Good Morning, Friends:

The big news of the week in Washington was the reconvening of Congress and the President's State of the Union Message. The Congress quietly went through the parliamentary routine of reconvening, but the President's address the next day lit the torch of flaming political controversy which will burn fiercely until the American people make their choice at the polls next November.

With the election of a President and a new Congress in the offing, it would be expecting far too much of men and political parties who live in a practical, striving world to be immune from partisan political considerations.

There is so much politics now, however, that I, for one, find myself feeling a little depressed because of it. With peace insecure, with the danger of another awful war in the making, with strife and hate and suspicion and distrust, and suffering rampant in the world, we in Congress find ourselves in the fortress of whirling political strife and passions. But to reel against it would produce no more worthwhile results than the proverbial act of butting one's head against a brick wall.

The people do elect their public officials. Of that fact we can be proud, and despite the multitudinous shortcomings of partisan politics, many of the woes of the world's mankind would, I believe, vanish if all peoples everywhere could with intelligence and freedom choose their own public officials and give popular direction to the course of their destiny. So, upon second thought, instead of complaining about our elective process, let us rejoice in the privilege, but while doing so, resolve to keep partisanship on the highest possible plane and by all means let it stop at the water's edge.
As I sat in the joint session of Congress, I observed that in that chamber was present just about the whole policy making personnel of the United States government. One person and one person alone in that assemblage seemed to me to stand above partisan politics. It wasn't the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Hon. Joseph W. Martin, because even though he presides over the proceedings of the Nation's House of Representatives, he, nevertheless, holds that position by the choice of one of the two principal parties and is, indeed, one of the leaders of his party in Congress.

He wasn't a Member of the Senate either because there, too, sides have been chosen, lines have been drawn and each member of the Senate is marked as a Democrat or a Republican.

It wasn't the President because though he is the Chief of State, he is expected to be the democratic candidate for President. And no matter in what high terms his annual message on the State of the Union in an election year might be couched, his every utterance would necessarily have a partisan interpretation.

As I looked about and studied the assemblage, the one figure that seemed to me to stand apart was one who has never been identified as either a Republican or a Democrat; a great man who has devoted his life to the fortunes of his country first as a military leader, in which politics in the usual sense is minimised, and now as Secretary of State, the Honorable George C. Marshall. In this fact, I find encouragement. — Encouragement to believe and hope that despite the partisan politics, contending that is inevitable throughout this year, we may yet be able to maintain the bare essentials of a bi-partisan foreign policy. The very fact that the European Recovery Program is properly known as the Marshall Plan improves its chances of approval by the Congress.
Encouraging as this is, it was about the only known partisan note of the week. No sooner had the President left the chamber than attacks upon his message began. "A political document," cried the Republicans in speech after speech. No Democrat arose on the Floor to deny that it was a political document.

The President's recommendation regarding taxes touched off the most heated charges. Twice last year the President vetoed Republican tax reduction bills. And each time he gave two principal reasons: One, that it was the wrong time to reduce taxes and governmental revenue what with our enormous public debt and the cost of veterans programs, national defense, and the many costs of government; and two, that the Republican bill provided the wrong kind of tax reduction. In his message last Wednesday, the President still maintained that governmental revenue should not be reduced, but that because of the terrific increase in the cost of living and the great increase in the profits of corporations and business, there should be a shifting of tax burdens. In submitting his recommendation as to how taxes should be revised or shifted, the President gave his political answer to the Republicans who have been shouting for tax relief so long and loud. In other words, the President said to them in effect, "Now if you are really sincere in wanting to give tax relief to people who really need it, here is the way you can do it and at the same time keep governmental revenue high enough to meet the requirements of government and make a payment on the national debt."

To do this the President proposed that a $40.00 cost of living credit be given to each individual taxpayer and to each dependant. Representative Knutson, the Republican spokesman on taxes, has repeatedly said that he wants to have an across-the-board, treat-everybody-alike, reduction. But he spoke in terms of
percentages. He started out by saying he wants to give everybody a 20 percent reduction in their taxes. However, the President gives his idea of how to give tax reduction in a way that will really treat everyone alike. — A $40.00 cost of living credit for each taxpayer and each one of his dependents. Of course, $40.00 wouldn't be much of a reduction to a man whose taxes were $10,000, but it would be quite a sizable reduction to the man who paid $100 taxes. Now, whether the President's program is good or bad, it was generally admitted around the Capitol that he had given an effective political answer to the matter of tax reduction.

Now, I think you and I know that the people who have been hurting most, the people who have been having to pinch tightest their pennies have been those with children to feed, clothe and educate on small income.

I have never thought that the exemption for a dependant was enough. In fact, I long ago discovered that there was something subversive to the male of the species in the constant spreading of that old adage that two can live cheaper than one. I think we men are going to have to rise up and smite that one down.

However, to you men who are suffering in your loneliness and counting your shekels, let me hasten to say that the blessings of a companion and a home are worth all it cost and far more. But don't you be fooled into thinking that two can live cheaper than one or that the exemptions provided in the income tax law for dependents is enough to compensate for the living costs of a family.

In this respect, I think the President's recommendations were sound. It means that a bachelor would have his taxes cut $40.00 while a man with a wife and child would have his taxes reduced $120.00. Now I can testify that is more than $80.00 per year difference and I find myself in agreement with the President's recommendation in this respect.
Generally speaking, I did not think the President's speech was too controversial. He stated broad objectives upon which both Democrats and Republicans should have little difficulty reaching agreement. It was largely upon matters of the pocketbook that opponents found cause for alarm. Senator Taft severely criticized the President's message in a nation-wide broadcast. He found faults in great length with not only the President's tax recommendations, but also with his recommendation of social improvement that would cost more money, and then, too, Senator Taft was quite critical of the President's renewed request for necessary governmental powers to control inflation.

Representative Knutson, Republican Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee to whom I have already made reference in this broadcast, was quoted as saying the President's address was political demagogy. I rather guess that by the time Mr. Knutson had cooled off and saw his statement in the papers, he regretted hurling such a charge at any President of the United States. Name calling serves no good purpose. It has just about gotten to the point around Congress that some people brand as demagogues all those with whom they disagree, just as some people try to brand all political opponents as communists. Name calling serves no good purpose anyway. Surely, we can find a more dignified way to make democracy work than to challenge the sincerity and patriotism of those with whom we disagree. A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and as for me, I concede to every American citizen, be he friend or foe, a good name, a sincere desire to do right, and patriotic devotion to his country unless and until there is definite evidence to the contrary.