

For Release January 18, 1951

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW
BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

The President in his traditional State of the Union message to a joint session of the House and Senate concentrated on foreign policy and national defense matters. In this message Mr. Truman was sketchy in reference to domestic problems. It would appear that during the duration of the emergency the Chief Executive will not be pushing socialized medicine, the Brannan Plan, etc.

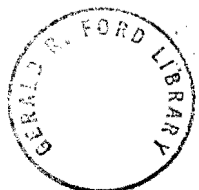
The President advocated debate in the Congress on foreign policy issues and wisely stated that unity which we all want did not necessarily mean unanimity. It would be un-American to shut out and ignore respected leaders like Hoover, Taft, Kennedy and Dulles. By a thorough airing of all views and a comprehensive re-analysis of past policies, particularly Secretary Acheson's China flopperoo, perhaps Uncle Sam can steer a straight and true course in the perilous months ahead.

The running debate on the international situation isn't limited to radio addresses or speeches on the floor of the House and Senate. Resounding through all Congressional deliberations, formal or informal, is this prime question--What should be our foreign policy? In every Cloak Room conference, caucus or committee meeting, Members of the House state their opinions. One of my colleagues summarized the two extreme views by saying, "One side screams, 'Isolationism--see what it will do to us!' The other side retorts, 'Internationalism--see what it has done to us!'" In my opinion, America and its citizens will find the answer but in the meantime let's keep our heads and seek to resolve our differences in honorable and effective compromise.

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Since January 3rd when the 82nd Congress convened the necessary but time-consuming formalities of reorganization of the House and Senate have been in progress. Seventy-one new Representatives and nine new Senators had to move into their offices. That's a snail pace process in itself for many of the "lame-ducks" of the 81st Congress were squatters till the last minute.

When a number of new lawmakers are elected the two House Office Buildings get a thorough and hectic housecleaning. Scores of offices are moved, lock, stock and barrel, for some of the oldtimers because of seniority move to better quarters. Maintenance crews work around the clock as they scurry about with their paint brushes and hammers from office to office. Newcomers wonder



where they go for what, just as I did two years ago. Our office wasn't moved, thank goodness, so we haven't been upset like some who are handling their Congressional duties in the corridors or "on the run!" In a week or so the reorganization mess will be straightened out for another two years at least.

One of my new Congressional neighbors on the same corridor is the famous Marine, General James Devereux. Glad to say he is a Republican. As you recall, General Devereux was commanding officer at Wake Island when the Japanese struck at Pearl Harbor. Although overwhelmingly outnumbered, with a few Marines and a handful of American civilians General Devereux held out for 19 days by sheer courage. Heavy losses were inflicted on the enemy and surrender came only when ammunition ran out. He was a prisoner of war with his men for many months.

At first sight you wouldn't visualize him as the tough Marine officer who led this heroic fight to save Wake Island but in talking with him you readily appreciate his rugged determination, his fine character and excellent qualities of leadership. Don't know the General well enough as yet to ask him what he thought of President Truman's infamous letter concerning the Marines. When we become better acquainted, I'll put the question and report his reply. Might have to delete a word or two if his reaction compares to that of other Marines.

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What does the scorecard show on the President's specific proposals during the second session of the 81st Congress? All told, Mr. Truman requested favorable action on 36 legislative measures not including substantial appropriation demands. In 1950 during the second session the 81st Congress enacted 38 of the 86, took partial action on 30, rejected 10 and ignored eight. That's the President's batting average in his dealings with the last Congress.

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We were pleased to have quite a few people drop in or call this past week. They included Jay Petter and Jim Van Zylén of Holland, Lt. and Mrs. Herbert E. Boelens of Grand Haven, General Kitson of Rockford, and Bob Carrier and E. M. Deckman of Grand Rapids.

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW
BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

Last week the House of Representatives saw a raw example of attempted "face saving" by the Executive branch of the government. The facts were so clear that few citizens or members of Congress were hoodwinked. The case is a gross example of the White House overriding the Congress at the expense of the taxpayers.

Here's the story. Right after World War II the 80th Congress on recommendation by the Chiefs of Staff appropriated 189 million for a super aircraft carrier. Experiences in the last war indicated such a ship was essential for our national defense. In April, 1949, Secretary of Defense Johnson with the President's approval cancelled the construction on this ship after 20 million had been spent on material and labor.

