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YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW
BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

Perhaps it's fortunate that spring has been tardy in arriving for I'm certain that the usual temptations of warm weather might have temporarily overcome my sense of duty. However, with the weather cooperating I've remained chained to a rigid legislative and committee schedule. With no loopholes providing for a leisurely stroll in the out-of-doors, fishing or golfing, I have waded through the daily routine of correspondence, legislation and constituent problems.

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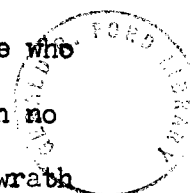
Despite the fact that a Congressman's time is seldom his own, personal matters last Sunday superseded even an invitation from the President. The members of Congress and their wives were invited to inspect the White House, newly redecorated at a cost of \$5,700,000. As much as I would like to have been on hand to help the numberless employees protect the woodwork from fingermarks, the floors from scratches and the furniture (particularly the bamboo rigging in the solarium) from defacement, just in case the rejuvenation of one of these items may have been financed by my tax dollars; as much as I might have wanted to be present to protect my interests in the Executive mansion, John Gardner, the newest Ford, had decided that it was high time for him and his mother to come home from the hospital. So, instead of an expedition through the high-ceilinged rooms of the mansion on Pennsylvania Avenue, Betty, Mike and I introduced John to our small but comfortable apartment. Somehow I'll never regret passing up the Presidential invitation.

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One of the principal benefits from serving on the Appropriation Committee is the opportunity to learn on a wide scale what goes on in the federal government. For example, not long ago, I temporarily served on the Navy appropriation sub-committee where the ship-building and conversion program involving several billion dollars was under consideration. My experiences as a Navy man during World War II came in handy in questioning the witnesses, mostly Admirals. Last week I served on a special investigating committee looking into an urgent and top secret 200 million dollar Air Force contract. These experiences give a member of Congress a close insight into the complicated and costly problems involving the spending of your tax money. By continuously probing the whys and wherefores the Appropriation Committee hopes to eliminate corruption, waste and extravagance.

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Suppose you received your monthly bill from your local grocer and discovered several extra unaccounted-for items. There's not a consumer worthy of the name who wouldn't beat it right down to the store and give the merchant a word or two in no uncertain terms for the additional charges. Few could condemn the customer's wrath



or lack of sympathy if the merchant nonchalantly admitted that his inefficient buyers had caused him to lose money or that one of his employees had been stealing from his warehouse so he was charging his customers extra to make up for his loss. The bill would be ignored. No consumer would take that kind of reasoning. But how about our tax bill? That one is hundreds of times bigger than any grocery bill we'd ever get. Are we having the wool pulled over our eyes? Are we being charged for Administration inefficiency and waste? Taxpayers have a right to expect top-grade performance from the President, his cabinet, the Congress and all the rest of the federal government employees. Our tax payments foot the bill and it's not unreasonable to expect our money's worth.

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There has been a good deal of cloakroom discussion among legislators lately as to whether we should continue talking in Korea or whether we have talked long enough. If wishes were horses beggars would ride, and if the talking were any solution we'd have been rid of this Korean mess long ago. As the truce talks wear on, words, promises and our military strength gets weaker while the forces of our enemy, according to all the latest reports, grows proportionately stronger. A lot has been said about waiting until the time is ripe. It looks to me like we've by-passed the desirable fruit stage and now must make the best of a mushy, over-ripe harvest. Poor pickings, at this point, I'd say, when the cost is so high.

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AN EYE-OPENER: A former communist party member in a testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee told how the party draws strength from non-party members. "The role of a pro-communist sympathizer or fellow-traveler," he said "is more important than the role of a communist party member. A party member has certain duties that little by little expose him and he can't very well defend his activities insofar as being a non-communist. Whereas a pro-communist is in a much better position because he can deny the fact that he is a communist, but still fight for the party. The pro-communists are more dangerous than the party. Actually there is no difference between the two, other than the fact that one has intestinal fortitude to join the ranks and the other has not."

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Every year it seems as if, right along with the first day of spring, scores of visitors drop out of nowhere onto Capitol Hill. Clusters of camera-carrying sightseers plod through the federal buildings taking in all the puzzling machinations of our government. This is a fine sign as far as most of your Congressmen are concerned.

We like to have you come around to see for yourselves that this legislative business is no picnic, and to have a friend from home drop in for a pleasant visit always boosts our morale. First spring visitors this year were Bud Vestal, Erwin LaHaine, and Anne Croak of Grand Rapids; Marjorie C. Hoeksema, Grandville; and Mr. and Mrs. Harvey L. Scholten of Grand Haven.

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Another Easter period rolls around and legislators look forward to a brief respite from routine business. Routine business, for your information, has just about tripled these past weeks. Most committees have concluded their hearings and are priming their reports for presentation on the floor of the House of Representatives. Last week, the bill prepared by "the stingy five," as my colleagues in the Civil Functions appropriation sub-committee and myself are familiarly called, came before the House and frankly we are quite proud of the reductions made in Mr. Truman's free spending budget. My committee slashed over 200 million "hard earned" tax dollars from the President's wasteful proposals. According to a statistician that means a six-dollar saving in one's federal tax bill next year. Not much to be sure these days under H.S.T.'s tax and tax, spend and spend policies but a little "whittlin" all along the line adds up in the final analysis.

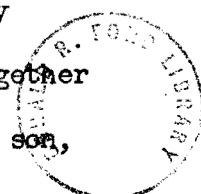
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During the debate on this bill I brought up the subject of the Great Lakes water level. My speech stimulated a strong Congressional telegram to the International Joint Commission urging that action be taken to alleviate the serious conditions now existing and potentially upon us in Michigan and elsewhere. This joint telegram signed by a number of Congressmen brought an immediate hearing before the International Joint Commission. At the hearing I served as chief spokesman for the 20 or more Congressmen from Illinois, Indiana, New York, Ohio and Michigan. The three American and three Canadian members seemed impressed by the extreme seriousness of the situation and gave us hope that some immediate remedial action will be forthcoming. More on this next week.

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Brilliant tulips, presented in honor of Queen Juliana's visit by the Holland Tulip Time Festival of Holland, Michigan, gave a festive air to the dignified rooms of the Capitol last Thursday. Comments on the beauty of the blooms which are the pride of Western Michigan came thick and fast from Congressmen and visitors. Since the bulbs which had been sent from the Netherlands last year to decorate the White House and Capitol lawns refused to blossom in time for the Queen's visit, our Holland, Michigan, blooms were more welcome than ever.

Passes to the House gallery on the day of the Queen's address to the joint session of Congress were at a premium. Each Congressman received only one guest card, the usual allotment. However, after a little door-to-door begging from friendly Congressmen who would not be able to use their tickets, we managed to scrape together enough to permit Mr. and Mrs. Joppe of Grand Rapids and Mrs. Paul Jones and her son,



Dale, to view the joint session honoring the Queen.

