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Mr. Kelly: From Washington, DC, transcribed, United States Senator J. Allen Frear reports again to the people of Delaware on current congressional affairs. Ladies and gentlemen, Senator Frear.

Senator Frear: Thank you, Mr. Kelly. The Senate has completed another week of intensive legislative activity in its move towards the anticipated adjournment of Congress within the next sixty days. Notable among the measures approved by the upper chamber were appropriation bills for the Department of Labor, Health, Education, and Welfare and independent offices. These bills, which cleared the chamber on Monday, permitted the Senate to take up a more controversial matter: The Housing Act of 1955, on the following day. The biggest item at issue in this legislation was the commission to authorize construction of one hundred and thirty-five thousand additional public housing units during the next year. An amendment to limit public housing to only thirty-five thousand units touched off a somewhat protracted debate, but the majority of the Senate voted against the reduction. Within minutes after this vote was completed, another roll call produced an effective majority for passage of the entire housing bill. On Wednesday, June 8th, the Senate passed a total of seven bills, the most important of which was one to increase the minimum wage from seventy-five cents to one dollar per hour. This measure had been the subject of lengthy hearings and intensive discussion for a period of months. Some senators believe that a maximum of ninety cents per hour should be established as the new minimum wage. Others feel the ceiling should be fixed at one dollar and twenty-five cents. The decision of the Senate to approve a figure of one dollar establishes what might be termed a compromise between the two extremes. The exemptions that are provided in the bill are not changed from the present act. In other significant legislative activity of the past seven days, a joint Senate-House Conference Committee finished work on HR 1, which extends the reciprocal Trade Agreements Act for an additional three years. The report of the (unintelligible [02:53]) is expected to be adopted shortly and sent to the White House. Meanwhile, both houses of Congress quickly completed consideration of the long-awaited bill to grant a salary increase to Post
Office employees. This is the bill, you may recall, which was drawn up and approved after the President vetoed another message passed by the Congress some days ago. It is expected that legislation to advance the salaries of other government employees will be acted upon soon. In fact, the Senate has already passed such a measure, and it now awaits approval of a similar bill by the House of Representatives. Within the various congressional committees, work continued on other legislation, and all indications are that both houses will proceed to dispose of a number of these matters during this current week. In the course of acting upon these important bills which I’ve just mentioned, a notable spirit of harmony has existed in the Senate between the distinguished majority leaders, Senator Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas and his counterpart on the Minority side, Senator William F. Knowland of California. While these two men and their colleagues have necessarily and frequently differed on the merits of legislation before them, it was obvious to all that they were unanimous in the desire to constructively and effectively handle the business at hand with a minimum of acrimonious discussion. The success of their joint efforts was warmly praised by the public and their fellow members of the Senate. As Congress continues to hurry along with its scheduled program, attention within the executive branch of the government turned this week to an important exercise, which will test the effectiveness of civil defense in the Washington area and throughout the country. The result of practice evacuations and other activities related to civil defense should be watched carefully by every citizen, for the lessons learned in these mock sessions may prove invaluable if a real emergency occurs. While many of us are prone to take lightly the aspects of civil defense, yet it goes without saying that an attack on the United States could bring immeasurable destruction if the population were unprepared and unaware of its obligations. Anyone who has witnessed concentrated bombing attacks will, I am sure, testify to the confusion and panic which can occur if civilians have not been properly trained in advance.

Mr. Kelly: Thank you, Senator Frear. From the nation’s capital, you have heard United States Senator J. Allen Frear in his regular report to the people of Delaware on current congressional affairs. Senator Frear will be heard again next week at this same time, speaking from the Senate Office Building in Washington.