

October 5, 1950

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW

BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

Here is one of the best stories that has been heard in Washington ever since the President called the Marines the Navy's "police force", and accused them of being a propaganda agency similar to Stalin's.

A Congressman appointed a strapping young Marine sergeant to the Naval Academy at Annapolis. The doctors rejected this battle-decorated Marine because they said he had defective teeth. The Congressman who had appointed him to Annapolis was outraged and immediately telephoned a top Marine officer in the Pentagon. The Congressman asked this question: "Do you expect this Marine to bite the enemy?" The Marine official replied, "He may have to if the President keeps on trying to cripple the Marine Corps and the Navy.

\* \* \* \* \*

Several weeks ago when the President declared his intention to veto the "Communist Control" bill there was some fear that he might nullify this legislative effort of Congress by a "pocket veto." The President, although he vetoed the "Commie" control bill, didn't follow this particular procedure. The question arose, however, can Congress override a "pocket veto"? The answer: Congress can't. Pocket vetoes are possible only when Congress goes home for more than 10 days. In such cases the President simply "pockets" the bill and forgets it, and it dies.

\* \* \* \* \*

During the second session of the 81st Congress a new procedure was used in the handling of appropriation bills. In the past during each session there were 11 individual appropriation bills and there was very little if any coordination in the handling of this important legislation. As a result in recent years the expenditures of the federal government got pretty much out of hand.

This year, however, the appropriation bills were combined in a "single package" with rather good results. By this method Congress cut normal budget items approximately \$2 billion below President Truman's budget requests. For this reason some



of the President's leaders are anxious to sidetrack the "single-package" technique next year but that isn't the apparent sentiment in Congress.

For example Senator Byrd of Virginia has reminded members of Congress that last year (1949) the Senate spent a total of 290 hours over a 10 month period debating 11 separate appropriation bills. Result: A new increase of \$100 million over the President's budget requests. This year the Senate debated 236 hours on the "single-package" bill. Result: A net decrease of \$2.3 billion. With soaring military expenditures and emergency defense appropriations, Congress should take advantage of any and all methods to reduce domestic spending and the "single-package" method seems like a good one to accomplish that purpose.

\* \* \* \* \*

Every American is mighty proud of the recent brilliant military successes in Korea. General MacArthur engineered a skillfully planned maneuver that sealed the doom of the Communist forces in South Korea. It must be remembered, however, that improvising after the event is neither cheap nor safe. In other words, in the months ahead we must build up our military strength in order to forestall other Communist aggression. It isn't fair to put the entire burden of our national security on only a few of our citizens. Our men in Korea have acted courageously and with skill. Some have made the supreme sacrifice. Out of respect to them and for our nation's future security, the United States must hereafter maintain adequate military strength.

\* \* \* \* \*

Following the overriding of President Truman's veto the Congress recessed until November 27th. Any unfinished business of the 81st Congress will be completed in December. Some of us preferred a shorter recess period but the Speaker of the House and Senator Lucas of Illinois, majority leader in the Senate, had it all arranged and we in the minority were unsuccessful in trying to get Congress back to work at an earlier date. Although Congress is not in session for a few weeks, my local schedule is a busy one. I plan to get around the district but if anyone has any problems stop in at the Post Office in Grand Rapids, Room 227, or call me at Glendale 4-9012.

\* \* \* \* \*

VISITOR: Benn M. Corwin of Grand Rapids.

\* \* \* \* \*

October 12, 1950

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW

BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

The war in Korea has turned the spotlight on the United Nations. The defense of Korea was supposedly a U. N. responsibility. However, 98% of the effort fell directly on the United States, our soldiers and taxpayers. Consequently an equally high percentage of "United Nations casualties" came from American forces.

Because of the relatively weak effort by the other nations in the U. N. many American citizens rightly think that the "rules" of joint U. N. military action must be changed. In other words, it isn't fair for the citizens of the United States to bear all the burdens in trying to meet Soviet imperialist aggression.

The Korean war has emphatically pointed out the fact that Uncle Sam has been shouldering most of the United Nations burdens. Unfortunately this problem in a different way has existed for some time but the State Department under Mr. Acheson hasn't accomplished much in getting the U. N. nations to assume their fair share. This is what I mean. All the nations in the U. N. are supposed to make financial contributions so the U. N. can operate. The United States in every instance has paid more into the "kitty" than its share while other member nations constantly fail to do their part. It's been the same over and over again. To put it bluntly, our allies seem to be better bargainers than our Department of State and as a result Uncle Sam continues to pick up the check. It's high time President Truman and his foreign policy advisors were a lot tougher in our negotiations and if Mr. Acheson and his assistants can't "cut the buck" more competent negotiators should be given the job.

\* \* \* \* \*

When the 81st Congress closes its book there will be a number of new faces regardless of any political changes based on Republican or Democrat victories. Michigan loses three. Representative Earl Michener of Adrian is retiring voluntarily after 30 years of superb public service. The House of Representatives will miss Earl for he has been liked and respected by all regardless of political party affiliation. Personally I am deeply indebted to this fine elder statesman for his always helpful suggestions.



