

DIARY OF WHITE HOUSE LEADERSHIP  
MEETINGS -- 91st CONGRESS

October 14, 1969

The President announced that we would have a briefing of the Haynsworth nomination and introduced Mollenhoff. He repeated much of the substance of the paper which he prepared dated October 11 and entitled "Explanation of the Haynsworth Case," a copy of which is attached.

Before he concluded, RMN got up and left the room and in his absence, Tower addressed the VP and ventured the thought that some Senators now uncommitted would make a commitment of support if they were given absolute assurances that there would be no retreat on the part of the President or Haynsworth. The VP said he could not speak for the President and would allow him to respond when he returned. The VP asked for a list of the errors in fact in which Senator Bayh is dealing. Mollenhoff mentioned his statement concerning the Greenville case, the Olin-Matheson case and the Kent Manufacturing Company case.

Rhodes said that some of the most liberal Democrats in the legal community were supporting Haynsworth and cited as a conspicuous example Attorney John P. Frank of Arizona. Morton asked if Haynsworth is charged with violating a statute. Cook cited 28 U.S.C. 455 which defines the conduct required of judges who have a "substantial interest" in a litigant before them. With respect to the Canons of Judicial Conduct, he called attention to the fact that they were not adopted until 1968 after the cases cited by Senator Bayh had been decided. Hruska pointed out that the statute cited by Cook places in the hands of the judge himself the discretion to decide what is and what is not a "substantial interest."

Following miscellaneous dialogue concerning what assets a judge should or should not own, RMN asked if the President



should be reduced to appointing only paupers and college professors to the Court. He expressed his view that if the potential conflict of interest theme were carried to the ultimate extremity, a federal judge could not own government bonds since any decision he renders potentially could affect their value in the market place.

Tower reiterated his point and waited for a reply from the President. RMN turned to Mitchell. Mitchell said that he had had a number of conversations with Haynsworth and that he is convinced that Haynsworth has no intention whatever of withdrawing. At this point, RMN began what proved to be a 10-to-15 minute defense of Haynsworth. He said that some lawyers feel that Haynsworth violated the Canons of Ethics; some lawyers feel that he violated the statute; still other lawyers, like the Washington Post editorial, feel that when Haynsworth has been charged with misconduct and some doubt about his ethical judgement has been raised, the interests of the Court require that he withdraw or be rejected by the Senate. While he said that he respected the views of Republican Senators who took this position, he could not accept their position. He said that he had personally inquired carefully into the case; that he had asked Mitchell, Mollenhoff, Rehnquist, Walsh and others to do so and that he had become entirely satisfied that Haynsworth is simply the victim of a partisan attack and is innocent of any conscious wrongdoing or impropriety. He said that 6 judges who now sit on the Supreme Court own a variety of stock in corporations involved, either directly or through subsidiaries, in litigation pending before the Court. To illustrate that he was not seeking to justify any conflict of interest on his own part, he recalled that when he became Vice President, he sold all of his stocks and bonds and bought real estate. After 8 years in the Vice Presidency at an annual salary of \$45,000 a year, he left Washington with barely \$47,000 in total assets. He chose Haynsworth because he regarded him as the best judge on any circuit



bench and a man with the kind of philosophy he feels should sit and in order to give the bench better balance. He said again that all future appointments will be lawyers of the same kind. With respect to future appointments, it can be anticipated that similar attacks will be made by those who object to the ideological persuasion of the nominee. His final point impressed me deeply. "I hold in my hands the fate of a man," he said. "Nobody seems to care much about that any more. I will not be party to destroying a man." He said that he recognized that he could help himself by withdrawing the nomination. "All the liberals would clap, but what would happen to him (Haynsworth)? What would happen to the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals?" With firm and somewhat emotional emphasis, he said that he will stand by Haynsworth if he gets only 1 vote in the Senate and then, to break the tension, he looked squarely at the VP and said, "Ted, you will vote for him, won't you?"

