

Chapter 8 – First Session

The first session of the 80th House of Representatives of the United States of America convened at noon on Friday, January 3, 1947. The Doorkeeper, Ralph Roberts, a holdover from the 79th Congress, called the House to order in lieu of the recently deceased Clerk of the House. The Chaplain, Rev. James Shera Montgomery, also a hold-over, offered a very Christian prayer. The roll was called, and 429 of the 435 members answered; there were two vacancies (one due to resignation on election to the Senate – John Sparkman of Alabama - and one due to death after election – Robert Henry of Wisconsin) and two showed up shortly in time for the group oath. James Domengeaux (D LA) did not appear until January 9 and Helen Gahagan Douglas (D CA) was tardy until January 10. Joseph Martin (R MA) and Sam Rayburn (D TX) were nominated for Speaker and a roll call vote was taken, with Martin winning 244-182. In addition to the nominees and the late arrivers, Jamie Whitten (D MS) was not recorded as voting. Vito Marcantonio (AL NY) voted for Rayburn. Republican Wallace Chadwick of Pennsylvania was initially recorded as voting for Rayburn, but a correction was quickly made.¹

Rayburn and other leaders escorted Martin to the chair, where Rayburn introduced him as “my friend, your friend, the friend of mankind, a man of unquestioned character, of demonstrated ability, with a great, fine heart and with fairness.”²

Martin spoke:

Colleagues, the Eightieth Congress comes into existence in a time when most of the world lies crushed, broken, and in waste from the ravages of the most terrible war mankind has ever experienced.

Millions of men and women – and little children – are still displaced far from their native homes; they are still hungry; they are still dazed by the enormity of the horrible disaster which has wrecked their lives, laid waste their native lands; left them without homes, and, in many cases, bereft of loved ones.

[But] the beacon of freedom and security ... still burns brightly in the United States of America....

Here at home we face grave and pressing problems. The debt into which this Nation has been plunged is of such magnitude it cannot be paid off in more than a century. Our people are bowed down under a burden of taxation which is well-nigh intolerable. Strikes, industrial agreements, scarcity of raw materials and machinery, and a large remnant of governmental controls still hamper production.

This cooperation [between the parties] is requisite if we are to accomplish successfully the painful readjustments from war conditions of deficit spending, waste, and the don't-count-the-cost policy. Those readjustments must be made in every field of our domestic economy – agriculture, labor, small business, big business, and by all the citizens.

No one group or class of the people, no section of the country, can long profit at the expense of the rest. Economic and social organization must, like freedom, be based upon equal justice to endure. Whenever that balanced justice is disturbed, it must be restored through proper readjustment, however painful that readjustment may be.

The Government's control over the private affairs of the citizens must be ended, and the people's control over their Government must be fully restored as soon as practicable.

¹ *Chester Times*, January 4, 1947.

² The description of the opening is from the *Congressional Record*, 33-40. A member of the Class of '46, Parke Banta of Missouri, committed a faux pas at the first roll call. He “fumbled in his coat pocket, drew out a cigarette and lit it. He had taken no more than two puffs when a fellow member called his attention to the [no smoking] rule and he hurriedly extinguished the cigarette.” *The St. Louis Star and Times*, January 4, 1947.

There is no room in the Government of the United States for any who prefer the communistic system, or any other form of absolutism, to our American system. ... They should be – they must be – removed.

No sound economist can deny, or does deny, that competition is a better regulator of prices and quality than all the governmental bureaus and departmental regulations which could be organized or devised.

Price levels mean nothing if people cannot get ... homes to shelter them....

Never in the history of the world ... has there been a greater opportunity for any nation to lead other bewildered and confused peoples toward the path of freedom and Christianity as is offered to us now.

In 3 years we were fighting an offensive war and were on the road to victory. We helped our allies with millions of men and billions of dollars in machines and supplies of war....

We call upon every section and every class of good Americans to stand with us for an adequate, efficient national defense, while we endeavor to persuade the rest of the world to adopt a practical formula for disarmament and the outlawing of war.

Reduction of the national debt and of taxation, industrial conflict, scarcity of goods, governmental controls, domestic communism – the Republican platform for the new congress.

Martin was sworn in, then all members were sworn. The Majority Leader Charles Halleck of Indiana and Minority Leader Rayburn were announced. Roy Woodruff of Michigan, Chair of the Republican Conference, then introduced HRes 1 choosing the new clerk, sergeant-at-arms, doorkeeper, postmaster, and chaplain (who would continue to be Rev. Montgomery). The Chair of the Democratic Caucus offered a substitute motion, which was rejected, and HRes 1 was accepted. A motion to table the resolution was rejected, and the five staff officers were sworn in. A number of housekeeping resolutions were approved, followed by six resolutions to acknowledge with sorrow the deaths of former members as well as of the late Clerk. One of these, HRes 8 was offered by first-year John Blatnik of Minnesota, the first House success of the Class of '46. Finally, the House adjourned at 2:23 p.m.³

What the *Congressional Record* does not record are the friends and families in the galleries, though limited through ticketing, and the young children with their parents on the floor. Cokie Roberts, three-years old at this time of her father's second oath, remembered the event as her earliest firm memory and said, "I still love Opening Day." But, "there's always some baby in the arms of a man that the baby has never seen before in its life, right? That man has been running for Congress through that baby's life. And the baby will be sort of happy for a minute and then look up and realize that it is in the arms of a stranger and let out a wail, a mighty wail. It is so funny, and it is invariable. And either there's an older sister on the floor that takes over, or the young Member particularly will look up to his wife in the gallery going {distressed groan}. And she will come down to the Speaker's Lobby and grab the baby." It is a joyous but portentous event, heralding an unknown political and personal future for the Class of '46.⁴

Chadwick's one ticket went to his wife Alice. Having no children, Chadwick's accompaniment on the floor was a red carnation from a gift basket the Chester Rotary Club sent to his office. Charles Deane of

³ Blatnik was memorializing William J. Gallagher from Minnesota, a Democrat who served one term in the 79th House, dying after renomination to the 80th and being replaced by Republican George MacKinnon, another of the Class of 1946.

⁴ Roberts interview. It was not only babies who wailed. Rep. Clifford Hope (R KS) in his initial campaign for the House in 1926, did not attend the funeral of his father-in-law. "I have never forgiven Clifford," his wife said. Hope, 64-5.

North Carolina had three tickets, one issued to him and two from other representatives, so he could host his wife and daughters, while he took his six-year-old son on the floor.⁵

The next legislative day of the House, Monday, January 6, was the occasion for Pres. Harry Truman's second State of the Union address and another opportunity for legislator and off-spring bonding. Members with small children would arrive early and take aisle seats, holding the children on their laps, so that when the President exited after his speech, he would have the opportunity to shake the hands of and speak to the undoubtedly bored or perhaps sleeping children.⁶

Truman painted a positive picture of a prosperous nation and called for new laws in labor-management relations, in anti-trust enforcement, and in military administration. He asked for new programs - national health insurance, child care, hospital and home construction, and international control of atomic energy. He wanted progress in civil rights, a balanced budget (he promised a small surplus), and to aid war-devastated nations. While not effective at inter-partisan bonding, the address was statesmanlike and received in like fashion.⁷

Our people are bowed down under a burden of taxation which is well-nigh intolerable.⁸

The first bill introduced, HR 1, was a reduction in the income tax. Brought by Harold Knutson, Chair of Ways and Means, the bill would cut revenues by about \$3.5 billion in a full year. It included an across-the-board cut of 20% in tax rates up to a taxable income of \$302,400 and lower rate cuts above that. Since existing tax rates were marginally progressive up to the highest bracket of \$200,000 plus, such proposed cuts were regressive within that range. That is, the highest marginal tax rate of 91% would be reduced by 18 points (20% of .91) for those with incomes between \$200,000 and \$302,400, while the lowest rate of 20% would be reduced by 4 points. On the other hand, the bill would have restored somewhat the income brackets above \$302,400 eliminated by the Revenue Act of 1941 and cut their rates by a smaller percentage. And the bill would have created a special tax exemption of \$500 for individuals over age 65.⁹

The Truman Administration opposed the general cut as potentially increasing inflation and reducing the ability to pay off the national debt. It also objected to the greater tax relief for higher incomes and suggested that cuts in other forms of taxes would be delayed by the income tax reductions. The bill as reported by Ways and Means increased the cut to 30% for incomes below \$1000 (i.e. six points). The Democratic minority of the Committee dissented from the supportive Committee report. After passing the House, the Senate introduced another bracket, reducing the cut to 15% for incomes between \$79,700 and \$302,400 (i.e. 13.65 points at the highest bracket). The Senate also allowed only half the reductions for 1947. The conference bill (the resolution of House and Senate versions by a conference committee) restructured the brackets and kept the senior citizen deduction. Truman vetoed the bill as economically unwise, both as to the deficit and to inflation, and as inequitable and the House failed to override.¹⁰

⁵ *Chester Times*, January 4, 1947. Deane, 75.

⁶ Cotton, 143-4.

⁷ McCullough, 532. Donovan (1977), 261-3.

⁸ Section headings are taken from Speaker Joseph Martin's initial address.

⁹ The previous Democratic Congress cut taxes \$5.9 billion. Donovan (1977), 119. Goode, 68. Marginal tax rate data are from taxfoundation.org.

¹⁰ Goode, 68-9.

Seven Republicans and seven Democrats of the Class of '46 participated in the sharp debates over HR 1 in March and were true to their parties' positions and arguments, though it must be said that Oklahoma Democrat Toby Morris's contribution was irrelevant and that Democrat James Davis of Georgia said he would vote for the bill if his vote for recommitment failed. Nevertheless, Democrats Davis, Prince Preston of Georgia, Otto Passman of Louisiana, Hugh Meade of Maryland, Harold Donohue of Massachusetts, Monroe Redden of North Carolina, Bryan Dorn of South Carolina, and Frank Wilson and Wingate Lucas of Texas voted for passage of HR 1 on March 27. Democrat John Kennedy of Massachusetts and Republican Thruston Morton of Kentucky failed to vote. Otherwise, the Class of '46 voted with their parties. The veto override vote of June 20 saw the same line-up except that Morton and Kennedy voted with their parties, and Democrats Lucas, Hamilton Jones of North Carolina, and John Bell Williams of Mississippi did not vote. The new Southern and Border Democrats split as did their carryover brethren, but Donohue's support of the bill was an outlier among Northern Democrats. The override vote failed by two votes with two of the more senior Republicans voting to sustain the veto.¹¹

Republicans on Ways and Means responded by introducing HR 3950, which was identical to HR 1 but deferred all reductions to 1948.¹² Truman vetoed this as well. The House passed the bill 302-112 and voted to override 299-108, but the Senate sustained. The nine junior Democrats who supported HR 1 voted for HR 3950 to pass and for the override, except for Dorn who missed the vote on passage. They were joined by Hamilton Jones, Laurie Battle of Alabama, Don Wheeler of Georgia, and Thomas Stanley and Burr Harrison of Virginia. Republican members of the Class all supported passage and override.

Taxation is the fundamental function of modern government. Without income the government cannot act. If that income is not drawn primarily from taxation, rather than from borrowing, the economy cannot be sustained. Yet taxation is an imposition on the citizenry. How much can be imposed depends on the effectiveness of the spending that taxes fund, on the fairness of how taxes are imposed, and on the biases to the economy that result from how taxes are applied.

The greater Republican opposition to taxes had both an underlying libertarian rationale as evidenced by opposition to a variety of governmental functions, as well as concerns about its impact on individual taxpayers and on economic growth. As evidence for the first point, Republican opposition to Federal aid to education may be cited. For the second point, albeit somewhat reluctantly, the Republican tax bill did include nominally greater percentage cuts at lower income levels. Finally, Republican opposition particularly to the high rates of taxes on the more wealthy was justified as inhibiting initiative in the investing and entrepreneurial class.