Congressman Albert Engel of Muskegon and Lake City, after many terms in the House, was a candidate for Governor and therefore will not be back January 3, 1951. The Committee on Appropriations is losing a valuable member, for Albert was the best "watchdog" of federal funds the nation has seen in many a day. He terrified the bureaucrats with his facts and figures when they tried to get undeserved appropriations from the Congress. The record shows that on one occasion Representative Engel singlehanded saved the federal taxpayers approximately four billion dollars. Albert has done me a mighty nice favor by resigning from the Committee on Appropriations so that I could be appointed to take his place when Congress reconvenes November 27th. This is one of the top Committees in the Congress and consequently a swell break for our district. It means plenty of extra work and long hours for the Committee handles all government spending and in these days that's plenty, in fact too much.

\* \* \* \* \*

One of the first documents I received from Washington after the 1948 elections was a reprint of a speech by a veteran Congressman, Charley Plumley of Vermont. The title - The Making of a Congressman. Charley was a great believer in getting new men off on the right foot. He is also retiring voluntarily but I presume some other old timer will be carrying on the job of helping the "freshmen" in the 82nd Congress.

\* \* \* \* \*

The other day a friend asked, "Can Congress jail a person who refuses to answer questions about possible Communist affiliation or gambling activities?" Here's the answer. Congress cannot directly put a person in jail for refusing to answer such questions, but the House or Senate can vote a "contempt of Congress" citation which is then turned over to the U. S. District Attorney for prosecution. If the D. A. decides prosecution is possible, the case can be tried in federal court. A procedure no longer used was to try the case in House or Senate depending on which voted the contempt citation.

\* \* \* \* \*

VISITORS: Mr. R. L. McKay, Steve Barnard and Mr. Gerald R. Ford Sr. all from Grand Rapids. Mr. and Mrs. H. Ter Haar and Mr. and Mrs. Niel Steketee from Holland.

\* \* \* \* \*

October 19, 1950

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW

BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

A good many folks from time to time rant and rave about interference from Washington in their daily existence and Congress gets berated periodically for setting up some new agency or program. The best insurance I know against new "bureaucratic regimentation" is doing the necessary job right at home. For example, support the Community Chest with an open heart and a generous pocketbook. The Community Chest agencies do a fine job and need your help. Furthermore, I'm sure we all can get more satisfaction out of doing the job locally instead of with "Washington bigwigs." If the job isn't done at home someone will soon demand that it be accomplished by the federal government and your tax dollars.

\* \* \* \* \*

The other evening I attended the monthly Kent City Farm Bureau Community Group meeting. One of the members asked, "Is it true that Congress is elected by less than half the people in the United States of voting age?" The answer is yes and we should not be very proud of that record. For example, in 1946 only 38 per cent of the folks old enough to vote in the United States actually voted in elections for members of the House of Representatives. Michigan with 41% was a little better than the national average but that should be improved this year. Your government needs your personal attention. If this thought registers with you, register with your Township Clerk by Oct. 18th so you can vote November 7th.

\* \* \* \* \*

A couple of Washington statisticians just sent out some information that is worth reporting. In 1949 the House of Representatives had 236 roll call votes. That's where a member is recorded in black and white. In 1950 so far there have been 288 roll call votes. A total of 524 in the two sessions to date. The Clerk of the House informs me I've answered 96.4 per cent of the recorded roll calls.

In addition, Members of Congress in the course of their legislative responsibilities are called upon to make many votes which are not recorded in the usual roll call method. These votes are designated as voice votes, consents, divisions and tellers.



In August, 1950 there were 1167 voice votes. In this same month there were 113 division votes where members simply stand and are counted by the presiding officer. For the same period there were 18 teller votes. That's where members of the House march up the center aisle and are counted by tellers. In addition, in August there were 1784 consent votes making a total of 3115 votes in all during the 23 legislative days in the month. Believe it or not, the statisticians say that in each Congress there are approximately 40,000 votes of all kinds for each member of the House.

\* \* \* \* \*

The State Department recently reported that the Russian Communist government still retains 459 of the 585 United States naval vessels that our government loaned to Russia in World War II. The "commies" also have failed to return 84 of the 96 merchant ships loaned them during the last war. A demand has been made for some of the ships but not for all. Why not in all cases? It doesn't make sense that Uncle Sam should be fighting Russia and her satellite nations throughout the world and then on the other hand continue to provide our enemies with our own ships. The State Department should be tougher in this particular situation just as Secretary Acheson and his aides should be more hard boiled in other negotiations with Stalin.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Buchanan Committee set up to investigate lobbying activities had better look rather closely at some government employees and agencies who do a good bit of propagandizing. The situation calls to mind the old story, "People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones." Mr. Oscar Ewing, head of the Federal Security Agency, in trying to promote socialized medicine, has had government press agents prepare 33 speeches for him for this purpose. The committee would be wise to examine carefully Mr. Ewing's lobbying activities and furthermore the Congress next year should tighten down on these government propagandists.

\* \* \* \* \*



October 26, 1950

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW

BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

E.S.A.; N.P.A.; M.E.A. and O.D.M. These are the new alphabetical designations for the federal agencies that will handle some of the war mobilization in the months ahead. Unfortunately most of the alphabetic agencies exist mostly on paper. This problem is 'confusin' but not amusin''. The mad scramble for power by the various departments and agencies under President Truman has seriously disrupted and delayed any orderly mobilization effort. Mr. Symington, head man in this over-all job, needs some help from the President. If Mr. Truman doesn't step in soon Uncle Sam is going to lose additional valuable time and money in preparing for our national security.

