MY FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS:

Since I reported to you last week, there have been several developments here in Washington/which I believe will be in your best interests.

The Senate Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee, of which I am a member/and in which I asked for a resolution last week to investigate the increased price of gasoline, is now ready to go forward with this investigation. The Senate has approved an appropriation of $50,000 to carry out the probe on why the price of gasoline was increased by one cent per gallon.

The Committee is authorized to "investigate and make a complete study of any and all matters pertaining to the production for sale or use in interstate commerce" of petroleum products. In the resolution approved by the Senate, four purposes are stated for the investigation:

1. To prevent serious economic dislocation.
2. To provide for the proper conservation and most effective use of petroleum products.
3. To protect commerce among the States in petroleum products.
4. And to me the most important -- To protect the consumers of petroleum products from the burdens and harmful effects/brought about as a result of the operations of companies engaged in the petroleum business.
I believe this investigation will enable us to find out whether there have been any activities going on which are not in the public interest and whether there have been undue and unreasonable increases in the price of gasoline which you, as purchasers, have had to bear.

Another matter of importance to our people took place on Wednesday in a subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee. I refer to the efforts of Senator Hennings of Missouri, chairman of the subcommittee, to get approval of a motion to give a favorable report on some so-called civil rights bills. By a vote of 5 to 2, the subcommittee defeated this effort to report the bills to the full Judiciary Committee. The subcommittee then voted 4 to 3 against limiting hearings on the civil rights bills to two weeks duration.

The result of all this activity is that the chairman could schedule a time to begin the hearings, but he could not fix in advance a time when the subcommittee would have to stop and vote on the bills.

As of now, that is another victory on the side of real constitutional government and over the efforts of federal civil rights advocates to impose new laws on our people which would make it possible for the Federal Government to interfere with the rights of the States to police their own affairs. We will have to expect many more battles on this subject.
Since my last report, I am happy to say, progress has been made toward securing a permanent 500-bed hospital for Fort Jackson at Columbia. The Secretary of the Army has now endorsed the larger hospital and the Department of Defense has informed me that it will also approve the plan.

This means that an additional appropriation of $6,000,000 will be needed to add to the $5,000,000 which was appropriated last year for a smaller 250-bed hospital. I am quite hopeful that action will be taken by the Congress this year to provide the additional funds for this worthy project.

Veterans in the area will also be glad to learn of a program to renovate and improve the Veterans Administration Hospital near Columbia. The VA has informed me that it will submit a request to the Bureau of the Budget, and with approval of that agency, to the Congress for an appropriation of $510,000 to do the work. I shall work for passage of this measure, too.

Now I must say good-bye for another week. Thank you for listening and thanks to this station for making this broadcast time available. This is Strom Thurmond in Washington.

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