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This Week In Congress Radio Address: U.S. Aircraft Shot Down Over Soviet Territory,
1958 July 11
Speaker: Senator J. Allen Frear
Transcribed by: David Cardillo

[00:00]

Announcer:   The Week in Congress, recorded on July 11th, 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.   The recent indignities against United States
servicemen whose aircraft was shot down within the borders of Soviet
Russia has stirred a great many American people to a feeling of further
indignation against the Soviet Union.  It will be recalled that the incident
occurred when an Air Force plane, not a fighting craft, but a slower,
propeller-driven plane was wantonly attacked by Red jets and shot down
after it had gotten off course because of inclement weather conditions.  It
was fortunate that the crew was not killed outright by this act of savage
and unprovoked aggression.  All of us can imagine the anguished feelings
of the families of these men upon learning of their almost miraculous
escape from death.  Thankfully, they have now been released.  I hope and
trust that our government will protest this outrage with all the vigor at our
command.  But in addition, we have not yet been able to secure the release
of another group of Americans being held in Communist East Germany,
and our nation has been faced with the embarrassment of still more
Americans being seized as hostages by the so-called rebel forces in Cuba.
Without question, the prestige of the United States has been sharply
affected as a result of these various unfriendly acts, not to mention the
feelings of the individuals involved.  Demands have come from many
parts of the country that our government take stronger steps than in the
past to recover American servicemen, and others, who fall into the hands
of unfriendly forces.  There was a time when we would have dispatched
troops to the scene to recover our personnel by force.  But perhaps the
most realistic approach that we can take to the present situation is to
consider the fact that the Soviet Union must use such provocative
incidents as these to gain propaganda advantages because most of their
other efforts to do so have been unsuccessful.  As long as the Soviet
leaders can create the impression of great power and strength, they may
keep the rest of the world from exposing the internal weaknesses of the
Communist system.  By the same token, the Kremlin can use alleged
border violations as a means of trying to solidify support for its regime
among the Russian people. It is probably for this reason that recent, tough-sounding statements have been made by Russian leader Khrushchev during his visit to East Berlin and other parts of the Soviet empire. Thus, the indignity suffered by our American servicemen in the incidents I have described must be judged in the light of our overall relationship with the Iron Curtain. In protesting the attack on our Air Force plane over Russian Armenia, I trust that this government will utilize the strongest possible language, and will disseminate to the entire free world properly documented information which will show the callous indifference of the Soviet forces to the lives and welfare of others. To the various Delawareans and others who have written me during the past few days about the seizure of American troops by the Russians, I want to assure them I have transmitted their views to the Secretary of State as a reflection of the sentiment which is undoubtedly also felt by millions of Americans in every state of the Union.

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 04:56]