\* \* \* \* \*

Last week I was asked, "Has Congress closed down entirely during the present adjournment?" The answer is no. Important committees are meeting regularly. These committees will have some draft law changes ready when Congress reconvenes. Big city crime syndicates are being investigated by committees in Kansas City and elsewhere. In addition, small business and labor-management problems are getting committee attention during this adjournment period.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Peoples Business. In the present fiscal year the U. S. government will spend about 60 billion dollars. This means an average cost of \$401.51 to every man, woman and child in this country. Of that amount \$211.80 will go for present and future wars. This startling news should make us realize our responsibilities to the government and its problems.

\* \* \* \* \*

This past week Senator Ferguson and Mrs. Ferguson were in Kent County for a visit. I kept him busy in the short time that was available. We met personally a number of the men and women who work at Nash-Kelvinator and American Seating. We talked with the veterans of World War I and II at the Michigan Veterans Facility. In addition we discussed problems with many individual citizens throughout the county. The Fergusons have asked me to thank the folks of our part of Michigan for the cordial welcome extended.

\* \* \* \* \*



While visiting the Veterans Facility hospital we stopped to chat with one veteran who was a wonderful example of a top notch citizenship. Despite his bad health and his confinement to the hospital he told us he always did his solemn duty on election day. In fact, this veteran has already applied for his absentee voters ballot. It doesn't make much difference how he votes. That's his business and the business of no one else. It is encouraging to know that many of our citizens, despite tremendous personal difficulties, will do their duty for their government.

While touring the American Seating Co. plant we met a man who deserves top rating on all counts. He is blind and has as a trusted friend a "seeing eye" dog. Despite his physical handicap this man performs along with his fellow workers a full day's work on the production line. People with that kind of courage and character make us stop and think when some of our personal problems seem unbearable.

At the Nash-Kelvinator plant the Senator talked with many workers concerning their individual and employment problems. He was particularly interested in the production line jobs where one sees how each and every worker contributes his or her part in the finished product. It is the job of a Senator or Representative to see first-hand what makes American products the best in the world. Too often a legislator never gets that opportunity.

\* \* \* \* \*





NOVEMBER 2, 1950

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW

BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

Some illuminating facts have been brought to light that should be printed as part of the public record regardless of how mad we might get on learning the full story. Here it is. From September 1945 to June 1949 the U. S. government, presumably with the knowledge and consent of the Department of State, sent Soviet Russia more than \$279,000,000 worth of tanks, guns, ships, agricultural, industrial and other commodities. In this three year period it was our government's policy to send more than \$2,800,000 worth of tanks and other vehicles to Russia plus 21 million in vessels, plus 9 million in miscellaneous military equipment.

In 1945 when some of these deals were made with the Kremlin, Alger Hiss was still wielding his influence in the State Department. Perhaps this explains why the U. S. was so generous in our dealings with the communist regime in Russia. The other day I pointed out this situation to a friend who stopped in the office. He raised this question. "How much of this military equipment which was transferred to Russia by our State Department and other government executives was used against our own men in Korean battles?" Some undoubtedly. No wonder there is criticism of the State Department.

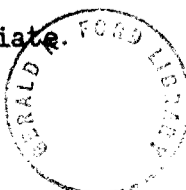
\* \* \* \* \*

News stories have told of captured American GIs being transferred by North Koreans to Manchuria and Communist China as prisoners of war. This action should be condemned by the Department of State and immediate action should be taken to stop any such cooperation between the military forces of North Korea and the Reds. Our American foreign policy makers in the Pacific area have appeased too long the Communist Regime in China and elsewhere. It would be tragic to have American soldiers disappear behind the Chinese "iron curtain."

\* \* \* \* \*

Statisticians on the loose again. The Congress so far during 1950 was in session from January 3rd through September 23rd. The House of Representatives was operated 158 days in this period. The debates and discussions filled 6,631 pages. Contrast this with the 9,287 pages for Senate proceedings. All this produced 1134 laws. A good many more, some good, some bad, are still awaiting congressional action and when Congress reconvenes in November the docket of unfinished business will get immediate attention.

\* \* \* \* \*



The President in the nine months vetoed 43 legislative proposals submitted by Congress. Mr. Truman's most publicized veto was his disapproval of the "communist control" law. The House and Senate promptly over-rode this Presidential veto but it now appears that the President will try to get around the law by indirect methods. You would think the White House would make a sincere effort to carry out the spirit of the law but so far that is definitely not the case.

\* \* \* \* \*

Citizens throughout the country are guessing as to what took place at Wake Island during the Truman-MacArthur get-together. Speculation is pretty terrific regarding probable effect on U. S. Far Eastern diplomatic policy. I certainly hope that General MacArthur convinced the President of the need and necessity for a change from the bumbling Acheson policy in that part of the world.

