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This Week In Congress Radio Address: President's Recommendations to Congress, 1956 April 4
Speaker: Senator J. Allen Frear
Transcribed by: David Cardillo

[00:00]


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. Some days ago, the President sent to Congress an important message on the subject of foreign aid. In it, the President recommended and requested that Congress appropriate approximately five billion dollars to meet various aspects of our foreign program, both economic and military. At the same time, the President has authority to make commitments under foreign aid for as long as ten years into the future. Let me say first that the President’s message was well-stated and doubtlessly motivated by the best of intentions. He emphasizes the fact that we cannot falter as a nation in our quest for peace. Toward that goal, said the President, we must – and will – strive consistently by every means available to us. These are compelling words and are certainly shared by every patriotic American. All of us agree with the Chief Executive that we must continue to work with our allies in order to maintain freedom in those nations, secure them against external aggression and subversion, and encourage the development of our economic society for the benefit of all. Indeed, few, if anyone, will disagree with the purpose of our past and present help to friends abroad. As individuals and as a nation, we are acutely aware, not only of the economic needs of our allies, but of their military requirements to prevent possible Soviet aggression. But by the same token, as many Delawareans already know, there comes a time when we must seriously question the extent of foreign, of future foreign aid because of our own needs here at home. Therefore, I have no hesitancy in saying I shall examine with the greatest possible detail specific requests for future foreign aid appropriations and, unless undisputed evidence exists to the contrary, I shall probably favor a lesser amount of American aid than has been requested by the Chief Executive. Furthermore, I am quite concerned over the President’s desire to make commitments for the use of foreign aid for ten years in advance. This permission is desired, of course, to assist less-developed countries in long-term projects important to their economic and social advancement. However, to grant such authority could take away from Congress its rightful control over the disposition of the public’s money. Since Congress is in session the greater
part of every year, there seems to be no reason why any future foreign aid requirement cannot be quickly brought before the Senate and House for consideration. In other words, Congress has a clear-cut responsibility as the elected representatives of the American people to account for the dollars which the public annually pays to the Federal Treasury. Therefore, I feel that Congress should increase rather than loosen its hold on the nation’s purse strings. Let me assure all Delawareans that my views of foreign aid as currently expressed here or in accord with what I believe to be the essence of sound fiscal policy. Much of our deficit financing that has occurred in the past came about because of either war emergencies or excessive grants in aid to friendly nations throughout the world. Our allies needed American help during and after the last great conflict, and they received it generously. Now, the economy of Western Europe is vastly improved and growing stronger all the time. While the same cannot be said for all of Asia, it must be realized that we cannot hope to underwrite a martial plan for that section of the world without facing bankruptcy here at home. We can and will assist underdeveloped nations to the fullest possible extent. But it is only logical that in the present economic climate, the United States takes stock of its own resources and measure them carefully in order to keep our financial house in the best possible order. We cannot and do not want to be classed as a selfish nation, and in view of the fact that we have expended nearly fifty billions of dollars abroad since the end of World War II, I doubt that this classification can be justly applied to us. However, it is scarcely possible to have the benefits of a cut in federal income taxes and a lessening of excise levy on corporate taxes unless the government expenses are reduced proportionally. I believe this Congress will look carefully in this direction when it takes up appropriation requests for foreign aid in the forthcoming fiscal year.

Mr. Kelly: 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.

[End 07:06]