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Elizabeth Kee : A Clarion Voice of and for the People of Southern West Virginia 1951-1964

Shari A. Heywood
s.heywood@citynet.net

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Elizabeth Kee: A Clarion Voice of and for the
People of Southern West Virginia
1951-1964

Thesis submitted to
The Graduate College of
Marshall University

In partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts
History

By

Shari A. Heywood

Dr. Robert Sawrey, Committee Chairperson
Dr. Montserrat Miller
Dr. David Duke

Marshall University

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*At signing of the Area Redevelopment Bill on May 1, 1961. Elizabeth Kee is between Jennings Randolph and President Kennedy.
Source: White House Official Photo*



*Elizabeth Kee (far left) joins the other women of the 88th Congress at the signing of the Equal Pay Act of 1963 on June 10, 1963.
Source: John F. Kennedy Library*



*Elizabeth Kee with West Virginia Congressional Delegation.
Source: Jennings Randolph Collection, West Virginia State Archives*

ABSTRACT

Elizabeth Kee: A Clarion Voice of and for the
People of Southern West Virginia
1951-1964

By: Shari A. Heywood

Elizabeth Kee served as the first woman to represent West Virginia in the House of Representatives from 1951-1964. Newly available sources: taped interviews with her son, Jim Kee, from 1978 and 1980; a complete copy of Elizabeth Kee's entries into the *Congressional Record*; copies of many of her "Keenotes" columns from the late 1950s and early 1960s; and correspondence between Elizabeth Kee and veterans from West Virginia from 1961-1963 allow a more complete picture of Kee to emerge. Elizabeth Kee was not only a hardworking politician, who laid the groundwork for future programs like the War on Poverty, she was also a religious and moral person, who shared her values with members of the House in an effort to raise the standards and behavior within that institution. Finally, Kee was a talented writer whose weekly columns illustrate a woman ahead of her time in terms of her ability to remain connected to her constituents.

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to all the women, from Jeannette Rankin to the women of the 109th Congress, who have served in the House of Representatives. Their desire to serve and their dedication to making our country better and stronger have inspired me. Also, to my husband, Greg, and my three children: Austin, Alex, and Sam, who inspired me to finish. Always remember—“You must do the thing you think you cannot do.”

–Eleanor Roosevelt

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I could not have completed this project without the cooperation of the staff at the West Virginia State Archives. Special thanks to Fred Armstrong for allowing me to complete an internship there, Joe Geiger for his help on the website, Dick Fauss for his assistance with the cassette tapes, Debra Basham for her assistance with the Kee collection, Mary Johnson for answering questions regarding *Congressional Record* research, Cathy Miller for allowing me to take over her desk every Thursday, and to Sharon and Nancy for their kindness and friendly smiles. A heartfelt posthumous thank you to Pat Pleska for introducing me to Fred and helping me to feel at home at the archives. Thank you to Dan Holbrook who oversaw my internship and taught me so much about public history and thanks to Ken Hechler for agreeing to an interview about Elizabeth Kee. Thanks, too, goes to Eva McGuire and Stuart McGhehee at the Eastern Regional Coal Archives for your assistance and for staying open for me on a snowy Saturday morning. Also, thanks to the staff at WVU's West Virginia and Regional History Collection.

Lastly, thank you to my friends and family who kept me sane through this whole project: my Marshall friends: Kim, Michael, Tony, and Kelli (I'll never forget our dinners at Mycroft's) Teresa, my best friend since 5th grade, my book club buddies: Cat, Tim, Carla, and Lola, Gail, Sara (thanks for the help with excel and your printer!) Mom and Dad, thank you for your love and support and thanks for coming to my graduation. It means so much.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Photos of Elizabeth Kee	ii
Abstract	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Table of Contents	vi
Introduction	1
Chapter One: Passionate Populist	17
Chapter Two: Ecumenical Adherent	50
Chapter Three: Accomplished Journalist	67
Conclusion	109
Appendix A	118
Appendix B	137
Appendix C	163
Works Cited	164
Works Consulted	172

Introduction

Commenting on the history of women's rights in America, women's historian, Dale Spender said, "While men proceed on their developmental way, building on inherited traditions, women are confined to cycles of lost and found."¹ Spender's quote seems particularly pertinent when examining women's participation in national politics in the United States. For while men have been building a culture and tradition within Congress since 1789, women entered this all male institution just eighty-nine years ago. Since that time, according to author Hope Chamberlin, women's "election cadence has been one step forward, one step back."² Before World War II, women in Congress seemed to be aberrations more than anything else. One author recently pointed out that over two-thirds of the women who served in Congress during the war years were widows of congressmen or had been appointed temporary seats by the governor of their state.³ In the 1950s, participation by women was relatively low. Then, in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, women's voices grew in national politics spurred on by the feminist movement. The 1980s saw a lull in women's service in Congress while 1992 was hailed as the "Year of the Woman." These cycles of lost and found have at times impeded scholars attempting to study women involved in politics at the national level.

In spring 2000, scholars meeting at the first-ever national research conference focusing exclusively on women and the U.S. Congress, upon assessing the state of

¹ Quoted in Susan Faludi, *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women* (New York: Crown, 1991), 46.

² Hope Chamberlin, *A Minority of Members: Women in the U.S. Congress* (New York: Praeger, 1973), 64.

³ Clara Bingham, *Women on the Hill: Challenging the Culture of Congress* (New York: Random House, 1997), 12.

research on women and Congress, agreed that in years prior, because of the limited numbers of women involved in national politics, researchers had focused more on the states than on the U.S. Congress as a venue of quantitative study. Another observation made was that because of the many widows serving before the late 1960s, scholars had not generally focused on women serving in Congress during this time because many assumed these women were “controlled by their husband’s advisers and lacked a legislative agenda of their own.”⁴

Reviewing the scholarship of the last forty years dealing with widows in Congress, their assessment proves correct. Martin Gruberg said of these women, “The widow of a deceased officeholder is often endorsed [by her party] in order to capitalize on the good will generated by her husband, to gain the sympathy vote, or to forestall a general contest of the office.”⁵ Bullock and Heys compared widows with “regularly elected congresswomen” and said of the non-widows that they “tended not to be housewives and were somewhat better educated . . . The regularly elected more often had backgrounds similar to congressmen than did widows.”⁶ Diane Kincaid did attempt to debunk the idea that reluctant widows were easily placed as temporary stand-ins in Congress and diffidently served out their terms, disinterested in reelection.⁷ But even she

⁴ Cindy Simon Rosenthal, ed. *Women Transforming Congress* (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 2000), 10.

⁵ Martin Gruberg, *Women in Politics* (Oshkosh: Academia Press, 1968), 121.

⁶ Charles S. Bullock III and Patricia Lee Findley Heys, “Recruitment of Women for Congress: A Research Note,” *Western Political Quarterly*, 25 ; 423.

⁷ Diane D. Kincaid, “Over His Dead Body: A Positive Perspective on Widows in the U.S. Congress,” *Western Political Quarterly*, 31 no. 1: (March 1978), 96-104.

stated, “In general, a negative and passive impression of these women still prevails.”⁸ Irwin Gertzog examined factors such as seniority of the husband, his leadership position, and the age of the widow as to whether party leaders would even nominate a widow to replace her husband. Recently, he also examined the decline in southern widows being nominated to succeed their husbands in relation to the decline of one-party politics in the South.⁹ But as evidenced in the aforementioned studies, scholars by in large have ignored the contributions of *individual* widows in the House of Representatives serving before the late 1960s.

In the introduction to *Women in American Politics: New Questions, New Directions*, editor Susan J. Carroll states that in trying to answer questions regarding political participation of women in the United States, researchers have often relied on large-scale data sources and analyses of this data. She indicates it is time to consider using not only quantitative analyses but also other methods, such as interviews and participant observation as approaches that would most assuredly strengthen women and politics scholarship.¹⁰

This project will in a small way remedy this lack of scholarship, using both quantitative and qualitative analyses as it focuses on the political contributions of Elizabeth Kee, a little known politician from West Virginia who served in the House of Representatives from 1951-1964. She was the first and as it turned out only woman to

⁸ Kincaid, 97.

⁹ Irwin N. Gertzog, “The Matrimonial Connection: The Nomination of Congressmen’s Widows for the House of Representatives,” *Journal of Politics* 42 (3): 1980, 820; “Women’s Changing Pathways to the House of Representatives: Widows, Elites, Strategic Politicians,” in *Women Transforming Congress*, (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 2000), 95-118.

¹⁰ Susan J. Carroll, ed. *Women and American Politics: New Questions, New Directions*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003), 11.

represent West Virginia in Congress during the 20th century. This introduction provides some necessary background by first giving a brief history of women in national politics, then answering why there has not been greater participation by women on the national level and finally, ending with a short history of Elizabeth Kee's life before and after she took office in 1951.

Chapter One details Kee's political contributions, particularly her long and bitter fight against the importation of residual fuel oil and her devotion to veterans and their families. Chapter Two portrays Kee's religious ecumenicalism as she entered into the record various sermons and tributes throughout her time in the House. Lastly, Chapter Three reveals Kee's journalistic flair in the numerous newspaper columns she sent home to West Virginia over the course of her fourteen-year career in the House of Representatives. While scholars have previously ignored or dismissed the contributions of widows like Elizabeth Kee, this thesis revisits Kee's service and brings to light the life of a committed, assiduous politician whose powerful voice laid the groundwork for programs like the War on Poverty and whose moral center and journalistic talents demonstrated a woman ahead of her time in terms of her ability via a weekly column to remain connected to her constituents.

Although it was 1917 before a woman took a seat in the House of Representatives, women have long been involved in American politics. James David Barber and Barbara Kellerman said of Abigail Adams, "She was not her husband John's 'sovereign,' as one critic averred, but clearly a close adviser and avid partisan of the

second president.”¹¹ In her now-famous letter Abigail reminded her husband to “remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. . . . If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation.”¹² Forty years later, Elizabeth Cady Stanton started that rebellion and shocked some of the delegates at the 1848 Woman’s Rights Convention in Seneca Falls by proclaiming that among other rights, women should have the right to vote. In 1866, she continued to push the boundaries set for women as she ran as an independent candidate for Congress. Annabel Paxton described Stanton’s platform as, “Free speech, free press, free men, free trade, and universal suffrage.”¹³ Unfortunately, only twenty-four men voted for her. Six years later she was arrested for voting in the national election of 1872. In 1878, Senator A.A. Sargeant of California introduced a suffrage amendment to Congress and said, “I believe that by bringing the intelligence, the virtue, the good intentions possessed by the women of America to the ballot-box, we may have better politics, better administration and government . . . and an improvement in every direction.”¹⁴ His amendment did not pass but Stanton’s organization, the National Woman’s Suffrage Association, made sure it was reintroduced in each succeeding Congress. Elected in 1916, Jeannette Rankin, the first woman to serve in the House of

¹¹ James David Barber and Barbara Kellerman, eds. *Women Leaders in American Politics* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1986), 24.

¹² Quoted in Kathlyn Gay, *The New Power of Women in Politics* (Hillside: Enslow Publishers, 1994), 18.

¹³ Annabel Paxton, *Women in Congress* (Richmond: Dietz Press, 1945), vii.

¹⁴ Quoted in Martin Gruberg, *Women in American Politics* (Oshkosh: Academia Press, 1968), 4.

Representatives, fought for suffrage her entire term in the House and finally in 1920, saw the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution. What happened next surprised many involved in national politics.

In 1920, seeing the strength and effectiveness of the suffrage leaders, most male politicians feared the creation of a women's bloc. One unidentified politician, quoted in *Harper's* in 1919, said, "Women feel this sex difference still more than men . . . for a long time many women will tend to vote for another woman as a demonstration of *esprit de corps*."¹⁵ Alfred Smith, running for governor of New York in 1920, tried to persuade his party to nominate a woman as lieutenant governor. He was convinced that women would vote as a bloc and that they would flood the polls. In reality, only 25% of the eligible women voted in the 1920 presidential election and 35% four years later.¹⁶ The women's bloc never materialized and in fact many women remained either indifferent or antagonistic towards politics. The long held idea that politics was a man's world that was rough, dirty, and unladylike ran deeper than many had originally thought.

Over a decade after Rankin first entered the House in 1931, only six female representatives had seats. Three of those women were widows, elected to fill the remaining time in their husband's terms. Forty years later, in 1971, there were only seven more women in the House. Spurred on by the feminist movement, the numbers in the 1970s improved but by January 2006 only 15% of the total number of United States representatives elected to the House were women.¹⁷ When Elizabeth Kee entered the

¹⁵ Gruberg, 7.

¹⁶ Gruberg, 9.

¹⁷ "Women in Elected Office 2006," *Center for American Women and Politics*, Rutgers University, accessed (22 March 2006).

House of Representatives in 1951, however, the percentage was much lower at only 2%.¹⁸ Why was this percentage so low and why does women's participation in national politics lag so far behind that of men? Scholars have tried to answer the question why historically American women have not been equally represented in national politics. Some scholars point to the doctrine of coverture, others to the political socialization of American women, and still others present very practical reasons as to why women have not achieved parity in Congress.

Applying the doctrine of coverture, its legal ramifications, and its sociological influence, scholars offer one explanation for the lack of women's political representation in America. The doctrine of coverture is the legal term, derived from British common law, describing the original status of women at America's founding. It meant that women were literally and figuratively covered by their husband's status. According to Blackstone, a British common law authority, the basis for the law incorporated early religious principals, "By marriage, the husband and wife are one person; that is, the very being or legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage."¹⁹ Historians coined a word to describe the status of women under the doctrine of coverture: "civilly dead- meaning women had no standing or civil rights, independent from their husbands."²⁰ Over the last two hundred years or so, the legal aspects of coverture have gradually been overturned: women can own property, women can vote, women are

¹⁸ See Appendix A

¹⁹ Linda Witt, Karen M. Paget, and Glenna Matthews, *Running as a Woman: Gender and Power in American Politics* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 21.

²⁰ Witt, Paget, and Matthews, 21.

guaranteed to be tried by a jury of their peers—a jury which actually includes women, women can apply for a credit card, etc. But, even though the laws have changed, many in the last twenty-five years, legal scholar Leo Kanowitz points out that the sociological effects still linger and are very damaging when it comes to male-female relationships. He says that, “Above all, the position of married women at common law both resulted from and contributed to a failure of men and women to see themselves essentially as human beings rather than as representatives of another sex.”²¹ He attributes this failure back to the idea that husband and wife are “one” because in practice “the ‘one’ was always the husband, [and his] dominance was assured.”²² The doctrine of coverture is clearly evident when women candidates or representatives have not been considered as independent and separate from their husbands as in the case of widows who are expected to vote exactly as their husbands or in the case of Geraldine Ferraro whose 1984 vice-presidential campaign faltered when questions about her husband’s financial dealings came to light in the press.

While legal scholars in the 1960s considered the law as one reason why women did not experience equality in politics, sociologists and other scholars in the 1970s looked at gender and socialization theory to explain the lack of female political leaders in America. Dean Jaros wrote in 1973 that the low participation in politics by women was not because of restrictions imposed on women but rather from a set of norms that women accept that they should not participate in politics because politics is a man’s game. “There is a cultural tradition,” he wrote, “of feminine nonparticipation transmitted in

²¹ Leo Kanowitz, *Women and the Law* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1969), 35.

²² Kanowitz, 35.

childhood.”²³ In 1974, historian Sheila Rowbotham wrote of the gender inequality women experience. Rowbotham asserted, “Our sexual conditioning means that we submit more readily than men to this intolerable state of affairs.”²⁴

In 1978, Rita Mae Kelly, a professor at Rutgers, and Mary Boutilier, a professor at Seton Hall, published a study entitled *The Making of Political Women* wherein they gathered data on thirty-six women from around the world who had played specific types of political roles: wives of famous political men, women involved in elective politics, and political revolutionaries.²⁵ Their goal was to identify and to understand the processes underlying the political socialization of women. They identified one group of women involved in elective politics as “Achieving Political Women.” The single most important thing Kelly and Boutilier attributed to these women’s success was the fact that they were taught early “to expect an active role in the family and in its decision making by a mother who definitely played such a role. These political achievers had accepted the idea that they could be both female and competent.”²⁶ According to the study, these women achieved politically, in large part, due to the influence of an independent, strong mother and a father who was active in politics. If a woman did not grow up with these influences, according to these scholars, a career in politics was unlikely.

A final reason scholars give for women’s lack of equal representation has to do with very practical issues like dealing with family, distance, time, and money.

²³ Dean Jaros, *Socialization to Politics* (New York: Praeger, 1973), 44.

²⁴ Sheila Rowbotham, *Women’s Consciousness, Man’s World* (New York: Viking Press, 1974), 121.

²⁵ Rita Mae Kelly and Mary Boutilier, *The Making of Political Women: a Study of Socialization and Role Conflict* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1978), 4.

²⁶ Kelly and Boutilier, 323.

Linda Witt, Karen Paget, and Glenna Matthews point out, “The mere fact that women had established their legal right to become candidates and officeholders did not absolve them from ‘women’s work’—the multitude of family responsibilities that, according to the old truism, ‘is never done.’”²⁷ Marriage, motherhood, and politics become a tricky balancing act as the “hard-campaigning wife or mother historically finds herself having to explain—to voters, colleagues, possibly even her own mother, her husband, and herself—why she is not at home putting food on the table and otherwise caring for her family.”²⁸ Many female candidates wait until their children are grown but then this creates another problem as they have less time to build seniority and gain access to coveted committee chairmanships. Distance is another issue, particularly when some families choose to stay in their home state rather than join the representative in Washington D.C. As far as time is concerned, Witt, Paget, and Matthews point out that “The political woman often must be several persons yet she is given the same twenty-four hour day as a man.”²⁹ A final practical consideration scholars consider an impediment for many female candidates is money. It costs close to one million dollars to finance a campaign for the House of Representatives today.³⁰ These considerable amounts of money “scare off potential candidates, both men and women . . . increasing incumbency return rates” according to Witt, Paget and Matthews.³¹

²⁷ Witt, Paget, and Matthews, 76.

²⁸ Witt, Paget, and Matthews, 77.

²⁹ Witt, Paget, and Matthews, 127.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Witt, Paget, and Matthews, 128.

But despite the historical impediments to the entrance of women into the national political arena, many women *have* served exceptionally in the House of Representatives of the United States during the course of the twentieth century. One such woman was Elizabeth Kee.

Elizabeth Kee was born on June 7, 1895 and grew up in Radford, Virginia, the daughter of John Jesse Wade Simpkins and Cora French Hall. Kee's father was a policeman, a railroad man, and an insurance salesman who dabbled in local politics, unsuccessfully running as a Republican candidate for mayor of Radford. Kee's mother, a housewife, bore eleven children, only four of whom survived to adulthood. According to her sister, Hazel Hall Simpkins, Kee did not excel in her schoolwork and had no plans for college. Simpkins described Kee as headstrong and somewhat contrary from the beginning.³² In fact, as a young adult, she changed her first name from Maude to Elizabeth and as soon as she was able changed her political and religious affiliations as well. Raised Republican and Baptist, she became a Catholic and Democrat as a young woman and not long after, got married to her first husband, James Alan Frazier with whom she had three children, only two of whom survived to adulthood. James Frazier served during World War I, but according to Kee's sister, rarely acknowledged his marriage or children. Unsurprisingly, the marriage did not last. Following high school, Kee had attended the National Business College in Roanoke and worked during the war, so after the marriage ended, she continued with her career as a secretary at the *Roanoke Times* and later became a court reporter with a local firm. Ambitious, she soon decided

³² Hazel Hall Simpkins, Interview by William Hardin, 11 July 1983, tape recording, Kee Collection, West Virginia State Archives, Charleston, West Virginia.

to open up her own court reporting firm first in Roanoke and later in Bluefield, West Virginia.³³

Elizabeth Kee first met John Kee when he represented her first husband in their divorce proceedings. During the next four years, they often came into contact with one another professionally and socially. Just when it seemed John Kee had settled into the life of a confirmed bachelor at fifty, he asked her to marry him. She agreed and in 1932, they were off to Washington D.C. along with five other Democratic representatives from West Virginia. After a few years in Washington and following his first heart attack, Elizabeth Kee became John Kee's secretary. According to her son, Jim, she acted as a buffer for John in handling the minutiae of his office and she proved invaluable as a crucial link in keeping her husband connected to the people of West Virginia.³⁴ In addition to keeping up with much of the constituent correspondence, she also wrote a column which she sent back to West Virginia detailing important events that had taken place in the House of Representatives and in Washington in general. John Kee worked hard and over time, moved up in rank and prestige in the House. After seventeen years, he finally achieved a career milestone when he became chairman of the Foreign Affairs committee. Over the next two-and-a-half years, the Kee's professional and social calendar became increasingly more strenuous until one day in May 1951, when John Kee collapsed during a foreign affairs committee meeting and could not be revived. Elizabeth

³³ William H. Hardin, "Elizabeth Kee: West Virginia's First Woman in Congress," *West Virginia History* 45 (1984): 110; William H. Hardin, "Elizabeth Kee: 1899-1975," in *Missing Chapters II: West Virginia Women in History*, Frances Hensley, ed. Charleston: West Virginia Women's Commission, 1986, 61-70.

³⁴ Jim Kee, Interview by William H. Hardin, 29 March 1980, tape recording, Kee Collection, West Virginia State Archives, Charleston, West Virginia.

Kee ran in a special election in July 1951 on the platform that she only needed to fill out the remainder of her husband's term to finish the business he had started. She not only won this election but stayed and served in the House of Representatives for the next fourteen years.³⁵

On May 10, 1955, the Honorable Robert C. Byrd, then a member of the U.S. House of Representatives of the United States, rose on the floor of the House to pay tribute to Elizabeth Kee, his colleague who had recently been honored as West Virginia's Daughter of the Year. After quoting both Walt Whitman and Woodrow Wilson and inserting into the *Congressional Record* letters and telegrams of congratulations from Sam Rayburn, Speaker of the House, Thomas Kennedy, president of the United Mine Workers and six other distinguished Americans, he ended his tribute with a poem he had written:

How far away is the temple of fame?
Said a youth at the dawn of the day.
He toiled and dreamed of a deathless name,
And the hours went by and the evening came
Leaving him feeble, and old, and lame
To plod on his cheerless way.

How far away is the temple of good?
Said a youth at the dawn of the day.
And he strove in the spirit of brotherhood,
To help and succor as best he could,
The poor and unfortunate multitude,
In their hard and dreary way.
He was careless alike of praise and blame,
But after his work was done,
An angel of glory from heaven came,
And wrote on high his immortal name,
To proclaim this truth that the temple of fame
And the temple of good are one.

³⁵ William Hardin, "Elizabeth Kee: 1899-1975," 61.

For this is the lesson that history
 Has taught since the world began;
 That those whose memories never die,
 But shine like stars in the human sky,
 And brighter grow as the years go by,
 Are the men who live for man.³⁶

It is not only interesting to note the gendered nature of the poem Byrd chose to honor Kee but also to examine the accuracy of its message. The poem suggests that if we seek fame, it eludes us but that if we live our lives in selfless service to others, then fame will naturally follow because history has shown that those who live for others are the ones we never forget. Unfortunately, in the case of Elizabeth Kee, nothing could have been further from the truth.

Kee served in the House sandwiched in between service by her husband and her son, James, who served for eight years ending his service as chairman of several subcommittees of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee.³⁷ She was a widow of a former congressman as were approximately 42% of her fellow congresswomen from 1945-1972.³⁸ But Kee turned out to be much more than a “useful surrogate until a male heir apparent could be designated.”³⁹ She was a dedicated and persevering politician who stayed in Congress for fourteen years, almost twice the average time for women of that

³⁶ Congress, House, 84th Cong., 1st sess., *Congressional Record* 101, pt. 5 (10 May 1955) : 5996-7. Note: Hereafter, all citations to the *Congressional Record* will refer to proceedings of the U.S. House of Representatives and will be cited as *CR*, followed by the appropriate volume number, Congress, session, and page number.

³⁷ James Kee served as chairman of both the Irrigation and Reclamation subcommittee and Mines and Mining subcommittee.

³⁸ See Statistical Analysis of Data from Appendix A.

³⁹ Linda Witt, Karen M. Paget, and Glenna Matthews, *Running as a Woman: Gender and Power in American Politics* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 31.

era.⁴⁰ Over twenty years ago, William Hardin approached Elizabeth Kee's life in a chronological fashion, detailing her early years, her second marriage to John Kee, their years in Washington, and some of her political contributions. Besides these two articles, scholars have largely ignored Kee's service and dedication to the people of West Virginia.

It is surprising that more scholars have not studied the life of Elizabeth Kee, who gave over thirty years of service to her country and state. Perhaps the answer lies in an interview given by her son, Jim to William Hardin in 1978. When asked what happened to his mother's, stepfather's and his own personal papers, Jim answered,

Well, I decided that I was getting out of politics and I was going to stay out and a lot of people want to ask you real personal questions. So, I just had them destroyed, all of them. I supervised it. There were a lot of things in there. I didn't want to. But, I thought, what the hell. I'm out of politics. It doesn't make any difference.⁴¹

From a historian's point of view, this destruction of the personal record of so many years of public service seems almost inexcusable but if the context of the time is considered, it perhaps makes a little more sense. In 1972, Jim Kee lost a bitter election against Ken Hechler ending forty years of service from the Kee family in the House of Representatives. The scandalous Watergate years complete with stolen Pentagon Papers, missing tapes, and investigative hearings followed and in 1975, Elizabeth passed away unexpectedly following abdominal surgery.⁴² Destroying the papers may have been a

⁴⁰ See Figure 3.1, Appendix A

⁴¹ James Kee, interview by William Hardin, tape recording, 17 June 1978, tape 6, transcript pg. 31, West Virginia State Archives, Charleston.

⁴² "Illness Claims Mrs. Kee," *Bluefield Daily Telegraph*, 16 February, 1975, 1.

way for Jim Kee to try and protect his family name from the scrutiny of outsiders and a way for him to deal with the grief following his mother's death.

Fortunately, William Hardin recently donated over fifteen hours of taped interviews with Jim Kee to the West Virginia State Archives. The archives has also acquired a complete copy of Elizabeth Kee's entries and insertions into the *Congressional Record*, organized chronologically by each of the fourteen years she served in Congress and copies of many of her "Keenotes" columns from the late 1950s and early 1960s.⁴³ West Virginia University's Regional History Collection has correspondence between Elizabeth Kee and veterans from her district asking for help and assistance from 1961-1963. From these newly available sources, a more complete picture of Elizabeth Kee emerges. She was a hardworking politician, deeply committed to the people of West Virginia with a clarion voice that warned about America's dependence on foreign oil and laid the groundwork for future programs like the War on Poverty. She was a religious and moral person who, in keeping with the ecumenicalism of her time, shared values with members of the House in an effort to raise the standards of behavior within that institution. Finally, Kee was a talented journalist whose weekly columns illustrate a woman ahead of her time in terms of her ability to remain connected to her constituents.

⁴³ See Appendix B for Chronological Synopsis of Elizabeth Kee's *Congressional Record* Entries

Chapter One: Passionate Populist

Once elected to the House in 1951, Elizabeth Kee continued in the populist tradition of her husband, John Kee, working passionately for issues related to the needs of the working families of her state and country. During her fourteen-year career in the House, she championed aid to depressed areas, surplus commodities, Social Security, and veteran's benefits. She demonstrated on a regular basis what Temma Kaplan calls female consciousness. Female consciousness, according to Kaplan is the: "recognition of what a particular class, culture, and historical period expect from women, [which] creates a sense of rights and obligations that provides motive force for actions."¹ As opposed to demonstrating a feminist consciousness, contesting patriarchal relations in any given situation, Kee framed her speeches and dialogue within traditional notions of femininity while keeping her messages both strong and powerful. She fought for the working families of Appalachia and the topic she spoke most fervently about in relation to their future was the importation of foreign residual fuel oil.

Knowing just what residual fuel oil is and its role in replacing coal is crucial in order to understand the desperate fight so many Appalachian politicians like Kee faced in the late 1940s and 1950s as many of their constituents lost their jobs in the Appalachian coalfields. Crude oil is first refined and becomes petroleum gas, which is then further refined into gasoline and diesel fuel. Heavier oils are then extracted from the crude oil and become lubricants, paraffin and asphalt. Whatever is leftover after these processes is

¹ Temma Kaplan, "Female Consciousness and Collective Action: The Case of Barcelona, 1910-1918," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 7 (3) 1982: 545.

known as residual fuel oil and it is the cheapest form of liquid fuel available.² In the 1950s, residual fuel oil was beginning to replace coal in powering industrial boilers, railroad locomotives, and steamships.

In addition to the increasing use of residual fuel oil in the nation's industries, the nation's homeowners and renters began to abandon coal as a home heating-fuel source. Coal was dirty, bulky, and difficult to handle. Coal strikes in the 1930s and 1940s had interrupted coal supply many times and the price of coal continued to rise. Americans increasingly turned to fuel oil, natural gas, and electricity. A final element contributing to the loss of jobs in the Appalachian coalmines was the mechanization of the bituminous coal extraction process.³ Clearly, Kee faced enormous economical and industrial forces in her fight to get jobs for her constituents but she was in an interesting position. She could not criticize the coal producers for modernizing their mines nor could she criticize the people in her district who were looking for cleaner and more efficient ways to heat their homes. She could, however, target industrialists who were willing to shift to imported residual fuel oil to power their factories.

Elizabeth Kee first mentioned foreign residual fuel oil when she introduced a bill to establish quota limitations on imports of this fuel on February 12, 1953.⁴ A month later, she delivered a speech wherein she cited statistics showing, "the total imports of

² A.D. McNaught and A. Wilkinson, *Compendium of Chemical Terminology*, 2nd ed., (Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publishing, 1997) definition online at www.iupac.org/goldbook/R05312.pdf (accessed 10 November 2005).

³ Pennsylvania, *History of the Department of Labor & Industry*, "Working in Pennsylvania: 1940-1970," 14 August 2001, online at <http://www.dli.state.pa.us/landi/cwp/view.asp?a=11&q=60511> (accessed 8 November 2005).

⁴ CR 99, 83rd Cong., 1st sess., H.R. 2957, p. 1038.

foreign residual in 1952 were sufficient to deprive miners of almost \$80 million in wages.”⁵ Her statement to the House Ways and Means Committee in May was pointed and direct. She said:

There can be no free trade where there is fraudulent trading. Our people must be protected against international price-fixers, and it is the duty of the Congress to provide this protection. I am aware of the parade of the highest ranking members of the executive branch of our Government who last week descended upon this committee with their sermons—which, incidentally, were not necessarily consistent nor essentially factual—to the Congress of the United States. I realize that such opposition makes our work much more difficult.⁶

In that same speech, she reminded her fellow lawmakers that the officials of the executive departments had an obligation to repeat the president’s viewpoint but it was the committee’s responsibility to do what was in the best interest of the *people* (emphasis mine). She is, of course, speaking of the coal miners and their families. In case the committee had forgotten the views of the people, she then told them of the many letters she had received, primarily from women, who desperately wanted to keep their families together but could not because of unemployment in the coalfields. Many husbands and sons from West Virginia had moved to Ohio, Michigan and other nearby states.⁷

Perhaps her most stinging address of 1953 came on May 21, when she delivered a speech entitled, “The 1952 Billion-Dollar Club.” She told the House members of an article in *Business Week*, which listed twenty-nine organizations whose 1952 assets were in excess of a billion dollars. She then pointed out, “You may be interested to know that five of them were represented by high officials at last week’s hearings of the Ways and

⁵ CR 99, 83rd Cong., 1st sess., p. A1165.

⁶ CR 99, 83rd Cong., 1st sess., p. A2564.

⁷ Ibid.

Means Committee.” In her speech she listed Standard Oil of New Jersey, Socony-Vacuum Oil, Texas Co., Gulf Oil Co., and Standard Oil of California and their assets ranging from upwards of five billion down to one and a half billion “so that everyone may understand just what we are up against in our crusade to place a quota limitation on cheap foreign oil. . . Yes; big oil—more than \$11 billion worth of it was very much in evidence at the hearings.”⁸ She ended her speech contrasting members of the Billion-Dollar Club with the thousands of ordinary citizens from coal producing areas: miners, railroaders, butchers, and bakers that were depending on Congress to protect them from a product that “serves only to make big oil bigger.”⁹ Her female consciousness would not allow her to sit back and watch as big business paraded before the Ways and Means committee. She knew she had to take action and she did by writing and delivering a dynamic and compelling speech to her colleagues in the House.

Later in the year, Elizabeth delivered a short speech on July 23, 1953 in support of the Simpson bill, which would amend the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Extension Act of 1951 so that the president would no longer have the authority to raise and lower tariffs. (Prior to 1934, Congress had this authority via the 1930 Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act.) Instead that responsibility would go to a non-partisan Tariff Commission. With this action, Kee believed tariffs would no longer be used as a tool to manipulate foreign policy but instead would protect farmers, miners, and other American workers from the flood of foreign products entering the United States that could be sold for lower prices. She began her speech telling of the 12,000 unemployed coal miners in her district; “The

⁸ *CR 99*, 83rd Cong., 1st sess., p. A2828.

⁹ *Ibid.*

result now is that we have a very large percent of hungry men, women, and children in West Virginia who, under present conditions, face a future filled with despair.” She clearly blamed greedy oil companies for the widespread unemployment in West Virginia, again, because she could not blame the coal operators for modernizing nor could she blame her constituents for changing over to gas or oil furnaces. Instead, she reminded Congress of their obligation to “return to our American citizens—who through no fault of their own, are suffering from the effects of this imported residual fuel oil—an opportunity to return to gainful employment.”¹⁰ She also admitted into the *Congressional Record* an editorial by A.S. Barksdale, the editor of the *Bluefield Sunset News*, in which he said, “Last year, 128 million barrels of foreign residual fuel oil were imported into the United States, enough to replace 31 million tons of coal.”¹¹ During 1953, she pleaded with members of Congress to pass her bill putting a quota limitation of 5% of domestic demand and to pass the Simpson bill. It is not clear whether Kee fully grasped the complexities of world trade or perhaps she just refused to accept the inevitability of an ever-changing industrial world. What is clear is that she spoke for coalminers and their families, as she gave no less than six strong speeches on foreign residual fuel oil and included one newspaper editorial making her case but to no avail. Big oil won out in the end, as it would continue to do for the next eleven years of her service.

