

The original documents are located in Box D13, folder “House Speeches Coal, February 28 and March 1, 1950” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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*House
Speaker*

THE COAL SITUATION

MR. FORD. Mr. Speaker, anything I may say today in regard to the coal situation would be mere reiteration of what I have been saying for the past 4 months, but I do wish to remind the Members of the House that it is 14 degrees below zero in Michigan and the people are getting colder by the hour because of the President's procrastination in invoking the national emergency provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act.

There is a law on the books that has been most helpful in alleviating our situation, namely the FHA legislation which provides for repair and maintenance loans on homes so that people may convert from coal to gas. In the city of Grand Rapids some 10,000 people in the last 9 months have converted from coal to gas. In other words over 25% of the homes in Grand Rapids within a year have fortunately made this conversion. A substantial portion of these conversions were handled under Title I of the existing F.H.A. legislation.

This legislation including Title I expires today and if we do not have a renewal of the authorization we are going to hinder and hamper conversions by the thousands which are vitally necessary for public health and welfare in a State that is terribly affected by the present situation.



I was recently informed by the officials of a single bank in Grand Rapids that applications for conversions under Title I were being received at the rate of 30 a day. These people can't get coal because of President Truman's failure to act promptly under the Taft-Hartley Act. The Democratic leadership now roadblocks the consideration of F.H.A. legislation even though such a lack of action may materially add to almost universal human suffering. I condemn the Democrats for lack of foresight in both instances.

MR. COLE OF KANSAS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

MR. FORD. I yield to the gentleman from Kansas.

MR. COLE of Kansas. Does the gentleman know that the reason that law expires today is due to the fact that the ^{Democratic} administration has failed to present it to the Congress because they want it as a magnet in drawing votes to the controversial housing bill? The Democratic leadership has deliberately permitted Title I to lapse, and they inserted

THE SPEAKER. The time of the gentleman from Michigan has expired.

it in the cooperative housing bill to gain support for this measure. This is not the first time the Democratic leadership has used Title I as a political football. The result called to our attention by Mr Ford is by reason of this fast and loose Democratic playing of politics.

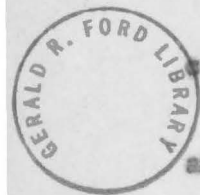


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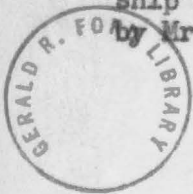
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THE GOAL SITUATION

MR. FORD. Mr. Speaker, the chaos created by the coal situation is well known to all of us. It has been aggravated, however, by failure of the Administration to extend Title I of the FHA legislation. For example, in the City of Grand Rapids, a community of nearly 200,000 citizens, we have at the present time, before the various banks and other lending institutions, applications for over 500 Title I loans for conversion from coal to oil and gas. These families need help, but the Democratic party leadership in the Congress continues to roadblock affirmative action for the extension of F.H.A. legislation. One local bank has 104 lapsed Title I applications. Another bank can't act on 260 conversion applications because the Democratic leadership sits tight and lets the American public slowly freeze to death.

Do you want to know what the truth is? Here it is straight from the shoulder. The Administration wants the so-called "co-op" housing provision included in any new F.H.A. law. It is well known that this 2 billion dollar "co-op housing" proposal will not and cannot be approved in the Congress on its merits. In order to put this expensive co-op program over,



the Administration is blackmailing the members of Congress by saying no F.H.A. extension unless you include this new multimillion dollar housing program. This flagrant bribery by the Administration should be vigorously condemned.

The thousands of families who now have gas and oil furnaces because of Title I in F.H.A. are fortunate but those who can't get the same aid at this time can blame the Democratic congressional leadership and no one else. I ask, when will the Democrats realize that the citizens of the United States are demanding action, not inaction, in attempting to solve the coal crisis? Congress should immediately approve a resolution extending Title I and the other proven sections in F.H.A. legislation. The expensive co-op housing proposal should be brought up later and its fate decided strictly on its own merit.

