

WSM BROADCAST  
April 22, 1945

Good Morning Friends:

Everybody in Washington has been watching President Truman and most everyone seems to be pulling for him to make good. There is general concensus that he has made a remarkably good start. He came before Congress last Monday, only one day after former President Roosevelt had been buried, and made a speech not only to Congress but to the American people. It was not a speech of high flown oratory nor of clever phrases. It was a simple, forthright statement which radiated assurances to the people that despite our great loss, America would continue to press forward not only against our enemies but in the objectives of peace both internationally and domestic.

The President asked for cooperation of the people and the Congress. His humble and sincere manner had a wide appeal. The reaction to the speech was good. *I heard no one acclaim it as* ~~No one said it was~~ a great message filled with brilliance and inspiration

but it was almost unanimously acclaimed as a sound, forthright, ~~statement~~

typically American. *statement of a new president upon whom a very great responsibility had been thrust.*

The new President's speech before Congress, however, was not ~~the~~ <sup>his</sup> most difficult task of the ~~people~~ past week. Speaking to Congress, he could prepare his message and no questions were asked of him. The most severe task which the President has weathered <sup>I was</sup> ~~is~~ his first press conference. There over 300 newspaper men pressed around his desk and asked <sup>ing</sup> him one question after another. ~~and~~ <sup>completely</sup> the new President had to be upon his own as well as on his toes. He came through with flying colors. Those who were apprehensive <sup>about</sup> ~~in~~ the ordeal of his press relations breathed a sigh of relief.

The new President has lost no time in tackling problems of great momentum - holding conferences with military leaders, conferences with foreign diplomats and with legislative leaders on problems of the home front. He has been a very busy man, indeed, and reportedly arrives at the office at a much earlier hour than <sup>has been</sup> customary at the White House.

By the end of this week many observers have sort of leaned back in their chairs, breathing a sigh of relief, because President Truman appears to have taken the reins of his office firmly in his hands and is proceeding humbly, yes, but with confidence and ~~for~~ forthrightness.

One of the interesting side lights to President Truman's address to Congress was the presence of Britain's Foreign Minister, the Honorable Anthony Edenn. After the President had returned to the Chamber and the diplomats started to file out, the House gave a cheer to Mr. Edenn which he acknowledged with a graceful smile and bow. Mr. Edenn conferred during the week with President Truman, Secretary Stettinius, and he journeyed out to the hospital to confer with former Secretary of State, Cordell Hull. Secretary Hull is not yet able to go to the San Francisco conference but he is undoubtedly playing a major part as a delegate by not only conferring with <sup>such</sup> distinguished delegates as Mr. Eden, but he is also in close touch with Secretary Stettinius, Senator Vandenberg, and Sen. Connally and other delegates to the San Francisco parley. It may be that before the conference is over, Secretary Hull will be able to attend at least a part of the conference.

The importance of this conference would be hard to over estimate.

The House Ways and Means Committee began consideration of a bill to extend the reciprocal Trade Agreement program and to give to the Administration power to make further adjustments in tariff rates. Secretary Hull, who was the father of the Reciprocal Trade program, sent a statement to the Committee pleading for approval of the bill. ~~Secretary Stettinius and other~~ <sup>WV</sup> members of the staff of the State Department have appeared as witnesses. <sup>arguing approval. There will</sup> ~~In~~ <sup>be a fight on the bill.</sup> this early stage of the battle. Both sides are making optimistic claims.

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## A Harmful Approach

The United States has had more than ten years of experience with the reciprocal trade agreements program. A record has been made, and, on the whole, it has been a good one. Consequently, it is somewhat surprising to see Republican members of the Ways and Means Committee launching what appears to be a drive for abandonment of the entire program.

It had been expected that there would be controversy over the request by the administration for authority to effect a further 50 per cent reduction, or a total cut of 75 per cent in some of the rates fixed in the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act. The administration asked for this power on the ground that, in the case of some commodities, it had used up its margin of bargaining power under the original grant of authority to reduce rates by 50 per cent.

Perhaps it can be shown in the hearings now under way that it would be unwise to open the door to this additional reduction of American tariff walls. But even if this showing can be made, and it has not been made as yet, that would be no ground at all for scrapping the trade agreements program in its entirety. It is a matter of record that our exports to countries

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