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### Report to the People Vol. 13 No. 6

Florence P. Dwyer

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CONGRESSWOMAN DWYER'S

# REPORT TO THE PEOPLE

OF THE UNION-ESSEX SUBURBS



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DISTRICT  
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Volume XIII, Number 6

Thursday, May 22, 1969

## THE VOICE OF THE 12TH DISTRICT

In record numbers, you -- the people of the 12th Congressional District -- have responded to my annual Congressional Questionnaire. Twenty-nine percent of the nearly 16,000 who received the questionnaire have completed and returned it, four percent higher than last year's record participation, and altogether a most encouraging response.

This rate of return -- approaching one out of three -- is especially gratifying to me in view of the fact that this year's questionnaire was perhaps more complex and challenging than others. It was specifically designed to probe attitudes as well as issues and to avoid the over-simple and obvious in favor of something more meaningful. I am led to hope it was at least partially successful in this respect in view of the high participation rate and the comments of such constituents as a former Wall Street Journal editorial writer who, commenting on the "penetrating questions," added: "Thanks for making me think, even if I know I don't know all the answers."

In return, of course, you have made me think -- think long and deeply about your answers to questions, about the values that underlie your responses, about the direction you believe our country -- and its Congress -- should take and, inferentially at least, about the kind of performance you expect of me.

### WHAT YOU HAVE SAID

Although the detailed results appear on the reverse of this page, here are some of the highlights as I interpret them:

\* The extent of support for tax reform in general, and for each of the particular reforms which were listed, was impressively one-sided -- ranging from a low of three-to-one on head-of-household benefits to a high of almost 15 to 1 in favor of a minimum tax to plug the tax-exempt income loophole.

\* President Nixon emerges with a strong degree of support at this point with better than a two-to-one majority agreeing that he is "generally doing well so far."

\* The minimum tax requirement, which won broader support than any other position (89%), was followed by: 84% support for raising the basic tax exemption from \$600 to \$1,000; 84% in favor of giving high priority to intensifying the fight against crime; 80% backing for a similar priority in improving governmental efficiency and effectiveness; 78% for high priority efforts to control inflation; and identical support for making "substantial reductions" in foreign aid spending.

\* Whether or not it's extensive enough to be described as "alienation," our affluent district displays less than overwhelming personal confidence in some cherished institutions. Of the six listed, the highest measure of confidence was expressed in "the capacity of American youth to become responsible adults." Religious leaders, military leaders and Congress did relatively poorly.

\* The war in Vietnam grows increasingly unpopular with 72% giving high priority to Congressional attempts to prevent further escalation.

For the time and thought you have invested in these responses, and for giving me the opportunity to learn from this highly informative dialogue, I am truly grateful. I only regret that limited staff resources prevent my answering each of you, but I assure you that your replies and extra comments have been carefully read and will be remembered. Thank you.

(over)

CONGRESSIONAL QUESTIONNAIRE -- 1969 -- RESULTS (in percentages)

1. TAX REFORM -- Which reforms do you favor or oppose?
- |   |              |                  |
|---|--------------|------------------|
| (a) Raise basic exemption from \$600 to \$1,000?  | FOR<br>(84%) | AGAINST<br>(11%) |
| (b) Reduce oil and mineral depletion allowance?   | (70%)        | (17%)            |
| (c) Require persons with substantial income from tax-exempt sources to pay at least a minimum tax?                  | (89%)        | ( 6%)            |
| (d) Extend head-of-household tax advantage to single persons above a certain age who maintain their own households? | (70%)        | (24%)            |
2. DO YOU BELIEVE --
- |   |       |       |
|---|-------|-------|
|   | YES   | NO    |
| (a) that the Federal Gov't should relieve local communities of a greater share of welfare costs?            | (56%) | (41%) |
| (b) that in order to control inflation it is worth risking substantial unemployment?                        | (40%) | (49%) |
| (c) that substantial Federal revenues should be given to States and localities "with no strings attached?"  | (23%) | (72%) |
| (d) that States and local governments can do a better job of administering programs than the Federal Gov't? | (65%) | (25%) |
| (e) that public ownership of railroads is justified to preserve passenger service, including commuters?     | (50%) | (40%) |
| (f) that colleges are able to handle campus disorders adequately without Federal intervention?              | (53%) | (40%) |
| (g) that Congress should go ahead with the ABM?   | (43%) | (43%) |
3. HOW DO YOU FEEL? To what extent (high, medium or low) do you feel personal confidence in the following:
- |   |       |        |       |
|---|-------|--------|-------|
|   | HIGH  | MEDIUM | LOW   |
| (a) the integrity of Congress                                       | (22%) | (56%)  | (19%) |
| (b) the judgment of our military leaders                            | (26%) | (44%)  | (26%) |
| (c) the guidance of religious leaders                               | (18%) | (47%)  | (32%) |
| (d) the capacity of American youth to become responsible adults     | (47%) | (36%)  | (13%) |
| (e) the ability of Americans to resolve racial discord successfully | (24%) | (47%)  | (26%) |
| (f) the capacity of people generally to make wise decisions         | (25%) | (57%)  | (15%) |
4. CONGRESSIONAL PRIORITIES -- What priority (high medium, low) should Congress devote to these policy choices:
- |   |       |        |       |
|---|-------|--------|-------|
|   | HIGH  | MEDIUM | LOW   |
| (a) Control inflation                                       | (78%) | (16%)  | ( 2%) |
| (b) Prevent further escalation of the war in Vietnam        | (72%) | (15%)  | ( 9%) |
| (c) Reduce military spending                                | (55%) | (30%)  | (10%) |
| (d) Reform and modernize Congress itself                    | (57%) | (34%)  | ( 9%) |
| (e) Change the method of nominating and electing Presidents | (53%) | (27%)  | (19%) |
| (f) Improve governmental efficiency and effectiveness       | (80%) | (13%)  | ( 3%) |
| (g) Eliminate discrimination against women                  | (28%) | (30%)  | (35%) |
| (h) Improve the quality of life in U.S. cities              | (47%) | (32%)  | (15%) |
| (i) Continue the fight against racial discrimination        | (47%) | (31%)  | (18%) |
| (j) Intensify the fight against crime.                      | (84%) | ( 9%)  | ( 2%) |

GOVERNMENT SPENDING -- Where should Congress make substantial reductions?

- |                           |       |                                   |       |
|---------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| (a) defense               | (49%) | (f) housing, urban development    | (24%) |
| (b) agriculture subsidies | (68%) | (g) education                     | (13%) |
| (c) poverty programs      | (44%) | (h) public works (highways, etc.) | (21%) |
| (d) health research       | ( 9%) | (i) foreign aid                   | (78%) |
| (e) Veterans' benefits    | (21%) | (j) aid to States and localities  | (21%) |

PRESIDENT NIXON -- Which view best describes the President's performance so far?

- |                                 |       |                                   |       |
|---------------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| (a) Generally doing well so far | (64%) | (b) must improve performance soon | (31%) |
|---------------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------|-------|