

We will be here in session, I expect, until the first of July or August and probably into August. The Senate has demonstrated themselves to be thoroughly sympathetic to a bill of this kind. The conferees, I am satisfied, of both the House and Senate, would be sympathetic and friendly to the legislation. I am sure that they would not do anything to prevent the civil rights bill from ultimately becoming law. I see no reason why we should fear sending the House bill to conference. I am well satisfied the conferees would act diligently to eliminate such bugs as would appear and act expeditiously to bring the bill to the House for consideration. I think I am satisfied, on the basis of the vote and the announcement made by the Vice President, that we could look forward to having legislation.

It is important, and we are going to have to eliminate the abuses in terms of affording all of our citizens full equality. Unless and until we do, we are not going to have peace in this country.

I am satisfied the members would recognize the responsibility to the body that sent them to the conference, to the electorate that has sent them to this great House and Senate. And I am satisfied we would have a good bill back on the floor which the membership of this body and the other body could consider in an appropriate fashion and we could present to the President a civil rights bill which would accomplish most of the things in the bill that is now before this committee.

Mr. COLMER. Mr. Dingell, I am going to be very brief and conclude.

What committee of the House has jurisdiction of this firearms legislation?

Mr. DINGELL. This is a much abused subject, Mr. Chairman. If you recall, traditionally, the Ways and Means Committee has had jurisdiction over tax matters; the Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee has jurisdiction over matters dealing with interstate commerce. By reason of comity, the Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee waived over to the Ways and Means Committee the jurisdiction of the entire structure of the firearms law of the United States. But recently, because of some connivance of the administration downtown through circumstances that no one really fully understands, with the possible exception of perhaps the Parliamentarian and the Speaker, the question of firearms legislation should wind up in the Judiciary Committee. The administration was shopping for a more favorable form to strip the citizens of the right to have firearms and that wound up in the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. COLMER. The Judiciary Committee?

Mr. DINGELL. Yes, it is a very tenuous jurisdiction that the Judiciary Committee has.

Mr. COLMER. To the best of your knowledge, has the Judiciary Committee considered this subject?

Mr. DINGELL. They have considered it at great length, Mr. Chairman. A bill was reported out of the subcommittee which I do not expect will see the light of day because it will strip from our citizens the right to use firearms and to possess them for legitimate purposes.

Mr. COLMER. To the best of your knowledge, has the Judiciary Committee given any consideration in the way of hearings to this Senate version of the firearms?

Mr. DINGELL. To the best of my knowledge, no.

Mr. COLMER. I think the testimony of Mr. Rogers would possibly confirm your knowledge of that subject.