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This Week In Congress Radio Address: Economy In Latin America, 1959 June 19

Speaker: Senator J. Allen Frear

Transcribed by: David Cardillo

[00:00]

Mr. Kelly: From Washington, DC, 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. From time to time, I've felt it necessary and desirable to comment on political and economic conditions in South America. Part of this interest stems from visits to that area which I have made as an official representative of the Banking and Currency Committee as well as through private trips both before and since taking office as a senator. The close proximity of what may generally be described as the lands below our border makes them of strategic importance for many reasons. Of most significance, perhaps, are the military considerations involved, for the presence of unfriendly governments in any of those countries poses a potential threat, especially if Communist influence is involved, as has been charged from time to time in recent months and years. In the backwash of the Cuban revolution, disturbing situations have arisen in both Nicaragua and more currently in Argentina. Reports of more or less regular internal disturbances have come from Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Panama. While changes in government under rather emotional circumstances are not unusual in Latin America, they are a vital concern if motivated by foreign elements which are basically opposed to the government of the United States. To be more specific, Communist footholds in any of the republics below the border must be looked upon by this country with as much or more concern as similar developments in Europe or Asia. Failure to recognize danger signals of this type would be foolhardy on the part of the American people. In the event of conflict, any government of Latin America sympathetic to the enemies of the United States could vastly increase the dangers to our southern flanks. For this reason, United States military authorities endeavor to watch carefully these vital approaches to our mainland. The conditions which may contribute to the overthrow of governments friendly to this country must be met and solved satisfactorily. Broader development of our economic and social ties with our sister republics is clearly essential. While trade between the United States and Latin America is fairly substantial, I am confident that much more could be done to improve this exchange. Implementation of the so-called Good Neighbor Policy was never more necessary than in these days when nationalism is rising throughout the world and when all people are seeking a better standard of living. Historically, many Latin American countries lack a middle class, which is the influential and balancing force in

any free society. As it has developed in so many Latin American countries, the progress of civilization has brought about an upper class of citizens at one extreme and a very low and often poverty-stricken class at the other. In attempting to conduct diplomatic relations, as well as commercial negotiations with countries so constituted, our government and some of our business people are often confronted with great difficulties. We should not, of course, interfere with the internal affairs of other nations. To do so would arouse the type of criticism that has been so often directed at the communists. The future of the United States is closely bound to the people of Central and South America. A sincere, enlightened, and dedicated attitude in the conduct of our private business activities and in the administration of governmental responsibilities is clearly indicated if we are to pursue and carry out a more effective policy toward Latin America. I know that more can be done along these lines through the leadership of our own nation, and I should like to see us take more definite and firmer steps in that direction.

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 05:30]**