At a more electoral level, tax cuts were presumed to be generally popular and thus win votes, and wealthy donors to political campaigns were presumed to be demonstrably appreciate of reductions in their tax liabilities.

Knutson stated that a goal of the tax bills was to "cut off much of the government's income by reducing taxes and compelling the government to retrench, to live within its income." Truman on the other hand was proposing both new programs and attention to existing services deferred by the War. As for fairness, even larger percentage cuts for poorer taxpayers result in small benefits while smaller cuts

¹¹ *Congressional Record*, March 27, 1947, 2742, 2758. Donohue was joined by Democrats Philip Philbin and Thomas Lane of Massachusetts in supporting HR 1. The other Northern Democrats voting for it were three from California and one each from New Jersey and New York. Roll call data used in this work are usually from Voteview.com, otherwise from the *Congressional Record*. All new Republicans voted for HR 1, while 3 of 241 returning Republicans voted against passage.

¹² Goode, 73.

for richer taxpayers result in larger benefits for them. High tax rates were imposed on richer taxpayers before the War to pay for New Deal programs to the point that Wartime tax increases were necessarily borne more by poorer taxpayers; so, even the progressive rate cuts of the tax bills were more effective in returning the rich to pre-War tax levels than they were for the poor.¹³

There was a 22-percentage point shift in support of passage by all Southern Democrats from HR 1 to HR 3950 and a 25-point shift in support of overriding the vetoes. The shift among Northern Democrats was smaller - 6 points on both passage and override. Donohue remained an outlier among junior Northern Democrats.

That Southerners were more supportive of tax reductions than other Democrats is unsurprising given that the one-party system of all Southern states (even of Tennessee with its two Republican representatives) meant that more tax resistant politicians would necessarily be represented within the single party. But why was there such a strong shift between the override votes from June 20 to July 18 among the Southerners?¹⁴

Between the first tax veto vote on June 20 and the second on July 18, Truman spoke to the closing session of the annual convention of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) at the Lincoln Memorial, saying the Federal government must be the “defender of the rights and equalities of all Americans,” that “each man must be guaranteed equality of opportunity.” He earlier appointed the President’s Committee on Civil Rights and he had called for a permanent Fair Employment Practices Commission, but his very public endorsement at an assembly largely of black people of active government intervention on behalf of the rights of African Americans between the veto override votes suggests a reason why more Southern Democratic members might have been more inclined to give their party’s President the back of the hand.¹⁵

An alternative explanation is that the ranking Democrat on Ways and Means, Robert Doughton of North Carolina, in objecting to HR 1, while arguing that reducing taxes should be a lower priority than balancing the budget and paying off the national debt, also objected that the bill was retroactive to the first day of 1947, saying that this was poor fiscal stewardship in that the current year’s budget was already enacted and that unanticipated spending was already coming forth. Doughton then came out for the conference report on HR 1, he said, because the effective date of the cuts was changed to July 1, 1947, and because new estimates indicated tax receipts were going to be as much as \$3 billion higher than anticipated. He was even more supportive of HR 3950 for similar reasons – delay of the effective date to January 1, 1948, and even higher estimates of receipts. Doughton was an influential voice on tax policy, particularly among Southern Democrats.¹⁶

Increasing Southern distance from Truman would be a continuing theme of his administration, affecting his domestic program success, even when Democrats returned to control of Congress.

Passman was the only Democratic member of the Class of 1946 to support the two income tax cut bills on all seven roll call votes. There were only two other Democrats who matched Passman, Frank

¹³ Ippolito, 53. Goode, 72.

¹⁴ On the incorporation of the Republican Party within the dominant Democratic organization in Tennessee, see Key (1949), 78-80.

¹⁵ Donovan (1977), 333-4.

¹⁶ *Congressional Record*, March 26, 1947, 2643; June 2, 1947, 6199; July 8, 1947, 8445-6.

Boykin of Alabama and Philip Philbin of Massachusetts. Philbin, a fourth term, was elected from a district that surrounded freshman Donohue's District, and the two were or became close friends.¹⁷

Ways and Means followed the defeat of HR 3950 with extensive hearings on taxes beyond the levy on individual incomes and appointed a technical subcommittee to further investigate. The Treasury Department also released a series of studies covering a wider range.¹⁸

Another significant tax issue was that of the community property income of married couples. The nine to twelve states, the number changing during 1947, which defined income of either spouse as community property rather than of the individual effectively reduced Federal tax brackets for the couple.¹⁹ Class of '46 members Henderson Lanham of Georgia, Albert Reeves of Missouri, Redden of North Carolina, and Melvin Snyder of West Virginia were among House members who introduced bills to effect community property consideration for their non-community property states in Federal law. All such bills failed to make it out of Ways and Means, though Knutson's new tax bill, HR 4790, which would be introduced on December 18, included income splitting for spouses, having a similar effect. Consideration would wait until the second session.

There appears to have been a reluctance on the part of Republicans to clutter their income tax reduction with the extraneous issue of the treatment of non-community property states. States that resisted community property laws did so for whatever reason, but the effect was to retain economic power in the hands of the primary breadwinner, usually the husband.²⁰

... we are to accomplish successfully the painful readjustments from war conditions of deficit spending, waste, and the don't-count-the-cost policy.

Tax reduction is half the budget battle, with the other half being spending reduction. Truman submitted a budget of \$37.5 billion for fiscal year 1948. The new fiscal road map required by the Legislative Reorganization Act produced conflicting spending estimates between the House and Senate of \$31.5 and \$33 billion respectively. Actual expenditures would become \$36.5 billion, a reduction of only \$400 million from fiscal 1947. In the meantime, the Administration estimated a budget surplus for fiscal 1948 of \$7.5 billion, which would have provided a sizable cushion for tax reductions. The actual surplus would be \$8.9 billion.²¹

The irrelevance of the fiscal road map, or maps since the two houses could not agree, failed to keep members of the House of '46 from comment. The debate on HCRes 20 was as clear a partisan division as appeared on the floor, resulting in a better collection of quotes than any other debate.

Republicans supported the supposed \$6 billion reduction from the President's budget with faith in the amount of waste in government and dire warnings of big, bad government:

- Donald Jackson of California: The issue is how much of the tax-payers' money we will allow them to keep.

¹⁷ There were roll calls to recommit each bill, as well as roll calls on passage and veto override, and there was a roll call on accepting the conference report on HR 1. Barone, Ujifusa, and Matthews (1972), 345.

¹⁸ Goode, 73-6.

¹⁹ Goode, 76-7.

²⁰ See the discussion on July 12, 1947, of an amendment on the issue to be proposed by Sen. John McClellan of Arkansas. *Congressional Record*, especially page 8811.

²¹ Goode, 70-1. *Historical Statistics*, Series Y 339-42. Fiscal years began in July.

- David Potts of New York: My District had elected a Democrat for 26 years. "My constituents felt so strongly about what was happening to their country that they felt constrained to reverse that custom. They expressed the wish for economy in government...."²²
- Reeves: I have full support for establishing a budget, which everyone must do. We do not need "specially designed silver sugar bowls and the fancy cut glass" for the Navy. We do not need two civilian employees for every three men in uniform.²³
- Robert Twyman of Illinois: "the people of this country want us to reduce the staggering debt, reduce taxes, return to industry some of the vast number of people unnecessarily on the Federal pay roll and get back to a sound economy."²⁴
- George MacKinnon of Minnesota: This is "a menacing gesture aimed squarely at the heart of a bureaucratic and wasteful Government."²⁵
- Katherine St. George of New York: "The fallacy that Government can give food, jobs, or anything else, is the biggest hoax that has ever been put over on mankind." "This budget can be cut by doing just two things; eliminating waste and extravagance in all Government services. No services need be curtailed, the efficiency of no service needs to be in any way jeopardized."²⁶
- Frederic Coudert of New York: If "the wartime expenditures and taxes ... are continued indefinitely at present levels, then economic disaster, to be followed by some kind of a totalitarianism, in the not too distant future, is almost inevitable."²⁷

Democrats worried about what would be cut, maybe defense, maybe certain domestic services:

- Olin Teague of Texas: Former Army Chief of Staff George Marshall, current Army Chief of Staff Dwight Eisenhower, and Chief of Naval Operations Chester Nimitz say the cuts will weaken defense, and their statements are good enough for me.
- Dorn: "I would like to remind you that the VFW [Veterans of Foreign Wars], the American Legion and all experts in our armed forces agree that this means a reduction in the appropriations for the armed forces."²⁸
- Hamilton Jones: inserted communications from veterans opposing the cuts.
- George Smathers of Florida: "This cut might easily wreck the Federal Housing Agency, the rivers and harbors development, old-age assistance program, Federal education program, soil-conservation program, and others...."²⁹
- Porter Hardy of Virginia: "when I vote for or against any Federal expenditure I want to know what agency is affected."³⁰
- Morris: "how can we form a judgment as to the specific amount to be cut until we are furnished with some information?"³¹
- Passman: will oppose because there is no information on where the cuts will be applied.

²² *Congressional Record*, February 20, 1947, 1244.

²³ *Congressional Record*, February 20, 1947, 1243-4.

²⁴ *Congressional Record*, February 20, 1947, 1246-7.

²⁵ *Congressional Record*, February 20, 1947, 1241.

²⁶ *Congressional Record*, February 20, 1947, 1246.

²⁷ *Congressional Record*, February 20, 1947, 1244.

²⁸ *Congressional Record*, February 20, 1947, 1217.

²⁹ *Congressional Record*, February 20, 1947, 1228.

³⁰ *Congressional Record*, February 20, 1947, 1235.

³¹ *Congressional Record*, February 20, 1947, 1249.

- Redden: "The majority leadership ... held only two meetings on the budget which has lasted altogether only a few hours, that only two witnesses were heard and they gave very little testimony. ... There has been no information made available to the Members of the House upon which the Appropriations Committee ask that the House of Representatives approve this resolution."³²
- Williams: The President sends an itemized budget, and then the Republicans say cut \$6 billion without saying where.³³

Voting on recommittal and passage of HCRes 20 was virtually as consistent. All Republicans voted against recommittal and for passage. Three Democrats voted against recommittal and twelve voted for passage. Among the Class of '46 Democrats, Hugh Meade, Wilson, and Stanley voted for recommittal but then for passage.³⁴

The first appropriation measure was a bill to address deficiencies in fiscal 1947 spending. The House bill, HR 1968, ended up \$40 million greater after the Senate and conference, which marked the pattern for future appropriations in the session.³⁵

Members of the Class of '46 were quick to weigh in on the appropriations. Republican Jacob Javits of New York and Democrat Smathers took to the floor on the initial debate and Democrats Carl Albert and Glen Johnson of Oklahoma and Javits again on consideration of the conference report. Javits was concerned that lack of funding of the Office of Price Administration would impact rent control. Albert argued for more funds for school lunches, Indians, and rural free delivery. Johnson also contended for the school lunch program. Smathers felt that defense funding was too low. Democrat Preston addressed the House before consideration of the conference report on the necessity of the school lunch program.

Reclamation was one of the two major program areas targeted by Republican funding cuts; the other was agricultural programs. The school lunch program was in the budget of the Department of Agriculture. School lunches came up again on April 1 in the next deficiency appropriation for fiscal 1947, with a successful amendment adding \$6 million to the bill for school lunches and Democrats Blatnik, James Davis, Donohue, Joe Evins of Tennessee, and Johnson arguing for the amendment. They were joined by Republican Javits.³⁶

When the fiscal 1948 appropriation bill for the Department of Agriculture, HR 3601, came up in May, the House cut the school lunch program from the Administration request of \$75 million to \$45 million. The Senate restored the \$75 million and the conference compromised on \$65 million. Blatnik and James Davis again went to the mat and were joined by Democrats Hamilton Jones, Frank Karsten of Missouri, Morris, Preston, and Williams and Republicans Kenneth Keating and Potts. Republican Charles Kersten of Wisconsin spoke in opposition to the restoration of funding.