\* \* \* \* \*

The 81st Congress did a "fair to middlin" job in regards to the Hoover Commission recommendations and undoubtedly some greater governmental efficiency in high places has resulted. However, a recent experience with the Department of Commerce makes me wonder. On October 11, 1950 a local businessman informed me he wanted to buy a shipload of steel from overseas and asked my assistance with any government agency. Not being an expert on how or where to buy a shipload of steel from across the Atlantic, I wrote the Secretary of Commerce for information. It was an urgent request for help for a local industry and its employees. Two weeks elapsed and no answer. Finally I called via long distance and was told the letter was on its way. Three days later - still no answer. Guess we must check this one off to "bureaucratic red tape."

\* \* \* \* \*

Some have wondered what would happen if the elections November 7th resulted in the Senate having 48 Republican Senators and 48 Democrats. Which political party would then control the Senate? If that split in the membership should occur the Democrats probably would keep control for ordinarily the Vice President casts a vote where there is a tie and he would be expected to favor his Party.

\* \* \* \* \*

Just a final word before November 7th. When we realize how long and hard men and women fought for the right to vote one can hardly believe that so many neglect the privilege. It would be healthy for this great nation if there was a 100% voter participation in the elections this fall.

\* \* \* \* \*

Visitors: Mr. & Mrs. Arthur W. Johnson, Mr. & Mrs. Arthur P. Edison.

\* \* \* \* \*



November 9, 1950

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW

BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

Your Congressman writes the column this week before the votes of November 7th are counted. By the time you read the column the election results throughout the nation will be known. For myself I want to thank each and every citizen of our district for the help and encouragement over the past two years. The decisions have been difficult but at all times I've done my best to represent all the citizens of Kent and Ottawa Counties. In addition it has been a pleasure to write my weekly report on the happenings in Washington. You should know the facts, good or bad, on your federal government and the people who are running it. It's your government and with your assistance and knowledge it can be strengthened.

\* \* \* \* \*

With the elections over and a good citizen turnout recorded it is interesting to look through the pages of history to see how important "one vote" can be. Thomas Jefferson and John Quincy Adams were each elected by one vote in the electoral college. Another President, Rutherford B. Hayes, was elected by one vote. This election was contested and upheld - again by a single vote. The man who cast that deciding vote for President Hayes was a Congressman from Indiana who was elected to Congress in the preceding election by a margin of just one vote. And that one vote was cast by a man who, though desperately ill, insisted on being taken to the polls to cast that one ballot.

Just one vote gave statehood to California, Idaho, Oregon, Texas and Washington. In 1918, woman suffrage in the U. S. passed the House of Representatives with just one vote to spare. When the bill went to the Senate, it failed to pass by just two votes. Fortunately it passed both the House and Senate in 1919.

Obviously your vote, in fact every vote, counts. It's pretty silly to contend your vote makes no difference. I sincerely hope everybody assumed their full citizen responsibilities last Tuesday.

\* \* \* \* \*



The bad news indicating that Chinese Communist troops are fighting with the North Koreans and against our G.I.s should make everyone's blood boil. These military reverses mean more reservists called back into the armed services and more men drafted under Selective Service. State Department officials who are responsible for this "communist" government in China should hang their heads in shame and resign their jobs. By coddling the Red Chinese leaders the policy makers in Mr. Truman's Department of State have strengthened Stalin's grip on the China mainland. Now those Red leaders whom Mr. Acheson and Alger Hiss favored are turning their troops on our soldiers in Korea. I suppose the President and Secretary of State Acheson will next propose that our government give diplomatic recognition to this Chinese Communist government.

\* \* \* \* \*

Last week a friend, because there is talk about Mr. Truman seeking re-election, asked this question. Has Congress limited the number of terms one person can be President? The Congress has done its part of the job; the decision now rests with the 48 states. Congress in 1947 passed a Constitutional Amendment limiting a President to two elected terms or not more than 10 years if he succeeded from the vice presidency. However, only 24 of the necessary 36 states have ratified this proposed amendment to the Constitution of the United States. There is a time limit on when the states must act. If 36 states fail to approve the amendment by 1954 the proposal dies unless Congress starts the process anew.

\* \* \* \* \*

According to reliable reports from Washington, President Truman and his Budget Bureau in January will propose to Congress a 73 billion dollar spending program of your tax dollars. A good many taxpayers must be thinking along these lines. "Something's going to slip sooner or later. The world is standing on Uncle Sam's shoulders; the federal government is standing on the American taxpayer's back, and the American taxpayer is standing on the ragged edge."

The Congress will do its level best to balance expenditures with revenues. It can be done without hurting the defense program providing some pruning is accomplished on nondefense items. I'm afraid in the President's proposed 73 billion dollar budget there is no attempt to curtail extravagance and waste.

\* \* \* \* \*



November 23, 1950

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW

BY CERALD R. FORD, JR.

A note to the ladies. Feminine representation in the 82nd Congress will consist of Senator Margaret Chase Smith plus eight Representatives. Out of the nine women in the Congress, seven will be Republicans and three will be Democrats. Michigan makes its contribution by having Republican Ruth Thompson from Muskegon County and the 9th District. Our delegation will miss former Representative Albert Engel who was a top notch "watchdog" of federal funds, but Judge Thompson will be welcomed to the ranks.

