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The Metcalf Bill - Regulatory Boards

The particular Magnuson Bill we mentioned deals with only one area of consumer interest. There is another bill introduced in the United States House of Representatives which is more far-reaching and affects every state-regulated industry, such as utilities, transportation and insurance.

Senator Metcalf of Montana has proposed that a federal agency be established to represent the consuming public before any federal or state regulatory agency which is considering matters which affect the consuming public. I do not have to tell you what this means to the concept of State's rights.

It would mean that bureaucrats from North of the Potomac could descend on the North Carolina Utilities Commission, appear before the Insurance Commissioner, or even appear before the Milk Commission any time they felt like coming to North Carolina for sun and fun. It would mean that persons who know little or nothing about our State or its problems would be making the decisions concerning what is in the best interest of the people of North Carolina. I do not mean to be unduly harsh, but, frankly, I have never had much reason to believe that Washington bureaucrats are

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closely enough tuned to the interests and needs of the people of this State to be representing me before a regulatory agency in my own State.

Why was such a bill ever conceived? Is Senator Metcalf such an advocate of Federal power that he would, without any reason at all, further erode State's rights. I don't think so.

I am afraid that he simply looked around him, and saw that the consuming public was not being represented in hearings that effected their lives and pocketbooks, concluded that no State action was forthcoming and turned to the Legislative body of last resort, the United States Congress. If this is in fact what happened, every State in the United States should sit up and listen for this is a clear signal of what is going to be the trend in Congress if our States do not heed the needs of the people and become responsive and responsible on the state level.