Kee had observed and participated in politics in Washington long enough to realize that she was fighting against some very powerful people. Nevertheless, she never seemed to give up fighting for coalminers and the people of coal-producing states. In

¹⁰ *CR* 99, 83rd Cong., 1st sess., p. 9700.

¹¹ *CR* 99, 83rd Cong., 1st sess., p. A686.

1954, she again gave six speeches on the devastation that importing foreign residual fuel oil caused for many Americans and, in a somewhat self-serving move, she entered into the record an article written by Syd Barksdale printed in the *Bluefield Sunset News* telling of her continued, courageous fight.

In January 1954, she denounced the members of the Randall Commission. The Randall Commission had been set up by Eisenhower to “draft a new charter for foreign economic policy.”¹² The commission met for almost a year and then they issued a report with their recommendations. The report called for a more liberal approach to foreign economic policy including a recommendation to extend the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act, which would continue to allow the executive branch to set the tariffs between foreign countries and the United States. Kee forcefully reminded members of Congress that even though there had been increased production of steel and electricity in 1953, production of coal was considerably less for 1953 than it had been in 1952. She asked, “Why? Because foreign residual fuel oil is allowed to come into the United States in an unchecked flood. . . But all this apparently means nothing to the authors of the Randall Commission report.” Kee then gave some sobering statistics: 134 million barrels of foreign oil had come into the United States resulting in a reduced need for 32 million tons of coal resulting in the loss of \$155 million in revenue for coal companies resulting in the loss of \$79 million in wages to coal-miners, \$44 million in wages to railroad workers,

¹² Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorandum To Gabriel Hauge, 2 October 1953. In *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, ed. L. Galambos and D. van Ee, doc. 445. World Wide Web facsimile by The Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission of the print edition; Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, <http://www.eisenhowermemorial.org/presidential-papers/first-term/documents/445.cfm> (accessed 21 September 2005).

and \$40 million lost tax revenue to the federal, state, and local governments.¹³ She ended her speech assuring her colleagues that she would continue to fight.

In the spring 1954, Kee gave a speech on the House floor where she brought up the example of Charles E. Watson, who had recently been confirmed as Secretary of Defense and who had been asked about his investments in companies producing materials that would be purchased by the Defense Department. He had promptly disposed of those stocks. So, Kee then posed the question that may have been on others' minds as well. What about the head of the Randall Commission, Clarence B. Randall, former industrialist and president of Inland Steel? His decisions as with respect to the future of foreign economic policy were going to be paramount to the United States' future. Kee insisted that Mr. Randall and other members of his commission should also volunteer whether they were stockholders in any of the international oil companies.¹⁴ She backed off a little near the end of her speech, thanking Mr. Randall and his colleagues for their important work, but then she again called for full disclosure:

It is logical that only persons entirely disinterested from a personal point of view be permitted to speak for this Nation on all-important issues. . . . Because of human frailties that would lead some of our respected citizens to the conclusion that what is good for Standard Oil is good for America, I think that full information on all officials involved in the formulation of our foreign policy should be made available at this time.¹⁵

¹³ *CR* 100, 83rd Cong., 2nd sess., p. 975.

¹⁴ *CR* 100, 83rd Cong., 2nd sess., p. 4423.

¹⁵ *CR* 100, 83rd Cong., 2nd sess., p. 4424.

It is unclear whether or not the Randall commission followed the example of Charles Watson. Nevertheless, Kee had succeeded in making her point: big corporations and those with interests in those corporations have no business deciding public policy.

By June of 1954, it became clear to Elizabeth Kee that Richard Murray Simpson, a Republican from Pennsylvania, had duped her and others into supporting the Simpson bill. As originally introduced, the bill was supposed to take the authority to raise and lower tariffs away from the president and give it to the Tariff Commission, but Simpson had made a deal with Eisenhower. In June Simpson and pro-tariff Republicans on the Ways and Means Committee agreed to restore full presidential power in exchange for a provision enlarging the bipartisan Tariff Commission from six to seven members, thus in effect giving Republicans control of the panel.¹⁶ The Simpson Bill passed, the Tariff Commission ended up staying the same, but Simpson now had a spot on the influential Randall Commission.

After its controversial report was issued early in 1954, the Randall Commission was supposed to have held hearings at which it could hear from the coal industry and other Americans hurt by the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act. Yet the commission did no such thing. In June, adding insult to injury, Simpson feigned shock and surprise at how the commission had gone about its business:

I say that the Members of Congress would throw up their hands in horror if the chairman of this committee were to hold hearings as those hearings were held. There was no opportunity whatever for an aggrieved businessman to come before that commission and to tell them what was happening to his employees as a result

¹⁶ Dwight D. Eisenhower, letter to Joseph William Martin, Jr., 1 May 1953. In *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, ed. L. Galambos and D. van Ee, doc. 170. World Wide Web facsimile by The Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission of the print edition; Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, <http://www.eisenhowermemorial.org/presidential-papers/first-term/documents/170.cfm> (accessed 21 September 2005).

of the Reciprocal Trade Agreement program. There was no opportunity to cross-examine the witnesses who, handpicked, as they came before that commission and testified in their own interest and then when the time came to cross-examine they were released and were not subjected to cross-examination.¹⁷

After promising to hold hearings to hear grievances within the Ways and Means Committee starting in 1955, as there was no time left before adjournment in 1954, Simpson ended his speech by saying that he would support the administration again in extending the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act so as to prevent the spread of war in Asia.¹⁸

Kee rose to speak following Simpson's comments. Her disgust and disappointment were evident as she spoke of the Republican Party "closing the door of human kindness on the coal miner, railroaders, and many other workingmen in West Virginia and elsewhere." She denounced the "cruel political maneuverings" and "broken promises" of the Republicans and then she spoke in disbelief at their attempts to push through another extension in less than a week's time. Her indignation was palpable as she ended her speech:

Mr. Chairman, I simply cannot understand how anyone can in conscience approve such tactics even in an election year . . . Apparently the Republican leadership considers these tactics good politics. I do not know, but I can say without equivocation that they are in direct violation of moral and religious principles. I insist that our people deserve and are constitutionally entitled to an open hearing to present their case before this political stratagem is carried any further.¹⁹

Kee tried on three more occasions during 1954 to make her voice heard, even sending a telegram to Daniel A. Reed, Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee pleading for

¹⁷ *CR 100, 83rd Cong., 2nd sess., p. 8086.*

¹⁸ *CR 100, 83rd Cong., 2nd sess., p. 8086.*

¹⁹ *CR 100, 83rd Cong., 2nd sess., p. 8086.*

an open hearing before the vote on the Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act, but again the extension passed.

As soon as Kee and her colleagues were back in Washington in January 1955 and settling in to begin the first session of the 84th Congress, she again introduced a bill to establish quota limitations on imports of residual fuel oil.²⁰ She then gave a passionate speech detailing the worst depression in the coal-producing areas of the United States since the industry began.²¹ She called on Congress to take action, as it was obvious the executive branch would not, and then she warned her colleagues that foreign oil was replacing coal that was vital to the United States defense program. She said, “If an emergency should come, none of the platitudinous statements about high levels of trade will be of any value in meeting the demands of a stepped-up industrial effort in a fuel-hungry mobilization economy.”²²

In February, Kee appeared before the Ways and Means Committee to plead with its members not to grant yet another extension to the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act. She spoke of the drastic drop, which she attributed to mine closings, in the population in West Virginia, more than in any other state. Almost 3 per cent of the population had

²⁰ CR 101, 84th Cong., 1st sess., H. R. 1807, p. 213.

²¹ Otis K. Rice, noted West Virginia historian, backs up Kee’s words regarding the dire economic situation in West Virginia, even though his causation explanation focuses on mechanization rather than importation of residual fuel oil. In his article entitled “West Virginia” he said, “Following WWII, the increasing mechanization of coal mining brought disaster to miners throughout the Appalachian states. West Virginia was hit the hardest. Scores of small operations closed, and conditions resembling the very worst times of the Great Depression developed, as 80,000 unemployed miners, with 170,000 dependents, lived a marginal existence. State relief laws had no adequate provisions to help them and West Virginia’s other industries could not absorb the vast numbers dismissed from the mines. During the 1950s the state’s unemployment rate was the highest in the country, at three times the national average. While most state populations boomed, West Virginia suffered a loss of 7.2 percent as thousands fled in search of employment.” Online at http://encarta.msn.com/text_761565250_1/West_Virginia.html (accessed 11 October 2005).

²² CR 101, 84th Cong., 1st sess., p. 217.

been forced to leave their home states to find work elsewhere. Then she appealed on behalf of the many individuals from her district, 75, 856 people, who were dependent on surplus commodities for survival, nearly one in four.²³ Near the end of her speech she declared, “In the entire history of our country, the coal industry has never failed to stand by the United States Government. It is now time for the United States Government to stand by the men and women of the coal industry.”²⁴ Clearly, when she spoke of the coal industry standing by the government, she was not referring to the wealthy coal barons but rather to the men and women who worked diligently and laboriously throughout the war, without work stoppages, to produce the coal that had made America a viable force economically and politically. Kee then extended an invitation to all the members of the committee to come to West Virginia and see the devastation for themselves. She pointed out that it was only a one-hour trip by plane or an overnight trip by train. Unfortunately, no one came for a visit and on June 11, 1955, the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act passed in the House once again.²⁵

Kee focused on issues other than the importation of foreign fuel during 1956, but in June 1957, a new threat to the coal industry appeared, this time from Canada. The Federal Power Commission had received several applications to bring in natural gas from Canada to the midwestern part of the United States. Kee’s female consciousness inspired her not to stand idly by and let a few people “make a financial killing through the Canada-United States pipeline” while “sons and daughters of coal miners have been

²³ The surplus commodities program had been set up during the Depression to end the practice of farmers having to plow up surplus crops or destroy surplus livestock. Instead, the Secretary of Agriculture bought the surpluses and distributed them overseas or to needy American families.

²⁴ *CR* 101, 84th Cong., 1st sess., p. 1095-1096.

²⁵ *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, vol. XI, 1955, pp. 289-301.

deprived of college educations because their fathers' paychecks stopped coming." She then shared quotations from several Canadian papers about the fortunes to be made with the new pipeline. The *Toronto Daily News* quoted M.J. Coldwell, a leader of the Conservative Commonwealth Federation as claiming that, "two Canadian officials of Trans-Canada alone would make more than \$1 million each as a result of Trans-Canada stock options." The *Ontario Beacon Herald* ran an editorial telling of these officials: Mr. Nathan Tanner and Mr. Charles Coates who had recently bought 55,000 and 50,000 shares respectively of Trans-Canada stock at \$8 a share. "On a recent Friday, their Trans-Canada shares were selling at \$24. Nice work if you can get it." She continued, "It seems to me that there is too great a disparity between the financial and economic positions of our coal miners and the pipeline promoters to permit further enrichment of the latter at the expense of the former."²⁶ The Trans-Canada pipeline into the midwestern portion of the United States never materialized but Kee was truly fighting a losing battle as welding techniques, pipe rolling, and metallurgical advances in the late 1950s allowed for the construction of thousands of miles of reliable natural gas pipelines domestically which brought Americans a cleaner and cheaper alternative to coal.²⁷

The frequency with which Kee discussed publicly the importation of foreign residual fuel oil waned in her remaining seven years in Congress, but her conviction did not. In February 1958, she took her frustrations to the public in her "Keenotes" column that appeared in several West Virginia papers and which she later entered into the *Congressional Record*. She told her constituents that she would make a formal statement

²⁶ CR 103, 85th Cong., 1st sess., pgs. 8276-7.

²⁷ "Natural Gas- A History," online at <http://www.naturalgas.org/overview/history.asp> (accessed 21 March 2006).

when the Ways and Means Committee held hearings on yet another extension of the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act. In her column, in addition to oil imports, she added importation of pottery, glass, and ceramics, as severely threatening the future of West Virginia as American consumers could and would buy imports at much lower prices. She promised her readers that she would continue her long struggle to stop the President from having absolute power to lower tariffs.²⁸

Later in February, Kee appeared before the committee. Because she had been there before and had seen that heretofore her pleas had been ignored, she made a brief but pointed statement. She stated that she knew that spokesmen for the administration would be appearing before the committee telling of their many travels abroad and seeing the success of Venezuelan and Middle Eastern oil refineries, Japanese textile mills, German machine shops, and Belgium glass houses. But she then asked the committee if they would please discuss with these Eisenhower officials the domestic repercussions of the president's program. Kee asserted that:

It would indeed be revealing to discover whether any of these officials have, for instance, visited mining communities of West Virginia in the past several years. I am curious to know whether anyone who actually understands conditions in our state could recommend that America's fuel markets continue to be exposed to the rampaging floods of foreign oil while coal miners search in despair for a way to earn a livelihood for their families.²⁹

One week after her appearance, several other congressmen from Appalachia, recognizing the threat the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act posed to their constituents, joined the fight against yet another extension, but to no avail.

²⁸ CR 104, 85th Cong., 2nd sess., p. 2326.

²⁹ CR 104, 85th Congress, 2nd sess., p. 2334.

Despite the efforts of Kee and other members of Congress, the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act of 1958 passed in the House and Senate and the President signed it into law in the early summer. In light of this and the disturbing trend of government buildings being converted from coal to oil, Kee proposed the need for a national fuel policy. She made a very prescient statement in June regarding America's future dependence on foreign oil. She said, "Oil supplies of the Middle East, upon which this country is more dependent each year, are subject to the whims of Middle East politics. Growing Arab nationalism could, if it is recognized officially, cut off this oil supply from the United States and the West."³⁰ While she never got a national fuel policy from President Eisenhower, he did deliver some good news to coal states in 1959.

Finally, six years after Kee proposed a bill imposing mandatory quotas on the imports of residual fuel oil, President Eisenhower took action and imposed mandatory quotas setting the limit for residual fuel at the amount brought into the country in 1957. While the West Virginia delegation hoped that the limit would be set at the 1954 level, they were extremely gratified that their hard work had finally paid off. Elizabeth said, "The two West Virginia Senators and all the members of the West Virginia congressional delegation . . . appeared before every department and agency in Washington concerned with the foreign trade problem, arguing that the great domestic coal industry was being slowly but surely liquidated."³¹ Unfortunately, the gratification Kee and the other members of the delegation experienced was not long lasting.

³⁰ *CR* 104, 85th Cong., 2nd sess., pgs. 11546-11547.

³¹ *CR* 105, 86th Cong., 1st sess., p. 3684.

In late 1961, Kee rose in the House to let the members know that the mandatory quotas established back in 1959 had been nothing but a sham. She stated that the base number from 1957 had “apparently been abandoned by those who administer the program.” Instead of the number of barrels of residual fuel oil decreasing from 1959-1961, the numbers had actually increased at a rate of about 10% a year. Over the three-year period, seventy-seven million barrels over and above the 1957 amount had come into the United States. This amount was equal to about 20 million tons of coal. She continued, “It won’t be long before the program becomes absolutely meaningless.”³² Elizabeth Kee had probably seen this coming or perhaps she began to recognize that her efforts to help her constituents by restricting imports had, in large part, been ineffective.

Kee spent an entire decade of her career in the House on the issue of importation of foreign oil. Why? She had asked the administration to consider the *domestic repercussions* of not only importation of foreign oil but also importation of many different foreign goods in America. No one ever gave her a straight answer in reply. Perhaps she saw a glimpse of a future where the bottom line of major companies meant more to politicians than working families did. If the coal industry could be effectively wiped out, what was next—steel, the garment industry, the auto industry? Starting in 1957, she had slowly begun to take her focus away from the residual fuel oil fight and started looking at how she could begin to help the people of West Virginia get federal money, food, and a plan for a future without coal.

In January 1957, Kee introduced a bill to establish an effective program to alleviate conditions of excessive unemployment in certain economically depressed

³² CR 107, 87th Cong., 1st sess., p. 16333.

areas.³³ In May 1957, she linked her bill and two similar ones to criticism of the President's proposed foreign aid budget. Her bill would provide for federal loans and grants to economically depressed areas that had been officially designated industrial and rural redevelopment areas. The loans could be used to buy land, finance commercial projects, build public facilities, and obtain advice and planning to restore the economies of these areas. Kee questioned the President's desire to spend \$4 billion on foreign aid, giving \$150 million specifically for technical assistance to the people of other countries while only giving \$50 million to the people struggling in poverty in the United States.

On the floor of the House, she said:

I am forced to recognize that the mutual security and foreign aid programs are of tremendous importance to the Nation. But not more important than bread and milk for coal miners' children, good jobs for their fathers, new industries and increased business activity for economically depressed American towns and cities, and bigger markets, better roads and higher incomes for American farmers. I am not willing to vote nearly \$4 billion of our taxpayers' money to pay the bills of mutual security abroad and nothing to fight the poverty that communism can exploit--here at home.³⁴

Unfortunately, the administration and Congress did not agree and none of the Aid to Depressed Areas bills made it to the President's desk in 1957.

In 1958, Kee made public her frustration with the President's inaction in her "Keenotes" column. She stated matter-of-factly that the nation was clearly suffering a recession with national unemployment figures at 4 million and climbing and the

³³ *CR* 103, 85th Cong, 1st sess., H.R. 1949, p. 229; According to the U.S. Bureau of Mines, mining employment between 1950 and 1960 declined 56 percent and was 3 percent of the Appalachian labor force in 1960 compared with 8 percent in 1950. Coal-mining employment, which constituted 80 percent of total mining employment, declined 60 percent during this same period. See Table 13 in Appendix C.

³⁴ *CR* 103, 85th Cong., 1st sess., p. 7598.

workweek hours shrinking.³⁵ She said that the administration did seem to be concerned but it was not willing to take action. Kee bemoaned that, “The Government has thus far refused to support measures to meet the needs of economically depressed areas, such as I proposed in H.R. 1949.” She accused the government of looking at the recession as “merely a set of statistics or lines on a chart.” But she saw the recession as a “deep, personal tragedy and a shameful waste of human resources.”³⁶ Kee and other Democrats were encouraged later in 1958, as another bill to aid depressed areas, the Douglas-Payne bill, came down from the Senate, passing there and in the House with impressive bipartisan support. Yet, Eisenhower vetoed the bill because he objected to the 100% grant for public facilities, the loosely drawn criteria for eligibility, the inclusion of rural districts, the inclusion of long-term loans, the high loan limit, and the low interest rates.³⁷

On the first day of the first session of the 86th Congress in January 1959, Elizabeth Kee introduced no less than twenty bills. Her first bill, H.R. 111, sought to establish an effective program to alleviate conditions of excessive unemployment in certain economically depressed areas.³⁸ The program she had in mind would be similar to the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Great Depression through which young

³⁵ During World War II, the workweek rose to 45.2 hours at one point. See Donald M. Fisk, “American Labor in the 20th Century,” *Bureau of Labor Statistics*, U.S. Department of Labor online at <http://www.bls.gov/opub/cwc/cm20030124ar02p1.htm> (21 September 2005). However, during the 1958 recession, the workweek shrank to 38.2 hours. See Barry Bluestone and Stephen Rose, “Overworked and Underemployed,” *The American Prospect*, 1 March 1997 online at <http://www.prospect.org/web/page.wv?section=root&name=ViewPrint&articleId=4842> (accessed 21 September 2005).

³⁶ *CR* 104, 85th Cong., 2nd sess., p. 1124.

³⁷ Sar Levitan, *Federal Aid to Depressed Areas: An Evaluation of Area Redevelopment Administration* (Baltimore : Johns Hopkins Press, 1964), 13.

³⁸ *CR* 105, 86th Cong., 1st sess., H.R. 111, p. 30.

men were employed in soil conservation work, road construction, forest preservation and other public works projects. In this case, unemployed miners could man hundreds of construction, restoration, and conservation projects across Appalachia. In her “Keenotes” column, in early January of that year, which she later inserted into the *Congressional Record*, she wrote,

The West Virginia delegation is united in the belief that a depressed areas bill should be passed. How economical is it to stave off this program and allow thousands of men to continue on the unemployed rolls? Wouldn't it make better sense to invest money to create jobs to restore these men to the tax rolls and give them an income that would create additional jobs?³⁹

In March, Elizabeth Kee joined with fifty-one of her colleagues from both parties in proposing a three-part program consisting of higher quantity and quality of surplus food, a public works program to control flooding and area redevelopment legislation, which would bring relief to depressed areas. She spoke out in support of this program citing what she insisted were the worst economic conditions in the history of southern West Virginia and she wanted to make clear that “West Virginians do not want a dole or a handout—they merely want job opportunities in order that they may provide the necessities of life for their families.”⁴⁰ Congress agreed, passing the bill but in late August, President Eisenhower vetoed again.⁴¹

In May 1960, area redevelopment legislation again came up before the House. Kee rose and addressed the House quoting a recent *New York Times* article stating that, “West Virginia possesses ample human resources to conquer her problems if these

³⁹ *CR* 105, 86th Cong., 1st sess., p. 859.

⁴⁰ *CR* 105, 86th Cong., 1st sess., p. 3640.

⁴¹ *CR* 105, 86th Cong., 1st sess., p. 17095.

resources can be mobilized.” She then went on to lend her strong support to the bill that would “remove these pockets of economic depression from the Nation’s landscape.”⁴² The bill passed both Houses and finally reached the President's desk. In spite of counsel from Cabinet members, including Secretary Mitchell and Vice-President Richard Nixon, who did not want area redevelopment to be an issue in his upcoming campaign, Eisenhower vetoed the bill.⁴³ By this time, Kee understood that the area redevelopment issue would be decided with the 1960 Presidential election.

In the spring of 1960, John F. Kennedy and Hubert Humphrey battled it out in West Virginia during the 1960 Democratic presidential primary campaign. According to Ken Hechler, a fellow representative with Elizabeth Kee, Kennedy’s success in West Virginia was pivotal because of the religious issue. If a Catholic could win in a state that was 95% Protestant, he could win in other states as well.⁴⁴ In cities in the northern part of West Virginia, Kennedy’s chances looked good but in Elizabeth Kee’s neck of the woods, Kennedy volunteers were nowhere to be found.

To remedy the situation, Kennedy recruited his staff from Washington to knock on doors and hand out literature in southern West Virginia. According to one observer, the only way they could guarantee a good turnout for a rally was to provide free hot dogs and sodas. Kennedy knew the fundamental issue in West Virginia was poverty and he promised the people of West Virginia that if elected, he would act to relieve the

⁴² CR 106, 86th Cong., 2nd sess., p. 9440.

⁴³ Gladys Ruth Kremen, “MDTA: The Origins of the Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962” U.S. Department of Labor Publication, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Policy, 1974 online at www.dol.gov/asp/programs/history/mono-mdtatext.htm (accessed 25 September 2005).

⁴⁴ Ken Hechler interview by John Lilly, *Goldenseal* Fall 26: 3, pg. 20.

distressed parts of the state within sixty days of taking office.⁴⁵ Soon after his election to the Presidency, he kept his word to the people of West Virginia when he signed executive orders increasing the quantity and quality of surplus food distributed to jobless Americans on January 21, 1961. On May 1, 1961, Elizabeth Kee stood next to President Kennedy as he signed the long-sought Area Redevelopment Bill to aid communities with chronic unemployment.⁴⁶

Two years later and just two weeks before Kennedy's assassination in Texas, Elizabeth addressed the House, giving a stirring speech that paid tribute to the program the President had finally made happen. She said,

Until the last twenty months or so, there were times when I wept silently over the apparent hopelessness of the economic prospects for the people in my district and for all of West Virginia, for that matter. Until the latter part of 1961, we were all preoccupied with despair brought about by economic change and technological innovations, a despair and bitterness sustained and fed by the absence of any new program that might offer new paths for economic growth and new employment. By the early part of 1962, however, West Virginians came to appreciate the role of the Area Redevelopment Administration [ARA] in providing that kind of program.⁴⁷

Kee then described to her colleagues how the ARA provided money for a feasibility study to be done in the New River Gorge area. The results of the study led the ARA to approve a multi-million dollar tourist and recreation project. Area residents of Hinton, West Virginia became confident and hopeful for the first time in many, many years and there was an upsurge in economic activity in local projects such as motels, restaurants, and gas stations. These local projects did not involve any ARA money. The ARA

⁴⁵ Geoffrey Perret, *Jack: A Life Like No Other* (New York: Random House, 2001), 250.

⁴⁶ John F. Kennedy Library and Museum, "Selected Milestones in the Presidency of John F. Kennedy," online at www.jfklibrary.org/jfkchron.htm (accessed 25 September 2005).

⁴⁷ *CR* 109, 88th Cong., 1st sess., p. 21538.

money used to build the New River Gorge recreation area had been the seed for economic growth. Kee had long been looking for federal money to kick-start economic growth in the private sector and it had finally happened. That was all Elizabeth Kee had ever wanted—hope for the people of West Virginia and a chance to support their families in the future.

Besides fighting diligently for area redevelopment legislation, Kee spent several years focusing intently on the Surplus Commodities program. This program had been set up by the government during the Depression to help end the disturbing practice of farmers having to plow under surplus crops and destroy livestock while families in American cities were going hungry. In 1935, Congress passed public law 74-320. Section 32 of this act made available to the Secretary of Agriculture an amount of money each year equal to 30% of the import duties collected from customs receipts. The money had to be used to encourage the exportation of surplus agricultural commodities, to encourage domestic consumption of surplus agricultural commodities and to reestablish farmers' purchasing power by paying them for surplus agricultural commodities. One way in which the Secretary accomplished these objectives was to purchase the surplus foods and distribute them to schools and needy families in America and abroad.⁴⁸

The food from the program was supposed to be a *supplement* for families' tables but by the late 1950s in Appalachia, more and more families remaining in the abandoned coal towns ate *only* the surplus commodities as many neighborhood grocery stores closed. In 1960, when John F. Kennedy campaigned in West Virginia "he could scarcely bring himself to believe that human beings were forced to eat and live on these cans of

⁴⁸ "History of the Food Distribution Program" online at www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/aboutfdp/fd-history.pdf (1 October 2005).

dry relief rations, which he fingered like artifacts of another civilization. ‘Imagine,’ he said to one of his assistants one night, ‘just imagine kids who never drank milk.’”⁴⁹

In early 1959, Elizabeth Kee had joined with Senators Randolph and Byrd to introduce legislation that would allow the Secretary of Agriculture to use \$200 million to purchase additional foods to supplement the butter, flour, meal, rice and dried milk that were being distributed to 306,000 needy people in West Virginia.⁵⁰ In March, the West Virginia Congressional delegation, in an effort to call attention to this bill, met for breakfast at the Capitol and dined on items that were available to recipients of surplus commodities. The breakfast consisted of 1 3/4 ounces of flour, 3/4 ounce of meal, 2/3 ounce of powdered milk, 1/3 ounce of butter, and 1/3 ounce of rice; the amount that was normally allotted by the program to a family of three for one meal.

Later in March, Kee then wrote a “Keenotes” column , which she entered into the *Congressional Record*. In it she told her constituents about the breakfast and then she said:

The diet of surplus commodities is wholly inadequate, especially for growing children. It provides only 26% of the needed calories, 36% of the necessary protein, and 46% of the necessary calcium . . . We have hammered away at this one thing ever since Congress reconvened. We are working as a team to bring flood control and other projects to the State to create desperately needed jobs. We are demanding that other commodities be added to the list which is now available to our unfortunate families. And more importantly, we want an economic redevelopment program under which West Virginia can attract new industries and businesses to provide permanent jobs for our people.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Theodore H. White, *The Making of the President 1960* (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1961), 106.

⁵⁰ CR 105, 86th Congress, 1st sess., pgs. 1644-1645.

⁵¹ CR 105, 86th Cong., 1st sess., p. 4833.

The delegation succeeded with only one of the three projects they were pushing that year. The public works bill, to aid in flood control, finally went through. After being vetoed twice by Eisenhower, the House and Senate overrode the second veto in September of 1959. As for supplementing the surplus commodities, many of Kee's colleagues in the House and Senate along with the Eisenhower administration did not find this to be a priority in 1959. No legislation dealing specifically with surplus commodities made it to the President's desk.

In addition to the issues of residual fuel oil, aid to depressed areas, and surplus commodities, Kee devoted much of her time to veterans. According to her son Jim, the Foreign Affairs Committee, of which her husband had been chair, offered Kee a position there after her husband's death, but she instead accepted a seat on the Veteran's Affairs Committee.⁵² She was well aware that West Virginia had contributed more soldiers per capita during World War II than any other state in the union and she wanted to make sure that the veterans of all the wars were provided the benefits they deserved. During her time in Congress she introduced no less than thirty-nine bills related to veterans' affairs.

For example, in February 1955, Elizabeth introduced a bill to amend the law that had granted education and training benefits to veterans to extend the period during which these benefits were offered.⁵³ In early January, President Eisenhower had announced that January 31, 1955 would be the official cut-off date for certain benefits for veterans of the Korean conflict. Kee took exception to the announcement. She said, "I will favor full

⁵² James Kee, interview by William Hardin, tape recording, 29 March 1980, tape 8, transcript 8, pg. 1, Kee Collection, West Virginia State Archives, Charleston.

⁵³ *CR* 101, 84th Cong., 1st sess., H.R. 2981, p. 687.

veterans benefits for these men regardless of whether or not this country is actively engaged in war . . . The issue is a moral one. So long as the Government asserts the right to draft young men for military service, I feel that it assumes, at the same time, sizeable responsibilities for their future welfare.”⁵⁴ But, in light of increasing duties to an already overloaded Veteran’s Administration, Eisenhower’s cut-off date held as the official end to the Korean conflict.⁵⁵ However, the draft continued between January 31, 1955 and February 28, 1961 (the official start date for veterans serving “in country” for the Vietnam War) leaving many veterans ineligible for certain VA benefits.⁵⁶

In spring 1955, the topic was evidently still on her mind as she wrote a “Keenotes” column about “yesterday’s heroes.” She wrote that it is sometimes easy to forget the war veterans, especially when the country was not engaged in a shooting war. Then she blasted the Hoover Commission. In September 1953, Eisenhower had established a second Commission on the Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government. This second Hoover Commission had undertaken a broad study of government functions, policy, and organization and had been looking at the government’s \$4 billion a year health activities. The commission found that the government could save \$400 million a year by several reorganization strategies. The only problem was that 75% of the cuts would come from hospitalization benefits for veterans, tightening of disability-allowance procedures for veterans, not building new VA

⁵⁴ CR 101, 84th Cong., 1st sess., p. 309.

⁵⁵ *Department of Veteran’s Affairs Fact Sheet*, “VA and Korean War Vets: a Partnership Reaches 50,” online at <http://www.va.gov/pressrel/kwarbkgd.htm> (accessed 2 October 2005).

⁵⁶ *Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents 2005*, page 2, online at <http://www1.va.gov/opa/vadocs/fedben.pdf> (accessed 2 October 2005).

hospitals and closing existing veteran's hospitals that were not operating economically or effectively. With dramatic flair, Kee then quoted Shakespeare's *King Lear*, "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child." Comparing the king's child to an unappreciative America, she ended her column with, "Nations can be ungrateful, too."⁵⁷ Some of the Hoover Commission's proposed cuts did go through. No new VA hospital construction took place between 1955-1958. But the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) fought vigorously in order to ensure that more of the Hoover Commission's recommendations did not occur. For example, they worked with the House Veteran's Affairs Committee in order to get funds to update many of the existing VA hospitals.⁵⁸

In 1956, Kee entered into the *Congressional Record* nine separate petitions signed by 373 of her constituents calling for a separate pension program for veterans of World War I. Perhaps she realized a separate pension was not really necessary because she did not comment on the petitions but she did place them in the public record so her constituents could know that their voices had been heard. A separate pension program solely for WWI veterans was never instituted but they continued to receive benefits along with WWII veterans and Korean War veterans.⁵⁹ As Memorial Day 1956 approached, Kee spoke on the House floor, "As we celebrate Memorial Day tomorrow and honor the brave men who fought and died to save our country, let us not forget to honor those

⁵⁷ CR 101, 84th Cong., 1st sess., p. 2989.

⁵⁸ VFW "Recycling the Battle: 1955-1973" online at <http://vfw1679.tripod.com/recycle.htm> (accessed October 5, 2006).

⁵⁹ *Now with Bill Moyers*, "Coming Home," May 13, 2005 online at www.pbs.org/now/society/vetbenefits.html (10 October 2005).

equally brave men who fought and lived.”⁶⁰ She took her own advice and continued to fight for veteran’s benefits by introducing bills throughout 1956 that would improve state soldiers’ homes, get uniforms for holders of the Medal of Honor, and provide money for vocational rehabilitation facilities. She took a special interest in one particular facility.

The Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center opened its doors in 1947 in the town of Fishersville, Virginia. It was the first state-owned and operated comprehensive rehabilitation center in the country serving many veterans, especially after WWII. When Elizabeth learned that the center did not have a library, she took it upon herself to get one. She donated her own personal library and then wrote to others and asked for their contributions as well. According to her son Jim, she arranged to get autographed books by many famous world figures, including Douglas MacArthur and Winston Churchill.⁶¹ She eventually collected over ten thousand volumes for the center.⁶² Even though this center was outside her district and state, Kee demonstrated through her actions a broader concern for veterans nationwide.

Elizabeth Kee toured many VA hospitals in her role as chairman of the Subcommittee on Hospitals. In 1961, she presented to the House a thorough and extensive report following a week of hearings on the general operations of the VA hospital and medical program. Fourteen of her colleagues from the House had appeared before the committee asking for funds to either build a new hospital in their communities or make improvements to an existing one. She was appreciative of President

⁶⁰ CR 102, 84th Cong., 2nd sess., p. A4281.