The fallacy of this cancellation was finally brought to light when this Congress was asked to approve another supercarrier practically identical with the first. Here are some comparisons that are interesting and shocking. The cancelled ship would have been 1090 feet long and 135 feet wide at a cost of 189 million. If built on schedule it would have been practically at sea and defending our nation by now. The new ship is alleged to be smaller in size but is to cost more, 235 million. The net result--a loss of 55 million dollars plus 2½ years in precious time.

What's the moral to the story? Our founding fathers in drafting the Constitution set up a government based on the theory that the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the federal government should be of equal strength, thereby checking and balancing unwise and illegal decisions. In recent years the Executive branch has usurped too much authority and upset the fine balance between the three branches.

In this specific case the White House wiped out or cancelled action taken by the legislative branch of the federal government. Another example is the President's impounding of funds in the last couple of years that Congress had appropriated for a 70-group air force. Such usurpation of authority is bad enough on domestic matters but when our national defense is jeopardized the problem is even more serious.



What must be done? Our citizens and members of the House and Senate should demand that there be no further recision of Congressional action by the Chief Executive and his advisors. The President must realize that the collective judgment of Congress is at least equal to and sometimes far better than his own.

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Congress in recent weeks has been deluged with correspondence and personal calls from individuals and associations who ardently plead that the manufacture of a particular product or a group of related products is absolutely essential during a war emergency. Guess there is no harm in this lobbying practice for in reality a Congressman doesn't have much if anything to say about priorities. The latest and probably most unusual salvo came in the mail from the Home Laundry Manufacturers Association. The brochure, entitled "Scrubboards for American Women," is guaranteed to convince the most hardshelled bureaucrat that a lack of new household scrubboards would eventually defeat Uncle Sam in his struggle with Joe Stalin. No doubt we'll build some labor-saving appliances for the household in the next year or two, but the emphasis, to save our own skins, must be on guns, tanks, and airplanes.

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VISITORS: We're always pleased when our friends from home drop in to see us, or even just take the time to call us on the phone, and quite a few did this past week. William Hertel, Jr. and Edsko Hekman of Grand Rapids were here. Mr. and Mrs. Dan Darling of Grand Rapids were also in town. Louis H. Breitels, Claude Ver Duin and M. H. Sherwood of Grand Haven stopped by on official business. Joseph L. Hans Knecht, Jr. of Grand Rapids, who is attending Catholic University in D.C., came in.

For Release February 1, 1951

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW
BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

My new committee assignment to the Committee on Appropriations is already giving me some insight into the problems caused by the President's stupendous budget requests. Mr. Truman has asked the 82nd Congress to authorize the expenditure of 98 billion dollars. According to the White House, federal income for the next 12 months is estimated at 55 billion, leaving a sizeable deficit which the President wants covered by new taxes, not by further economies.

Isn't there another approach to Uncle Sam's dire financial problems? There certainly is. Many items in the outrageous budget submitted by the President can and must be cut or eliminated. The national defense expenditures are essential for the nation's security, but in this time of emergency we can do without socialized medicine, the Brannan Plan, new state aid programs and non-military public works.

How is the President's budget prepared? Each government agency and department prepares yearly estimates of the money supposedly needed. The Bureau of the Budget sifts these estimates and produces a budget which goes to the President for final approval. Congress then gets the bad news in the "budget message." The details are submitted in a sizeable volume with page after page of complicated figures, some 1492 pages altogether. Reminded one of my colleagues of a Sears-Roebuck mail order catalogue. The only difference--not much of a bargain for the public.

The Committee on Appropriations in the House carries the ball at first for under the Constitution all bills for expenditures must originate in the lower chamber. I have hopes that our committee composed of 30 Democrats and 20 Republicans can wield a sharp knife on non-essential items.

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Apropos of fiscal matters--Postmaster General Jesse M. Donaldson has approved a change in the name of Hot Springs, New Mexico, to Truth or Consequences. We are waiting for the next one. We suspect it will be Break the Bank, D.C.

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For the last few months the President has been living in Blair House while the White House has been undergoing long delayed repairs. The outside walls were left intact but the insides were removed piece by piece. Every nail, board, brick or what-have-you was carefully preserved. This material in limited quantities is now on sale at bargain prices. If you want a relic from the White House, write Captain James L. Little, Commission on Renovation of the Executive Mansion, Fort Myer, Virginia. Better act quickly. Here are some sample prices: Enough old pine to make a gavel or a cane, \$2.00; two pieces of stone for bookends, \$2.00; one brick, as nearly whole as practicable, \$1.00; small piece of old stone and old square nail 2½", suitable for paper-weight, 50¢; piece of hand split lath about 12" long, 25¢.