\* \* \* \* \*

Down in Ohio an independent was elected to the House. He knocked off the incumbent who was a Democrat. Back in 1936 he managed President Roosevelt's campaign in the Buckeye state. During the campaign this year the Democratic Party leaders attacked him as a carpetbagger. After the election he was asked whether he would sit with the Democrats or the Republicans. His reply: "If I have my way, I will sit in the aisle on my carpetbag."

\* \* \* \* \*

How many "new" faces in the House of Representatives when the 82nd Congress convenes January 3, 1951? At this time it appears there will be 234 Democrat Congressmen, 200 Republicans and one independent. Of the 435 Representatives, approximately 87 percent will have served in some previous session. Out of the 435 House members, 363 will be incumbents from the 81st Congress, while 14 will be ex-Representatives who successfully campaigned again this year. Of the incumbents, 217 are Democrats and 146 Republicans. There are three Democrats and 11 Republicans among the ex-Representatives who are returning to their old stamping ground on the floor of the House. All told, there will be 58 novice, or freshmen, Congressmen.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Congress convening January 3rd will be the 82nd since 1789. The first Congress served from 1789 until 1791 during the first administration of George Washington. In contrast to the 435 members in the House of Representatives at the present time, the first Congress had only 65 House members.



Talk about the size of the House of Representatives brings up a problem which will have to be decided in the months ahead. The 1950 Census indicates there will be some losses for some states and gains for others in the House of Representatives. Because of our population increase, Michigan will probably have 18 Representatives instead of 17. This means the Michigan legislature will have to reapportion the State to squeeze in the new district for the additional Congressman. More than likely the new Congressional district will be set up in the Wayne County area where there has been the biggest population increase.

California, as a state, picks up seven more U.S. representatives. Washington, Texas, Maryland and Virginia each pick up one. The big losses in representation come from New York, Pennsylvania, Missouri and Oklahoma. These changes, which will first be a political factor in the election of 1952, and the 83rd Congress convening in January, 1953, will probably foretell a slight but definite shift in the center of political gravity toward the West and Southwest.

\* \* \* \* \*

We are living today in a world in conflict. If one excludes Korea, Indo China and Tibet, it is a war fought with words instead of bullets. It is a war for men's minds. But it is nonetheless a deadly serious war, and one in which the United States, if we do not win, stands to lose everything we hold dear.

Words and ideas are effective weapons. How much is Uncle Sam doing along this line? Last year America allotted 47 million dollars for a globe-wide propaganda campaign. In the same year Russia spent an estimated 30 million in Italy alone.

The Voice of America is a mere whisper compared to Russia's "roar". The Voice of America broadcasts 209 program hours a week, about 30 hours per day. Against that is a flood of Russian-controlled global radio propaganda and vituperation, estimated to total 885 program hours a week or about 120 broadcast hours each day.

We in this nation know the truth about ourselves, the opportunities and freedoms we enjoy. However, the millions of people in other lands beyond the Iron Curtain do not know the benefits of our kind of government. The U.S. must tell with pride its story in hopes that others from oppressed lands will join in the Crusade for Freedom.



For release Thursday, November 31st

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW

BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

There seems to be a good bit of confusion on the calling of men into active duty with the Army, Navy and Air Force. Admittedly it's a tough job to bring our military strength up to the necessary defense level and I don't envy the men who have the job of deciding who should don a military uniform. Certainly the civilians voluntarily serving on the draft boards, without pay and at a great personal sacrifice, deserve our wholehearted support and commendation. In addition, the military officers in charge of mobilizing the reserves are beset with tough and seemingly unsolvable decisions. It is safe to say that few of us would trade places with any of the individuals who must make some of these selective service and reserve recall decisions.

From the situations that have come to my attention in the last few months since the outbreak of the Korean War, it would seem that the top policy makers in both the Department of Defense and Selective Service were at fault. There seems to be a decided lack of coordination between the top echelon of Selective Service and those in charge of recalling reservists. For example, inactive reservists in the Army, Navy and Air Corps are apparently called back to active duty despite certain physical disabilities while draftees are deferred even though they are as well qualified physically.

Here is a specific case of how reservists and draftees are handled differently and I think unjustifiably so. An inactive Army reservist who is a pre-seminary theological student, even though he is in his last year, cannot be deferred. At the same time a young man in the same situation under the draft law regulations will get a deferment. Such a contradiction in regulations seems to penalize the fellow who already served in World War II.

The confusion is bound to result in Congressional review and action. Chairman Carl Vinson of the House Committee on Armed Services will be hearing many complaints when Congress reconvenes, and knowing him I'm certain the Department of Defense and Selective Service will be told to get the chaos and inequities straightened out pronto.

\* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \*

A birthday passed November 17th but the day went by hardly noticed. The 150th Anniversary of the first session of the Congress of the United States in Washington, D.C. occurred on that date but the House and Senate were not in session this year to observe it. The first session of the Sixth Congress sat in Philadelphia but the second session convened in Washington, D.C. November 17, 1800. The Congress has met in Washington since then.

