

Washington Report

— By —
CONGRESSMAN WALTER B. JONES

In the early summer, most Members of Congress thought that we would adjourn by October. These predictions have fallen flat as it now appears that we will be in session until early December.

This lengthy session has not been due to any great flood of new legislation, but rather from a comprehensive, thorough look at existing programs and appropriations.

At this date in early November, there still remain several major appropriation bills which must be approved if Government is to continue to function. This present week of November 6 through 12 is being consumed by a long, bitter debate on the controversial Poverty Program.

The House voted favorably on several important bills last week. Among those of most interest to the people of the First District is the Federal Meat Inspection Act, which was changed for the first time since 1907.

This bill provides an appropriation to the 50 states for up

to 50% participation in strengthening meat inspection state laws to meet Federal standards.

The present North Carolina Meat Inspection law is stronger than the requirements of the Congressional action, but it was stated on the House Floor that there are states where cattle is slaughtered and meat is sold that all too often is not fit for human consumption.

Another bill that created quite a bit of attention and debate on the Floor was the bill to reduce the extra long staple cotton quota. Briefly, it cancels the import quota which previously had existed between Egypt and the United States.

The new bill obviously will help the extra long staple cotton growers of the Southwest, and I joined in the passage of this bill on the philosophy that any Nation and its Government which sees fit to break diplomatic relations with the United States certainly does not deserve to be pampered in the field of commercial exchange. Many of us feel that President Johnson will veto this bill even if the Senate concurs in the House action.

Still another Act which should be of interest to all our citizens on the coast was the National Flood Insurance Act which puts the United States Treasury in the position of underwriting excessive losses from private insurance companies for some of the citizens in the coastal flooding areas of this country.

At the present time, this bill covers only those sections who have a previous experience of excessive flooding conditions, but it is anticipated that in subsequent years other sections will be added to its coverage.

It will require a period of time for actuary study to determine fair premiums based on losses. At least it is a foot in the door to providing much needed insurance protection for our coastal property owners. One of the most far reaching

Acts of the House was the passing of the Air Quality Act of 1967, better known as the air pollution act. This problem of air pollution is becoming increasingly serious as our population expands and there are many of us who feel that the increase in respiratory troubles and lung cancer is far more attributable to air pollution than the effects of tobacco.

The question regarding this legislation was not the need for the Act itself, but rather was the right of an individual state to have more rigid air pollution laws than those required by Federal legislation. It is a matter of record that California has a higher degree of air pollution than any other state and the California Legislation has already passed legis-

lation more far reaching than is contained in the Congressional bill.

I joined with the majority in voting to give California

this inherent state right. The Senate had previously passed this bill providing the same privilege without a dissenting vote.

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