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Now that defense money is flowing again, does Congress plan to regulate the activities of the "five per centers"? A bill to provide for renegotiation of defense contracts to eliminate excessive profits has been approved by a committee and sent to the House. A similar law was in effect during World War II but did not have a provision covering contract brokers--the "five per centers." They are included in the legislation now under consideration.

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VISITORS: We really had folks from home this week. Mrs. Louise Hunsinger, Minor Dutcher, Mr. and Mrs. Silas F. Albert and Mr. and Mrs. Walter Perschbacher were all here from Grand Rapids attending the meetings of the National Association of Real Estate Boards; Luther Bloomberg, an old school friend of mine, formerly of Grand Rapids, came in to see me from Hammond, Indiana; Mr. and Mrs. James T. Sheridan of Grand Rapids moved down here this week while Jim attends school; and Violet Panyrek of Grand Rapids has come to Washington to work. R. J. Vander Veen of Grand Haven was also down here on business.

For Release February 8, 1951

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW
BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

General Eisenhower in a joint closed session with the Senate and House presented his recommendations to the Congress on the European situation. "Ike" has made a similar report to the President and the American people. I can't relate in detail what the General told the 531 members of the Congress but here are some personal observations.

I had never seen General Eisenhower in person before. Frankly, he impressed me as a very sincere, straightforward citizen who has assumed the terrific burden of trying to coordinate the joint military efforts of the U.S. and our European allies. Ike is convinced that the U.S. for its own protection cannot stand alone, that we cannot afford to let the 200 million people of Europe and the industrial productivity of England, France, the Netherlands, etc., be dominated by Red Russia.

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At the same time, and I think this is important and significant, General Eisenhower said the major responsibility against Russia in Europe must come from the Europeans themselves. Uncle Sam's best contribution would be in supplying guns and tanks. By providing this military equipment and a limited number of troops the threat of a Communist attack on Europe and America would be stalled or stopped.

General Ike didn't give too many details on his trip to the 13 nations. It was interesting, however, to get certain impressions from the way he talked about each of the countries. Norway apparently impressed him greatly by its determination to fight Soviet aggression at all cost. "Ike" spoke glowingly of the recent promises and the proposed new rearmament program of the Netherlands. The French assurance of 25 divisions and a "no deferment," longer service policy in the drafting of her youth brought compliments in the Eisenhower report.

Under very adverse conditions, Ike thought Italy planned to do her full share. He praised the military effort of little Denmark which sits right at Russia's doorstep. Luxembourg, small as it is, is ready to provide men if military equipment is available. To my recollection the General said nothing about the military effort of Great Britain. Does that mean he was dissatisfied with England's response? If "Ike" isn't pleased with the British Labor Government, the Congress certainly won't be. If England is "to stand aloof, she'll find herself standing alone," and I don't think Britain will enjoy the bad position of facing the Kremlin and Stalin by herself.

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On January 31st Speaker Sam Rayburn exceeded the tenure of office record as Speaker of the House. Henry Clay, a great statesman in his day, previously had held the office longer than any other person. Interesting ceremonies marked the occasion. The Democrats even let a Republican, former Speaker Joe Martin, preside while eulogies flowed forth on behalf of Sam. Everyone likes him and respects his fairness and integrity even though there may be differences of opinion on political issues. Sam, who hails from Texas, came to the House in 1913 at the age of 32 years. By hard and intelligent work he has become one of the most powerful influences in American political life. Even though Sam is now 69 years old and a bachelor, one of his colleagues humorously pointed out that there was still hope for marital success, after all Vice President Barkley took the step when over 70.

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As everyone knows, the United Nations finally took the long overdue action to condemn Red China as an aggressor in Korea. Several weeks beforehand the House and Senate approved unanimous resolutions stating that the Chinese Communist forces were aggressors. What is the effect of such a resolution by the House of Representatives? The House resolution simply expresses the "sentiment" or consensus of the members and was principally a moral force which our U.N. delegates could use in negotiations with other members of the U.N. The resolution was not a law and didn't require the President's O.K. The Congressional resolutions, being unanimous, undoubtedly helped in the U.N. branding of Red China as an outright aggressor.

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VISITORS: We really had callers from home this week. Here's the list: Arnold Figorsh's son Gerry was here for a visit from Norfolk where he is stationed; Jack Appel and Dr. W. D. Dawson from the Michigan Veterans' Facility were here; Robert K. Stolz, Philip W. Buchen, Ford Stephens, Frederick C. Stiles, Kenneth Ver Burg and Alvin Bytwork, all of Grand Rapids, were all down here on business.