⁶¹ James Kee, interview by William Hardin, tape recording, 29 March 1980, tape 8, transcript 8, pg. 8, West Virginia State Archives, Charleston.

⁶² “Elizabeth Kee” *Current Biography: 1954*, 371.

Eisenhower's announcement two years earlier of his support of a \$900 million program for the modernization and renovation of many of the 170 VA Hospitals and she was encouraged because of recent legislation that had passed in the House providing slightly higher salaries to managers and directors of VA Hospitals. Finally, she entered into the record several detailed tables indicating the Veteran's Administration's hospital construction program with accompanying costs.⁶³ Clearly, Kee took her chairmanship of this large subcommittee very seriously. She knew the work she was doing would have a lasting affect on thousands of veterans.

Each year Elizabeth Kee's Congressional office received thousands of letters from constituents. Since West Virginia had the highest number of veterans per capita in the nation, many of those letters came from veterans. Fortunately some veterans' letters to her and her responses have survived. One such exchange occurred between Kee and a veteran from Oak Hill, West Virginia. On January 16, 1962, Mr. Logan sent a lengthy four-page letter to Kee. Her handling of this case and others like it is an example of her genuine concern and willingness to intervene on behalf of individual veteran's rights.

In his letter to Kee, Logan wrote of his service in France in 1944 and his injury by machine gun fire, which resulted in large fragments of bone to be missing in his pelvis and left ischium. For his courage and bravery, he received both the Silver Star and Purple Heart citations.

After Logan received an honorable discharge and 100% disability, he had a desire to work and applied for vocational rehabilitation. He completed on the job training and worked for a few years when his benefits were cut by 40%. Upon inquiry, the VA

⁶³ CR 107, 87th Cong., 1st sess., pgs. 8383-8387.

lawyers told him that if he could hold a job, he could not be considered disabled. He kept his job and continued to work for fifteen more years missing work more with each consecutive year because of terrible pain in his pelvis and left leg. He finally had surgery on his left leg in 1961 but was denied 100% disability advantage because the VA office in Huntington said the pain in his left leg was not a service-connected disability.

Logan attempted to return to work but at times during the day, his hip would “give way,” causing excruciating pain. He checked back into the VA hospital where they called in a specialist who did a series of x-rays and finally told him that he had a fragment of metal lodged in his hip close to the socket but that there was nothing they could do for him. The V.A. still had his injury listed as non-service connected and would not reinstate any of his benefits. He had appealed on several occasions, but since September 1961, he had not heard anything. Since that time he had been examined by his family doctor because of stomach pain and told that he had growing adhesions in his abdominal wounds. He ended his letter telling Elizabeth Kee that he had a wife and two children in school and that being unable to work had caused him “considerable hardships financially.”⁶⁴

Kee wrote back immediately on January 20th telling this veteran that she was contacting the manager of the VA Regional Office in Huntington that very day and would let him know of the outcome.⁶⁵ True to her word, she forwarded the letter she had received along with a letter asking the manager to look into the matter and get back with

⁶⁴ Andrew J. Logan, Jr. to Elizabeth Kee, 16 January 1962, Archives and Manuscripts, West Virginia Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown.

⁶⁵ Elizabeth Kee to Andrew J. Logan, Jr., 20 January 1962, Archives and Manuscripts, West Virginia Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown.

her.⁶⁶ Three days later she heard from the manager that this veteran's records were in Washington for the Board of Appeals but that they would contact her when they heard anything.⁶⁷ She immediately contacted Logan to let him know of her continued interest in his case.⁶⁸

In March, Kee heard from the Huntington office that the records were returned from Washington without a decision and that it would be necessary for this veteran to be examined again.⁶⁹ Kee wrote to Logan within a week about his needing to be examined once again.⁷⁰ In August, she finally received good news. Upon reexamining this veteran's extensive injuries, the VA was able to restore his benefits to 100% and his monthly check would increase \$197 to \$322 retroactive to January 1961. An adjustment check was on its way to Oak Hill.⁷¹ Kee forwarded this letter to Logan along with a note letting him know that it had been "a real pleasure to have been able to assist you in this matter. I trust you will let me know if I can be helpful in the future."⁷² Elizabeth Kee's

⁶⁶ Elizabeth Kee to Patrick Beville, 20 January 1962, Archives and Manuscripts, West Virginia Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown.

⁶⁷ Patrick Beville to Elizabeth Kee, 23 January 1962, Archives and Manuscripts, West Virginia Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown.

⁶⁸ Elizabeth Kee to Andrew J. Logan, Jr., 1 February 1962, Archives and Manuscripts, West Virginia Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown.

⁶⁹ Patrick Beville to Elizabeth Kee, 15 March 1962, Archives and Manuscripts, West Virginia Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown.

⁷⁰ Elizabeth Kee to Andrew J. Logan, Jr., 23 March 1962, Archives and Manuscripts, West Virginia Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown.

⁷¹ Patrick Beville to Elizabeth Kee, 13 August 1962, Archives and Manuscripts, West Virginia Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown.

⁷² Elizabeth Kee to Andrew J. Logan, Jr., 15 August 1962, Archives and Manuscripts, West Virginia Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown.

care and conscientiousness in dealing with this one case out of hundreds of cases like it illustrates the deep respect and appreciation she had for our country's veterans.⁷³

In July 1954, Syd Barksdale wrote an article about Elizabeth Kee's service in Washington that rang particularly true in conjunction with her service to veterans. Barksdale wrote of Kee, "She is not a headline hunter nor a spotlight seeker. Rather she works quietly, and often behind the scenes, out of the glare of the publicity which so many Members of Congress court."⁷⁴ When speaking of his mother's commitment to veterans, Jim Kee said:

One of the things few people know about Mother . . . [She] quietly spent one day a week, visiting hospitals in Washington, going around to see the folks that were sick. Nobody knew it. She did it because she thought, well, people are in the hospital and they're far away from their families. And she didn't tell them she was a Congresswoman . . . She'd get flowers [or] she'd see somebody sick and she'd find out they didn't have a family, she'd go out of her way and write letters to them. That was part of her interest in those less fortunate.⁷⁵

During her entire fourteen-year career in Congress, Veterans Affairs remained a key concern for Elizabeth Kee.

While the majority of Elizabeth Kee's legislative work focused on fuel importation policies, area redevelopment legislation, and veterans she was also very vocal on an issue that affects all Americans to this day—Social Security. Elizabeth Kee faced her share of bitter disappointments with her legislative work but in late August 1954, she stated on the floor of the House that she was very proud "to have had a hand in

⁷³ See hundreds of other letters from veterans to Kee from 1961-63 in the West Virginia Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown.

⁷⁴ Syd Barksdale, "Mrs. Kee Earns Praise as First Congresswoman," *Bluefield Sunset News-Observer*, 17 July, 1954, 3.

⁷⁵ James Kee, interview by William Hardin, tape recording, 29 March 1980, tape 8, transcript 8, pg. 2, West Virginia State Archives, Charleston.

the enactment of legislation such as this social-security bill.”⁷⁶ She continued her speech by detailing some changes to Social Security under the new law. She informed her colleagues that under this new legislation, coverage was extended to several groups such as farmers, self-employed workers, and ministers. The new bill also reduced from seventy-five to seventy-two the age at which benefits would be paid without regard to earnings. There was good news for future workers as well, in that benefit levels increased by about 13%, effective in September 1954. Kee praised the new social security law but before she sat down, her female consciousness inspired her to give a short history lesson aimed squarely at her colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

She began by recalling two Hollywood films, a 1920 silent film called *Over the Hill to the Poorhouse* and its 1931 talking picture remake entitled *Over the Hill*. She pointed out that “today’s youngsters would probably need a commentary to understand what the movie was all about—and what a poorhouse is or was.” She attributed this to the Social Security Act written into law in 1935. The bill they had just passed to further expand coverage and increase benefits had enjoyed tremendous bipartisan support. But she reminded her colleagues that this had not always been the case.⁷⁷

Kee said that in 1935, many Americans condemned the act as “un-American, Communist, radical, and wild-eyed.” The Republican Party, as part of its platform in 1936, had vowed to repeal the act and, she pointed out, some of the people in that very room had tried to remove people from the rolls in past years, rather than include more Americans. Then she stated pointedly:

⁷⁶ CR 100, 83rd Cong., 2nd sess., pgs. 15827-15828.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

I feel now that insofar as social security is concerned, the Republican Party has probably learned the error of its earlier ways. I am sorry that it has taken 19 years for this lesson to be learned. It now appears that it is also taking 19 years for the average Republican Congressman to learn some of the other lessons of American progress brought about by Democratic Congresses of recent years, such as the need for better defenses against recession and depression, the need for better unemployment compensation, the need for better housing for our people, the need for better schools . . . We waited 19 years for the Republican Party to come around to social security. Must we wait 19 years for a similar awakening in each of these other important areas? American progress cannot wait 19 years while the Republican Members of Congress catch up.⁷⁸

Elizabeth Kee did not devote her time and energy to issues that got a lot of press. Instead, she worked on the areas that mattered most to the people of southern West Virginia: jobs and assistance for displaced coalminers and their families, help for veterans, and money for retirement years in the form of Social Security. When she rose to give a speech on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, she came prepared and she was not one to mince words. She warned about the wisdom of America's growing dependency on Middle Eastern Oil. She scolded politicians for caring more about big oil companies than they did for working families and her commentary regarding the devastating conditions in the southern West Virginia coalfields laid the groundwork for later programs like President Johnson's War on Poverty.⁷⁹ She understood the complexities of a political life; there were many areas that could have captured her time and attention but throughout her career, Elizabeth Kee was most

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Lyndon Johnson was a colleague of John Kee, Elizabeth Kee's husband, when they both served in the House. In her "Keenotes" column in the *Bluefield Sunset News-Observer* of September 14, 1959, she thanked Lyndon Johnson for helping to secure approval of two critical flood control projects in her district. She called Johnson a "sincere friend of West Virginia. He understands our problems and has gone out of his way to be helpful, not only on this particular problem, but on other matters of great interest to our State."

passionate and devoted to issues relating to the immediate and future well-being of her constituency.

Chapter Two: Ecumenical Adherent

Tim Kaine, first Roman Catholic to be elected as governor of Virginia, recently said in an interview with *Newsweek*, “We can’t completely separate politics and faith. They rise from the same wellspring: the concern about the distance between what is and what ought to be.”¹ In the foreword to James Reichley’s *Religion In American Public Life*, Bruce K. MacLaury wrote, “Arguments now abound over the extent to which religious groups should participate in politics or the degree of constitutional separation of church and state that is desirable.” He added that many of these discussions lack a historical perspective. He reminded readers,

The Founding Fathers drew on religious ideals and rhetoric when they formed the new nation. Churches have been active participants in political struggles to abolish slavery, prohibit the sale of liquor, and win votes for women. Secular institutions—government and the courts—have affected issues important to religious denominations such as school prayer, the status of conscientious objectors, and public funding for private education.”

In the United States, religion and politics have always been interconnected. The challenge, as MacLaury saw it, is how this connection can continue “without threatening civil liberties and without the secular politicization of religion.”²

Elizabeth Kee shared in this view that religion and politics were closely intertwined. During many of her fourteen years in Congress, she entered into the *Congressional Record* different sermons, tributes and religious articles. For some today, this may seem inappropriate or out of place, but the 1950s, according to scholars such as Geoffrey Laymen, “represented a high point in American religiosity and in the role of

¹ Howard Fineman, “A Faith-Based Initiative: What the Democrats can Learn from Kaine’s Virginia Victory,” *Newsweek* 146 no. 21, 21 November 2005, p. 37.

² A. James Reichley, *Religion in American Public Life* (Washington D.C. : The Brookings Institution, 1985), ix, x.

religion and traditional morality in American culture.”³ By 1959, more Americans were members of churches than before the war. (64.5 million in 1940- 50% of the population and 114.5 million in 1959-63% of the population.) This was the decade, after all, where this religiosity spurred Congress to insert the words “under God” into the pledge and place the words “In God We Trust” onto the currency. Even President Eisenhower weighed in when he summed up the role of religion in public life saying that, “Our government makes no sense unless it is founded on deeply felt religious belief—and I don’t care what it is.”⁴

But Elizabeth Kee was careful with her personal religiosity. She never discussed in Congress her particular religious affiliation. Instead, she entered items into the record that focused on morals and values. Despite having been in Washington nineteen years prior to her service in the House and witnessing the nature of politics, she was not always comfortable with its cruel realities. Perhaps, she shared the religious sermons or articles as a way to temper some of the negativity, which inevitably seeped into the political body in which she served. Perhaps it was an effort, on her part, to raise the standards of behavior within the House itself. Many of the religious materials she entered into the record dealt with two themes: redemption for those who have made poor decisions in their past and devotion to God not only through words but by actions as well.

Elizabeth Kee’s own religious journey took many turns during her lifetime as she was born into a strict Primitive Baptist family, converted to Catholicism as a young bride, faithfully attended the Episcopalian church after marrying her second husband, and

³ Geoffrey Layman, *The Great Divide: Religious and Cultural Conflict in American Party Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 7-8.

⁴ Ibid.

returned to the Catholic church not long after his death.⁵ The congregations may have changed throughout the years but her deep commitment to moral and religious beliefs did not. Without a doubt, God played a very important role in her life and her religious beliefs guided her words and her actions on a daily basis.

Having just returned from her first Christmas break as a Congresswoman, Elizabeth Kee entered into the record on January 10, 1952, a sermon given by a Reverend William Eckman of Christ Church in Philadelphia. According to Don Ritchie, Senate historian, most of the entries into the *Congressional Record* are “ political or policy-oriented, but there is no prohibition against including religious or other cultural items. I think it’s safe to say that not many members include[d] sermons, but I doubt that Representative Kee was alone in that practice.”⁶ Even though, in 1952, Kee attended a Catholic congregation, she quoted a Protestant clergyman, suggesting she embraced an ecumenical religious vision in which she saw truth and goodness in many different religions.

The thrust of this sermon by Eckman seems to suggest that Kee believed that people needed to recognize God in their lives and the many opportunities He gives them to make make something right. Eckman began his sermon by talking about the different theories behind the Star of Bethlehem. Was it the planet Venus or, as some ancient Egyptian records suggest, was it instead a conjunction of Jupiter or Saturn? Was it a comet or a new star, a nova, which burns brightly for a few weeks and then quietly dies out? Or was it, as the skeptics believe, just a decorative addition to the colorful myth of

⁵ William H.Hardin, “Elizabeth Kee: West Virginia’s First Woman in Congress,” *West Virginia History* 45 (1984): 110.

⁶ Email correspondence from Don Ritchie to Shari Heywood, 30 November, 2005.

the Lord's birth? Eckman said that ultimately it does not really matter. What mattered more was that God spoke to the Wise Men in a way they could understand. They were prepared and willing to recognize God when "he approached them through the avenue of their own interests."⁷

The reverend then likened the star to God's hand giving us opportunities in our lives. And unlike the opportunity of proverbs: Opportunity waits for no man and Opportunity never knocks at the same door twice, God's opportunity comes to us many times in our lives giving us many second chances. It is up to us to take the opportunities and make good use of them. Reverend Eckman then gave the example of Abraham Lincoln who had many, many failures and disappointments in his life. But he kept getting second chances and he took them. After all, the reverend continued, Christianity is sort of a religion of second chances as Jesus Christ came in large part to those who had missed their opportunities. And even though today, "people remain selfish where they ought to be generous; they hate where they ought to love; they are quarrelsome where they ought to be helpful," still God's star shines and gives us second chances.⁸

Complicated family issues may have made the idea of redemption or second chances appealing to Elizabeth Kee. Several years after her marriage to John Kee, she left West Virginia and moved to Washington D.C.. She left behind the two children from her first marriage: Frances, who as a child had been afflicted with polio and James Alan Jr. who later became Congressman Jim Kee. Her sister, Hazel Hall Simpkins, helped raise Jim but after some trouble with the law, he was sent away to the Greenbrier Military

⁷ CR 98, 82nd Cong., 2nd sess., p. A 84-85.

⁸ Ibid.

Academy. Simpkins said in a 1983 interview, “Maude [Elizabeth] was career minded . . . not as a mother and housekeeper.” After Kee won her husband’s seat in 1951, she did not have any contact with either her sister Hazel or her brother Frank. When asked in 1983, about the reason for this falling out, Hazel replied that she did not know the reason but that “Maude had not been raised that way.”⁹ Perhaps religious differences played a part in this unfortunate family divide. Kee’s brother and sister did not attend her funeral in 1975.

Before entering another item from Christ Church into the *Congressional Record* in April 1952, Kee’s ecumenicalism is again evident as she made a point of noting that Christ Church had become known as a place where many Americans from different denominations and racial groups were bound together by a common faith in God. The declaration Kee shared with her colleagues began by identifying two forces that were allegedly overpowering humanity—tyranny and moral degeneracy. Then, it stated that in America we were waging a war against these two forces with vague ideals like “the American Way of Life,” “Freedom,” and “Democracy” without a clear idea of what these terms really meant. We needed to get back to the history of these ideals and what the founding fathers had in mind when they set forth the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights and the Constitution.

According to Christ Church, the founding fathers and the colonists before them were looking for the freedom and the right to seek grace through a personal relationship with God, the right to human dignity based on that relationship and a chance to exercise moral responsibility and brotherhood because of that relationship. It was for these rights

⁹ Hazel Hall Simpkins and Frank T. Simpkins interview by William H. Hardin, 11 July 1983, tape recording, Kee Collection, West Virginia State Archives, Charleston, West Virginia.

that so many had risked and lost their lives. Then the formal declaration came asserting that “each man has the right and duty to establish a relationship with God by the best means open to him and each man has the obligation to guarantee this right to every other man, to do all in his power to aid his fellow man in achieving this relationship.” It is interesting to note that the above quote, runs counter to Roman Catholic doctrine that posits the indispensable intermediary role of *the* church headed by the Holy Father. Still, Kee included it. This is further evidence that Kee embraced an ecumenical view of religion and welcomed the basic message of the declaration, which was that only by allowing every American citizen the freedom to worship as they saw fit and to establish their own individual relationship with God, would we ever be able to overcome the many challenges that modern life placed before us.¹⁰

Lastly in June of 1952, Kee entered into the record another sermon given at Christ Church in Philadelphia. This one, written by Reverend E.A. deBordenave, celebrated the 175th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence while examining insights about man, relationships between man and man, and the relationship between man and God. It was entitled “You and America’s Contradiction.” DeBordenave began by going over two very important points from the Declaration of Independence. All men are created equal and the Creator has given men certain unalienable rights: life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. So, the Declaration states that all men have the right to be free but the Declaration also recognizes that “men cannot live together unless personal freedom has limitations placed upon it.”¹¹ DeBordenave claimed that these ideas:

¹⁰ CR 98, 82nd Cong., 2nd sess., pgs. A 2139-A2140.

¹¹ CR 98, 82nd Cong., 2nd sess., pgs. A 4001-A4002.

freedom and limits on that freedom were at opposite poles and were in fact America's contradiction. Whenever either one of these ideas was taken to the extreme, the result was tyranny.

DeBordenave continued by next giving the example of Germany after World War I. The Treaty of Versailles took away freedom from Germany as they were forced to pay tremendous reparations to the Allies. Germany also lost territory to other countries, had its military forces severely limited and was stripped of its colonies overseas and in Africa. Soon, Germany was experiencing both economic and political chaos. The dissatisfaction and despair the Germans were going through opened the door for a strong man named Hitler to bring order. Instead he brought tyranny. The reverend also gave the example of Communist Russia where they tried to create a social order where everyone was equal but the price was personal freedom. Again, the result was tyranny.

In America, Debordenave taught, we have to overcome the contradiction between the ideas of personal freedom and regulated society and the best way to do this is to recognize that God transcends the contradiction. Only through faith and devotion to God can the people recognize the "necessity of order in society and give their consent to be governed and assume responsibility for maintaining a healthy society."¹² He continued by reminding the people of the founding father's knowledge and devotion to God which gave them a deep sense of personal responsibility for America: "With a firm reliance on the protection of divine providence, we mutually pledge each to the other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."¹³

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

It is clear that in the 1950s, Kee and many of her contemporaries, including the aforementioned ministers, held the popular, simplistic view of United States religious history that has since been challenged. Author Susan Jacoby points out that it is wrong to portray men like John Adams or Thomas Jefferson either as complete atheists or devoted Christians. She says:

What did distinguish the most important revolutionary leaders was a particularly adaptable combination of political and religious beliefs, constantly subject to revision in an era when modern views of nature, science, and man's place in the universe were beginning to take shape. These views included skepticism vis-à-vis the more rigid and authoritarian sects of their day; the conviction, rooted in Enlightenment philosophy, that if God exists, he created human rationality as the supreme instrument for understanding and mastering the natural world; and the assignment of faith to the sphere of individual conscience rather than public duty.¹⁴

Despite the fact that DeBordenave was inaccurate in his views of the founding fathers, he did pose an interesting question to end his sermon, which may have given Kee's colleagues pause for reflection. He asked, "How do we stand in our devotion to God?"

Devotion to God was something Elizabeth felt very strongly about. In many cases, she expressed her devotion through concrete action. Her son James told of how later in her life, she would visit the Bethesda Naval Hospital and "she became quite friendly with the Catholic priest out there and . . .she'd clean up the altar out there . . .She was a good Catholic and she was a devout Catholic."¹⁵ If Jim Kee was right, if Kee was as devout as he claims, there should be some Catholic sermons inserted into the *Congressional Record* as well. Clearly Kee was devoted, not to a specific religious

¹⁴ Susan Jacoby, *Freethinkers: A History of American Secularism*, (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2004), 14.

¹⁵ James Kee, interview by William Hardin, tape recording, 17 June 1978, tape 10, transcript pg. 10, West Virginia State Archives, Charleston.

dogma, but more to the ecumenical idea that people of different faiths can and should work together to build a world where people cooperate and help one another. She tried to do her part by cleaning the altar, gathering books for a rehabilitation center, and visiting veterans in D.C. hospitals. For her, religion and politics were never separate because they were both part of her life in a very real way. Besides sermons, another way her religious views were evident was through the many tributes she entered into the *Congressional Record* to colleagues who had passed away.

One such colleague was Albert Sydney Camp, a representative from Georgia who had served in the House for fifteen years. In a tribute given him in July 1954, Kee read a poem that had been a favorite of her husband, John Kee, entitled “Our Kind of Man.”

The kind of man for you and me,
 He faces the world unflinchingly,
 And smites, as long as the wrong resists,
 With a knuckled faith and force like fists:
 He lives the life he is preaching of,
 And loves where most is the need of love.
 His voice is clear to the deaf man’s ears
 And his face sublime through the blind man’s tears,
 The light shines out where the clouds were dim,
 And the widow’s prayer goes up for him.
 The latch is clicked at the hovel door
 And the sick man sees the sun once more,
 And out o’er the barren fields he sees
 Springing blossoms and waving trees,
 Feeling as only the dying may,
 That God’s own servant has come that way,
 Smoothing the path as it still winds on
 Through the golden gate where his loved have gone.¹⁶

The themes of this poem spoke to Kee as they dealt with living a genuine, service-filled life, helping those who needed it the most and the idea that in serving our fellowman, we also serve God.

¹⁶ CR 100, 83rd Cong., 2nd sess., p. 12033.

In 1955, Elizabeth included into the *Congressional Record* another tribute given by Dr. Frederick Harris, the Chaplain to the United States Senate, for John T. Jones.¹⁷ Again, a picture emerges of someone who not only professed religion but lived it as well. Dr. Harris spoke of John T. Jones as “not just a hearer, but a doer of the Word . . . In a time of sophisticated artificiality he loved and clung to the genuine and true. He hated sham and cant and knew both when his honest eyes looked upon them with scorn in high places and low.”¹⁸ Having spent much of her adult life in Washington D. C., Kee, too, was most likely all too familiar with sham and cant. She hated hypocrisy as John T. Jones did and instead tried to truly live her religion. A year later, Kee included yet another tribute with religious overtones into the record.

This time, Reverend Shirley Donnelly gave the tribute at the funeral service for Senator Harley Kilgore, a former judge and Colonel in the National Guard, who served as a West Virginia Senator from 1940 until his unexpected death in 1956. Donnelly said of Senator Kilgore, “Because Harley Kilgore was true to himself, it naturally followed he was not false to any man.”¹⁹ But Donnelly also reminded those gathered that she knew Senator Kilgore personally and that he was by no means perfect. “Like all the rest of us who walk the black dirt of God’s planet today, our old friend had feet of clay.” But Reverend Donnelly was quick to point out that when the final judgment came and “the books were opened, the tears of gratitude and joy of the soldiers this beloved officer

¹⁷ John T. Jones was at one time the director of Labor’s Non-partisan League, originally formed to derail Labor candidates and rally support around Roosevelt in 1936. Jones was very active in promoting health and safety for miners.

¹⁸ *CR* 101, 84th Cong., 1st sess., p. A1536.

¹⁹ *CR* 102, 84th Cong., 2nd sess., pgs. A2062-A2063.

helped in their cases of trouble; of the offenders whom he gave another chance in life; and of all others whom he relieved in the day of their distress, would pour across those pages like a cleansing flood and wash away every stain.”²⁰ Kee wanted to share this redemptive message with her colleagues, perhaps as a reminder that an elected official could be both flawed yet true to himself and others as well.

Elizabeth Kee gave another tribute for a gentleman named Michael L. Benedum, a deeply religious West Virginian from Bridgeport who had made millions in the oil business. Despite spending most of his later years in Pittsburgh, Benedum had donated between 3 and 4 million dollars to Bridgeport and millions more to many West Virginia colleges and individual students. Kee was a close friend of his and had written him a letter of congratulations upon his 90th birthday on July 16, 1959. He wrote back to her and included a copy of his last will and testament. Two weeks later, he passed away and she decided to enter a portion of Benedum’s will to further illustrate the importance she placed on truly living one’s religion by reaching out to others who are less fortunate.

Michael Benedum began his will with an interesting observation, “As I have seen it, all of the elements of the earth belong to the Creator of all things and He has, as part of his divine purpose, distributed them unevenly among His children, holding each relatively accountable for their wise use and disposition.” He admitted that in deciding where to leave his wealth, he had been swayed by two things: his love for the land of his birth and his affection for his family. He then stated very clearly, “Wealth cannot be measured in terms of money, stocks, bonds, acres, or by ownership of mine or mill . . . Those who use a material yardstick to appraise their wealth and foolishly imagine

²⁰ Ibid.

themselves to be rich are objects of pity.” Instead, he said the truly rich were those that while climbing the ladder of success “sustain the faltering ones on the rungs above and extend a helping hand to the less fortunate on the rungs below.”²¹ Benedum was true to his word and was a model for Elizabeth Kee of someone who truly lived his religion. He left much of his wealth to the Benedum foundation that since 1944 has given 6500 grants to communities in West Virginia and Pennsylvania totaling over \$265,000,000.²²

Perhaps the most moving tribute Elizabeth Kee included into the *Congressional Record* was the one given by her friend, the Reverend Robert E. Brengartner, the Catholic chaplain at the U.S. Naval Medical Center, for John F. Kennedy following his assassination in November of 1963. The tribute was entitled “A Man of Prayer and Action.” He began his tribute by describing John F. Kennedy as “the ideal Christian man, combining the age old Christian axiom of *Ora et labora*—pray and work.²³ Pray, as if everything depended upon God, and work, as if everything depended upon yourself.” Brengartner then described President Kennedy as being born into a wealthy family where he could have spent his life in leisure and security. Instead he chose to serve the people and “cry out for social justice, for equality, for the rights of the individual.”²⁴ The chaplain ended his tribute with a hope that President Kennedy’s death would not be in vain but that it would remind us that all men are created equal and that social justice must prevail. Elizabeth Kee spoke of the people of West Virginia’s love for the late president

²¹ CR 105, 86th Cong., 1st sess., pgs. A7079-A7080.

²² Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, “About the Foundation” online at www.benedum.org/about.html (accessed 25 October 2005).

²³ St. Benedict of Nursia left this motto to his disciples before he died in 547 A.D.

²⁴ CR 109, 88th Cong., 1st sess., pgs. A7282-A7283.

and then described him as having a “great spirit, selfless dedication, and a spiritual depth.”²⁵ In light of more recent histories of Kennedy, Brengartner’s assessment of him as “the ideal Christian man” and Kee’s view of his “spiritual depth” may seem naïve and simplistic. But, Kennedy’s father, Joe, told his children, “It’s not what you are that counts, but what people think you are.”²⁶ Kee’s and Brengartner’s view of Kennedy was the common view shared by many Americans during the early 1960s and even though Kennedy’s personal integrity has come into question in recent years, his service and devotion to democratic principles has not.

A final way Elizabeth Kee shared her religious views with her colleagues and the public was through religious speeches and articles. In 1952, Elizabeth Kee wrote a “Keenotes” column in which she printed the prayer given by the Chaplain Bernard Braskamp in Congress on the first day of the eighty-second session. In his prayer he said, “Show us how we may cultivate and bring to fulfillment and fruition humanity’s longings and aspirations for world peace and a finer social order.”²⁷ She then gave a brief biography of the chaplain from his humble beginnings in a small town in Iowa to his graduate work in divinity at Princeton. Kee let her readers know that she always made an effort to be in her seat for the chaplain’s opening prayer of Congress each day “as we are asking God to guide us as we consider matters of grave importance to the American people.”²⁸ Braskamp was not a Catholic, but in fact was a Presbyterian but Kee’s respect

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ “John F. Kennedy-35th President” *The American Experience* online at http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/presidents/35_kennedy/filmmore/filmscript.html (accessed April 2, 2006).

²⁷ CR 98, 82nd Cong., 2nd sess., p. A 508.

²⁸ Ibid.

for him and the principles he stood for is more evidence of her ecumenical attitude regarding religion.

Another “Keenotes” article dealing with moral issues was one she wrote in the summer of 1957. She was very concerned about the problem of juvenile delinquency and gave several examples of teenaged boys being involved in killing animals, gang activities, rape, kidnappings and holdups. Then she asked a pointed question, “Where have we failed these children?” She asked her readers to examine their own consciences and their own lives to see what kind of example the adults of America were setting for its young people. “The mirror, I am sorry to say, does not reflect back a very flattering image of today’s adult world.” She then talked about crowded schools and teacher shortages but a school aid bill did not pass because of petty, partisan politics. She mentioned the 40,000 Americans killed the previous year in auto accidents with the automobile industry continuing to churn out faster and faster cars. She talked about the moral indignation Americans felt after the dropping of the first atomic bomb on the people of Hiroshima but that today “[w]e causally debate whether radioactive fallout will cause sterility and deformity in future generations. We gamble the future happiness of our children in the mad race to develop still more hideous weapons of destruction.”²⁹ She contrasted the giving of foreign aid to countries following World War II, an act of truly wanting to help those war-torn countries rebuild, with the foreign aid of the late 50s that seemed to be nothing more than the selfish purchasing of political loyalty. “We have lost our moral influence and friends abroad and dimmed the idealism and altruism which have heretofore always characterized us as a nation. In their place we have substituted

²⁹ CR 103, 85th Cong., 1st sess., p. 15990.

cynicism, skepticism and the pursuit of the almighty dollar.”³⁰ No wonder America’s young people were confused. The idea that our actions speak louder than words was a moral and religious idea that was central to Kee’s way of life.

Kee entered another religious article into the record sharing again with her colleagues again the idea of devotion to God leading to a life of service to others. The July 1954 article by *Washington Post* columnist Malvina Lindsay dealt with a French nurse named Genevieve de Galard Tarraube, also known as “the angel of Dien Bien Phu.” The article began by talking of another famous nurse, Florence Nightingale, who maintained that God spoke to her audibly four times in her life and called her to the service she performed for the sick and wounded British soldiers of the Crimean War. Like Nightingale, Genevieve de Galard was motivated by religion and her “desire to serve in the areas where she was most needed.”³¹ Despite family opposition, she asked to be sent to French Indochina and served there under extremely dangerous conditions for two years until she was forced to leave in 1954. In a rare occasion, de Galard received the Medal of Honor, usually reserved for U.S. military personnel, from President Eisenhower on July 30, 1954, a few days after Elizabeth Kee had shared the article about her with her colleagues in the House.

Finally, Elizabeth Kee shared some of her religious views by inserting into the *Congressional Record* a speech given by the Honorable Walter Vergil Ross, a judge of the Mercer County Criminal Court and a resident of Elizabeth’s hometown of Bluefield. The title of his speech was “God as Chief Justice of the Universe.” Judge Ross began his

³⁰ CR 103, 85th Cong., 1st sess., p. 15991.

³¹ CR 100, 83rd Cong., 2nd sess., p. A5382.

speech by talking about why jurors, witnesses, and other officers of the court take an oath that includes the words “so help you God.” “Why? Because experience has demonstrated that a reminder of the fact that an ever-present and living God is witnessing our acts and words serves as a guide and beacon light toward the paths of truth and justice.” Judge Ross then compared the courts of the United States with those in communist countries. The biggest distinction that he saw was that American courts “recognize God as the Chief Justice of the Universe . . . Without that faith and belief your life on this earth, and your hope of peace hereafter, rest upon fallacies as insecure and capricious as the shifting sand of the sea.” The judge talked of approaching his duties very humbly, knowing that he himself was fallible but hoping that God would help him to see what the best course of action was in each of his cases. He then pointed out that American courts were open to the public unlike the communists court system with its secret sessions and policy of non-disclosure. He ended his speech with a very strong statement saying, “When Communists deny the divinity of God and undertake to usurp His powers, then the properties, the liberties, and the lives of mankind are imperiled beyond the scope of human imagination.”³² It is interesting that Kee chose to include Ross’ speech into the *Congressional Record*. His religious fervor and even the title of his speech, “God as Chief Justice of the Universe” approach a level of religiosity that does compare to Kee’s more moderate, ecumenical approach. Still, Kee did believe in an ever present, living God who was there to guide her and inspire her as she went about the important political work she was doing for the people of West Virginia.

³² CR 100, 83rd Cong., 2nd sess., p. A4695.