The soil conservation program of the Department of Agriculture also was an issue. The Administration asked \$301 million for fiscal 1948, and the House cut the program in its entirety. The Senate added \$150 million back in, which the House accepted. Democrats James Davis, Evins, Johnson, and Williams spoke

³² *Congressional Record*, February 20, 1947, 1238.

³³ *Congressional Record*, February 20, 1947, 1227.

³⁴ Republicans Sanborn, Jenison, Russell, and Dawson paired against recommittal and for passage. Democrats Kennedy and Lucas paired for recommittal and against passage. Javits voted on neither.

³⁵ "Record of the 80th Congress (January-July, 1947)."

³⁶ The second deficiency appropriation, HR 2849, was labeled the First Deficiency Appropriation, whereas the earlier deficiency appropriation was named the Urgent Deficiency Appropriation.

for soil conservation. The overall Department budget for 1948 was cut 24% or \$192 million from the Administration request.

In April the fiscal 1948 appropriation for the Interior Department, HR 3123, came to the floor. The eventually enacted budget cut \$101.5 million, or 34%, from the Administration request. The House reduced the request for reclamation by 53.5%, \$78 million, but the eventual conference figure was a 36% or a \$53 million drop. Democrats John Carroll of Colorado and Georgia Lusk of New Mexico opposed the cuts, as did Republicans Willis Bradley of California and Charles Russell of Nevada. Democrat Hardy, essentially representing the west-east divide on such matters, noted that Interior paying for irrigation in the west had a competitive effect on agriculture in the east.

Reclamation was not the only Interior issue, though the largest in dollar terms. Oklahoma Democrats Albert and Morris were vocal on the need for funds for Indians. Keating of New York questioned why the Federal government should be on the ticket for Oklahoma Indians. Morris responded that the US put the Indians in Oklahoma. The House budget cut the 1948 funding for Indian education from the fiscal 1947 amount and defeated an amendment by Albert to increase it.

While the Senate tended to moderate the budget cuts enacted by the House, this was not the case with appropriations for the Department of Labor (HR 2700). The House reduced the recommendation of its own Appropriations Committee. The Senate cut that and the conference cut even more. The Department was finally funded for fiscal 1948 at 27% below the Administration request. Few members of the Class of '46 took on the issue. Javits defended the Conciliation Service and the Employment Service from cuts. Smathers championed the Veterans Placement Service.

HR 3311, appropriating funds for the departments of State, Justice, and Commerce, produced much debate on Federal funding for airport control towers. The Appropriations Committee wanted to cut the Commerce budget by about one-third. Funds for operation of control towers would be totally eliminated. This was about \$5 million, less than two percent of the Department's requested budget, but about 75% of the oratory fireworks on its appropriation. Republicans Kersten, Reeves and Claude Bakewell of Missouri, William Dawson of Utah, Bradley and Charles Fletcher of California, and Frederick Muhlenberg of Pennsylvania and Democrats Albert, Carroll, James Davis, Hardy, Karsten, Hugh Meade, Williams, and Wilson contributed to the debate in favor of funding, while Republican Horace Seely-Brown of Connecticut was more negative. An amendment to restore the funding request, which was an increase over fiscal 1947 funding, was adopted. We note that there was more interest in small cuts affecting economic development than in large cuts in services to individuals.³⁷

Funding of Department of State information programs in HR 3311 was also denied by the Appropriations Committee and confirmed by the House after some debate. The \$31 million requested would have funded the Voice of America radio service, libraries in foreign countries, and the foreign student exchange program. Objections to the program in debate were that the programs had no legislative authority, were inefficient, and that journalism was an inappropriate governmental function. Appropriations Chair John Taber of New York added that too much of the programming was communistic. Eventually, the House restored \$12.5 million for the services.³⁸

³⁷ "Appropriations for State, Justice, and Commerce Departments," *CQ Almanac 1947*, 3rd ed., online.

³⁸ "Record of the 80th Congress (second session)."

Karl Mundt (R SD) introduced HR 3342 to authorize the information programs. His bill carried no funding but much discussion. Though Seely-Brown spoke for the State Department information program, and St. George spoke against it in the HR 3311 debate, it was Mundt's bill that really brought out the comments. Republicans Bradley, Parke Banta of Missouri, Caleb Boggs of Delaware, Thomas Owens of Illinois, and Dayton Phillips of Tennessee spoke against the program, as did Democrat Johnson. Johnson was particularly opposed to exchange students, whom he saw as communist infiltrators. Bradley also offered two successful amendments to restrict who could act for the US in the program. Republicans Coudert, Jackson, Javits, Keating, Kersten, MacKinnon, John Davis Lodge of Connecticut, and E.A. Mitchell of Indiana were for the information service. So were Democrats Lusk and Morris.

Mundt's bill was accepted after receiving 30 amendments.³⁹ The vote on June 24 was not close, 273-97, but 90 of the nays were from Republicans and provided some evidence for midwestern isolationism. Republicans from Interior states (except Vermont) voted 65-49 against the bill, while those from Exterior states (plus Vermont) voted 71-25 for the bill.

Only two Democrats from the Class of '46 voted against the bill – Johnson and Passman. Nineteen of the 56 Class Republicans who voted, however, were opposed – St. George, Caleb Boggs, Edward Miller from Maryland, and Franklin Maloney, George Sarbacher, Paul Dague, and William Crow from Pennsylvania, all from the Exterior; and Owens, Twyman, Reeves, Banta, Phillips, Russell, Harold Youngblood from Michigan, John Brophy from Wisconsin, Herbert Meyer and Wint Smith from Kansas, Howes Meade from Kentucky, and John Sanborn from Idaho, these from the Interior.⁴⁰

Four members of the Class of '46 introduced bills to provide Federal aid to the states for education—Republicans Morton, and John Allen of California, and Democrats Battle and Blatnik – as did at least eleven other members. None reached the House floor. In the Senate, however, Robert Taft (R OH) got a bill to appropriate \$300 million for such aid to states to that floor. Morton's bill, HR 3076, was the same as Taft's S 472.⁴¹

Military budgets fared better. The Navy appropriation (HR 3493) was cut 11% by the House but after conference ended up down only 7% below the Administration request. The House cut the War Department (HR 3678) 8%, but after conference the reduction below the Administration request was 4%. Since the military had 30% of the total budget, these smaller percentage cuts were substantial in dollar amounts - \$244 million from the Navy and \$234 million from the Army budget. None of the Class of '46 spoke for less spending, but Democrats Hardy, Smathers, and Williams and Republicans Keating, Muhlenberg and Abe Goff of Idaho wanted more money.

... an adequate, efficient national defense....

The 80th Congress and Pres. Truman succeeded in merging the Departments of War and the Navy into a new Department of Defense. Truman advocated for this when running for Vice President and had asked Congress to enact the change in December 1945. The Navy and the Marine Corps fought this

³⁹ "Record of the 80th Congress (January-July, 1947)."

⁴⁰ Republicans Vail and Jenison from Illinois and McGarvey and Kearns from Pennsylvania were paired against. Coudert was paired for. Republican Snyder and Democrats Lusk and Redden did not vote.

⁴¹ The other Class bills were HR 3104, HR 1870, and HR 3220. "Record of the 80th Congress (January-July, 1947)."

proposition with support from their veterans in Congress. The 79th Congress grappled unsuccessfully with the issue, as did Truman with Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal.⁴²

Once Truman abandoned the Army's plan for a dominant military chief of staff and agreed to a plan in which the Navy and Army were moved under a Secretary of Defense, with a coordinating Joint Chiefs of Staff, the plan could move forward in Congress. The National Security Act passed on July 25 and made limited progress to the coordination of the military forces that had originally been contemplated. The Navy won and the Marine Corps ensured themselves a seat on the Joint Chiefs.⁴³

The Act was approved fairly easily and without roll calls, and comments by the members of the Class of '46 were generally supportive, with the common concerns about preserving the Marine Corps, making sure the Joint Chiefs would still be subservient to civilians, and advocating for a more independent role for the Army Air Corps. The Central Intelligence Agency was also created by the Act, and there was some concern that it be restricted by "civilian," i.e. political, i.e. democratic, norms. Owens took an isolationist tact, saying that the Act would give Truman authority "to get into military adventures and nondeclared wars...;" perceptive that, though more about future presidents.⁴⁴

... competition is a better regulator of prices and quality than all the governmental bureaus and departmental regulations....

The Office of Price Administration was eliminated by Congress on June 1 by the simple expedient of denying it funding. The only price control that remained within OPA, on rents, was transferred to the Office of Housing Expediter, a product of the Veterans' Emergency Housing Act of 1946.⁴⁵ Elimination of the OPA and of price controls was a leitmotif of Republican campaigns. Yet Republican members of the Class of '46 were divided on the issue. Javits, Bradley and Keating spoke for continued rent controls, while Banta and Jackson were opposed. The bill to extend rent controls, HR 3203, included a provision by Fletcher to allow a 15% increase in rents under certain conditions, and Bradley and Keating endorsed that. Fletcher also offered a failed amendment to end rent controls on December 31, 1947, which Owens supported and Keating opposed. The bill extended controls to June 30, 1948. Richard Vail of Illinois offered an amendment to increase rents 10% across the board, which was rejected. MacKinnon moved an amendment with the intent of making new homes more available to veterans, which was accepted but was criticized as ineffective. Democrats Kennedy and Carroll spoke for continuing rent controls (and Kennedy opposed Fletcher's 15%). Hardy spoke for rent controls as they affected the military. Democrat Redden, on the other hand, opposed the controls.

A motion to recommit HR 3203 created a mini-crisis for the Republican leadership as members of the Party opposed to extension of rent controls and some who wanted stronger controls voted to send the bill back to committee. In the words of the United Press story, "To the consternation of the Republican leadership, the Democratic proposal was tentatively carried by sixteen votes at the end of the roll call. Halleck scurried around the floor, button-holing members and bringing them up to the well of the House. Eleven Republicans switched their votes from 'yes' to 'no,' amidst hoots and catcalls from the Democratic

⁴² Donovan (1977), 138-40, 200-2.

⁴³ Donovan (1977), 264-5, 309-10.

⁴⁴ *Congressional Record*, July 23, 1947, 9850.

⁴⁵ Price controls on sugar also remained, but Congress had already transferred that function to the Department of Agriculture. "Record of the 80th Congress (January-July, 1947)."

side of the chamber.” Brophy, Raymond Burke of Ohio, and Owens were among those who switched, but Owens went on to vote against the bill on passage.⁴⁶

Both parties’ leaderships held their members well on the vote to recommit. Though only 15% of the Republicans voted for recommitment, it would have been 20% with the eleven switchers; 9% of Democrats voted against recommitment. On passage though, 33% of Republicans said nay. The bill was saved by 36% of the Democrats who voted yea, while the leadership urged opposition. Southern Democrats were, of course, less loyal to the leadership than Northern Democrats, yet a majority of the former did vote for recommitment and against passage.

Among the Class of ’46, the Democrats, even the Southern Democrats, were more loyal to their leadership than the more senior members, while the Interior Republican members were less loyal. The only Democrat to buck the leadership by voting against recommitment and for passage was Hugh Meade. The only Republicans to vote for recommitment and against passage were Vail and Edward Jenison of Illinois. The lesser unfaithful were Robert Jones of Alabama, Battle, Smathers, James Davis, Lusk, Deane, Hamilton Jones, and Redden, Democrats who voted for passage; Howard Coffin of Michigan, Russell, and Phillips, Republicans who voted for recommitment; and Goff, Sanborn, Owens, Meyer, Smith, Youngblood, Banta, Norris Cotton of New Hampshire, St. George, and Maloney, Republicans against passage.⁴⁷

Price levels mean nothing if people cannot get ... homes to shelter them....

