
MY FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS:

I regret to report that the Senate this week has voted to enter the international health field. Under the terms of an act passed by a 63 to 17 vote in the Senate, the United States will underwrite medical and health research throughout the world to the extent of an initial expenditure of $50 million. The Surgeon General of the United States testified that he did not feel that more than $7 1/2 million was needed for international health and research at this time.

In reality, we have been in the international health field for many years. The bill passed by the Senate would centralize the current efforts and set up a completely new -- and very expensive -- administrative structure while enlarging the world program.

The Budget Director of the United States opposed the proposal for four reasons: 1. It would further add to the diffusion within the Government of responsibility for dealing with international problems; 2. It would increase the complexity of United States efforts in the field of international health; 3. It is not desirable to establish a statutory institute to conduct international health research. (Once enacted, a statute is difficult to cancel out, requiring additional action by Congress); and 4. It calls for much more money than needed. These reasons are sound ones for opposing passage of the bill.
I have always favored medical and health research in the United States. In fact, next week on my radio program I expect to have as my guest Assistant Surgeon General John Heller who is Director of the National Health Institute, a Clemson College graduate, and a native South Carolinian. However, I opposed this international health and research act at this time with the United States Government already staggering under a $285 billion debt.

The lopsided vote in favor of the International Health and Medical Research Act is one more example of fiscal irresponsibility. We can't afford it, and even if we could, we should enter the field with caution and not with a $50 million blank check.

President Eisenhower has ordered that an interdepartmental committee be created to seek solutions to the ills of the American textile industry. Senators Cotton, Pastore and I of the Textile Subcommittee have been urging the President to take this step since making our report to the Senate earlier this year. I am confident that the textile industry will benefit when this interdepartmental committee makes its study of textiles.

Secretary of Commerce Lewis Strauss was recommended for Senate confirmation by the Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee this week by a one-vote margin. I supported Secretary Strauss and am convinced that the nation will be the loser if the Senate deprives the President of Admiral Strauss' services by refusing to confirm him.
While this program is being recorded, the Senate debated the merits of the Jennings Bill calling for revised methods of calculating price supports for tobacco. Under this bill, the support level for 1959 would be frozen at the 1958 dollars and cents level -- until 90 percent of old parity catches up with this level. The tobacco industry favors this bill, feeling its passage will restore confidence of foreign buyers. I plan to vote for passage.

The month of May is National Radio Month. Today Americans own more than 150,000,000 radio sets. Over 97 percent of all homes are radio equipped. Radio is an important avenue of communication between governments and the people. The radio industry is doing a better job today than ever before in keeping Americans informed.

This is Strom Thurmond in Washington.