

How Nader Sees 3 Congressmen

Instead of eliciting seething criticism and fervent denials as many expected, Ralph Nader's investigation of local congressmen has drawn favorable comments from at least two of the representatives who were investigated.

It may have been a sigh of relief, but both U.S. Rep. William D. Ford (D-Taylor) and Marvin L. Esch (R-Arbor) said they were "pleased" with the final report and had only mild criticism of the contents.

U.S. Rep. Martha Griffiths (D-Detroit) had severely criticized the preliminary report, but the final copy has eliminated some of her sore spots.

"I WAS PLEASED with it," Ford, who represents the 15th district, said. "My only concern with it is that I don't know how the newspapers and news media are going to treat it."

The fact that the report only briefly describes the bills on which the representative's votes are disclosed was "disappointing," Ford added.

"That's one of the things Nader insisted he was going to do - give a broader in-depth analysis of voting patterns than other groups do," he said.

Esch, who represents the 2nd district, says the study reemphasizes "that Esch is an individual in his thinking."

"Secondly it emphasizes my service to the district," Esch added.

His positions on environmental legislation and against the Vietnam war are stressed in the report.

BECAUSE THE descrip-

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tions of the congressman's votes are so brief, they tend to be deceptive, Ford said.

For example a committee vote shows Ford voted against a measure "to give public service job preference to unemployed veterans who served after 1964."

This is deceptive because of the wording in the measure, Ford said. He said that veterans should be given special consideration (which was finally put into the bill) but giving them "job preference" would have forced hiring veterans over an unemployed man with five children and possibly five persons if a veteran applies for the same job.

BILL FORD votes a straight liberal ticket for federal aid to education, OEO anti-poverty programs, unemployment insurance, urban renewal and model cities, rat control, child care, legal services for the poor, increased social security benefits, and pollution control," the Nader report states.

"Ford is known for his impatience with those conservatives who decry deficit spending," the report continues. "The fact is, they are advocating that the members sit by the path with their rifles

and shoot mice while the elephants march by," Ford is quoted as saying.

The report praises Ford's action on education measures and notes that he cosponsored the Higher Education Bill which marks the first federal aid legislation passed for colleges and universities.

It traces his changing position on Vietnam from 1967 when he was totally committed to the war until 1968 when, after the Gulf of Tonkin episode, Ford became critical of the war.

TIE REPORT praises Esch as being "his own man."

"Marvin Esch: the media calls him a liberal, the Democrats call him an administration supporter, and he calls himself a pragmatist. By looking at his legislative record one can see that he is quite literally his own man: he votes the way he feels."

"No one can accuse Esch of being a straight party-line voter," it continues. "In 1971, he supported the President only 51 per cent of the time while the average Republican support ran to 72 per cent. Esch voted with a majority of the Republican party 45 per cent of the time and opposed them 37 per cent."

It states that Esch made 78

per cent of the House floor votes and missed voting on the Keyes Cope budget, an appropriations bill for foreign economic and military aid, an urban renewal amendment and legislation on wage and price control.

He missed the subsidy votes for the supersonic transport, Lockheed loan guarantees and merchant marine construction and subsidies. Esch also missed the vote to permit the underground nuclear test in Alaska.

"THE VIETNAM war has been one of Esch's primary concerns," it says. "He is against the war, and this is where he differs greatly from Nixon. He has authored a position paper on the war and has cosponsored several anti-war bills."

Esch's votes on environmental legislation are cited including one to end killing of sea mammals, a noise control bill and one to give the Environmental Protection Agency the power to impose federal pollution standards.

"Recently Esch's floor voting record has been antislavery," the reports states, citing his vote against migrant worker compensation and to

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settle the West Coast dock strike through compulsory legislation.

"On the manpower side of the Education and Labor Committee, Esch is known as an innovator. He is attempting to greatly expand efforts on prison reform, including proposals for job training and subsequent opportunities for criminal offenders."

Esch was critical of the report's statement that he "has not been an active or successful initiator of legislation."

"It shows some naivete on their part," Esch said, explaining that it is necessary to have Democratic names on legislation in order to get bills through the Democratic congress.

REP. MARTHA Griffiths

(D-Detroit) is described as a "skilled politician who chooses her fights carefully" in Nader's study.

"Her record as a member of Congress is not that of a reform leader," the report states. Although she consistently supports programs to solve social problems, her positions on crime and justice, welfare, foreign policy and defense spending are described as more moderate than liberal.

It points out that she was the sole dissident in 1966 for a drug treatment program that offered addicts a choice of resident treatment instead of prison for up to three years. She is said to have called the program a "bribe" to allow addicts to escape prosecutions. The bill did not apply to addicts convicted of violent crimes, the report states.

When Griffiths gets into a fight, she is a formidable opponent," the report states. "But her critics complain about the battles she has chosen not to take on."

An anonymous Detroit official is quoted as saying "In general, Martha Griffiths has been neither particularly helpful nor particularly difficult. There's no one thing we've gotten I can trace directly to her."

THE REPORT continues by describing her busing votes.

Griffiths, a supporter of civil rights legislation in the 1960s, simply did not vote on busing questions in 1971. But she opposed it this year. Asked about Michigan Democrats and busing, Griffiths bluntly responded, "If they don't vote against busing, they won't be back next year."

Members of peace and welfare groups are reportedly "anxious" to see her advocate their causes more forcefully."

The report also says she has not been "an avid floor supporter of cutting the defense budget."

"Some of Griffiths' black constituents complain that they find it difficult to bring their problems to her. She has created some enmity among blacks in Detroit because she supports President Nixon's family assistance plan, bitterly opposed by the National Welfare Rights Organization."

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