For Release February 15, 1951

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW
BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

For the last several years President Truman has sponsored compulsory health insurance, better known as socialized medicine. Most Americans expected that the President would sidetrack this program during the present international crisis so that all citizens could concentrate on national defense. Unfortunately Mr. Truman included funds for socialized medicine in his 98-billion-dollar budget. Congress will probably delete this item. I hope so.

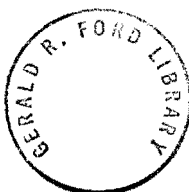
However, I've noticed by reading home town newspapers that the best possible attack on the local level is being made on socialized medicine by the generous contributions of our citizens to the Polio drive. By wholeheartedly supporting the Polio, Cancer, Heart and other fund drives with nickels, dimes and dollars these devastating diseases can be licked and in the interim those affected can have adequate care and treatment. If you want to keep the federal government from meddling any further in your personal health problems, vigorously support these very worthwhile drives for Infantile Paralysis, T.B., Cancer, etc.

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After some inexcusable delays the Committee on Appropriations finally got "squared-away" and is now ready to start the important job of pruning the President's budget. The committee composed of 50 members, 30 Democrats and 20 Republicans, is subdivided in 11 subcommittees. My assignment is the subcommittee on Deficiencies and Army Civil Functions. Former Congressman Albert Engel of Lake City and Muskegon served on this committee part of the time and did a wonderful job for economy in government. I'll do my best to follow in his footsteps.

This subcommittee has jurisdiction over all River and Harbor and Flood Control projects including the Panama Canal, the Soo Locks, hydroelectric power dams in the Far Northwest, and Alaskan and Hawaiian Army installations. There are three Democrats and two Republicans, including myself, on the committee. I suspect there will be some knock-down battles between the minority and the majority on the President's demands for certain costly projects and programs.

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Within 24 hours after my subcommittee appointment I had a telephone call from a Washington, D.C. citizen who wants just a "little federal money" for a pet project for the District of Columbia. According to the lobbyist the project will cost only 50 thousand and "it's so badly needed." I intend to say NO far more often than YES for Uncle Sam can't stay solvent if everyone gets his fingers in the federal treasury.

* * *

Russia and her satellite nations behind the iron curtain have flooded American markets as the result of certain trade concessions granted by the Department of State. For example, the fur trappers in Michigan have been injured by this situation.

Here's what caused the difficulty. The State Department by a trade agreement with one nation would lower the tariff on a certain product or commodity. Under this trade agreement Russia and her satellites would get the same benefits even though the State Department had negotiated no comparable concession from the Soviets. In other words, Russian furs have come to the U.S. at a reduced tariff rate while the U.S. got nothing in return.

Republican Congressman Byrnes of Wisconsin sponsored an amendment to the recently approved Reciprocal Trade bill which cuts off such benefits to Communist Countries. The Byrnes amendment, which I supported, will exclude Soviet imports from any tariff cuts or concessions made by the Department of State.

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VISITORS: Not so many this week. Stephen F. Dunn and Robert K. Stolz, both of Grand Rapids, were down here on business. William Swart, Sr., from Spring Lake stopped in for a visit. And I had a nice conference with President John Hannah from Michigan State on several matters of vital importance. Martin E. Kornbluth, representing a Grand Rapids company employing several thousand employees, has been in Washington on business with which our office could assist him.

For release February 22, 1951

YOUR WASHINGTON REVEIW
BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

President Truman in his rather typical way in the past week has thrown two "dares" at the 82nd Congress. First he challenged the House and Senate to cut his 98 billion dollar budget. Even some in his own political party have accepted this one. Practically all of the Republicans are anxious to see the President "eat a little crow" on the budget "dare."

The second challenge wasn't quite so direct but it's there nevertheless. Most everyone has read of the Senate report concerning the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. The unanimous R.F.C. report stated that there is gross evidence of White House "influence and favoritism" in connection with million dollar government loans. Three of the five R.F.C. board members were severely criticized for being unduly influenced by persons close to Mr. Truman in granting loans. In other words, White House politicians of the same ilk as General Vaughan are using behind-the-scenes influence contrary to the best interests of the American taxpayers.

The President is apparently behind these individuals. He called the Senate report "assinine" and now has renominated the same three R.F.C. directors, presumably because they can be counted on to grant special consideration to his White House friends. The Senate, inasmuch as it has the authority to turn down these appointees, should accept the Truman "dare" and reject them forthwith. These nominations, in light of the Senate report, are a new low in political morality.

