

NORTHWESTERN Banker Newsletter

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Reflective Notes on D.C.

By **BEN HALLER, JR.**
Publisher

HAVING just returned from a trip to Washington, D.C., with a delegation from the Iowa Bankers Association, we want to share with our readers certain highlights of general interest. Practically all upper midwest state banker associations schedule similar trips and their elected officers all can attest to the ongoing value of such trips. The basic purpose of such jaunts is to meet and exchange views with one's Congressional delegation, federal regulators and government offices identified with banking interests, such as USDA.

These few reflections are not presented so much as to provide details of this specific trip as to encourage each banker to strongly consider the value of taking time to make this annual trip when it is scheduled by one's state association.

On this particular trip, bankers had requested early arrival so the weekend could be spent in visiting historic sites in D.C. and the area. The millions of tulips, flowering plants, bushes and trees beckoned in glorious color as a welcoming committee, knowing that the spirits of midwesterners, who had not yet ex-

perienced the perennial re-birth of the land, needed a special lift this year as a respite from the gloomy farm economy news at home. With that uplifting feeling of new life wherever one turned, the visit to the nation's capital took on a more exciting, refreshing pace.

But business was the main purpose and the group of 30 bankers and four IBA staff people were up early Monday morning to start off at 7:30 a.m. with an all-morning briefing by ABA staff at ABA headquarters. We have been making these Washington visitations with banker groups off and on for 25 years and have seen how ABA has consistently improved the quality and effectiveness of these briefings for banker members. This last briefing was without doubt the most thorough, effective one we have experienced. The high quality of the staff was apparent as each person shared insights on a specific area.

Visits to the offices of the three federal regulators again proved productive. FDIC Chairman William Seidman breakfasted with the delegation, then made some brief remarks. He said that in view of the problems so many bank directors associated with failing or failed banks, FDIC is striving to put

together a *Code of Duties for Directors* as a helpful guide for all bank directors. Additionally, Chairman Seidman said he is considering recommending that bank board's retain their own independent counsel, just as mutual funds have done successfully. If those two proposals can be put in place, he said, FDIC may be able to persuade Lloyd's of London to assist in pulling reinsurers back into the marketplace for needed bank insurance. A staff official discussed details of the capital forbearance program.

At the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Comptroller Robert L. Clarke had been called to Capitol Hill for an important hearing, so the group met with three top staff people: Dick Fitzgerald, chief counsel; Frank Maguire, senior deputy comptroller for industry and legislative affairs, and John Noonan, chief examiner. They discussed details of the forbearance program recently announced and responded to a number of questions.

At Federal Reserve System headquarters, the bank group was addressed in the board room of the Board of Governors by recently appointed Governor Wayne Angell, a farmer-banker-educator from Kansas, who is very familiar with midwest ag problems and spoke candidly about consequences of various Congressional and regulatory



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courses. Governor Angell engaged in an extended question and answer session.

At USDA, the briefing was given by Glenn "Jack" Wertzler of the FmHA staff. After reviewing details of the direct loan, guaranteed loan and recently-enacted interest rate buy-down programs, Mr. Wertzler was told by a number of the bankers present, "your program isn't being worked consistently" at home. They voiced support for the dedicated work of their state FmHA director, but cited numerous instances of where a county director in one location in making completely different decisions, or no decisions, compared to the hard-working directors in adjoining counties. J. Bruce Meriwether, president of the IBA, suggested Mr. Wertzler and FmHA Chairman Vance Clark come to Iowa and have a meeting on the spot with Iowa's bankers, the FmHA state director and the 99 county directors. That proposal was being pursued at press time.

The state's Congressional delegation and their wives, as well as guests from regulatory agencies attended a reception on dinner Monday night. The pleasant tenor of the dinner hour turned somber when word was passed quietly from table to table that American planes from England and the Mediterranean carrier task force had finally struck back at Libya by bombing terrorist bases at Tripoli and Benghazi. It

seemed odd to come all the way from the midwest and then be the one who informed our area Congressman that we had just bombed another nation!

It was interesting to note during the ensuing two days that business throughout the nation's capital went on as usual, with no visible evidence that anyone was aware of, cared, or was concerned about what had taken place thousands of miles away on their behalf. Other than media coverage, practically no one referred to the fact that two crew members were missing in action! Outside, people raised their umbrellas against a brief spatter of rain, hurried to and from work, walked in the park, or went about business and sight-seeing as usual.

For those who have considered making such a trip with their state association we can only encourage you—do it! The direct contacts right in the center of this nation's heart beat cannot be experienced elsewhere. That's where it happens, for better or worse. It's the best system in the world and only when more of us feel the quickened pulse as we realize we're a part of the process that is aspired to by millions all over this globe, will we fully realize why so many of the hungry, depressed, repressed, frustrated in so many countries look to us for leadership and help.

Some would discount the value of extra time for visiting historic

shrines, sites or just plain sight-seeing this historic area. It is our feeling that only when one can assimilate the full flavor of Washington, inhale deeply of its atmosphere, cultural offerings and soul-stirring history can one appreciate more fully the consuming osmosis of being proud to be an American. Any time one can visit the nation's capital, the trip should be embraced as an opportunity to grow in knowledge, spirit and love of this great country. □

Iowa News

J. Bruce Meriwether, president of the Iowa Bankers Association, and Neil Milner, executive vice president of IBA, have announced a realignment of executive staff reporting to Mr. Milner. Wes W. Ehrecke is appointed vice president for government relations, with responsibility for government relations, agriculture and compliance. Marva Faeth McCarty is appointed vice president for membership services, with responsibility for marketing, communications and education. Mr. Ehrecke and Ms. McCarty were promoted from other staff responsibilities. John Sorensen has joined the IBA staff as vice president for administrative services, with responsibility for human resources, planning, accounting and data processing. Mr. Sorensen previously was with the Iowa Corn Growers Association.

