

CONGRESS CONVENES. At exactly 12:00 noon on January 3rd, the Speaker's gavel fell. "The House will be in order", he intoned. "The chaplain will offer prayer." The chamber was filled. A colorful crowd in the galleries. Tickets for the gallery were at a premium. There were the usual resolutions for a joint session with the Senate to hear the President's message. A sustained pause during which returning members, visited, shook hands, wished one another well. Once more the gavel fell. The Sergeant at Arms announced the Senate. In marched the Senators to take front seats. Another announcement. There entered the members of the Cabinet. A pause. Then the Sergeant-at-Arms, "Mr. Speaker, The President Of The United States." Applause. Prolonged applause. Infirm, smiling, slightly more intent perhaps than on inaugural day, the President, flanked with Secret Service Men, holding the arm of an aide came our Chief Magistrate. Now an ovation. He seemed a bit fatigued. Who wouldn't with such burdens. Without delay, he read his message. Concluded, another ovation. He departed. It is one of those rare occasions when the complete Executive and Legislative families come together.

FEDERAL WORKERS. On November 30th, there were 588,035 persons on the Federal payroll. This closely approximates the figure of 597,482 in July of 1921 when the Government began to dismantle the gigantic war machine.

VETERANS REVIEW. The special Review Boards established in various sections of the nation to review so-called presumptively service connected claims of veterans completed their work and rendered a consolidated report. Of 51,213 cases examined, 21,995 or 42.87 per cent were allowed to remain on the rolls. In North Carolina 74.68% were allowed. In Burlington, Vermont, 23.43%. At Hinos, Illinois 23.70%. The Illinois Boards almost achieved the doubtful distinction of dis-allowing the greatest number of claims.

LAND PURCHASES. The Interior Dept. at the instance of the Dept. of Agriculture, has this week embarked on a new policy of purchasing lands to take them out of cultivation and convert them into national domain. The initial purchase fund of 25 million was advanced out of Public Works Administration funds. First land to be purchased will be adjacent to national forests, the national domain, Indian Reservations and National Parks. The purpose of course is to retire said lands from cultivation, reduce agricultural surpluses, in the hope of increasing prices. A long term program seeking the retirement of more than 285 million acres is the goal of Secretary Wallace.

HOME LOAN BONDS. When the Home Owners Loan Corporation was created by act of Congress in special session, the question of marketability of the 2 billion in bonds was raised because only the interest on the bonds was guaranteed. After six months of operation, this weakness in the bonds became more apparent. They were in reality only 18 year annuities with interest guaranteed. Next week, the President will recommend to Congress guaranteeing the principal as well as the interest on the 2 billion of authorized Home Loan Bonds and the 2 billion of Farm Credit refinancing bonds. They will be as good as Libertys and should be snapped up.

GROCERS CODES. Effective January 6 and affecting 480,000 grocers, the NRA Code will provide that grocers must not use so-called "loss leaders" or articles on which they take a loss as a sales leader in order to stimulate patronage, nor shall grocers raise prices of food products over and above the price that prevailed on June 1st 1933 except by that amount that would be warranted by higher wholesale costs, extra taxes, or increased cost of production or distribution. Stores must operate not less than 63 hours per week unless they operated on a shorter schedule before June 1st. Maximum hours for employees shall be 48 hours per week, 10 hours per day, 6 days per week. Minimum wages - \$10.00 in towns under 2500, \$15.00 in towns over half million.

LIQUOR. Liquor Revenue Bill as passed by the House provides taxes of \$2.00 per proof gallon on spirits (old tax \$1.10) 10¢ per gallon on wines under 14% alcohol, 20¢ on wines between 14 and 21%, 40¢ on wines between 21 and 24%, and \$2.00 on wines over 24%. Champagnes carry a tax of 5½ cents per half pint, beer \$5.00 per barrel. An effort was made to tax imported champagnes by \$6.00 per gallon in order to penalize France for her failure to pay her war debt to us.

BUDGET. If you earn \$30 per week and spend \$40, there will be a deficit in your personal budget of \$10.00 for the week. If that deficit continues every week for a year it would aggregate \$520.00. At the end of the year, you would doubtless be concerned about some source of income with which to pay off the deficit and balance your budget. That in a nutshell expresses the situation so far as the Federal Government is concerned. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1934, our national income will be 3¼ billion and our expenditures 10½ billions. Deficit 7 1/3 billion. For 1935 income will be approximately 4 billion and expenditures approximately 6 billion. Deficit almost 2 billion. Manifestly, there is concern about how to raise the money for these estimated expenditures when the national income is so far behind. That's why you hear the proposal to borrow. The effort soon to be made to borrow 10 billion will be a test of federal credit. Our national debt which was 26 million after the war, will soon mount to 32 billion. There is some concern over this increasing debt.

OBSERVATION. Mrs. President Roosevelt is personally championing the cause of Old Age Pensions for the District of Columbia. Congressman Shoemaker of Minnesota who served a year in Leavenworth stated on the floor of the House this week that in a period of 7 months, 117 bootleg stills were raided by guards, inside the walls of the prison. Inconceivable!