By the start of 1947 the housing supply was still “shockingly inadequate.” The value of new residential housing construction in 1946 was only 6% greater than in 1941, and in that earlier year it was still recovering from the Depression. The value would increase 26% in 1947 over 1946 and 20% in 1948 over 1947, but was still laboring to meet demand. Nearly all was privately funded, 93% in 1946, 98% in 1947, 99% in 1948, though often aided by lower mortgage guarantees of the GI Bill.⁴⁸

Housing for veterans was a major concern. Four million of them were said to be still seeking a domicile in 1947. The Senate Banking and Currency Committee reported out the Taft-Ellender-Wagner housing bill on April 23, which would spend \$100 million per year to build public housing, 500,000 new units within four years, and ideally result in 12.5 million new units in ten years. Chair Jesse Wolcott’s (R MI) House Banking and Currency Committee, however, refused to hold hearings on the bill (HR 2523, which was introduced by Javits), and a discharge petition to force it out failed. Pushed by Truman, authored by Republican “Mr. Conservative” Sen. Taft, Southern Democratic Sen. Allen Ellender (LA), and Northern Democratic Sen. Robert Wagner (NY), and supported by House Veterans’ Affairs Chair Edith Nourse Rogers (MA), it would have seemed to cover the partisan and political field, but it failed to even reach the House floor.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ *The Daily Register* (Harrisburg), May 2, 1947.

⁴⁷ Maloney paired against recommitment. Bakewell paired against recommitment and did not vote on passage. McGarvey voted against recommitment and did not vote on passage. Sarbacher paired against recommitment and for passage. Nixon, Mitchell, Morton, Howes Meade, and Macy did not vote in either roll call.

⁴⁸ Donovan (1977), 262. *Historical Statistics*, Part II, Series N 50-60, using constant dollars. Goulden, 135-6.

⁴⁹ Gambone, 23. Donovan (1977), 62-3. *Congressional Record*, June 16, 1947, 7060-1, “Record of the 80th Congress (January-July, 1947).”

Strikes ... still hamper production.

While tax relief was the subject of the first bill in the 80th House, addressing industrial conflict through the Taft-Hartley Act is easily the most remembered domestic accomplishment of the Congress.

Republican election campaigns advocated changes to labor law. "Labor bosses" in general were attacked and the "Communist" CIO in particular was pilloried. Complaints about the frequency and severity of workers' strikes were commonplace. Such strikes were a notable headache for the President as well. Truman, in his State of the Union address on January 6, proposed outlawing jurisdictional strikes, prohibiting secondary boycotts, binding arbitration on existing agreements, and the creation of a joint commission to study further changes in labor law.⁵⁰

Many members of Congress had already beaten the President to the punch; eighteen bills addressing organized labor were introduced on the first day of the session in the House alone. Apart from concern over strikes and the activities of Unions in general, the Supreme Court ruled on June 10, 1946, that the Fair Labor Standards Act required employers to pay workers for their required preparatory time. This decision on so-called "portal-to-portal" pay resulted in an outpouring of suits on behalf of workers, amounting to over \$5 billion in claims by the convening of the 80th Congress and concern among some members as to the effect on business and on tax refunds to business. While legitimate economic concerns, this also fed into the atmosphere of anti-Union posturing, not least because the CIO filed the determining legal case and was particularly aggressive in bringing the subsequent suits.⁵¹

Two of the House bills introduced on opening day were portal-to-portal bills, which were referred to the Judiciary Committee rather than the Education and Labor Committee because of their effect on court rulings. The Judiciary Committee reported a clean bill, HR 2157, on February 25, which the House passed on February 28.

Eight Republican members of the Class of 1946 participated in the debate on HR 2157 – Coudert, Keating, Owens, Reeves, MacKinnon and Edward Devitt of Minnesota, and Robert McGarvey of Pennsylvania – all supportive of the legislation, although Keating advocated for a longer statute of limitations than the bill proposed. Javits also spoke but without commitment on the bill. Two Democratic members of the Class spoke, Wilson supporting the bill and Karsten opposing. Passage on February 28 was overwhelming, 345-56.

All but nine of the 56 opposing votes came from Northern Democrats. Five Republicans opposed the bill, including Howes Meade, Javits, and Brophy. Four Border Democrats opposed it, including Karsten of St. Louis and Johnson. No Southern Democrats voted against the bill although 11 failed to vote at all, including Smathers. Other non-voters included Kingsland Macy of New York, Homer Jones of Washington, both Republican, and Lusk, a Democrat. Once again, Donohue was an outlier, being one of five Northern Democrats voting for the bill, which also included Philbin.

HR 2157 as passed by the House was broader than the portal-to-portal issue. It would restrict judicial authority on suits already filed, reduce the penalties that might ensue, and make good faith as well as existing customs and practices legitimate defenses for the employers. Future suits would face a one-year statute of limitations. The Senate moderated the bill and the conference report extended the statute of limitations to two years and eliminated the judicial restrictions, but retained the good faith and customs and practices defenses as well as the reduction in penalties. The report also limited the bill to portal-to-

⁵⁰ Donovan (1977), 261.

⁵¹ *Anderson et al. v. Mt. Clemens Pottery Co.*, 328 U.S. 680. "Record of the 80th Congress (January-July, 1947)." Linder, 98, 176.

portal contests. Truman took the maximum ten days to return the bill signed on May 14 after substantial disagreements within his staff, recognizing that a veto would not be sustained.⁵²

In the meantime, Education and Labor reported HR 3020 on April 12, a clean bill addressing labor unions globally, that was sponsored by its Chair, Fred Hartley of New Jersey. The bill would outlaw pension plans, group insurance, and hospitalization as subjects for collective bargaining. Mass picketing would be illegal as would most industry-wide bargaining. Unions would be subject to antitrust laws. Closed shops would be illegal and union shops would require employer approval. The quasi-judicial and prosecutorial functions of the National Labor Relations Board would be separated. Injunctions could be brought against unions that threatened public safety. Political contributions by unions would be forbidden.⁵³

The House passed the bill on April 17, 308-107. While 215 Republicans voted for it, 22 voted nay, over half of them Class of '46. Southern Democrats joined with Republicans in support with 79 for and 16 voting against the bill. Border Democrats split 11 for to 14 against. Northern Democrats divided 3-54.⁵⁴

Members of the Class of '46, particularly Republicans, were active in debate.

Among Republicans, MacKinnon, Owens, Seely-Brown, Smith, Bradley, Jackson and Richard Nixon of California, Chadwick and Carroll Kearns of Pennsylvania, and Francis Love of West Virginia supported the bill in debate. Keating spoke in opposition to an amendment to ban the closed shop, in opposition to the elimination of union trust funds, and in favor of industry-wide bargaining. Kersten spoke in opposition to banning the union shop and in support of preserving union benefit funds, and for industry-wide bargaining. He also moved an amendment to prevent employers from agreeing on a wage policy in their industries, which was accepted. Devitt spoke in favor of Kersten's amendment. Javits offered an amendment to replace injunctions when strikes threatened public safety with government seizure, which was rejected. Republican Mitchell Jenkins of Pennsylvania proposed an amendment to expand allowable industry-wide bargaining, which was rejected. Lodge moved an amendment to allow pension plans, group insurance benefits, and hospitalization benefits to be part of collective bargaining, which failed 62-94. Snyder said that he liked a lot in the bill but that he was for industry-wide bargaining. Potts opposed an amendment by Charles Bell (D MO) to bar people who had ever been a communist from union offices, saying young people make mistakes, but it passed 153-10.

Democrat Lanham also questioned Bell's amendment to bar communists, saying "who is to determine whether a man is a Communist or has been? ... Is the man given a hearing....?"⁵⁵ He moved an amendment to prohibit employees from bypassing the union in dealing with employers, which was rejected. Democrats Blatnik, Carroll, and Karsten strongly opposed the bill in debate. Albert spoke on the floor in favor of the bill's restricting "labor bosses" but opposed its restriction on industry-wide bargaining. Hardy favored recommitment and industry-wide bargaining. Kennedy offered an amendment to allow a union shop without employer approval, which was rejected. He also delivered perhaps the most quotable summary of HR 3020:

The bill contains clauses which do much toward guaranteeing each individual union member a square deal from his union. It makes an effort to end feather-bedding, racketeering, and arbitrary combinations of unions which conspire to set prices and conditions which benefit themselves alone. All of these clauses are good, but let us recognize that these clauses are merely window-dressing to secure support from those Members

⁵² Linder, *passim*.

⁵³ "Labor Management Relations Act," *CQ Almanac 1947*, 3rd ed., on-line.

⁵⁴ The one American Labor Party member also voted against the bill.

⁵⁵ *Congressional Record*, April 17, 1947, 3627.

who feel that this Congress has an obligation to correct existing evils. The actual fact is ... this bill would in its present form strike down in one devastating blow the union shop, industry-wide bargaining, and so strangle collective bargaining with restraints and limitations as to make it ineffectual.⁵⁶

The Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee also reported a bill under the sponsorship of its chair, Taft, that was less hostile to unions than Hartley's bill, less due to Taft than to Committee Republicans George Aiken of Vermont, Irving Ives of New York, and Wayne Morse of Oregon. The Senate as a whole amended the bill more forcefully against unions, but nevertheless passed a more moderate bill on May 13 than the House's.⁵⁷

During three weeks of conference negotiations lobbying on the bills intensified. Sen. Aiken said, "It is a wonder that Members of the Senate can hold their tempers and vote ... according to their best judgment, because we have been subjected to the most intensive, expensive, and vicious propaganda campaign that any Congress has ever been subjected to." He focused his ire on supporters of the bill, but the opposition was also highly active.⁵⁸

The conference report would permit union shops without employer approval but only if state law allowed them. Welfare funds would be allowed if the employer was represented in managing them. Industry-wide bargaining would be allowed. Political contributions by unions and corporations would be forbidden. But most of Hartley's bill was retained. The House accepted the report 346-55 on June 4, the Senate two days later. The House allowed little debate on conference reports, but Owens managed to interject on the record his opposition to the report as not adequately separating the prosecutorial and judicial functions of the NLRB, but he voted for it anyway.

Twenty-one members switched their votes from nays to ayes on the conference report, ten Southern Democrats, three Border Democrats, and eight Republicans.⁵⁹

Truman vetoed the bill on June 20, the House overriding immediately 331-83 and the Senate doing so on June 23, but only after a filibuster forced that three-day postponement.

Only three members switched their votes from the conference report. Richard Welch of California, who gave up the Chair of Labor and Education to Hartley under pressure, opposed the bill at each vote.

The votes on the Labor Management Relations Act of 1947, AKA Taft-Hartley, was a classic case of what came to be called the Conservative Coalition – a union of Southern Democrats and Republicans opposed to Northern Democrats. It was classic not only in its thoroughness, 305 coalitionists for and 19 against, versus two Northern Democrats for and 50 against on acceptance of the conference report, but also in its policy stance. Political scientist V.O. Key's analysis of what he called the Southern Democratic-Republican Coalition in the congresses preceding the Eightieth concluded that the signature issue defining the Coalition was Labor.⁶⁰

Members of the Class of '46 were largely consistent with their partisan and regional cohorts, but there were notable exceptions. Javits, Brophy, Phillips, Homer Jones, and Thor Tollefson of Washington joined the five other Republicans who opposed HR 3020 on passage, conference report, and veto override votes. James Patterson of Connecticut, Twyman, Howes Meade, Russell, Snyder, and Jenkins and James Scoblick of Pennsylvania voted against passage of the bill but shifted to support with the conference report. Thus,

⁵⁶ *Congressional Record*, April 16, 1947, 3512-3.

⁵⁷ "Record of the 80th Congress (January-July, 1947)."

⁵⁸ "Labor Management Relations Act," *CQ Almanac 1947*, 3rd ed., on-line. Donovan (1977), 301.

⁵⁹ As with usual recurring votes on a bill, most of the changes in totals result from non-voting.

