

WSM, January 23, 1944

Good Morning, Friends:

*Washington was thrilled at the boldness
+ initial success of another ^{ally} landing
in Italy, and hopes were high that
the city of Rome*

Both Houses of Congress got down to legislative business during
on Friday,
the past week. The Senate finally passed the tax bill which ^{was} ~~passed~~ ^{by} the
House last fall. The Senate, as did the House, virtually ignored President
Roosevelt's request for what he called a realistic tax bill. The President,
as you will remember, had ^{repeatedly} asked Congress to pass a bill to raise ten billion
dollars additional tax revenue. It has been estimated that the bill which
has now passed both the Senate and the House would raise ^{only} approximately
*which is far short of the president's request and far short
of what the country should pay in taxes while the
national income is the highest in our history.*
two billion. There are numerous differences, ~~however~~, in the bills ~~as it~~ *which*
passed the ~~two separate~~ houses of Congress, and it will, therefore, go
before a conference committee ^{of the two houses} ~~which~~ for the ironing out of differences.

Although the Administration went down to defeat in its request for
ten billion dollars additional revenue, the President did win a major
victory when the Senate, ~~last Friday~~, voted to retain virtually all of the
curbs against war profits. The Senate Finance Committee had approved
amendments which war agencies said would virtually destroy the Renegotiation
law. But a majority of the Senate would not accept these committee amendments
and as it now stands both the House and the Senate have agreed to continue
the Renegotiation Law. The Renegotiation Law means, simply, that if the War
~~Department~~ or Navy Department finds that a war contractor has made excessive

profits on a war contract, they ^{can} reopen the contract and renegotiate the ^{amount to} ~~matter~~
he paid to the contractor.

In ordinary times, this would be a wrong procedure, but we must remember that

when we were attacked at Pearl Harbor, it became urgently necessary to

produce war goods, to make guns, and ammunition, to manufacture planes and ships, to build plants. ^{Training camps} In other words, we had to get ready. ^{That was first - and something else second.} Contracts had to be made, or rather work had to be started over night. It was humanly impossible to know exactly what it would cost to produce an anti-aircraft gun in mass production. But we couldn't wait for the guns until this could be ^{figured out.} ~~determined~~. And, of course, the only way it could be actually determined ~~was~~ would be after factories were in production. Mistakes were made. They were inevitable, and under the conditions under which many of these contracts were made, it was little more than a guess ^{at best,} what the cost would be. So, now ^{that many in many cases estimates in contracts were too high,} that we are in production, it develops that a lot of people have made entirely too much money out of war contracts. So, under the Renegotiation law, the contracts can be reopened and a fairer and sounder basis for compensation fixed. Why isn't this right? Why isn't it just? Entirely too many people are making too much profit out of the war, anyway. And it was a signal victory for justice and right that the Senate voted to continue the Renegotiation law. ^{It ought to be tightened rather than relaxed.}

While the Senate was considering ^{the tax} a measure to raise money, the House of Representatives was considering a bill to authorize the appropriation of our part ^{called there} in the United Nations Program of Relief and Rehabilitation of Occupied Countries. There were two full days of debate on this measure in the House, last Thursday and Friday, and the bill will be voted upon tomorrow.

All of the United Nations have agreed to pool their efforts for relief and rehabilitation instead of going at it single-handedly and ~~in a haphazard way~~ more or less haphazardly as was done following World War I. The nations have agreed that the fairest way to calculate the amount of money each nation should contribute is to base it upon National income. So, each one of the united nations is supposed to contribute one per cent of its national income. For us, this means considerably more than a billion dollars.