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The recent perjury conviction of William Remington re-emphasizes the need for an overhauling of Uncle Sam's Loyalty Review program. Remington claimed he never was a Communist. An American jury decided that he had been or still was a Red. Until recently William Remington was earning 10 thousand dollars a year working for the Department of Commerce. His job--in charge of export licenses for American goods to be shipped to Russia and other Iron Curtain countries. Can anyone understand how or why a Communist could be put in such a position of responsibility? The Kremlin itself couldn't have picked a better spot for a top espionage agent.



This deplorable situation emphasizes the need for plenty of changes in our policy toward federal employees who are Reds or Soviet sympathizers. President Truman by lambasting Congressional investigations a "red herring" ignores the facts of life. The President's Loyalty Review Board is a farce for it cleared Remington. Senator Nixon in his Grand Rapids Lincoln Day speech proposed an overhauling in the President's policy and I wholeheartedly concur. Hereafter any doubts as to whether or not a federal employee is loyal or a good security risk should be resolved in favor of the government rather than in favor of the individual. It is hoped that the President will cooperate with Congress instead of fighting the House and Senate in an honest to goodness clean-up of subversives in top jobs in the federal government.

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VISITORS: Lots of friends from home are in Washington this week. Mr. and Mrs. Philip W. Buchen of Grand Rapids, enroute to Jamaica; Mr. and Mrs. Robert K. Stolz and Samuel H. Himelstein and Frank J. Kozak, all of Grand Rapids; and some former Grand Rapids folks, Mrs. William O. Lynch now of Custer, Michigan, and Mr. and Mrs. Gordon K. Stratton now of Cheboygan.

For Release March 1, 1951

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW
BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

There is so much talk by President Truman these days in terms of billions of dollars (16 billion in new taxes--98 billion budget), I was interested in some comparisons which vividly brought out what a "billion bucks" means and represents. Just to illustrate that a billion is a "whale of a lot of money" read the following:

For example: A billion dollars in one-dollar silver coins would make a tower ten feet square and four times the height of the Washington Monument (555 ft.).

It would take a diligent worker three weeks to count \$1 billion in \$1,000 bills--if there were that many available. Only 589,000 of them are now in circulation.

It would pay the nation's meat bill for a month, its whole grocery bill for two weeks.

A billion dollars would pay the wages of every working man and woman in the United States for two and a half days.

* * *

The House Committee on Un-American Activities is set to launch new investigations. The House as a whole recently approved the necessary funds for new probes. I voted to continue the Committee principally because it has been the best way to expose high-ranking Communists and "commie sympathizers" on the federal payroll. If the Un-American Activities Committee hadn't done a real job, Alger Hiss and William Remington might still be working for Uncle Sam. The Committee definitely called President Truman's "red herring" bluff in this regard.

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About this time every year hundreds of Red Cross workers diligently make the rounds to raise funds for the continuation of all the fine and helpful services rendered by that organization. In ordinary times we need the Red Cross. Wartime multiplies its essentiality. In any disaster or emergency the Red Cross is there. Veterans get all kinds of help. Without the Red Cross our essential plasma and blood supplies would be critical. The G.I.'s and their families are helped and counseled. I'm told the Red Cross is seeking a slight increase in funds. Let's put the 1951 drive over the top. It's a mighty deserving cause.

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Some friends from home were in Washington last week and I showed them around the Capitol. During the trip we talked about some Washington traditions. Probably the No. 1 House tradition involves the mace--a big silver shaft topped by a globe supporting an eagle with outspread wings. It's the symbol of federal authority and it sits on a green marble pedestal at the front of the House when it is in session. Whenever the sergeant at arms has to stop a brawl on the floor, he takes down the mace and holds it up to the brawlers. It's supposed to overawe them and quiet them down.

Take the time during the fifty-fifth Congress when Representative Charles L. Bartlett of Georgia got sore at Representative Charles N. Brumm of Pennsylvania and heaved a heavy volume at him. History doesn't say whether he conked him. But it does say that the sergeant at arms bustled up with his mace and "further trouble was averted." The same formula worked when the violent Mr. Bartlett charged Representative George N. Southwick of New York, waving a knife.

Cowing a Congressman with a medieval mace may seem silly. But it's traditional. So far in my experiences the mace hasn't been needed even though the debates got hot at times.