DES MOINES: Harry McCutcheon, Jr. has been promoted from vice president to senior vice president at East Des Moines National Bank. Prior to joining the bank in 1978, he was associated with Iowa State Bank for 16 years.

LINCOLN: Steve Alber has been hired as vice president branch manager of Lincoln Savings Bank of Reinbeck Office. His previous experience includes two years with a commercial bank at Scales Mound, Ill., and one year with the Farm Credit System in West Union and New Hampton.

SERGEANT BLUFF: Bruce M. Kolbe has joined the Pioneer Bank of Sgt. Bluff as executive vice president and a member of the board. Mr. Kolbe has been involved in Sioux City banking circles for the past 22 years, 14½ years with Security National Bank and the past 7½ years as president of First Interstate Bank of Sioux City.

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WEST DES MOINES: William J. Duma has been elected first vice president of West Bank in West Des Moines. Mr. Duma's extensive banking experience includes most recently vice president, First Interstate Bank of Des Moines, and previously Barclays Bank, First National Bank of St. Paul and National Bank of Minnetonka, Minn., where he was president and chairman.

Nebraska News

CURTIS: John S. Wilkinson has been promoted to president and chairman of the Curtis State Bank in Omaha. He replaces his father, R. Scott Wilkinson, who died on February 15. The late Mr. Wilkinson had been employed and active in the bank since 1940 and was president and CEO since 1947. Roger S. Hogleland has been hired as vice president.

OMAHA: American National Bank of Omaha has elected Chris E. Fenimore as vice president and trust officer. He was most recently assistant vice president and trust officer for Hawkeye Bancorporation's bank in Council Bluffs, The State Bank and Trust Company.

Minnesota News

The Minnesota Bankers Association Bank Holding Company seminar will be held May 14 at the Radisson Inn in Plymouth. The program will provide new and innovative ideas for bankers in the management of a bank holding company. Alex Sheshunoff, founder of Sheshunoff & Company, will be the headlined speaker.

MINNEAPOLIS: First Banks has announced a number of promotions. Randolph S. Koppa, formerly president and managing officer of First Bank Rochester, has been named vice president and group head for the food products/agribusiness and wholesale/retail divisions of the FBS

metropolitan division corporate banking group. Richard L. Peterson has been promoted to senior vice president, real estate finance department, First Bank Minneapolis and First Bank St. Paul. Gerald L. Reichwald has been promoted to senior vice president, special loans real estate at the two banks. Harlee E. Goldstein's promotion was to vice president, special loans real estate at First Bank Minneapolis, and William M. McRostie's was to the same position at First Bank St. Paul.

Wisconsin News

The Wisconsin Bankers Association has elected new officers and members of the WBA Executive Council for the 1986-87 fiscal year. Rowland J. McClellan, president of Valley Bank, Janesville, will begin his term as president in June following the annual convention. He will replace Dean A. Treptow, president of Brown Deer Bank, Brown Deer. Other officers are Vice President—Richard P. Klug, chairman of F&M Bank, Menomonee Falls, and Treasurer—Thomas L. Schiefelbein, president, Security National Bank, Durand.

Illinois News

CHICAGO: Richard M. Delaney has been named vice president, marketing for W.N. Lane Interfinancial, which includes the Chicago area Lane banks. He succeeds Paula T. Bartholome. Previously, Mr. Delaney had been manager of advertising and promotional planning for Montgomery Ward Corporation, Chicago, and was vice president of marketing at ITT Consumer Financial Corporation, Minneapolis, and marketing manager at Continental Illinois National Bank, Chicago.

CHICAGO: Kendon T. Birchard has been elected president and COO of Community Bank of Edgewater. He joined the bank from National Security Bank, Chicago, where he was

senior vice president of marketing and retail services. In addition, Gregory G. Cromwell was promoted to vice president of personal banking and Brenda A. Rifenberg was promoted to vice president and cashier. Mr. Cromwell previously served as assistant vice president and assistant manager, personal banking at Michigan Avenue National Bank, Chicago. Ms. Rifenberg was a cashier and corporate secretary at the Community Bank of Edgewater.

WHEELING: Carol L. Ennis has been appointed vice president and trust officer at Main Bank. She was previously employed by the Northern Trust Company, Chicago, for 12 years, most recently in corporate financial services.

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South Dakota News

SIOUX FALLS: Dennis Daugaard has been elected vice president and trust officer, trust services division, at First Bank of South Dakota, Sioux Falls. He was most recently a personal trust manager.

SIOUX FALLS: First Bank of South Dakota has elected Fred White, vice president and manager of indirect retail lending, Sioux Falls. Serving at the East Branch in Sioux Falls for the past eight years, he was most recently a branch manager.

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AG LENDING OFFICER. \$35M N.W. IL bank seeking experienced lender for Ag Loans. Must have knowledge of FHA & other gov't programs. Good starting salary and full benefits. Send resume to File No. WFC c/o Northwestern Banker. (PA)

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