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This Week in Congress Radio Address: Federal/State Road-Building Program, 1958 March 28
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. This week, Congress is taking a brief recess from its major legislative activities. The reason for the temporary cessation in its deliberation is really three-fold. First, out of respect to the approaching Easter season. Second, to give the membership of the House and Senate an opportunity to return home for consultation with their constituents. And thirdly, to afford the lawmakers a personal rest from the debate before the onrush of the major portion of legislative decisions which are always forthcoming during the months of May and June. In advance of the recess period, the Senate completed work on legislation authorizing appropriations for highway construction: a major design to stimulate the Federal-State Road Building Program throughout the nation, which in turn should help to ease unemployment, at least to a limited extent. With passage of this bill and following earlier approval of the so-called Emergency Housing Bill, Congress has established a partial basis on which huge segments of our construction industry may plan a renewed business activity during the spring and summer months. However, it is quite apparent that economic conditions generally are still far from desirable, and undoubtedly, further legislative measures will be taken when the congressional membership returns to Washington. Meanwhile, in addition to our known problems in domestic and foreign affairs, Congress is more and more becoming active in the subject of scientific research as a part of the new era of outer space, which our nation is now beginning to actively enter. Within the past few days, a comprehensive staff report was released on a proposed bill known as the Science and Technology Act of 1958. A principal section of this bill will, if approved, create a Department of Science and Technology, headed by a secretary with cabinet rank. The objective of the department would be to coordinate and centralize Federal civilian science functions now vested in agencies which carry on scientific activities. At the present time, there are a number of individual agencies, such as the Atomic Energy Commission, the National Science Foundation, and others. The centralization of certain of these agencies into a department would, in the opinion of some, ensure better coordination and proper administrative direction. This proposal is
but one facet of the overall contents of this pending bill and, in addition to the legislation, there also exists a special committee authorized and directed to continue a thorough and complete study with respect to problems relating to outer space. Furthermore, other bills and resolutions are also being contemplated with a view to establishing leadership by the United States in the investigation, exploration, and development of our interests and objectives in the vast and infinite distances beyond the confines of this planet. This project is of itself perhaps the greatest challenge that civilization as we now know it will ever face, and although we are only in the pioneering stages at the moment, technical advances are being made rapidly, and we may very well witness startling accomplishments in a very short space of time. All of us, whether as members of Congress or as private citizens could demonstrate a very definite and continuing interest in the fascinating subject of outer space because, where once, not long ago, talk of spacemen and spaceships was relegated to the comic strip sections of our newspapers. It is now rapidly becoming another remarkable reality of the Twentieth Century. [05:04]

In closing, may I take this occasion to wish everyone a most happy Easter observance.

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.

[End 05:35]