Following the address our visitors returned to the office to give their impressions of the ceremonies.

Primarily, they were all inspired by the dignity and formality of the proceedings. Mrs. Jones was fortunate enough to sit next to someone who was familiar with all the dignitaries and was able to point them out to her. She also commented that a trip to Washington intensifies one's patriotism. Seeing the government in operation, being in close contact with the pulse of our democratic nation, cannot help but increase a love of country and an appreciation of the true greatness of America. Young Dale, who attends Holland Junior High, was so stirred by his experiences in Washington that he is eager to get home to tell all his friends of his adventures.

Mr. and Mrs. Joppe were reminded at the arrival of the Queen, of their trip to the Netherlands three years ago. At that time the Joppe's sensed the Dutch gratitude and esteem for the American people. It was this very point which the Queen emphasized time and again in her speech before the Congress.

Unquestionably, this noble woman was most favorably received by all her listeners that day, both for what she had to say and for her excellent presentation. Queen Juliana, it is commonly agreed, is the Netherlands' best ambassador. All were warmed by her wholesome graciousness and charm.

The Joppe's and Mrs. Jones and Dale will long remember this occasion which represented, in the Queen's own words, "the feeling of friendship and relationship of the free for the free."

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Visitors to Washington this week were: Mr. and Mrs. Peter Joppe, G. S. Carbonneau, Mr. and Mrs. John Hesselink of Grand Rapids; Mary Jo Geerlings, Bill Michers, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Jones and Dale, Ed Danson, Karen and Bob, Delphine Schaeffer, Harold Van Houdt, and Mrs. Art Schaeffer of Holland, Michigan; Miss Nancy Jean McQuarrie, and Kenneth Roger McQuarrie of Gaylord, Michigan; Jim Van Zylén of Grand Haven, and Reverend Van Kieft.

HAPPY EASTER.



Washington, these past weeks, would remind one of New York City after the ticker-tape reception given to MacArthur. Can you imagine tulip and cherry blossom petals and resignation slips (Morris and McGrath) left in the wake of arriving royalty, the annual cherry blossom festival and departing office holders? So much excitement in one week, especially the week before the Easter recess, prompted some Congressmen to take advantage of the "breather" and head for home or a secluded corner where they could rebuild their fences or lick their wounds and prepare for the final legislative siege during the last few weeks before Congress adjourns.

For myself I was grateful as well as honored to be a part of Queen Juliana's reception committee in Western Michigan. Welcoming a fine person, paying tribute to the leader of a great Nation, seeing old friends at home if only for a few days, was an enjoyable change of pace from the Congressional agenda of the past three months.

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All the realism of an actual A-bomb attack would really make our citizens sit up and take notice. That's exactly what the "Alert America" convoy has in mind. Americans are too much inclined to feel that since the wars of the past generation have been held outside our continental limits there is little or no danger from future attacks. Ordinarily, ignorance breeds fear, but it would seem in this instance that an ignorance of the actual experiences of war-torn homes and cities and brutal deaths before our very eyes makes the possibility of their happening here almost incomprehensible. But it can happen here!

The "Alert America" convoy, making a 35-city tour of the Nation, will be in Grand Rapids from April 21 to 23 in the Civic Auditorium. Its aim is to show the part every individual must play in our Civil Defense. This is definitely a show no American citizen should miss.

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From now until late Fall folks along the shores of Lake Michigan and the other Great Lakes will be watching with fearful interest the lake levels and the weather bureau storm warnings. Those who live in the Great Lakes Basin in the next six months should be most apprehensive.

The Mississippi and Missouri Rivers on occasion go on sudden rampages with devastating fury. When the heavy rains come or the snow melts too rapidly, the levees are broken, bridges are swept downstream, communities are



inundated, and farmers with their livestock scramble to higher ground. Last summer the people in Kansas and Missouri suffered unaccountable losses. This spring folks in South Dakota, Nebraska and Iowa are experiencing a similar fate. Because my subcommittee on Appropriations has jurisdiction over the many flood control projects throughout the Nation the Army Engineers keep us posted on the status of the dangerous flood areas.

The same is happening on this lake level matter. Although the Great Lake water level problem has been serious until recently it hasn't been spectacular. Finally some of the same authorities in the federal government are beginning to appreciate the seriousness of the situation just as they do when a huge river goes beyond its banks. For the past six months or more several of us in the Congress have been prodding the State Department and the Army Engineers to take whatever remedial action at their command.

At my urging the Army Engineers in February produced a very informative booklet on the over-all problem. Right now as the result of a resolution I sponsored in the House of Representatives the Engineers are feverishly preparing a more detailed report and recommendations. I am meeting this week in Grand Rapids with the Army Engineer in charge of this job.

A few days ago 20 or more members of the House by-passed the State Department and pleaded the case before the International Joint Commission. This joint American-Canadian Commission quite possibly can take some remedial action by curtailing temporarily the discharge of water into Lake Superior through the Ogoki and Long Lake Dams. In addition the Commission could slow down the flow of water from Lake Superior into Michigan and Huron through the St. Mary's River. There are other potential steps in Ontario and Erie which might be helpful if the Commission would act promptly. Although more outflow through the Chicago Drainage Canal is beyond the jurisdiction of the Commission, such action along this line might be helpful to a degree.

So far there has been no effective remedial action for two reasons. Despite our repeated warnings of a pending disaster comparable to the floods on the Mississippi and the Missouri Rivers the authorities in the Executive Branch of the federal government have "fiddled while Rome burned." Second, the authorities have repeatedly said nothing can really be done. They contend the lake levels can only be reduced a few inches here and a few more there by taking certain steps. In my judgment this lack of inertia, this failure to take all precautions is inexcusable. The cumulative effect which could reduce the lakes six inches or more might well have millions in property damage. You can rest assured I'll continue to make every effort to force action in the crucial months ahead.

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With the Missouri River flood disaster still vividly in mind I am rather burned up, to put it mildly, at some of the comments made by the President after he took a plane trip to the scene of the catastrophe. In his typical fashion all of the blame for this disaster rests squarely on the shoulders of the Congress, because the House and Senate haven't appropriated sufficient money to build flood control dams and levees on the Missouri and Mississippi rivers and their tributaries. To be blunt this is more Truman hogwash.

The construction of some of the flood control plans haven't progressed at breakneck speed. The President's own budget over the past six years didn't call for a completed program at this date. It is true the Congress has cut some funds from his budget for flood control but none of the reductions in any way materially added to the flood damages in the Missouri Valley.

The cuts in Mr. Truman's budget for flood control projects were made necessary by his expensive foreign aid program. In other words, if the United States in the last few years under President Truman had spent less in rehabilitating the world we could have spent more building up and developing America.