Throughout her fourteen-year career in the House of Representatives, Elizabeth Kee freely shared her religious views with her colleagues in the House by inserting articles, speeches, tributes and sermons into the *Congressional Record*. Her personal experiences in several different denominations may have prompted her ecumenicalism as she hoped for cooperation and an improved understanding between her colleagues who represented many different religious faiths. Her emphasis on themes such as redemption, service, and sincerity suggest an effort to share these ideas that were a very integral part of her life, in hopes that she could remind herself and her colleagues that morality and politics were not mutually exclusive and that religion perhaps did have a place within politics. A fellow politician, himself a Roman Catholic, Mario Cuomo , recently said, “I conclude that religious convictions . . . are not a serious impediment to efficient and proper service by a public official in today’s America. In fact I am convinced that some of the fundamental propositions common to all religious convictions actually enrich, instead of inhibit, public service.”³³ This was certainly the case with Kee. Her religious convictions compelled her to serve and do the best that she could for the people of West Virginia. And she was not a hypocrite. Instead, she backed up her beliefs with actions and believed that actively supporting political programs that advanced compassion mattered to God in a very real way.

³³ Mario Cuomo, “In the American Catholic Tradition of Realism,” in *One Electorate Under God? : a Dialogue on Religion and American Politics*, eds. E.J. Dionne Jr., Jean Bethke Elshtain, Kayla M. Drogoz (Washington D.C. : The Brookings Institution, 2004), 18.

Chapter Three: Accomplished Journalist

Elizabeth Kee's interest in and talent for journalism began after she graduated from the National Business College in Roanoke, Virginia in 1917 and continued throughout her years in Washington D.C. From 1917-1918, she took a job as the secretary to W.E. Thomas, business manager of the *Roanoke Times*.¹ However, because she was, according to her sister, Hazel Hall Simpkins, "career minded . . . and ambitious," she had no intention of staying a secretary forever.² Kee trained to be a court reporter in 1919, opening up an office in Roanoke first and a second one soon after in Bluefield, West Virginia. In 1922, Kee and her first husband, James Frazier divorced. Four years later, in 1926, she married John Kee and traveled with him to Washington D.C. when he was elected to serve in the House of Representatives in 1932. According to her son, Jim, Elizabeth Kee was an integral part of her husband John's political career. She traveled with John, listened to and critiqued his speeches and helped write hundreds of constituent letters.³ After John's heart attack in 1934, Kee became his full time secretary in charge of daily activities in his congressional office. In addition to this, she kept the constituents at home aware of the activities in Congress by writing a weekly column from Washington D.C. and sending it to several West Virginia papers. During this time, she, along with many prestigious women journalists, including Eleanor

¹ William H. Hardin, "Elizabeth Kee: West Virginia's First Woman in Congress," *West Virginia History* 45 (1984) : 110.

² Hazel Hall Simpkins, interview by William H. Hardin, tape recording, 11 July 1983, West Virginia State Archives, Charleston.

³ Jim Kee, interview by William H. Hardin, tape recording -side 1, 29 March 1980, West Virginia State Archives, Charleston.

Roosevelt, was a member of the Women's National Press Club.⁴ Whether it was speeches to be delivered on the House floor, letters to her constituents or newspaper columns, Kee was a lifelong writer who entertained and informed her readers while examining critically the political affairs of her day.

In the late 1940s, when John Kee became chairman of the Foreign Affairs committee of the House, Kee's journalistic endeavors ended for a few years. During the year and a half of her husband's chairmanship, the duties of running the office, especially in light of John Kee's failing health, assumed priority. Upon John Kee's death in May of 1951, Elizabeth Kee was not sure she wanted to fill her husband's position in Congress but upon discussing the matter with her son, she decided there was too much that John had started that only she, who had worked close by his side for nineteen years, could finish.⁵ Kee won the special election in July of 1951. Her new role as a member of Congress facilitated the resumption of her writing.

In October 1951, Kee penned an article for the *Democratic Digest* entitled "Security in the Western Hemisphere."⁶ The article so impressed Abraham Multer, a representative from New York, that on March 21, 1952, he entered the article in its entirety into the *Congressional Record*. For the next eight years, the *Congressional Record* would be peppered with pieces written by Elizabeth Kee. Some pieces, like the one mentioned above, were originally written for other publications but most of what Kee entered came from the weekly column entitled "Keenotes" that she sent to papers in her

⁴ Jim Kee, interview by William H. Hardin, tape recording- side 10, 29 March 1980, West Virginia State Archives, Charleston.

⁵ Jim Kee, interview by William H. Hardin, tape recording- side 6, 17 June 1978, West Virginia State Archives, Charleston.

⁶ Elizabeth Kee, "Security in the Western Hemisphere," *Democratic Digest*, October, 1951.

home state of West Virginia such as the Bluefield *Sunset News-Observer* and the Hinton *Independent-Herald*. Her writing style in these columns was accessible but not patronizing and she clearly enjoyed writing and connecting with her constituents. If the election results were any indication, her constituents enjoyed hearing from her as well.⁷ The tone of her earlier columns was often light as she shared travelogues and human-interest stories with her readers. As time went on, however, her voice became stronger and more forceful as she addressed government operations, domestic issues and foreign affairs--all serious topics affecting the American people. In fact, on many issues, Elizabeth Kee was ahead of her time. Decades before Nixon's disgraceful exit from the White House and the current Bush Administration's non-disclosure policies, she warned about the dangers of government secrecy and deception. She supported whole-heartedly disarmament and she also laid rhetorical groundwork for several bills that would later pass in Congress such as the Area Redevelopment Bill and the Food Stamp program. Her journalistic talent and flair are evident over a half-century later as her columns still entertain, enlighten, and examine issues critical in American politics today.

It was not Elizabeth Kee's idea, to enter her own "Keenotes" column into the *Congressional Record* on May 25, 1953 but rather her colleague's, Representative Cleveland M. Bailey, from West Virginia's third district. The tone of this first column is light and entertaining while dealing with a very deadly topic. It is somewhat surreal to read coming from a 21st century perspective because Kee tells her readers of her

⁷ J. Howard Myers, *West Virginia Blue Book*, 1951 vol. 35, Special Election: Kee-58%/Gadd-41%; J. Howard Myers, *West Virginia Blue Book*, 1952 vol. 36, Kee-64%/Gadd-36%, J. Howard Myers, *West Virginia Blue Book*, 1954 vol. 38, Kee-68%/Blue-32%, J. Howard Myers, *West Virginia Blue Book*, 1956 vol. 40, Kee- 61%/Sanders- 39%, J. Howard Myers, *West Virginia Blue Book*, 1958 vol. 42, Kee-99.8%/Daugherty- .2%, J. Howard Myers, *West Virginia Blue Book*, 1960 vol. 44, Kee-70%/La Follette-30%, J. Howard Myers, *West Virginia Blue Book*, 1962 vol. 46, Kee-73%/Crockett-27%.

“amazing” trip out West where she and twenty-seven other members of Congress, along with a thousand troops, witnessed an atomic blast in the Nevada desert.

She wrote of the explosion “rattling windows in a California town 200 miles away” and “St. George, Utah citizens remaining indoors for 3 hours until the nuclear cloud passed on.” Yet she never wondered about the effect the blast might have on the nearby observers. She used words like serious, dramatic, and breath taking in describing the blast but not dangerous, deadly, and frightening. Because of unfavorable weather conditions, the blast had been postponed for three days. The congressional delegation used its spare time to tour the Hoover dam, which Kee described as “fabulous.” Still with more time to kill, the delegation visited Death Valley and finally the “spectacular” Hellsdorado celebration in Las Vegas complete with rodeo. In the final paragraph of her piece, she became somewhat reflective as she describes the “weird beauty” of the blast: “We were truly shocked and astounded by the amazing phenomena of the atomic weapon and from the depths of our hearts we uttered a plea to almighty God that the peoples of the world will be forever spared from an atomic war.”⁸

Kee’s next article to be entered into the *Congressional Record* definitely falls into the entertaining category as she shared with her readers a recent invitation by one of her colleagues in the House to the other members of Congress to come to Missouri for some sassafras tea. She playfully responded, “West Virginia is much closer and I’ll wager the sassafras from the West Virginia hills is better, sweeter, and tangier than any to be found

⁸ C.R. 99, 83rd Cong., 1st sess., p. A-2885-6.

in the Ozark hills.” She then gives a brief history of Sassafras tea in America and how because of the recent coffee shortage⁹, everyone should “switch to sassafras.”¹⁰

Late in May 1955, Kee took another trip, this time closer to Washington, which she wrote about in her “Keenotes” column. Evidently, prior to this time, the Navy had a policy that invitations to board fighting ships for demonstrations and maneuvers were limited to congressmen only. Congresswomen had protested in the past and insisted that the ban was nothing more than an outmoded superstition but their pleas had not been heard until 1955. Kee lauded the Navy for finally inviting a group of congresswomen (on Friday the 13th, no less) to be a part of the congressional delegation that spent the weekend aboard the U.S.S. Intrepid off the coast of Norfolk, Virginia. Kee described for her readers the “flight deck the size of three football fields” and the battleship, destroyers, and submarines which were also part of the exercises. They witnessed jet takeoffs and landings, a night attack on a submarine, a drone shoot, gunnery practice, and F9F-Cougar and F2H-2 Banshee jet fighters engaged in a series of exercises. Kee even took an over water helicopter tour of the task force group that she described as “a real thrill.” The trip gave her and the other members of congress an appreciation for the men of the Navy who wore their uniforms with honor and courage. It also reinforced in the minds of those congressmen and women the necessity to provide adequate funds to help the Navy keep

⁹ Coffee is second only to oil in dollar value as a world trade commodity. Approximately 25 million acres of land are devoted to cultivating coffee. Ideal growing conditions include tropical/subtropical temperatures (68-75F), abundant sunlight, rich soil and 60 to 80 inches of annual rainfall. In the early 1950s, unseasonable or adverse weather conditions damaged coffee crops, resulting in shortages that drove up the market price. For several years, the world experienced a coffee shortage.

¹⁰ C.R. 100, 83rd Cong., 2nd sess., p. A-1621.

up with the demands of modern warfare at sea.¹¹ Kee always held the military and its veterans in the highest regard as evidenced in another “Keenotes” column of 1955.

This time Kee was honoring and celebrating the birthday of the United States Marine Corp. She said, “They have always packed a powerful punch. They look sharp and they are sharp. And they certainly cut an impressive swath on the capital scene.” She then described how the Marine Band played near the front door of the White House at state occasions and how the bronze statue of the marines raising the flag on Iwo Jima added a “throat-catching solemnity” to the Washington horizon. She then let her readers know that Congress supported wholeheartedly the marines and they backed that support with money—more, in fact, than the President or Joint Chiefs of Staff had requested. President Eisenhower had proposed cutting 22,000 marine troops but Congress would not have it. They voted to give 46 million dollars to maintain the Marine Corps at 215,000 men and provide training and support for all. Kee ended her column by saying that the money was not the result of special lobbying but that the Corps had earned that money with “the work they have performed over many years on steaming jungles and bloody beaches and frozen mountains—on every front, in every war, in all of our Nation’s history.”¹²

One of the reasons Elizabeth Kee was a successful politician was that she genuinely cared about people. She enjoyed talking to them, learning about their lives and writing about them. Occasionally, she used her column to tell of a specific person whom she looked up to and admired. Dr. Herbert Putnam was one such individual. In 1899,

¹¹ *C.R.* 101, 84th Cong., 1st sess., p. 6851.

¹² *C.R.* 101, 84th Cong., 1st sess., p. 10265.

President McKinley appointed Putnam to the position of Librarian of Congress. Putnam was just thirty-eight, but he had big ideas about how to change the scope and vision of the library. Originally, the library was designed to be simply a reference for the legislature. Putnam thought the Library of Congress instead should serve the American people and so under his leadership the library went from about a million poorly organized books to five times that many with a cataloging system that became the standard throughout the country. After forty years of working hard to make the library “the greatest storehouse of knowledge in the world,” Putnam retired in 1939 at the age of seventy-seven. But that, Kee told her readers, was not the end of the story because he still had a lot of good years left in him. Congress appointed him to a specially created post of Librarian Emeritus and he continued working at the Library of Congress every day, except during the summer when he went to Maine to sail small boats up and down the coast. Upon learning of his death in August of 1955 at the age of ninety-three, Kee wanted to honor him for the many years of service he gave to the American people and to illustrate for her readers that there is no ideal retirement age. The appropriate retirement age depended on an individual’s health, personality, and their job satisfaction. In the case of Herbert Putnam, no age was the right age. Kee observed, “Some people just aren’t meant to retire.”¹³

Another individual that Kee obviously admired and respected was Abraham Lincoln. In early 1959, Elizabeth Kee shared reflections with her readers of the February 12th joint session of Congress celebrating the 150th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln’s birth where Pulitzer Prize winning author and poet, Carl Sandburg, spoke. She pointed out that it was hard to believe the cruel and bitter things that were said about him while

¹³ C.R. 101, 84th Cong., 1st sess., p. 13240.

he served as president. He was vilified on a regular basis and portrayed in cartoons as “an ape, a monster, and a maniac.” But he rose above the hate and the criticism because he was “a noble soul [with] a touch of the poet about him.” At a time where fancy prose was the norm, he instead spoke and wrote in simple but profound terms. Kee reminded her readers that Charles Sumner, who preceded Lincoln on the platform at Gettysburg, spoke for no less than two hours.¹⁴ Lincoln spoke for five minutes. And yet the Gettysburg Address, “a masterpiece of prose, has attained immortality” while Sumner’s speech has been forgotten. Lincoln, Kee asserted, was modest and humble and a “masterful politician.” His Cabinet was at times hostile and somewhat disloyal and yet he “persevered, outmaneuvered, and in the end, had his way” because he was a strong president. As people are apt to do, it was not until Lincoln was gone that the people appreciated what they had. Then, Kee wondered how the course of history might have changed had Lincoln lived. She believed that had he lived the South would have been spared the indignities and humiliations they endured following the Civil War. “The Nation could well have been spared a legacy of hate and suspicion which is still with us today,” Kee wrote. To suggest that had Lincoln lived, America may have been spared a legacy of hate and suspicion is surely an oversimplification. Perhaps due to her lack of a college education, at times, Kee failed to see the intricacies of complicated issues. But she was definitely not alone in her suppositions regarding Lincoln. Authors have been speculating for years how America would have been different had Lincoln lived but the truth is no one can know how Lincoln would have responded when faced with difficult

¹⁴ Note: It was not Charles Sumner but Edward Everett who preceded Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg.

post-war realities. As Ward McAfee pointed out in his recent review of William Harris' book *Lincoln's Last Months*:

The realities of post-war America would have severely challenged Lincoln's presidential Reconstruction. He might have continued to advocate a simple restoration with negative consequences for black freedom, or he may have gravitated toward a more thoroughgoing Reconstruction. In the crafting of historical literature, facts rarely speak for themselves. Conjecture often shapes written history at least as much as hard evidence.¹⁵

Kee ended her column on Lincoln thankful for the birthdays of great men of the past who built America and who still had much to teach us.

In addition to travelogues and human-interest stories, Kee's lighter toned columns sometimes dealt with a problem that was not a national emergency but more of an irritating nuisance. In late July of 1957, Kee wrote a column taking on the advertising profession, specifically when it came to the "unsightly billboards and garish symbols that do such violence to the natural beauties of the landscape." Kee wrote of West Virginia's rising tourism industry and proudly stated that some were calling her home state the "Little Switzerland of America." She talked of the rolling hills, fertile valleys and 213 million green acres of lush land set aside in national parks and forests. West Virginia was indeed beautiful and that was why Kee was so disappointed in the lack of legislative action protecting the new 41,000 miles of the Federal Interstate Highway System from unsightly advertising. Kee pointed out to her readers that even though taxpayers' money would be financing 90% of the new highways and the federal government set forth all kinds of detailed regulations and standards, a powerful billboard lobby had so far blocked passage of any legislation restricting billboards along the new roads. Kee stated

¹⁵ Ward M. McAfee, "Review Essay," *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association* Winter 2005 <http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/jala/26.1/mcafee.html> (8 Jan. 2006).

emphatically, “When I take an automobile trip, it is the view I wish to enjoy and I want to enjoy it unmarred and unobstructed by signs admonishing, cajoling, and coaxing me to buy this or that.” It is clear that Kee condemned some aspects of America’s consumerist society when she pointed out that the advertising world had plenty of other outlets available to them such as newspapers, magazines, radio, and television. They didn’t need to spoil the natural beauty of the highways with crass commercialism. She urged her readers to get behind those in Congress who were desperately trying to keep America beautiful.¹⁶

In another informative column in April 1960, Kee reported to her readers that a joint resolution providing for participation by the United States in the 1963 West Virginia Centennial Celebration had recently been passed by the House. The Secretary of Commerce would soon be working with the Centennial Commission in planning ways the federal government could participate. The cost to the federal government was going to be “just \$15,000 as contrasted to millions appropriated by Congress for Federal participation in the centennial celebrations of other states.” She wrote of an outstanding program that was in its planning stages calling to the entire country’s attention many notable chapters in West Virginia’s history. She reminded her readers, “West Virginia was created by an executive order of the President as a part of Federal policy during the Civil War.” Her article reflected a genuine excitement about the celebration.¹⁷

Unfortunately, in 1963, due to health issues, she was not able to attend the festivities.

¹⁶ C.R. 103, 85th Cong, 1st sess., p. 13082-3.

¹⁷ “Keenotes,” *Bluefield Sunset News-Observer*, 19 April 1960, p.4.

While it is interesting to read about Kee's columns dealing with lighter issues such as past trips or upcoming celebrations, it is imperative to realize that Kee also used her journalistic abilities to not only entertain but to instruct her readers as well. Through the years, Kee wrote many columns dealing with various aspects of government operations. From the dangers of government secrecy to teaching her constituents how a bill becomes a law, Kee proved to be not only a good politician but a very good teacher as well.

In August 1955, Kee wrote an informative and thought provoking column dealing with all of the talk that goes on in Congress with each session. Her article started, "Talk, talk, talk. Endless talk. Repetitious talk. Droning on, never seeming to stop." This, Kee said, was the popular perception of what goes on in Congress each day or in any legislative body that is part of a democracy. She asked her readers if all that talk was really necessary and then she answered that, yes, it was. Democracy in action seems to require millions and millions of words and hours and hours of debate. Kee acknowledged that much of the talk is dull, boring, and stale but that once in awhile, out of this "comes the occasional burst of brilliance which lights our way through difficult paths of public policy." She then told her readers that the *Congressional Record* from January 5 to July 31 of 1955 had more than 16,000 pages, with nearly 33 million words. Some critical members of Congress referred to the words and hours of debate as "yakity yak." Kee said, "Some would dismiss it as sound and fury, signifying nothing. But occasionally—just every once in a long while—there is meaning, and inspiration, and enlightenment, and the pure delight of fine speech and real eloquence." For Kee, the

moments when enlightenment and inspiration led to sound policy decisions made the millions of words and hours of talking all worthwhile.¹⁸

In 1957, Kee served on the subcommittee on Government Operations. In July, she wrote a column on government secrecy and she shared that while serving on this committee, she had witnessed over and over again unnecessary suppression of information the public had a right to know. She defined secrecy as concealment and furtiveness in violation of a right, a law, or a code. She then stated, “Certainly, then, secrecy should have no place in the democratic processes of government where the people’s ability to govern themselves depends in large part upon the fullness and accuracy of the information available to them.” But, she recognized that the United States and its allies were fighting communism and that sometimes concealment was necessary, especially considering the sensitivities surrounding the atom bomb and nuclear weapons. However, Kee was very concerned that more and more the American people were “patriotically relinquishing more and more of their vital and essential right to know in the name of national security.” History had shown, she said, that powers once yielded to governmental bureaucracy are hardly ever returned and in fact only led to more power grabbing and abuses by those in charge.

Kee then told her readers that Congress recognized this problem and had acted on it in 1955 by establishing the Commission on Government Security. The commission included 12 citizens who had been appointed by the President, Vice-President, and Speaker of the House to find the means to keep America safe while at the same time preserving the American people’s right to information. The week before Kee’s column,

¹⁸ C.R. 101, 84th Cong., 1st sess., p. 13227.

this commission had released its report and recommendations. Kee was clearly disappointed in the commission's recommendation for a law prohibiting unauthorized disclosure of secret documents jeopardizing national security. Many interpreted this law as targeting newsgathering agencies, newspapers, and reporters. The Chairman of the Commission, Lloyd Wright, denied this allegation and assured the press that he would gather some information that had previously been classified that no longer needed to be so and present it to them in order to justify the proposal for the new law.

Unfortunately, Wright was unable to get permission from government officials over his commission to share the "sensitive" information. He said, "The information is apparently entombed forever in the bureaucratic graveyard of a maze of files, never to be disseminated to the American people who are entitled to know the full details of these dark chapters of betrayal." The irony of Wright's frustration was not lost on Elizabeth Kee. She ended her column with a very compelling statement, "The inflated egos of a bureaucracy swollen with a little power can be as dangerous to our national well-being from within our midst as can be the threat of communism from outside our borders."¹⁹ It would be another nine years before the Freedom of Information Act passed in 1966 addressing the problem Kee had recognized years earlier.

Later that summer, Kee wrote an article criticizing in no uncertain terms the Eisenhower administration's sidestepping several laws Congress had passed. She wrote caustically, "Next to golf, circumventing the intent of Congress would seem to be the favorite pastime of the executive branch of the Government." Kee then shared with her readers two examples of this circumvention. The Trade Agreements Extension Act gave

¹⁹ C.R. 103, 85th Cong, 1st sess., p. 11042-4.

the President the power to limit imports of crude and residual oil when those levels exceeded the 1954 levels. However, the administration refused to enforce the limitations, instead hoping for voluntary compliance by big oil, which everyone knew was never going to happen.

A second example of the administration's ignoring Congressional intent involved the Housing Act of 1957. Kee explained to her readers that Congress had passed an amendment to the Act to provide lower down payments under the Federal Housing Authority's program to bring them more in line with the Veteran's Administration loan program. The cash down payment on a \$10,000 home would be \$300 instead of the previous \$700 and the cash down payment on a \$12,000 home would be \$600 instead of the previous \$1200. This would surely allow for more young families to get into homes and it would stimulate the home-building industry, which had dropped 20% in 1956 and 16% in 1957.

The week before Kee's article, however, the Federal Housing Authority had announced that the new down payments could now go into effect but that they had found it necessary to raise the interest rate from 5% to 5.25%. What this meant for the average family was a \$700 increase in the price of a \$12,000 home, in a sense negating the down payment decrease entirely. In response to criticism from Kee and other lawmakers, the administration said it had to stay competitive with other demands "in the present tight money market." Kee doubted the sincerity of the administration and lamented the fact that once again the burden had fallen on the consumer, worker, small businessman, and retired American while the bankers and brokers just kept getting richer.²⁰

²⁰ C.R. 103, 85th Cong., 1st sess., p. 13080-1.

The Eisenhower Administration's circumvention of congressional intent was an example of what can happen in a democracy when lawmakers and the people are not paying close enough attention. Kee felt a very real responsibility to educate her constituents concerning various government operations so they could be active participants in the democracy of the United States. In October 1957, she began a four-part series in her weekly column detailing the lawmaking process in the Congress of the United States. Kee stated that citizens desperately needed to understand the legislative process so they could appraise national issues and make informed decisions based on their knowledge. While the columns at times seem lengthy and unnecessarily detailed, Kee believed in wanting the people of her district to become more educated and involved.

She began by explaining that before a law becomes a law it is a proposal, which appears in one of four forms: a bill, a joint resolution, a concurrent resolution, or a simple resolution. Since the bill was by far the most popular form, her column focused on it. A bill, she explained, is the result of an idea that a lawmaker has herself or has received from constituents or even from the executive branch, which expresses a need for the nation. One of the signs of a healthy democracy is a system that allows for revision, growth, and progress. Once the lawmaker has the idea, he or she must engage in many hours of research because often ideas that seem to be good for many people, in fact, end up benefiting only a small group while possibly even hurting other members of the population. Once lawmakers have a general idea of what they would like to say, they have at their disposal the services of the official legislative counsel to help them in drafting their bill.²¹

²¹ "Keenotes," *Bluefield Sunset News-Observer*, 1 October 1957, p. 4.

The following week, Kee continued instructing her readers with a discussion of the role the executive branch plays in the lawmaking process. Kee explained that at the beginning of each legislative session, the president gives a State of the Union address. Following this address, the House receives letters known as executive communications. These letters, sometimes with a draft of a bill already included, are then referred to the committee, which is in charge of that particular subject matter. The committee then spends time, sometimes weeks or even up to a year, discussing, researching, and rewriting the bill before presenting it to the other members of the House. The president can also simply appear before Congress, for example, when he gives his annual budget message, and he can communicate the need for a certain appropriations bill. Any of the 435 members of the House can introduce a bill at any time that the House is in session. Once the bill is typed on a certain form, with the name of its sponsor, it is placed in the “hopper” which is beside the Clerk’s desk. On the same day, the title of the bill is entered into the Journal, assigned a legislative number, entered into the *Congressional Record*, sent to the government printing office and referred to the appropriate committee. At this point, the bill may linger in committee and expire with that particular session of Congress. In that case, the bill must be reintroduced during the next session of Congress. Kee let her readers know that only a very few bills introduced by individual lawmakers make it out of committee. A bill with the support of the executive branch or an entire committee has more of a chance. In 1957, 14,000 measures had been introduced and only a fraction of those had become laws.²²

²² “Keenotes,” *Bluefield Sunset News-Observer*, 8 October 1957, p. 4.

The third installment in Kee's columns on the lawmaking process informed her readers of the importance of the congressional committees and the committee chairmen. Kee warned her readers that they may want to think twice before deciding to change their elected officials too frequently because those states and districts whose representatives return year after year and attain seniority rank in the important committees are the states and districts who most often "prevail in matters of nationwide legislative importance." Kee went on to explain that the real work of Congress is done within the congressional committees. At one time there had been forty-eight committees in the House but in 1946, Congress streamlined them into nineteen. At the start of each new Congress, members are elected to serve on at least one committee. When there are vacancies, new members can indicate a preference to serve on a specific committee. Once on a committee, a member usually stayed, as this was the only way to move up the ladder of seniority. The seniority system had lately been the object of criticism because of past abuses of some of the chairmen but Kee defended the system in that it ensured that chairmen had extensive experience and knowledge. Kee ended her column explaining that when a bill is before committee and is particularly controversial or of wide spread interest, public hearings are held. Any citizen may request an opportunity to be heard before these public hearings. Those who do not take these opportunities cannot complain when Congress does not act in accordance with their wishes.²³

The final installment of Kee's informative legislative series detailed what happened to a bill once it finally made it out of committee. Kee went into great detail about the printing process and the scheduling of the bill on a particular calendar. Then

²³ "Keenotes," *Bluefield Sunset News-Observer*, 15 October 1957, p. 4.

she explained for her readers the process of debating a bill. On the day listed on the calendar, the chairman of the committee that supported the bill and the bill's sponsor appear before the House and ask for its consideration. If the bill is controversial, there is a debate before the House and Senate finally vote upon the bill. Kee told her readers that there is "much parliamentary procedure" involved in the lawmaking process and let them know that obviously time and space did not permit her to describe the many technicalities. But she wanted her readers to know that safeguards were in place to prevent the passage of sloppy and ill-considered legislation. Kee ended her series by encouraging students of federal lawmaking to consult, as many new members of the House do, the Jefferson Manual, a manual Thomas Jefferson prepared in 1801 so he could keep all the rules straight, along with the House Rules. If they had any further questions, they could contact her.²⁴

Elizabeth Kee wrote more in some years than she did in others depending on her traveling schedule, health, and political obligations. 1959 was a banner year for her not only in terms of her political work but also in her writing. On the opening day of the first session of the 86th session of Congress, she introduced twenty bills. Throughout the year, she worked diligently on the Veteran's committee and the Government Operations committee, she entered sixteen of her "Keenotes" columns into the Congressional Record, and she wrote many other columns for the Bluefield paper back home in West Virginia. One of her first columns to appear in the *Congressional Record* of 1959 was a critique of Eisenhower's State of the Union Address. In one section of the address, he

²⁴ "Keenotes," *Bluefield Sunset News-Observer*, 22 October 1957, p. 4.

focused on a balanced budget. A balanced budget was a key to government operations running smoothly but Kee was skeptical that Eisenhower could achieve his lofty goals.

She began her column by commenting that the President “appeared to be in the best of health” delivering the forty-five minute speech in a “vigorous manner.” Kee mentioned Eisenhower’s health because he had, in fact, had three major health scares since taking office: a heart attack in 1955, intestinal surgery as a result of Crohn’s disease in 1956, and a stroke in 1957.²⁵ Early in his speech, Eisenhower insisted that all of the government programs, including defense, needed to have a balanced budget as one of their main objectives. Apparently this idea did not go over too well. Kee commented, “I got the impression that his insistence that budgetary requirements transcend even defense needs received a distinctly cool reception, even from some of the Republicans.” Kee noted that this battle between budget and defense would most likely be one of the major issues to face the 86th Congress. The President announced that he would ask for around \$77 billion and assured the Congress and the nation that he would balance the budget. Kee thought otherwise. She doubted very much he could balance the budget without an increase of about one-third in tax revenues and additional revenues from an increase in postal rates and a gasoline tax.²⁶ As it turned out, Kee was right. The gasoline tax went up and Eisenhower did not balance the budget. In fact, the end of the Eisenhower

²⁵ Health Media Lab, *When President is the Patient*, “Deception, Disclosure and the Politics of Health” online at www.healthmedialab.com/html/president/deception.html (accessed 5 October 2005).

²⁶ C.R. 105, 86th Cong., 1st sess., p. 859.

administration saw the highest peacetime deficit to that time. It had grown from \$266 billion in 1953 to \$286 billion in 1959.²⁷

In addition to lighter columns that entertained and columns that instructed her readers regarding various aspects of government operations, Kee's writing also frequently focused on domestic issues such as government spending, disarmament, education, and unemployment. For example, in April 1957, she wrote a powerful column expressing her frustration at the efforts of Congress to cut government spending starting with programs that "affect the welfare of an overwhelming majority of the American people." She went into great detail explaining six different appropriations bills that had recently come through the House. The first bill was a deficiency appropriation bill for 1957 providing money to many government departments who had come up short and needed funds to continue functioning to the end of the year. Kee had no problem with the bill, but rather, objected to an amendment to the bill that stated that from 1957 on, the federal government would only provide 35% of the cost of administering public assistance programs instead of the usual 50%. West Virginia's public assistance program was already struggling due to the increase in the number of people seeking help. More cuts, she believed, would be devastating to the program.

In other bills, the House also cut funds to the United States Treasury, Post Office Department, the Tax Court, and the Interior Department. In March, the House cut an additional \$500 million from nineteen federal agencies such as the Civil Defense Administration and the Advisory Committee on Aeronautics. Then, in April, the House cut the budgets of both the Labor/Health and Education/Welfare Departments by \$134

²⁷ Stanley K. Schultz, *American History 102: Civil War to the Present*, "Eisenhower and Kennedy," online at <http://us.history.wisc.edu/hist102/lectures/lecture25.html> (24 October, 2005).

million dollars. Kee reported that many wanted to cut money to the Food and Drug Administration and to the Public Health Services Department who were working on several important water pollution control/sewer projects but thankfully these bills did not pass.

Kee then stated that she was economy-minded. She understood that Congress must spend the people's money responsibly but she had a problem with only targeting programs that were doing the most to help the American people. She stated, "Only that overused rubber stamp "classified" prevents Congress and the public from knowing of possible waste, extravagance, and duplication in the Department of Defense and the foreign-aid programs." Unfortunately, she said, the service agencies that deal with the needs of the aged, the veterans, and the small businessman had no "classified" stamp.

At first glance, Kee's support of defense cuts may seem to contradict her earlier criticism of Eisenhower's defense cuts and her obvious support of the armed forces. In fact, she did support defense spending but within reason. She definitely did not support the waste and misuse of funds she had witnessed from the Defense Department while serving on the subcommittee for Government Operations. She was also opposed to the practice of many politicians that when cutting government spending, looked *first* to those programs that took up much less of the overall budget and helped many Americans survive and thrive. Instead, they should look to programs that spent more of the government budget and make their cuts accordingly. She ended her article letting her readers know that she would continue to fight for more money to help the hard-working, everyday people of America.²⁸

²⁸ C.R. 103, 85th Cong., 1st sess., p. 5305.

In a 1957 column a far cry away from her 1955 travelogue detailing her atomic blast weekend, Kee wrote a column criticizing Secretary of State John Dulles, special assistant Harold Stassen, and Atomic Energy Commission chairman Lewis Strauss for their lack of progress on disarmament, and specifically, a ban on nuclear testing. It seemed she had learned a great deal regarding nuclear weapons in her few short years of service and she was incensed that these men were not working harder toward a ban on nuclear testing. She said, “If anything, with the worsening of the situation in Syria and the Middle East, the arms race may be expected to accelerate in the next few months with the concomitant explosion of more and bigger atomic bombs—at what deadly peril to the human race we apparently have no way of knowing.” She then went on to explain that three different sources had recently significantly increased the estimates of danger from radioactive fallout that resulted from the above-ground tests. Despite the National Academy of Science and the Atomic Energy Commission’s claims to a “clean bomb,” John Hopkins University, the American Institute of Biological Science, and the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy all warned that further testing would be extremely detrimental to human populations and “present experiments lend great weight to the belief of geneticists that there is no safe dose of radiation.” Kee then asked her readers to contemplate the great price their children and grandchildren would pay if nuclear testing were allowed to continue unabated and expressed her hope that Congress and the administration would be able to come to an agreement concerning disarmament in the following year.²⁹ As it turned out, it was late 1963 before the Limited Test Ban

²⁹ “Keenotes,” *Bluefield Sunset News-Observer*, 17 September 1957, p. 4.