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VISITORS: Not many this week. Dr. and Mrs. Norman S. Vann, formerly of Grand Rapids, now of Hampton, Virginia, were here for a few days. Tom Walsh was also here from Grand Rapids testifying for more and better air transportation for Western Michigan.

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For release March 8, 1951

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW
BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

Several weeks ago the House of Representatives approved amendments to the Reciprocal Trade legislation. The bill was tightened up by the House action without defeating the over-all benefits from expanded foreign trade. One important amendment would prevent Russia and her satellite nations from deriving certain preferences. After the House approved the several amendments to the law it sent the measure to the Senate for hearings and action. Secretary of State Acheson in testifying before the Senate Committee strongly opposed the House amendment to deny tariff concessions to Communist countries. The Secretary likewise disapproved of the "escape clause" proposal, the "peril point" clause and the provision to cancel tariff concessions on farm imports whose prices, with the import duty, are below domestic support prices.

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In my Washington office we do our best to keep up to date on correspondence with folks from home. At times my staff and I get a little behind but that can't be avoided with the heavy volume of letters. For example, in January of 1951 we received and replied to over 1500 letters. All get my personal attention. There are 27 working days in January, excluding Sundays, so your Congressional office handled approximately 60 letters per day. This, in addition to the usual committee work, House sessions, etc., keeps us plenty busy, so if there is some delay in our replies, hope you will understand.

* * *

Price Control Chief DiSalle is having his problems controlling inflation and the cost of living, but some of his difficulties may be self-inflicted. For example, Price Administrator DiSalle not too long ago sent out 1253 telegrams to Mayors of various communities at a total cost of approximately 17 thousand bucks! The telegram urged each mayor to set up a "volunteer emergency stabilization cooperation committee." The Office of Price Stabilization could have sent the same message by regular mail with a 3¢ stamp. The 1253 letters via the Post Office Department would have cost \$37.59, instead of \$17,000.00 for the telegrams.

* * *

March 8, 1951

Nevada, the 36th state to enter the Union, last week became the 36th state to approve the 22nd amendment to the Constitution of the United States, thus making it the law of the land that no President should serve more than two terms. President Truman is excepted from this restriction but all Presidents after him are banned from more than eight years occupancy of the White House. Former Representative Earl Michener of Adrian, Michigan, introduced this constitutional amendment in the 80th Congress.

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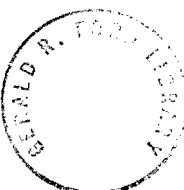
Tax free checks worth \$21,183.50 are being held by the War Claims Commission because it is unable to locate 40 ex-prisoners of war and civilian internees who received the awards under the War Claims Act of 1948.

Under this act, former World War II prisoners of war are paid \$1,00 for each day they were held by the enemy and were not adequately fed. Survivors of P.O.W.'s are also paid.

It is estimated that there are 30,000 former P.O.W.'s, internees or their survivors who haven't filed claims to date. If you think you qualify, let me know and my office will try to help.

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VISITORS: Baltzer and Roger Bolling were here on business from Grand Haven; Mr. and Mrs. Harold V. Hartger of Grand Rapids stopped for a couple of days on a vacation trip; Col. Walter J. Baker, Commandant of the Michigan Veterans Facility in Grand Rapids stopped in with Mrs. Baker and his daughter Kay and we had a nice chat; John Vogel of Grand Rapids, Jay H. Petter of Holland, and Ben McGinn, formerly of Grand Rapids were all here this week.



For Release March 15, 1951

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW
BY GERALD R. FORD, Jr.

The legislative mill has been grinding slowly with most of the Congressional work to date confined to committee hearings. In all likelihood, however, the legislative tempo in the chambers of the House and Senate will increase rapidly in the next couple of weeks.

Here are some statistics worth noting: In the first two months approximately 4600 bills, resolutions, etc., were dropped in the "hopper" by members of the 82nd Congress. Two have become law.

During January and February the House of Representatives was in session 30 legislative days with seven roll call votes and four quorum calls. The 81st Congress during the comparable period had been in session 27 legislative days and had enacted 12 laws with a total of 21 roll calls.

The lack of quick and final action on many issues in this Congress has resulted from a new policy of more careful scrutiny of White House proposals by the Congressional committees. Instead of rubberstamping legislation proposed by the Executive departments, the House and Senate are analyzing and evaluating all matters in greater detail. When you consider the importance of some of the legislation before the Congress everyone should approve this policy. For example, it certainly would be unwise for Congress to okay all of the manpower requests of the militarists in the Pentagon without a thorough investigation of the proposals to induct and train the youth of the nation.

