

WSM

October 16, 1949

Good morning, friends:

When I talked to you last Sunday morning I thought that by
playing with my baby boy whom I hadn't
seen for nearly 2 mos/ this ^{morning} time I would be home in Tennessee but the Congress is still deadlocked and

wrangling over three problems: 1. The appropriation bill for the Air Forces;
2. the Farm Bill, and 3. the so-called DP Bill.

The house is insisting upon appropriating enough money for a 58 group air force. The Senate and the President are insisting that only enough money for a 48 group air force be appropriated. The issue is simple and the lines are tightly drawn. The sentiment in the House for increasing the size of our air force has been strong all along but since the announcement ~~of~~ ^{that} Russia ~~has~~ ^{now} ~~exploding~~ ^{the} atomic bomb, the sentiment in the House for a larger air force is almost unanimous. In fact, we had a vote upon the question last Monday and the vote was 305 to one. The news from Russia, however, seems to have ^{no} effect on the Senate position ⁱⁿ ~~on~~ this particular item. ~~As for me,~~ ^{not} ~~now~~

The Congress is tied in another knot on the farm bill - deadlocked between my bill which passed the House and the Anderson Bill approved by the Senate. Of course, I would be glad to see my bill become law, ^{and so far the House is standing firm behind it, but I realize} but I realize that either of these two bills are better than the Aiken Bill which will go into effect on January 1 unless Congress acts. I reached the conclusion, therefore, that first things ^{must} come first and the thing of first importance to the farmer in this situation is that Congress pass a farm bill. This is true whether it is my bill, Senator Anderson's bill or a compromise between the two. If Congress should adjourn without passing a farm bill I believe we would see an immediate decline in prices of farm commodities on the commodity exchanges as well as in the physical ~~exchange~~ markets. I wish I was in a position to indicate to you what kind of bill I expect to finally pass but right now the situation is so complicated and deadlocked that it is impossible to forecast what may be the result. But in ^{all} events, I do not think Congress should even consider adjourning without passing a farm bill, even if we have to stay here until Christmas Eve. If we fail to pass a farm bill it will not only be hurtful to the farmer but to the entire economy. Agriculture is so basic to our whole economy that anything that adversely affects agriculture will just as surely adversely affect the whole economy. For the last 100 years national income has been approximately 7 times our farm income. What reason do we have to think it would be otherwise now. Unless the farmer can buy the automobiles, the refrigerators and the million and one products of industry and labor then the industry of the country will lose a very basic market and, therefore, ^{will} have to curtail its operations. Yes, farm prosperity

is vital to national prosperity and we must have a farm bill - that is vital right now. Of course, in a deadlocked situation like that which prevails between the House and the Senate, somebody must give and the usual

thing is for both sides to give and take. Practically all legislation is the

result of compromise. ~~I am still hoping~~ for enactment of a good farm bill. There are differences ~~between~~ ⁱⁿ the ~~two~~ ^{two} bills and the ~~Anderson~~ ^{Jefferson} bill but those differences

The Senate has had a mean fight on the DP bill. ~~I~~

~~had a vote in the Senate, I would vote against passage of the bill as a result~~

^{while}

~~of information I received when recently in Europe, Over there I was told~~

by people who should know that the displaced persons camps are now filled

with people who are there not because they are ⁱⁿ really displaced persons or

political refugees but because they want to come to the United States. Senator

McCarran, Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, is in Europe now making

a study of the DP camp situation and he has wired back ^{similar} information to ^{the} Senate which bears out the impression I had about the camps.

The debate ~~on~~ on the bill has become ~~bitter~~ ^{bitter}.

world's

Well, one of the ~~three~~ most important and influential men - Prime Minister Nehru of India,

is a visitor in the United States and addressed the Congress last Thursday.