For example, do you know that under President Truman from 1948 to June, 30, 1951 American tax dollars contributed \$1,656,700,000 on foreign public works projects. Over 39 million was spent by ECA on overseas waterways and harbors. Almost 800 million in U.S. funds went into foreign hydroelectric power projects. In this period the rest of the 1½ billion was used by Mr. Truman's foreign policy experts in overseas public buildings, land reclamation, roads and relief projects.

Congressmen from the flood stricken areas should call these facts to the attention of their constituents and should also remind the President that if just a part of the foreign aid program had been diverted to the Missouri River dams and levees the recent disaster might have been averted.

Seems as though the President invariably takes a plane ride to look over a catastrophe after it has raised havoc with our citizens, their homes and families. This means we can probably expect a Presidential sightseeing trip this summer in Michigan and elsewhere in the Great Lakes area when the high water disaster reaches its peak. In the meantime, while some definite and forceful remedial and protective action might be taken by the President, not a word is heard and no action is taken. When the lake levels reach unprecedented heights this summer, when damages soar to untold millions, equal to those in the Missouri Valley flood, I doubt if a Presidential sightseeing trip will be of much value. In the meantime, some of us in the Congress will keep hammering away at every possible solution to the pending disaster.



Ex-cleanup man Newbold Morris may be able to take some small consolation from the fact that the same method which he initiated in the Justice Department and which prompted his release from office, apparently is obtaining favorable results in the Internal Revenue Department. According to Edgar E. Hoppe, chief of a newly organized inspection service, questionnaires were sent to 30,000 Revenue Department employees with "remarkable" success. Judging from past experience, this unenviable job of getting individuals to fill in questionnaires involving detailed accounts of expenditures, gifts, total income and mode of life, is a delicate and difficult undertaking. But the public should be encouraged that only one out of five hundred persons quizzed in the department were found guilty of wrong-doing and therefore "the great bulk of tax employees are trustworthy."

However, the success of this questionnaire in the Revenue Department would make us wonder why the same questionnaire method is objectionable in other branches of the government.

Frankly, it's a deplorable state of affairs when our people feel a general distrust and skepticism toward its government. We have evidence enough that the governmental house-cleaning is long past due, particularly when every day of delay is sapping the strength from the nation. If nothing else has been accomplished in the numerous Congressional investigations, I believe that Americans have realized more than ever before their responsibilities to put the right men in public office by means of their franchise or right to vote.

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VISITORS - From Grand Rapids: Mr. and Mrs. Fred Poel, Mr. and Mrs. Earl Stewart, Mr. and Mrs. Clayton Steele, Benjamin S. Montague, Mrs. H. H. Carr; Charles Raber, Mr. and Mrs. Willis DeRoer, Mr. and Mrs. Paul J. Zwier, Richard A. Kutcipal, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Neuman and daughter Julie; Beverly Burleson, Mr. and Mrs. D. Koolman, Mr. and Mrs. Marvin J. Blackport and daughter and son, Bonnie and Roger, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Boozer, Mr. and Mrs. Louis A. Weil, Jr. and family, Mr. and Mrs. Lee Dibble and Mrs. Dorne A. Dibble, and Mr. and Mrs. S. K. Brown and son, Mr. R. A. Buchoz, Mr. and Mrs. Lee Woodruff, Mr. and Mrs. John Wurz, From Holland, Mrs. Bud Hinga.

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If you tire of hearing about the frantic Washington merry-go-round, imagine what it must be like on the reporting end. I'm more than a little reluctant to poke a hesitating nose into what looks like an editorial free-for-all,

This period before a national election is a commentator's field day. There's plenty of grist for the news mills and no reporter worthy of the name would pass up a chance like this to toss in an opinion or two just on general principles. Besides, things are happening so fast it's safe to hazard any guess or conjecture without fear of retaliation from a slander sleuth. Or is it?

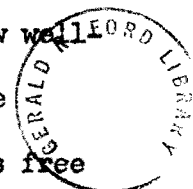
That at least seems to be the logic propelling corrupt office holders to the doom of disclosure. Laboring under the misapprehension that we're all too busy with our own problems to be our brother's keeper, the financial gluttons line their pockets with one hand while allegedly guarding the public coffers with the other. Only now are we beginning to realize just how long this practice has been going on under the present regime.

Some reckless money-grabbers are hurriedly burning their check books in an attempt to outdistance Congressional investigators. It's getting so some of the top political bigwigs can't make a dishonest dollar these days. For example, the King Committee, which has been probing federal tax collections, has come up with one Joe Nunan, ex-Commissioner of Internal Revenue under Mr. Truman. Now, Joe, it seems, is just heartbroken at the thought that he should be accused of dishonesty. At least his doctors have offered a "heart ailment" as the reason Nunan can't appear before the committee to explain an unaccounted-for \$100,000 on which no taxes were paid. But if Nunan thinks he's going to pull the old stomach-ache routine like the little boy who's afraid of a school exam, he'd better have some pretty convincing evidence ready for the committee doctors Rep. King is sending to New York to check up on the tax-evading truant,

Back in 1946, Nunan, in his annual report as Commissioner of Internal Revenue, charged that the high tax burden was to blame for the widespread chiseling. President Truman praised Commissioner Nunan for his astute observations. Now the Congress discovers Mr. Nunan, himself, was making profitable deals fixing tax cases and in addition wasn't paying his own taxes. Guess he figured the federal treasury shouldn't benefit by any of this dirty money.

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President Truman's lawyers, like trained seals, are arguing before the federal courts that the United States Constitution has quite a different meaning from any ever before imagined. In order to justify the seizure of the steel mills, a few well-disciplined lawyers in the Department of Justice contend that the judges and the Congress are accountable to the basic laws of the land but that the President is free



to act as a dictator, transcending all law. If this new and unusual theory of the American form of government prevails our school teachers can throw away their textbooks. The tripartite American system of "checks and balances" becomes an absurdity if Mr. Truman wins before the courts.

Judge Pine, by the way, a man appointed by President Roosevelt, after listening to the arguments of the President's attorneys, asked this question - "Suppose the President should declare that the public interest required seizure of your home. Do you contend that the court could not restrain that act?" The attorney replied - "I'd rather, your honor, not answer."

Congressional reaction to the steel seizure resulted in the following action: (1) The House voted 255 to 88 to have the Committee on Education and Labor investigate the Wage Stabilization Board; (2) the Senate cut out all federal funds for the operation of the seized steel mills by the bureaucrats; (3) the Senate Judiciary Committee voted to hold hearings on the legality of the steel seizure; (4) all Congressional committee action was stopped on any further price and wage legislation.

Two timely quotes: Benjamin Franklin once said, "They that give up essential liberty to obtain a temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety." And William Pitt had this to say, "Where the law ends, tyranny begins."