RMN then asked Dent to explain the advance procedure used over the weekend in connection with the Presidential message on the legislative program. Dent said that the staff worked over time in corporation with the Republican National Committee, calling state chairmen, National Committeemen and National Committeewomen and governors, advising them about the Presidential message and urging them to give maximum publicity to the fact that there are two administrations in Washington, one in the White House and one on Capitol Hill. RMN interrupted to say that this is the procedure that will be followed on all major issues in the future. Ford said that he approved the procedure and that he found enthusiastic reaction to the speeches he made following the news stories about the message. Scott said that he recognized the need to take the neutral and non-inflammatory approach. He is describing the President's words as a "reminder message." Griffin agreed that the advance work was "tremendous."

RMN said that his tone was carefully and deliberately temperate. However, he wants the Leadership to be more vigorous in calling



attention to the delay that has ensued since legislative messages on specific bills were sent to the Congress. In some cases this delay has been more than 5 months. He said that we should not allow the Democrats to get away with the ploy that the Administration is late in sending departmental reports to the Congress. The Presidential message is a departmental report, and it is fair to say that every major item in the Administration's legislative package has been fully and favorably reported by the departments to the Congress. We should also remind the Democrats that they control both Houses 3 to 2, and if they want to move a bill, they have the votes to move it. We can run on action or we can run on the issue. We would rather run on action.

Harlow said that next Thursday there would be a meeting concerning economics and inflation, patterned after the D. C. crime meeting held at the White House last Thursday. Rhodes expressed surprise that the Abernathy Subcommittee of the District of Columbia Committee feels that the package cannot be enacted for at least 6 months. He said that Abernathy's constituency certainly would favor the package. I (Poff) interrupted to say that the Administration might want to give some thought to separating the court reform item in the package from the other items in the package. This proposal, important as it is, has drawn the hostility of bench and bar in the District of Columbia and some of the Members of the Committee have strong feelings against increasing the number of judges. These feelings have been nourished in large part by the nature of the decisions which some of these judges have rendered in recent years.

Turning to another subject, RMN gave flat, unequivocal assurance that he will veto H. R. 13000, the postal pay bill and that he will do it on television in prime time, showing not only the process of veto, but explaining the reason.



Copies of a letter dated October 13 addressed to Jerry Ford were distributed among the leaders and the President indicated that Ford was privileged to read the letter into the record during floor debate and comment upon it in the Republican Conference scheduled at 10:30 this morning.

Ford said that the strategy will be not to improve the bill by amendment but to recommit it to the Committee, and he expressed the hope that enough Republicans would vote to recommit to indicate clearly that a veto would be sustained.

Allott expressed the hope that it will be possible soon to announce some affirmative results in the fight against inflation. RMN said that the present tight policies will be continued this month and next month and his present forecast is that there will be a gradual turndown in prices over the next 4 or 5 months. We must maintain maneuver flexibility. In the spring, the conditions of the economy may require a move away from tight policies. In light of the Republican Conference in the House, the meeting adjourned early.

RICHARD H. POFF

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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

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THE WHITE HOUSE

PRESS CONFERENCE  
OF  
SENATOR HUGH SCOTT  
AND  
CONGRESSMAN GERALD R. FORD  
THE ROOSEVELT ROOM

AT 10:42 A.M. EDT

SENATOR SCOTT: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

This morning the President and the Leadership discussed several things: The Haynsworth nomination, the economic questions, the October 15 moratorium, and others.

On the matter of the nomination of Judge Haynsworth, the President expressed himself as firmly and unequivocally determined to go forward with the nomination.

The President also has released a letter, which Representative Ford will refer to, having to do with H.R. 13000, the Postal Pay Bill.

CONGRESSMAN FORD: Thank you, Hugh.

We also discussed, in addition to the letter that I will summarize for you, the impact that some of us found around the country over the weekend on the President's message, which came to the House and Senate yesterday.

I was in Texas, Nevada, and Michigan over the weekend. I can say that universally the public has responded to the program the President has submitted. I think you will find a great surge of public opinion insisting that the Congress respond to the President's overall legislative package.

