

Washington Report

— By —

CONGRESSMAN WALTER B. JONES

The week ending January 27 was one which brought for many emotions of joy and relief over the case-fire announcement as well as one of sadness and sorrow over the unexpected death of former President Johnson.

On Monday, January 22, the Texas Congressional delegation had a reception honoring the Dean of the House, Congressman Wright Patman which quickly changed from an occasion of happiness and fellowship to one of sadness and shock at the unexpected news of the death.

As to the Vietnam peace treaty, although approved by all, several Members of Congress as well as members of the press are approaching the action with a degree of caution and a "wait and see" attitude.

I am willing to accept the President's word that it is a peace which he had sought and a "peace with honor." The case-fire lifted the burden of the longest and most unpopular

war the United States has ever fought.

One lesson which I hope this nation has learned is that we cannot alone police the rest of the world and should be extremely careful of commitments and foreign entanglements in the future.

Many of you have written expressing interest in Congressional reforms, the method of selecting Committee Chairmen and members of committees.

So, in attempting to change the former system, this year the Democratic Caucus adopted a system where those nominated for Chairmanship as well as every member of the various committees could be challenged and voted upon by both the Democratic Caucus and the full House.

Strangely enough, those who were advocating rigid reform insisted on the secret ballot method of voting for or against each Chairman as well as the Committee Members.

This, to me, defeated the very purpose of reform and I voted for an open ballot so that all might be recorded. In spite of suing the secret ballot, all Committee Chairmen who had been nominated by the Ways and Means Committee successfully withstood all challenges.

Again I was placed on the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee as well as the Committee on Agriculture. Also, I have again been selected as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Oilseeds and

Rice.

I treasure this appointment for among other items, it has jurisdiction over legislation concerning soybeans and peanuts, both of which are becoming increasingly important to eastern North Carolina.

The House Committee on Agriculture contains 21 Democrats and 16 Republicans. On the Democratic side, I am now in fifth position from the chairman in seniority.

The main effort during the week was the naming of committees and the organizing of

same to the end of passing multiple functions attending resolutions governing the same, the death of President Johnson, and a most important announcement of peace, it proved to be a very full week in Washington.

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