

Washington Report

— By —
CONGRESSMAN WALTER B. JONES

The 93rd Congress as required by law, will convene at 12 noon on January 3, 1973. A democratic Caucus has been set for January 2 at which time nominations will be made for Speaker of the House, Majority Leader, Sergeant at

Arms, Reading Clerks, and other administrative offices necessary to carry out the working processes of the House of Representatives.

This time one of the major offices to be filled is that of Majority Leader to fill the absence of Congressman Hale Boggs. The two leading candidates at this moment are Congressmen Tip O'Neill of Massachusetts and Sam Gibbons of Florida.

The general consensus is that Congressman O'Neill will in all probability be elected. If so, then another vacancy will occur in replacing him as Assistant Manority Leader.

While the Democrats are completing their slate of nominees the Republicans will do likewise. Then on opening day of Congress, the names placed in nomination will be submitted, and with the Democrats being in the majority with 242 members and the Republicans 192, the results are a foregone conclusion.

Many study groups such as Common Cause have suggested Congressional reforms to expedite the procedures of Congress. Some changes have been put into effect within the last two years; for an example, in the 92nd Congress, a rule was adopted which prohibits a member from serving as Chairman of two subcommittees, but can serve as Chairman of a full Committee and one subcommittee.

In addition, beginning in January, the recorded votes in the House will be compiled by an electronic card system rather than the voice vote as now used.

Where the present voice votes consumed approximately 40 minutes each, under the new system a member will have only 20 minutes to reach the Floor and cast his vote.

There are some who seriously question the seniority system, but it is doubtful that any radical changes will be made at this time.

As always the first few weeks will be spent in organizing the Committees, assigning new members to the various committees, with the chairman having the responsibility of naming the subcommittees and designating the Chairmen of same.

It is highly unlikely that any serious legislative activity will occur until after the Presidential Inauguration on January 20, and the subsequent State of the Union Message by President Nixon.

In a recent column we related some statistics as they affect the First Congressional District. In studying the 1970 census report I came across some unusual figures which are as follows: of the 113,169 households in the District, 39 percent are served by a public sewer system, 45 percent had access to a public water system, 63 percent had telephones but 93 percent had TV sets!

Judge of thine improvement, not by what thou speakest or writest, but by the firmness of thy mind, and the government of thy passions and affections.— Thomas Fuller.

Kenneth Morris

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