

Congressman Ford's Voting Record

Washington

President Gerald R. Ford's record in Congress makes it unlikely he will strike out in major new directions from Nixon administration policies.

Mr. Ford's voting record in Congress was one of close agreement with his predecessor. In 1973, for example, Mr. Ford supported Mr. Nixon on 80 per cent of the House votes on which the former President had taken a position. That put Mr. Ford ahead of all but one of his colleagues.

He voted to sustain every Nixon veto the House considered in 1973. About the only serious difference came on mass transit legislation. Mr. Ford, a native of auto-dependent Michigan, opposed diverting highway trust fund money for mass transit use, a proposal supported by Mr. Nixon.

Mr. Ford's conservatism shows up in the thousand of votes he has taken since he arrived in the House in 1949. The new President shares his predecessor's skepticism about expanding the role of the federal government, his fiscal protest.

In 1967, Mr. Ford attacked the philosophy that "everything can be cured through federal dictation and federal funds, dole out through cash grants-in-aid which keep Washington as the manipulator of all the strings."

During the 1950's and 1960's, Mr. Ford voted against most legislation expanding the federal role in solving modern social welfare problems. He opposed federal aid to education in the early 1960s, voted against creation of the Office of Economic Opportunity and Medicare, and opposed federal help for state water pollution programs in 1956 and 1960.

By the last years of the Johnson administration, Mr. Ford was publicly advocating revenue sharing as an alternative to continued federal government expansion. "Tax

sharing," he said in 1966, "would restore the needed vitality and diversity to our federal system. . . . Republicans have faith in the constitutional concept of federalism, which requires strong and vigorous state and well as federal action on a variety of national problems."

Mr. Ford has sought to milk the federal government role in the protection of civil rights. He has voted for some civil rights bills, such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. But he backed weaker substitutes for these bills prior to their passage, and endorsed the Nixon administration's efforts to water down the Voting Rights Act in 1969. He opposed federal open housing legislation in 1966, but supported it in 1968, when it passed Congress and became law.

Mr. Ford's suspicious attitude toward federal spending has not extended to spending for national defense. A member of the defense appropriations subcommittee for many years before his election as Republican leader, Mr. Ford consistently fought in favor of giving the defense department the resources it wanted.

In 1952, Ford was one of only 11 Republicans to vote against an amendment limiting defense spending to \$46-million; He was still voting against similar amendments during his last days in the House in 1973.

Another point consistently at issue between Mr. Ford and liberals has been the Vietnam war. He was critical of President Lyndon B. Johnson for not pursuing the war more vigorously, and in 1967 gave a speech on the House floor entitled, "Why are we pulling our best punches in Vietnam."

Mr. Ford supported President Nixon's policy of gradual "Vietnamization," and endorsed the 1973 peace treaty. Through the end of his House career, he continued to oppose any legislation to end the Vietnam war faster than Mr. Nixon wanted to move. This included Ford votes

against amendments to end U.S. bombings of Cambodia in the summer of 1973.

On matters of social protest, Mr. Ford has taken a consistently conservative position. Even while criticizing the Johnson Vietnam policy, he lashed out at those opposed to the war from the left. "Today," he said in 1965, "our so-called 'technicians' and 'peace' demonstrations call for 'peace-at-any-price'—while the seeds of Communist atrocity take root. And yet the appeasers speak of morality."

He continues to take a hard line in the question of amnesty. "Unconditional blanket amnesty to anyone who illegally evaded or fled military service is wrong," Mr. Ford insisted August 5.

Mr. Ford supported a 1968 amendment that would have require colleges to cut off federal aid to students who participated in campus disruptions. He endorsed the Nixon administration's handling of the 1971 "May Day" war protest, in which police used mass arrests to sweep 12,000 persons off the streets of Washington on the day of demonstrations.

Mr. Ford quickly gained a reputation among liberals as being soft on civil liberties for his 1970 attack on Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas. Shortly after Douglas authored a book, "Points of Rebellion," which defended civil disobedience, Mr. Ford called the book "a fuzzy harrange evently intended to give historic legitimacy to the militant-hippie-yippie movement."

Combining his complaints against the book with charges that Douglas maintained improper financial connections with a private foundation, Mr. Ford urged that Douglas be impeached. Ford denied that a crime was required for impeachment. "An impeachable offense," Mr. Ford said, "is whatever the House of Representatives considers it to be at a given moment in history."

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