What are People Thinking About Back Home

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What are the people thinking about back home? As a matter of fact, I am getting a good many communications on a great variety of subjects. Much of my mail has to do with the George proposal relative to raising the income tax exemption rate from $600 to $800 this year and to $1000 next year. Most of the communications seem to be in favor of this proposal.

I am also getting a large number of communications about the elimination of various kinds of excise taxes. The farmers in the State of Montana are making themselves heard very definitely in favor of 90% of parity at least and eventually 100% or full parity. Many of them keep reminding me of the President's remarks at Kasson, Minnesota, Brookings, South Dakota and Fargo, North Dakota, where he came out for 90% parity and eventually full parity.

The question of public power is an important one in my part of the country because you must understand in the Pacific Northwest, we have 40% of the potential hydroelectric power in the entire nation and in my own
State of Montana, we have 10% of the nation's potential. We are very much interested in the development of both public and private power and we feel that there is room for both. We are against monopolies in this very important public service field and we are very much in accord with the previous Administrations' views in the building of multi-purpose projects for flood control, irrigation, reclamation and cheap power. We feel multi-purpose projects in the State of Montana, where feasible, would be far superior to projects built only for the dissemination of electricity.

I am getting very little mail on McCarthy although is evident in late weeks, an increased demand for a change in the rules of procedure for Congressional Committees so that these hearings will be carried on under the rules of fair play and with full protection for the witnesses who appear.

There is a certain amount of apprehension about the war in Indo-China and the possibility of American intervention in that struggle. There seems to be very
opposition to the sending of American war supplies to Indo-China and general disapproval of sending combat troops to that part of the world.

Many of Montana elder citizens are writing in relative to an increase in their social security and some few groups have stated that they would like to be included in the same.

There is an increased amount of interest among the younger people in favor of the right to vote at the age of eighteen.

The question of termination of federal jurisdiction over Montana's 22,000 Indians has also created a lot of interest lately and the general opinion seems to be while this may be a feasible procedure, it should not be undertaken too quickly. I have received a great deal of letters and petitions both for and against the Bricker Amendment, with the great majority of writing in form of petitions in favor of passing the Bricker proposal.

My state is also interested in grazing legislation and has expressed itself in no uncertain terms against the possibility of federal grazing lands being turned
over to what amounts to in effect as private ownership.

The latest item of interest is the highway aid bill and we are hopeful that the highway aid bill when it is considered in the Senate, will be passed not on a population basis but rather on territory because in my state and in many other Western States, distance is the biggest factor and the one which must be considered if a more network of roads are to be created maintained.

This, in general, comprises some of the matters about which I have been receiving mail on lately.