

July 13, 1947  
WSM

Good Morning Friends:

Congress is rushing pell mell toward adjournment. Somebody has suggested that the closing days of a Congress or a legislature should be abolished. That is an oblique way of saying that there is so much rush to pass bills in the closing days that inadequate consideration is given to the measures. That is true, but that is only part of the story.

Bills of doubtful merit frequently lag behind and are acted upon <sup>at the last</sup> in rush order. But human nature can not be outlawed, nor abolished, at least ~~not~~ by Congress.

Beginning tomorrow, the Congress faces a week of feverish activity with a large number of appropriation bills awaiting final action and a full calendar of legislative bills. During the past week, Congress has dealt with a variety of questions, ranging from passage of a warmed over tax cut bill, to succession to the presidency, and conducting an investigation <sup>of</sup> ~~against~~ James Cecil Petrillo, that seemingly indomitable czar of the Musicians Union, who has <sup>such</sup> great propensity for getting into people's hair.

The Republican party took the <sup>ir</sup> defeat on the tax cut bill hard, and after smarting <sup>under</sup> ~~over~~ the <sup>sting</sup> for a few days, decided that they would try again, and, therefore, Congressman Knudson, the Republican leader on ~~the~~ tax policy, reintroduced the same bill, with only a change in date, which the President had been sustained in vetoing <sup>this time</sup>. There wasn't too much of a fight on the bill! Most fellows had their <sup>debated +</sup> mind made up. We had debated and scrapped over it for weeks, and like

*of Congress*

hash or <sup>other</sup> warmed over dishes, the men folks just couldn't wax very enthusiastic over it. The bill, however, received a few more votes than when it first passed the Congress. The bill would cut the government's revenue next year four and one half billion dollars. Oddly enough, it was only on the previous day that Congress passed unanimously a bill to pay terminal leave to veterans in cash. This is only a matter of simple justice. The officers were paid in cash and the enlisted men are entitled to just as good treatment. No one in the House was opposed to this. As a matter of fact, the House passed a bill last year providing for payment in cash. The point that I am trying to make is that when it comes to spending money, the Congress voted unanimously to spend two billion dollars one day, and then on the very next day, voted to cut off four and one half billion dollars in revenue. This reminds me of some advise that an old member ~~fr~~iciously gave me when I first came to Congress. He patted me on the back and said, "Well, son, you come here a young man, and if you will just vote for all appropriations and against all taxes, I predict for you a long and successful career." <sup>Well,</sup> This old gentleman was speaking to me in all good humor, but it ~~is~~ surprising how many members of Congress proceed upon that theory. They are very ready to vote to give the people what they want--an agricultural program that costs money, an army and a navy that costs money, a veterans program that costs money, flood control, navigation, roads, hospitals, ~~federal courts~~ in fact, they vote for all appropriations. But when it comes to levying taxes to

raise the revenue with which to do it, then they leave that job to somebody else.

America's back is strong and broad, and she can carry a few such demagogues and hypocritical public servants, but if all the Congress ~~were~~ were like that, and the President, too, then we would really be on the rocks.

Of course, everyone would like to have his taxes reduced----I would, I dare say you would, and everybody else. Undoubtedly most of us need tax reduction; therefore, it is <sup>an</sup> ~~an~~ unpleasant thing for a member of Congress,

who must go back to the people for their endorsement, to vote against ~~giving to the people~~ a reduction in ~~the~~ taxes. ~~But, it is, in my opinion,~~ <sup>the question is</sup> ~~which comes first - the welfare of the~~ ~~in the best interest of our country not to do so at this time~~ ~~country or an equivalent~~ ~~popularity for the next election.~~

A gentleman wrote to me during the week urging me to vote to reduce his taxes. He said, "While the war was on I paid my taxes with a smile.

Now, I want them reduced." Well, now that would be a very good point if the war had been paid for, but we didn't half pay for the war as we

fought it. As a matter of fact, we <sup>would</sup> ~~would~~ <sup>not</sup> have ~~won~~ won the war on a <sup>had to</sup> pay as you go basis. so we ~~would~~ incur a war debt. Now, what are we

going to do with it? <sup>says he</sup> laugh it off simply because some one can't pay his taxes with a smile any more? We dare not ignore our public debt. For

to do so might shatter the very foundations of every material value we have. You and I know that our paper money, our bank ~~deposits~~, our bonds ~~and~~ our notes would be worthless if the government should go <sup>current budget</sup> defunct.

