

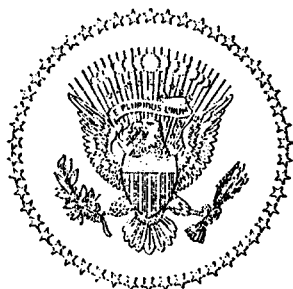
PUBLIC PAPERS OF THE PRESIDENTS
OF THE UNITED STATES

Harry S. Truman

*Containing the Public Messages, Speeches, and
Statements of the President*

JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31, 1946

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obligations to these veterans. But the Government of the Philippines is in no position today, nor will it be for a number of years, to support a large-scale program for the care of its veterans.

However, in recognition of the practical difficulties faced in making payments to Philippine Army veterans under the G.I. Bill of Rights, I have directed the Secretary of War, the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs, and the United States High Commis-

sioner to the Philippines to prepare for me a plan to meet these difficulties. I have asked that this plan be submitted not later than March fifteenth. I expect to request Congress to make such provisions as are necessary to implement the program when it is evolved.

NOTE: As enacted, H.R. 5158, approved February 18, 1946, is Public Law 301, 79th Congress (60 Stat. 6).

For the President's message to the Senate transmitting a bill to provide benefits for Philippine veterans, see Item 122.

39 Statement by the President Upon Signing the Employment Act. *February 20, 1946*

I HAVE SIGNED today the Employment Act of 1946. In enacting this legislation the Congress and the President are responding to an overwhelming demand of the people. The legislation gives expression to a deep-seated desire for a conscious and positive attack upon the ever-recurring problems of mass unemployment and ruinous depression.

Within three years after the First World War, we experienced farm foreclosures, business failures, and mass unemployment. In fact, the history of the last several decades has been one of speculative booms alternating with deep depression. The people have found themselves defenseless in the face of economic forces beyond their control.

Democratic government has the responsibility to use all its resources to create and maintain conditions under which free competitive enterprise can operate effectively—conditions under which there is an abundance of employment opportunity for those who are able, willing, and seeking to work.

It is not the Government's duty to supplant the efforts of private enterprise to find markets, or of individuals to find jobs. The

people do expect the Government, however, to create and maintain conditions in which the individual businessman and the individual job seeker have a chance to succeed by their own efforts. That is the objective of the Employment Act of 1946.

The major provisions of this important legislation can be briefly summarized.

1. The Act declares that it is "the continuing policy and responsibility of the Federal Government . . . to coordinate and utilize all its plans, functions, and resources for the purpose of creating and maintaining . . . conditions under which there will be afforded useful employment opportunities, including self-employment, for those able, willing, and seeking to work . . ." The Congress by this declaration has accepted a great responsibility.

2. The Congress has placed on the President the duty of formulating programs designed to accomplish the purpose of the Act. In signing this Act, I accept this responsibility, which I believe is in line with the responsibility placed on the President by the Constitution. This task is so great that I can perform it only with the full and

unqualified cooperation of all who are sincerely interested in the general welfare inside and outside the Government. Making this Act work must become one of the prime objectives of all of us: citizens generally, industry, labor, and agriculture, State and local governments, and the Federal Government.

3. The Act includes a significant provision that will facilitate cooperation between the Executive and the Congress in the formulation of policies and programs to accomplish the objectives of the Act. It establishes a joint Congressional Committee consisting of seven Members of the Senate and seven Members of the House. This committee is given an assignment of great scope and the highest importance.

4. The Act establishes in the Executive Office of the President a Council of Economic Advisers, composed of three members to be appointed by the President with the consent of the Senate. The new Council

will be an important addition to the facilities available for preparing economic policies and programs. In carrying on this work, I expect the fullest cooperation between the Council, the Cabinet, and the several divisions of the Executive Office.

I am happy that the Senate adopted this legislation unanimously, the House of Representatives by a large majority. The result is not all I had hoped for, but I congratulate Members of both Houses and their leaders upon their constructive and fruitful efforts.

The Employment Act of 1946 is not the end of the road, but rather the beginning. It is a commitment by the Government to the people—a commitment to take any and all of the measures necessary for a healthy economy, one that provides opportunities for those able, willing, and seeking to work. We shall all try to honor that commitment.

NOTE: The Employment Act of 1946 is Public Law 304, 79th Congress (60 Stat. 23).

40 Statement by the President Urging Continuation of the Victory Garden Program. *February 21, 1946*

DURING THE WAR PERIOD, gardening further demonstrated its value to our people in many ways. The splendid response to the appeal for more home-produced food was an important factor in making it possible during the war for the people of this country to be better fed than before the war while supplying the best-fed fighting forces in the world and providing essential food supplies to our allies. The threat of starvation in many parts of the world and the urgent need for food from this country emphasize the importance of continued effort to add to our total food supply this year.

A continuing program of gardening will be of great benefit to our people. In addition to the contribution gardens make to better nutrition, their value in providing outdoor physical exercise, recreation and relaxation from the strain of modern life is widely recognized. The Department of Agriculture through a long-time garden program can do much to encourage more attractive home surroundings and improved community development, and can provide a large body of citizens with much needed assistance in home gardening.

NOTE: This statement was made public as part of a White House release issued following a meeting of