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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



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The returns from my third annual Congressional Questionnaire are in, counted, reduced to percentages and, I want to add, very much appreciated. I have read and studied every one of them, and I want you to know how grateful I am for your cooperation. I wish it were possible to thank each of you personally and to reply individually to the many additional comments -- all of which gave me a much clearer understanding of the views of the people I represent.

Whatever they may show in terms of Union County's political opinions, I am convinced the returns reflect our people's awareness that Congress has a great deal of public business to conduct before it adjourns early in July. They also represent a vigorous demand that action be taken on several major issues during these remaining eight weeks of the session to meet the Congress' responsibility to the people we were elected to serve.

I believe this is a fair interpretation of the decisive way in which more than 5,000 residents of the 6th Congressional District expressed their views in the questionnaire.

Before reporting the results in detail, however, a word about procedures is called for. This year's questionnaire went to a much larger number of people than either of my two previous questionnaires. Distribution of the questionnaire, too, was much better balanced than heretofore, going to Republicans, Democrats and Independents in roughly equal proportions. Consequently, the results should be an unusually accurate reflection of the District's political thinking -- in keeping with my personal conviction that a Member of Congress has an obligation to try to represent all the people of his district.

The results are, I think you will agree, most interesting.

Exceptionally strong support, for instance, was expressed for: continued military and economic aid to friendly countries; Federal aid to education; an increase in the Federal minimum wage; a tightening of regulations to require continued railroad commuter service; an increase in the amount of income persons may earn without losing their social security benefits; greater military, space and economic efforts to counter Soviet gains; greater metropolitan area cooperation in finding solutions to such area-wide problems as transportation, water, roads, etc.; continuation of the "tight money" policy of fighting inflation; and for government leadership in bringing labor and industry leaders together, away from the bargaining table, to help achieve better labor-management understanding.

But here are the results in detail:

1. What is your reaction to the criticism that the U. S. is not using its resources sufficiently to meet the Soviet challenge in military power, space exploration and economic growth? (Please check only one of the following replies):
 - (a) 26.9% This criticism is not justified.
 - (b) 29.9% I'm not sure, but I have a feeling we should be doing more in these fields.
 - (c) 36.1% We definitely are lagging behind and should make greater efforts.
 - (d) 7.1% I don't know.
2. Which of the following statements best expresses your view of disarmament?
 - (a) 30.1% We can't trust Russia; we should rely on our own military and nuclear power.
 - (b) 63.6% We should continue disarmament negotiations but make certain we negotiate from strength, since this is the only way to persuade Russia to accept a mutually-enforceable and secure agreement.
 - (c) 6.3% Stopping the nuclear arms race is of first importance; we should be more willing to compromise with Russia to obtain an agreement.
3. Do you agree that, as long as world tensions continue, the U. S. should continue its program of military and economic aid to friendly countries?
 - (a) 89.5% YES;
 - (b) 10.5% NO.

4. How would you rate the President's conduct of foreign affairs during the past year?
 (a) 34.5% Excellent. (b) 37.8% Good. (c) 20.4% Fair. (d) 7.3% Poor.
5. The President has estimated that the next Federal budget will be balanced and return a surplus of about \$4.2 billion. How should this surplus be used? (Check only one):
 (a) 44.4% To reduce our national debt.
 (b) 14.1% To reduce taxes.
 (c) 18.8% To pay for greater space, missile and military efforts generally.
 (d) 22.7% To support expanded efforts in domestic programs such as health and education.
6. The 10% Federal excise tax on telephone service will expire June 30, 1960 unless Congress extends the tax or transfers it to the States. Which do you prefer?
 (a) 27.4% Extend the tax for needed Federal services.
 (b) 42.3% Let the tax expire.
 (c) 13.3% Transfer the tax to the States for their use.
 (d) 17.0% Transfer the tax to the States only if the States accept responsibility for an equal share of Federal services.
7. Congress is considering various proposals for Federal aid to education. How do you feel about each of the following?
- (a) Does the Federal Gov't have any responsibility to help improve educational opportunities in the States? YES 69.1% NO 26.6% DON'T KNOW 4.3%
- (b) Should Federal aid be restricted to school construction? YES 41.0% NO 53.8% DON'T KNOW 5.2%
- (c) Should States be free to use Federal aid, as they see fit, for either school construction or teachers' salaries? YES 42.3% NO 53.3% DON'T KNOW 4.4%
8. How would you vote on the following Social Security bills?
- (a) To increase above \$1,200 a year the income which persons receiving social security are allowed to earn. YES 85.8% NO 11.4% DON'T KNOW 2.8%
- (b) To increase social security benefits by raising the tax. YES 31.8% NO 61.7% DON'T KNOW 6.5%
- (c) To increase social security taxes to finance a new program of medical and surgical insurance for retired persons. YES 48.5% NO 44.3% DON'T KNOW 7.2%
9. The following questions involve Federal activities in Union County:
- (a) Should a new jet airport be built in the Great Swamp area? YES 28.2% NO 58.3% DON'T KNOW 13.5%
- (b) Should the Federal Gov't provide financial aid to railroads to assure continued passenger service? YES 39.8% NO 51.7% DON'T KNOW 8.5%
- (c) Should railroads be required by Federal regulations to continue needed commuter service? YES 57.0% NO 34.6% DON'T KNOW 8.4%
- (d) Should the hundreds of State, county and local governments in the metropolitan N.Y.-N.J.-Conn. area (which includes Union County) actively cooperate to seek solutions to area-wide problems like commuter transit, water, roads, etc.? YES 94.8% NO 2.4% DON'T KNOW 2.8%
10. Do you agree with the "tight money" policy of fighting inflation by reducing the supply and increasing the cost of money to borrowers? YES 56.2% NO 30.0% DON'T KNOW 13.8%
11. Has the "tight money" policy adversely affected you personally? YES 26.2% NO 66.8% DON'T KNOW 7.0%
12. Do you believe the present Federal minimum wage of \$1 an hour should be raised to \$1.25 an hour? YES 60.5% NO 33.5% DON'T KNOW 6.0%
13. Should the Federal Gov't take the lead in bringing together leaders of industry and labor, away from the bargaining table, to help achieve better labor-management understanding? YES 66.9% NO 26.1% DON'T KNOW 7.0%