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Almost breaking the record set by UMF mail are the letters coming to our office on an item on the Defense Department appropriations bill. Frankly, I never would have dreamed there were so many civilian rifle-shooting constituents. Makes a Congressman want to think twice before taking a step in any direction. If I were thinking only of myself, I'd be all in favor of kicking in extra funds as premium on an insurance policy that the rifles would stay trained on their proper targets, but at the risk of incurring the enmity of marksmen throughout the United States I feel obliged to concur with the recommendations of the subcommittee on military appropriations. It has been necessary, due to the Administration's free-spending policy, to cut appropriations to the absolute minimum even as you might postpone a much-needed trip to the doctor or dentist because you just didn't have the funds. That's the way things stand now as one looks at the federal treasury. We just don't have the funds for some of the items which might seem necessary and desirable.

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Visitors to Washington: Mr. and Mrs. Walter Rybook, Mr. and Mrs. W. C. O'Brian and daughter, Mary; Wade Seys and Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Seys; Mr. W. S. Dixon; Mrs. Ann W. Miller; Mrs. Emilio Townsend, all of Grand Rapids; Mr. and Mrs. E. Phil Bradstrum of Sparta and Mr. Fred Bulford of Holland.

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Shooting down the corridor on the way to my office last week, I stopped short at the door to the Armed Services committee room. The old "chamber of horrors" had been replaced by a new and less elaborate exhibit. Thinking to myself that I would look it over at another time, I was about to hurry on when my curiosity got the better of me.

Long before the Armed Services committee began its anti-waste campaign it appears the Army had been waging its own modest and unceremonious war against waste with savings amounting to \$700 million since June 1951. Capt. Cyril Coggins, who is handling the exhibit showing concrete examples of the Army's cost cutting, grinned when I expressed my amazement. The credit for the savings, he explained, goes to local commanders who have used their own initiative to ferret out ways and means of eliminating waste.

With the whole-hearted support of all personnel, individual field units, independently of each other, have discovered incredible savings can be effected through cooperation and increased efficiency even in the smallest items.

But even in these graphic examples of Army thrift the old bugaboo of inefficient cataloguing reared its many heads. No matter how the men curtail wasteful methods, it's tough explaining the fact that an ordinary G.I. rifle costs \$31 in one camp and \$72 in another. Evidently, this is waste on a much larger scale which has cost the taxpayer plenty.

Looks as if the Armed Services Procurement sub-committee has been on the right track all along. By implication, the new "chamber of horrors" has put the finger on the multiple defense procurement agencies. Army field units are innocent of any flagrant waste, but anything they may accomplish is counteracted by the mismanagement in military procurement offices.

The bill formulated by the Committee would provide for a single cataloguing agency and consequently, would eliminate this major military extravagance of duplication and mismanagement. The bill comes to the floor this week and all economy-minded members of Congress look for a very favorable reception for the bill.

I intend to vote in favor of the bill. The Hoover Commission reported that a single catalogue system would save \$2 billion on a \$25 billion military budget. With a \$50 billion appropriation the saving should be over \$4 billion, which means \$100 saving to each and every taxpayer.

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Attendance at House Committee meetings is mighty lean these days. Tearing their hair to eke out a simple quorum, committee chairmen helplessly watch their busy



broods scatter off to their respective state primaries. (Many states hold their primary elections in March, April and May while Congress is still in session.) Actually, committee members aren't any happier about the situation than their chairmen and would welcome some solution to the dilemma facing members of Congress each election year.

Here's how it stands:

Congressmen, feeling that legislative matters are too pressing to permit their absence, stick to the job in Washington. Immediately, floods of condemnation pour in from the neglected district. So, Congressmen, loath to incur the wrath of the citizens, take time out for a district visit. And in the meantime, the legislative machinery grinds on, albeit in low gear. But are Congressmen commended for this alternative decision? Not on your life.

If we're to do our best to keep everybody happy, it doesn't leave much choice but to grab a shirt and a couple pairs of socks and sail off to the district at the close of a legislative day. Coming about as close to bilocation as any human being can get requires darting into the district for a hasty greeting and racing back to Washington to gasp a breathless answer to the next roll call (and there's always the desk piled high with mail yet to be answered).

This is proof enough that you can't do two things at once. In other words, I feel that in all fairness to the people we represent, Congressmen should stay on the job in Washington until adjournment or a defined recess. Too many decisions are won or lost unnecessarily when Congressmen are absent from a vote because of a campaign mission. After Congress has adjourned--that's the time for politicking.

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The guest list this week is almost as long as the column. And it will probably keep right on growing as the news gets 'round about our beautiful Washington spring weather. This week's visitors included: Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Stafford, Mr. and Mrs. Gerald E. White, Mr. and Mrs. L. Dexter, Mr. and Mrs. L. Dooge, Mr. and Mrs. D. Porter, Dr. and Mrs. Denham, George Roderick, R. Douglass, L. Dygert, G. Clarke, A. McFadyen of Grand Rapids. Pete Murdick, J. Wesley Lee, Art Wheeler, Bert Singerling, Jake Taxopeus, Louis H. Bruitels, J. Ledinsky, Claude Verduin and Ed Baas of Grand Haven; Baltzer Bolling, W. P. Bilz and Robert Burnside of Spring Lake.

In addition, there was a swell gang of ninth graders from Oakleigh School on their annual pilgrimage to the nation's capital.

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Judge McGranary is going the way of all corruption sleuths--before he even receives the dubious honor accompanying the chores of an Attorney General. McGranary's appointment by the President has not, as yet, been approved by the Senate and the Senate doesn't intend to give the slightest hint of a nod until they clear up to their own satisfaction, the allegedly smudged past which trailed McGranary when he came to Washington to accept the post offered by the President.

Presently, Judge McGranary is making explanations to the Senate Judiciary Committee, with a few incidental remarks on the touchy subject of "inherent powers." As a matter of fact, the Senators pursued the controversial issue surrounding the steel seizure until the reluctant McGranary was forced to admit that the President "is not free to claim some inherent power before he exhausts power given him by law." But then he added the qualification, "no man is above the law," which statement some Senate members preferred to disregard in favor of the preceding remark.

The qualification is a clever bit of fence-straddling which leaves ample room for interpretation of "the law." McGranary is shrewd enough to see that any statement prodded out of him at this time could cause him definite discomfort later should the Senate approve his appointment. At any rate, whatever reservations McGranary may make, his categorical "No" to Senator Smith's query on the President's inherent power merely reflects Judge Pine's decision on the steel case and emphasizes the fact that plain common sense leads to the conclusion that the Administration overstepped its bounds in refusing recourse to existing legislation in handling the labor-management dispute in the steel industry.

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We hear from the Katyn Committee, which has been holding hearings in Europe for the past month, that they are about to fold their foreign language dictionaries and come home. But even after all the testimonies, given practically at the scene of the murders, they still can't figure out why the Katyn massacre was not on the agenda at the Nuremburg war crimes trials. The whole business is still as mysterious as the shrouded witness Mr. X--at least until the committee members get back and make their final report. Then we're sure to get the low-down on what their continental jaunt cleared up with regard to the most monstrous crime since the days of the Christian martyrs.