Then there is the question of <sup>current budget</sup> expenditures. How are we going to <sup>it</sup> pay terminal leave <sup>bonds</sup> bills, ~~plus~~ pensions to the disabled, how are we

how are we going to pay old age pensions to the people who are in the evening of their lives and in need of aid. How are we going to run our army and navy, how are we going to run the government, in fact, without revenue? It just can't be done. So somebody has to vote for taxes in order to make the government operate.

Someone says, yes, but reduce government expenditures. Well, government expenditures can be reduced and should be reduced, but it is easy to be fooled about that. The great bulk of government expenditures go for things that can not be very well reduced. For instance, interest on the public debt; no one dares suggest that we stop paying <sup>interest</sup> on our government ~~lands~~ ~~policy~~; national defence; no one dares suggest that we abolish our army and navy ~~program~~; the veterans program. Of course, there is no answer to these arguments except the cogency of the advice which the old gentleman gave me--vote for all the appropriations ~~and projects~~, but vote against all taxes. But I have ~~always~~ <sup>always</sup> thought that ~~was an unfair indictment of the people~~ true, most ~~of us are selfish~~ but on the other hand, I firmly believe that ~~most people want Congress to do what is best for the country~~ The time may come, and I hope it will, when some of ~~the~~ tax burdens

can be eased. But, in all candor, I must say that ~~I have~~ I have said before, that even if it was now time, even if it was sound ~~policy~~ now to reduce taxes, I would not vote <sup>for</sup> the Knudson Bill because it is the wrong way to reduce them. It is grossly unfair, unsound, and unequitable.

<sup>slightly</sup> After the House passed the Bill, President Truman stated to a press conference that when it came to him, he would again veto it. This <sup>there, too,</sup> precipitated some bitter debate in the Senate, ~~by~~ the majority of Republican

senators, and a few senators, who are listed in the Congressional Directory as Democrats, are determined to repass the tax bill.

So, during the coming week, we are likely to vote still another time. ~~This will be~~ the fourth time, ~~on~~ on the Knudson Tax Bill when we vote on ~~whether or not~~ over-ride<sup>up</sup> the President's veto. The indications are that this time the House will over-ride it, but in the Senate, the vote promises to be very close. ~~But~~ At the time I am making this broadcast, the indications are that the veto will be sustained by perhaps<sup>one or</sup> two votes.

When I talk about this tax reduction bill, one question always comes into my mind, and that is, unless we can pay something on ~~our~~ <sup>our</sup> debt now, when can we?

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American doctrine to place in line for the Presidency men who are chosen by the people and therefore, must of necessity be close to the people. True, it is that the Speaker of the House of Representatives is only elected to Congress by the people of one Congressional District but the Representatives of all the people choose him above all others as their presiding officer and vest in him their highest privileges. True, in a very real and true sense, the Speaker of the House of Representatives is a product of our elective and representative system and right, I think, it is that he should follow the Vice-President in line of succession.

According to this bill, the next in line of succession would be the Speaker Pro Tempore, or in other words, the Senator who is chosen by all the Senators to preside over the Senate in the absence of a Vice-President.

President Truman was roundly ~~praised~~ praised by Representative Mitchner of Michigan for his broadmindedness and non-partisanship in continuing to support and recommend this change despite the fact that a member of the opposition party was now Speaker.

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Congress is off on another investigation of James Caesar Petrillo and the little dictator shocked a Congressional Committee by threatening to prohibit the making of phonograph records and ~~prohibiting~~ radio network broadcasting of music. In a moment of mellowness and concession, he did however, agree to consider allowing high school bands to broadcast.

This fellow is exasperating to us all. You and I know that such power is unconscionable. The first question is, "How did he get it?"

Well, he must be supported by the members of his union; and the reason why the members of the musician's union support him can perhaps be found in the fact that only about one-third of the union membership of 138,000 have steady jobs. In other words, dictator Petrillo's strong arm tactics are explainable only on the basis of what so-called canned music means to live musicians. As one union member put it, "It is unfair to use my talents day after day and only pay me once."

They fear the juke box, sound films, record players and radio. This fear of technological advancement and the unemployment resulting from it is not a new story. The buggy manufacturers feared the competition of automobiles and the makers of coal oil lamps <sup>+ lamp wicks</sup> ~~wax~~ envisaged a curtailment of their industry in the coming of electricity.

So, James Caesar Petrillo has seized upon this fear and has organized a tight union by which he has exercised almost an absolute veto as to what musicians should make records for the recording companies and as to who shall play music on radio programs and ~~exp~~ under what conditions.

The next question is, "What to do?" Well, society can not permit any man to stand <sup>w</sup>athart the path of progress. James C. Petrillo and all others of his ilk must be put in his place.