

Feb. 2, 1941

Good Morning, Friends:

Consideration of the lease-lend bill having been completed by the House Foreign Affairs Committee, debate on the measure will begin in the House tomorrow with final passage by the House <sup>practically</sup> assured before Saturday night. Meanwhile the Senate committee continues its public hearings with several <sup>more</sup> witnesses, maybe Wendell Wilkie, to be heard. Many of the Republicans in Congress are bitter at Mr. Wilkie for his enthusiastic support of the legislation. One of the highest ranking Republicans in either branch of Congress said <sup>sarcastically</sup> during the week that Mr. Wilkie was getting ready to run next time on the democratic ticket.

The House Committee did a splendid job on the legislation. They gave it thorough consideration but did it expeditiously. Before the legislation is finally enacted, there will be much complaint of the slowness of the legislative process. That's the way of democracy. People <sup>about the argument</sup> have a right to argue and people have a right to complain. Bills are improved and the will of the people is discerned by the conflict of ideas in the "give and take" of debate. In this connection, it must be remembered that our Executive leaders did not make up their minds about what course should be pursued in a day or in a week, and certainly the Congress, which constitutes the voice of <sup>130 m Americans</sup> the people, can not lightly <sup>consider</sup> ~~treat~~ a subject so vitally <sup>as to</sup> affecting the security and peace of the entire nation. The Committee, in cooperation with the House leadership and the

President, leaned over backwards in amending the bill to meet some of the objections voiced to it. For instance, the Committee adopted an amendment which says that nothing in the bill shall be construed as granting authority to the President to use our Navy in convoying ships. Many members think that that amendment has no place in the bill, because nothing that Congress could write into this or any other bill would contravene the authority of the President derived from the constitution itself as Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy. The amendment can only serve to allay some fears that such authority would be granted by the bill and in that way it can but mislead many people. Nevertheless, since the committee in its studied judgment thinks that it is advisable from the standpoint of unity and harmony, most members will support it, though its inclusion is certainly <sup>considered</sup> questionable. This nation shouldn't tie <sup>a</sup> ~~its~~ hands or even a finger. <sup>behind it.</sup> Suppose that some situation which we can not foresee, and we certainly can not foresee all situations, should arise which would make it absolutely imperative that the President send units of the navy to convoy some given shipment to some given point, then if he had to do so, this amendment, though in no way preventing it, would, nevertheless, serve as an embarrassing deterrent.



Another amendment adopted by the committee provides that the President shall report to Congress on what action he takes under the authority of the bill. This is well and good. He should do this and should be required to do so. A third amendment provides that the powers granted to the President would automatically expire in 1943. This is also well and good. Powers granted during emergencies should revert to the people, the source of all <sup>governmental</sup> power. Thomas Jefferson advocated that all laws should expire every twenty years so that the people <sup>through</sup> ~~and~~ their representatives would have a free hand in renewing <sup>them</sup> or relegating them to history.

There was much demand that the President confer and advise with the Army Chief of Staff and the Naval Chief of Operations before transferring any military equipment becoming available under the bill. So, this amendment was written into the bill. But what of it? There is scarcely a day passing now when the President is not conferring with the heads of both <sup>the</sup> ~~our~~ army and navy. If, however, this will calm the opposition and bring a more unified support, then the amendment will <sup>certainly</sup> do no harm and may do some good.

Now that the Bill is before the House and consideration begins tomorrow, let us consider the most important phases of the bill. The world is in a tremendous upheaval. New developments, new plays of strategy come rapidly and even by our wisest can not be foreseen. <sup>told</sup> ~~seen~~ It is a stupendous world conflict. Its outcome will affect the course of mankind

for centuries to come. This bill gives this Nation, through its chosen leader, a stronger, a more flexible, and a more ready hand in playing this tragic game in which the liberty and freedom of mankind is at stake.