⁶⁰ Key (1949), 355-9, 374-8.

exactly half of the Republican opponents on passage were Class members. Phillips of Tennessee opposed HR 3020 on all three votes.

Only one Southern Democrat in the Class opposed HR 3020 on all three votes: Lanham. Four other Southern Democrats did so. On passage, Robert Jones and Smathers voted nay, along with Lanham and 16 other Southern Democrats, but the two converted to supporters with the conference report.

Among Border Democrats, Johnson and Morris remained opponents through all three votes, while Albert voted against passage, then shifted to support.

Truman's veto of Taft-Hartley, sure to be overridden, has been characterized as a savvy, perhaps Machiavellian move. While the President thought it a bad bill, he had proposed restrictions on unions himself and he did not interject himself into the debate over the bill. The excessiveness of the lobbying, private and public during that debate, revealed the criticality perceived for the bill both by organized labor and private corporations. The issue drew a hard political line and would for years to come for these politically active segments of the population. Truman had lost significant union support during his battles with strikers. By his veto and his accompanying categorical written objections, as well as going on the air to explain his opposition, placed himself squarely on one side of that line. He ensured not only Labor support for himself, particularly in the 1948 election, but reliable union support for Democratic presidential candidates until reforms in the presidential nominating process of the Party substantially decreased Labor's ability to choose Democratic candidates to their liking from 1972 on.⁶¹

Workers' rights was also a New Deal issue, and many of the Rooseveltian liberals, who had cooled to Truman, partly through perceptions of his insufficiency to follow the great leader, partly through the shakedown cruise that every presidency embarks on, and partly through the domestic postwar issues that forced some retreat from New Deal ideals, were also drawn back to some degree to the Truman Presidency. But most Southern Democrats in the House abandoned the President in his vetoes of the two most critical domestic issues of the first session of the 80th Congress.⁶²

... to lead other bewildered and confused peoples toward the path of freedom and Christianity....

Truman's presidency was long considered as at best a missed opportunity, at worst an outright failure, and the man was often remembered more for his comeback victory at the polls in 1948 rather than for administrative or policy accomplishments. He remained overshadowed by his predecessor, Franklin Roosevelt, and by the popularity if not the policy performance of his successor, Eisenhower. David McCullough's popular biography of Truman in 1992 did much to rehabilitate him, and the basis for this rehabilitation was foreign policy.

By the end of 1946 the Truman Administration countered various moves by the Soviet Union, including in Iran and occupied Korea and with respect to the Dardanelles in Turkey, supported the Bernard Baruch plan on civilian control of atomic energy and the economic merger of the British and American zones in Germany, both of which upset the Soviets, and fired Henry Wallace for his public disagreement with the more hard line Secretary of State James Byrnes. The year 1947 saw a more confrontational

⁶¹ Donovan (1977), 301-3. Goulden, 240.

⁶² Donovan (1977), 303-4.

approach by the Administration to communist activities or what was perceived as such, and the Republican Congress reacted positively.⁶³

Gen. George Marshall attempted for a year to mediate the Chinese civil war, getting the western-oriented Kuomintang to adopt a new constitution, which the Communists promptly rejected, but Marshall also recognized that military forces in the Kuomintang would not accept Communist participation in any event. His return to Washington and his report in January 1947 was essentially a negative assessment of the prospects for peace.⁶⁴

On February 21 the British Embassy in Washington formally notified the Department of State that British military assistance to the Greek and Turkish governments would end on March 31 due to the United Kingdom's economic situation. The Truman Administration was already aware of the worsening situation for the Greek government in regard to communist-led guerrillas in the north. The State Department warned that the government was likely to be overthrown. The British warned that Turkey needed aid to resist Soviet pressure. On March 12 Truman spoke to a joint congressional session to declare the need for American intervention, enunciating what came to be called the Truman Doctrine: "I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures."⁶⁵

In April, the conference of French, British, American, and Soviet foreign ministers in Moscow, which was to agree on peace treaties with Germany and Austria and to coordinate the governance of the occupation zones there, ended in stalemate. Marshall, Secretary of State since January 21, reported on the conference to the American public by radio on April 28.⁶⁶

On June 5, Marshall, speaking at commencement at Harvard University, called for a program of aid for Europe to help in restoring its war-ravaged economy. Undersecretary Dean Acheson had already given a similar address in Mississippi, and former Governor and aspirant for the presidency Harold Stassen, former Vice Pres. Wallace, and Roosevelt adviser Benjamin Cohen were giving similar speeches around the country. While preventing communist gains in Europe was not mentioned as a purpose, it was generally understood to be a concern, and when the Soviets explicitly rejected participation on July 2 after a meeting with the French and British foreign ministers, the Marshall Plan became another Cold War milestone.⁶⁷

Truman asked for \$400 million in economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey. The desire of fiscal conservatives to reduce government expenditures aligned somewhat with the objection of isolationists to expanded American foreign involvement. Then there were those who feared the aid would prompt more war, and leftists in particular were concerned with the support of rightist governments in the two countries. And many felt the new United Nations was the proper body to address conflict between states.

Charles Eaton of New Hampshire, Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, introduced the Administration bill, HR 2616, in the House on March 18: \$300 million for Greece, \$150 million of it military aid, and \$100 million, pretty much all military aid, for Turkey. Despite Truman's expressed urgency, the Committee did not report until April 25 and included Javits' desire for amendments requiring UN involvement in Turkey and government reforms in both countries. Javits was one of three on the

⁶³ Donovan (1977), 194-5, 248-9, 251, 206-7.

⁶⁴ Pogue, 135-43.

⁶⁵ Donovan (1977), 277-84.

⁶⁶ Pogue, 197-200.

⁶⁷ Pogue, 207-25.

Committee who voted present on the bill. The Rules Committee then took until May 6 to report, and then only when Chair Leo Allen of Illinois joined the 6-5 majority while reserving the right to oppose passage. Consideration on the floor of the rule and the bill took four days, longer than any other bill in the House that session, yet there was little doubt the bill would pass, and only one non-Committee amendment of the two-dozen introduced was accepted. Passage came on May 9, 287-108; then the House substituted the Senate bill.⁶⁸

Members of the Class of '46 participated actively in the debate. Most supported the bill: Republicans Chadwick, Jenkins, Muhlenberg, Cotton, Devitt, MacKinnon, Goff, Jackson, Morton, Ellsworth Foote of Connecticut, and Walter Riehlman of New York. Democrats Preston, Johnson, Hamilton Jones, Smathers, and Teague also spoke in support. Republican Lodge also registered his support, too, while couching it in an attack on the Administration in "the betrayal of Poland at Yalta, the help we have furnished to Tito, the hands-off policy in China."⁶⁹ Republican Keating spoke for the bill but favored amendments to limit the numbers of American troops deployed to the countries. Republican Kersten also supported the bill and tried to broaden it by amendment to sanction countries supporting the guerillas. His amendment was ruled nongermane.

The most vocal opposition among the Class of '46 was by Republicans Owens and St. George and Democrats Blatnik and Morris.

Blatnik argued that if the US sent aid to Greece, it would be used against the Greek people. Having worked with the Yugoslav partisans against the Axis during the War, he claimed to know the guerrillas, and contended that responsible people in the Greek government had been in league with the German occupation. If there is outside interference in Greece, he said, it should be taken to the UN. Blatnik introduced HJRes 160 to provide aid to Greece through the UN, but it never made it out of committee. Morris also supported working through the UN and argued that many of the guerrillas had worked with the Allies against the Germans. But his greater concern seemed to be isolationist and pacific, saying, "[W]e cannot, by force, stop communism nor any false religious or political belief in the minds of people. The use of force will only spread it." "[T]he only way to stop communism is to make democracy work well in this country."⁷⁰

Owens, in a series of interjections that brought a reproach from Eaton, asked a stream of questions attuned to criticism of Administration policies. St. George stuck with a combination of denigration of Administration acquiescence to communist expansion and isolationist coexistence with communism.

We talk about democracy being saved in Greece and Turkey. What has happened and what have we done to save democracy in Poland, in Latvia, in Estonia, in Yugoslavia, in Czechoslovakia, in Bulgaria, and in Rumania? We are coming in a little late to save democracy. What I think the President should have told us, and what I believe he meant is that it is high time now to assume Britain's role in the world, to take on the imperial purple, to keep order, and to go out and do it ourselves. ... [I]f communism is what Europe wants and she will not accept us on our own terms, we will get on the best we can with a Communist Europe, making it very clear that while we respect the opinions of others we are going to insist that they, in turn, shall respect ours. We will not tolerate outside interference in our affairs or in the affairs of this hemisphere; and let us remember always that nothing is more barren and profitless than to bolster up weak puppet governments.⁷¹

⁶⁸ "Aid to Greece and Turkey," *CQ Almanac 1947*, 3rd ed., on-line.

⁶⁹ *Congressional Record*, May 7, 1947, 4716-7.

⁷⁰ *Congressional Record*, March 28, 1947, 2837.

⁷¹ *Congressional Record*, March 13, 1947, 2049.

Republicans Bradley and Phillips were most worried that the military support for Greece and Turkey might lead to a greater war. The latter seemed to advocate for a UN solution overseas, while being more concerned about domestic communists than foreign ones. He also offered an amendment, which was rejected, to provide a hiring preference for veterans for any positions funded.

Democrat Carroll and Republicans Patterson and Javits also preferred a UN solution. Javits offered an amendment to require the President to take the issues in the two countries to the UN, while simultaneously providing the aid under the bill. Everything could be handled by the UN if the President would just do so, he argued. The amendment was rejected. He also offered another amendment which was rejected that would require the receiving government to be both representative and take appropriate economic measures.

Democrat James Davis also sought to constrain the governments of Greece and Turkey by moving an add-on to sharpen a Committee amendment that denied them the ability to use any of the American funds to retire any existing debts. This was the only amendment of the 24 that was accepted, in part because it was the least effective, given the fungibility of funds, but sounded good.

The most offhand comments were those of Democrat Dorn who persistently tried to link HR 2616 to his support of the Franco regime in Spain, and who was regularly told that the connection was irrelevant. But he said he would support the bill.

Only thirteen Democrats voted nay, ten of them Northerners. Among the Class of '46, Blatnik was opposed. Morris was the only Border Democrat to vote nay, and Stanley was one of the two Southern Democrats who were opposed. Preston did not vote.

Republicans split 127-94, not along clean geographic lines, but enough to provide some support to assumptions of midwestern isolationism. The Northeastern and Pacific Coast states voted 83 to 30 for the bill, while the Interior states voted 44 to 64 against the bill. Class of '46 Republicans voted 43 to 17 for the bill, more supportive than returning Republicans by twenty percentage points. Regional contrarians were Pennsylvanians McGarvey, Maloney, Sarbacher, Dague, Scoblick, and Crow, Boggs of Delaware, and Gregory McMahon of New York, all opposed (St. George paired against). Goff of Idaho, Smith of Kansas, Morton of Kentucky, Coffin of Michigan, MacKinnon and Devitt of Minnesota, Reeves and Bakewell of Missouri, Burke of Ohio, Dawson of Utah, Love and Snyder of West Virginia, and Glenn Davis, Brophy, and Kersten of Wisconsin voted yea (Mitchell of Indiana paired for). Owens and Howes Meade did not vote.⁷²

Clark Clifford, a White House counsel and one of the primary architects of the Truman Doctrine, would contend that the President intended his speech "to mark a historic departure from traditional American foreign policy." The Nation would be an international activist, a biased world policeman, primarily devoted to containing the Soviet Union.⁷³ The Marshall Plan was a major part of that strategy, though its focus, unlike the aid to Greece and Turkey, would be economic improvement not military reinforcement. But with adjournment of Congress approaching in July, a major initiative such as the Plan would have to wait. The President had requested on February 21, and Congress had already authorized \$350 million for relief for war-devastated countries via HJRes 153, which became law on May 31.

