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Congressman Charles W. Whalen, Jr. (R-Ohio) today predicted a renewed attempt at Congressional Reform in the next Congress.

He said prospects appear better because of the possibility of 90 new Representatives taking office and greater public awareness of the need to modernize Congress.

Whalen, one of the leaders of the House Republican attempt to pass the bill this year, said "I think we made the point more strongly than we realized that a horse-and-buggy approach to the problems of a computerized society is a travesty."

He made the comments in remarks prepared for delivery at a Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce luncheon meeting at noon today at the Statler Hilton Hotel.

"The quality of Congress' performance as well as its ability to act effectively as a check and balance on the Executive branch will diminish steadily unless reforms are undertaken," Whalen declared.

Because of an increase in its workload and the absence of modernization, Congress is virtually a year-round operation, he said.

Whalen said his group engendered hostility in its reform drive "because some senior Members of the House in key positions were opposed to changing the status quo, the 'Establishment,' if you will."

Whalen cited seven changes he supports "among the many that are desirable."

They were:

1. Establishment of a Joint Committee on Congressional Operations with continuing authority to study the structure and procedures of Congress, to recommend additional reforms and changes and to determine the feasibility of employing data processing and information retrieval systems.
2. Creation of an Office of Placement and Office Management to assist Members, Committees and officers of the Senate and House seeking competent personnel and to furnish advice and information regarding office management procedures.

3. Provision for the protection of the rights of the minority by permitting the right to appoint and direct certain committee staff members, the right to present minority views and reports, the right to call witnesses during committee hearings and the right to equal time on conference reports.

4. Authorization for the broadcasting, telecasting and photographing of committee hearings that are open to the public.

5. Establishment of a Bill of Rights for committees that would require announcement of record votes and permit a majority to compel the calling of a meeting, the opening of meetings to the public and the filing of a report.

6. Authorization of a measure designed to assist Members of Congress in the performance of their Congressional duties. Such measures would include enlarging committee staffs, strengthening and improving the Legislative Reference Service, and authorizing the committees to employ experts as consultants on an interim basis.

7. Implementation of fiscal controls and budgetary reforms that would include a greater utilization of the General Accounting Office, a multiple year financial projection of programs, the updating of the budget on June 1 of each year, and the testimony of responsible Executive Department officials before the Appropriations Committee of each House within 30 days after the budget is presented to Congress.

Whalen said that any business or even a fraternal organization that functioned as Congress does would cease to exist "before very much time passed."

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NOTE: An excerpt of Congressman Whalen's Remarks is enclosed.
EXCERPT OF REMARKS BY CONGRESSMAN CHARLES W. WHALEN, JR., BEFORE THE DAYTON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AT NOON, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25 AT THE STATLER-HILTON HOTEL

Another failure of the 90th Congress was its inability to enact legislation reforming itself. As you know, there was a major push made in September in the House of Representatives to free the Congressional Reform bill from the House Rules Committee and get it before the full House.

I was one of the 16 members of the group which led this fight. I think we made the point more strongly than we realized that a horse-and-buggy approach to the problems of a computerized society is a travesty. We engendered no small amount of hostility in so doing because some senior Members of the House in key positions were opposed to changing the status quo, the "Establishment," if you will.

It will be up to the 91st Congress to effectuate these needed changes. Three weeks ago, I felt that chances would be slight in the next Congress. But so many people have brought the subject up in conversation with me recently that I have become a bit more optimistic. I suspect this same degree of awareness must exist in many other Congressional Districts and, therefore, should serve as a prod either to newly-elected Members of Congress or for those who sat on the fence a month and a half ago.

The possibility also should be somewhat better than it was in the 90th Congress because of the greater prospective turn-over. There already are more than 40 seats in the House which will be taken by new Members because of retirements, primary election defeats, deaths and decisions to run for other offices. In addition, overall changes in the House could be as high as another 50 as a result of Election Day. This adds up to more than one-fifth of the membership of the House, a sizeable percentage.

Congress, for all practical purposes, is almost a year-round operation. This is due to constant increases in the workload and also to the lack of modernization.

Congress has to reform itself and its procedures before very long. If it does not, it will become progressively more impaired. The quality of Congress' performance as well as its ability to act effectively as a check and balance on the Executive branch will diminish steadily unless reforms are undertaken. If any company or business or even a social or fraternal organization adopted the Congressional method of operation, it probably would cease to exist before very much time passed.
Various specific reforms have been introduced. The total number of changes that have been proposed probably exceed one hundred. Let me cite seven changes that I consider important among the many that are desirable:

1. Establishment of a Joint Committee on Congressional Operations with continuing authority to study the structure and procedures of Congress, to recommend additional reforms and changes, and to determine the feasibility of employing data processing and information retrieval systems.

2. Creation of an Office of Placement and Office Management to assist Members, Committees and officers of the Senate and House seeking competent personnel and to furnish advice and information regarding office management procedures.

3. Provision for the protection of the rights of the minority by permitting the right to appoint and direct certain committee staff members, the right to present minority views and reports, the right to call witnesses during committee hearings and the right to equal time on conference reports.

4. Authorization for the broadcasting, telecasting and photographing of committee hearings that are open to the public.

5. Establishment of a Bill of Rights for committees that would require announcement of record votes and permit a majority to compel the calling of a meeting, the opening of meetings to the public and the filing of a report.

6. Authorization of measures designed to assist Members of Congress in the performance of their Congressional duties. Such measures would include enlarging committee staffs, strengthening and improving the Legislative Reference Service, and authorizing the committees to employ experts as consultants on an interim basis.

7. Implementation of fiscal controls and budgetary reforms that would include a greater utilization of the General Accounting Office, a multiple year financial projection of programs, the updating of the budget on June 1 of each year, and the testimony of responsible Executive Department officials before the Appropriations Committee of each House within 30 days after the budget is presented to Congress.

Modernization is the goal. The obstacle is reluctance to change. The prospects look a bit better in the 91st Congress. I expect a renewed effort.

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