



ED ESHLEMAN'S WASHINGTON REPORT

Toward the end of the 92nd Congress there was a debate over enacting a Budget ceiling that would be controlled by the President. Out of that debate grew a real question about the ability of Congress to keep the Federal Budget under control.

As the 93rd Congress opens it looks as though that question may be answered with some solid proposals for changing the appropriations process and watching the spending process. The intent of these proposals is to put Congress back in the driver's seat when it comes to Federal money matters.

Senator Bill Brock of Tennessee has offered a five-point plan for reforming the budgetary process that makes a good deal of sense. His proposals are aimed at getting some congressional control over Federal spending while at the same time constantly reviewing and changing our national priorities.

First, he would create a Joint Committee on the Budget that would develop a legislative budget - as opposed to the executive budget that is now the only comprehensive spending proposal.

Second, Senator Brock would require five-year budget projections in every major category of Federal spending. This would make Congress think in terms of the long-range cost of the programs being proposed.

Third, a re-evaluation of spending programs would be required every three years. Such a review would help to weed out programs that have outlived their usefulness or those that have proved unworkable.

Fourth, there would be a requirement that every new major program be pilot tested for at least two years. The testing process would give us an indication of how much cost is

actually involved and, more importantly, whether the idea will work at all.

Fifth, Senator Brock would have all Federal money, including that in the trust funds, appropriated annually. Presently, many of the trust funds escape annual review yet add to the deficit and spending problems that have plagued the Budget.

Whether some or all of the Brock proposals get adopted will very much depend on the determination of the 93rd Congress to get a grip on Federal spending. At the very least, this five-point plan offers a starting place for some thinking in the right direction.

Along this same line, I plan to re-introduce my proposal to put all controllers in the Federal Government under the jurisdiction of Congress. The controller is the guy who makes daily decisions about how money is being spent by a particular government agency. While he is responsible to the agency, his determinations will favor it. But if he became a legislative employee, his determinations would reflect Congressional intent.

Therefore, Congress would gain a day-to-day insight and input into all government spending. There would be a pre-audit of all spending and not just a post-audit. Pre-auditing would mean that spending would be looked at before it took place rather than after it had already been spent and possibly wasted.

Still other ideas for getting some legislative control of the Budget are almost certain to be put forward. I, for one, will welcome all proposals because nothing has been done for far too long.

Survey Says Industry Is Towns' No. 1 Need

The need for new industry is the most important problem facing small communities, according to a survey conducted by the American Bankers Association, Washington, D.C.

In the survey of 12,500 smaller banks (those with resources of less than \$50 million) nearly 75 per cent of the respondents rated new industry as the number one community need. And 80 per cent of the bankers said they are involved in trying to foster new industry for their towns.

"For each 100 people employed by industries in our community, retail trade goes up \$1.3 million, personal income goes up \$2.9 million," says Thomas R. Smith, chairman of the ABA's Agricultural and Community Banker Division, and president of the First National Bank, Perry, Iowa. "It also means five new retail businesses," he said.

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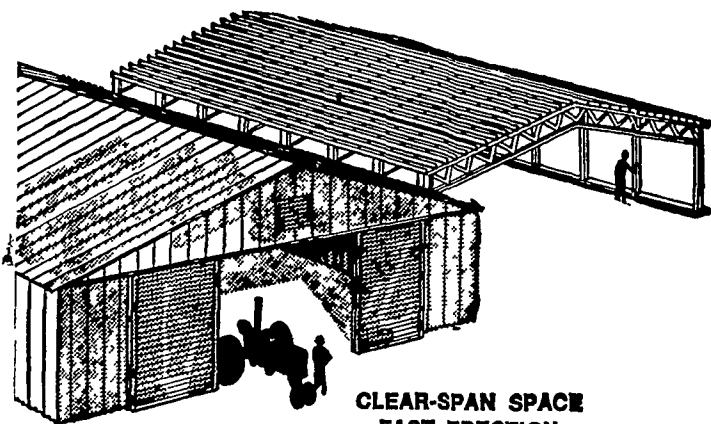
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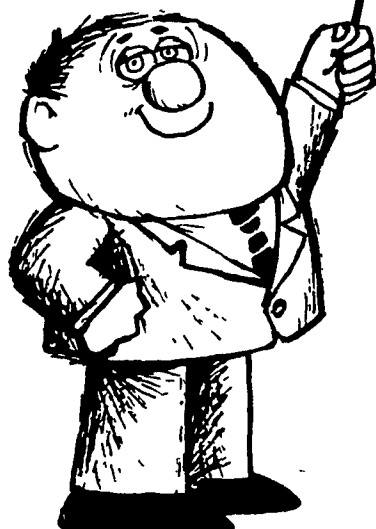
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