\* \* \* \* \*

Do most Congressmen have previous training which comes in handy in the drafting of laws? The answer is yes for about 60 per cent of the members of the House and Senate are lawyers. In addition, almost all have had previous experience in civic service or politics. As a matter of fact, it's probably a good thing that all of the 531 federal lawmakers are not attorneys. It's been my experience that some of the men and women serving in the Congress who are farmers, teachers, doctors and businessmen often-times make the most constructive suggestions.

It might interest you to know that a good bit of the actual drafting of legislative proposals is done by a highly competent staff of professional lawyers attached to the Legislative Counsel's office. If a Congressman has an idea for a proposed law he usually does the preliminary work himself and then turns the material over to these experts for final inspection. The Legislative Counsel lawyers work with both Democrats and Republicans alike. They're only interested in getting a bill in proper shape before it's dropped in the legislative hopper. You never saw such sticklers for detail.

\* \* \* \* \*

Everytime a new Congress is selected by the voters throughout the United States the question is asked, Will members of the new Congress be younger? The statisticians after analyzing the records say the 82nd Congress will be about average in that respect. In the House and Senate the average age is 53 years with the Senators averaging about four to five years older than the members of the House.

\* \* \* \* \*





December 7, 1950

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW

BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

The atmosphere in the Nation's Capitol is tense although on the surface a stranger in town would not realize that to be the case. Members of the House when seeing each other for the first time after the two month recess shook hands and said the usual greetings. However, once that was done the discussions were always devoted to the critical international situation and the ability of our nation to defend itself against further Communist aggression. Among Congressmen there is considerable resentment over the underground sniping aimed at General MacArthur by some officials in the government. The MacArthur critics appear to be the same officials who appeased and promoted the Communist regime in China at the end of World War II. There is also a growing Congressional demand that the President should do some wholesale house-cleaning in the Department of State in order to root out those who were duped into believing that the Chinese Communists would ever be friendly to the United States. Our diplomatic blunders in China after World War II are the blackest mark in the history of American diplomacy.

\* \* \* \* \*

The weather threw a monkey wrench in the plans to get Congress reopened November 27th. The Fords made the trip back to Washington on time. Betty and Mike flew back in 3½ hours without difficulty, but I drove back alone and the trip through Ohio and Pennsylvania was really rough. Normally one can drive the 650 miles in 16 hours, but this time I was lucky to make it in 35 hours. Planned to arrive in Washington at least 24 hours before Congress reconvened but with all the trouble enroute was lucky to pull into the Capitol an hour before Speaker Rayburn rapped his gavel calling the House to order.

The worst snow storm in 37 years really fouled up the Ohio roads. Traffic was snarled beyond all comprehension. Everyone was pushing or pulling some other car out



of the ditch or a snow bank. A hundred times I wished that I had purchased those chains which I thought about buying in Grand Rapids before departure.

Almost stopped overnight in Youngstown conditions were so terrible. Everybody said the roads were even worse ahead. Perhaps foolishly I kept on and although it took three hours to go 12 miles after that stretch the drive was easier.

Pittsburgh at 3 A.M. after 37 inches of snow was a mess. The National Guard and the local police were patrolling the streets. Glad they were for an Army jeep with four wheel drive had to pull me out of two different snow piles. Was tempted to stop there but after a couple of cups of coffee decided to keep on. Finally after 28 hours of continuous driving arrived in Washington, a little weary but on time. The only bright part of the trip was the radio news as I drove of Michigan's football victory over Ohio State.

\* \* \* \* \*

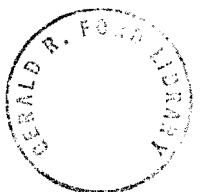
This "lame-duck" session of the Congress is not the first to reconvene after elections since the Constitution was changed by the 20th Amendment in 1933. The 80th Congress did convene for a few hours on December 31, 1948 for formal adjournment.

Neither the House or Senate in the short "lame-duck" session are meeting in regular quarters. The remodelling job on the Capitol isn't complete and won't be until January 1st. Haven't had time to take a look at what the workmen have been doing, but from all reports the chambers will be brightened considerably. In the meantime we meet in the Ways and Means Committee room.

\* \* \* \* \*

Visitors in Washington: Mr. and Mrs. J. Leslie, Mr. and Mrs. Art Lindberry, George Young, and John Cumiskey all of Grand Rapids.

\* \* \* \* \*



December 14, 1950

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW

By GERALD R. FORD, JR.

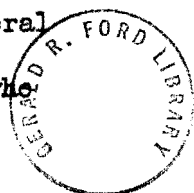
The Chairman of the House Committee on Public Works notified me the other day that our committee was to have witnesses on some emergency legislation involving 190 million dollars. The Chairman had received a personal request from the President for the immediate consideration of the bill. Mr. Truman and his advisors thought it was important in view of the danger of enemy attack to initiate a program for the dispersal of some essential government buildings in the District of Columbia. It seems our officials in the Executive Branch of the government are extremely concerned because of the heavy concentration of government records and personnel in a relatively small area in downtown Washington. Within a few miles of the White House approximately 170,000 federal employees do their daily chores from day to day.

With all this money involved I visualized a rather complicated and lengthy legislative proposal. Imagine my surprise when on my desk at the committee I found a  $2\frac{1}{2}$  page bill. That's really boiling it down; 190 million dollars in 38 lines of proposed legislation.

