

Washington Report

— By —

CONGRESSMAN WALTER B. JONES

The two most important subjects in Washington last week was the promised peace agreement as it relates to our involvement in Vietnam. Hopefully, by the time this column appears this will be a reality. The other was the Inauguration of President Nixon as our 37th President.

As always, this was a most impressive event and this year has become extremely costly if one attempted to attend functions and purchase the many souvenirs offered.

Some examples are the sale of a sterling silver Inaugural plate for \$150; Inaugural license plates at \$15 per set. A box at one of the Inaugural Balls cost \$1,000, or admittance for one at \$40 per person.

The sale of pennants and

other souvenirs created an almost carnival atmosphere in the city. Most of the expense such as the construction of the stands and parade seats, police protection, communications, etc. are borne by the taxpayers, so in all probability, the Inaugural Committee will conclude the event with a tidy profit.

Since Congress convened on January 3, I have introduced or co-sponsored legislation as follows:

A bill to amend the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 to provide that where violations are corrected within the prescribed abatement period no penalty shall be assessed.

Also, in connection with the Occupational Safety and Health Act, I co-sponsored a bill to exempt any non-manufacturing business, or any business having twenty-five or less employees in States having laws regulating safety in such businesses, from the Federal standards created under such Act; and also legislation requiring the recognition between the difference in hazards to employees between the heavy construction industry and the light residential construction industry.

These are in no way designed to reduce safety and the well-being of employees, but rather to provide a common sense approach to the enforcement of this act which all too often has been absent.

I again co-sponsored legislation which provides that

no public school student shall, because of his race, creed, or color, be assigned to or required to attend a particular school.

Many of you have written complaining about the curtailment of certain programs through the President's arbitrary action in impounding funds previously approved by the United States Congress.

I co-sponsored a bill which would require the President to notify the Congress whenever he impounds funds, or authorizes the impounding of funds, and to provide a procedure under which the

House of Representatives and the Senate may approve the President's action or require the President to cease such action.

The question of water pollution remains a serious one as it relates to our states and municipalities attempting to comply with Federal anti-pollution standards; therefore, I co-sponsored legislation which would provide that no state shall receive a lesser allocation of water pollution control funds in fiscal '73 or '74 than it received in fiscal '72.

I also joined in legislation calling for a constitutional amendment for a direct popular election of the President and Vice President which would put an end to the outmoded two centuries old Electoral College system.

It is obvious that the original method of electing a President was provided when there was no mass communication and travel was almost impossible. But, today, changing conditions I think justify a change in the method of electing our Chief Executive.

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