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Florence P. Dwyer

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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 III, Number 8

Thursday, February 26, 1959

This has been a rather typical week for me here, and these past few days may serve to illustrate why I find the work of Congress-- despite its difficulties-- an experience and a constant opportunity for which I am very grateful.

The week's biggest story has been the illness of John Foster Dulles which forced him to step aside, at least temporarily, from the job of Secretary of State.

But the number two story would have to be the world's reaction to his illness. Universally, the expressions of shock and sympathy, and the tributes to the Secretary's great talents, have been generous and sincere. Even those who have staunchly opposed the Dulles foreign policy have paid him their respects, and have gone on to stress how badly the country needs him as we approach the crucial negotiations over Berlin.

This is the measure of Mr. Dulles' greatness-- the boundless respect he has won from those with whom he disagrees. The depth of his understanding and the breadth of his knowledge of foreign affairs are unmatched. He has been a firm and consistent leader of the free-world coalition. He represents-- in his own person-- the hopes of free men for peace and security.

Knowing all this, who can fail to add their hopes and prayers for the speedy recovery of John Foster Dulles.

Next step needed

As I write this report, one week has gone by since my discussion of possible means of improving labor-management relations arrived in your mail and appeared in County newspapers. And in just seven days the response has been most impressive and heartening.

It is crystal clear that people care about this. They recognize the tremendous power exercised by organized business and organized labor-- power that can lift this nation ahead to a new age of greatness, or power that can disrupt our unity and plunge us into an economic civil war.

They see, too, the signs of antagonism, of a hardened state of hostility between labor and management, which responsible leaders of both have warned us of. But they expect more to be done by people in the top ranks of business and labor, people with grave responsibilities for the common welfare. They expect a more generous, open and unselfish willingness on the part of each to take minimum steps, at least, to sit down together and discuss their mutual problems-- especially at a time when unemployment in New Jersey is at a level that requires some constructive action.

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Any kind of labor-management conference-- local, county, State or national-- would be useful. If nothing else, it might convince each side that the other is composed of human beings, not ogres, responsible and capable people who are genuinely concerned with the public good.

This would be a great advance.

Common interests

Speaking of labor-management relations, at least one issue brings both sides together in defense of common interests-- the threat, that is, to production and employment caused by unfair foreign competition.

In recent weeks, three cases of such unfair competition have been brought to my attention, all of them involving apparent violations of U.S. patent laws. The products are sewing machines, rubber overshoes and cotton textile prints-- all of them important to Union County's economy.

In each case, manufacturers in Hong Kong and Japan are alleged to have copied the American design-- even though it was patented-- and exported their cheaper copies to the United States, where they compete with our own originals.

Both management and labor have asked for help in these cases, and I have been glad, of course, to cooperate. A particularly happy opportunity arose this week when the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for International Affairs, Mr. Henry Kearns, traveled to the Far East for the purpose of negotiating with government officials and manufacturers voluntary agreements to reduce exports of certain of their products to the U. S.

I took advantage of his presence there to urge him to take up the question of patent infringements and try to find a way of stopping this illegitimate form of foreign trade. As I reminded Mr. Kearns, Americans are not afraid of competition-- as long as it is fair and equitable and honorably pursued.

Selfless service

The first 1959 meeting of the Board of Directors of Gallaudet College was held the other night-- the first, too, since my reappointment as the only woman ever to have served on the Board in the college's 100-year history.

It is always a deeply impressive experience to visit this school-- the only college for the deaf in the world. It is only a ten-minute drive from Capitol Hill, but Gallaudet is a whole new world: quiet and peaceful and pervaded with a sense of the dignity of the college's high purpose. Everyone, teachers and students and administrators, seem to share an unusual dedication. Yet, this doesn't prevent anyone there from enthusiastically joining in the full round of extra-curricular activities the college sponsors: athletics, drama, publications, clubs of all kinds.

As you may know, President Abraham Lincoln signed the legislation that gave Gallaudet its charter. Since then, the Federal Government has contributed generously to its support. The results of this help are impressively evident in the well-trained young men and women it sends forth each year and in the teachers it provides to further the work of teaching the deaf throughout the world.

Postscript - This is a good place for me to express my thanks and appreciation for the large number of invitations I've received this year, and to explain again why I've been unable to accept many of them. I have found that to do a good job, a Congressman must stay on the job in Washington as long as Congress is in session-- except, of course, for weekends and periods of brief recess. I believe this is what our people expect of me; anything less than full-time service would be inadequate. After adjournment, however, I shall be happy to accept any invitations you are kind enough to offer. It's a wonderful way to see old friends and meet new ones, and it gives me an opportunity to report directly to you, the people I represent.