And I, for one, just as the President expressed it, hope and trust that this Congress will act affirmatively on this program. I don't think we ought to get into nitpicking about who is at fault, if there is any blame. All of us can be the beneficiaries of affirmative action. I think the public is going to insist upon it.

One of the items that the House today is considering involves H. R. 13000. It is a bill that, if in its present form is passed, will add approximately \$4.3 billion in Federal expenditures. Secondly, if it is approved by the Congress in its present form, it will undoubtedly undermine any opportunity for bona fide, legitimate Post Office reform legislation.

Because of its inflationary impact, and for the other reasons that I previously mentioned, this bill, if it comes to the President's desk in its present form, will be unacceptable to the President of the United States.

MORE

I might add one paragraph, quoting from the President's letter. "The increase which the Post Office Department alone must absorb, for example, would require cutbacks in a variety of services. They would include the elimination of Saturday deliveries and window service for rural, city and suburban areas alike."

If this legislation is enacted over the President's veto, inevitably you are going to have just further deterioration of Post Office Department service.

And I, therefore, hope and trust that the House uses some good sense today and takes another look at this kind of legislation.

I can add, as a supplement, that the President has a group in the Executive Branch of the Government that is working on pay comparability and pay problems for people in the Executive Branch of the Government. But their recommendations certainly cannot follow the pattern of H. R. 13000.

SENATOR SCOTT: One last thing. Today is President Eisenhower's birthday. We have been trying to get the Eisenhower Dollar Legislation adopted by today in the Senate. Senator Kennedy was in charge yesterday. There has been some colloquy and it is our hope that that bill can be disposed of today.

Q Senator Scott, did you at any time write to the President asking him not to make the Haynsworth appointment?

SENATOR SCOTT: No, sir, I did not.

Q Senator, what did you talk about in regard to the moratorium? What was your conclusion?

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, we, first of all, agreed that there is no argument whatever in the fact that everyone concerned, from the President down to every last American, has the same objective: We are all for achieving peace.

Every President in recent years has known war. And the President shares the anguish of spirit, which will be exhibited tomorrow in memory of those who have fallen, and in concern over the future course of America.

But the President is firmly on his course for peace. His plan is a plan in progress. It is a plan which is the only one in my judgment which offers an opportunity to achieve that for which people will be demonstrating; that is, there is only one negotiator at the top and if anyone has a better plan than the President, obviously, everyone wants to hear it.

But no matter whose plan is offered, it has to be implemented by the President. And he believes that his plan is the working one; that it will work; that we will get out of this war; and that we will do it as expeditiously as the sum total of events will permit.

MORE

Q Senator, do you find that it is the President's view that the demonstration such as tomorrow will delay the possibility of negotiating a settlement or hinder the efforts to get a negotiated settlement?

SENATOR SCOTT: The President has made no such statement, nor do I think that peaceful demonstrations would impede or delay a settlement. I think that violence, those people who want peace so much that they would fight everybody in sight to get it, would probably be a counter-productive effort.

CONGRESSMAN FORD: If I might add a comment. I think it is well to point out that President Eisenhower, whose birthday it is today, ended the war in Korea and the plan that President Nixon has will end the war in Vietnam. But there can only be one quarterback.

The American people selected President Nixon as the quarterback for at least this four-year period.

I might use this analogy. This is the football season. Joe Namath is a great quarterback. The New York Jets seem to be doing pretty well with one quarterback. If they had 11 Joe Namaths on the field, I don't think the New York Jets would win very many football games.

I happen to believe that we have a good quarterback. He has a good plan. I think it will be successful and will get peace in Vietnam.

Q What is your position on the all-night marathon that some of the Democrats want in the House?

CONGRESSMAN FORD: As far as I am concerned, if they want to go on all night, I am not going to object to it personally. I think there may be some others who might do otherwise. But if they wish to proceed that way, and as long as they present reasonable arguments for the continuation, fine.