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The Pentagon is still threatening a shortage of military supplies if defense appropriations are not restored to their former staggering figures. Apparently, the Senate is weakening under the volley of tears, intimidation, pleading, cajoling and bullying fired from the Pentagon fortress.



The House had to endure the same treatment while it considered the bill. But perhaps the adage "safety in numbers" bulwarked the unyielding tenacity of a majority of the 435 House members who would not be badgered when the evidence of waste and extravagance was before their very eyes.

The members of the Senate Appropriations committee are carrying the ball now. They seem to have fallen behind the line of scrimmage on this play while the Pentagon brass tries the old hidden ball trick. But the Economy team in the House is pulling for a touchdown in the final minutes of the game providing everyone will stick to the facts and avoid hysteria.

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The Red Cross Bloodmobile was stationed at the House Office Building last week --on the very floor on which our office is located! As if we aren't well aware that there are plenty of folks out for our blood.

Casting a furtive glance over my shoulder for someone who might take advantage of my weakened condition, I volunteered to give one pint for the cause. Seriously though, it is a mighty worthy cause. Our boys in the Army, Navy and Air Force need this help, so if you've got any to spare, by all means give your blood.

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As if our ordinary quantity of mail wasn't enough to snow us under the past week brought a daily avalanche of requests for the U.S. Department of Agriculture bulletins. But you can rest assured that we are just as anxious to see that you receive these informative bulletins as you are to get them. So, we're getting them out to you, with the cooperation of the Department of Agriculture, as quickly as our harried staff can handle them.

A REMINDER: Be sure to put your name and address on the order blanks. You'd be surprised how many "check lists" we receive with no names on them. We can't send them to you if we don't know who you are.

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And now the news is out that the "chamber of horrors," which you have been hearing so much about, has accomplished its purpose. The bill providing for the establishment of a single cataloguing agency passed the House by a vote of 228 to 48. And Chairman Hebert announced, "The publicity men at the Pentagon have been decisively defeated...We are on the march in the war on waste. This bill is one weapon."

Congressman Jack Anderson, sponsor of the bill, deserves a word of credit.

Definitely, this round goes to the House, and we're watching hopefully for the Senate to back us up in this decision. If this bill becomes law, between two and four billion dollars can be saved annually in military appropriations.

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW
BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

Those of you who viewed my television program about a month ago perhaps remember my mentioning the Panama Canal ship tolls problem. I said at that time that for some 20 years the tolls had not been raised to meet the rising operating costs and consequently the Governor was obliged to ask Congress to make up the deficit by appropriating general tax funds.

The Appropriation Committee felt that the Panama Canal should and could be self-supporting if the tolls were increased and proposed either administrative or legislative action to that effect. A Congressman friend of mine from California with the help of the Governor of the Canal Zone protested on the grounds that a toll increase would be a violation of Public Law 841 which fixed the method of setting tolls and excluded certain services from the operating expenses recognized by Congress.

Public Law 841 Provides for a periodic appraisal of expenditures with a corresponding increase or decrease of tolls to meet the cost of operating the Canal, the Canal government and the gradually liquidated construction costs.

Furthermore, the law stipulated that government shipping (Naval vessels, for instance) should not be charged against merchant shipping.

This legislation leaves only two alternatives, if the Canal is to be self-supporting. Either the government ships must be charged on some equitable basis with the merchant ships or the merchant ship rates must be increased. Those who are interested in helping the American shipping interests oppose any increase in merchant rates, while those of us in the Committee on Appropriations (as well as others) dislike the prospect of additional burdens on the federal treasury. At the moment there is quite a tug of war over how to handle the problem.

There is no doubt but that a system of toll charges can be worked out which will be satisfactory to all parties concerned. However, if a watchful eye is not kept on the situation, an unreasonable burden will be dumped on the federal treasury with all our taxpayers helping to subsidize all the shipping interests.

* * *

In a wooded setting, befitting a Department of Agriculture ceremony, the Secretary of Agriculture presented to men and women from all over the country awards of merit for outstanding contributions to the science of agriculture.

I was especially proud of two gentlemen from our district who received Superior Service Awards at the ceremony.

Leo R. Arnold of Grand Haven and Robert E. Briola of Grand Rapids received citations "For notable services in assisting the West Ottawa Soil Conservation



District in Michigan to sponsor and carry out a varied agricultural program of major importance to the farmers in the district."

Leo Arnold representing the Extension Service and Bob Briola on behalf of the Soil Conservation Service have done a wonderful job. But best of all, I liked their attitude in stating that no degree of success could have been accomplished without the wholehearted cooperation of the farmers in the West Ottawa District.

Leo and Bob together with all the other award winners were feted at a three-day program sponsored by the Department of Agriculture. It is indeed encouraging to know that we can still take time out to recognize those who contribute to a healthier happier life in our United States even though we seem to be thoroughly engrossed in hostilities on foreign fronts.

* * *

Practically every place one goes in Washington--on the floor of the House chamber, the cloakrooms, the House restaurant or in committees--the conversation centers around the unusual similarity between the Jackson prison riots and the Communist uprising in the Koje prison camp.

It is almost generally agreed that the Koje prison officials were stupidly careless in permitting such a wholesale overthrow of authority. Such gross neglect in an allegedly supervised and intelligently conducted United States POW camp is incomprehensible.

By the same token, Michigan prison officials can be justly criticized for permitting conditions to get out of hand to the point of holding prison guards as hostage and then dictating their terms.

The most glaring outrage, is the fact that in one instance the United States government bowed to the demands of Communist prisoners. In the other, Michigan State officials were forced to make a deal with convicts on their terms. Disturbing to say the least, is the realization that in both cases authority was overthrown by mob violence. There was a direct inversion of the order of nature. This is disastrous in any situation.

American prestige and integrity have suffered a crushing blow. When our executive department officials tolerate Communist dictation of terms for the release of General Dodd, our country is necessarily placed in an absurd and scornful position.

The reputation of the state of Michigan, too, has been tarnished by the humiliating position which prison officials were forced to take.

It is obvious that whether it be convicts in Jackson prison or Communists in a prison camp, maximum precautions must be taken in advance to protect life, property and prestige. Furthermore, an agreement made with such individuals under such circumstances not only does not enhance our position in the eyes of our allies, but degrades and discredits us before them.

* * *

VISITORS: Miss Dolores Schowalter, Miss Bernadette Miller, Wm. S. Kabacker, David K. Vaer, Mr. and Mrs. Lyle B. Morrison, Robert Briola, John Dregge, Mrs. Pat Loomis of Grand Rapids. L. R. Arnold of Grand Haven, and Mrs. H. Garrett of Kalamazoo.