Extensive hearings were held; some behind closed doors, because of the secret information given the committee by our military leaders on potential enemy bombs and bombers. Because the initial hearings were lacking in certain details the Committee is holding off any action for a week until the defense departments and city planners get more data. The prize comment during the questioning of witnesses came from Representative Will Whittington who said, "You planners are fine in drawing up designs and schemes but you never tell the legislators how to raise the money."

\* \* \* \* \*

On December 7th of this year a rather interesting and extremely bitter debate flared up in the House of Representatives. It started out when four so-called "left-wing" Democrat congressmen arose on the floor of the House one after another and praised Secretary of State Acheson and his foreign policies. This pro-Acheson oratory by the extreme liberal wing of the Democrats brought some fire from a Republican congressman who



just returned from a four week survey first hand of the Korean War. The Republican, Representative Scott of Pennsylvania, said "Nine years have passed since Pearl Harbor and we have lost every diplomatic contest in our dealings with the nations of the world. . . . The record of the Secretary of State is clear. That is why he should resign forthwith." One of the most astute members of the House said to me as he listened to the four "left-wing" Democrats lavish praise on Mr. Acheson, "It's interesting to observe what group of Congressmen seem to come to Acheson's support. The liberals always defend the "striped pants boys" in the Department of State."

\* \* \* \* \*

The big news in the Nation's Capital was the visit of Prime Minister Attlee. After a number of meetings between Mr. Truman and Mr. Attlee a six page statement was issued setting forth the results of these high level conferences. Apparently the two leaders see "eye to eye" on the issue of no appeasement toward the ruthless aggression of the Chinese Reds. However, the British apparently are standing firm in their belief that the Chinese Communists should be recognized as the official government of China and be given the Chinese seat in the United Nations. One wonders how Prime Minister Attlee can reconcile this attitude with the fact that the Chinese Communists are at this very moment engaged in open warfare with U.N. forces including some British soldiers and sailors in defiance of all the peace-seeking nations of the world. I should think, at the very least, the Chinese Reds should "toe the mark" before expecting any recognition or consideration from the other world powers.

Although the President and Mr. Attlee concluded that Uncle Sam and John Bull had nearly similar views on the basic problems facing both nations, there may well be some objections in the next Congress to a continuation of heavy U.S. financial aid to Britain and other European nations. There is an undercurrent of feeling among a good many Congressmen that Europe should now be able to stand on its own feet economically. This attitude is quite prevalent in the day to day cloakroom conversations now that this country needs more and more dollars for guns, tanks, ships and aircraft for our own national defense.

\* \* \* \* \*

Guess President Truman can't resist the occasional temptation to write rather silly letters on White House stationery. Several months ago the President wrote disparaging remarks about the Marine Corps at a time when the Marines were battling for our national security. Now Mr. Truman threatens to beat up a music critic who said his daughter's voice was a little flat. Hope the President doesn't spend his time in the future "popping off" on such personal matters. Seems to me there are some rather important government decisions he might concentrate on instead.

\* \* \* \* \*

VISITORS: Mrs. James C. Parker, Dr. John A. Van Bruggen, Reverend Edward Heerema, Miss Kathryn Adams, Professor Henry J. Ryskamp, Father Joseph Walen, Dr. Leon DeVel, City Commissioner Bernard Barto, Millard Pritchard, A. Drasin and his son George, and S.C.T.Lloyd.

\* \* \* \* \*

December 21, 1950

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW  
BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

The past few weeks have been jammed with lots of legislation, far more than was anticipated for the "lame duck" session. The critical international situation and the serious condition of the domestic economy kept the wheels of Congress moving at a rather rapid rate. Nevertheless the members of our Committee on Public Works had a short but rather nice ceremony honoring Representative George Dondero of Royal Oak, Michigan.

During the 83th Congress George was Chairman of the Committee on Public Works. It is traditional that a portrait of all past chairmen be appropriately placed in the committee room. The present chairman of the committee during the 81st Congress is, of course, a Democrat, Will Whittington of Mississippi; and no finer man and public servant ever lived. Will Whittington is voluntarily retiring from the Congress at the end of this term after 24 years in the House, and he took this occasion in honor of his long standing friend George Dondero to make a few final remarks as his own career draws to its close. I shall never forget this fine gentleman of some 75 years saying, "His generation had unlocked many of the secrets of the globe except the lock of peace." His final plea to us of younger years was that our struggle be continued unabated for a "larger life and a better freedom." Will Whittington in urging a constructive approach at all times wisely stated, "It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness."

\* \* \* \* \*

Local and statewide civilian defense programs are being formulated throughout the land but in addition plans are being readied for their integration with the over-all participation of the federal government. Congress is now studying a three billion dollar comprehensive civilian defense plan that would provide for the proper training and adequate supplying of civilian volunteers. Under this vast program



emergency equipment, particularly medical supplies, would be stock-piled in local communities. Shelters would be constructed along with the necessary warning systems. The present federal legislation contemplates that Washington pay 54 per cent of the cost of the integrated program. The plans envisage each local community running its own organization but the coordination between areas would be handled by federal officials. This legislation, if not approved in this session by December 31st, should have top priority in the opening sessions of the 82nd Congress. There has been too much delay already.

