

Ford, Esch, McDonald

# Three Criticize Congress-- But For Different Reasons

By TIM RICHARD

Talk to three suburban congressmen, and you get three different impressions of the present U.S. House of Representatives--all of them fairly bad.

Put all their views together, and you get the impression there's a tug-of-war going on in Washington between a slender majority of federally-minded liberals and an insurgent group that wants to remake--but not necessarily to kill--existing programs.

Politically, the three congressmen span the political spectrum from the out-and-out liberal Democrat, William Ford, to the Ripon-style intellectual Republican, Marvin Esch, and then to the slightly more conservative brand of modern Republican, Jack McDonald.

In 1967, the first session of the 90th Congress saw a few major pieces of legislation. A new crop of freshmen Republicans--including Esch and McDonald--strengthened a GOP minority that sometimes teamed up with southern Democratic conservatives to give the Lyndon Johnson leadership a bad time.

WHAT SHOULD Congress have done was asked. First, it should have passed "the safe streets and crime bill. That's our number one problem. It's ludicrous that those who about the looting about crime in the streets are the ones losing up the bill. "It'd even go so far as to give money to raise salaries of (local) police. We have 19th century police departments. I laugh when I see one of these John Birchers with a bumper sticker that says 'Support Your Local Police.' I ask him if he wants to sign a petition to raise local taxes for the police."

Second, Ford thinks Congress "loused up" the housing and urban development programs by not appropriating enough money.

Third, he cites the financial difficulties of local school districts, insisting that not enough money was actually authorized for federal aid to education even though it looks on the surface as if a big bill was passed.

MARVIN ESCH is one of four Michigan Republicans that Gov. Romney helped carry into office in the 1966 GOP comeback. If Romney is a weak presidential candidate at the moment, his political philosophy is nevertheless being articulately expressed by Esch.

"The key question is not whether government is going to become involved, but rather how it can best develop structures to utilize fully the vast resources of our country to meet essential needs."

"The old thinking of the '30's--that Washington solutions must be found for every problem--is on the way out, and rightly so, because it's obviously not working in the '60's."

Each, of Ann Arbor, represents the 2nd Congressional District, which includes Plymouth, mouth City and Township and the counties rimming the west side of Wayne.

WITH ROMNEY, he holds that the federal government shouldn't look down its nose at everyone else as incompetent to aid in the solution of social problems. Rather, it should look to the states and local govern-

ments, and even to private business and agencies, for participating partnerships. Doctrinaire liberals snort at the notion.

As Esch does it out, the 90th Congress was played by what Democratic leadership that was unable to set priorities in time of war.

"As a result, many of our most pressing issues went unmet and others received inadequate consideration," he says. "The most glaring omissions include the failure to pass anti-crime and anti-riot measures, the failure to consider significant and needed changes in the law, the failure to complete congressional reorganization, the lack of action on civil rights, the failure to develop more meaningful job training and securing programs, and the failure to act on housing problems."

JACK McDONALD has often teamed up with other freshman Republicans to introduce what GOP moderates like to call "constructive alternatives" to Democratic and Administration programs.

McDonald represents the 19th Congressional District, which includes Redford (his home base), Livonia and Northville in Wayne County, and western Oakland County. His district office is in the approximate population center of the district, downtown Farmington.

It's McDonald's view that some of the most important bills introduced in the 90th Congress' first session never even got committee hearings.

THE REASON, he adds, almost parenthetically, is that they are Republican-sponsored bills. Items:

1. The Human Investment bill which would provide for on-the-job training in private industry.
2. Tax sharing, which would send a percentage of federal income tax revenues to the states and local governments on the theory that they can best handle many domestic problems but lack the revenue resources.
3. Tax credits for air and water pollution control equipment.
4. The Percy-Wadsworth housing bill--which would aid private

home ownership (as contrasted to public housing).

Note that each of McDonald's suggestions involves, Romney-like, some dealing with the states and local governments and with the private sector of the economy.

TRANSLATED into voting statistics, Ford's record would rate a zero to 10 on an arch-conservative index (00 to 100 on a liberal index).

Each would rate in the lower 60s on a conservative index (high 30s on a liberal index) and would rank as one of the most liberal Republicans in the House.

McDonald's early record was in the 70s on the conservative index (low 20s among liberals), although a few recent votes might give him a few liberal ratings. He ranks as a relative conservative among the freshman Republicans, but still stands clearly in his party's moderate wing.

The three suburban congressmen, however, have this in common: Each seems to be aligned with the younger, more aggressive elements in his party. They would, if they could, run Congress differently.

You don't hear the echoes of Speaker John McCormack or Minority Leader Jerris Ford when the three suburbanites talk.



MOSQUITO EATER -- Lansing city officials are using this tiny fish, the gambusia, to feed on mosquito larva in natural ponds. This year, it is trying an experiment--holding the tiny fish in indoor tanks so that they can be planted earlier in the spring and begin their mosquito control all the sooner. Just 1,000 of the tiny fish planted in a quarter-acre or half-acre pond can clean it up in a day or two.

## public affairs

# How School Study Can Help Suburbs

Much impressed so far, State Board of Education members are studying a comprehensive report on the weakness of school finances in Michigan.

Suburban schools could be greatly affected by the study's proposals to change the state aid formula and the method of collecting property taxes, according to one state board member, James F. O'Neill of Livonia.

The report was directed by Dr. J. Alan Thomas of the University of Chicago's Midwest Administration Center. The 650-page study is referred to as "The Thomas K-12 Financial Study" or, more simply, as the "Thomas Report." It was completed in 15 months with a \$200,000 legislative appropriation.

State Board President Edwin L. Novak predicted the study may have "an unparalleled impact on schools" for years, but added that the results came too late for use in 1968-69 budget recommendations. They will, however, have a "strong effect on budget making for the 1969-70 school year," Novak said.

