

WSM

January 30, 1949

Good morning friends. Just as the lull comes after the storm, ~~we have this week in which~~ <sup>for the past week</sup> the headlines out of Washington have been scarce ~~or~~ remarkably calm. Congress, which had bided its time until after the Inauguration, has now settled down to work with legislative and appropriation committees meeting <sup>morning</sup> and afternoon<sup>s</sup> preparing bills for <sup>final</sup> legislative action. The <sup>House</sup> Labor Committee, for instance, held hearings during the week on a bill to increase <sup>the</sup> minimum wage <sup>of</sup> and the Fair Labor Standards Act from 40¢ an hour to ~~70¢~~ an hour and promises to have this bill reported to the House within a few days. Meanwhile the Truman Administration, particularly Secretary of Labor Tobin, has been busy composing differences and drafting the Administration's proposal on labor legislation. Reportedly the bill will propose the repeal of the Taft Hartley law and the reenactment of the Wagner Act with certain changes ~~for~~ some of which are calculated to be controversial. Secretary Tobin is expected to appear before the Senate Labor Committee tomorrow morning at ten o'clock to outline the Administration's proposals. Meanwhile the House Ways and Means Committee has been holding hearings on a bill to extend the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act for three years without the ham-stringing amendments <sup>put</sup> on last year by the 80<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Former Secretary of State Cordell Hull, now slowly recuperating from a serious illness which forced his retirement from the high office he held longer than any other American, avidly watches every development and is using his influence, which is still vast, with the Congress to bring about an unhampered three-year extension of the program for which he is more responsible than any other American and which has stood the test of time.

Indications are that after holding the necessary hearings the Ways and Means Committee will report the bill favorably and I feel certain that both the House and the Senate will enact it in due course.

One of the big jobs of Congress every year is to appropriate money for the various and wideflung operations of the Federal government. The House Appropriations Committee initiates all appropriation bills, ~~and~~ <sup>so</sup> to this Committee is assigned the tremendous job of making recommendations to the Congress on the amounts that ~~it~~ ~~it~~ ~~thinks~~ should be appropriated for everything the Government needs from sealing wax to air-craft carriers. Every item in the President's ~~budget~~ more than 40 billion dollar budget request must be acted upon by this Committee. The Committee is divided into nine distinct sub-committees, each ~~one~~ having given fields for study and recommendation. All nine of these sub-committees are now at work listening to testimony, pouring over figures, making decisions. On last Friday the Tennessee Valley Authority was called before one of these subcommittees to testify in behalf of the steam generating plant at New Johnsonville, Tennessee, for which the President has asked speedy enactment of ~~the~~ appropriation. Perhaps most of you will recall that this was a hotly contested issue in Congress last year and after it was turned down by the Congress it became a political issue in the Presidential campaign last fall.

The need for additional electricity in the TVA region is acute. The increased use and demand for electricity in that area <sup>has been</sup> ~~is~~ phenomenal. The demand is <sup>still</sup> ~~is~~ growing <sup>by leaps & bounds</sup> week after week in the home and the industries, shops and stores. <sup>more electricity is used.</sup>