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW
GERALD R. FORD, JR.

Many an eyebrow has been raised over some rather unexpected action taken in the House of Representatives not long ago. When the House voted favorably on an amendment which, in effect, allowed Congressmen to deduct expenses incurred while living in Washington during sessions of Congress no little consternation was caused among newsmen. Consequently, we have been accused of everything from threatening the national security to robbing the poor. We have been described as predatory Congressmen, wolves in sheep's clothing--a bunch of out and out rascals.

But before the general public starts hurling accusations in our direction, let's take stock of the facts. In view of the furor which has been raised, I believe a full explanation is necessary.

A Representative receives an annual taxable income of \$12,500. In 1946 Congress approved legislation granting a tax-free sum of \$2,500 to each Congressmen for expenses. In 1951 Congress resolved to do away with the tax-free expense money, and I voted in favor of this legislation. Now the McCormack amendment will put the members of Congress on exactly the same basis with other taxpayers who make a business trip to Washington.

On the Congressman's income he finances the upkeep of a place for himself and his family at home and at the same time maintains a residence in Washington. Nine chances out of ten, while Congress is in session, the Congressman's family lives in Washington and after adjournment the whole clan moves back to the district. Therefore, even in this particular instance you can see that a Congressman's expenses are just about double those of an ordinary citizen.

Furthermore, a Congressman is always being solicited for membership in various organizations and clubs and also for contributions to numerous organizations. These, too, take a big lump out of the bank account.

The McCormack amendment, then, permits a Congressman to deduct his personal business expenses (not those for his family) while living in Washington. And this, in reality, is only the same privilege granted to all businessmen who make business trips to Washington.

It is unfortunate that this issue was so quickly resolved by a voice vote with very little debate or committee action. This error can and should be corrected by the Senate. If the McCormack amendment is approved, it should be changed to put a very conservative limitation on the deductions authorized. If the McCormack amendment isn't approved members will get along, but I know from experience it will put a strain on families having difficulties maintaining two homes.

* * *

Judge McGranary is In! Despite the efforts of Senator Ferguson and other members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, the Senate saw fit to approve McGranary's



appointment as the new attorney general. Now he is taking the position so recently vacated by Mr. McGrath.

It is not unreasonable that we expect a high degree of integrity from those whom we place in positions of authority. It is the same characteristic of human nature which demands that priests and ministers maintain a strict code of morality. Furthermore, those who aspire to these positions have an obligation to examine themselves to determine whether or not they have the intentions which will merit the confidence of the people whom they are to serve.

No matter what our opinions concerning individual cases, it is of the utmost importance that we avoid hasty generalizations in the corruption investigations. Under no circumstances do I approve of the "white-washers" who have done nothing about ferreting out graft and corruption in government, nor do I condemn the whole human race in one fell swoop when I say that none of us goes through life without blemish. Because we are human we made mistakes; if we make any pretence toward wisdom or prudence we will profit from the mistakes.

BUT--there is no justification for consistent and deliberate immorality in or out of government. On the other hand, neither can we justify a general suspicion and mistrust of all public officials. That is national suicide.

Because one individual is in possession of a mink coat acquired through rather questionable means, it does not indicate that everyone in Washington is harboring a fur piece doubtfully come by. The altogether too many instances of corruption which reach the limelight do not imply a wholesale corruption in government.

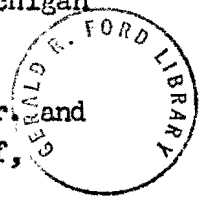
My whole point is this: Do not be misled by the sensationalism of the reports of evil in our government. We deplore the examples which exist but to save ourselves from utter despair we cannot afford to judge the many by the few. I feel safe in assuring you that for every corrupt official there are hundreds of honest, hard-working citizens trying to make a living working for you in the government.

Your Congress is doing everything within its power to separate the wheat from the chaff. Unfortunately, the Congress has had very little cooperation in this task from the White House. Roadblock after roadblock, has impeded Congressional investigations but at the same time the reputable, scrupulous men in government service have been cooperating with Congress to the best of their ability in an effort to weed out the undesirables who have discredited public service.

And even though every "gift" given or received in Washington seems to be accompanied by an aura of suspicion and speculation these days, I have no intention of declining the quart can of genuine New Hampshire maple syrup given to me by Congressman Norris Cotton of that state. The Fords will use the maple syrup on the pancakes and waffles which replace the potatoes we can't get these days. The syrup is good--and I'm more than grateful. But you'll never get me to admit its superiority over our own Michigan variety of maple syrup.

* * *

VISITORS: Si Albert, Mr. and Mrs. Herman Stern, Dr. and Mrs. John Montgomery, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Fosheim, Mr. and Mrs. Robert D. Shook of Grand Rapids. James Meekhof, Clarence Huizinga, La Verne Ter Haar of Jamestown.



For release June 5, 1952

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW
BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

The House of Representatives has temporarily turned a cold shoulder on a pig-in-the-poke social security proposal. Refusing to pass the bill, the House ordered it returned to the Ways and Means Committee for some revisions that would improve the situation greatly.

The deal was like buying a pig in a poke because the bill was brought to the floor for a vote under a parliamentary procedure where there could be no corrective amendments offered. Either you took what was offered, or nothing. So, the House took nothing, until corrections are made in committee.

Here's what happened. The proposal to the House would increase social security payments on old age and survivors insurance rolls by \$5 per month. Increased costs of living have made it increasingly difficult for retired aged persons, widows, and orphans to exist on present payments. For most of the recipients, these benefits are their chief source of dependable income--and often their only source. These benefits allow, on an average, about \$42 per month for a retired worker. The average for an aged couple is \$70 and for an aged widow \$36 per month.

As far as your Congressman is concerned, the bill, in the form it was presented, didn't meet the problem adequately. For instance, if a covered worker, on reaching age 65, was able to do part-time work or had savings that brought in an income of more than \$70 a month, he or she couldn't receive the annuity on which payments had been made for years.

Your Congressman felt this was an unjust penalty on thrift and willingness to supplement income.

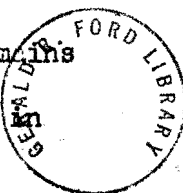
And this was just one of the inadequacies--along with those affecting the aid to the blind and the totally disabled. Therefore, the bill goes back to the Committee with the assurance it will be returned to the House with some essential changes made.

* * *

The long weekend gave me a chance to get back home for a few days--and full days they were too. Several Memorial Day speeches and a high school graduation address really had me hopping for the few days I was in the district.

We're all hoping that it won't be long now before we can leave the capital to the tourists and spend a few months at home. But if Congress is to adjourn, as we plan, before the July conventions in Chicago, the House and Senate will really have to burn the midnight oil to wind up the four major issues which must be faced before we will be free to close the books for this session.

