



# Washington Report

from CHARLES M. TEAGUE

your congressman



(NOT PRINTED AT GOVERNMENT EXPENSE)

February 28, 1958

Dear Friends:

As your Representative in Congress I receive a great deal of mail. This month's issue of the report will deal with some of the questions and issues raised by my correspondents.

## WHAT IS BEING DONE ABOUT THE HOOVER COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS?

Seventy-seven percent of the 497 separate recommendations of the Hoover Commission has been accepted wholly or with minor modifications. The majority of these have actually been put into effect; most of the others are in the process of being "implemented" (a fancy Washington word for putting into operation). Some of the rest require action by Congress, which action is not taking place as rapidly as it should. Indications are, however, that H. R. 8002, which would require better budgeting practices, will be acted upon favorably by the time you receive this Report.

## WHAT ABOUT PAY TELEVISION?

The overwhelming majority of my mail has expressed strong opposition to Pay-TV. Most people write that they would rather put up with commercials than be required to drop a coin in the slot every time they wish to see some particularly desirable program. This is a matter within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, and that Committee recently adopted a resolution in opposition to television-for-a-fee.

## HOW SERIOUS IS THE RECESSION AND WHAT IS BEING DONE ABOUT IT?

Unemployment is higher than we would all like to see, but it should be pointed out that just within the last few days a committee here in Congress unanimously reported that its investigation indicated the current recession is slightly more severe than that of 1954, but not as pronounced as that of 1949. Of course, the 1949 condition was "cured" by the Korean War. None of us wishes that sort of remedy. The 1954 slump was followed by a good period of prosperity. Most people to whom I have talked, both in and out of government, are of the opinion that the same thing will happen this year as did in 1954.

Two principal types of Government action have been proposed to stimulate our economy. One is that we enter into a massive Public Works Program. It is my opinion that we should not go that far but that we should speed up programs which have been authorized and for which money eventually will have to be spent. In other words, let us get some of the best of these projects under way a little sooner. This would be some help, but certainly it was well demonstrated between 1932 and 1939 that Government spending alone is not the answer. After seven years of very heavy spending then, the unemployment figure still stood at 9 million, about twice what it is today.

The other suggestion is that a tax cut would put more dollars into circulation and create more jobs. The jury is still out so far as I am concerned on this proposition. It has been alleged that a reduction in the Federal income tax would actually bring in more dollars to the United States Treasury due to increased business activities and more jobs. If this is so, and it may well be, I will support a reduction in rates or an increase in exemptions. I am very much concerned, however, about the size of our national debt and the fact that it will have to be passed along to future generations. A return to deficit spending should be only a last resort.

Relaxation of interest rates and Federal Reserve deposit requirements, new Department of Defense contracts, the Federal Buildings and Post Offices Building Program, and a step-up in the building of Federal Highways should all soon have their effect in lowering the total unemployment figure.

## WHAT IS THE STATUS OF LEGISLATION PERTAINING TO THE FEDERALLY IMPACTED SCHOOL AREAS?

The many school boards and individuals who have written me will be glad to learn that indications are still very strong that the existing legislation will be extended substantially in its present form.

**NOTE:** This publication is now in "tumble sheet" form. This was done at the suggestion of one of the recipients who places the Report on his bulletin board and wants both sides of the Washington Report to be available to the reader.

#### WHAT ARE THE PROS AND CONS REGARDING EXTENDING THE EAST FRONT OF THE CAPITOL?

It has been proposed to spend about \$20 million building an addition onto the main entrance, or the East Front, of the Capitol. This is the impressive part of the exterior of the building where Presidents of the United States have been sworn into office since 1825. Most of you will probably recall the scene from the telecasts of the last two inaugurations. It is argued that more space is needed in the National Capitol for committee rooms. I cannot agree that this is the case but, in any event, considerably more area will be available in the new House and Senate Office Buildings now under construction (both of which I voted against). It seems to me to be entirely unnecessary to undertake this construction. My view is supported by that of most of the architects in the country who feel that the remodeling will detract from the present beautiful and inspiring edifice. I have called the proposed project "The \$20 Million Front Porch."