ONE SET of alternative recommendations, O'Neill said, points to the inequity in the property tax base of many school districts.

Thomas suggests that the "allocated millage" portion of school property taxes be collected on a statewide basis, rather than locally, in order to equalize educational opportunity.

An alternative suggestion is that property taxes on industry be collected statewide and redistributed on a per-pupil basis.

O'Neill said such reforms could aid suburban school districts with small tax bases--such as Livonia with \$12,000-plus state equalized valuation per child, or Farmington with about \$10,000.

ANOTHER THOMAS recommendation that O'Neill favors is to give matching grants to school districts which spend more than minimal or average amounts of money in giving better quality education.

It might work this way. Suppose that \$600 per pupil were considered to be a standard operating cost. Then suppose a local district, by taxing itself, added \$50. The state would add another \$50, making the total appropriation \$700 per pupil.

A maximum of \$900 per pupil is suggested for the state participation plan. That is, the state would match local grants until the total appropriation reached \$900 per pupil; the local district could spend more, but it wouldn't get additional state help.

O'Neill said Livonia school district, which levies twice as much school operating millage as the state average, could particularly benefit from this program.

A CONTROVERSIAL part of the report, O'Neill said, may be on non-public education.

Thomas makes little in the way of recommendations here, O'Neill said, but does point to the burden that parochial schools are carrying--15 per cent of all K-12 students in the state and a \$200 million a year contribution.

The Thomas report says that last year, when parochial schools attempted to reduce their pupil-teacher class loads, the result was that the public school system found itself with 20,000 more students.

Thomas further gives great credit to the work of parochial schools in providing for integrated elementary education in the inner city area.

THE STUDY TERMED "very costly" Michigan's present procedures for financing school construction. "Some districts are denied over 30 per cent of their assessed values," Thomas said. "This frightens and worries me."

Listed as alternatives for reforming the current construction methods were:

- A forgiveness feature for school districts unable to repay their existing indebtedness in a given period of time on the basis of a reasonable millage.
- An equalization program for the support of school building construction, through which the state would share in the debt retirement of districts which already have constructed their facilities.
- State sharing in the amortization of the cost of classroom space.

"These plans will work well only if they are accompanied by an intention to limit the ratio of debt to assessed value and the length of repayment schedules among school districts," the report said.

ALSO RECOMMENDED was appointment of a commission to develop a master plan for school district organization in Michigan.

"A concerted effort should be made to reduce the number of school districts in Michigan (743 in September) to a point where education can be most efficiently provided throughout the state," the study suggested.

FURTHER SUGGESTIONS were that:

- Steps be taken to eliminate a deficit in teacher retirement funds.
- Vocational centers be part of comprehensive high schools or be shared with post secondary institutions.
- Programs of special education be increased.
- Efficiency of school transportation systems be improved.
- The state board of education support and encourage establishment of education parks, serving public and nonpublic schools.

# GOP Inner City Tactic: Soft Sell, Hard Work

Suburban Republicans are getting a hefty pat on the back from GOP workers in Detroit's inner city for their help on the recent "Operation Christmas for Kids."

Nearly 700 children from the ages of 3 to 5 got packages of toys, sweaters and underclothing collected by GOP workers all over the state.

Project chairman Annette Evans singled out the Oakland County Republican Women's Organization as the best help in the state. She added praise for GOP ladies in Livonia, Redford and Plymouth.

THE GIFT packages were distributed to children in a dozen pre-school centers operated by the Archdiocese of Detroit in its anti-poverty program, Mrs. Evans said.

The party workers collected gifts and money locally for the Christmas parties, which were held Dec. 31.

Among the 12 Santas at the parties was Weidon Yeager, former Constitutional Convention delegate from Redford and now state director of women's compensation.

ONE WOMAN, reading of the project in this newspaper, arrived with a carload of toys at the Observer's Livonia office in the late afternoon of the 21st.

It was too late to get them downtown, so the toys wound up at Congressman Jack McDonald's Farmington office until they could be picked up by Mrs. Evans' forces.

Besides individual contributions, Mrs. Evans said, gifts of goods, bags or services were received from Union Co-op Toy Co., Sears, Michigan Bell, Chrysler, Ford and General Motors.

Mrs. Evans said late and left-over gifts would be distributed directly to the 12 pre-school centers.

MRS. EVANS' OFFICE is in

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SAVINGS ACCOUNTS	MORTGAGE LOANS	SAFE DEPOSIT BOXES
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# Ike Denies Writeoff Of Romney

Former President Dwight Eisenhower has been reported to have written off Gov. George Romney as a possible 1968 presidential candidate. In a television interview he attempted to clarify just exactly what he meant.

He said, "I have not said, nor do I believe, that Gov. Romney is unfit to be President, that he has been on too many sides on too many issues, or that he would panic in emergency."

"In a recent interview, I did say that though I was not personally too disturbed by his explosive term brainwashing--because I regarded it as an unfortunate expression rather than accusation against anyone--so many people had interpreted it as a definite shift of the governor's position on the Vietnam War that he had, according to the polls, lost much ground in the public mind."

"I added that it was always possible that the governor might be able to clarify his position and meaning on the war and so restore wholly or partially his standing in the public esteem."

"I pointed out that I publicly never speak ill of my citizen."

Naturally, I would not do so about any Republican.

"Finally, I emphasized that Governor Romney had, in my opinion, taken forthright, logical and intelligent positions on many vital domestic issues and could not be written off as a serious candidate."

"Though I am not indicating any preference among the several possible Republican candidates, I have mentioned half a dozen, and remarked that I could earnestly support any, including the governor, who has long been a good friend of mine along with the others."