

*In the Floor
6/27/60
During debate on Joe
See Bill 1*

The decision of our distinguished colleague and my good friend, Aime Forand, to retire from public life upon the conclusion of this session of the Congress has left me with a feeling of personal loss. For almost 20 years we have worked side by side here in the House attempting to effectively represent the good people of our great State of Rhode Island. In all these years, I have looked upon Aime Forand as a source of experienced knowledge and a fountain of good common sense. We have shared many moments of triumph and some of defeat. Through it all, he has kept his good disposition and humor, and has never lost sight of our common objective -- good government for all the people of this nation. He has forged ahead with a patience and diligence that has truly been an inspiration to me as, I am sure, it has been to all of you.

I think we can all profit from his good example. I know that I and all the citizens of Rhode Island take great pride in his outstanding record of achievement in public office. I note, of course, that Aime was born in the Bay State - right in Joe Martin's district, at Fall

River, Massachusetts. But upon attaining the age of reason, he followed the path of Roger Williams, and came to our great state, which he was destined to represent so nobly here for many years.

Following overseas service in World War I and subsequent business pursuits, he acquired valueable House experience as the secretary to several of his predecessors, Congressman Jeremiah O'Connell and Francis Condon, both of whom became outstanding jurists on the Rhode Island Supreme Court. The lessons he learned then he learned well. It wasn't long before Aime had a chance to demonstrate their practical application because on November 3, 1936, he was elected to the 75th Congress. Were it not for the country-side landslide in 1938 which cost him his seat in the 76th Congress by a handful of votes, he would now have a record of 24 consecutive years in the House instead of the still impressive record of 22 years broken by that one gap.

I will not attempt to detail the record of his service on the Ways & Means Committee. Many of you who have served on that Committee with him can re-count it much more intimately than I can. But the hours, days

and months which he has devoted, with pains-taking care, to the complicated and important measures in that Committee are beyond computation. In this task he has brought to bear a sound, wise and sympathetic outlook on legislation as it affects the average man and woman in this country. He has always been ready to champion a just cause -- and to lead it well.

One facet of his character that has always impressed me is his true humility. He has never sought acclaim for his many achievements and he has performed his duties in a quiet, effective manner - like the valuable ball player on the team who makes the hard plays look real easy. In recognition of his services as an outstanding legislator, in 1951 Providence College bestowed on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws, noting in that citation his integrity as a gentleman and his virtues as an elected official.

Over the years, our fellow citizens in Rhode Island have returned him to the House again and again, with ever-increasing pluralities. There is no doubt that he could reasonably expect to go on for many years to come. He has merited such confidence and given so much of his time

and labor to the affairs of government that his services could be deemed by most of his constituents as indispensable.

His knowledge of the intricate procedures of this House and his coherent sense of impartiality has made him an outstanding presiding officer of this body on the frequent occasions when our distinguished Speaker has called upon him to serve in such capacity. I need not mention the courtesy and kindness that he has always extended to his colleagues, young and old, who have been privileged to serve with him. So it remains for future history to write his name high on the wcroll of those who have served in the Congress of the United States. As for me, I write it now in the top echelon.

Aime Forand has long had a particular interest in the welfare of the aged. Perhaps the greatest push toward national prominence for our esteemed colleague was his sponsorship of a proposal to do something about the medical needs of our older citizens. The Forand bill, which he fought for so ably and with such devoted effort will alone assure him a very special place in the minds and hearts of all the elderly throughout the country. He

will rightfully take his place among the great protagonists of social legislation such as President Roosevelt and Senator Wagner. Truly he has deserved the reference which is often made to him as "The Champion of Social Security."

However, he has now made a free and un-influenced choice to return to private life. With deep regret we respect the reasons which dictated that decision. Yes, we will all miss Aime Forand tremendously -- and I, in particular, will feel his absence keenly. May he enjoy the rich rewards that flow from a sense of having discharged a public trust to the full measure of his great ability -- discharged it well and honestly. And may he and his gracious and charming wife, Gertrude, have years of health, happiness, and success in the pleasant road of private civic life that lies ahead.

So, I say to my dear friend, Aime Forand -- Doctor Aime Forand - Hail and Farewell - the people of this great Nation will never forget you.