

Chapter 4

LEARNING THE CONGRESSIONAL ROUTINE

For the several weeks in November 1946 following Nixon's triumph, he and his supporters celebrated. On the 13th, for example, the Whittier Chamber of Commerce sponsored a dinner for \$1.75 per person, at which the candidate promised to do his best and exemplify the town's spirit. Eight days later, the Pomona Valley Club held its own supper honoring their man for \$1.50 a plate.¹

From the moment of triumph, Nixon recognized that his constituency opposed the legacy of many New Deal social programs that verged on socialism. He also agreed that American values had to replace any subversive alternatives at home such as the use of books in California public schools advocating the overthrow of government. He knew that the labor strikes of the previous several years had to stop, and that meant limiting unions' gains since the advent of Franklin Roosevelt's presidency. Nixon's election philosophically signaled the victory for moderation in economic matters. He accepted that much of the legislation over the last decade was part of the nation's social fabric, but his triumph illustrated that new proposals would be met with skepticism.²

Nixon regularly read David Lawrence, publisher and influential columnist for *U.S. News & World Report*, who warned Republicans in the middle of November against mimicking the Democrats. President Truman and Senator Arthur Vandenberg, Republican from Michigan, had structured a bipartisan foreign policy, and thereby set a positive trend. Lawrence asked the two political parties to extend this cooperation to domestic issues, particularly in regard to new labor legislation. The Re-