The various appropriation bills are now in the hands of the Senate and it remains for them to back up the action of the House in approving the 6 billion dollar cuts in President Truman's budget which he submitted to the Congress in January.



The wage and price control issue has yet to be hashed out. The Senate should conclude its action on this legislation this week. The House will battle this one out by mid-June. The Foreign aid bill was trimmed about one billion, 700 million in the House and slightly less in the Senate. Despite the predictions of dire despair by the President because the reductions were made, our allies can get along quite adequately in our mutual defense program with the $6\frac{1}{2}$ billion dollars Congress will undoubtedly approve, particularly, if they keep their own shoulders to the wheel.

Congressional committees are now considering several legislative proposals to amend existing labor-management legislation. Unquestionably this will call for a good deal of debate which may delay action for a considerable length of time.

But regardless of the approaching national political conventions, you may be sure that as far as I am concerned, I will not sacrifice adequate legislation in haste to "sew things up." Our primary concern is to enact federal laws under the Constitution and all else must take secondary consideration. With this in mind I assure all citizens that caution will be my watchword during these days when we are inclined to be heaped with work and pressed for time to complete it.

This has been a year which has placed a strain on even the most stout-hearted of Congressmen and we're not likely to throw the game with a wild pitch in the last inning of play when it's still anybody's game.

* * *

I wish to thank most sincerely all those whom I have not been able to thank personally for their part in helping to sign and circulate my nominating petitions. These, as you know, are the all-important first step toward the election.

The election of Representatives to Congress is provided for in Article I, Section 4 of the United States Constitution with regulations as to time, place and manner of the election to be administered by the respective state legislatures. Recently the Michigan State Legislature passed a law which advanced the date for the Michigan primaries to August 5 so that absentee voters, particularly GI's overseas, would have more time before election in which to turn in their ballots.

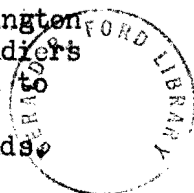
My sincere gratitude to everyone who gave his support in any way whatsoever--to the circulators and to the signers of the petitions. The response was a morale builder.

* * *

We were honored to have among our visitors last week Mrs. Mary V. Essebagger of Holland, who received the Congressional Medal of Honor for her husband, Cpl. John Essebagger, a victim of the Korean War. Cpl. Essebagger displayed heroic courage when he voluntarily remained behind to cover the withdrawal of other members of his unit and then made a one-man advance, killing a number of the enemy before he was mortally wounded. Mrs. Essebagger, her husband's parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Essebagger, and her sister Mrs. Gerald VanDenBerg, spent a weekend in Washington as guests of the government. Their weekend was packed full of appropriate ceremonies.

The Essebagger family indicated they had fond memories of the trip to Washington despite the sad occasion, and we feel that anything we can do for our gallant soldiers or their families is little enough in comparison to the sacrifices they are asked to make.

Other visitors were Harold Albert, Klaas and Eleanor DeRuiter of Grand Rapids.



YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW
BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

On Monday of last week debate on the G.I. bill almost got lost in a flurry of argument on parliamentary procedure. The bill to extend G.I. benefits to veterans of the Korean war was to be considered under the procedure called "suspension of rules." This term signifies that the issue must be approved or disapproved as is. By blocking stray and sometimes unrelated amendments which invariably creep into measures of this nature, this method obviously speeds action.

But regardless of any opposition to the suspension of rules, a pre-Memorial Day agreement to postpone roll call vote until Thursday, confined arguments to cloakroom and over-the-coffee-cup discussions. By Thursday the roll call vote brought forth only one resounding "nay." So, in effect, the bill has passed the House and now goes to the Senate where, undoubtedly, it will undergo some changes.

Congressman Teague, author of the bill, emphasized that his bill was designed for the veteran and the taxpayer. With this basic premise in mind, all details of the bill were discussed and carefully drafted by the Committee on Veteran's Affairs before it was presented to the floor of the House.

Any deficiencies in the bill can and should be corrected by the Senate. But members of the House were well aware that the new G.I. bill was long overdue. Regular parliamentary procedure would have resulted in a demagogues' field day and bogged down immediate action in the mire of long-winded and irrelevant debate. An essentially good proposal, the bill for the veterans of World War III might have been ruined altogether.

* * *

Ignorance of the law is no excuse, but just how ignorant can you be! An individual appearing before the Senate tax investigation committee on the charge of tax evasion claimed that a friend told him Virginia residents were exempt from federal income taxes. So, for 11 years this gullible creature has looked on smugly as his associates faced the misery of March 15. The dubious humor of the situation is increased when we're told that not only was this gentleman completely hoodwinked but that each year he had faithfully helped his daughter make out her income tax.

A huge practical joke was played on someone and as usual our federal treasury is bearing the brunt of it.

* * *

Each day your Congressman wades into the mail which pours into his office in a relentless stream. I think our office holds the record for mail from home and I'm proud of it. However, a few suggestions might help.

Your Congressman wants to receive your letters. They are just about his most important contact with his home district and its needs. However, he's not able to remedy any problems nor make a thoroughly fair evaluation of a situation when



receives only form letters or perhaps a threat now and then. He wants to know your reasons for approving or disapproving a certain bill.

I might add that well-thought-out, sincere letters receive far more attention than do mimeographed sheets urging support or defeat of a measure. A Congressman is really inspired to use every possible means to help those whom he feels have an interest in specific legislation and substantial arguments to back their position. Form letters which deluge a congressional office seldom give any inkling into the whys or wherefores. Furthermore, it's quality, not quantity, that counts.

Threats a Congressman merely passes off as occupational hazards and they certainly do not move him to sympathy for a constituent.

Incidentally, it's a good idea, too, to give the name or number of the specific bill to which you refer and also to keep your letters brief.

These suggestions when followed have a double-barrelled effect. It makes it a lot easier on me and my staff to give you better service. That way we both profit

But most important--keep on writing!

* * *

A suggestion has been made to rename the Office of Price Stabilization and more correctly call it the Office of Potato Scarcity. The OPS ceiling on potatoes forced producers to send over 150,000,000 pounds of U.S. potatoes into Canada, thereby causing our present shortage.

In an effort to make amends for their bungling, the OPS recently announced that the ceiling is off. But a lot of us will continue to gulp down our rice and other substitutes until the next potato crop comes up.

* * *

The Katyn Committee is back in its old bailiwick in the caucus room of the House Office Building. The main question now is: What happened to the report of the massacre which was made to the Chiefs of Staff shortly after the tragic event took place? Army officials claim that somehow or other the report has been mislaid--in plain terms--lost through carelessness. Rumor has it that General Eisenhower may be called upon to give any information he may have on the subject.

* * *

VISITORS - Shirley Flanders, Terri Quinn, Yvonne Schrupp, Mrs. Ray Roerig, Mrs. Alvin Groendyk, Mr. and Mrs. M.J. Leunk, Bill Peterson, Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Hansen of Grand Rapids.

