

PENSION FUND UPDATE

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sounded the alarm that a financial mess was brewing with the unfunded pension fund. The Nelson Commission got the message, warned Congress of a potential financial catastrophe and recommended Congressional action. But again Congress did nothing.

Now, Congress has finally turned its attention to the problem. But it is only scratching the surface.

BILL REPORTED

The House District Committee has completed work on an amended Pension Fund Bill and sent it to the House Floor.

The measure provides 760 million over the next 25 years to help meet the pension fund obligation. However, it still short changes the District Government. Under the proposal the local government contribution would be reduced from 100 per cent to 72 per cent. That compares with a 15 per cent city government contribution in Los Angeles. In financially troubled New York City the local government share is 30 per cent. I had hoped that Congress would have recognized its full obligation and accepted all of the accumulated pension fund debt; however, the Committee did not approve my amendment which would have reduced the D.C. Government share to 41 per cent. The Committee also failed to approve a compromise proposal which would have at least liquidated the city obligation for the first two years of the new home rule government. That provision would have lowered the city government share to 69 per cent. Despite the Committee rebuff, I plan to pursue the matter at the White House. I will ask President Carter to include the two year liquidation funds in his budget proposal.

Some of the other approved amendments call for expanding city government participation on an 11 member pension fund board of directors with employee representatives maintaining a 6 to 5 majority; transferring any accrued savings on the pension plan to the District Government Treasury; prohibiting the Pension Fund Board from making investments in local (D.C., Maryland and Virginia) bonds, real estate, or real estate mortgages.

The Pension Fund Bill is not all we wanted, but it is a step in the right direction. It is long overdue and should pass Congress before the end of summer. It is the initial effort in helping the District out of the Pension Fund Hole.

The Assassinations Committee Is Alive And Well!

Despite some comments to the contrary, the Assassinations Committee is healthy enough to complete its investigations. The panel is not anemic, nor does it suffer from feeble leadership. Committee members are prepared to pursue the leads which we have uncovered and follow-up on the initial information I obtained which was the basis for forming the Committee last year.

The best prescription for pursuing the investigations of the murders of President John Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is a bandaid over some of the verbal cuts which have tended to try to undermine the work of the Committee.

More than three-fourths of our countrymen believe that the Kennedy and King Murders have not been completely solved. We are pursuing several leads that hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash were offered to murder Dr. King. We have solid leads which point to a conspiracy and perhaps a government cover-up in both slayings.

To allow these clues to go uninvestigated would leave a cloud over our nation and help create an unhealthy atmosphere among future political and social leaders. This Committee must and will complete its assignment. We cannot



Congressman Fauntroy and Congressman Louis Stokes, new chairman of The Assassinations Committee.

retreat from our responsibility as lawmakers.

We must restore the confidence of the American people in our government and the principles of Democracy.

A sincere thanks to my colleagues who recognized our moral responsibility and voted to continue the work of the Committee. Had we abdicated our obligation, we may have been accused of perpetuating a cover-up. Now we can get on with the business of getting the whole truth and the whole story on the brutal deaths of two of our most beloved citizens.

Congressional Representation, It's A Human Right, Too

While Mr. Carter is conducting a world-wide campaign speaking out against violations of human rights and oppression, I hope he will also make a strong statement against human rights violations here in the Nation's Capital... namely, political repression, which denies full Congressional voting rights to three quarters of a million people.

True, the President has said he supports District voting representation in Congress, but so far Mr. Carter has limited his support to just D.C. Representation in the House of Representatives. That's only half a loaf. For D.C. taxpayers to get our money's worth, we should have full representation in the House and Senate.

Meanwhile, the President has asked for a special task force report on the voting rights issue plus other vital District matters, including the Federal payment and Metro construction. I don't see the

task force effort as a retreat on the President's campaign commitment to support voting rights. He is new to our city and needs time to learn of the special problems we have. The task force recommendations should help to educate the President. Furthermore, I am encouraged by Mr. Carter's naming Vice President Mondale to head the task force. The Vice President is a long-time supporter of District voting rights.

While the Task Force must study numerous D.C. issues, I think it can make a swift and favorable recommendation on full voting representation, a basic constitutional right. In my opinion the Task Force will provide the analysis that will allow President Carter to support the Resolution (H.J. Res 139) which I have introduced in this session of Congress. The Resolution is a constitutional amendment that would give the District two Senators and the number of Representatives in the House it would be entitled to if it were a state.