The bill authorizes the President to manufacture implements of war and to transfer them to any Nation, the defense of which he deems to be in

the interest of the defense of the United States. Since the war broke out, there have been 16 purchasing commissions placing orders <sup>helter-skelter with private firms</sup> in this

country. This bill would make the Government of the United States almost

the sole purchasing agent of war equipment, thus, <sup>unifying</sup> bringing through one

funnel the entire productive output of our industrial might and more

important yet, it gives this government control of the distribution

of this output, to which countries it should go <sup>how much</sup> and when. How will this

great power be used - this power so great as to stiffen or break the

resistance of nations? <sup>+ only time will tell.</sup> ~~to aggression?~~ Only heaven knows. Suppose that

Hitler was making a bold stroke to capture the Suez Canal by a land

invasion through Turkey and that Turkey, being poorly equipped, was

waivering on whether or not to give resistance. Under the authority

of this bill, the President could bolster their morale and encourage

them in their defense, if he deemed it to our own interest to do so,

by releasing to them material with which to defend themselves, provided,

of course, we are successful in producing enough <sup>to do so.</sup> ~~of it.~~



The primary aim of this bill is to promote our own defense by aiding Great Britain in her defense. But let us project ourselves into the realm of possibility and proceed upon the hypothesis that the British Isles shall have been subjugated. What of the other parts of the British Empire? - British South Africa, Australia, Canada, and the East Indies, Because the British Isles shall have been subjugated (isn't that an awful supposition, yet <sup>clearly</sup> not beyond the realm of possibility) - Because the British Isles have been subjugated, would we then cease to encourage the remaining parts of the Empire to resist. Would it not then be wise to place at the disposal of Canada, Australia, and the Malay States instrumentalities with which to defend themselves, thus <sup>promoting</sup> ~~defending our own selves~~ <sup>our own defense?</sup> ✓ Suppose that Brazil is put under pressure. Would we sit idly by, <sup>with</sup> our eyes blinded by the scales of narrow isolationism, and not encourage Brazil to resist and make available to her instrumentalities with which to do so. It is terrifying <sup>painful</sup> to project a discussion beyond the collapse of the British Isles, but, my friends, ✓ the leadership of our nation can not close its eyes to any possible <sup>ility</sup> ~~threat~~ to our security. "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D. C.

~~W~~  
The continued occurrence of strikes, labor trouble in the building of camps, <sup>the</sup> drafting of labor by Great Britain has caused increased pressure for a clarification of Labor Policy by the government. Rep. Vinson, ~~chair~~ chairman of the House Naval Affairs com has introduced a bill to prevent strikes on navy work. Many speeches have been made about workers having to pay high dues before they could work on camps being built to house soldiers at \$30 per month. "Why," it is repeatedly asked, should a man in a free country have to pay ~~some~~ <sup>any</sup> organization

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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
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or person  
for the privilege of working  
for his own country.

Of course, labor and labor  
organization has rights and  
these rights should and  
must be guarded, but labor  
organizations themselves will  
make the mistake of  
their lives if they try  
to get bigger than the  
government itself.

The nation must be tolerant  
and in times of emergency  
hysteria is liable to prevail.



The House passed its first regular appropriation bill Friday.

It was for the operation of the independent offices - the offices and commissions not included in the regular departments of the government and it totaled nearly a billion and a half *dollars*.

The Tennessee Valley Authority appropriation was included in the bill and very little fight was made on it. TVA's worth to the entire nation is now more fully appreciated in the face of the emergency. Due to a shortage of power for defense activity over the country, it may be necessary for the TVA to construct more dams and in this event their preliminary surveys are ready.

Only one cut was made in the entire appropriation bill on the floor and this was in the United States Housing Authority. There was an item of \$125,000 for publicity; some folks call it propaganda. This was cut to \$25,000. Another item called for \$150,000 for tenant relations.

When asked what this was to be used for, about all the "Housers" could say was that in these big projects they wanted to teach the tenants

proper relations. *and how to live together* In other words, teach people how to live in houses. *and perhaps employ high salaried technicians to instruct them in the fine art of borrowing a cup of sugar from the next door neighbor.* This was cut and should have been. When we need billions and billions *of*

*dollars*

for national defense, we shouldn't waste ~~money~~ money on such tommy-rot.