GENERAL POLICY

Congress is looking for an excuse to say that the President has asked that more be done than could possibly be done at this special session.

Therefore, in addressing Congress the President should not recite the many things that he has asked Congress to do in his various messages but emphasis should be placed on what Congress itself has started to do but failed to finish.

This can be accomplished by confining his remarks, except in a very few instances, to bills that have been introduced, or have had committee consideration, or have been favorably reported or have passed either the House or the Senate.

Measures upon which the 80th Congress had failed to act that were mentioned by President Truman in his acceptance speech before the Democratic National Convention at Philadelphia.

1. A bill to reinstate selective price control and other anti-inflation powers.

2. S. 483 (Sarkle), to provide temporary control of prices on certain vital commodities in short supply, introduced December 16, 1947, and referred to the Committee on Banking and Currency.

3. S. 1288 (Thomas of Utah and Wagner), to provide a coordinated anti-inflation program, introduced February 6, 1949,
and referred to the Committee on Banking and Currency. H. R. 6362 (Mrs. Douglas), introduced April 22, 1948, and referred to the House Committee on Banking and Currency, which appears to be identical with S. 2156. (Any of these bills could serve as a basis for desirable legislation).

2. A bill to authorize Federal aid for slum clearance and low rent housing.

S. 866 (Taft, Ellender, Wagner), the Housing Act of 1949, passed the Senate April 22, 1948.

(Be sure to ascertain whether the House Committee on Rules still has this bill impounded or whether it has been returned to the Committee on Banking and Currency)

3. Federal aid to education.

S. 472 (Taft and others), (Senate Report 439), the "Educational Finance Act of 1948", passed Senate, April 1, 1948, and is still in the House Committee on Education and Labor.

4. Extension of Social Security coverage and increased unemployment benefits, including a reduction in the eligibility age of women from 65 to 60 years and also a revision of the law which took Social Security benefits away from 950,000 people.

H. R. 6777 (Reed of New York) (House Report 2166), Social Security Act amendments, 1948, passed the House on
June 14, 1948, is now in the Senate Committee on Finance and could be amended.

See the President's message of May 24, 1948, on the Social Security System (House Doc. 970); Veto Message of June 14, 1948, (House Doc. 711) and Public Law 540, 80th Congress.

6. A Federal Health Program:

S. 140 (Fulbright and Taft) (Senate Report 248), to create a Department of Health, Education and Security, amended and favorably reported to the Senate on June 6, 1947, and now on the Calendar.

Senate Resolution 940 (Smith and 6 others), authorized the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare to study national health problems, adopted by the Senate June 12, 1948.

No action has been taken on S. 545 (Taft, Smith, Hall and Donnell), the "National Health Act of 1947", introduced on February 26, 1947; or S. 678 (Lodge), for grants to States for medical aid, introduced February 26, 1947; nor upon S. 2501 (Horse), authorizing public-assistance grants for medical services; which is also true of S. 1220 (Burton and 5 others), to provide a national health insurance and public health program. (The House bills have not been checked)

6. A Civil Rights Program:

H. R. 26 (Senate Report 1225), anti-poll tax, passed the House on June 30, 1947, and now pending on the Senate calendar.
S. 2888 (Ferguson) (Senate Report 1052), to provide for the better assurance of the protection of persons within the States from lynching, reported out of the Committee on the Judiciary on June 14, 1948, and on the Senate Calendar.

H. R. 5673 (Case of New Jersey), protection of persons within the several States from mob violence and lynching, favorably reported from the House Committee on the Judiciary on March 25, 1948, and on the House Calendar.

S. 904 (Ives and others) (Senate Report 951), to prohibit discrimination in employment because of race, religion, color, national origin or ancestry, favorably reported February 26, 1948, and pending on the Senate Calendar.

7. An increase in the minimum wage:

S. 154 (Pepper, Murray and Thomas of Utah), to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act (75 cents an hour), introduced January 10, 1947, and referred to the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare.

S. 1048 (Gagehart and Barkley), to raise the minimum wage standards of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, introduced April 5, 1947, and referred to the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare.

S. 1404 (Pepper and 10 others), to raise the minimum wage standards of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, (65 cents an hour the 1st year, 70 cents the 2nd year and then 75 cents an hour), introduced June 9, 1947, and referred to the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare.
5. 3063, (Thomas of Utah and 9 other Democrats), amending the Fair Labor Standards Act (not less than 75 cents an hour) introduced January 26, 1939, and referred to the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. (The House bills have not been checked)

9. Funds for projects needed to provide public power and cheap electricity:

The Republicans will say, which might as well be freely admitted because it is true, that the 80th Congress appropriated more money for public power projects and for rural electrification than any other Congress in the entire history of the Government.

Therefore, the President's recommendations to Congress should be confined to:

(a) An appropriation of the Budget estimate of $4,000,000 to start construction of a stand-by steam plant for the Tennessee Valley Authority which was approved by the Senate but finally denied by vote in the House of Representatives, and

(b) Money for the California transmission line which had to be abandoned. (There are other instances of lack of foresight in providing funds requested in the President's Budget, but Secretary Krug should be warned not to request the President to ask Congress to bite off more than it can chew at a special session.)
9. Liberalization of the displaced persons law:

No bills have been introduced to amend Public Law 776, 80th Congress, approved under protest, June 25, 1948, but extensive hearings have been held on the entire subject so that there would appear to be no apparent need to consume time in taking further testimony.

10. Senate Joint Resolution 810 (Lives) (Senate Report 1692 by Connally), authorizing a loan of not to exceed $50,000,000 to the United Nations for the construction of a headquarters in New York City, and authorizing an appropriation of that sum of money, passed the Senate June 18, 1948.

11. Oleomargarine:

The Rivers bill, H. R. 2648, was passed by the House of Representatives on April 20, 1948. The bill repeals the excise tax on oleomargarine and is now pending on the Senate Calendar. If the Senate will promptly pass that bill it will receive my approval, since its enactment will help to reduce the price of one item in the cost of living which is important to many American families.

And finally:

The Chief Executive will be addressing an equal coordinate branch of the government for whose power he has great respect. Consequently there must be nothing in his remarks which could possibly be construed as flippancy or a reflection on the dignity of the Congress.