

WSM, June 5, 1949
Rep. Albert Gore

Good Morning, Friends:

The three principal developments and decisions in Washington during the week have been, (one) the investigation of the Atomic Energy Commission and its Chairman, Mr. Lilienthal, (two) the decision of President Truman and Senate leaders to consider a new labor bill ahead of ratification of the North Atlantic Pact, (three) House passage of a veterans pension bill.

The Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy has been going full blast in its investigation of the charges of incredible mismanagement made by Senator Hickenlooper against Mr. David E. Lilienthal, Chairman of the Commission. The general impression in Washington is that Senator Hickenlooper ^{thus far} has failed ^{to} substantiate the dramatic charges that he has made and I have heard some remark that before it is over Senator Hickenlooper will be in more serious political trouble than Mr. Lilienthal.

On last Thursday, the Atomic Energy Commission reported to the Committee ~~that~~ the discovery of the container which originally contained the small amount of Uranium U-235 that was lost. The recovery of the container from a dump pile in Chicago was made in the presence of FBI agents. This recovery plus the fact that all of the lost or misplaced Uranium U-235 has been recovered ~~except~~ a small fraction of an ounce seems to eliminate the possibility of any subversive activity or theft in the matter. The question of carelessness or negligence and by whom is still unresolved and still open to criticism. ^{whole cons.} Some people are inclined to deplore the investigation.

As for me, I deplore any flagrant and unsupportable charges either against the program or the commissioners. ^{and the tendency of all cons.} But I do not share the opinion of those investigations toward blatanay, But

The investigation itself, if careful, conclusions are reached,

who deplore the investigation. I think it may serve very good purposes.

For one thing, it may serve to give to the public more information about the

Atomic Energy program. Having studied this program in detail myself, as a

Member of the Appropriations Committee, I know that this ~~program~~ is so

immense and so vitally important not only to the peace of the world, but

eventually to our ^{individual} ^{lives} ~~lives~~ that it would be in the public interest ~~for~~ ^{to have} more

widespread knowledge of atomic energy and the vast program underway.

For another thing, this investigation will very probably result in

the exercise of more diligent care on the part of the Commission and the

people employed in atomic energy. And thirdly, there is always the possibility

that there may exist and that there may be brought to light by the investigation

something ^{minuscule} ~~direly~~ ^{minuscule} ~~enimacable~~ to the public interest. ~~The difficulty of Congressional~~

~~The Com. & the people should know about it.~~ ^{If such should exist}
~~investigation, however, is that they always tend toward extremes and often~~
~~On the other hand, if all as well with this~~
~~reach the end of ridiculous blatancy.~~ ^{then the people are entitled}
~~important undertaking, then the people are entitled~~
~~to and will welcome such reassurances.~~

The policy leaders of the United States Senate met with President

Truman and later announced the decision to take up repeal of the Taft-Hartley

Act before considering ratification of the North Atlantic Pact. The real

reason for this action appears to me to be the pressure of Democratic Party

leaders and labor leaders to get on with consideration of a new labor bill.

An additional reason was offered and that was that consideration of the Pact at

this particular time might prove embarrassing to Secretary ^{of State Dean} ~~Atcheson~~ in the

Paris conference rather than helpful because of ~~the~~ speeches and possible

filibuster tactics of the opposition in the Senate to ratification of the treaty.

There is undoubtedly some merit in this contention but despite this,
^{including the great Rep. Sen. Arthur Vining}

I am one of those who think that ratification of the North Atlantic Pact is

of such overweening importance to the peace of the United States and the world that we should take the risk of whatever tactics the opposition might employ and proceed with ratification forthwith. True, modification of the Taft-Hartley law is important and it is generally recognized as fair and but desirable; ~~but~~ this great collective effort to preserve world peace entered into by so many nations of the North Atlantic Community is such an historic and vital step in the development of world peace that I think it should be placed ahead of all domestic legislation. Nevertheless, the decision of the procedure in the Senate is decided by the Senators and I have nothing to do with it although you and I can have our opinion about the wisdom of some of their decisions.

Well, the House of Representatives finally passed a veterans pension bill. You will undoubtedly recall that a few weeks ago the House engaged in a furious fight over the Rankin pension bill. It was charged then that the committee ^{had not seen} ~~gave~~ inadequate consideration to the bill, that the bill was unfair and unsound. Of course, there were those who defended the bill, but, in the end, after three days of wrangling and adoption of amendments that ~~already~~ ^{already} ~~had~~ only added to the confusion, the bill was recommitted to the House Committee on Veterans Affairs for further study. The Committee went to work and gave thorough consideration to the subject and carefully prepared and reported out a bill.

I am fortunate, pleased and honored to have with me on this program this morning a distinguished Member of ~~this~~ this committee who took a leading part in the preparation and passage of this important bill. He is one of my Tennessee colleagues, Representative Joe Evins, who ^{of} represents

the fifth Tennessee Congressional District. Joe and I are neighbors in Tennessee living in adjoining counties and we have been personal friends for a long while. So you see, it is a source of personal pleasure and pride for me to see this young man doing so well in Congress. Mr. Evins was called upon to make the principal speech in support of the bill and now I am going to ask Mr. Evins some questions and if you will excuse me, I will just call him Joe.

COUNTIES:
BRAZOS ELLIS
FREESTONE HILL
LEON LIMESTONE
NAVARRO ROBERTSON

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

June 1, 1949

My dear Colleague:

The Chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee will call up the veteran pension bill, H.R. 4617, today and it is my thought that you might wish to be apprised of the present provisions for non-service-connected disability pensions and the changes in H.R. 4617.

PRESENT PROVISIONS FOR NON-SERVICE-CONNECTED PENSIONS (World War I and II):

55 years of age (60% disabled), pension per month - \$60.00
60 years of age (50% disabled), pension per month - \$60.00
65 years of age (10% disabled), pension per month - \$72.00

Above rates payable when veteran is unemployable and without dependents earns less than \$1000 per year, or with dependents less than \$2500.

Cost of program for 1950 (V.A. estimates) --- \$134,300,000
Cost of this program through year 2000 ----- \$35,000,000,000

PROPOSED CHANGES TO NON-SERVICE-CONNECTED PENSION PROGRAM:

H.R. 4617 writes into law the above Veterans Administration regulations and liberalizes these benefits as follows:

- (1) Veteran at age 65 is presumed totally and permanently disabled (physical examination not required).
- (2) Income limitation for veteran without dependents increased to \$1200.
- (3) Increase would also apply to payment of non-service connected death pension to a widow without a child or to a child of a World War I or II veteran.
- (4) Benefits payable to veteran in need of regular aid and attendance of another person ----- \$100 per month.

Estimated additional cost to present program - \$ 8,693,000,000
Cost of existing program through year 2000 - - \$35,000,000,000

TOTAL for non-service-connected pensions \$43,693,000,000
(Veterans Administration estimates)

The Committee adopted an amendment because of cost to retain the unemployability requirement. The V.A. estimated that to remove this requirement would add over \$1 billion per year or a total of \$65 billion in 50 years, making non-service-connected disability pensions cost approximately \$100 billion in this period. I hope you will support this Committee amendment.

Sincerely,

Olin E. Teague
OLIN E. TEAGUE, M. C.