Treaty went into effect outlawing the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union from performing nuclear tests in the atmosphere, in outer space, and underwater.³⁰

In late January 1958, Kee told her readers that Congress, in response to the Russian sputniks, was asking some tough questions concerning America's educational system. Kee informed her readers that Congress had learned that 23% of America's high schools did not offer physics, chemistry, or geometry. Considering this unacceptable, numerous proposals had been made to boost science education. The President proposed federally financed scholarships for students interested in pursuing science beyond high school but who were not able to afford college on their own. Other politicians had proposed federal money for physical school improvements, the raising of teacher's salaries, or drastic revisions of curriculums to place more emphasis on math and science. Kee had her own unique idea. Just a few weeks before, she had introduced a bill to establish the United States Academy of Science in order to ensure the armed forces and other government agencies had access to trained scientists. Patterned after other great service schools like West Point or the Naval Academy, graduates would agree to serve, after graduation, for five years with the Armed Forces or a government agency working directly in the science field.³¹ Unfortunately, Kee's bill did not pass, possibly because she did not seem to have a viable plan for funding the construction of the United States Academy of Science. Nevertheless, Kee did contribute to the consensus about the need for a long-term solution to America's lack of science education.

³⁰ Federation of American Scientists, *Weapons of Mass Destruction*, "Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Chronology," online at <http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/ctbt/chron1.htm> (9 January 2006).

³¹ *C.R.* 104, 85th Cong., 2nd sess, p. 686.

In February 1958, Kee's column focused on the precarious state of the economy. She pointed out that America was indeed suffering a recession despite the fact that many in Washington refused to accept the facts. She said, "Call it what you may—a leveling off at a high plateau, a breathing spell, a readjustment, or any of the other mysterious terms economists love to use—these facts are clear." She then laid out the cold, hard facts that unemployment had risen to 4 million while the length of the workweek, which in many instances determined take-home pay, had grown shorter. Manufacturing workers were making \$1.13/a day less in December of 1957 than they had a year earlier, industrial output levels were down and housing starts were at their lowest numbers since 1945. She criticized the administration for being slow to act, "The neglect of this serious problem has been extremely costly, not only in terms of loss of purchasing power to communities but in suffering and hardship for thousands of families." As Kee was wont to do, she saw the recession not as merely facts and figures but in real human terms.³²

This topic must have been weighing heavily on her mind because a few weeks later, in February 1958, Kee wrote *another* column concerning the economy. She let her readers know that since January, unemployment had risen by another 500,000 and was expected to reach 5 million by the end of February. (In fact it rose to 5,173,000.)³³ She reiterated her frustration with the Eisenhower administration by adding, "Many respected members of Congress, whose knowledge of economics is highly regarded, believe the administration is too timid in its approach to the recession. These representatives are demanding bold action now before the country slips into more serious trouble." She

³² C.R. 104, 85th Cong., 2nd sess., p. 1124.

³³ T.N. Vance, "The Eisenhower Recession", *New International*, (Winter 1958) : 3.

urged the administration to give more attention to public works and to free money already appropriated by Congress but impounded by the Budget Bureau. She gave the example of the \$175 million the Veteran's Administration had at its disposal for renovation of some of its hospitals. The administration could release the money throughout the country, create jobs, and complete the work on the hospitals. Defense spending could help as would getting the interstate highway system, which had been signed into law two years prior, actually off the ground. Kee worried that the administration was counting on an economic turn around in the spring that may never happen. Kee and others in Congress wanted a strong, decisive leadership to take action to end the recession.³⁴

In 1959, Kee finished reading volume two of the *Age of Roosevelt* series by Pulitzer Prize winning writer Arthur Schlesinger Jr. entitled *The Coming of the New Deal—1933-35*. She read Schlesinger's assertion that the Civilian Conservation Corps was the most successful of all the New Deal Agencies and she agreed with him. She then shared with her readers a short history of the CCC. She wrote that, "Within three months of the establishment of the CCC, thousands of young men were at work building roads and water-check dams in forests. Millions of trees were planted. Not only were the young men given an opportunity to support themselves but they gained an appreciation of nature which undoubtedly enabled them to lead a fuller and richer life." Kee then explained that she had recently introduced legislation (H.R. 7777) that would set up a Youth Conservation Corps that would be modeled after the CCC. The bill would "provide healthful, outdoor training and employment for young men and would advance the conservation, development and management of natural resources of timber, soil,

³⁴ C.R. 104, 85th Cong., 2nd sess. p. 2332.

range and recreational areas.”³⁵ With jobs scarce and many of the young men with nothing to do, Kee’s bill and another bill that a group of senators had introduced seemed like a sure thing. Unfortunately, neither bill became a law at that time. It would be another twelve years before Public Law 91-378 would become a law establishing a Youth Conservation Corps.³⁶

Even though Elizabeth Kee did not hail from a state known for its farming, in the 1950s, West Virginia did have 8.6 million acres of agricultural land.³⁷ Kee wrote about her strong feelings concerning the inadequacies of the farm program of the United States in the spring of 1959. She said in her April 28 column, “There is no getting around the fact that the present farm program is not working out.” Then she gave her readers some figures to think about. The cost of storing commodities that were being taken over by the government had reached \$1 million dollars a day. The government was losing money on all of the commodities it exported. In 1959, the farm program would cost the taxpayers \$7 billion dollars. Kee was very critical of Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson. She said, “Secretary Benson has talked a lot about the need for a new approach to the farm problem. It is unfortunate that Mr. Benson has been unable to come up with anything radically different from what we have now. In fact, he has not this year submitted any legislative proposals to Congress.”³⁸

³⁵ “Keenotes,” *Bluefield Sunset News-Observer*, 30 June 1959, p. 4.

³⁶ National Park Service, *Youth Conservation Corps* online at <http://www.nps.gov/youthprograms/ycc.htm> (accessed 26 October 2005).

³⁷ Demographia, *Agricultural Land by State: 1950-2000*, online at <http://www.demographia.com/db-farm1950.htm> (accessed 26 October 2005).

³⁸ “Keenotes,” *Bluefield Sunset News-Observer*, 28 April 1959, p. 4.

Apparently Kee was not the only one dissatisfied. Members of the House Agricultural Committee were unhappy with Benson's performance as well. The crop surpluses were huge. A recent law allowing surplus commodities to be sold abroad for foreign currency to help pay the bills of the foreign embassies and other foreign agencies had helped as had using the surplus commodities in the school lunch program and to feed unemployed people. But Kee let her readers know that the bottom line was that with the current farm program, the taxpayers, the consumers, and the farmers were all losing. Interestingly enough, even though she was aware of the many problems the farm program faced, Kee did not seem to have any brilliant ideas about fixing it. Instead, she proposed a bill that would expand agricultural research. She believed expanding research provided the best hope for creating new markets.³⁹ Surely, she knew that this kind of research would take years to yield any kind of measurable results. The problems were immediate and needed immediate solutions. Predictably, Kee's bill did not make it out of committee.

In November 1959, Kee again targeted Benson for his reluctance to implement the Food Stamp Plan. Kee pointed out to her readers that during the closing days of the last session of Congress, a Food Stamp Plan for the distribution of surplus agricultural commodities had passed and yet almost a year later nothing had been done. Congress unfortunately did not make the plan mandatory but instead left it up to the discretion of the Secretary of Agriculture. Benson had done nothing and had no immediate plans to enact the plan. Kee had written a letter to Benson but got no response. She simply could not understand why he was so vehemently opposed to the program. Kee wrote,

³⁹ Ibid.

“Certainly he must be aware of the fact that thousands of people are urgently in need of help. Many West Virginia families are absolutely dependent upon surplus commodities in order to avoid actual starvation . . . Many of the children are showing signs of malnutrition. Some will bear the scars of this terrible experience throughout their lives.”⁴⁰

Benson opposed the plan because he opposed anything that even remotely resembled communism. Shortly after World War II, Benson, an apostle with the Mormon Church, had traveled to war-torn Europe. Under his direction, many people in Eastern Europe received church relief supplies. But as Steve Bonta explains, “Benson noted the lengthening shadow of Communism over Eastern Europe. While there, he warned people in Poland and Czechoslovakia of the new peril that threatened their freedom. He predicted that, if they weren’t vigilant, they would soon find themselves under the communist yoke.”⁴¹ Upon his return to the United States, he became an avid anti-communist, joining the John Birch Society and opposing any programs, that in his perception, could eventually lead to a total and complete welfare state. As to his being aware of the suffering in West Virginia, there is no record of any official visits or inquiries of any kind by him or any members of his office.

John F. Kennedy gave a speech in Minneapolis less than a year later reiterating some of the same ideas Elizabeth Kee wrote in her 1959 columns regarding the farm and food stamp programs. Kennedy said that the current administration had:

⁴⁰ “Keenotes,” *Bluefield Sunset News-Observer*, 9 November 1959, p. 4.

⁴¹ Steve Bonta, “A Man of Character,” *The New American*, vol. 16, no. 5, 28 February 2000 online at http://www.thenewamerican.com/tna/2000/02-28-2000/vo16no05_taft.htm (accessed 9 January 2006).

brought American agriculture to its lowest level in 20 years, for Mr. Nixon has simply refurbished the programs which Mr. Benson introduced, a program which Mr. Benson endorsed . . . This is not a new program. This is an old program dressed up with old slogans. It uses the very language Mr. Benson used . . . Hubert Humphrey and I spent 6 weeks in West Virginia. We did not see Operation Consume. We saw Operation Misery. Five cents a day of surplus food for each person in West Virginia, in the richest country on earth, a country that has \$9 billion of surplus food stored away, and yet this administration opposed the food stamp program, which Senator Humphrey and others supported.⁴²

Kee was definitely not alone in her frustration with the Eisenhower administration. She regularly shared with her readers her concerns and what actions she was taking to try to make a difference for them in Washington.

Kee spent much of her energy politically in 1959 and 1960 trying to help the people of Appalachia with some kind of program to turn the economy around. In another column, she was very critical of the president's decision to veto for the second time an area redevelopment bill that had passed both the House and Senate. She told her readers that she hoped they would not be discouraged by this latest veto. She assured them that many in Washington showed great concern for the people of West Virginia and she reminded them that "[a] new administration, which takes office next January, will no doubt look with favor upon Federal cooperation to help solve the economic problems of distressed areas."⁴³ She was right again. Less than a year later, on May 1, 1961, Elizabeth Kee stood right next to President Kennedy in the Oval Office as he signed the Area Redevelopment Bill into law.

In August 1960, Elizabeth Kee wrote a column on a domestic topic she did not address very often—conservation. She told her readers to remember that the supply of

⁴² John F. Kennedy, remarks at Bean Feed, Minneapolis, MN, October 1, 1960 online at http://www.jfklink.com/speeches/jfk/oct60/jfk011060_minn01.html (accessed 9 January, 2006).

⁴³ C.R. 106, 86th Cong., 2nd sess., p. 11952.

water and soil was limited and that the people must take better care of them or they would be passing on to future generations some very serious problems. She spoke of water pollution in the Potomac River and how a natural recreation area was denied the people of Washington D.C. because of the horrible pollution. She gave the example of how cities and states bordering the Ohio River had begun to clean that river with wonderful results. The people could use it for recreation and rely upon the Ohio River as a water source. She also spoke of dams and how they had begun to check flooding in many areas of the country. She said, "It is fashionable in some circles to refer to this program as a 'pork barrel.' I disagree wholeheartedly. We are dealing with precious resources and in building these great public works, we are investing in our Nation's future." She said at times she had been criticized for supporting programs that helped other areas of the country but she defended herself saying, "I feel deeply that I have an obligation to support these programs in the national interest. Soil erosion in the Midwest does concern West Virginia and all of her people. The problem of saving our soil and water is the obligation of all of us, regardless of where we live."⁴⁴

Kee's columns dealing with domestic issues illustrate her obvious care and concern for the people of West Virginia and all Americans. She recognized the impact government could have on human lives even if she did not always understand the complexities of every domestic issue. Her experience as a secretary to her husband, who served as Chairman of the Foreign Affairs committee, however, seemed to provide her with strong yet at times naïve views regarding America's role as a world leader.

⁴⁴ "Keenotes," *Bluefield Sunset News-Observer*, 1 August 1960, p.4.

Her first article in the *Congressional Record* was originally published in *Democratic Digest* in 1953. In the article, Kee discussed the role that America had played as a “good neighbor” to Latin America but then outlined what steps would be necessary to maintain positive relations with our neighbors to the south. First, she mentioned an attitude of joint responsibility that all the nations in North and South America should take in achieving and maintaining peace and security. She then discussed the many imports that Americans depended on that come from Latin America such as manganese, bananas, coffee, silver, cocoa, and tin. But she also discussed the great, untapped potential of Latin America in achieving financial independence. In the areas of mineral wealth and food production, many Latin American countries, with a little help, could become economic players on the world stage. Finally, she pointed out that our neighbors to the south may need help from organizations such as the United Nations and the Organization of American States to achieve financial independence but that the aid we give them would be money well spent. In the spirit of the time, Kee pointed out that once those countries became stable economically and politically, they could become our allies in the fight against communism. She ended the article by saying, “Peaceful cooperation pays off. We have found that being good neighbors is not only possible but mutually profitable.”⁴⁵ Roosevelt’s Good Neighbor policy of the 1930s obviously influenced Elizabeth Kee’s Cold War vision in that she felt mutual respect and cooperation were of the utmost importance when it came to foreign affairs.

In her “Keenotes” column dated March 11, 1955, Kee talked of “yesterday’s heroes—our war veterans” and how as Americans we would be ungrateful if we forgot

⁴⁵ C.R. 98, 82nd Cong., 2nd sess., p. A2156-7.

the many sacrifices the veterans had made for our country and supported the Eisenhower administration's cuts to veteran's benefits. On March 24, Kee changed her tune and actually applauded the administration for its appointment of Harold Stassen to a Cabinet-level office. Kee said that Washington was beginning to refer to Stassen as the "Secretary of Peace" because his primary concern was to be disarmament throughout the world. On May 10, Kee reminded Americans of the announcement just ten years earlier that the war in Europe had ended. She asked Americans to remember how they had all hoped the end of the war had meant a chance for world peace. Instead the United Nations had "stumbled along, East and West are divided nervously watching each other in deepest suspicion and mistrust." She made the point that Americans could never rest until the dream of peace and freedom was realized worldwide.⁴⁶

At times Kee's columns regarding foreign affairs bordered on the sentimental and naive. In 1955, she entered into the record her June 27 column, which she noted might be entitled "A Happy World for Everyone." She told of a little 9-year-old girl, whom one can only assume is fictional since Kee never gave any concrete details concerning her or her parents. The little girl is saying her prayers one night and ends her usual prayer differently by asking God to "please make this a happy world for everyone." The adults were taken aback and so the child asked, "Was that all right to say?" Assured that it was, the little girl settled contentedly in her bed and went right to sleep while the parents are left bothered that they had been surprised at the girl's simple and eloquent prayer. Evidently some in Washington considered this idea to be unrealistic and even somewhat subversive. But Kee insisted that the idea had merit and in fact was one of the ideas

⁴⁶ C.R. 101, 84th Cong., 1st sess., pg.s. 2989, 4105, and 5995.

behind the formation of the United Nations. She then quoted from a speech given by President Eisenhower at a meeting with United Nation delegates in San Francisco the week before in which he talked of some failures of the United Nations but its many victories as well. Kee ended this column by telling her readers that recently the House of Representatives had unanimously passed a resolution authorizing the use of a cancellation stamp in the post office bearing the admonition, "Pray for peace." In the midst of atomic bomb demonstrations, McCarthyism, and troop deployment to Korea, Kee's column seemed sentimental and idealistic in its approach.⁴⁷ Perhaps in an effort to balance her more pointed and critical columns, it was necessary to include a few up-beat ones as well.

In contrast, Kee's column of August 2, dealt with the upcoming atoms-for-peace conference in an informative and realistic manner. Kee wrote about the Geneva conference, to be attended by 25,000 scientists from all over the world, as "a meeting which may transcend all of the others in terms of eventual international and human significance." The hope was to take a force of destruction and turn it in to something positive. Kee wrote hopefully that scientists working together and teaching each other ways to use atomic energy could save lives, broaden resources, and improve living standards. Kee acknowledged the fact that the Soviet Union had developed a hydrogen bomb and said that at that moment "the Cold War became infinitely more harrowing [because] an aggressive force which hated freedom had the power to destroy whole cities of the world." Then Kee reminded her readers that ten years prior the now "old fashioned Model T atomic bomb" left Hiroshima in ruins but remained a warning that we

⁴⁷ C.R. 101, 84th Cong., 1st sess., p. 9306.

must find a way to peace. Kee ended her article hoping that the scientists could succeed where the statesmen had failed in making atomic energy a force for peace and good instead of death and destruction.⁴⁸

Several years later, Kee wrote a profound article commenting on the successful launch of Sputnik by the Russians on October 4, 1957. She said, “The sight and sound of Sputnik streaking at incredible speed across the nation’s horizon came –let us face it!—as a distinctly unpleasant surprise to most Americans.” Many in Washington were sobered and asked questions about the state of America’s defense program. Kee predicted that in the next session of Congress, there would undoubtedly be those who wanted to pour billions of dollars into the defense program so we could outdo the Russians in the future but Kee told her readers that this was a mistake. She said, “The strength of a nation does not depend solely upon its ability to spend money. It derives primarily from the will and spirit of a united people, from their understanding, courage, and determination—and from a leadership able to inspire their confidence and enthusiasm.” She then criticized the current leadership for being weak, vacillating and often times hanging back and waiting to see what the popular view was going to be before taking a strong stance on important issues affecting the American people.⁴⁹

In early 1958, Kee wrote a column scrutinizing the President’s proposed 4 billion dollar foreign aid program. Eisenhower presented his foreign aid plan to Congress but Kee and many others were not impressed in the least. Because she had been in Washington D.C. since 1931 and worked closely with her husband who was chairman of

⁴⁸ C.R. 101, 84th Cong., 1st sess., p. 13155-6.

⁴⁹ “Keenotes,” *Bluefield Sunset News-Observer*, 5 November 1957, p. 4.

the Foreign Affairs committee, she recognized that, “The arguments he used could well have been lifted word for word from messages on the same subject sent to Congress by former President Truman ten years ago.” Kee complained that Eisenhower used the same “scare words and threats of defections by our friends” if the United States did not continue sending large sums of money overseas. Many members of Congress were tired of the same “rehashed” arguments, especially in light of the fact of the President’s inaction with the economy. Kee said, “Many Congressman are asking this question: “If it is wise and desirable to help other countries build sound economies, why is it not just as important to enable all sections to participate in prosperity at home?” Kee was not opposed to foreign aid but she let her readers know that she and many others felt the administration could not, in good conscience, spend billions of dollars in other countries while not taking care of their own at home.⁵⁰

The next year, Kee entered into the record a column that examined the United States’ role as a world leader. It was a role Kee, like her husband before her, took very seriously. She said, “We have to keep in mind, during 1959 and the years ahead, that what we do—or fail to do—can change the course of history, that it can determine whether freedom prevails in the world.” She acknowledged that the role was not an easy one or free from danger. The threat of communism was very real to her and very frightening. One statement she made in this column was reminiscent of an earlier column entitled “A Happy World for Everyone” where her naiveté shone through. She said, “I firmly believe that the rest of the world is beginning to realize that our motives are unselfish. We do not want world domination or control. We desire only to create world

⁵⁰ “Keenotes,” *Bluefield Sunset News-Observer*, 25 February 1958, p. 4.

conditions under which people can live in peace and freedom.” Obviously Kee was not familiar with the work of William Appleman Williams who in 1959 wrote a book that is still in print today called the *Tragedy of American Diplomacy*. In it, Williams argues that the idea that America was isolationist before world power was “thrust upon it” to help Cuba and later to save the world for democracy twice is really a myth we tell ourselves. He asserts that, “Americans thought of themselves as an empire at the outset of their national existence . . . Having matured in an age of empires as part of an empire, they naturally saw themselves in the same light.”⁵¹ Nevertheless, Kee asserted that America was the only country capable of providing sound leadership. She believed that everyone around the world deserved a chance at happiness, peace and freedom and she hoped her readers would “keep that in mind.”⁵² Her views when it came to foreign aid seemed to be: help and teach the less fortunate, then get out and let them get on with it.

Kee’s last column of 1959, written a few days before Christmas, reflected again a certain naiveté but reflected her personal philosophy regarding humanity. She believed people were inherently good and not evil and she truly wished for peace for everyone in the world. She said, “Peace is the overriding desire of people everywhere. I am sure that men and women, regardless of where they live or the form of government which controls their destiny at the present time, want to live at peace with their fellow man.” She suggested that, if Americans could give the rest of the world one Christmas present, it would be a just and lasting peace “based upon a rule of world law insuring freedom and justice for everyone.” By “freedom and justice for everyone” she implied democracy.

⁵¹ William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1959), 21.

⁵² C.R. 105, 86th Cong., 1st sess., p. 584.

What she failed to realize was perhaps not everyone around the world wanted democracy or was ready for democracy.

Thomas Jefferson wrote to John Adams about this very topic in 1818 regarding the people of South America. He feared that:

ignorance and superstition will chain their minds and bodies under religious and military despotism. I do believe it would be better for them to obtain freedom by degrees only, because that would by degrees bring on light and information and qualify them to take charge of themselves understandingly, with more certainty if in the meantime under so much control only as may keep them at peace with one another. Surely it is our duty to wish them independence and self-government, because they wish it themselves, and they have the right and we none to choose for themselves.⁵³

Kee definitely wished for people all over the world independence and self-government but again she seemed naïve in some of her assumptions about *all* Americans. She said, “Americans are idealistic. Our aggressive approach to the business of making a living confuses people in other lands about this. But I am sure all Americans deplore the necessity for us to spend our great substance on arms and weapons of mass destruction.” She obviously did not associate with any defense contractors. Later in the article, she seemed to be walking a fine line, almost as if she did not want to sound unpatriotic when she said, “Americans do not like to spend \$40 billion a year on defense. But we know we must as long as our liberty and freedom are threatened and the very civilization which the Prince of Peace epitomizes is under attack.” She seemed conflicted. She wanted world peace but, if push came to shove, she and all Americans were ready to fight for it.⁵⁴

⁵³ Thomas Jefferson. *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*. Andrew A. Libscomb, ed. (Washington D.C., : Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association of the United States, 1905), 15:170.

⁵⁴ “Keenotes,” *Bluefield Sunset News-Observer* , 21 December 1959, p.4.

In 1960, Elizabeth Kee wrote several excellent articles that she entered into the *Congressional Record* dealing with Russia and the collapse of the summit meetings. In May 1960, the event dominating discussion in Washington was the shooting down 1200 miles inside the Soviet Union of an unarmed U-2 spy plane piloted by Francis Gary Powers of the Central Intelligence Agency. Elizabeth Kee let her readers know that this incident would probably have serious consequences in regards to the upcoming summit conference scheduled for the middle of the month in Paris and Eisenhower's proposed visit to Russia. Only eight months before, Premier Khrushchev's visit to the United States had been a success in terms of his relationship with Eisenhower and his willingness to meet with various government officials and tour different areas of the country. In the spring, he seemed to be looking forward to Eisenhower's upcoming visit, even building a country house for him and a golf course because the Soviet Union did not have one at that time.⁵⁵

Kee reported in her column that the country lost prestige abroad over how the incident was initially handled. On May 5, the State Department had called a press conference and announced that the plane was actually a U-2 NASA weather research plane from Turkey piloted by a civilian that had lost consciousness due to an oxygen malfunction. The plane had gone on auto-pilot and had accidentally flown over the Soviet Union.⁵⁶ To bolster the cover-up story, a U-2 plane was quickly painted with NASA markings, given a fictitious serial number and put on display at Edwards Air

⁵⁵ Nikita Khrushchev interview by Mr. Jaffe of CBS News, National Press Club, Washington D.C. 27 September 1959, "Khrushchev Speaks of his Gettysburg Visit" online at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/twhp/wwwlps/lessons/29ike/29facts4.htm> (accessed 10 November 2005).

⁵⁶ "U-2 Spy Plane Incident Documents," *State Department Statement*, May 5, 1960 online at <http://www.eisenhower.archives.gov/dl/U2Incident/u2documents.html> (accessed 10 November 2005).

Force Base in California on May 6. However, Khrushchev exposed the cover up for the entire world when he announced on May 7 that the pilot had been captured, had confessed and that espionage equipment had been recovered from the downed aircraft.⁵⁷ Kee told her readers that Chairman Clarence Cannon of the House Appropriations Committee, a Democrat and one of the three or four most powerful men in the House, gave a speech in which he defended the practice of flying photographic planes over Russia at high altitudes. Lyndon Johnson also told the House that this was a time to close ranks behind the President and move on. Kee finally said, “The country is united behind the President, even though no one is particularly happy that we were caught in such embarrassing circumstances.”⁵⁸

Just days after Kee’s column appeared in the Bluefield paper, Eisenhower arrived in Paris for the summit meeting. Khrushchev was also there but on the opening day of the conference he released a statement demanding “Eisenhower denounce the U - 2 flights over the Soviet Union as provocative, renounce further flights, and ‘pass severe judgment’ on those responsible for them as conditions for his participation at the summit conference.”⁵⁹ Eisenhower asserted that overflights of the Soviet Union had been suspended for the duration of his administration, but when he refused to apologize, Khrushchev withdrew his invitation to Eisenhower to visit the Soviet Union and also withdrew from the summit.

⁵⁷ “U-2 Photo Collection,” *Dryden Flight Research Center*, online at <http://www.dfrc.nasa.gov/Gallery/Photo/U-2/HTML/E-5442.html> (10 November 2005).

⁵⁸ *C.R.* 106, 86th Congress, 2nd sess., p. 10483.

⁵⁹ “U-2 Airplane Incident May-July 1960,” *State Department Records* online at http://www.fas.org/irp/imint/doc_u2/frus_x1_147.htm (10 November 2005).

On May 17, 1960, Kee wrote another column one week after the summit collapse. She felt certain the collapse raised “many grave problems for the United States and the rest of the world. One thing appears to be certain—the Cold War will be resumed with all of its dangerous implications.” She was right. The Cold War continued for another twenty-nine years. But Kee followed the advice of her Democratic leaders. This was not a time to criticize the President but to stand behind him and support his decisions. Reiterating a popular view of the day, she said, “In view of Premier Khrushchev’s violent and bitter attacks on Mr. Eisenhower, there is nothing else the country can do. A show of weakness at this point on our part or that of our allies could be fatal.” She then went on to criticize Khrushchev and alleged that it was obvious that he never wanted the summit to take place anyway. The U-2 incident was the excuse he used but he had made up his mind even before going to Paris. She then reiterated her support of Eisenhower and said that an inquiry into the series of events leading up to the failed meeting could wait until a more appropriate time.⁶⁰

In the fall of 1960, Kee finished reading a history book dealing with the 1920s, which she did not name. She wrote a column reflecting on how far America had come in a relatively short time. Airplanes, for example, were really in their infancy before World War II and now jet planes were common as were military planes that could fly faster than the speed of sound. Kee also reflected on what it was like to live in the atomic age. “The atom has provided the world with the most powerful and destructive weapon in history. It has created a force that can bring unimaginable material blessings to the world if only man can summon the wisdom and courage to put this powerful force to work for good.”

⁶⁰ C.R. 106, 86th Cong., 2nd sess., p. 10866-7.

She commented on the fact that they were entering the space age when “[i]t is only a matter of a few years until man flies off into space and returns safely to earth. Soon man will land on the moon and other planets.” Her column seemed very positive until she started reflecting on communism.

She realized that about one-third of the world lived under controls “as hard and ruthless as that imposed by ancient despots.” The future for these people looked dark and disappointing. But Kee was an optimist at heart. She said, “I refuse to believe that man with all the great wisdom he has gathered over the centuries will end by destroying himself. On the contrary, I firmly believe that we are entering a period in which the material things needed for a good life will be available to everyone.”⁶¹ Kee’s prediction in this area was again a bit idealistic.

Elizabeth Kee served for four more years in the House of Representatives before retiring for health reasons in 1964. While she did continue writing her “Keenotes” column for a few years, she did not enter any more of her columns into the *Congressional Record* after July 1960. She clearly had a talent for writing and it proved to be an invaluable way for her to stay connected with her constituents back home while at the same time express her views to her colleagues in the House.

Her columns show us a woman who was extremely dedicated to her job as a representative of the people of West Virginia. They show her versatility as a writer as she was able to, depending on the topic, entertain, inform, or examine critically. In many areas, she was truly visionary as she saw the dangers of too much government secrecy, stressed the importance of disarmament, and expressed concern for the environment all

⁶¹ “Keenotes,” *Bluefield Sunset News-Observer*, 13 September 1960, p. 4.

before these issues came to the forefront in the 1970s. Finally, the ideas she wrote about in her columns and sometimes shared with her colleagues in the House, laid the rhetorical groundwork for later programs that supported her populist political ideology such as the Area Redevelopment Bill and the Food Stamp Act. They show us that she was not afraid to take a stand but she also knew when it was prudent to follow the advice of her party leaders. And finally, her columns show us someone who believed, in the end, in the absolute goodness of her fellow human beings.

Conclusion

On August 21, 1951, a month after the people of Southern West Virginia elected Elizabeth Kee to fill out the remainder of her husband's term in the House of Representatives, her colleague from West Virginia's 1st District, Robert L. Ramsay, entered into the *Congressional Record* a news article about the state's first female representative. In her article, dated July 28, 1951, Mary Eloise Turner had described Kee's swearing-in ceremony and then she described Elizabeth Kee. She said, "Elizabeth Kee does not look like a politician. She is unhurried, calm, and soft-spoken; a rather large woman with a sweet smile and expressive eyes. She has a keen sense of humor and enjoys a joke on herself." Turner continued by giving Kee's background as her husband's congressional secretary and then she added some information about Kee's personal interests:

She has a large collection of [ceramic] miniature dogs. To this might be added Pepi, a Mexican Chihuahua, a more animated but scarcely larger member who guards his mistress's apartment. Mrs. Kee loves music and flowers and is interested in flower arrangement. Chinese art is another of her varied interests.¹

Personal information of this nature is rare because of the destruction of her private papers following her death in 1975. In several photographs taken of Kee (see page ii) at official occasions, the woman Turner described, neatly dressed with accompanying hats and gloves, appears confident and comfortable in her role as first Congresswoman from West Virginia.

It is interesting to note that during her fourteen years in Congress, she never gave one speech or wrote one column dealing with women and politics. She did, however, in 1956 and 1957, enter into the *Congressional Record* three pieces dealing with women

¹ CR 97, 82nd Cong., 1st sess., p. A5297.

and politics: two articles about female politicians she admired and a speech written by a female colleague. The articles, about Martha Griffiths, a Congresswoman from Michigan and Katie Louchheim, a member of the Democratic National Committee, contain several interesting quotes about women in politics, including Griffiths' prediction that "there would be a woman Vice-President in our time"² but the speech given by Coya Knutson at the convention of Democratic Women's Clubs, is even more compelling in its insights regarding women in politics.

Coya Knutson, a friend and colleague of Kee's, had come to Washington in 1954, against the wishes of Minnesota's Democratic Farmer Labor Party. Several years earlier they had asked her to run for the state legislature. After her win, the party leaders wanted her to stay put but Knutson had a mind of her own and instead challenged the endorsed party candidate, won the primary and then beat the incumbent Republican Congressman. Once in Washington, party leaders "wanted to run me, they wanted to run my office. They wanted to put people they wanted into my office. My goodness, I didn't want to do that. I was the boss of my office. To heck with them," said Knutson.³ Instead, she put her energies toward legislation regarding federal student loans, school lunch programs, and cystic fibrosis research. In July 1957, she flew to Florida to speak to other women politicians.

The fact that Elizabeth Kee entered this speech seems to indicate that she agreed with many of the points that Knutson made. The first point was that, contrary to popular belief, women were definitely suited for politics because whether or not they had realized

² CR 100, 84th Cong., 2nd sess., p. A4515.

³ Dan Gunderson, "Coya's Story," *Minnesota Public Radio*, May 3, 2004 online at http://news.minnesota.publicradio.org/features/2004/05/16_gundersond_coyal/ (accessed 7 April 2006).

it, they had been actively engaged in politics for hundreds of years. She said, “In the do-it-yourself lexicon, man’s genius may be to analyze, take apart, explore and expose; but after the pieces are strewn all over the living room floor, it’s usually women’s job to see to it that everything is picked up and put together again.”⁴ She then outlined ways to “pick up the political pieces.”

First, Knutson told the women that their “deep feeling for humanity” made women very effective in their political roles. They should use their capacities, their “feminine understanding and warmth” as they worked for the interests of the people. Next, they should be knowledgeable, “study the problems, know the issues, and provide the imaginative solutions.” Women should not be afraid to dig deeper and investigate if there are situations that do not seem right. They should get involved at the grass-roots level of politics and be proud of their accomplishments as women but “they should conduct themselves in such a way that they do not stand out as women.”⁵ Although somewhat contradictory, she continued to explain that she and the other female colleagues in the House did not get up to give a speech, “purely for the sake of talking.” They were considerate and tried to avoid personality clashes. She had achieved the best results “working with my male colleagues on a personal basis. If I speak to a fellow legislator, explain a given problem carefully and individually, he will usually help all he can.”⁶ Finally, she admonished the women, telling them, “We have to be better than

⁴ CR 101, 85th Cong., 1st sess., p. 13086.

⁵ Ibid, p. 13087.

⁶ Ibid, p. 13088.

good and maintain always a positive, frank, impersonal yet friendly attitude toward everyone, without irritation or taking personal offense.”⁷

Knutson’s speech ended, interestingly enough, with a sports analogy. She said,

One would almost think that I am suggesting that you ‘get out there on the field and save the game.’ Well, for your information, that is exactly what I am suggesting. You are the new and potent force in politics and if I have managed to put a little steel in your spines and a little pride into your hearts as to your capacities and your potential, I have been successful in my mission.”

