Mayor Robert F. Wagner today issued the following statement:

(The statement was forwarded to Senator Philip A. Hart, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Refugees and Escapees of the Senate Judiciary Committee.)

"Americans without regard to party must rally behind President Kennedy's proposal for the long over-due revision of the McCarran-Walter Act. This is undoubtedly the worst law on our statute books. It has been there for 11 years and has caused nothing but heartache and headache, as far as the U. S. Government is concerned. It has been a handicap to our foreign policy, serving as an unnecessary affront to the dignity and pride of many peoples. It has broken up families and caused inexcusable pain and anguish both on the part of foreigners abroad and American citizens with relatives and friends abroad. Against all its demerits, it has served few positive or constructive purposes. It has not stopped immigration but it has made immigration and the attainment of citizenship as uncomfortable and inconvenient as possible.

"Now President Kennedy has brought forth a set of proposals which strike at the heart of the inequities in the law -- the national origins quota system. The President's proposal would also liberalize and improve the law in other respects. It marks a giant step forward. That step must be taken. All possible support from all ranks of American citizens must be marshaled for the enactment of this legislation. Personally, I shall use all my own efforts in behalf of this legislation. The All Americans Council of the Democratic National Committee will make this its number one priority project...not as a political issue but as a non-partisan humanitarian program which all Americans can support together. "