They are going to take an awful lot of time to come up with some ideas that I think they might more succinctly submit through other channels.

SENATOR SCOTT: There might be occasion, if Members of Congress want to have night sessions, to consider such matters as obscenity, pornography, crime in the District of Columbia, bail reform, and all the crime bills.

I haven't heard anybody offer to work overtime on any of the pending legislation of that kind.

Q Senator, yesterday in the Senate, if I am not mistaken, you asked those who were introducing resolutions opposed to the President's course to ask themselves the question which side are they on. What did you mean by that?

MORE

SENATOR SCOTT: I didn't direct it to the people introducing resolutions. I said to all those people who share a common concern for peace, all the people who demonstrate, all the people who will gather on October 15, ought to ask themselves what side are they on, because it seems to me that if Americans will examine the fact that they have only one negotiator, not that they should agree with everything that he says or does, but that they should give him the fullest opportunity to bring about a peace.

I think it is a proper inquiry.

Q Is the implication of that question that these people are not on the President's side, they are on the side of Hanoi?

SENATOR SCOTT: No, the implication is not that. The implication is not that they are the enemy.

The implication is that the enemy cites statements made by Americans and that, therefore, Americans need to be responsive in everything they say so as not to unwillingly or unintentionally give information to Hanoi which can be used as an argument that America is divided and therefore they don't have anything to talk to us about.

Q Senator, Scott, when the Haynsworth nomination reaches the Senate Floor, will you vote for it or against it?

SENATOR SCOTT: I will be glad to tell you at that time. I expect the nomination to be approved.

Q You said that economic questions were discussed in the leadership meeting. Could you elaborate on that? Is the President satisfied that his policies are working at this point?

SENATOR SCOTT: The President is satisfied that his policies are working. He is satisfied that inflation can be brought under control, that the policies can be and are being made effective, and that this can be done and it is possible and feasible at the same time to hold down the level of unemployment; that they are in a period where certain Administration actions have to be taken.

From there, we may well move to a period where some of these things can be lightened or lessened in their effect. But, first, we must go through a period of some time in order to hold the inflationary monster back and he believes that that is being achieved. It is now in process.

Q Senator, I am concerned about the apparent contradictions between two things you said on this moratorium. You said you saw no objection to a peaceful demonstration by Americans.

SENATOR SCOTT: I am glad there are only two.

Q Yet, you also seemed to me to be saying that this kind of thing gives aid and comfort to the enemy in terms of making the enemy think that this country is divided and not following the President. How can you support the peaceful demonstration and also say the other?

SENATOR SCOTT: I can support a peaceful demonstration and urge, one, that it be peaceful; urge, two, that it be constructive; urge, three, that it be responsive; urge, four, that those who do it be very careful that in so doing they are giving aid and comfort to the country's negotiators and not aid and comfort to anyone else. I think it is a proper request.

Q Do you think this demonstration tomorrow meets your criteria as a legitimate demonstration?

SENATOR SCOTT: I have no way of knowing what tomorrow will bring forth. That is one of the excitements of my job and one of the burdens of it.

I would assume the way it is being organized that there is every honest intention for it to be a peaceful demonstration on the part of the organizers.

I am equally certain that there are disruptive forces in America who will try to exploit it. I hope they are not successful.

Q Senator, I am a little puzzled by your decision not to let us know how you are going to vote on the Haynsworth thing at this time. Does that indicate that you want to still hear more facts, that you are not convinced that he is as clean ---

SENATOR SCOTT: It simply indicates that, as a Senator, I have long refused to indicate my vote on matters of the highest interest. We will have a much greater amount of publicity if I keep you guessing.

Q Senator, is there any chance that that vote might not come before the end of this session?

SENATOR SCOTT: I have not heard that seriously postulated. I think it is likely to come well before the end of the session.

Q Senator, as the Republican Leadership in the Senate, since you don't want to make your plans public on Judge Haynsworth, can you tell us whether or not you have indicated to the other Republican Senators what your plans are?

