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This Week In Congress Radio Address: Foreign Aid, 1958 February 21

Speaker: Senator J. Allen Frear

Transcribed by: David Cardillo

[00:00]

Announcer: The Week in Congress, recorded on February 21st, 1958.

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. One of the principle items of congressional attention during the past week was the President's message on foreign aid. This was one of those annual recommendations that has come from the White House every year since the program began about eleven years ago. During that period, we have appropriated somewhere between fifty and sixty billion dollars for foreign, economic, and military aid. Although at the time of its inception the program was established as a temporary, five-year measure, it seems rather apparent that it is to be continued indefinitely into the future. For instance, the President's current request calls for Congress to appropriate another four billion dollars for use during the next year. The funds would be used for military and economic aid and for other special services abroad. In support of his request, the President has listed a number of compelling arguments. As a matter of fact, at first reading, one might think it most unusual if any legislator could logically oppose foreign aid, for in his message, the Chief Executive warns that the consequences of discontinuing or materially reducing the program could be all but disastrous. Curiously enough, the President's message starts off by warning the Congress of what will happen if they do not continue foreign aid. It is only later in the message that he lists the affirmative reasons why foreign aid is necessary. Obviously, the President recognizes that Congress is likely to be quite economy-minded this year on foreign aid because of the existing unemployment situation throughout the United States. Indeed, many people have requested, and demanded, a sharp reduction in foreign expenditures and a proportionate increase in Federal activities here at home to stimulate the local economy. It would be premature to pass judgement on the merits of the President's foreign aid message at this time. Certainly some foreign aid has been vitally needed in past years for our friends abroad. However, the question of its indefinite continuation at this time and at such a substantial level is another matter. As most people in Delaware know, I have expressed reservations about foreign aid in recent years after supporting earlier appropriations to the Marshall Plan and other aid programs. In the present circumstances, I expect to carefully review the arguments, both for and

against the President's request in its present form. In particular, I expect to weigh carefully the possibility of approving a continuation of the program on a reduced basis. And, in the course of studying this subject, I will again welcome the comments of interested Delawareans, who in the past have freely expressed their views and opinions on this particular issue. Undoubtedly, the days immediately ahead will prompt further discussions of the foreign aid program as the legislation to implement the Presidential message is brought before the respective committees of the Senate and House of Representatives. Our free allies overseas are an important bulwark to the United States. We need and want their continued, friendly alliance. By the same token, the American people cannot overlook their own needs, especially during the present economic slowdown. Congress should, therefore, examine the question of foreign aid in light of our overall policies, both foreign and domestic.

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. **[05:03]** Senator Frear will be heard again next week at this same time, speaking from the Senate Office Building in Washington.

[End 05:15]