Dr. T. Van Haitsma of Holland.

Mrs. Chester Turner, Barbara Burk of Byron Center and the Class of '52 from Byron Center High School.



For release June 19, 1952

YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW
BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

This past week I was again appointed to the Emergency Agency subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations.

Emergency Agencies include OPS, NPA, the Federal Civil Defense Administration and the many other alphabetical Administration brain-children which popped into being following the Korean War.

Last year President Truman demanded that Congress appropriate 141 million dollars for OPS and other so-called price and wage control agencies for a twelve-month period. Congress granted an appropriation of slightly under \$100 million-- still too much, I thought.

Imagine, if you can, how it is possible to spend \$100 million (your tax money) in one year on price and wage control projects. I shudder to think of the \$141 million we might have appropriated.

As one member of this committee let me assure you that I intend to vote to cut OPS appropriations at every opportunity. As a matter of fact, it might be better for the whole U.S., judging from recent OPS bungling, if the whole thing were discontinued.

* * *

WEATHER BUREAU IS OLD HAT NOW - Senators are notorious for their alleged long-windedness but we doubt that any of them are strong enough to blow away a rain cloud.

Michiganders, plagued by rainy weekends, have appealed to their Senators to halt the cloud-seeding shenanigans causing the wet weather and dampened spirits for Michigan residents and tourists.

The Defense Department claims that its experiments in the southwest United States are too essential to be abandoned at this point, and may call for a compromise settlement. They consider re-routing the clouds so it would rain in Michigan on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday instead of Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

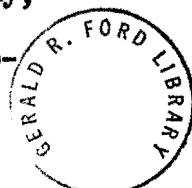
Now you tell one.

* * *

Last week I was granted time to address the House of Representatives on the subject of Regulation X. I contended that modifications which have already been made are not sufficient to meet the needs of Michigan home purchasers.

Down payments on homes in the medium price range are still beyond the reach of a home buyer of moderate means. For example: On a \$10,000 home the minimum down payment formerly was \$1,500. Under the new regulation the down payment has been decreased only \$50, making the minimum \$1,450--not a very substantial reduction.

The slight modifications which have been made all along the price scale have made no appreciable difference to home buyers in the northern states. Fortunately, the House Committee on Banking and Currency agreed to abandon the legislative pro-



YOUR WASHINGTON REVIEW
BY GERALD R. FORD, JR.

Heard any rumors lately about Michigan's seceding from the Union? Neither have I! Administration officials apparently aren't taking any chances that the Michigan outpost might develop any strange notions along that line, though.

The State Department has sent Foreign Service scouts into the old Northwest Territory on a mission of goodness-knows-what. Can't say I blame the guys for preferring to spend the summer in the Nation's Playground, but for the life of me I can't conceive of what value a Foreign Service officer in Michigan will be to the United States government. These worthy gentlemen, incidentally, have seen duty in Indonesia, Afghanistan, New Zealand, Australia, South America and Moscow. No doubt with all this experience, the Administration deems them duly qualified to brave the Michigan wildernesses.

A sympathetic Ohio Congressman expressed his shock that Michigan should be regarded as a foreign nation and offered the suggestion that the State Department might conceivably follow up this startling assignment with a full staff of interpreters and experts on quaint local customs as well as draw up elaborate programs of foreign aid with the Voice of America broadcast thrown in for good measure.

This could lead to all sorts of interesting developments which might not be quite so funny, especially when it involves spending more of the taxpayers' money.

I feel quite certain, however, the Senate will call a halt to all this foolishness when State Department appropriations come up for consideration. Ten chances to one there's likely to be a rider on the bill barring use of appropriated funds for these State Department envoys to state governments. From my observations the House will be glad to join a Senate move to eliminate these useless and unnecessary positions.

* * *

That beat up old dollar bill nestled comfortably in your pocket is there under false pretenses, the way I figure it. The deceptive little greenback is really worth only about \$.53 in buying power.

For example: Your food dollar in reality will only bring you \$.41 worth of victuals. That dollar will buy only \$.50 worth of clothing as compared with 1939 figures, \$.38 worth of domestic help, \$.49 worth of house furnishings, \$.75 worth of rent, \$.43 worth of a new house...I could go on and on. But we consumers have been aware of the general trend for some time now.

A decrease in federal spending is the only answer to the devaluated dollar. This Congress has done its utmost to cut expenditures. As a matter of fact there's little more we can do without some cooperation from the Administration. And goodness knows we've had precious little for the past seven years. It would do well for us all to remember this when we go to the polls this November.

* * *



And speaking of going to the polls--strangely enough, in this free land of ours where we enjoy a right and a privilege denied to so many people throughout the world, this very freedom is ignored, regarded with apathy, avoided, in some instances put off as a distasteful chore. I refer specifically to the right to vote. It is a shameful fact that on the average only 45% of the country's eligible voters actually make use of their franchise.

It is beyond my comprehension that our citizens, who certainly are aware of the critical issues facing our nation, not only slough off their duty to vote, but worse, have an active disinterest in national problems which in the final analysis take their toll upon each individual citizen.

Our fighting men know the significance of these rights because they are being asked to give their lives for them. That is why many of our statesmen have initiated steps to give 18-year-old G.I.'s the right to vote. If these young men are old enough to fight for the rights they are old enough to enjoy them.

I am strongly in favor of this proposal but even more strongly I urge that those who are now able to vote take their full responsibility to be at the polls this November.

* * *

The Social Security bill passed the House last week with 105 votes to spare. The bill which had been turned back to the committee for modification when it was first presented to the House received a 360-22 approval vote (much over the required two-thirds).

Benefits under this bill include for example, an increase in monthly old age and survivor insurance benefits by \$5 or 12½%, whichever is larger, and an increase in permissible earned income for beneficiaries from the present \$50 to \$70 per month. Persons entitled to benefits after August 1952 will receive the 12½% increase.

This bill satisfies to some extent long-awaited improved social security benefits. I feel that since the cost of living has reached such fantastic proportions it is high time social security benefits were augmented to meet the present needs.

* * *

The Senate still lags far behind its legislative schedule making any chance for adjournment before the nominating conventions mighty slim. As one Congressman remarked: "It must be mighty hard to get any work done with about one-third of the Senate out campaigning for the Presidency."

* * *

Our guest book lists for this past week Mr. and Mrs. Thomas B. Ford of Chicago, formerly of Grand Rapids. During our chat with the couple, we discovered that Mr. Ford (no relation) is the son of Melbourne H. Ford who represented the 5th District of Michigan in the 50th and 51st Congress from 1887 to 1891.

Other visitors were: Ted DeBoer and Si Albert of Grand Rapids, Mr. and Mrs. Laoy Gackler of Caledonia, and Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Matthew and daughter Dorothy of Spring Lake.