Clearly, Kee had already been following some of Knutson’s suggestions for political success before 1957, but the speech resonated with Kee and probably flattered her as well. (Knutson mentions Kee by name in her speech as an outstanding female leader.) Kee most likely looked forward to a continued political association and friendship with Knutson. Unfortunately, in the spring of 1958, Knutson’s political enemies from the DFL party finally took action against her and penned the now famous, “Coya come home” letter, which her drunken husband then signed.⁸ She lost public support as the letter implied she had put career before family and had been with other men. She lost the general election in 1958 and again in 1960. Her political career was over. Kee’s, however, continued for another six years.

Elizabeth Kee was a fascinating exemplar of the women of her time. She demonstrated female consciousness in that she acted upon her obligation to the families of Southern West Virginia by fighting long and hard on their behalf so they could have the basics they needed to survive. But she was not a feminist in the sense that she was

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Richard Reeves, “The Woman of the Century: You’ve likely Never Heard of Her,” *American Heritage* 49: 8 (December 1998) online at http://www.americanheritage.com/articles/magazine/ah/1998/8/1998_8_10.shtml (accessed 7 April 2006).

constantly fighting against patriarchal power. Rather, she looked to many of her male colleagues as allies as they fought together for the people of West Virginia.

Articles in the 1980s by William H. Hardin added to the public knowledge regarding Kee, but heretofore, there was still much left unsaid regarding Kee's political ideology, her ecumenical religious vision, and her journalistic endeavors. Fortunately, excerpts from the *Congressional Record*, taped interviews with her brother, sister, and son, newspaper columns she wrote in the 1950s and 1960s, and letters she wrote to veterans in the 1960s, have allowed a more complete picture of Elizabeth Kee to emerge.

Kee's populist political ideology enabled her to reach out to the ordinary, working-class families of West Virginia and then take their economic and social concerns back to Washington where she spoke and wrote passionately on their behalf. For close to a decade, she fought tenaciously to stop the flow of foreign residual fuel oil into the United States in an effort to restore the thousands of coal-mining jobs lost from 1950-1960. She warned about America's growing dependence on Middle East oil and Americans being subject to the whims of Middle East politics but eventually, she realized she was fighting a losing battle and began to introduce legislation that could help in some ways prepare her constituents for a future without coal. She introduced bills to alleviate conditions in economically depressed areas and worked with her colleagues from other Appalachian states on the Area Redevelopment Act. She also fought to increase the quantity and quality of surplus food coming into Appalachia while scolding politicians for turning a blind eye to the suffering of Appalachian families. Unfortunately, the Eisenhower administration's belief in self-sacrifice and duty and its repugnance for an increased reliance on the government clashed with Kee's desire to help the desperate

families in West Virginia. Kee's efforts did not pay off until Kennedy signed Area Redevelopment Legislation in 1961, a full decade after she had started taken her seat in the House.

Kee's female consciousness motivated her to see the human side of economic issues. She did not look at unemployment reports and see only numbers and percentages. Rather, she saw families being split up as husbands and sons were forced to leave West Virginia in search for work in neighboring states. She saw women that were left behind struggling to pay the bills and raise children on their own and she desperately wanted to ease their burdens with effective legislation. She paid special attention to the many veterans in West Virginia who had sacrificed much in their younger years, fighting for their country, only to be denied assistance later in terms of health benefits. Finally, she recognized the importance of continuing the legacy of Social Security and making benefits available to more Americans. Elizabeth Kee's political rhetoric laid important groundwork for programs like the War on Poverty and the Youth Conservation Corps and her populist ideology inspired her to continuously fight to improve the lives of the men, women and children of Southern West Virginia.

If Elizabeth Kee's political ideology was populist in nature, her religious inclinations tended toward tolerance and ecumenicalism. After all, she herself had worshipped as a Baptist, a Catholic and an Episcopalian. She entered several sermons from Christ Church in Philadelphia, a church known for its acceptance of people of different denominations and racial backgrounds who were bound together by a faith in God. She may have entered the sermons as a way to counteract the sometimes hostile atmosphere in the House or she may have been trying to remind her colleagues in the

House why, in her opinion, they were there in the first place—not fame, not fortune but service.

Often, the sermons she chose to enter into the *Congressional Record* and the tributes she gave to colleagues and public figures dealt with the topic of religious devotion leading people to take action in the form of service to their fellow human beings. Kee focused on their service-filled lives, their generosity, and their compassion. These were the values she thought most important as opposed to a specific religious dogma. Just as she valued service as an integral part of religious devotion in others' lives, she valued it in her own as well. She diligently collected over 10,000 volumes for a Virginia rehabilitation center's library, she assisted with altar preparations in the Catholic Church she attended in Maryland, and she visited D.C. area veterans. Her religious devotion reminded her on a daily basis that she was in Washington to serve the people; in doing that, she served her God.

Over a half-century before emails and web pages, Elizabeth Kee was truly ahead of her time in terms of staying connected to her constituency via a weekly column, which appeared in several different West Virginia papers. Her columns allowed her to become an entertainer, a teacher and a political commentator depending on the subject or subjects she chose to address in any given week. She was entertainer when she regaled her readers with stories and adventures from Congressional trips she took; she was teacher when she took the time to describe over a month's time the detailed process of how a bill becomes a law; she was political commentator when she criticized the Eisenhower administration for circumventing Congressional intent or scolded them for spending millions of dollars on foreign aid while ignoring their own country's economic realities.

Kee's columns contributed to her popularity in her district because unlike other politicians who were too busy to stay in contact, the people felt they knew her, her stand on important issues like Social Security and they believed without a doubt that she represented them with all she had to give.

When Elizabeth Kee passed away in 1975, the *Washington Post* ran a story on her and a picture of her with her good friend, speaker of the House, Sam Rayburn. She would have liked that because Rayburn was one of her favorite people. In June 1961, the House of Representatives paid tribute to Sam Rayburn on the occasion of his forty-eight years of service, seventeen as Speaker of the House. Kee paid tribute to Speaker Rayburn much as Robert Byrd had paid tribute to her when she was honored as Daughter of the Year, with a poem. Interestingly enough, both poems dealt with fame. The poem Byrd picked to honor Elizabeth Kee suggested that if we live our lives in service to others then fame was sure to follow. Kee's tribute to Rayburn was quite different. She said of him:

Mr. Sam has the most cherished possession any human being could possibly have. He has something money cannot buy, health cannot assure; his family or friends cannot give. Speaker Rayburn has won for himself and by himself, with the aid and grace of God alone, perfect tranquility and peace of soul. He has told me on several occasions that he loves all people, feels unkindly toward none, that he is at complete peace with God. By fidelity to duty, kindness to all, and a life-long earnest endeavor in his daily conduct to abide by the Golden Rule, this sincerely humble man has come to that perfection of spirit that is an inspiration to all who are privileged to know him . . . This calls to mind the words of Thoreau in his poem "Inspiration:"

Fame cannot tempt the bard
Who's famous with his God,
Nor laurel him reward
Who hath his Maker's nod.⁹

⁹ CR 107, 87th Cong., 1st sess., p. 10056.

This poem seems an appropriate tribute to Elizabeth Kee as well. She, like Coya Knutson of Minnesota, has in many ways fallen into political oblivion. In fact, many native West Virginians are not even familiar with her name despite her thirty plus years of service in Washington. But this would have been all right with her because more than fame, she valued her relationship to the people she served and her relationship with her God. She was a hard-working politician, an accomplished writer, and a moral person who backed up her beliefs with her actions every day of her life.

Women in the US House of Representatives 1917-1998

118

Name	Elected after death of male relative or colleague?****	Party	Region	Date elected	Term expired	Years Served
Rankin, Jeannette**	No	Rep.	West	3/4/1917	3/3/1919	2.00
Robertson, Alice Mary	No	Rep.	Midwest	4/11/1921	3/4/1923	1.90
Huck, Winnifred Sprague	Yes	Rep.	Midwest	11/7/1922	3/3/1923	0.32
Nolan, Mae Ella	Yes	Rep.	West	1/23/1923	3/3/1925	2.11
Kahn, Florence Prag	Yes	Rep.	West	3/4/1925	1/3/1937	11.83
Norton, Mary Teresa	No	Dem.	Northeast	3/4/1925	1/3/1951	25.83
Rogers, Edith Nourse	Yes	Rep.	Northeast	6/30/1925	1/10/1960	34.53
Langley, Katherine G.	Yes	Rep.	Southeast	3/4/1927	3/3/1931	4.00
Oldfield, Pearl Peden	Yes	Dem.	Southeast	1/11/1929	3/3/1931	2.14
McCormick, Ruth Hanna	No	Rep.	Midwest	3/4/1929	3/3/1931	2.00
Owen, Ruth Bryan	No	Dem.	Southeast	3/4/1929	3/3/1933	4.00
Pratt, Ruth Sears Baker	No	Rep.	Northeast	4/15/1929	3/3/1933	3.88
Wingo, Effiegene Locke	Yes	Dem.	Southeast	11/4/1930	3/3/1933	2.33
Eslick, Willa	Yes	Dem.	Southeast	8/4/1932	3/3/1933	0.58
Jenckes, Virginia Ellis	No	Dem.	Midwest	3/4/1933	1/3/1939	5.83
McCarthy, Kathryn	No	Dem.	Midwest	3/4/1933	1/3/1935	1.83
Greenway, Isabella S.	No	Dem.	Southwest	10/3/1933	1/3/1937	3.25
Clarke, Marian Williams	Yes	Rep.	Northeast	12/28/1933	1/3/1935	1.01
O'Day, Caroline Love G.	No	Dem.	Northeast	1/3/1935	1/3/1943	8.00
Honeyman, Nan Wood	No	Dem.	Northwest	1/3/1937	1/3/1939	2.00
Gasque, Elizabeth H.	Yes	Dem.	Southeast	9/13/1938	1/3/1939	0.31
Sumner, Jessie	No	Rep.	Midwest	1/3/1939	1/3/1947	8.00
McMillan, Clara Gooding	Yes	Dem.	Southeast	11/7/1939	1/3/1941	1.16
Smith, Margaret Chase	Yes	Rep.	Northeast	1/3/1940	1/3/1949	9.00
Frances Payne Bolton	Yes	Rep.	Midwest	2/27/1940	1/3/1969	28.85
Gibbs, Florence R.	Yes	Dem.	Southeast	10/1/1940	1/3/1941	0.26
Byron, Katharine	Yes	Dem.	Northeast	5/27/1941	1/3/1943	1.60
Boland, Veronica Grace	Yes	Dem.	Northeast	11/3/1942	1/3/1943	0.17
Luc, Clare Boothe	Yes	Rep.	Northeast	1/3/1943	1/3/1947	4.00
Stanley, Winnifred Claire	No	Rep.	Northeast	1/3/1943	1/3/1945	2.00
Fulmer, Willa Lybrand	Yes	Dem.	Southeast	11/7/1944	1/3/1945	0.16
Douglas, Emily Taft	No	Dem.	Midwest	1/3/1945	1/3/1947	2.00
Douglas, Helen Gahagan	No	Dem.	West	1/3/1945	1/3/1951	6.00
Woodhouse, Chase Going***	No	Dem.	Northeast	1/3/1945	1/3/1947	2.00
Mankin, Helen Douglas	No	Dem.	Southeast	2/12/1946	1/3/1947	0.89
Pratt, Eliza Jane	Yes	Dem.	Southeast	5/25/1946	1/3/1947	0.61
Lusk, Georgia Lee	No	Dem.	Southwest	1/3/1947	1/3/1949	2.00
St. George, Katharine Price	No	Rep.	Northeast	1/3/1947	1/3/1965	18.00

Women in the US House of Representatives 1917-1998

Name	Served one term or less?	College Graduate ?	Career outside home?	Career
Rankin, Jeannette**	Yes	Yes	Yes	social work, activist
Robertson, Alice Mary	Yes	No	Yes	teacher
Huck, Winnifred Sprague	Yes	No	Yes	journalist
Nolan, Mae Ella	Yes	No	No	
Kahn, Florence Prag	No	No	No	
Norton, Mary Teresa	No	No	Yes	politics
Rogers, Edith Nourse	No	Yes	Yes	nurse
Langley, Katherine G.	No	Yes	Yes	teacher, secretary
Oldfield, Pearl Peden	Yes	No	No	
McCormick, Ruth Hanna	Yes	No	Yes	business, politics
Owen, Ruth Bryan	No	No	Yes	teacher, nurse
Pratt, Ruth Sears Baker	No	No	Yes	politics
Wingo, Effiegene Locke	Yes	No	No	
Eslick, Willa	Yes	No	No	
Jenckes, Virginia Ellis	No	No	Yes	farmer
McCarthy, Kathryn	Yes	Yes	Yes	lawyer
Greenway, Isabella S.	No	No	Yes	business
Clarke, Marian Williams	Yes	Yes	Yes	journalist
O'Day, Caroline Love G.	No	No	Yes	social work, politics
Honeyman, Nan Wood	Yes	No	Yes	politics
Gasque, Elizabeth H.	Yes	Yes	Yes	author
Sumner, Jessie	No	Yes	Yes	lawyer, finance
McMillan, Clara Gooding	Yes	No	Yes	government
Smith, Margaret Chase	No	No	Yes	business, politics
Frances Payne Bolton	No	No	No	
Gibbs, Florence R.	Yes	Yes	No	
Byron, Katharine	Yes	No	No	
Boland, Veronica Grace	Yes	No	No	
Luc, Clare Boothe	No	No	Yes	journalist, playwright
Stanley, Winnifred Claire	Yes	Yes	Yes	lawyer
Fulmer, Willa Lybrand	Yes	No	No	
Douglas, Emily Taft	Yes	Yes	Yes	actor, author
Douglas, Helen Gahagan	No	No	Yes	actor, opera
Woodhouse, Chase Going***	No	Yes	Yes	social work, politics
Mankin, Helen Douglas	Yes	Yes	Yes	lawyer, politics
Pratt, Eliza Jane	Yes	No	Yes	secretary
Lusk, Georgia Lee	Yes	Yes	Yes	rancher, politics
St. George, Katharine Price	No	No	Yes	politics

Women in the US House of Representatives 1917-1998

120

Name	Elected after death of male relative or colleague?****	Party	Region	Date elected	Term expired	Years Served
Green, Edith Starrett	No	Dem.	Northwest	1/3/1955	12/31/1974	19.99
Griffiths, Martha Wright	No	Dem.	Midwest	1/3/1955	12/31/1974	19.99
Knutson, Coya Gjesdal	No	Dem.	Midwest	1/3/1955	1/3/1959	4.00
Granahan, Kathryn E.	Yes	Dem.	Northeast	11/6/1956	1/3/1963	6.16
Dwyer, Florence Price	No	Rep.	Northeast	1/3/1957	1/3/1973	16.00
May, Catherine Dean	No	Rep.	Northwest	1/3/1959	1/3/1971	12.00
Simpson, Edna Oakes	Yes	Rep.	Midwest	1/3/1959	1/3/1961	2.00
Weis, Jessica McCullough	No	Rep.	Northeast	1/3/1959	1/3/1963	4.00
Hansen, Julia Butler	Yes	Dem.	Northwest	11/8/1960	12/31/1974	14.15
Norrell, Catherine Dorris	Yes	Dem.	Southeast	4/18/1961	1/3/1963	1.71
Reece, Louise Goff	Yes	Rep.	Southeast	5/16/1961	1/3/1963	1.63
Riley, Corinne Boyd	Yes	Dem.	Southeast	4/10/1962	1/3/1963	0.73
Reid, Charlotte Thompson	Yes	Rep.	Midwest	1/3/1963	10/7/1971	8.76
Baker, Irene Bailey	Yes	Rep.	Southeast	3/10/1964	1/3/1965	0.81
Mink, Patsy Takemoto*	No	Dem.	Islands	1/3/1965	1/3/1977	12.00
Thomas, Lera Millard	Yes	Dem.	Southwest	3/26/1966	1/3/1967	0.77
Heckler, Margaret M.	No	Rep.	Northeast	1/3/1967	1/3/1983	16.00
Chisholm, Shirley Anita	No	Dem.	Northeast	1/3/1969	1/3/1983	14.00
Abzug, Bella Savitzky	No	Dem.	Northeast	1/3/1971	1/3/1977	6.00
Grasso, Ella Tambussi	No	Dem.	Northeast	1/3/1971	1/3/1975	4.00
Hicks, Louise Day	No	Dem.	Northeast	1/3/1971	1/3/1973	2.00
Andrews, Elizabeth B.	Yes	Dem.	Southeast	4/4/1972	1/3/1973	0.75
Burke, Yvonne B.	No	Dem.	West	1/3/1973	1/3/1979	6.00
Holt, Marjorie Sewell	No	Rep.	Northeast	1/3/1973	1/3/1987	14.00
Holtzman, Elizabeth	No	Dem.	Northeast	1/3/1973	1/3/1981	8.00
Jordan, Barbara Charline	No	Dem.	Southwest	1/3/1973	1/3/1979	6.00
Schroeder, Patricia Scott	No	Dem.	West	1/3/1973	1/3/1997	24.00
Boggs, Corrine (Lindy)	Yes	Dem.	Southeast	3/20/1973	1/3/1991	17.79
Collins, Cardiss	Yes	Dem.	Midwest	6/5/1973	1/3/1997	23.58
Fenwick, Millicent H.	No	Rep.	Northeast	1/3/1975	1/3/1983	8.00
Keys, Martha Elizabeth	No	Dem.	Midwest	1/3/1975	1/3/1979	4.00
Lloyd, Marilyn Laird	No	Dem.	Southeast	1/3/1975	1/3/1995	20.00
Meyner, Helen Stevenson	No	Dem.	Northeast	1/3/1975	1/3/1979	4.00
Smith, Virginia Dodd	No	Rep.	Midwest	1/3/1975	1/3/1991	16.00
Spellman, Gladys Noon	No	Dem.	Northeast	1/3/1975	2/24/1981	6.14
Pettis, Shirley Neil	Yes	Rep.	West	4/29/1975	1/3/1979	3.68
Mikulski, Barbara Ann	No	Dem.	Northeast	1/3/1977	1/3/1987	10.00
Oakar, Mary Rose	No	Dem.	Midwest	1/3/1977	1/3/1993	16.00

Women in the US House of Representatives 1917-1998

Name	Served one term or less?	College Graduate ?	Career outside home?	Career
Green, Edith Starrett	No	Yes	Yes	teacher
Griffiths, Martha Wright	No	Yes	Yes	lawyer/judge/politics
Knutson, Coya Gjesdal	No	Yes	Yes	teacher, politics
Granahan, Kathryn E.	No	Yes	No	
Dwyer, Florence Price	No	No	Yes	politics
May, Catherine Dean	No	Yes	Yes	journalist, broadcaster
Simpson, Edna Oakes	Yes	No	No	
Weis, Jessica McCullough	No	No	Yes	politics
Hansen, Julia Butler	No	Yes	Yes	politics
Norrell, Catherine Dorris	Yes	No	No	
Reece, Louise Goff	Yes	No	Yes	business
Riley, Corinne Boyd	Yes	Yes	Yes	teacher
Reid, Charlotte Thompson	No	No	Yes	politics
Baker, Irene Bailey	Yes	No	No	
Mink, Patsy Takemoto*	No	Yes	Yes	lawyer
Thomas, Lera Millard	Yes	No	No	
Heckler, Margaret M.	No	Yes	Yes	lawyer
Chisholm, Shirley Anita	No	Yes	Yes	teacher
Abzug, Bella Savitzky	No	Yes	Yes	lawyer
Grasso, Ella Tambussi	No	Yes	Yes	politics
Hicks, Louise Day	Yes	Yes	Yes	lawyer
Andrews, Elizabeth B.	Yes	Yes	Yes	teacher
Burke, Yvonne B.	No	Yes	Yes	lawyer
Holt, Marjorie Sewell	No	Yes	Yes	lawyer
Holtzman, Elizabeth	No	Yes	Yes	lawyer
Jordan, Barbara Charline	No	Yes	Yes	lawyer, politics
Schroeder, Patricia Scott	No	Yes	Yes	lawyer
Boggs, Corrine (Lindy)	No	Yes	Yes	teacher
Collins, Cardiss	No	No	Yes	government
Fenwick, Millicent H.	No	No	Yes	editor, politics
Keys, Martha Elizabeth	No	Yes	No	
Lloyd, Marilyn Laird	No	No	Yes	business
Meyner, Helen Stevenson	No	Yes	Yes	journalist, broadcaster
Smith, Virginia Dodd	No	Yes	Yes	politics
Spellman, Gladys Noon	No	No	Yes	teacher, politics
Pettis, Shirley Neil	No	No	Yes	journalist
Mikulski, Barbara Ann	No	Yes	Yes	social work, professor
Oakar, Mary Rose	No	Yes	Yes	professor, politics

Women in the US House of Representatives 1917-1998

Name	Elected after death of male relative or colleague?****	Party	Region	Date elected	Term expired	Years Served
Johnson, Nancy Lee	No	Rep.	Northeast	1/3/1983	12/31/1998	15.99
Kaptur, Marcy C.	No	Dem.	Midwest	1/3/1983	12/31/1998	15.99
Vucanovich, Barbara F.	No	Rep.	West	1/3/1983	12/31/1998	15.99
Burton, Sala	Yes	Dem.	West	6/21/1983	2/1/1987	3.61
Bentley, Helen Delich	No	Rep.	Northeast	1/3/1985	1/3/1995	10.00
Meyers, Jan	No	Rep.	Midwest	1/3/1985	1/3/1997	12.00
Long, Catherine S.	Yes	Dem.	Midwest	3/30/1985	1/3/1987	1.76
Morella, Constance A.	No	Rep.	Northeast	1/3/1987	12/31/1998	11.99
Patterson, Elizabeth J.	No	Dem.	Southeast	1/3/1987	1/3/1993	6.00
Sailli, Patricia Fukuda	No	Rep.	Islands	1/3/1987	12/31/1998	11.99
Slaughter, Louise McIntosh	No	Dem.	Northeast	1/3/1987	12/31/1998	11.99
Pelosi, Nancy	No	Dem.	West	6/2/1987	12/31/1998	11.58
Lowey, Nita M.	No	Dem.	Northeast	1/3/1989	12/31/1998	9.99
Unsoeld, Jolene	No	Dem.	Northwest	1/3/1989	1/3/1995	6.00
Long, Jill Lynnette	No	Dem.	Midwest	3/28/1989	1/3/1995	5.76
Ros-Lehtinen, Ileana	No	Rep.	Southeast	8/29/1989	12/31/1998	9.34
Molinari, Susan	No	Rep.	Northeast	3/20/1990	8/2/1997	7.37
Collins, Barbara Rose	No	Dem.	Midwest	1/3/1991	1/3/1997	6.00
DeLauro, Rosa L.	No	Dem.	Northeast	1/3/1991	12/31/1998	7.99
Horn, Joan Kelly	No	Dem.	Midwest	1/3/1991	1/3/1993	2.00
Norton, Eleanor Holmes	No	Dem.	Northeast	1/3/1991	12/31/1998	7.99
Waters, Maxine	No	Dem.	West	1/3/1991	12/31/1998	7.99
Clayton, Eva	Yes	Dem.	Southeast	1/3/1992	12/31/1998	6.99
Brown, Corrine	No	Dem.	Southeast	1/3/1993	12/31/1998	5.99
Byrne, Leslie	No	Dem.	Southeast	1/3/1993	1/3/1995	2.00
Cantwell, Maria	No	Dem.	Northwest	1/3/1993	1/3/1995	2.00
Danner, Pat	No	Rep.	Midwest	1/3/1993	12/31/1998	5.99
Dunn, Jennifer	No	Rep.	Northwest	1/3/1993	12/31/1998	5.99
English, Karan	No	Dem.	Southwest	1/3/1993	1/3/1995	2.00
Eshoo, Anna G.	No	Dem.	West	1/3/1993	12/31/1998	5.99
Fowler, Tillie	No	Rep.	Southeast	1/3/1993	12/31/1998	5.99
Furse, Elizabeth	No	Dem.	Northeast	1/3/1993	12/31/1998	5.99
Harman, Jane	No	Dem.	West	1/3/1993	12/31/1998	5.99
Johnson, Eddie Bernice	No	Dem.	Southwest	1/3/1993	12/31/1998	5.99
Lincoln, Blanche Lambert	No	Dem.	Midwest	1/3/1993	1/3/1997	4.00
Maloney, Carolyn B.	No	Dem.	Northeast	1/3/1993	12/31/1998	5.99
Margolies-Mezvinsky, Marjorie	No	Dem.	Northeast	1/3/1993	1/3/1995	2.00
McKinney, Cynthia	No	Dem.	Southeast	1/3/1993	12/31/1998	5.99

Women in the US House of Representatives 1917-1998

Name	Served one term or less?	College Graduate ?	Career outside home?	Career
Johnson, Nancy Lee	No	Yes	Yes	teacher, politics
Kaptur, Marcy C.	No	Yes	Yes	government
Vucanovich, Barbara F.	No	No	Yes	politics
Burton, Sala	No	No	No	
Bentley, Helen Delich	No	Yes	Yes	journalist
Meyers, Jan	No	Yes	Yes	advertising, politics
Long, Catherine S.	Yes	Yes	No	
Morella, Constance A.	No	Yes	Yes	professor, politics
Patterson, Elizabeth J.	No	Yes	Yes	social work, politics
Sailli, Patricia Fukuda	No	Yes	Yes	teacher, politics
Slaughter, Louise McIntosh	No	Yes	Yes	politics
Pelosi, Nancy	No	Yes	Yes	politics
Lowey, Nita M.	No	Yes	Yes	politics
Unsoeld, Jolene	No	No	Yes	politics, lobbyist
Long, Jill Lynnette	No	Yes	Yes	professor
Ros-Lehtinen, Ileana	No	Yes	Yes	teacher, politics
Molinari, Susan	No	Yes	Yes	journalist, broadcaster
Collins, Barbara Rose	No	No	Yes	politics
DeLauro, Rosa L.	No	Yes	Yes	politics
Horn, Joan Kelly	Yes	Yes	Yes	teacher, politics
Norton, Eleanor Holmes	No	Yes	Yes	lawyer, professor
Waters, Maxine	No	Yes	Yes	politics
Clayton, Eva	No	Yes	Yes	politics
Brown, Corrine	No	Yes	Yes	professor
Byrne, Leslie	Yes	No	Yes	business
Cantwell, Maria	Yes	Yes	Yes	business
Danner, Pat	No	No	Yes	politics
Dunn, Jennifer	No	Yes	Yes	engineer
English, Karan	Yes	Yes	Yes	politics
Eshoo, Anna G.	No	No	Yes	politics
Fowler, Tillie	No	Yes	Yes	lawyer
Furse, Elizabeth	No	Yes	Yes	social work
Harman, Jane	No	Yes	Yes	lawyer
Johnson, Eddie Bernice	No	Yes	Yes	nurse, therapist
Lincoln, Blanche Lambert	No	Yes	Yes	secretary
Maloney, Carolyn B.	No	Yes	Yes	government
Margolies-Mezvinsky, Marjorie	Yes	Yes	Yes	journalist
McKinney, Cynthia	No	Yes	Yes	professor, politics

Women in the US House of Representatives 1917-1998

Name	Elected after death of male relative or colleague?****	Party	Region	Date elected	Term expired	Years Served
Jackson-Lee, Sheila	No	Dem.	Southwest	1/3/1995	12/31/1998	3.99
Kelly, Sue	No	Rep.	Northeast	1/3/1995	12/31/1998	3.99
Lofgren, Zoe	No	Dem.	West	1/3/1995	12/31/1998	3.99
McCarthy, Karen	No	Dem.	Midwest	1/3/1995	12/31/1998	3.99
Myrick, Sue	No	Rep.	Southeast	1/3/1995	12/31/1998	3.99
Rivers, Lynn	No	Dem.	Midwest	1/3/1995	12/31/1998	3.99
Seastrand, Andrea	No	Rep.	West	1/3/1995	1/3/1997	2.00
Smith, Linda	No	Rep.	Northwest	1/3/1995	12/31/1998	3.99
Millender-McDonald, Juanita	No	Dem.	West	3/26/1996	12/31/1998	2.76
Emerson, JoAnn	Yes	Rep.	Midwest	11/5/1996	12/31/1998	2.16
Carson, Julia	No	Dem.	Midwest	1/3/1997	12/31/1998	1.99
Christensen, Donna	No	Dem.	Islands	1/3/1997	12/31/1998	1.99
DeGette, Diana	No	Dem.	West	1/3/1997	12/31/1998	1.99
Granger, Kay	No	Rep.	Southwest	1/3/1997	12/31/1998	1.99
Hooley, Darlene	No	Dem.	Northwest	1/3/1997	12/31/1998	1.99
Kilpatrick, Carolyn C.	No	Dem.	Midwest	1/3/1997	12/31/1998	1.99
McCarthy, Carolyn	No	Dem.	Northeast	1/3/1997	12/31/1998	1.99
Northup, Ann	No	Rep.	Southeast	1/3/1997	12/31/1998	1.99
Sanchez, Loretta	No	Dem.	West	1/3/1997	12/31/1998	1.99
Stabenow, Debbie	No	Dem.	Midwest	1/3/1997	12/31/1998	1.99
Tauscher, Ellen	No	Dem.	West	1/3/1997	12/31/1998	1.99
Capps, Lois	Yes	Dem.	West	3/10/1998	12/31/1998	0.81
Bono, Mary	Yes	Rep.	West	4/7/1998	12/31/1998	0.73
Lee, Barbara	No	Dem.	West	4/7/1998	12/31/1998	0.73
Wilson, Heather	Yes	Rep.	Southwest	6/23/1998	12/31/1998	0.52
*add'l terms-9/22/90-9/28/02		NOTE- All representatives with date 12/31/98 in				
**add'l term-11/5/40-1/3/43		the term expired category were currently in				
***add'l term-1/3/49-1/3/51		office at the end of the data collection.				
****Colleague is defined as						
a boss or close political ally.						

Women in the US House of Representatives 1917-1998

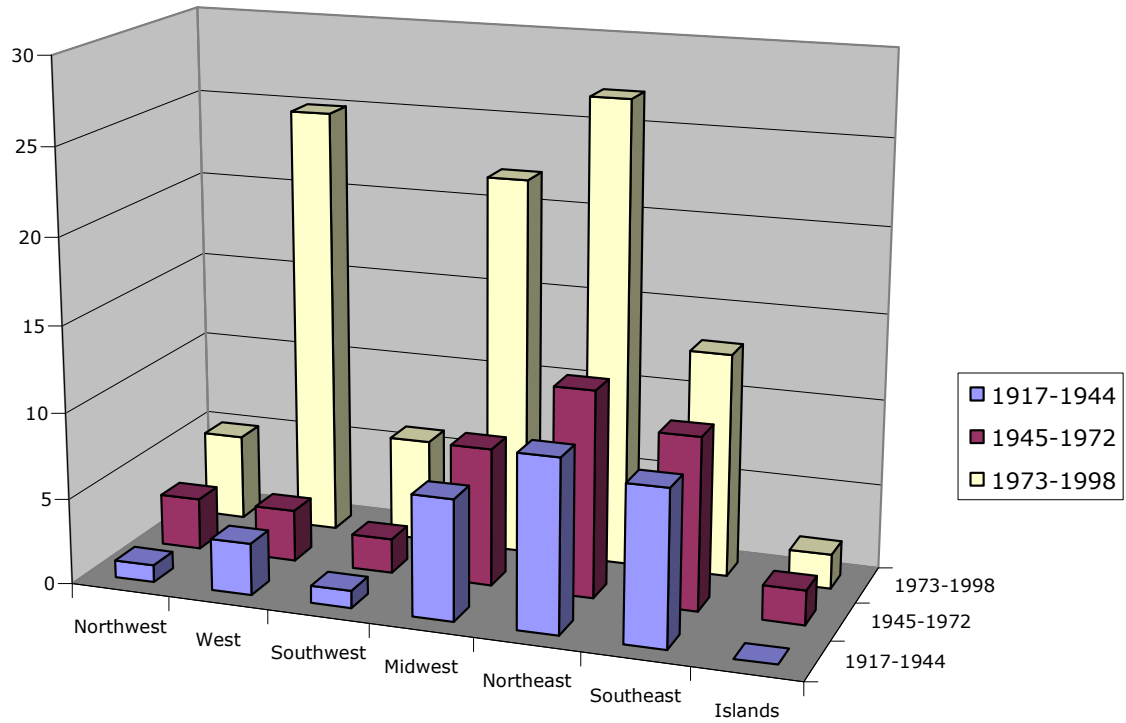
Name	Served one term or less?	College Graduate ?	Career outside home?	Career
Jackson-Lee, Sheila	No	Yes	Yes	lawyer, judge
Kelly, Sue	No	Yes	Yes	scientist
Lofgren, Zoe	No	Yes	Yes	lawyer
McCarthy, Karen	No	Yes	Yes	teacher, politics
Myrick, Sue	No	No	Yes	politics
Rivers, Lynn	No	Yes	Yes	politics
Seastrand, Andrea	Yes	Yes	Yes	teacher
Smith, Linda	No	No	Yes	politics, business
Millender-McDonald, Juanita	No	Yes	Yes	teacher
Emerson, JoAnn	No	Yes	Yes	social work
Carson, Julia	No	No	Yes	politics
Christensen, Donna	No	Yes	Yes	medicine
DeGette, Diana	No	Yes	Yes	politics
Granger, Kay	No	Yes	Yes	teacher, politics
Hooley, Darlene	No	Yes	Yes	teacher, politics
Kilpatrick, Carolyn C.	No	Yes	Yes	teacher, politics
McCarthy, Carolyn	No	Yes	Yes	nurse
Northup, Ann	No	Yes	Yes	politics
Sanchez, Loretta	No	Yes	Yes	finance
Stabenow, Debbie	No	Yes	Yes	social work, politics
Tauscher, Ellen	No	Yes	Yes	finance
Capps, Lois	No	Yes	Yes	professor
Bono, Mary	No	Yes	Yes	fitness instructor
Lee, Barbara	No	Yes	Yes	politics
Wilson, Heather	No	Yes	Yes	government
*add'l terms-9/22/90-9/28/02				
**add'l term-11/5/40-1/3/43				
***add'l term-1/3/49-1/3/51				
****Colleague is defined as				
a boss or close political ally.				

