Senator Thomas C. Hennings, Jr. (D., Mo.), Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights, today issued the following statement:

"We have received a number of inquiries as to how our committee intends to proceed. Many suggestions as to lines of inquiry have also come to us by mail and telephone and in personal interviews, and there has been considerable discussion in the press about constitutional rights.

The committee will hold a series of general hearings in the fall. At these hearings we intend to have leading citizens from all walks of life -- the government, business, labor, education and civic organizations -- discuss with us publicly what subjects within our jurisdiction require investigation and legislation. Judging from the information already submitted to us, many of our leaders feel that we should examine closely a number of questions concerning constitutional rights. They appear to believe that some old situations need new laws, that some old laws do not fit new situations. We want to determine by full exploration how these witnesses think we can be constructive, strengthen our country's security and our citizens' morale, and deal with inequities which may have developed. In every field of legislation there is a need for periodic review by legislators. Public and press have suggested the need at this time for broad review of questions of constitutional rights.

Following these hearings we shall proceed to specific investigations and hearings upon those subjects which the general testimony shows to be the most important. The problem of our age is to keep our country secure from attack from without and from subversion within and still maintain the American way of life. Our constitutional rights are what particularly distinguish our land from totalitarian countries.

Meanwhile our staff is studying the material available on questions such as free speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of movement and due process in administrative matters. In addition we are looking into a variety of individual complaints where citizens feel that they have been wronged. In some, investigation may reveal that there is no wrong; some belong before courts and not this committee; others may require action by the executive branch of our government. But a number seem to be appropriate for further investigation by us. A good deal of the time of the staff has been used in these early stages in sorting out and developing those matters which are most appropriate for this committee."

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