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REPORT TO THE PEOPLE
FROM YOUR CONGRESSWOMAN

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If the House of Representatives responds to the demands of public opinion for an effective labor reform bill as it did to similar demands for reducing Government spending, then the people will be getting what they want.

Although the intense concern of people about getting a workable labor reform bill has temporarily obscured the inflation issue, it can now be said, here in the final days of the first session of the 86th Congress, that the anti-inflation, Government economy campaign has been unusually successful.

The House so far this year has passed 16 of an expected 17 appropriation bills, all but one (a supplementary appropriation for the fiscal year which ended last June 30) providing funds for the present fiscal year 1960, the period covered by the budget submitted by the President last January. On 14 of these bills, the House has reduced Administration estimates by a total of \$2,447,056,412. On only two of these appropriations measures did the House vote to increase the budget -- by a total of \$158,735,600, the major part of the increase being earmarked for expanded hospital construction and medical research.

Thus, the House has voted a net reduction of nearly \$2.3 billion in the proposed expenditures approved this year.

Since the Senate generally restores some of the House cuts, the final figure for the year will be somewhat lower. Nevertheless, I believe it is fairly certain that the final accounting for this year's appropriation bills will show a substantial net reduction below the Administration's estimates.

Guarding Against Inflation

This is a far cry from the outlook of last January, when an expanded and optimistic majority returned to Capitol Hill ready to spend the country back into prosperity. But the President's own economic analysis turned out to be a more accurate gauge of the

recovery that even then was at work in the economy and that since has shown itself so dramatically in record-breaking employment, wage and production figures this year.

As a result, the President devoted much of his leadership to persuading the country and the Congress that the greater danger was a rising cost of living, an inflation that could get out of hand if Congress insisted on excessive spending and deficit financing. People responded to that leadership in impressive fashion, and responsible members of Congress wisely chose to listen and exercise caution.

The results have been good for the country: continued steady improvement and growth in the economy, with more and more jobs for people, and a Federal budget that almost certainly will not only be balanced but will return a healthy surplus to the Treasury

In addition to this encouraging record, the latest estimates of Federal revenues for fiscal 1960 indicate that the Treasury will take in about \$2 billion more than the estimates on which the President's budget was based.

If these estimates of appropriations and revenues hold true, it means that a sizable chunk of our huge national debt can be retired. This would exert a substantially steadying influence on the economy, hold back the threat of inflation, and protect the purchasing power of our dollars -- a boon to every man, woman and child in our country.

If the House this week (and next?) exercises the same high degree of responsibility in writing a labor reform bill, then the country again will be well served. An effective but fair bill is urgently needed and wanted.

Approaching Labor Reform

As the situation stands today (August 6), however, the week of August 10 will be a hot, contentious and confused one. The Rules Committee has granted an "open rule" for the labor reform bill, the procedure in the House which is closest to the unlimited debate of the Senate. Almost inevitably, this will mean that a great many amendments will be offered in the course of considering whatever version of the bill is finally approved. And it may also mean the longest, most vitriolic debate in recent history.

All this, of course, makes any prediction as to the final outcome a virtual impossibility. And it makes a scorecard of the major bills under consideration an essential. This is how they look to me, after considerable study:

The Shelley Bill has the formal endorsement of the AFL-CIO, though the unions most in need of reform -- and most of them are outside the AFL-CIO -- prefer no bill

at all. This is the weakest of the more significant bills, since it deals only with financial reporting requirements, and contains no bill of rights or necessary Taft-Hartley emendments covering secondary boycotts, blackmail picketing and "no man's land" cases.

The Elliott Bill (reported by the House Labor Committee), though presently opposed by labor, would probably be acceptable to most unions as the best bill they could hope to get. It is, however, considerably less effective than the Senate-passed Kennedy-Ervin Bill, chiefly because of its failure to provide for realistic enforcement.

The Kennedy-Ervin Bill, adopted by a vote of 90 to 1 in the Senate, has met the fate of most compromise legislation. It is attacked by labor as too strong and condemned by others as too weak. Nevertheless, most Senators, both Republicans and Democrats, have continued to support it as a moderate but effective reform measure.

Getting the Right Bill

The Griffin-Landrum Bill is a bi-partisan alternative to the Elliott Bill. Many provisions in the two bills are similar, though the Griffin-Landrum Bill is somewhat broader and more enforceable. Of all the House bills, it is probably closer to the Kennedy-Ervin Bill than any other, and has now won the strong support of President Eisenhower and Secretary Mitchell.

The original Administration Bill, stronger in several respects than the Griffin-Landrum Bill, has now been dropped by most of its supporters in favor of the latter alternative.

The Barden Bill and similar measures represent an opposite extreme to the Shelley Bill. Considered by many to be harsh and punitive, these bills will receive very little active consideration on the House floor.

The ultimate struggle will probably be waged between the Elliott and Griffin-Landrum bills, and it is not unlikely that any final product might be an amalgam of the two bills.

Whatever happens, however, I hope that the people and Congress will keep in mind these two overriding considerations: (1) an effective labor reform bill is universally acknowledged to be needed and desirable, both in the interests of labor itself and of the general public; and (2) labor is not, after all, an inanimate commodity; it is composed of human beings, our next-door neighbors, most of whom are thoroughly honest and responsible people.

Congress' responsibility is a heavy one. We must forget politics, and seek only justice and safety and fair play for all our people.