable one. It shall continue to be my own chief guide through the maze of Congressional business.

In concluding this first report of a new session of Congress, let me once again remind you that I am here to serve you. Your suggestions, requests, ideas and opinions are important to me. In dealing with them, as with the issues discussed above, I shall always do my best to justify the confidence you have expressed in sending me to represent you in the Congress.