⁷² West Virginia (3-1 for) is included with the northeastern states. Members who planned on missing a vote had recourse to a pairing mechanism that matched their support or opposition with a member of the opposite inclination. This allowed their positions to be recorded. The paired votes did not alter the result of the roll call vote, which they could not, being balanced.

⁷³ Clifford, 140.

The debate on HJRes 153 revolved around who would get the aid – communists? dead-beat countries? – and concerns over cost. Republicans Chadwick, Jackson, Javits, and Lodge, and Democrats Carroll and Morris were all in for the bill. Chadwick was particularly concerned that eastern Europe get funds, worries about communists be damned. Democrat Albert was supportive but concerned about it taking money away from domestic needs and that the money might go to communists. Morris asked, “What would the Master of us all do if He had the authority to take this money and feed people? Would He ask if a man were a Communist?”⁷⁴ Republican Seely-Brown worried that unilateral aid would diminish the UN. His Nutmeg compatriot, Antoni Sadlak, primarily was interested in making sure Poland got aid, which met head-on the communist issue. Democrats James Davis and Dorn, and Republicans Phillips, Snyder, and Owens were openly skeptical of the bill. Davis felt that the United States economy would soon crash. Dorn worried about communists and waste. Owens questioned the bill’s constitutionality, asking if it provided for the common defense or the general welfare of the United States and proposed an amendment to declare that it did. The House thought the amendment unnecessary. Lodge successfully moved an amendment that would suspend treaty reparations for participating countries, such as Italy, but the conference report eventually left this out. Republican St. George also offered an amendment to create a director of relief, independent of the president, and thus, she argued, to ensure the program would not be run by communists. The House found this to be unneeded.

The House cut the authorization to \$200 million and passed the bill 333-66 and then passed the conference report which restored the \$350 million 288-86. In the Class of ’46, nays on both passage and conference came from Republicans Smith, Youngblood, Reeves, Banta, McMahon, Maloney, Sarbacher, Kearns, and Phillips. Democrats Wheeler, Passman, Williams, Dorn, Lucas, Omar Burleson of Texas, and Harrison also voted nay on both opportunities. Republicans Sanborn, Vail, Jenison, and Dague voted the passage of the House version but opposed the conference report. Democrats Teague and Stanley voted nay at House passage and paired nay for the conference report.⁷⁵

Millions of men and women ... are still displaced ... and, in many cases, bereft of loved ones.

Concerns about aid to countries under Soviet occupation or domination, that is Poland, Hungary, and part of Austria, were countered by ripostes that the aid was for people, not governments.⁷⁶

A more direct aid to people would have been to relax immigration laws to admit more of the displaced or otherwise War-impacted individuals into the United States. Existing immigration laws limited admission by national origin based on a quota system that allowed a total of 153,879 immigrants from non-Western Hemisphere countries annually. At the end of 1946 the Administration counted over one million displaced persons (DPs) in Germany, Austria, and Italy, excluding the Soviet zones of occupation in Germany and Austria and not fully counting those in the French and British zones. Of those enumerated, 322,000 were Polish (annual quota 6524), 195,819 were Balts (738), 62,027 were Yugoslav (845), 25,925 were Soviet

⁷⁴ “Aid to Greece and Turkey,” *CQ Almanac 1947*, 3rd ed., on-line. *Congressional Record*, April 29, 1947, 4215.

⁷⁵ Republican Cotton paired yea at House passage. Republicans Morton and Howes Meade of Kentucky and Macy of New York failed to vote at House passage. Republicans McGarvey, Crow, and Dawson, and Democrats Smathers of Florida, Lusk of New Mexico, and Evins of Tennessee did not vote on the conference report. Republican Mitchell of Indiana did not vote at either opportunity. Finally, Republican Glenn Davis of Wisconsin was not seated yet for House passage but voted aye for the conference report.

⁷⁶ See for example the colloquy of George Sadowski (D, MI) and Preston Peden (D, OK and Class of ’46), *Congressional Record*, February 28, 1947, 1578.

Russian (2712), and 242,851 were tallied as Jewish without specification of national origin. The Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization reported that most Jewish DPs wanted to emigrate to Palestine, where the United Kingdom, governing the area as a League of Nations Mandate, had restricted Jewish immigration since 1939.⁷⁷

William Stratton (R IL) introduced HR 2910 to allow 100,000 refugees in annually for four years. The bill received extensive hearings by a Judiciary subcommittee, but was not reported out. Members of the Class of '46 Javits, Glenn Davis, and Jenkins testified before the Subcommittee in support of the bill, and Foote submitted a statement in support.⁷⁸ Javits also introduced his own bill seeking to admit orphans as non-quota immigrants. MacKinnon introduced a bill to admit Polish Army veterans outside the quota. All were Republicans. The bills did not make it out of committee.

Congress also enacted membership in the new International Refugee Organization, which was to take over caring for the DPs in Germany, Austria, and Italy from the western occupying powers, and authorized \$73.5 million for it in its first year. HJRes 207 specified that nothing in this membership altered US policy on immigration. Democrat Preston Peden of Oklahoma opposed continuing aid to refugees, saying they will not work and they will not repatriate. Also in debate, Republicans Owens, Kersten, and Youngblood showed concern for German DPs, who were not considered refugees by the Administration or the UN. German DPs were almost universally escapists, voluntarily or involuntarily, from Soviet occupied countries, most from areas of pre-war Germany now annexed by Poland. They were considered by the UN to have been repatriated to Germany.

Sympathy for Germans was a recurring concern of Owens and Kersten. The latter introduced unsuccessful HJRes 279 to end dismantling of plants for reparations in the American zone. These two along with Youngblood represented portions of counties with large numbers of German-born. Cook County in Illinois, Milwaukee County in Wisconsin, and Wayne County in Michigan, ranked first, fourth, and fifth, respectively among counties represented by members of the Class of '46 in numbers of German-born in the 1940 Census. The fathers of Kersten and Youngblood were German-born, as were the latter's parents-in-law.⁷⁹ Second and third ranks went to New York County and Queens County, both in New York City. Javits from New York County rather showed an anti-German streak, as did Blatnik of Minnesota. Javits was Jewish and Blatnik had fought in the partisan wars, notable for German atrocities.

Poland and Polish refugees got a great deal of sympathy from Republicans Brophy, Chadwick, Keating, Owens, Lodge, and Sadlak, but only Owens, Brophy, and Sadlak could claim large numbers of Polish born, and the last was of Polish ancestry. A certain amount of Republican oratory on Poland was directed at the Democratic "betrayal of Poland" at Yalta.

Lodge's greater concern was Italy, which he addressed frequently. While he had a large number of Italian-American constituents, he also had an Italian wife.

Javits was much concerned on the floor with Palestine, or more accurately the Jews of Palestine. He was joined in this by Democrat Blatnik and by Republicans Owens, Twyman, and St. George. Jewish population was strongly related positively to urban size, and so Chicago, the home of Owens and Twyman, had significant numbers. St. George's District outside New York City had significant numbers, as did Duluth

⁷⁷ *Permitting Admission of 400,000 Displaced Persons into the United States*. Hearings before Subcommittee on Immigration and Naturalization of the Committee of the Judiciary, 63, 92, 122-5, 227.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 264, 274, 281, 295.

⁷⁹ *The Winona Daily News*, August 13, 1968. 1910 Census schedule, Wayne County, Michigan. *Port Huron Times-Herald*, July 12, 1940; January 19, 1960.

in Blatnik's bailiwick. But other Class members with substantial Jewish constituents were much more silent on the matter. Twyman announced that 29 Republicans would introduce identical concurrent resolutions restating American policy for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Republican Goff of Idaho was the only member of the Class of '46 to oppose this proposition. Throughout the session of Congress Truman was wrestling with Jewish, Republican, British, Arab, War Department, and State Department pressure, each in a divergent direction on Palestine, and his own support for Jewish immigration and obligation to protect American interests. In the meantime, conflict in the Mandate increased as did illegal Jewish immigration to it, while the static state of over 200,000 Jewish refugees in Germany persisted.⁸⁰

We helped our allies with millions of men....

Twyman's 29 concurrent resolutions illustrate much about the nature of bills in Congress. None of the 29 members expected their resolution to be adopted or even to be reported out of committee. Their purpose was not immediate legislation but political positioning. The resolutions represented partisan Republican pressure on the Democratic Administration and, more importantly, individual "self-aggrandizement" in political scientist David Mayhew's terms.⁸¹ It advertises the participating members to constituents, Zionists, Republican partisans, and other members, the last being critical as the participants constituted something of an organized group, not only on the issue at hand but perhaps on other matters. The leadership was alerted to take these members into account.

Self-aggrandizement also partly explains why members of the Class of '46 introduced 70 bills touching on military veterans in this session of Congress. Perhaps when Democrat Passman introduced HR 501 on the second legislative day he actually expected to be legislating, but it is likely that the introducers were increasingly disabused of that pipedream. Sixty of the bills failed to get reported out of committee. Their lack of substance was probably not the primary reason, though HR 1548 from Peden to encourage the settlement of veterans in Alaska could have fallen through for that reason alone.⁸²

⁸⁰ For a map of Jewish population by county in 1950 see Gaustad, 153. Members of the Class of '46 who introduced Twyman's resolution were Boggs, Brophy, Coffin, Crow, Foote, Jackson, Javits, Keating, Lodge, MacKinnon, Howes Meade, Mitchell, Morton, Muhlenberg, Riehlman, Seely-Brown, St. George, Tollefson, Twyman, Youngblood, Potts, and Ross, in other words 22 of the 29. Ross appears to have been the only Jew in the Class other than Javits until joined by two others from special elections. Ross did not participate in debate on the matter. Donovan (1977), 312-9.

⁸¹ See Chapter Seven.

⁸² These were HR 661 & HR 2242 by Williams, HR 1033 & HR 1034 by Boggs, HR 1181 & HR 2985 by Teague, HR 1283 & HR 3141 & HR 3142 & HR 3584 by Howes Meade, HR 1385 & HR 3719 by Phillips, HR 1354 & HR 1569 & HR 2179 by Smathers, HR 1456 by Crow, HR 1462 by Karsten, HR 1429 by Vail, HR 1548 & HR 4060 by Peden, HR 1612 & HR 3365 by James Davis, HR 1804 by Allen, HR 2145 by Muhlenberg, HR 2147 & HR 2679 & HR 2779 & HR 3047 & HR 3048 by Ross, HR 2170 by Johnson, HR 2172 by Lusk, HR 2226 by Bakewell, HR 2320 by Lodge, HR 2317 by Meyer, HR 2370 by Fletcher, HR 2366 & HR 3650 by Patterson, HR 2400 & HR 3381 & HR 3382 by Devitt, HR 2518 & HR 3922 & HR 4345 by Keating, HR 2566 by Blatnik, HR 2676 & HR 3508 by Foote, HR 2663 by McGarvey, HR 2681 by Snyder, HR 3234 by Morton, HR 3517 by Owens, HR 3532 by Kersten, HR 3625 by Harrison, HR 3656 & HR 4358 & HR 4362 by Donohue, HR 3669 by Sarbacher, HR 3710 & HR 3840 by Battle, HR 3783 & HR 4098 by Kennedy, HR 3832 by Mitchell, HR 3909 by Scoblick, HR 3946 & HR 3974 by MacKinnon, HR 4058 by Redden, HR 4056 by Wheeler, HR 4066 by Bradley, and HR 4137 by Evins. *The Yiddish Policemen's Union* by Michael Chabon is an alternative history mystery which realizes Peden's failed bill.

