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This Week In Congress Radio Address: Reflections on U.S. Foreign Aid Program, 1956 June 7  
Speaker: Senator J. Allen Frear  
Transcribed by: David Cardillo

[00:00]

Announcer: The Week in Congress, recorded on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 1956.

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. As many Delawareans know, I have, on several occasions, through the medium of these weekly statements, and at various public meetings endeavored to draw attention to the question of this country's foreign aid program and its significance to the nation as a whole. Because the matter is current in the Congress, it seems desirable to reflect further on the issue in light of world events as they exist at the moment. You will recall that earlier this year, the President requested of Congress the sum of about five billion dollars in foreign aid for the new fiscal year and at the same time asked for authority to dispense it as the administration saw fit. And further to commit this nation to additional foreign aid for a period of ten years in the future. These new funds would be in addition to the more than fifty billion dollars expended for this program since the end of World War II. Certainly, therefore, the United States cannot be considered stingy to our friends abroad. We all know that a tremendous portion of our vast aid has been officially used to such programs as the Marco Plan (phonetic [02:01]), which was desperately needed to restore the war-shattered economy of Western Europe. But it should be noted that Europe has achieved a remarkable economic recovery and is now, generally, a thriving area. (Unintelligible [02:19]) every person who has visited the continent recently will testify to that statement. It may be well to further observe that the foreign aid ideal was conceived as a temporary measure until our allies could revive their own business and industrial facilities. Naturally, our help was intended to supplement the efforts of these nations themselves. Now, however, it seems prudent to take a new and more realistic look at the foreign aid picture and perhaps to decide whether it is really intended as a stop-gap measure or a perpetual grant out of the economic lifeblood of the United States. The days in which we live are ones of swift and unusual change. Even the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is being overhauled and its functions broadened from a purely military mission to one embracing both military and economic aspects. In this respect, it should be noted that France, diverting many of her NATO troops to North Africa and Germany, is alarmingly slow in providing the division's promise of its contribution.

The question follows, then, as to how effective a force the NATO group really is after receiving so much generous support from this side of the Atlantic. We might well consider the wisdom of dispensing additional help to Yugoslavia now that Marshall Tito seems to have made up with the leaders in the Kremlin. There are, of course, many more aspects of this entire question which would bear close and accurate study if we in the Congress are to properly exercise our responsibility as the representatives of the peoples' interests. In general, I have supported the principle of foreign aid. But at the present time, and in light of existing circumstances, I believe it most desirable to reappraise the whole question of continuing these tremendous grants abroad, not only for this year, but for the next ten years in the future. For instance, we might well consider making loans instead of outright gifts as a future policy. It is quite possible that Congress will see fit to reduce the President's request for another five billion dollars until answers to some of these perplexing questions are answered. [05:07] Unless we do require a reassessment of the program now, it seems to me that we might just as well resign ourselves to the fact that foreign aid will never end, but instead will remain as one more heavy demand on the already burdened government. I want to emphasize that these views in the future conduct of our foreign aid program are not exclusively my own. Rather, they reflect the judgment of an increasing number of Delawareans who realize that our own economic system cannot indefinitely tolerate the strain of billions of dollars in foreign grants each year without causing serious repercussions on our own welfare.

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 06:16]