MY FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS:

This is one of the busiest times of the year for the Senate. During the past week I have been attending a great number of meetings of committees and subcommittees of which I am a member.

Since appearing with the group of special representatives of the State of South Carolina before the Senate Judiciary sub-committee in opposition to the so-called civil rights bills, I have been attending meetings of the Senate Commerce Committee on several subjects, including television service to the public.

Also during the past week several hearings have been held by the Railroad Retirement subcommittee of the Senate Labor Committee, of which I am also a member.

This Monday, March 18, as chairman of the Labor Committee's Veterans Affairs subcommittee, I shall preside over hearings on a number of bills of great importance to veterans. These bills include amendments or extensions of the provisions of the Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act. This is usually called the Korean G. I. Bill of Rights.

First witnesses to be heard in the Old Supreme Court Room in the Capitol at 10 o'clock Monday will be officials of the Veterans Administration.

Another subcommittee of which I am a member will also start new hearings on automobile financing and marketing practices at that same time. This is the Automobile Marketing Practices sub-committee of the Senate Commerce Committee.
Since it is impossible for all committees to schedule their meetings and hearings to avoid conflicts with other committee meetings, we Senators simply have to divide our time between the committees of which we are members. Of course, in a case such as my being chairman of the Veterans Affairs subcommittee, I shall devote every minute possible to it.

In addition to the regular schedule of committee and subcommittee meetings, the Senate, itself, also meets long hours. Perhaps there are people who have heard that the Senate usually meets at noon and perhaps they wonder what Senators do all the morning.

Actually, committees start early in the day and sometimes continue meeting while the Senate is in session. This means that when roll-call votes are taken, a Senator must run back and forth from his committees to the floor of the Senate.

So the average Senator's work-day runs from early to late. Then his home-work runs just as long as he can hold his eyes open. There is seldom enough time to do all the things I would like to get done.

During the past week I have introduced several bills and co-sponsored several others.

One of my bills would permit small businessmen, including farmers, to take a standard federal income tax deduction on their business operations instead of having to keep books and itemize deductions. The trade, business or farm involved would not be eligible to take this standard deduction if it employed more than 10 persons.
The main purpose of the bill is to relieve small businessmen and farmers from the necessity of keeping detailed records for tax purposes alone. The Federal Government already allows this standard deduction on the payment of personal income taxes. My bill would simply extend the right to taxes on business income.

Another bill of mine would give some relief and protection to the plywood and veneer manufacturers, and the farmers who supply them with logs, against the plywood imported from foreign countries.

There are approximately 375 plywood and veneer plants in the United States, scattered over some 30 States. From 1954 through 1956, 65 plants were forced to shut-down or to cut-back production as a result of plywood imports, principally from Japan. While the use of plywood in this country was increasing by 74 per cent during the past five years, United States plywood plants gained only six-tenths of one per cent of that total. The rest of the gain was in the sale of imported plywood.

My bill would prohibit the importation of more than 15 per cent of the total plywood used in this country in any year. I believe the American plywood maker and the farmers who supply him with logs deserves this much protection against the low-wage countries which have seriously damaged our own industry.

This is Strom Thurmond in Washington. Thank you for listening and this station for making this time available each week.

- END -
- 3 -