The painstaking deliberations by the Congressional committees on the various issues are not a "sitdown" but rather evidence that Congress in the future will have more to say about policy matters affecting the nation's welfare.

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Approximately fifty per cent of my mail from home demands that the President and Congress slash federal spending. There will be some bitter battles between the White House and the Congress on this score. The President says his 98 billion dollar budget can't be reduced and he "dares" Congress to make any cuts. I would like your reaction to this vital problem.



Do you favor cutting down federal spending? If so, on which of the following items:

	YES	NO
a) National Defense?	—	—
b) Veterans' Benefits?	—	—
c) Farm subsidies?	—	—
d) Public Power Projects?	—	—
e) Harbor Improvements?	—	—
f) Flood Control Projects?	—	—
g) Foreign Aid Programs?	—	—
h) Public Health and Welfare Programs?	—	—
i) Federal Aid to Highways?	—	—
j) General Expenses of Government?	—	—

Clip out and mail the above to Representative Jerry Ford, 321 House Office Building, Washington 25, D. C.

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The word in Washington is that General MacArthur has recently informed top policy makers in the nation's Capital that unless he gets permission to bomb communication and industrial targets in Chinese Communist Manchuria and authority to use Chiang Kai-Shek's forces for raids on South China, the Korean campaign will be a seesaw and very costly battle. The Department of State hesitates to give its approval. In the meantime, our G.I.'s must fight the communist forces with one hand tied behind their backs. It isn't fair and right, militarily or morally, to have our G.I.'s in Korea without the use of every advantage. General MacArthur should be given the green light immediately despite State Department objections.

* * *

Have you ever heard about the bean soup served in the House and Senate restaurants? Here's an interesting tale.

One day in 1907 United States Senator Knute Nelson, a Minnesotan with firm convictions, strode into the Senate restaurant, sat down, smoothed out his newspaper and ordered his customary lunch, bean soup. The waiter said he was sorry, there wasn't any today. Whereupon, legend has it, the Senator let out an angry bellow. As chairman of the Senate rules committee, he ordered that from then on bean soup appear on the Senate menu daily.

The fame of the thick, fragrant brew quickly spread across the land. Today up to 35 gallons are consumed daily when the Senate is meeting. Appeals for the recipe come in from all over the country to Head waiter Paul Johnson. He's had it printed and will give it to you free.

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VISITORS: Mr. and Mrs. H. J. Koops, Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Versluis and Mr. and Mrs. Harold Albert, all of Grand Rapids, the Alberts on their way home from Florida with beautiful tans.

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW
BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

Within the past several weeks it has been my privilege to attend meetings where two great Americans were honored guests. Former President Hoover was the dinner speaker at a small gathering and he certainly amazed everyone with his vigor and clear analysis of our tremendous problems. He seems in mighty good health for a man of his age. I never realized before his fine sense of humor. It's a quiet humor with plenty of punch. Former President Hoover will undoubtedly go down in history as a truly great American.

One of the foremost proponents of soil conservation is the widely-read author, Louis Bromfield. A number of farmers from Kent and Ottawa counties have visited his famous Malabar Farm where conservation is practiced as well as preached. Mr. Bromfield was in Washington as the guest of his own Ohio Congressman. Betty and I were at a reception in his honor. He's a big homespun man with a friendly way about him. Sometime when the Fords are driving back from Washington to Michigan we intend to stop at Malabar Farm to see how it has been rehabilitated by good soil conservation practices.

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As the result of the widespread disclosures that the R.F.C. loans are affected by "favoritism and influence" there will be changes made in the Reconstruction Finance Corporation--in fact, it might be abolished by Congress. The Hoover Commission Task Force that investigated R.F.C. recommended that it be laid to rest. It did, however, recommend that R.F.C. be transferred to the Treasury Department and that certain safeguards be enacted by Congress to tighten up loan policies.

Instead of following the Hoover Commission recommendations in reference to R.F.C., President Truman recently submitted a hastily prepared reorganization of this federal Agency. Here are the facts. On February 5th the Senate investigating committee filed its report exposing favoritism and influence in the R.F.C. Three days later the President called this report "assinine." On February 12th, four days after this statement, President Truman reappointed the same five directors to manage the million dollar R.F.C. loans. In other words, on February 12th the President had no intention of recommending a change in R.F.C. Seven days



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later the President submitted his reorganization proposal to Congress to concentrate R.F.C. authority in one person rather than a board of directors of five men.