MORE

SENATOR SCOTT: I have not indicated to other Republican Senators what may happen with their votes or with mine other than to attempt to secure an estimate on how the votes are going.

Some are for it, some are against it, and some are uncommitted. I am not prepared to tell you what the count is, because it is incomplete. Until I have that, I am not prepared to say.

Q Have you told the President how you will vote?

SENATOR SCOTT: I have discussed the matter with the President. Beyond that, I, again, am not prepared to say.

Q Do you anticipate the President's message this week on inflation will contain any new initiatives or rather would be a re-statement on what he has done so far and how it is working?

SENATOR SCOTT: Which message?

Q The White House said yesterday the President will have a message on inflation.

SENATOR SCOTT: I think Jerry could answer that better.

CONGRESSMAN FORD: It is my understanding that there will not be a message, as such. But there will be a full and complete discussion at the White House with the individuals in the Congress who have charge of legislation involving the anti-inflation fight.

This will come sometime this week. It will be a resume of where we are, what we have to do, and an indication of the fact that we have turned the corner in the battle against inflation by the responsible fiscal and monetary policies of this Administration.

But as far as I know, it will not be a message, as such.

MR. ZIEGLER: The President didn't cover this in specific terms this morning in the general discussion of inflation. But there is a plan for the President to possibly have an address on inflation this week.

Q Senator, will the Haynsworth nomination be hurt in the Senate by Sunday's less than unanimous endorsement of him by the ABA's committee in New York?

SENATOR SCOTT: Will it be hurt?

Q Will it be hurt?

SENATOR SCOTT: The Senate is the forum for debate. Undoubtedly, people will raise that point and others will argue that the American Bar Association has reaffirmed its earlier position.

I can't anticipate what Senators will say. I can only tell you what the President's position is, and that is firmly and unequivocally in support of the nomination, and that I expect it to be confirmed.

Q Has the President reviewed the factual situation, or the charges, back and forth, or did somebody on the staff review it with the leaders?

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Mollenhoff made a presentation this morning and there was general discussion.

Q Do you know, and if you do, will you tell us who asked the Bar Association to take another look at Judge Haynsworth?

SENATOR SCOTT: I can clarify one thing: I am not the person who did.

The answer is I have heard only by rumor who made the request, and I am not really qualified to simply give you the benefit of the rumor.

I think I know. But I know it was not myself. I saw Mr. Segal on the day in question and spoke to him regarding two Pennsylvania Judgeships. I spoke rather urgently. I am sorry to say he doesn't agree with me.

Q Congressman Ford, I think you said that the President would indicate that we have turned the corner on inflation.

CONGRESSMAN FORD: That is correct.

Q Is that his view or is it yours?

CONGRESSMAN FORD: That is the President's view; that the policies that we have been following under this Administration have taken the first big step in turning the corner on inflation.

I think you will find, not tomorrow, maybe not for a month or two, some very substantive benefits from this effective battle against inflation.

We are optimistic that we can look forward in the near future to effects that will be helpful as far as the consumer is concerned without any rise of any significance in unemployment.

Q Congressman, was it your intention to describe the President as the Joe Namath of American politics?

CONGRESSMAN FORD: No. I was using only that as an illustration. I could pick any one of other first-class quarterbacks in both pro football and in college football.

Archie Manning down in Mississippi is a pretty good one. But I don't think Archie Manning would win many football games if he was out there all by himself.

I think you have to have one quarterback. We have a good one. I think he is going to win this battle against Hanoi, and achieve and be successful in accomplishing peace in America.

Q Congressman, the coach sends in a player now and then, doesn't he?

CONGRESSMAN FORD: He does. But some of these people who are making suggestions, I don't think, would qualify as very high-class coaches.

So I think we ought to stick with a quarterback who is making some successful accomplishments, a 20-percent reduction in the combat forces of the U.S. military personnel in Vietnam; a 12-percent reduction in overall U.S. military personnel in Vietnam. That is making headway in achieving peace and disengaging the United States.