Given the large number of veterans among the Class of '46 and on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, a focus on veterans legislation was to be expected. Democrat Preston early in the session was one of the movers seeking to organize veterans among the members, though Robert Sikes (D FL) in his fourth term was reportedly the prime actor. It is unclear if they were successful, but such a cohesive group does not appear in the references, and if it was not bipartisan its effectiveness would have been limited.⁸³

A law that passed both houses unanimously, though opposed by the Administration as inflationary and potentially costing \$2 billion, was one to allow veterans to cash in their terminal leave bonds. These bonds, which paid 2½% annual interest and matured five years after discharge from the military, were issued to compensate for unused leave. Obviously very popular among members of Congress and among cash-strapped veterans, Truman reluctantly signed the Bill while advising veterans to hold their bonds. Three members of the Class introduced bills on the matter, none being reported.⁸⁴ The enacted HR 4017 was introduced by William Blackney (R MI), a six-term member and on the Armed Services Committee, which handled the issue. Albert, Bradley, James Davis, Dawson, Evins, Goff, MacKinnon, Preston, Redden, Reeves, Smathers, Teague, and Williams, all supportive, spoke on the floor on the matter.

Other popular measures enacted allowed veterans to reinstate and extend their National Service Life Insurance. Republicans Devitt, Crow, Phillips, and Robert Tripp Ross of New York introduced bills on these matters. One of Phillips' (HR 4141) made it out of committee but no further.⁸⁵ The enacted bills were introduced by Edith Nourse Rogers of Massachusetts, Chair of the Veterans Affairs Committee, and Jesse Wolcott of Michigan, Chair of the Banking and Currency Committee.

That the bills of committee chairs took precedence over other similar bills is unsurprising. What is not obvious is that these bills, as well as others reported out of committees, may have incorporated other similar bills. Committees often recommended amendments to bills they reported and sometimes would create a "clean" bill that originated within the committee, usually representing a syncretism of similar bills brought to the committee.

Popular measures among bill writers that did not make it into law were increases in subsistence payments for veterans in education and training (other than in farming, for which see below) and to resolve the shortage of housing for veterans (other than temporary housing on college campuses).⁸⁶ The Administration's aggressive Veterans Emergency Housing Program of 1946 had failed to win over the housing industry, everyone in the Administration, and complete support from Congress and failed. Veterans could get loans for housing through the GI Bill if they could find housing to buy, but enough units were just not there. The most redundant issue among veterans bills were those seeking to solve the housing problem for veterans by creating homestead associations. Twenty-four such bills were introduced, nine by members of the Class of '46.⁸⁷ None were enacted. The housing issue for veterans was, after all, a major component of the overall housing shortage.⁸⁸

⁸³ *Daily World*, January 9, 1947. *The Anniston Star*, February 2, 1947.

⁸⁴ *The New York Times*, July 27, 1947. HR 3048 from Ross, HR 3656 from Donohue, and HR 3946 from MacKinnon.

⁸⁵ The others were HR 2400 from Devitt, HR 3047 from Ross, HR 4561 from Crow, and HR3719 and HR4160 from Phillips.

⁸⁶ The debate on HR 2780 to provide funds for housing at colleges for veterans brought out comments by Carroll, Fletcher, Javits, MacKinnon, Seely-Brown, Youngblood, generally positive while worrying about the level of funding.

⁸⁷ HR 4654 by Bradley, HR 4674 by Crow, HR4697 by Hamilton Jones, HR 4720 by Albert, HR 4754 by Lusk, HR 4757 by Kersten, HR 4774 by MacKinnon, HR 4801 by Ross, and HR 4819 by James Davis.

⁸⁸ Donovan (1977), 262. "Record of the 80th Congress (January-July, 1947)."

Members of the Class of '46 managed to introduce three bills that became law out of the mass of 70 veterans bills. Easily the least controversial bill was HR 1544 from Republican Keating, to authorize a lapel button to be worn by survivors of dead veterans. It was signed into law on August 1. A more complicated path was taken by HR 2181, introduced by Democrat Wheeler. This bill provided for subsistence payments for veterans receiving training on farms. It was signed by the President on August 6, but it was amended in both the House and Senate and required a conference. The Veterans' Administration earlier opposed the benefit but now encouraged it. Sen. Taft, chair of the Republican Policy Committee, opposed the bill, saying there would be cheating.

HR 2181 illustrates another feature of law-making. Two members of the Class of '46 introduced similar bills that got nowhere – Democrat Johnson (HR 2170) and Republican Meyer (HR 2317). Many of the veterans bills introduced were quite similar. This could have been a concerted effort to demonstrate the importance of a matter, or it could have been contentious self-aggrandizement, or it may have been simply a wide-spread recognition of an issue that needed addressing. That Wheeler's succeeded while the others did not may have been due to superior drafting or superior timing, but given the tendency of bills to languish while committees worked through the deluge of bills referred to them, the greater likelihood is the influence of the sponsor. Wheeler, as a freshman member and a Democrat, should have been at a disadvantage. Meyer was a Republican, after all. Members who sat on the committee to which a bill was referred would also have an advantage over sponsors who did not, and all three men sat on Veterans' Affairs. On the other hand, only Wheeler sat on the subcommittee of Veterans' Affairs that held hearings on the bills and which reported Wheeler's bill rather than the others to the full committee.⁸⁹

Democrat Smathers and Republican Howes Meade introduced bills to increase subsistence payments more generally. Although two of Meade's, HR 3888 and HR 4212, made it out of committee, none were taken up on the floor.

The third veterans bill from a member of the Class of '46 that became law in 1947 was HR 3546, introduced by Republican Mitchell, and which was signed by Truman on August 1. This bill would allow retired officers to represent veterans organizations to the Veterans' Administration. He had this niche to himself.

Two veterans bills introduced by members of the Class passed the House but did not get taken up by the Senate – HR 3889 from Patterson and HR 4160 from Phillips, both Republicans. Patterson's bill was to provide a service presumption of illness from a tropical disease. Phillips' intent was to waive National Service Life Insurance premiums for the disabled.

Five bills were reported out of committee but did not make it to the floor of the House – HR 3565 from Democrat Donohue, HR 4141 from Phillips, HR 4243 from Sarbacher, and HR 4212 and HR 3888 from Howes Meade, three Republicans.

Then there was HR 4244 from Republican Vail, which was reported, but not until July 24 and was carried over to the second session in 1948.

⁸⁹ Omar Burleson of the Class from Texas would observe in debate, "[W]hether it is the gentleman's committee, my committee, or any other committee of this House, we are inclined to sit up there with a sort of supercilious attitude and say: 'Now, look, I know something about these things; but you do not know too much about this, my boy.' ... I did not go before his committee on this question." *Congressional Record*, March 4, 1952, 1847. *Hearings on H. R. 161, H. R. 870, H. R. 1617, and H. R. 2176, Bills to Increase Subsistence Allowance Rates for Education or Training under the Servicemen's Readjustment Act and Similar Proposals*. The others were HR 1354 from Smathers and another, HR 3584, from Howes Meade.

Complaints about the performance of the Veterans' Administration were numerous. Truman replaced the Administrator who had served since 1923 with Gen. Omar Bradley in August 1945. Bradley clashed with the American Legion, which had had close relations with his predecessor. The membership of many of the Class of '46 in the Legion may have affected their opinions about Bradley, but it is more likely that the complaints of their constituents did. The VA had to adapt quickly and not always successfully to the tide of veterans after the War.⁹⁰

Veterans' Affairs Chair Rogers sponsored HRes 120 to authorize a committee investigation of the Veterans' Administration, which Burlison opposed and Lusk and Lucas supported on the floor, all Democrats. Members of the Committee spread out across the country holding hearings. Republican Rep. Willis Bradley complained on the floor that Gen. Bradley was not responsive to the medical needs of veterans.

The VA began a huge hospital program before Gen. Bradley took over, and he expanded it, but a major problem was the siting of these hospitals, as the construction spending and salaries of staff brought much Federal pork to a member's district – or not.⁹¹ One particular hospital that brought a number of the Class of '46 to the House floor was Schick General Hospital in Clinton, Iowa. Schick was a War Department hospital that was no longer needed for the diminishing numbers of active soldiers. The VA did not want to take it over because of its distance from other medical centers, preferring to build a new hospital in Iowa City. A subcommittee under Crow investigated and recommended using it. Democrats Lusk and Carroll and Republicans Mitchell and Twyman debated HCRes 54 to make the VA use the hospital. The House passed the resolution, but it never made it to the Senate floor.

Overall, there was general discontent with the lack of veterans legislation reaching the floor. Committee Chair Rogers took to the floor four times to complain. On June 30 she addressed the House for an hour on appropriations to buy autos for veteran amputees and returned to the issue on July 19. On July 17 she laid the hold-up in veterans legislation on the leaders of both parties and the Rules Committee, which was holding seven bills and a concurrent resolution from the Veterans' Committee, and made a plea for housing for veterans. Republican Rogers said, "There are those who might contend that such governmental assistance follows a socialistic pattern, but it is my honest conviction that the seeds of socialism and other alien 'isms' find much more fertility in the shacks, huts, and hovels where many of our people are forced to exist today than in an intelligent plan of governmental assistance." She endorsed the veterans housing bill from Democrat Donohue of Massachusetts. The range of comments indicated bipartisan support for Rogers, but Democrat Williams could not resist a dig at the Republican leadership, and Democrat Kennedy used the occasion to observe that 50 Democrats signed a discharge petition for a general housing bill and no Republicans. On July 25 Rogers contended that no important legislation for veterans had passed. Democrat Carroll responded by laying the problem on the Republican leadership.⁹²

⁹⁰ Goulden, 58. Gambone, 33-6.

⁹¹ Gambone, 48-9.

⁹² *Congressional Record*, July 17, 1947, 9227. Rogers' address on June 30 brought endorsements on the floor from Republican Bradley and Democrats Evins, Hamilton Jones, Lusk, and Williams. Her plea on July 17 brought out Republicans Bakewell, Howes Meade, Phillips, and Twyman and Democrats Donohue, Hamilton Jones, Lusk, and Wheeler as well as Kennedy and Williams. On July 18 she was seconded by Republican Crow and on July 19 by Republican Kersten.

There is no room in the Government of the United States for any who prefer the communistic system....

Increasing conflict with Soviet and Soviet-aligned countries and political and guerrilla forces increased concerns over a threat from domestic communists. Speaker Martin's inaugural statement reflected and fed the alarm, primarily by Republicans, that the Roosevelt and Truman administrations included communists and communist sympathizers, who were necessarily treasonous.

What occupied the House in the communist wars during this session was contempt citations brought from the Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) against three men – Gerhart Eisler, Leon Josephson, and Eugene Dennis. Eisler was accused of being a liaison between the Comintern and the Communist Party – U.S.A., of which Dennis was general secretary. Josephson was alleged to have helped Eisler to fake his passport application.⁹³

In appearances before HUAC on February 6, March 5, and April 9 the three men were disruptive and refused to recognize the legitimacy of the Committee, much less answer its questions. The Committee referred citations for contempt to the full House on February 18 for Eisler and April 22 for Josephson and Dennis. Republican Nixon presented the Committee's cases, making his maiden speech on the floor. The men were deliberately contemptuous of the Committee, and citation by the full House was a foregone conclusion with only Marcantonio opposing. Vail, also a member of HUAC, participated in the floor debates on Eisler and Josephson, as did Twyman on Eisler and Owens on Dennis, all Republicans in support of citation. Republican Javits also commented during the debate on Eisler, supportive of citation, but critical of the Committee's processes. Parnell Thomas, chair of HUAC, accused the Administration of a security failure in not prosecuting the men earlier for passport fraud.⁹⁴ Concerns about the Committee's processes were voiced by appellate justices, without overturning the contempt convictions in the trial courts, as the cases made their way through the courts.