Careful analysis of the President's plan indicates it is loosely prepared without the necessary "checks and balances" that must exist where huge sums of public funds are involved.

Mr. Truman's proposal does not conform to the Hoover Commission recommendations. The inference might well be drawn that his plan was not submitted on its merits but rather as a means of diverting adverse publicity on the charges of "influence and favoritism."

The fate of the superficial R. F. C. reforms has not as yet been decided by the Congress. Even if the President's plan is approved, that only scratches the surface. Congress should then undertake a full scale review of the present need, if any, for the R.F.C. If proper and effective safeguards cannot be imposed on R.F.C. by the Congress, then the agency should be abolished.

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VISITORS: Dave Bodary had some guests here from Grand Rapids this week--Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Mauk and Mr. and Mrs. John Boes and their son David. Also visiting here from Grand Rapids, enroute back from the south, were Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Jasper and their son E. C. Jasper.



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This last week was filled to capacity. First, the appropriation bill for the Post Office and Treasury Departments involving nearly three billion dollars came to the floor for consideration. Second, the President sent to the Congress a supplemental request for funds totalling 242 million for the current fiscal year. This new request is to take care of miscalculations in department budget estimates and to handle emergencies that were not fore-seeable in advance last spring.

The President's supplemental request involved a number of bureaus, departments and agencies. The chairman of the Committee on Appropriations assigned the various subcommittees to the necessary analysis of the executive department justifications. My subcommittee had only two items, one concerning the Panama Canal and the other a survey by the Army Engineers of the potential hydro-electric power development of the Niagara Falls. Fortunately, in neither case must the Congress appropriate more money, but it was necessary to authorize a transfer of previously appropriated but not yet expended funds totalling 522 thousand dollars.

Because one of my colleagues on the Committee on Appropriations had to be out of Washington on business, I was asked to substitute for him on the subcommittee handling funds for the Departments of State, Justice, Commerce and the Judiciary. Out of the 242 million requested in this supplemental appropriations bill by the White House close to 113 million came before this subcommittee.

Frankly, it was a hard but interesting responsibility to comb through the maze of facts and figures that the bureaus and agencies throw at you in justification of their alleged needs for money from the federal treasury. The six members of the subcommittee hold the hearings in one of the small and unpretentious rooms several floors below the rotunda in the Capitol building itself. There is no fanfare. On one side of a long table sit four Democrats, two Republicans, and two committee clerks. On the opposite side of the table come the Department head and his staff, anywhere from two to eight experts.

The hearings are long and drawn out. The government departments by oral testimony and reams of charts and tables do their best to convince the committee that the money requested is justified. The six committee members relentlessly cross-examine the witnesses and probe every detail.

Some departments and witnesses fare better than others. J. Edgar Hoover in making the arguments for more funds for the F.B.I. had little or no difficulty. The Department of Justice in contrast ran into some difficulty. The Department claimed that it needed 160 thousand dollars for new personnel in order to condemn land for the Department of Defense and the Atomic Energy Commission. It was finally admitted by the department officials that almost enough was available in other funds for the job so the committee approved 30 thousand instead of 160 thousand dollars.

In another instance the Civil Aeronautics Administration presented claims or contracts involving 1½ million dollars. After thoroughly interrogating the witnesses and checking the facts and law, the committee found no way to get out of this item. However, language was written in the bill which will slow down, and I hope stop, such claims in the future.

After hearings that extended several weeks, five hours or so each day, the subcommittee made its recommendations. The various departments requested approximately 113 million; we cut out about 89 million dollars. Our subcommittee's work may be repudiated and some of the cuts may be restored by the House or Senate, but in all sincerity we did the most conscientious job we could in trying to save some of the taxpayers' dollars and a cut of 89 million out of the 113 requested by Mr. Truman is a pretty good showing.

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Here's the result of the appropriations for the Treasury and Post Office. The President requested two billion, 958 million. The total cuts made by the House amount to 39 million, 398 thousand dollars. The House sustained my own amendment to cut one million from the administrative funds for the Bureau of the Public Debt.

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VISITORS: The senior class of Rockford High School and their chaperones have been visiting and sightseeing here this week. Mr. and Mrs. Buckman and daughter and Art Lockhart and his wife and daughter-in-law have been spending time between here and Camp Dietrich for a few days; Jay Petter from Holland has been here on business for several days; and G. L. Disselkoen and G. R. Gorman, both of Zeeland, both stationed at Fort Myer, and both about to go overseas, had a few hours to spend in Washington seeing the House in session.