You know, most of these grandstand quarterbacks never play a ball game. But they have got lots of advice. They wouldn't know how to play the ball game if they were on the field.

The American people selected one quarterback. He is doing a good job. I just don't think we ought to have a whole football field of quarterbacks out there in this crucial battle that involves the lives and future of a good many young Americans.

SENATOR SCOTT: I am still going to keep my lights on tomorrow. I maybe the only person in the whole country, but I am doing it.

CONGRESSMAN FORD: I am joining you.

Q Congressman Ford, in addition to criticizing the committee-passed bill on postal matters, what positive suggestions do you have for changing it?

CONGRESSMAN FORD: I think we will rely on two things:

As I said, the President has a committee now working on comparability and other pay problems in the Federal Civil Service and postal service.

This group, we hope, will come up with some constructive programs to make sure that Federal employees are adequately compensated, have adequate opportunities for promotion, et cetera.

Secondly, if we did get the President's postal reform legislation through the Congress, it means that about 850,000 postal employees will have a better opportunity for better working conditions, better pay, better incentives, et cetera.

But the fact that the Congress apparently at this moment is sitting on and not moving ahead with the President's postal reform legislation is harmful to the best interests of the 850,000-some postal employees in the Federal service.

Q Has that been reported out of committee, just for background?

CONGRESSMAN FORD: No. Last week, they had a crucial vote whether to take up the President's postal reform legislation, or whether to take Chairman Dulski's bill. And on a 13-to-13 vote, they agreed to put in the background temporarily the President's postal reform bill and to consider the Dulski bill. But I would like to make this observation:

Q That is the one you are aiming at, the Dulski bill?

CONGRESSMAN FORD: Let me give you a little fill on what I think is going to be the progress of this.

I suspect now the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service will report out the Dulski bill, which is not really meaningful postal reform.

I presume they will get a rule. Then the crucial test will come in the House of Representatives. If we are unable to substitute the President's postal reform bill, which has some real reform in it, then the committee as a whole will offer a motion to recommit and get a role call so the people will have a chance to know whether you are going to have this superficial reform or meaningful reform.

I think the public will insist in the final analysis on meaningful reform.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

(AT 11:05 A.M. EDT)

HOUSE ACTION, PERIOD OCTOBER 7 THROUGH OCTOBER 13

Tuesday, October 7, 1969

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION AUTHORIZATION

RULE (OPEN)

By voice vote, the House adopted H.Res.475, providing one hour of debate.

PASSAGE

By a record vote of 384 yeas to 5 nays, the House passed H.R.10878, to authorize appropriations for activities of the National Science Foundation.

CIVIL SERVICE RETIREMENT

The House cleared for the President H.R.9825, to amend subchapter III of chapter 83 of title 5, United States Code, relating to civil service retirement, by concurring to the Senate amendment thereto.

Wednesday, October 8, 1969

PUBLIC WORKS AND ATOMIC ENERGY APPROPRIATIONS

PASSAGE

By a record vote of 396 yeas to 3 nays, the House passed H.R.14159, Public Works and Atomic Energy Appropriations Act for FY 1970.

Prior to passage, the previous question was ordered (Mr. Dingell) by a record vote of 215 yeas to 187 nays.

Also prior to passage, the Minshall amendment that would have increased funding for construction grants for waste treatment works by \$400 million, was rejected by a teller vote of 146 yeas to 148 nays.

RECOMMIT

The motion by Mr. Bow to recommit the bill to the Committee on Appropriations was rejected by a voice vote.



Thursday, October 9, 1969

RAILROAD EMPLOYEES HOURS OF SERVICE

RULE (OPEN)

The House adopted H.Res.536 by a voice vote, to provide one hour of debate.

PASSAGE

By a record vote of 370 yeas, the House passed H.R.8449, to amend the act entitled, "An act to promote the safety of employees and travelers upon railroads by limiting the hours of service of employees thereon," approved March 4, 1907.