Women in the US House of Representatives 1917-1998

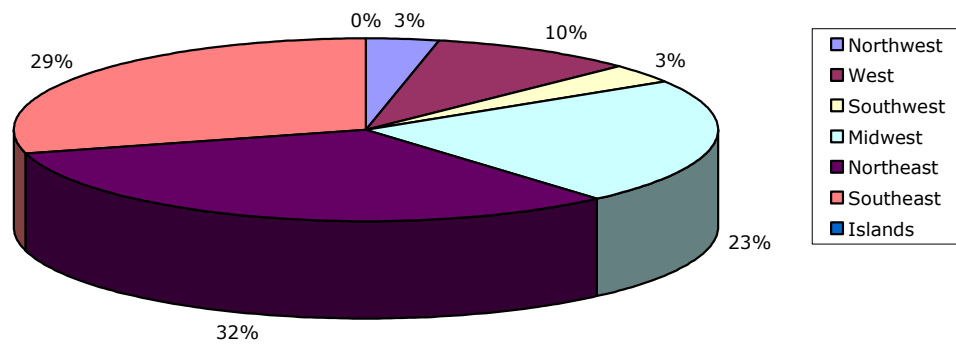
Name	Elected after death of male relative or colleague?****	Party	Region	Date elected	Term expired
STATISTICAL ANALYSIS-					
Total % of women elected because of death male rel./coll.					
0.284883721					
% of women elected because of death male rel./coll.'17-'44					
0.580645161					
% of women elected because of death male rel./coll.'45-'72					
0.425					
% of women elected because of death male rel./coll.'73-'98					
0.14					
% of women Democrats in House of Representatives					
0.63372093					
% of women Republicans in House of Representatives					
0.360465116					
Region that elected most women to House-Northeast					
0.284883721					
% of women who served 1 term or less					
0.25					
Total % of women elected with college degrees					
0.680232558					
% of women elected with college degrees '17-'70					
0.447761194					
% of women elected with college degrees '71-'98					
0.828571429					
% of women with careers elected to the House					
0.872093023					
% of women elected w/ careers in politics					
0.27					
% of women elected w/ careers in teaching					
0.25					
% of women elected w/ careers in law					
0.17					
% of women elected w/ careers in business					
0.08					
% of women w/ Other careers (Medicine, social work, etc.)					
0.23					

Regional Distribution of Women in the House							
	Northwest	West	Southwest	Midwest	Northeast	Southeast	Islands
1917-1944	1	3	1	7	10	9	0
1945-1972	3	3	2	8	12	10	2
1973-1998	5	25	6	22	27	13	2

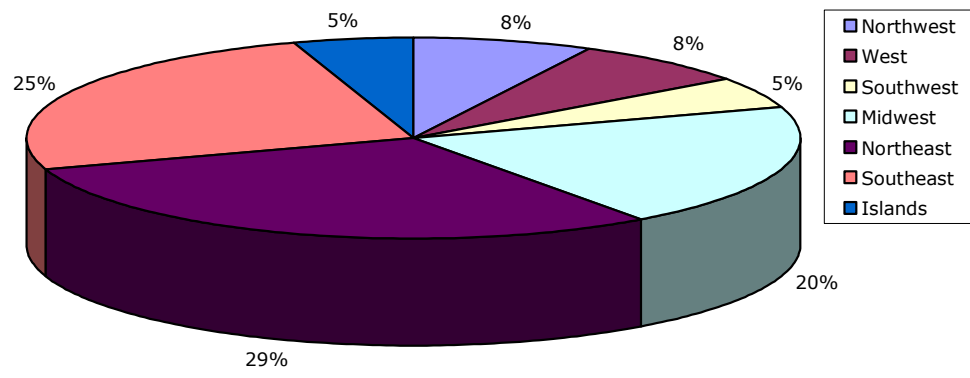
Regional Distribution of Women in the House
Figure 1.1



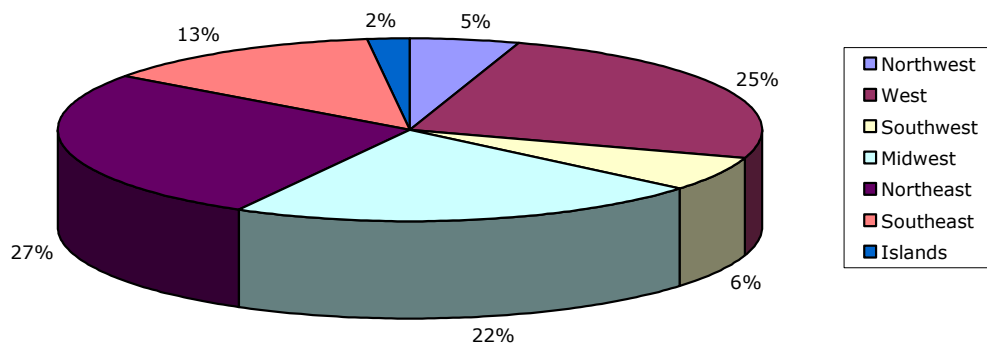
Regional Distribution of Women in the House 1917-1944
Figure 1.2



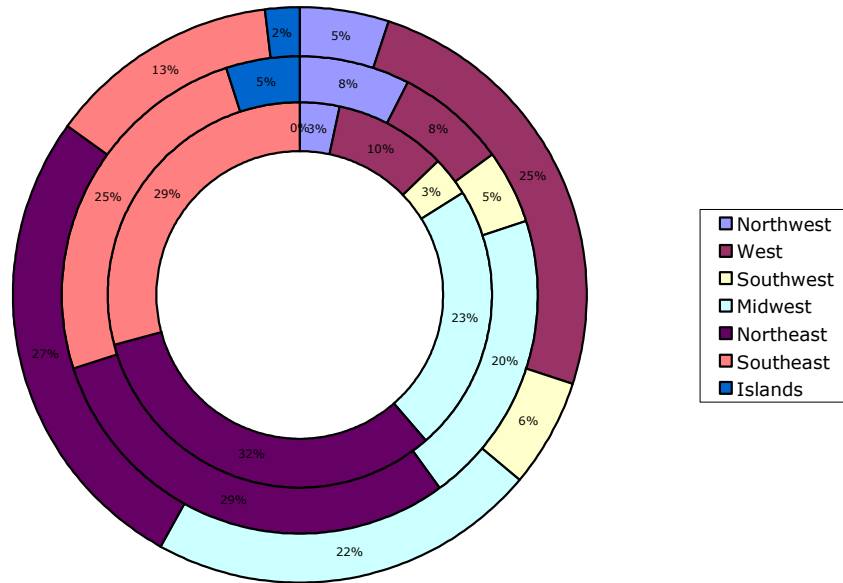
Regional Distribution of Women in the House 1945-1972
Figure 1.3



Regional Distribution of Women in the House 1973-1998
Figure 1.4

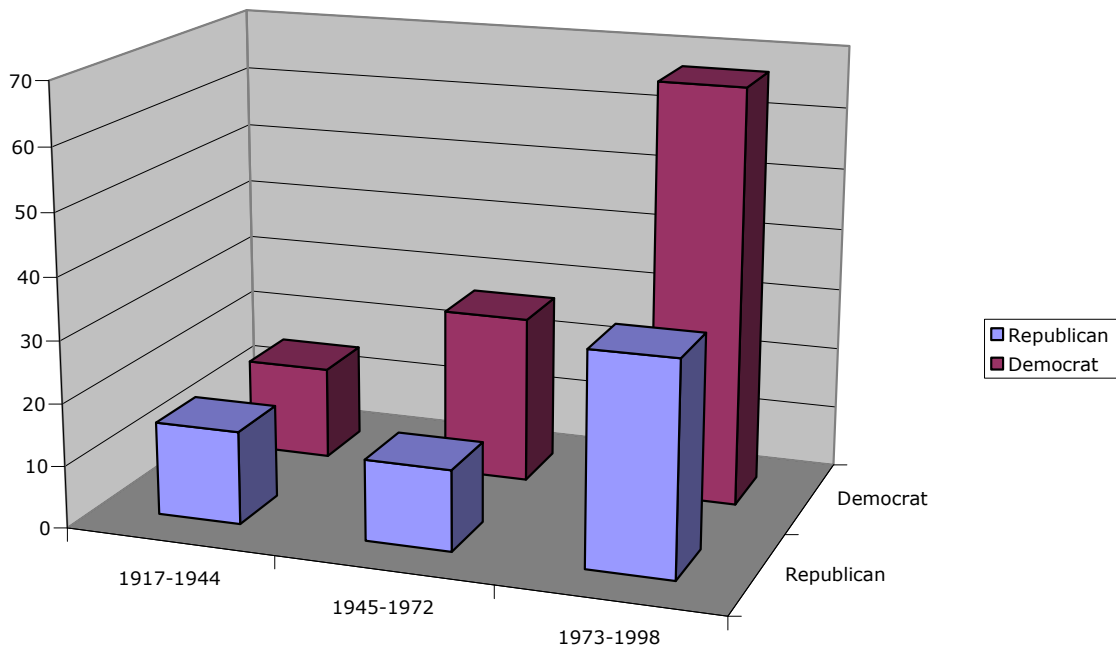


**Regional Distribution of Women in the House- Change Over Time
1917-1944, 1945-1972, 1973-1998
Figure 1.5**

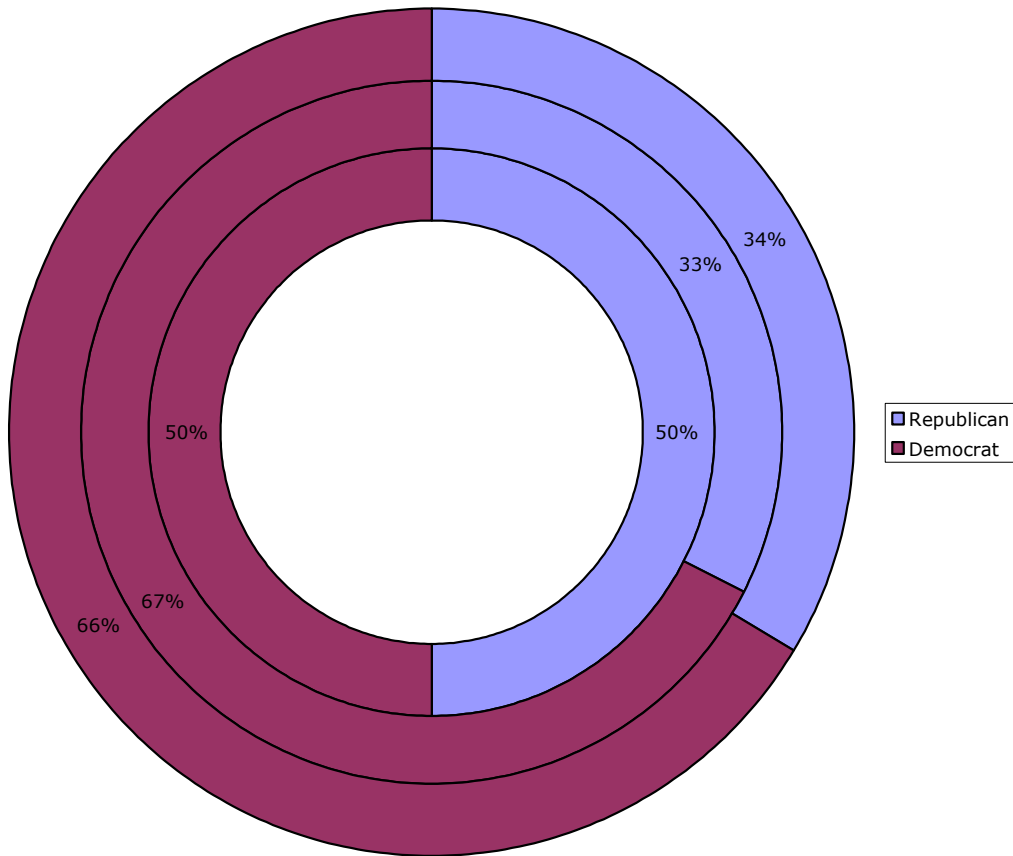


Party Affiliation/Length of Term			
	Republican	Democrat	
1917-1944	15	15	
1945-1972	13	27	
1973-1998	34	67	
	Average length of term		
1917-1944	5.64		
1945-1972	7.81		
1973-1998	6.78		

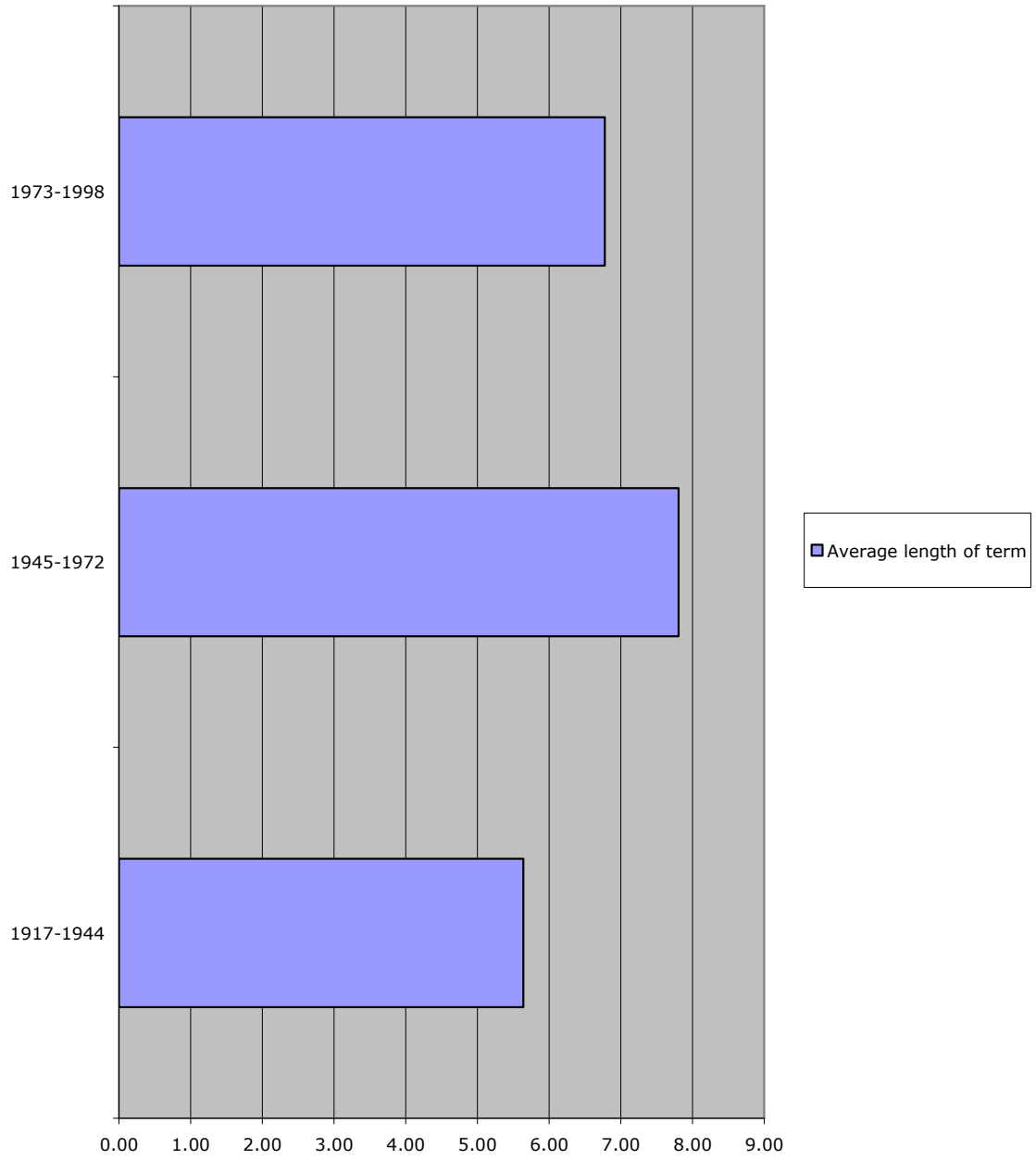
Party Affiliation of Women in the House
Figure 2.1



Party Affiliation- Change Over Time
1917-1944, 1945-1972, 1973-1998
Figure 2.2



Average length of term (in years)
Figure 3.1



APPENDIX B

Elizabeth Kee's Congressional Record Synopsis
1951-19641951*1st Session of the 82nd Congress*

Announcement of John Kee's Death and Tributes (8 pgs.)- May 8

Memorial Service- May 16

(Special Election to fill J. Kee's place held July 17)

Elizabeth Kee sworn in July 26, 1951

E. Kee Elected to Veteran's Affairs Committee- Aug. 9

Bill- H.R. 5506 funds for Bluefield Post Office and Courthouse

Appendix- 1st Session

Letter written to E. Kee from staff of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs
following John Kee's death

**Article by Mary Eloise Turner

"Elizabeth Kee- First W.V. Woman Representative- Granddaughter Sees Gracious
Lady Take her Seat in Congress"

1952*2nd Session of the 82nd Congress*

Bill- Statue for Uruguay of George Washington

Relief- Emmanuel Maragoudakis

Bill- Preference Primaries for Nomination of candidates for President and Vice-President

Bill to amend Railroad Retirement Act of 1937- retire after 30 yrs. of service and widow gets benefits at age 60 instead of 65

Bill to amend section 25 of the Internal Revenue Code

Bill- \$30,000 for grading and draining the Mercer Co. Airport

H.R. 7778 for Bluefield Post Office and Courthouse passed in House

Discussion of passing of Robert Ramsay- comments on and tribute to Dr. Hedrick

Appendix-2nd Session

Religious Sermon by Rev. William Eckman given on Dec. 28, 1951- opportunities, second chances

Keenotes from *Independent-Herald* of Hinton regarding Congressional Chaplain- Dr. Bernard Braskamp

Report- Veteran's Benefits now available at present time to veterans of all wars

Speech given by A.J. Hayes (Pres. Of Machinist Union at Women's National Democratic Club) Defense Spending vs. taking care of our own

Article by Joseph and Stewart Alsop in the *Washington Post* regarding success of Foreign policy meetings in Lisbon, Portugal

Article by Roscoe Drummond in the *Christian Science Monitor* detailing Truman mending relations with press before reelection

Speech by Donald Wilson (National commander of American Legion) on Veteran's Rehabilitation

Declaration by Christ Church in Philadelphia –must fight tyranny and moral degeneracy by remembering the fundamental truths of the law and will of God for men

**Article written by E. Kee "Security in the Western Hemisphere" in *Democratic Digest*

Statement-by WV State Director- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation on the success Of vocational rehabilitation programs in WV

Sermon given by Rev. E.A. deBordenave of Old Christ Church in Philadelphia celebrating 175th anniversary of Dec. of Independence

1. all men are created equal and have the right to freedom
2. but personal freedom comes with limitations
3. both are equally important- when one is neglected, result is tyranny, we must overcome the contradiction
4. God transcends the contradiction- submit to God and he will help us bridge Contradiction- Don't ignore God

1953*1st Session of the 83rd Congress*

Relief for Sylvia Mae Smith

Relief for Salim Mohamed El Masri

Relief for Gisela Walter Sizemore

Relief for Chakib Kassem Aboul-Hosn

Bill- Emergency Authorization for Bluefield Post Office and Courthouse

Elizabeth Kee on Veteran's Affairs committee

Bill for Statue of George Washington to people of Uruguay

Bill to establish quota limitations on imports of foreign residual oil

Relief for Emmanuel Maradoudakis

Bill to amend section 25 of the Internal Revenue Code

Bill to promote public library service to rural areas

**Protesting the firing of former W.V. Congressman M.G. Burnside from Security
Agency of Defense Department

Bill to authorize emergency appropriations for Post Office and courthouse in Bluefield

Relief for Margarita Cordero Bolin

Speech given in support for H.R. 5894, a bill amending the Trade Agreements extension
Act to protect farmers, miners, etc. from unbalanced foreign reciprocal trade

Relief for Gregory Harry Bezenar

Appendix- 1st Session

Editorial written by J. Malcolm Johnston, editor of *Monroe Watchman* protesting 2 new
Rules of the Selective Service System- taking potential officers from ROTC and
Making them privates and National Guard men being drafted into the Army

Editorial written by A.S. Barksdale Jr., editor of *Sunset News* lauding E. Kee's
Efforts in seeking a limitation on imports of residual foreign fuel oil

Speech pleading for her bill to establish quota limitations on imports of foreign oil

**Statement to the House Ways and Means Committee by E. Kee concerning Residual
Oil Imports- effects on economy of W.V.

**Statement regarding companies listed in *Business Week* as members of the Billion-
Dollar Club- 5 of whom were present at mtg. Of Ways and Means committee and
Who are actively fighting passage of the bill limiting imports of residual fuel oil

**Keenotes article from *Bluefield Sunset News* concerning E. Kee's witnessing of an
atomic blast in the Nevada Desert in May of 1953- shocked and astounded

Statement concerning unemployment in W.V. because of imports of residual fuel oil
Pleading with other House members to pass H.R. 5894, the Simpson Bill

1954

2nd Session of the 83rd Congress

Relief for Ralph Michael Owens

Statement concerning the amount of foreign residual fuel oil allowed into the U.S.-impact on American jobs in the coal industry

Statement of concern regarding the German governments imposing a discriminatory restriction against American coal

Bill to offset declining unemployment by providing Federal assistance to states for projects in construction, alteration, expansion or repair of public facilities.

**Statement regarding a recent report by the European Coal and Steel Community- much needed American coal is being denied a legitimate export market

Statement concerning Juvenile Delinquency- How Mercer Co. is combating it

**Statement calling for Clarence B. Randall (in light of recent recommendations given to the congress from the President concerning foreign trade) to divulge his interests, if any, in the international oil companies that stand to profit

Discussion of bill to amend Social Security Benefits- allowing farmers, clergymen, etc. to participate- must constantly see what needs improving in Social Security

Support for Unemployment Compensation Standards Act of 1954

**Discussion saying Republican Party broke its promise to consider the plight of the coal miners when a new foreign trade program was formulated. 38 states support restricting residual fuel oil imports and yet the administration does nothing

**Statement concerning her sorrow over being asked to support foreign oil for yet another year. There are 51 industrial areas that are now considered distressed communities. Workers are forced on unemployment compensation. Now a bill that we are not allowed to amend in any way allowing the flow of oil to continue- NO!

Statement pleading with the House to not extend the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act for another year. Unemployment and human misery in W.V. at an all time high.

Bill to provide that individuals that had served 6 months over seas not be liable for induction into the Armed Services.

**Statement scolding the Committee on Appropriations for presenting an "economy" which will in fact hurt many Americans

Tribute to Albert Sidney Camp of Georgia- 2 poems read that were favorites of John

Discussion in support of Railroad Retirement Act-pleased that it helps widows

**Discussion concerning Postal Pay Raise, Corbett Bill, think of it in terms of the people who work so hard- don't get caught up in statistics and figures

**Statement concerning Congress' neglect of public schools- pledges to work harder in the 84th Congress on this problem

Praise for Social Security and the recent changes in Social Security Law- proud of her Involvement in it

Appendix to 2nd Session

Keenotes article regarding Sassafras Tea

Article by E.A. Carter regarding Traffic Safety

Keenotes regarding American Legion Convention

Telegram E. Kee sent to Daniel A. Reed, Chairman, Ways and Means Committee re:

Depression in the coal industry

Appendix to 2nd Session of the 83rd Congress (cont'd)

Speech give by Walter Vergil Ross- God is the Chief Justice of the Universe-

Communism denies God and mankind is imperiled

Editorial from Bluefield Telegraph entitled "A Glorious Fourth"

**Tribute by John McCormack of Massachusetts to Elizabeth and her service of 3 yrs.

and a reprint of an article by Syd Barksdale in the *Sunset News* praising her
service and dedication to the people of W.V.

Article from Washington Post praising a French Air Force nurse who served in Indochina

1955

1st Session of the 84th Congress

Bill to establish quota limitations on imports of foreign residual fuel oil

Relief for Ralph Michael Owens

Statement that she had introduced bill to establish quota limitations on foreign oil-recent trip to Europe she visited communities going through industrial recovery- none so bad as W.V. is experiencing now. Executive branch not responding

Put on Committee on Veteran's Affairs

Bill to provide for the people of Uruguay a statue of Gen. George Washington

Bill to offset declining employment by providing Fed. Assistance to States for Construction, alteration, expansion, or repair of public facilities

**Statement concerning Veteran's Benefits- so long as the government asserts the right to draft young men for service, it assumes responsibilities for their future welfare

Bill to amend Internal Revenue Code of 1939 relating to definition of dependent

Concurrent resolution establishing a Joint Committee on Intelligence Matters (w/15 other representatives)

Bill to encourage the States to hold preferential primary elections for the nomination of candidates for the office of President

Discussion joining with Mr. Byrd in mourning the death of Dr. Eland H. Hedrick who Was Byrd's predecessor

Bill to authorize the Commodity Credit Corp. to process food commodities for donation

Bill to promote the further development of public library services in rural areas

Bill to amend the law granting education and training benefits to veterans on or after June 27, 1950 to extend the period during which benefits are offered

Relief for Chakib Kaseem Aboul-Hosn

**Statement before the Ways and Means Committee regarding H.R. – population in W.V. dropping more than in any other state- unemployment is heartbreaking people dependent on surplus commodities- every day misery and despair Invites members of Congress to W.V. to see first hand the devastation- the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act cannot continue

Bill to amend the Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1952 to provide education and training allowances paid to veterans pursuing on farm training to continue for 12 months after they start

Relief for Wadih Saleh

Relief for Show-Chung Lo Tsai, En-Ning Tsai, Ann-Ning Tsai, Kwan-Mei Ho Tsai

Keenotes regarding not forgetting yesterday's heroes- the veterans. Blasts the Hoover Commission for wanting to cut \$300 million from Veteran's hospital, etc.

Bill to amend the Natural Gas Act

Statement that the Postal Pay raise so long overdue needs to be retroactive at least to start of calendar year

Keenotes lauding the appointment of Harold Stassen as Secretary of Peace- goes

A little way in achieving the W.V. plan for the establishment of Dept. of Peace

Bill to amend section 302 of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944

Keenotes on Capitol Bldg. getting new renovations, including a prayer room

Keenotes- reflections on a post-war world 10 years later

1955 (cont'd)

- **Tribute to Elizabeth Kee by Robert C. Byrd as West Virginia's Daughter of the Year- letters and telegrams sent from friends included in the record, poem saying temple of fame and temple of good are one, no one forgets those who live for man
- Statement concerning the importance of Civilian Defense
- **Keenotes- Navy had previously excluded Congresswomen from boarding fighting ships- recently changed and E. Kee and other Congresswomen had the privilege to board the *U.S.S. Intrepid* on Friday the 13 no less and witness a weekend of carrier tactics- appreciation for the Navy
- Keenotes- concerning the President Eisenhower's statement that T.V. and Radio can have greater influence than the press- no, they both have their place and always will.
- Bill to amend the Commodity Credit Corp. to authorize the Corp. to acquire seeds, plants and fertilizer for distribution to the needy
- Bill to establish the Federal Agency for the Handicapped
- Article from the *White Sulphur Springs Sentinel* concerning E. Kee's being Daughter of Year
- **Keenotes- "A Happy Word for Everyone"- 10 yrs. of the U.N.
- Keenotes- use of radar to help stop the many highway deaths each year
- Keenotes- "Happy Birthday to the Marines"
- Keenotes- Summit meeting with U.S., Great Britain, France, and Soviet Union at Geneva- commends Congressmen George (John Kee's successor) in making Summit mtg. a reality
- Keenotes- the Adjournment Rush is like the circus preparing to perform- reports on the speed with which Congress had accomplished legislation this session
- Keenotes- report on the strike of the public transportation- police helped
- Keenotes- another meeting at Geneva- the Atoms for Peace Conference- atomic power for energy
- **Keenotes- talk, talk, talk, is it all necessary, especially in Congress? Yes, occasionally there is meaning, inspiration, and enlightenment
- Keenotes- retirement age is different for everyone- story of Dr. Herbert Putnam-93

Appendix

- Editorial from *Bluefield Sunset News* – Meeting to help coal. E. Kee trying to help, too.
- Resolution adopted by the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen concerning Reciprocal Trade and Residual Oil Shipments
- Article by Ira . Bennett "United States Market and Wages in Peril"
- Tribute to John T. Jones by his pastor, Dr. Frederick Brown Harris, Chaplain U.S. Senate
- White Sulphur Sentinel* article concerning the History of the State Fair of W.V.
- Speech by Jersey Joe Walcott (former world heavyweight champion) concerning Juvenile Delinquency

1956

2nd Session of the 84th Congress

Tribute to Vera Buchanan from Pennsylvania, also a female representative in the House

E. Kee and V. Buchanan both lost husbands serving in the House and were sworn in within a week of each other

Bill to amend the act providing for Federal aid for State veteran's homes to permit payments to homes not primarily furnishing domiciliary care

Keenotes- political musings on W. Germany and France

Discussion on the passing of Senator Kilgore of W. Virginia

Appointed E. Kee to funeral committee for Senator Kilgore

Bill to establish an educational assistance program for children of servicemen who died as a result of a disability incurred in line of duty during World War II or the Korean service period

Petition of W.C. Williams of Hinton, WV and 46 other residents of Summers Co., WV urging immediate enactment of a separate and liberal pension program for veterans of WWI and their widows and orphans

Bill to provide assistance to the States in the construction, modernization, additions, and improvement of domiciliary or hospital buildings of State or Territorial soldier's homes by a grant to subsidize in part the capital outlay cost

Bill to amend the Railroad Retirement Act of 1937 to provide increases in benefits

Petition of Omer C. Meadows of Hinton, WV and 45 resident of Monroe Co., WV urging immediate enactment of a separate and liberal pension program for veterans of WWI and their widows and orphans

Petition of Walter F. Rose of Bluefield, WV and 46 other residents of Mercer Co, WV urging immediate enactment of a separate and liberal pension program for veterans of WWI and their widows and orphans

Bill to amend the Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1952 to permit a veteran pursuing education and training thereunder to make a change of program if he is unable to continue the pursuit of his current program because of physical or mental disability or other compelling personal reasons

Petition of P.C. Brown of Renick, WV and 40 other residents of Greenbrier Co, WV urging immediate enactment of a separate and liberal pension program for veterans of WWI and their widows and orphans

Statement concerning Peacetime application of Atomic Power- government should not be paying for a program which will mean unemployment for Americans progress is fine but should be paid for by private industry

**Statement demanding an explanation of secret negotiations taking place in Geneva concerning tariff and trade policies-against membership in the OTC

Petition of Mrs. Carolyn Barosky, pres, Wood-Venable Auxiliary 8519 and 9 other Members of auxiliary urging immediate enactment of a separate and liberal Pension program for veterans of WWI and their widows and orphans

Petition of John F. Boyd of Alderson, WV and 43 other residents of Monroe and Summers Counties of WV urging immediate enactment of a separate and liberal pension program for veterans of WWI and their widows and orphans

1956 (cont'd)

Statement of shock as to the Parris Island Tragedy where some marines were killed during training. E. Kee has confidence in Marines that they will handle this tragedy in the best manner they know how

Bill to provide for the establishment of a fish hatchery in the state of WV

Petition of Waldo William of Hinton, WV and 45 other residents of Summers Co., WV urging immediate enactment of a separate and liberal pension program for veterans of WWI and their widows and orphans

Petition of Comdr. W. L. Clingman, VFW Dept. of WV Renick, WV and 45 other veteran and their friends urging a separate and liberal pension program for veterans of WWI and their widows and orphans

Tribute to Senator Harley Kilgore, in anticipation for Memorial Service in House

**Statement protesting the unnecessary subsidization of electric powerplants with Atomic ones on the grounds that it is unfair to the coal people and private electric companies

Relief of Mrs. Ursula Gertrud Ilse Vest

Petition of Frank N. Parker of Nimitz, WV and 45 other veterans of Summers Co. WV and their friends urging immediate enactment of a separate and liberal pension program for veterans of WWI and their widows and orphans

Relief for Dr. Benjamin S. Pecson, Leticia Simpao Pecson, Mary Mediatrix S. Benjamin And Carmelita Cresendia S. Pecson

Appendix to the 2nd Session of the 84th Congress

Statement including into the record telegrams and articles honoring Senator Harley M. Kilgore following his recent death

Statement including into the record an article from the AFL-CIO News of Washington, D.C. mourning the death of the late Harley Kilgore, also editorial from Welch

Tribute from the *Georgetowner* honoring Katie Louchheim, leader of Democratic Women, concerning her ability to combine a career in politics & marriage

Remarks made by Reverend Shirley Donnelly, D.D. at the funeral service of Harley Kilgore

Column by Marquis Childs from the *Washington Post* discussing the poor salaries of career foreign service officers sent to foreign countries to entertain

Editorial from *Huntington Advertiser* concerning the coal development program

Statement concerning the retirement of James P. Richards from politics- he succeeded E. Kee's husband as chairman of the foreign affairs committee- article by Elizabeth Maguire from the *Georgetowner*

Article by Norman Vincent Peale in the *Pineville Independent Herald* regarding Memorial Day

Article by John Herling in the *Washington Daily News* regarding the dedication of 10 memorial hospitals in WV, VA, and KY built by United Mine Workers

Essay by young Mary Varney from an American Legion essay contest entitled "My Obligation as an American Citizen"

Article by Marian Trainor from *Labor Daily* "Woman Veep in our Time Seen by Martha Griffiths"

Article by Mary McGrory from *Sunday Star* regarding John Simmons in the State Dept.