Ours will be the largest contribution, because our national income far exceeds that of any other nation. *This is a lot of money - about \$10 for every man, woman & child in the U.S. - Just one more cost of war - It is another reminder that*

It is worthy to note that this understanding between the united nations for post-war collaboration and coöperation in the field of relief and rehabilitation is drawn up in the form of an agreement, rather than as a treaty. Should it have been drawn in the form of a treaty, it would have required ratification in the Senate by a two-thirds majority. But, as an agreement, it requires only ordinary majorities of both the House and the Senate. *It is better than the cost of a cooperative peace after this war ends; it will be infinitely less than the cost of war*

~~It is better than the cost of a cooperative peace after this war ends; it will be infinitely less than the cost of war~~ *I think this seems* preferable because ~~it allows the matter to be subject~~

to majority will. And that's how we should operate in this country. Let the majority rule. ~~In such an important matter as this, why should we give one third of only one house of Congress a veto power?~~

Earlier in the week, the House passed the soldier's mustering-out pay bill. There was a good deal of fighting ~~back and forth~~ back and forth about how much mustering-out pay each soldier should get. But when it came to

the final vote on passage of ~~the mustering out pay bill~~, it passed unanimously.

The bill provides a top muster-out pay of \$300 for soldiers who have been in the service more than 60 days and \$100 for those who have been in service for less than 60 days. This muster-out pay, which will be given at the time they are ^{honorably} discharged, should not be confused with adjusted compensation which will come later.

Next week, the House will consider another question relating to soldiers - the question of permitting soldiers to vote. ~~I reported to you some two weeks ago that returning Congressmen seemed to be stronger in their support of legislation providing uniform Federal machinery to handle the~~

~~raising the~~ ^{Samuel} permit soldiers to vote. But ^{southern} Democrats, largely from ~~the~~ ^{will providing federal machinery} poll tax states, joined with Republican members to kill ~~this kind of legis-~~

^{to handle soldier voting} ~~lation~~ in the House Committee on Elections and reported out a bill leaving the matter entirely to the States. ~~It's easy to understand.~~ This bill, ~~though,~~

will ^{be put to} ~~get its~~ test in the House during the coming week. There is a lot of sentiment for uniform Federal machinery. But, on the other hand, a large

number of Democrats ^{and} ~~from poll tax states and a large number of~~ Republicans

are determined that the soldier's vote shall be left to the individual

states. The Secretary of War and the Secretary of Navy have said it would

be impossible for them to provide opportunities for the soldiers to vote

according to 48 different State laws, regulations, and lists of candidates.

It seems ~~to me~~ that the only practical way ~~that~~ the soldiers can have a

→ objections to the federal govt. handling the problem
come from three sources (1) those who sincerely believe
that the federal govt has no right and cannot constitutionally
take a hand in elections, claiming it to be exclusively a state
problem + right (2) those who fear that it might be the
intering wedge for federal guarantee of the privilege of
voting to every citizen ~~irrespective of race~~ ^{irrespective of race} ~~or other arbitrary requirements~~ ^{or other arbitrary requirements}. (3) those who think the soldier
vote might be mishandled by the administration or otherwise ~~not~~ ^{be favorable to their side}. Anyway, it will be thrashed out. ~~Recognizing this, the~~
vote is for the Federal Government to handle the problem. ~~I will discuss~~

Senate is trying to work out a compromise that will
~~this question more thoroughly, perhaps next Sunday.~~
~~be acceptable to both sides.~~

The House Military Affairs Committee voted to pigeon-hole temporarily
a National Service Bill which was recommended by the President in his
annual message. But the Senate Military Affairs Committee opened hearings
and Secretary of War Stimson, ~~who more than anyone else is qualified to~~
~~speak in the name of the members of our armed forces,~~ made a great state-
ment in support of the bill. He said the National Service Act was the only
way to provide any equality of service, ~~and sacrifice~~. He urged adoption of
a National Service Act on the grounds that it would stop strikes, that it
would provide equality of service, that it would hasten the end of the
war and be very helpful in the problem of post-war transition. Now, ~~as I said~~

if it is right and fair and necessary for the United States Government to
take millions of men from all walks of life and ~~put them in foxholes~~ ^{send them to} on the
battle fronts of the world, ^{there, equally} it is ~~just~~ as fair, just as right, and just
as necessary for the United States government to have the power to make
those who stay at home work when necessary to give the fighting men what
they need to protect themselves and to win the war for our country.