Prior to passage, the House agreed by a voice vote to the Preyer amendment that provides for exemption from the provisions of this act for railroads which employ not more than 15 employees; exception can be granted by the Secretary of Transportation.

EDUCATIONAL TV AND RADIO

RULE (OPEN)

The House adopted H.Res.526 by a voice vote, to provide for one hour of debate.

PASSAGE

By a record vote of 279 yeas to 21 nays, with one voting "present", the House passed H.R.7737, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 by extending the provisions thereof relating to grants for construction of educational television or radio broadcasting facilities and the provisions relating to support of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

RECOMMIT

By a record vote of 131 yeas to 190 nays, the House rejected a motion by Mr. Brown of Ohio to recommit the bill to the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce with instructions to report it back with a \$10 million cut in funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.



AGRICULTURAL APPROPRIATIONS

The House disagreed to the amendments of the Senate to H.R.11612, Department of Agriculture and related agencies appropriations for FY 1970, and agreed to a conference asked by the Senate. Representatives Whitten, Natcher, Hull, Shipley, Evans of Colorado, Mahon, Langen, Michel, Edwards of Alabama and Bow were appointed as conferees.

A motion was made by Mr. Conte to instruct managers on the part of the House to insist on the \$20,000 subsidy payment limitation.

Subsequently, on a motion by Mr. Whitten, the House agreed to table the Conte motion regarding instructing House managers, by a record vote of 181 yeas to 177 nays.

Monday, October 13, 1969

District Day (No Bills)

Columbus Day (No Legislative Business)

Tuesday, October 14, 1969 and Balance of Week

H.R.13000 Federal Salary Comparability Act of 1969 (Open Rule - Two Hours of Debate)

H.R.14127 To carry out the recommendations of the Joint Commission on the Coinage (Open Rule - Two Hours of Debate)

H.R.4293 Export Control Act Extension (Open Rule - One Hour of Debate)



OCTOBER 14, 1969

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSETEXT OF THE LETTER FROM THE  
PRESIDENT TO GERALD R. FORD

Dear Jerry:

I must frankly advise that our critically important national effort to contain inflation is bound to be seriously undercut if the federal employee pay bill now before the House were to become law.

In its present form H. R. 13000 would add approximately \$4.3 billion a year to federal expenditures. It would balloon expenditures in the remainder of this fiscal year by \$1.5 billion.

Spending increases of this magnitude cannot avoid nullifying many of the steps we have recently taken to stabilize the economy.

Less than three months ago, the Congress reflected the nation's determination to control inflation by imposing an expenditure ceiling on the current fiscal year. I gave a commitment at that time to restrict expenditures for this fiscal year to \$192.9 billion. In keeping with this limitation I am cutting federal expenditures for this year by an additional \$3.5 billion. But if H. R. 13000 should become law, additional deep cuts in federal services would have to be made.

The increase which the Post Office Department alone must absorb, for example, would require cut-backs in a variety of services. They would include the elimination of Saturday deliveries and window service for rural, city and suburban areas alike.

Since our total expenditures must be limited, a new round of heavy pay increases for federal employees would be in effect a mandate to reduce, abruptly, the number of federal employees.

The national interest clearly requires reconsideration of H. R. 13000 because of its inflationary impact. Furthermore, it would grant disproportionate benefits to postal employees. These increases should be reexamined in light of another major legislative proposal now before Congress. Improvements in the condition of the postal worker are long overdue, but they ought to be secured through total reform of the present outmoded, inefficient and costly postal system.

The postal reform I have urged provides for the setting of wage levels for postal employees through collective bargaining. Any major increase in postal worker benefits should be secured through this process, or as part of legislation establishing a government-owned postal corporation which will have the means of operating, ultimately, on a self-sustaining basis.

I solicit your personal leadership in urging the House to recognize that, however appealing H. R. 13000 may appear politically at this moment, the consequences of its enactment would surely generate strong resentments throughout the public far outweighing presently anticipated political gains.

/s/ Richard Nixon

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