\* \* \* \* \*

The 81st Congress on December 5th passed and sent to the President its 2000th proposed law. Number 2000 was the first on which Congressional action was completed at the lame duck" session. It was legislation involving the admiralty laws and courts.

\* \* \* \* \*

It looks like statehood for Alaska and Hawaii is unfortunately doomed during this Congress. The Democratic Majority leader, Senator Scott Lucas, by bowing to pressure from members of his party in the Senate cut off any hope that Hawaii and Alaska would soon join the other forty-eight states in the Union. The shortsighted selfishness of some states and their members in Congress will by this action cast a shadow over the claim of the United States that our Nation believes in equality for all territories and people throughout the world. Soviet Russia undoubtedly will try to use as malicious propoganda this latest turn down of statehood for the two territories.

\* \* \* \* \*

Santa Claus will find our family of three in Washington instead of Grand Rapids. Betty, Mike and I would all greatly prefer the Holidays in Michigan with relatives and friends, but if that's all we have to kick about, our troubles are mighty insignificant. In signing off this week, all the Fords wish everyone at home a Very Merry Christmas.

\* \* \* \* \*

VISITORS: Mr. and Mrs. James S. Banta, Jerry and Richard Falicki, of Grand Rapids, and John E. Jacobsen, formerly of Grand Rapids.



December 28, 1950

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW  
BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

Several weeks ago a number of citizens in Kent and Ottawa Counties urged that December 15th be set aside by the President as a Nationwide Day of Prayer for Divine Guidance. On December 11th I wrote the President strongly endorsing this fine suggestion. I didn't receive a reply like some of recent date from the White House. The following letter did, however, come from the office of Mr. Truman -

"My dear Mr. Ford: Please accept the President's thanks for your letter of December eleventh, with the enclosed tear sheet. He asks me to tell you that he noted the editorial carefully.

As you of course know, in many public addresses as well as in proclamations, including the recent Thanksgiving Day Proclamation, the President has urged all to unite in prayer for the peace of the world. While it wasn't possible to do as you ask, he does want you to know that he is giving consideration to the many appeals which are coming to him to again call the nation to prayer.

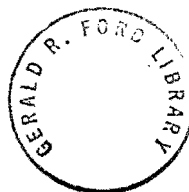
Very sincerely yours,  
(signed) MATTHEW J. CONNELLY  
Secretary to the President."

On December 20th the House of Representatives by a unanimous vote approved a resolution designating Sunday, December 24th as a Day of Prayer. The Senate will undoubtedly concur. On the Sunday before Christmas it is most appropriate that our citizens seek guidance from the Almighty. In times like these may we realize that we must "Look up" - for only from God can we get the courage to carry us through this crisis.

\* \* \* \* \*

A number of businessmen, mostly those operating small companies in our Congressional District, have written my office in Washington asking information about defense contracts. Many businessmen wonder whether they should hire "five-percents" in Washington. The answer is definitely NO. War contracts are to be awarded on a competitive basis. Businessmen should forget about men like General Vaughan and his "deep freeze" gifts. The Navy, Army and Air Force are trying to handle the big job of rearmament without the interference of "five percenters" so don't encourage such bad practices by hiring one yourself.

\* \* \* \* \*





The Congress of the United States will be in session New Years' Day. Has to be to get some emergency legislation on the statute books. Undoubtedly many folks at home are likewise putting in a good many extra hours in this period of emergency. All of us should come to the realization that life as usual is gone for the present and probably for several years. These are tough times. This country must prepare to measure up to the rigors of mobilization, price and wage controls, scarcities, plus sacrifices on the home front as well as those of our men in the battlefronts.

\* \* \* \* \*

Some of the oldtimers in the House had told me about such occasions, but somehow I never quite believed them. Well, after 550 or thereabouts roll calls, I finally saw it happen. Parliamentary rules, procedures, etc. are set up to handle the ordinary situation but when the unusual occurs, "time, patience and compromise" overcomes any faults in the rules of human nature.

Here's what happened. For the last couple of months a rather controversial bill has not gotten the consideration some proponents thought it deserved. Finally pressure was brought on the Democratic Party leadership to force action. Another group of Democrats violently opposed the same bill. Most Republicans favored it.

Late the Wednesday before Christmas on less than 24 hours notice the bill got the "green light" from Speaker Rayburn. The next day the opponents were ready. When the House convened on Thursday, December 21st, a point of order was made that a quorum wasn't present.

Normally it takes 20 minutes to call the roll of the 435 members of the House. This time it consumed two and three-quarters hours. Only 190 members were available at the regular call and 216 make a quorum. The Democratic leaders really scurried around trying to find enough absent members to make a quorum. In the meantime we who were on tab and not involved in the feud sat and waited. The necessary number of members finally appeared out of nowhere (??) when the warring factions in the Democratic Party signed a truce. Fine shenanigans during this critical period in our nation's history.

\* \* \* \* \*

VISITORS: Ben H. Mellema, Mr. and Mrs. Edmund Pace, Jr., William Gedris and Joe Bork, all of Grand Rapids, and Mrs. Effie L. Curran and Stafford R. Grady, both formerly of Grand Rapids, and William Swart, Sr. of Spring Lake.

\* \* \* \* \*