In the meantime, the House debated a bill to overturn the Supreme Court decision in *McNabb v. United States*. Four years earlier the Court reversed convictions in a 1940 case of the murder of a Federal alcohol tax officer in Tennessee by excluding evidence that was acquired through prolonged questioning by law enforcement officers before arraignment, basing this on criminal procedures enacted by Congress. Samuel Hobbs (D AL) introduced HR 4 to change the criminal procedures.⁹⁵

While the narrow legal issue did not depend on the Constitutional protection from self-incrimination, which would figure so heavily in HUAC's future pursuance of communists, the congruence of the issues was substantial. As the Supreme Court opinion in the McNabb case read, "Zeal in tracking down crime is not in itself an assurance of soberness of judgment. Disinterestedness in law enforcement does not alone prevent disregard of cherished liberties. Experience has therefore counseled that safeguards must be provided against the dangers of the overzealous, as well as the despotic."⁹⁶

Participation in the HR 4 debate on March 1 by members of the Class of '46 was tepid except for that of Democrat Johnson:

All of you who have practiced law know these things. You know what they do. You have had them come to you, parents of people being held, and you go to the district attorney's office to question them and you find locked doors and you cannot get in there and question them, and finally out comes the district attorney or the

⁹³ Goodman, 190-3.

⁹⁴ Goodman, 191-2, 194.

⁹⁵ Goodman, 193. *McNabb v. United States*, 318 U.S. 332 (1943).

⁹⁶ *McNabb*.

alcohol tax officers, and they will open the door and they will say, “Mr. Attorney, you can come in now; we have gotten a confession.” ... You pass this law here today and it will vitiate the McNabb decision; it is going to open the gates, and you are going to give the law-enforcement officers of this country a “blank check” to start their own third-degree methods, a thing we have not had for the past 3 years.⁹⁷

Defense attorneys sometimes defend in Congress as well as in court.

The House passed HR 4. It had passed the same bill in two previous sessions. The Senate would not sign on until 1968.

Truman’s Secretary of Labor, Lewis Schwellenbach, who had been a friend of the President’s in the Senate, in testimony before the House Education and Labor Committee on March 11, called for a law outlawing the Communist Party. Biographers of Truman have not been kind to Schwellenbach. Robert Donovan labeled him “a disastrous choice.” McCullough said he was ineffective. They were referring to his stewardship of his department, not to his opinions on civil liberties, but his opinion on the legality of the Communist Party was not Administration policy. Mundt’s bill to outlaw the Party had died on the last day of the 79th Congress, but the day after Schwellenbach’s testimony two such bills were introduced by John Rankin (D MI) and Harry Sheppard (D CA). FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover testified before HUAC on March 26 that the Party was subservient to the Soviet Union and its goal was the overthrow of the US government, which the Committee reported to the House on the 29th.⁹⁸

While Truman felt that worries of a domestic communist threat were much overblown, the results of the 1946 election in which the issue figured resulted in his appointment of the Temporary Commission on Employee Loyalty on November 25 to recommend a program to vet civil service allegiance. On March 21, 1947, by executive order the President implemented recommendations of the Commission that included background checks on all new Federal civilian employees as well as a mechanism for the loyalty of existing employees to be challenged. The Civil Service Commission was to implement this, which brought the ire of FBI Director Hoover, who told HUAC as much five days later. Persons could be denied employment based on “reasonable grounds for belief that the person is disloyal” but “disloyalty” was undefined. Accusations of disloyalty could be made without giving the accused the ability to confront the accuser. Eventually 212 people would be dismissed, a small number given the number of Federal employees, but a Star Chamber for those 212.⁹⁹

Edward Rees, Chair of the Post Office and Civil Service Committee, introduced HR 3813 on June 12 to establish a statutory loyalty program for government employees. Unlike the executive order, the bill attempted to define disloyalty and included the phrase “sympathetic association” with a proscribed organization or person. Republican Javits attempted to remove the phrase, calling it “thought control.” Republican Kersten observed that the phrase could mean anything from “mild interest to strong support.” Javits’ amendment was not accepted. Kersten also wanted to exclude “derogatory information” that did not relate to disloyalty, but the amendment was rejected. As with the executive order, the accused would have no right to confront their accuser. In debate on July 15, Arthur Klein (D NY) offered an amendment to correct this. Democrats Carroll and Johnson supported the amendment, but it was not accepted. Republican Keating managed by amendment to change “reasonable grounds” to “preponderance of the evidence.” Republican Homer Jones spoke strongly in support of the bill, Democrat Morris equally so in opposition, saying the bill was “based on hysteria.” Republican St. George voiced support for the bill,

⁹⁷ *Congressional Record*, March 1, 1947, 1386.

⁹⁸ Donovan (1977), 27. McCullough, 494. “Record of the 80th Congress (January-July, 1947).”

⁹⁹ Clifford, 178-9. McCullough, 552.

noting that ten people were dismissed from the State Department under Truman's order, saying that was enough for a communist cell. Twyman echoed St. George; Morton and Sadlak, all Republicans, spoke more calmly for the bill.¹⁰⁰

Three roll calls were taken on the bill – approval of the rule, recommittal, and passage. HR 3813 easily passed 319-61, though a motion to recommit was closer, 133-248. Only eight Republicans opposed passage, though 33 voted to recommit. Fifty-one Democrats rejected the bill and 99 voted to recommit. Southern Democrats voted 102-53 for passage and 100-57 to recommit. Northern Democrats voted against passage 13-34 and 48-2 for recommittal. The Senate did not act on the bill in the first session. Let us note that votes to recommit were less publicized than votes to enact. Votes to enact were, charitably, representing their constituents, while votes to recommit were more likely a reflection of the representatives' judgements. The two votes illustrate the Burkian juxtaposition of delegation versus trusteeship in representation. The reader might have noticed this already in previous discussions, but this bill demonstrated the difference forcefully.

Class of '46 members who voted against passage were Democrats Robert Jones, Battle, Johnson, Morris, Carroll, Blatnik, and Karsten. Kennedy, Donohue, Albert, Peden, and Lusk voted for passage as well as 19 Southern Democrats. The only Republican from the Class to oppose passage was Javits.

Nixon, Jackson, Lodge, Kersten, Glenn Davis, and Brophy were Republicans who supported recommittal, as well as Javits. Smathers, Lanham, Williams, Deane, Hardy, Lusk, Kennedy, Wilson, Teague, Lucas, and Burleson voted for recommittal as well as the other Class Democrats who opposed passage.

Economic and social organization must, like freedom, be based upon equal justice to endure.

Worries about domestic communists kept popping up in a variety of legislative actions. Concerns that government employees, specifically those high in the Administration, were communists or sympathizers impacted the Voice of America appropriation in June. An effort to ban veterans benefits to communists by Crow made it out of committee, also in June. A curious issue was the possible publication by the Legislative Reference Service of a pamphlet called *Fascism in Action*, following the issuance of *Communism in Action*. Wright Patman (D TX) introduced HRes 83 to print the one on Fascism, which met specific opposition in debate on July 8 from only two members, Democrat Williams, a member of the Class of '46, and James Fulton (R PA). Twelve members, including Class members Javits, Morris, and Smathers spoke for publication, yet Williams' motion to recommit failed by only 116-117 on division and 115-124 by teller. The Resolution passed on voice vote.¹⁰¹

Williams explained his opposition was largely because the "left-wing" press was playing up as a right-wing plot that the House Administration Committee did not favor publication. Another left-wing concern of Williams' was agitation for equal rights for African Americans. On May 20 he addressed the House to complain of a publication of the *Survey Graphic* magazine that "contained 129 pages of outrageously vile and nauseating anti-Southern, anti-Christian, un-American, and pro-Communist tripe, ostensibly directed

¹⁰⁰ *Congressional Record*, July 15, 1947, 8962, 8970, 8977.

¹⁰¹ In a vote by division, members stood and were counted. In a vote by teller, the members passed by tellers and were counted individually. In neither case was the individual's vote recorded. In a voice vote the presiding officer made a decision based on the aggregate sounds of the ayes and nays.

toward the elimination of the custom of racial segregation in the South.” One wonders if the reference to the Ku Klux Klan in the *Fascism* publication had any bearing on Williams’ opposition.¹⁰²

The 1947 session brought the recurring introduction of bills to outlaw poll taxes and enact a Federal anti-lynching law. Thirteen bills were introduced on the matter of lynching, including HR 4155 by Republican Willis Bradley. Republican McMahon introduced a bill, HR 4040, to ban the poll tax in Federal elections, and the House passed HR 29 by a 290-112 vote on July 21, but it was expected to die by filibuster in the Senate as similar House bills did in 1942, 1943, and 1945. The poll tax remained in only seven Southern states. Battle of Alabama and Burleson and Teague of Texas weighed in against HR 29, but it was Williams who brought the issue home, saying, “It is a sad state of affairs when pinks and off-shade renegades and crackpots such as Henry Wallace, [National Citizens Action Committee Secretary] Clark Foreman, and [NAACP Executive Secretary] Walter White can coerce the membership ... into becoming a monkey on a string...” on the bill. He complained about the “Southern Conference of Human Welfare, the Civil Rights Congress, the NAACP, and the rest of these communistic barnacles.”¹⁰³

All the Northern Democrats and 15 of 22 Border Democrats voted for HR 29, but only four of 95 Southern Democrats did. Only 14 of 230 Republicans voted against the bill. All Republican members of the Class of ’46 voted for the bill or were paired for it, including Phillips of Tennessee. All Southern Democrats of the Class voted against the bill, including those from Florida, Georgia, and North Carolina, which states no longer had the tax. Among Border Democrats Hugh Meade of Baltimore, Karsten of St. Louis, and Johnson of Oklahoma voted for the bill, while Albert, Morris, and Peden of Oklahoma were opposed. Lusk did not vote.¹⁰⁴

When the first session of the 80th Congress adjourned on July 26, 1947, the Republicans in the majority for the first time since 1930 felt they accomplished much with the promise of more to come in the second session the following year. Taft-Hartley became law over the President’s veto, shifting the labor-management balance much to the latter and demonstrating Truman’s weakness among his own Democrats. Republicans joined with the President to draw a line in the sand before what was perceived as a march of Soviet power and communism with the Greek-Turkish Aid Act. Purging the New Deal’s enlarged Federal bureaucracy of its assumed communist fellow travelers took a step in the House, awaiting Senate agreement in 1948. The imperial presidency fashioned by four elections and three terms of Franklin Roosevelt was dealt a blow by a proposed constitutional amendment to limit presidential terms to two, which was awaiting state ratification. And the Republicans succeeded in organizing a Congress greatly changed by the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946.

The collapsing of 48 committees into 19 super-committees and the addition of committee staffing created a House run more by committee chairs than by a speaker or party leaderships. Republican chairs

¹⁰² *Congressional Record*, May 20, 1947, 5533. The Klan is only mentioned once but in the context of “propaganda organization, some of which show very definite fascist tendencies.” *Fascism in Action*, vi.

¹⁰³ *Congressional Record*, July 21, 1947, 9527.

¹⁰⁴ Tennessee was one of the states which still had a poll tax, but three of its Democratic members also voted for the bill. Tennessee’s General Assembly had repealed the tax in 1943, but its courts restored it. “Record of the 80th Congress (January-July, 1947).” Keyssar, 442.

would have little opportunity to take advantage of this system, but it would persist until the reforms of the 1970s, when members of the Class of '46 achieved chairships only to find their powers attenuated.¹⁰⁵

The new budgetary process mandated by the Reorganization Act was a failure and would not again be attempted. A major income tax cut and shift of burden away from the wealthy failed by veto, but there would be another try in the second session of the 80th Congress. And numerous investigations of the Administration by committees and subcommittees, 39 by one count, had yet to reveal the assumed speculation, though revealing at times the usual need to improve delivery of governmental services.¹⁰⁶

After the *sine die* parties, given much opportunity for the usual food, drink, and harmonizing by the wait in the House as the Senate slowly approached adjournment, most members were free to return to their districts, to touch base with constituents, politic, reacquaint themselves with family left behind, and make a little money from their mothballed legal practices and other employments in anticipation of five months away from Washington.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Zelizer (2006), 7-8.

¹⁰⁶ Goulden, 235, 242-3.

¹⁰⁷ West interview (September 7, 2005). Chadwick column in *Chester Times*, August 7, 1947.