

Congressional reform needed, says Brodhead

By STEVE BARNABY

Congressional reform linked with tight budget controls are the keys to solving the country's economic woes, according to U.S. Rep. William Brodhead (D-Detroit). Brodhead recently appeared before the Farmington Area Chamber of Commerce to relate his experiences as a freshman congressman. "I have never seen such a shoddy

product as the Congress is producing today. What it amounts to is that a few old men can't watch over a monster," he said, referring to the Congressional seniority system. Brodhead advocates abolishing the system in determining committee chairmen.

Congress, he said, works far too slowly with problems which evolve faster than they can be solved. "THERE IS just too much lullap, around. There are too many special interest groups trying to be served. These groups must come to the realization that there just isn't enough to go around for everybody."

The philosophy of having guns and butter is unrealistic with today's economic troubles, he said.

"It's going to be a difficult adjustment. We can't promise everything to everybody. There must be substantial cuts in the federal budget," said Brodhead.

To aid in determining a budget, Brodhead said the Congress must reassert its primacy which was partially lost under the excesses of the Johnson and Nixon administrations. "The relationship between the Congress and the president must be rethought. The Congress must take back its power and reassert its authority."

Presently, under the Budget Control Act, Congress is setting up its own budget controls and targets. Because of Congressional attempt to recoup power, the Congress and President Gerald Ford are going through a veto battle, he said.

"President Ford had vetoed more bills since he's been in office than did President Nixon in his five years in office," said Brodhead who added that Congress has turned around and overridden seven of those vetoes.

The two houses of Congress also must learn to get along better, he said. It is against House rules to even refer to the Senate by its proper name, he said.

"What happens is that both bodies formulate a bill and then it goes to a combined committee and we end up with a hodge-podge. This is absurd."

POLITICAL LEADERS, he said, must face the cold facts on the economy by setting an example themselves, such as California's Governor Edmund Brown has done.

Brown has become renowned in the news lately by living in a sparsely decorated apartment rather than the multimillion dollar Governor's mansion. He also has rejected the traditional limousine and drives a cheaper model automobile.

"I'm convinced we've got to pull in our belts so we can deal with budget cutting across the board," he said.

Brodhead was particularly critical of past expenditures in the defense budget, saying that monies spent in Vietnam and Turkey were wasted. Although objecting to such foreign expenditures, he maintained a posture of having an economic foreign aid program.

"Concerning foreign aid, I think we should teach nations how to fish for themselves. We can help nations with starving populations by teaching them techniques of production in agriculture which have been successful for us," he said.

He also warned that the nation must look for other sources of energy or else we would be in trouble if staying with petroleum.

"We consume one-third of all the petroleum produced in the world. We just can't continue to consume at that rate."



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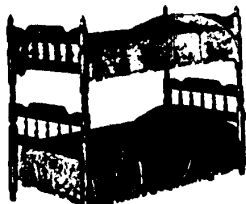
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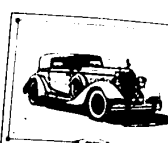
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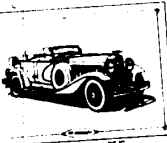
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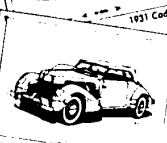
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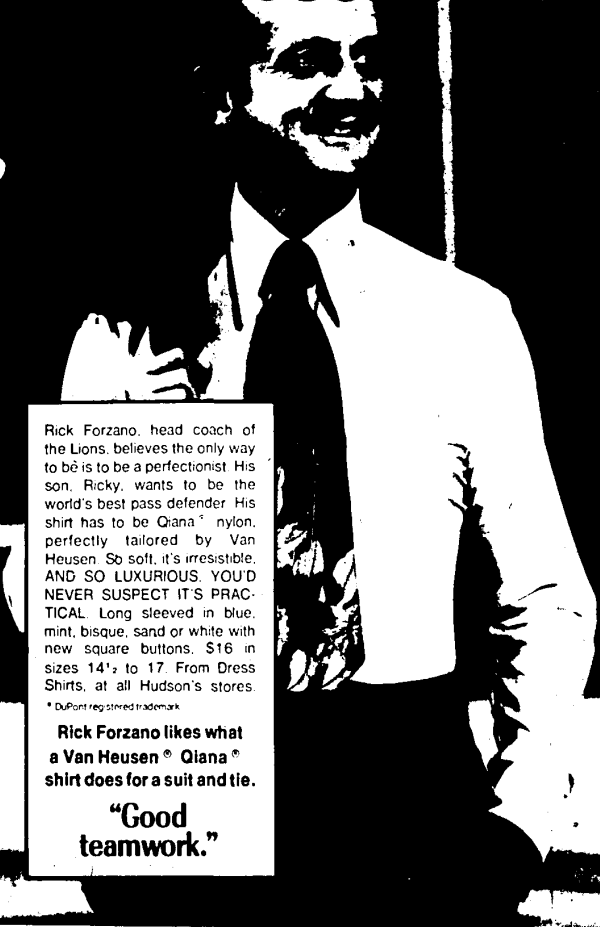
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