Article by Bill Sawyer from *Machinist* regarding 10 new hospitals in WV, VA, & KY

1957

1st Session of the 85th Congress

- Bill to amend Veterans Regulation No. 9a. to permit payment of the burial allowance where discharge requirements are or have been met
- Bill to amend Veterans Regulation No. 9a to provide that the Veterans Admin. Will transport the body of a veteran who dies in a State home for disabled soldiers and sailors to the place of burial within the U.S.
- Bill to amend Veterans Regulation No. 9a to provide for payment of not in excess of \$75 to cover the cost of acquisition of a burial site for certain deceased veterans
- Bill to establish an effective program to alleviate conditions of excessive unemployment in certain economically depressed areas
- Bill to encourage the States to hold preferential primary elections for the nomination of candidates for the office of President
- Concurrent Resolution (with 5 other Reps.) to establish a Joint Committee on Central Intelligence
- Relief of Dr. Benjamin S. Pecson, Leticia Simpao Pecson, Mary Mediatrix Benjamin and Carmelita S. Pecson
- E. Kee appointed to committee on Government Operations and Veteran's Affairs
- Relief for Mrs. Ursula Gertrud Ilse Vest
- Bill to establish quota limitations on imports of foreign residual fuel oil
- Relief for Dr. T. F. Tsai
- Bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 to permit taxpayers to treat casualty losses sustained after the close of a taxable year as having been sustained during the taxable year
- Bill to amend the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 to permit the donation of surplus property to volunteer fire-fighting organizations, volunteer reserve services, squads, and first-aid crews
- Relief for Mitsuko Harris
- **Statement regarding the Six Billionth Ton of Coal to be mined in WV in April 1957- still have recoverable deposits of over 52 billion tons
- Bill to establish the Federal Agency for Handicapped
- Bill to prohibit the severance of a service connected disability which has been in effect for 10 or more years, except when based on fraud
- **Keenotes-Cuts in Gov. Spending should not begin and end with programs that help so many of our citizens
- Keenotes explaining the Surplus Food Distribution Program and promoting a more Modest foreign aid program and a sound foreign policy
- Bill to provide supplementary benefits for recipients of public assistance through the issuance of food stamps for surplus agricultural commodities
- Statement regarding the Nation's Older Citizens
- **Statement dealing with H.R. 1949- E. Kee's bill establishing an effective program of Federal aid to economically depressed areas within the U.S.-response to Pres. Eisenhower's address concerning & for poor countries- we must take care of our own first
- **Statement regarding rising cost of food and pay raises for postal workers and elderly
- **Statement saying STOP the importation of foreign fuel when coal can do the job

- **Discussion of bill to amend Social Security Act- widows of 62 years or older can
Only receive help if they have child under 18- ridiculous!
- Bill to reduce age at which widows can get benefits from 62 to 50
- Bill to amend titl II of the Social Security Act to provide that the wife or widow can
Still get benefits even if they were separated through no fault of her own
- **Statement regarding the hard work of the 85th Congress
- Relief for Mrs. W. L. Taylor
- Statement regarding recent decision of judge that men and women serving in
Foreign lands who commit crime will stand trial in the U.S.
- Article by Prof. Seymour Harris regarding the administrations management of
The Nation's money
- **Statement regarding the nation's economy- E. Kee is suspicious of "rosy" statistics
as many farmers and others are poorer than ever
- **Keenotes- people relinquishing their right to know in the name of national security
very dangerous as "secret" stamp prevents info from reaching the public
- Statement to the Federal Power Commission regarding not allowing Natural Gas
To be imported from Canada when coal could do the job
- **Statement about the plight of the farmer
- **Statement regarding disappointment in the fact that the President and others do
not recognize dependence on foreign residual oil as a specific peril to our national
security
- **Keenotes- the Administration is thwarting Congressional intent, esp. when it comes
to the importation of foreign residual fuel oil and treatment of veterans
- Keenotes- no to huge billboards along the New Federal Interstate Highways
- Keenotes- Coal production slightly higher for 1956- no gov. help for modernization
- **Statement- Women in our Nation's Politics- Speech by Coya Knutson of MN-
sometimes it's up to the women to "pick up and put the mess together again"-
mentions E. Kee in speech
- **Statement in support of pay raises for Gov. employees and postal workers
- **Keenotes-Juvenile Delinquency linked to amoral behavior from greedy business-
men and indifferent politicians
- Bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 to increase the depletion allowance for
coal and lignite
- Bill to encourage and stimulate the production and conservation of coal in the U.S.
through research and development by creating a Coal Research and Development
Commission
- **Keenotes- report back to people of the progress and efforts of the 85th Congress
- Keenotes- pat on the back for Television industry
- Statement regarding an excellent report given by the Coal Research Subcommittee

- Appendix to the 1st session of the 85th Congress*
- Statement regarding the discrimination towards the older worker, particularly women
- Letter from constituent who is a postal worker regarding low pay
- Article by Malvina Linsday from *Washington Post* regarding the medically indigent, the
Senior citizens of America
- Article entitled "After retirement- What?"

1958

Second Session of the 85 Congress

Tribute to Jere Cooper of Tennessee after his recent death

Bill to amend Veteran's Benefits Act of 1957- burial allowance increased to \$250

Bill to provide for the establishment of a U.S. Academy of Science

Tribute to Augustine B. Kelley of PA- champion of handicapped, wage earners, and schoolchildren

Tribute to Senator Matthew M. Neely of WV, former member of the House and Governor of WV

Appointed to Senator Neely's funeral committee

Keenotes- Ideas to improve science education in regards to Russia's Sputnik

Talks about her bill to set up a U.S. Academy of Science

**Keenotes- Our economy is suffering and the gov. has so far refused to support measures to meet the needs of economically depressed areas such as
Kee proposed in H.R. 1949- waste of human resources

Statement urging raising the depletion rate of coal from 10% to 15%

**Keenotes- we cannot extend the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act- this program lowers tariffs and makes it so WV and others cannot compete against imports from low-wage foreign countries-Pres. deaf to our pleas for help

Statement- Happy 48th Birthday to the Boy Scouts of America

Keenotes- the economy is in serious trouble and needs bold action- free up \$ already appropriated, increase defense spending, and start road building

**Statement made before the House Ways and Means Committee-their decisions with respect to International Trade Policy are crucial to the future of WV
The people of WV want jobs but they can't compete against the rampaging Floods of foreign oil. There are serious repercussions to Pres. program

**Statement- proposed 4 billion Foreign Aid Program is a repeat of Truman's scare words of 10 years ago. If it is wise to help those abroad build sound economies, then it is just as important to do it here at home. There will be a long and bitter debate re: Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act

Keenotes- Manpower for the Armed Services- It takes \$24 million to support the Selective Service Program and if man leaves after his draft period, this \$ is Wasted, why not revise pay scale based upon skill and ability rather than time served- upcoming hearing important

Discussion of retirement of Col. Bill Roy, Assistant Parliamentarian of the House

**Article written by E. Kee for *The Railway Clerk* "How Congress Makes Our Laws"

Keenotes- Stepping up the Community Facilities Program would help provide much needed jobs

**Keenotes- Cherry Blossom Festival- W.V. State Society Reception- Princess Ann Baker Tierney (Picture at Eastern Regional Coal Archives?)

Keenotes- Economy in recession- Congress is stepping up to start construction

Work in Houseing and Interstate Highway, 5.25 mill. Unemployed, need speed

Bill to protect the right of the blind to self-expression through organizations of the blind

Bill to amend the National Defense Amendment

Bill to provide uniforms to holders of the Medal of Honor

Statement as to why uniforms for holders of the Medal of Honor are desperately needed

Keenotes- House passed H.R. 6239- attacking the distribution of pornography

Keenotes- Russia is in the lead exploring space, House passed a bill to create National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Control Of it with civilian officials

Keenotes- Economic situation of American Farmers. Need to create an Agricultural Research and Industrial Board in the Dept. of Agriculture

**Keenotes- As a member of the International Operations Subcommittee of the Gov. Operations committee, I have seen much waste in the form of aid to Other countries with NO ACCOUNTABILITY

**Statement- Need for a National Fuel Policy. The gov. is stacking cards against coal Growing dependence on Middle East Oil and then we are subject to the whims Of Middle East politics

Bill to create an Agricultural Research and Industrial Board in the Dept. of Agriculture

Statement- before adjournment- needed legislation in the following areas: chronic Unemployment, air safety, Social Security, tax relief for small business, tax relief for the people

Statement- during 1957, coal industry shipped 55 mill. Tons overseas as exports, but In 1958 we stand to lose 12 million tons to countries who take our foreign aid money and then barter with Russia for communist coal, must have support of state dept. to stop this

Keenotes-Conservation of Soil and Water is a pressing problem, lends support to Watershed development program: dams built and floods reduced

Keenotes-report on 2nd session of 85th Congress- 3 distinct moods- 1. concern over Russia's advances in science and technology 2. serious economic recession 3. threat of war in Middle East

Keenotes- Congress recently passed a bill for tax relief for small businesses and the small business Administration is a permanent agency where you can get as much as \$350,000 at 5.5 %interest

Appendix to the 2nd session of the 85th Congress

Employment of Handicapped is on the rise- Pan American World Airways received Award from the American Legion

Tribute to Neely

Tribute to Neely from Bar Association

Letter thanking Kee for her interest in getting uniforms for the Medal of Honor Winners

1959

1st session of the 86th Congress

Bill to establish effective program to alleviate excessive unemployment in economically depressed areas

Bill to encourage states to hold preferential elections for nominations for candidates for President

Bill to prevent the severance of a service-connected disability which has been in effect 10 or more years

Bill to amend IRS Code of 1954 to allow casualty losses to be counted during taxable year even if they occurred after

Bill to establish quota limitations on imports of foreign residual fuel oil

Bill to amend Social Security Act- widow can receive benefits at 52 instead of 65

Bill to amend Social Security Act- widow can receive benefits even if separated from husband due to no fault of her own

Bill to amend Veterans Regulation 9a to provide that the Veteran's administration will transport body of Veteran who dies in a State home to his burial place

Bill to provide that veteran's may accrue educational benefits until individuals can no longer be inducted into service

Bill to amend Veterans Regulation 9a to provide for payment not in excess of \$75 for burial site for veterans

Bill to amend title 10, U.S. Code to authorize the furnishing of uniforms for Medal Of Honor Awardees

Bill to establish the Federal Agency for Handicapped

Bill to amend Veterans Regulation 9a to permit payment of the burial allowance where Discharge requirements are or have been met

Bill to protect the right of the blind to self expression through organizations of the blind

Bill to amend Internal revenue code to increase the depletion allowance for coal and Lignite

Bill to provide benefits for those on public assistance- food stamps to be used to acquire surplus agricultural commodities

Bill to create and Agricultural Research and Industrial Board within Dept. of Agriculture

Bill to amend the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 to permit donations of surplus property to volunteer fire-fighting organizations

Bill to amend the national defense amendment

Bill to develop a Coal Research and Development commission to encourage and stimulate the production and conservation of coal

20 bills all introduced by E. Kee on first day of session Jan. 7, 1959

Resolution to authorize the Committee on Ways and Means to investigate and study the administration of the Social Security Act

****Keenotes-** The U.S. is a World Leader and what we do or fail to do can change the course of history. Must be vigilant against communism- firmly believe the rest of the World is beginning to realize our motives are unselfish. We don't want world Dominion. We need sound fiscal policies especially to help depressed areas
Pledge to work hard for people of WV

Keenotes- Challenges to 86th Congress- Russian space race, National Debt, battle over budget- Democrats known for spending but in 85th Congress- we reduced budget

- Appointed to Government Operations Committee and Veterans Affairs Committee
- Keenotes- President's State of the Union message very general, message focused on balanced budget but his statement that budget requirements transcend even defense spending received chilly reception from Republicans, WV Delegation united in a depressed areas bill
- Bill to check the growth of unemployment by providing assistance for the construction of needed public works and public improvements
- Bill to amend the National Security Amendment to establish quota limitations on imports of foreign residual fuel oil
- Bill to revise the basis for providing medical care for veterans' wartime service connected disabilities
- **Statement – last week E. Kee joined with Senators Randolph and Byrd in introducing legislation to direct the Sec. of Agriculture to use \$200 million to purchase foods to supplement the surplus commodities distributed to needy
WV had 306,000 people dependent on that food-butter, flour, meal, rice, dry milk. This bill will help but we need JOBS
- Bill to establish a program of economic relief for distressed areas through a system of loans and grants-in-aid
- Statement- potential of electric heating in homes good for coal industry
- Joint Resolution providing for U.S. to participate in the WV Centennial Celebration to be held in 1963
- Statement- friend on hand for distribution of surplus agricultural commodities- heart-breaking scene- we must focus on JOBS- new bill could provide for 200,000 new jobs for WV
- **Keenotes- spoke of speech given by Carl Sandburg in the House on Abraham Lincoln- Had Lincoln been spared, the South would have escaped the indignancies and humiliations. **It is unfortunate we have not learned better the lessons of the past**
- **Discussion of H.R. 3696 Depressed areas Bill- almost 1 out of 4 of population in Kee's counties were dependent on surplus commodities- worse econ. conditions in history- we must pass this bill to help them
- Bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code to exempt a corporation from corporate income tax when operations carried on in an economically depressed area and provide employment to people in that area
- Keenotes- last week joined with 51 colleagues from both parties and from all sections of the country in proposing a 3 part program which would bring relief to depressed areas-1. expansion of surplus food distribution program 2. funds from Congress for flood control 3. passage by Congress of area development legislation to help people help themselves.
- Statement- encouraged by President in imposing mandatory quotas on imports of residual Fuel oil but 475,000 barrels is still way too many = to 110 million tons of coal
But it's a start and the WV delegation worked together to make this happen
- **Keenotes- Economically Distressed Areas Bill is similar to one that passed previously
That the President vetoed. Why is it right to do these things abroad but not at home?

Statement- grant for Beckley Hospital and WVU Med. Ctr. Bldg. for studies in cardiopulmonary disease related to coal dust

Discussion regarding flood control protection joined with colleague from KY

Keenotes- WV Delegation recently dined on surplus agricultural commodities- Just like 300,000 West Virginian do on a regular basis –trying hard to Pass legislation to help

Bill to amend the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1958 to provide additional funds for the construction of highways in labor surplus areas

Statement- urgent need for a North/South route in Interstate Highway System in WV-start In Washington, PA down through Beckley and down to Bluefield. Chairman of Recent conference on subject- Arch Moore

Statement- Invitation to all members of the House to National coal Policy conference

Bill to grant the consent of Congress to VA and WV to enter into compact re: boundary between the states

Relief for Adel Nassib Masri

Statement- congratulation to Dept. of Justice acting on new pornography law passed by the 85th Congress- 3 men indicted and congratulations to Kathryn Granahan for her leadership in bringing this matter to the attention of Congress and the people

Bill to name the Veteran's Administration Hospital in Seattle, WA the George E. Flood Memorial Hospital

Keenotes- House passed legislation extending the life of the Renogiation Act –provides the means whereby Gov. can recover excess profits from firms awarded Gov. contracts. Area Redevelopment Bill needs to be debated on the House floor- it does not need to get bottled up in committee for the rest of the session

Bill- striking Medals in Commemoration of the 100th anniversary of WV

Discussion on the bill promoting a Coal Research and Development commission- purposes are to 1. develop new and effective uses for coal 2. improve and expand existing uses for coal 3. reduce cost of coal production and distribution 4. emphasize those development in consumption of coal to small coal producers

Discussion of bill to increases to 70 % of the veterans and their dependents who served in WWI, WWII and the Korean conflict

Bill to amend burial benefit provisions of chapter 23 title 38 for veterans

Keenotes- Congress has just cut \$1.3 billion from President's proposed budget. Again, Democrats are not wild spenders but are acting responsibly. Debate on lifting of interest ceiling should be interesting. Debates on 2 Agric. Bills- more research needed for industrial uses of corn, wheat, tobacco, etc.

Bill to authorize the establishment of a Youth Conservation Corp

Statement – great need in U.S. for a Youth Conservation Corp, similar to CCC during Roosevelt's administration

**Keenotes- we end the 58-59 fiscal year with a \$10 billion deficit. Large amounts of income are escaping taxation each year. Some estimate \$26 billion goes untaxed- \$5 billion in revenue escapes our Nation. Ways and Means committee will look at this in upcoming hearings

Bill to strike medals for 100th anniversary of WV becoming a state (same as above but different H.R. #)

Bill to provide uniforms for Medal of Honor Winners (same as above but different H.R. #)

Statement-concerning the financing of the Federal Interstate Highway- cannot finance this through a gas tax

Statement- No state should be able to collect taxes on income derived from interstate commerce if person maintains no permanent stock, plant, office or warehouse within state

Keenotes- people need an adequate diet- we need to expand the food available for hungry families – the YCC- hope this bill passes in the House

Bill to limit the power of the states to impose income taxes from interstate commerce

Discussion on Area Redevelopment legislation pending since May (now July) Quote by Sylvia Porter, “If Congress doesn’t act, the problem won’t go away. The hard core will just get harder and thicker.”

**Statement- the Russian people just don’t understand us and this ignorance could lead to another war –Russian people want to live in peace just as we do. “We have no aggressive intentions in the world.”

Keenotes- We cut \$700 million from Foreign Aid- they have to be more careful with a smaller amount. Senate passed the Coal Research Bill and the Gas tax defeated

Keenotes- positive toward Mr. Krushev’s upcoming visit. Need new housing bill

Statement- NO to the interest rate ceiling of 4.5% being removed

Statement- no taxes on interstate commerce

Keenotes- should House adjourn before Krushev’s visit? We have several important issues that need to be dealt with

1. Aid to Depressed Areas languishing
2. Interstate Highway System needs to continue building
3. New Housing Legis.
4. Farm problem- costs \$1 million a day to store extra commodities

Concurrent Resolution establishing a basic fuels policy for the U.S.

Statement- We need a National Fuel Policy- especially for coal

Statement- A number of members of the House who represent coal-producing areas have introduced identical concurrent resolutions of a Joint Committee on a National Fuels Policy

Keenotes- Recently Congress passed legislation to create the Inter-American Development Bank. In the future, direct gifts and grants will be played down. Instead, Latin America will look to the bank

Statement- looking forward to upcoming visit by Krushev but his ignorance is appalling “He apparently honestly believes that large corporations in this country want war to increase their profits.”

**Statement- Disappointed that Pres. vetoed Public Works Appropriation Bill for Flood Control Projects- Let’s as a Congress override this veto

Statement pleading for action in regards to Aid for redevelopment of depressed economic Areas

**Keenotes- House and Senate overrode President’s 2nd veto of a bill for flood control and navigation projects. Projects at Brush Creek and Meadow River in WV can begin. Thanks to Sam Rayburn and Lyndon Johnson who were very helpful. Need full disclosure of Foreign Aid Spending

Interim Report of Committee on Government Operations of which E. Kee was a member (17 pages long)

Appendix to the 1st session of the 86th Congress

Letter re: Uniforms for Medal of Honor Awardees

Article by Merle Hopper in *National News of Veterans of WWI* "How to Write Your Congressman"

Article by Justin McCarthy and Rex Lauck in *United Mine Workers Journal* "Coal for the Nation's Roads" (E. Kee's son, Jim there for the demonstration)

Tribute to Michael Benedum, fellow West Virginian, who was born in Bridgeport and who gave a great part of his wealth to helping others, copy of last will of Mr. Benedum- religious in tone- WV needs my \$ more than PA

Editorial in *Washington Post* entitled "Youth and the Land" supporting Youth Conservation Corp

1960

2nd Session of the 86th Congress

Tribute to fellow Representative Hubert Ellis

Tribute to former Representative Dr. Will Neal

Bill to encourage and stimulate the production and conservation of coal in the U.S. through research and development

Bill to afford additional time during which vocational rehabilitation may be afforded to those disabled veterans of WWII or the Korean conflict who have been prevented by reason of their service-connected disabilities from pursuing and completing a suitable course of rehabilitation training

Statement- 2 international financial agencies have been launched in which the U.S. will play a major role: the Inter-American Development Fund and the International Development Agency. These agencies are there to help, therefore can't support Foreign aid appropriations of \$4 billion. Needs to be reduced. Other nations must bear some of this burden

Keenotes- Recently began hearings on all phases of the V.A. medical care program. E. Kee chairman of the Hospitals Subcommittee of the House Veteran's Affairs Committee so she is honored that the chairman has entrusted her with finding ways to make hospitals even better.

Statement- Present organizational setup of the Pentagon is not adequate to meet the threat posed for this country by the revolutionary techniques in weapons and warfare. Need to consider a single service and a single uniform. The interservice rivalry has got to stop because we are in a space race with Russia

**Statement- very happy and grateful that the House passed legislation authorizing the Sec. of the Interior to contract for coal research

Statement- Summit conference this spring will pose the first test as to whether Russia really wants peace as much as we do. Chinese seem aggressive. Debates continue as to how to handle our foreign policy. We need to debate and ask questions. Our people want peace but we need strong defense.

Keenotes- 2 messages received by Congress will touch off a lively debate- 1. request for \$4 billion to carry on foreign aid 2. the President's request for an additional 1 cent increase in first class and airmail postal rates. Coal research bill passed. Retirement benefits for self-employed proposed

Statement honoring Mrs. Hazel Davenport of Beckley as National Teacher of the Year

**Statement- High level talks coming up that could well determine the course of history during our lifetime. Feeling of cautious optimism in Washington – talk of suspension of nuclear weapons testing- end to the arms race. We would rather devote \$ we are forced to spend on arms to more useful purposes.

Bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 to repeal the excise taxes presently imposed on communications and on the transportation of persons

Relief for Michael H. Dugan

Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the U.S. should not grant further tariff reductions in the forthcoming tariff negotiations under the provision of the Trade Agreements Extension Act of 1958

Discussion re: the economic rehabilitation of distressed areas. Recent article in the NY Times said that "West Virginia possesses ample human resources to conquer her problems if these resources can be mobilized" Area Redevelopment Act will do just that

**Keenotes- Discussion of the shooting down of an American plane flying over Russia- this is a time for us to close ranks and defend our position of flying photographic missions over Russia. Rural Electrification Administration celebrating 25th anniversary. West Virginians voted their consciences recently

**Keenotes- collapse of the summit conference raises many grave problems for the U.S. and the rest of the world. One thing is for certain- the Cold War has resumed -.Kruschev uncooperative. President vetoed the Economic Rehabilitation of Distressed Areas Bill. Twice Congress has passed bill and twice president has killed it. We have lost valuable time. House has voted even more \$ toward the watershed program- dams to prevent flooding

**Keenotes- recent weeks have shown an interest in WV and her economic problems. Sad that the bill the Pres. vetoed would have helped our state so much. Hope the people of WV will not be too discouraged by these turn of events. A new administration will take over next January and things will change. Americans help the people of Chile because of recent earthquakes

Bill to amend the act of August 11, 1939 so as to authorize Group Hospitalization Inc. To enter into contracts with certain dental hospitals for the care and treatment of Individuals

Keenotes- One of major disappointments of the present session of Congress is a failure to face up to the urgent need for a National Fuel Policy. Pres. had to cancel trip to Japan because of street rioters- threat to Japan's democracy

Keenotes- Adjournment rush-trying to finish up business before Democratic convention on July 11 but many things still need to be done- housing, minimum wage, social security, and aid to education. Also Congress must decide what to do about Castro. Castro does not want to get along with us but he invited Kruschev for a visit- we must act soon.

Keenotes- recently had to vote against a proposal I had heretofore supported- the International Development Association. In effect, this is a distressed areas bill on a worldwide scale. E. Kee voted against it because it is part of a growing double standard where administration will help abroad but not at home. Veteran's Home Loan Program extended and Coal research legislation clears Senate. Congress will recess and reconvene in August caught everyone by surprise

Bill to provide for a program of Federal loans to assist certain areas of substantial and persistent unemployment to develop and maintain stable and diversified economies

**Statement regarding E. Kee's last minute effort in introducing H.R. 13077- a new effort to get aid to depressed areas. News release explains that she proposes creating a \$75 million area assistance fund within the Dept. of Commerce to be loaned to States which come up with programs to attract new industries to depressed areas "The time has come to get off dead center."

Appendix to the 2nd session of the 86th Congress

Article from the *Washington Daily News* written by Thomas Kennedy, pres. of UMW
entitled "Coal is a Giant"

1961

1st Session of the 87th Congress

- Bill to amend the burial benefit provisions of chapter 23, title 38, U.S. Code
- Bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to reduce from 62 to 50 the age at which widows' benefits become payable thereunder
- Bill to provide for a program of Federal loans to assist certain areas of substantial and persistent unemployment to develop and maintain stable and diversified economies
- Concurrent resolution to create a Joint Committee on a National fuels Study (with 6 other representatives)
- Relief for Michael H. Dugan
- Appointed on Veteran's Affairs Committee
- Bill to amend title 38 to provide vocational rehabilitation, education, and training and loan guarantee benefits for veterans of service after 1/31/55
- Bill to provide for loans to veterans when housing credit is otherwise not generally available
- Bill to amend sections 712 and 715 of title 38, U.S. Code, to permit waiver of premiums and payment of total disability income benefits to veterans holding national service life insurance policies who become totally disabled before their 65th birthday
- Bill to amend section 1502 of title 38, U.S. Code, to provide vocational rehabilitation to certain veterans in need thereof to overcome the handicap of a disability incurred in or aggravated by active service after WWII and before the Korean conflict of after the Korean conflict
- Bill to amend title 38, U.S. Code, to provide a 7% increase in rates of disability compensation , to liberalize effective dates of certain awards
- Bill to amend section 715 of title 38, U.S. Code to permit veterans with service connected disabilities less than total who have \$5 per \$1000 total disability income provision included in their national service life insurance policies to obtain the new \$10 per\$1000 total disability income protection
- Concurrent resolution declaring the sense of the Congress that no further reductions in tariffs be made during the life of the present Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act
- **Statement dealing with the bills she had introduced for the Veterans, explains each one and then discusses a long-range plan for modernization and repair of the V.A. Hospitals
- Bill to amend the Small Business Investment Act of 1958
- Bill to amend section 4107 of title 38, U.S. Code, to provide increases in the compensation of medical personnel of the Veterans Administration
- Bill to amend section 4107 of title 38 , U.S. Code, to provide increases in the compensation of medical personnel of the Veterans Administration (same as above only different H.R. #)
- Statement explaining both of the above bills, seeking to increase the pay of doctors, dentists, and nurses. 1st bill represents recommendations of managers of VA hospitals, 2nd bill represents the recommendations of the 7 area medical directors, need to recruit and retain good doctors and this is the way to do it

- Discussion regarding the Youth Conservation Corps, this program would help so much, particularly in Appalachia, there are trees to be planted, thousands of miles of fire trails, bridges to be built just as in the 30s with the CCC. Support the Representative from KY and hope the bill goes through
- Bill to provide for a program of civil works to economically distressed areas
- Bill to provide for the establishment and administration of the Allegheny Parkway in the States of WV, KY and ML
- Bill to make the evaluation of recreational benefits resulting from the construction of any Federal project an integral part of project planning
- Bill to provide for an additional benefit factor for flood control projects located in labor surplus areas
- Discussion regarding the completion of hearings conducted by the Hospital subcommittee of the Veterans Affairs committee, reports on 170 hospitals and 3 independent domiciliaries, requests by many representatives for more beds or a new VA hospital in their state, criticism of E. Kee on hiring outside “efficiency” experts who look at hospital for less than a week and then say how gov. could be saving thousands, then pay the group hundreds of thousands, facts, figures, tables
- Discussion regarding E. Kee’s bill new bill to increase pay of doctors, dentists, nurses of V.A., Med. Dir- \$22,500- Drs. \$16, 790-\$18,090
- Bill to amend sections 210, 4103, and 4107 of title 38, U.S. Code, to provide increased compensation for medical personnel of the VA
- Tribute to Sam Rayburn, speaker of the House on his long service (twice that of those before him). He has won for himself perfect tranquility and peace of soul, he loves all people, feels unkindly toward none, and he is at peace with God. Poem by Thoreau: **Fame cannot tempt the bard who’s famous with his God, nor laurel him reward who hath his Maker’s nod**
- Tribute to Anna Braskamp, wife of the House Chaplain, she was the very essence of goodness, faith, and unreserved love of God
- Letter to Pres. Kennedy signed by the WV Delegation pledging their support in light of his recent speech re: Berlin, Russia “Mountaineers are always free” but freedom must be indivisible and you have our pledged support.
- **Discussion on Residual Fuel Oil Imports, support for Mr. Jennings but want to add that we don’t want to completely cut those off –there is a need but every year we keep increasing imports by 10%, response to those in New England claiming fuel shortage, administration of program must be tightened up
- Bill to amend chapter 73 of title 38, U.S. Code, with respect to the annual rate of compensation of certain medical personnel

Appendix to the 1st session of the 87th Congress

Article from *Charleston Gazette-Mail* quoting a recent book by Theodore White entitled *The Making of the President, 1960*, In it he describes West Virginians as “handsome people, the best mannered and most courteous in the nation, relations with Negroes are the best in any state, brave people, more soldiers per capita than any other state, that they live as they do (poverty) is an indictment of the national political system as well as of their own (state.)”

1962

2nd Session of the 87th Congress

Tribute to Sam Rayburn upon his death, there are no indispensable men, but he came as close as anyone to being indispensable, E. Kee cherishes her friendship with him
 Editorial written by A.S. Barksdaer, Jr. in the *Sunset-News Observer* comparing Mr. Sam with Mr. Kruschev, lost a great man

Bill to amend section 701a of the Housing Act of 1954

Bill to authorize the Secretary of Commerce to assist the States of ML, PA, and WV to reestablish their common boundaries

Bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 to increase the depletion allowance for coal and lignite

Relief for Katina Nonouri Kokinas

**Statement regarding the impact of Foreign Residual Oil on Mining Communities, quotes Thomas Kennedy, pres. UMW as to international oil interests are dictating how much employment is available in WV

Bill to amend Public Law 86-184, an act to provide for the striking of medals in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the admission of WV in the Union

Resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to non-Federal installation of electric generating facilities at Hanford, WA

Resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to non-Federal installation of electric generating facilities at Hanford, WA (same as above only different H.R. #)

Relief for Lydia Schmidt Thompson

Appendix

Speech by Joseph G. Weeda on the History of the American Legion

1963*1st session of the 88th Congress*

Relief for Katina Nanouri Kokinas

Appointed to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

Bill to provide for the establishment and administration of the Allegheny Parkway in the States of WV, KY, and ML

Bill to amend section 632 of title 38 U.S. Code to provide for an extension of the program of grants-in-aid to the Republic of the Philippines for the hospitalization of certain veterans

Appointed to the Board of Visitors to the U.S. Naval Academy along with 3 other representatives from the House

Relief for Lydia Schmidt Thompson

**Statement regarding the appropriation of \$500 million requested by the President to continue the Accelerated Public Works Program, we need this money, last month southern WV experienced the worst flooding in its history

Relief for Jew Hing On

Discussion of upcoming legislation establishing by law import quotas for residual fuel oil

Bill to impose quota limitations on imports of foreign residual fuel oil

**Statement regarding the Area Redevelopment Act- until 20 months or so ago, E. Kee wept silently for the people of WV. Now, the ARA has helped so much, one story is in converting the New River which had been a liability into a positive by making it a tourist destination. Quote from John Faulconer about the morale of the local people. No money requested from ARA- do not need it –the ARA was the seed.

Bill to amend the Internal Revenue code of 1939 and 1954 with respect to the apportionment of the depletion allowance between parties to contracts for the extraction of minerals or the severance of timber

Appendix to the 1st session of the 88th Congress

Article from *New York Times* by Homer Bigart regarding Hinton and how this railroad town, depressingly poor, has turned itself around with news of Federal money that will be used to build Blueston State Park, morale is amazing

Tribute to John F. Kennedy after his assassination by the Rev. Robert E. Brengartner, Catholic chaplain at the U.S. Naval Medical Center

1964

2nd session of the 88th Congress

Bill to designate the authorized Justice Reservoir on the Guyandot River, WV as the R.D.
Bailey Reservoir

Relief for Lydia Schmidt Thompson

Appointed to Board of visitors of U.S. Naval Academy

**Statement regarding the food stamp program, long range benefits 1- program is effective in improving diets of participating families 2. food stamps bolster economy and boost agricultural sales, a great program we should continue to support

Comments by Ken Hechler on E. Kee's decision not to run for reelection, E. Kee's son, Jim has been nominated as her successor, Jim's background and qualifications

Tribute by W.J. Bryan Dorn of SC to Elizabeth Kee who served with her on the Veterans' Affairs Committee for many years

Tribute by Edna F. Kelly of NY to Elizabeth Kee

APPENDIX C

Table 13

Appalachian bituminous coal and lignite employment and productivity 1950-60.
Average number of men working daily:¹

	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
Alabama	18,363	13,822	11,800	10,411	8,217	8,838	8,439	8,546	7,179	6,694	7,405
Georgia	45	45	44	25	16	25	16	17	19	18	12
Kentucky	60,698	51,908	45,237	39,363	26,626	31,743	29,891	30,601	24,439	21,441	21,738
Maryland	1,326	712	633	595	383	561	605	701	614	593	572
Ohio	18,214	16,249	14,412	12,244	10,396	10,374	10,101	9,508	8,366	8,488	8,006
Pennsylvania	93,181	84,309	75,908	68,957	53,135	47,974	48,325	46,262	40,203	36,323	32,651
Tennessee	6,464	6,514	6,910	6,372	4,507	6,397	6,406	8,229	5,834	5,238	4,043
Virginia	17,493	17,500	17,316	14,640	12,158	15,202	15,849	16,693	15,766	15,634	13,561
West Virginia	120,888	111,886	102,996	88,985	68,911	66,231	71,996	71,201	62,437	53,847	51,062
Total, Appalachia	336,672	302,945	275,256	240,632	183,449	187,345	191,619	191,848	164,857	148,276	139,410

¹ Peggy Perazzo and George Perrazzo, *Sone Quarries and Beyond*, "Mineral Sources of the Appalachian Region: The Mineral industry," pg. 3 online at www.cagenweb.com/quarries/articles_and_books/min_res_appalachian_region/images/table_13.jpg (accessed 28 November 2005).

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