#### WILL THERE BE A FEDERAL PAY RAISE?

There has been a growing discrepancy between the pay scale of Federal classified employees and postal employees as compared to the pay scale of industrial and business employees. Clear evidence of this is shown by the increases which have been granted to Federal blue collar or per diem employees since the last bill was passed by Congress in 1955 granting a pay increase to Federal classified (per annum and postal) employees. Under existing law, the wages of blue collar employees are adjusted periodically by wage boards to keep them abreast of the wages of comparable industrial and business employees in the same area. However, the wages of Federal classified and postal employees must be set by Congress.

We will have before us very shortly a proposal for a cost-of-living increase for the postal and classified Civil Service people. I have every confidence that legislation will be adopted which I hope will be reasonably satisfactory to those involved. Before the increase becomes effective, it must be approved by both the Senate and the House and be signed into law by the President. Rather than commit myself to any specific percentage of increase, I again take the position that I shall support the particular proposal which seems to me to be sure of becoming law. As I have previously stated, it is doing our Government employees no favor to promise them the moon. The important thing is to get a cost-of-living increase into effect as soon as possible.

It should be stressed that the turnover rate in Government employment is too high. We lost too many competent people to private industry where annual salaries are generally higher. In my view, we must pay adequate salaries and, at the same time, insist that the Executive agencies be required to get along with fewer people. In this connection I can report to you that there was a decrease of 76,000 civilian employees in the last six months of 1957.

#### WHAT ABOUT THE MUTUAL SECURITY BILL?

This program still is not politically popular, but I am convinced that we cannot yet abandon it. I realize that there have been too many instances of unwise spending in certain overseas areas. A large percentage of the funds appropriated for the program now goes to Korea, the Republic of China (Formosa), Viet-Nam and Turkey. These countries are strategically located and among the most vigorous opponents of atheistic communism.

Some other parts of the funds make it possible for us to have Strategic Air Command Bases of great importance to us in such nations as Morocco and Libya.

In my opinion we would have to spend at least \$10 billion more per year in our own defense budget if we did not have the Mutual Security Program. Furthermore, we would have to increase greatly inductions of American youth into our own armed forces, and many more of our young men would be stationed in the outposts of the world.

#### ARE YOU AFRAID?

I have a letter from a constituent who sets forth a set of questions and then asks whether I "would be afraid for the public to read my answers." I don't know that I have all of the answers to these questions, or any others, but I'm certainly not afraid to try. Here goes:

1. Hasn't our Government continued to go in debt during the most prosperous years in our history? Ans. Yes. We could have done better, but the big increases in the debt have occurred during wartime periods. At least, we have had a balanced budget during the last two years.

2. Do our Government officials ever expect to try to get out of debt? Ans: We cannot do much more than hold our own until the world situation gets into shape where we do not have to spend such huge sums on our defense program. We could and certainly should reduce the debt rapidly if and when we ever have an enforceable disarmament agreement.

3. Shouldn't England and her outlying possessions be as wealthy as the United States? Ans: The British Empire has been shorn of most of her imperial possessions. These possessions are now independent countries and, therefore, no direct comparison seems possible.

4. How does England's national debt compare with ours? Ans: Our per capita national debt is \$1,600; England's is \$1,530.

5. Doesn't most of our foreign aid eventually get to Russia and her satellites? Ans: Major-  
ity of all aid now goes to four countries -- South Korea, South Viet-Nam, Republic of China, and Turkey. They certainly are strongly anti-communist. To the best of my knowledge, none of our mutual security funds has gotten into Russian hands, and this includes the comparatively small amounts that have gone to Poland and Yugoslavia.

6. Don't the American taxpayers indirectly pay for the Queen's lush coronation and other English luxuries? Ans: No.

7. What steps is our Government taking to protect our service boys who are drafted and put into service to protect us? Ans: Members of the Armed Services are recipients of a host of guarantees, protections and privileges not available to those who have not served.

8. Haven't we gotten more socialistic every year? Ans: The trend has been the other way since 1953. Examples: Government employees cut in total number by one-quarter of a million; the partnership power plan; change from rigid price support to flexible price support plan in agriculture; ending of Government price regulations; return of tidelands to the States; removal of the Federal Government from many businesses formerly in competition with private enterprise.

Sincerely yours,

Charles M. League