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THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT.
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16th District

BONUS FOOTBALL. A glance at the history of the Bonus indicates what a political football it has been for the past 17 years. In the 65th Congress, convening on March 4, 1919 more than 100 bonus bills were introduced. First bonus bill was passed in the House on May 29, 1920 by vote of 289 to 92, but failed of action in the Senate. Second bonus bill was reported in Congress on March 13, 1922, passed both Houses and was vetoed by the President. Third bill was reported on March 17, 1924 and was enacted into law. (The present bill). In the 69th Congress in 1926, bills were passed to permit veterans to borrow up to 50% of the face value of the certificates and interest rates were reduced from 4% to 3½%. First bill for immediate cash payment of full face value of certificates was reported in the 72nd Congress in 1932, passed the House and was defeated in the Senate. Next bill for full cash payment passed the House on March 12, 1934 but failed in the Senate. Third bill for full cash payment passed both Houses by May 7, 1935, vetoed by the President, and failed to pass over the veto on May 22, 1935. Fourth bill passed House on January 10, 1936 by vote of 356 to 59 and sent to the Senate.

G.P.O. stands for Government Printing Office, the busiest place in Washington. It has 5341 employees who have their own Emergency Hospital, their own Group Life Insurance with 4 million dollars worth of policies in force, their own Sick & Benefit Association, their own Federal Credit Union with 1300 members, their own Federal Employees Association, their own American Legion Post with a membership of 400 and a uniformed band of 38 pieces, their own Cafeteria & Recreation Association, operating pool, billiard and bowling concessions and a cafeteria that serves about 800,000 meals annually under the supervision of a trained dietitian.

FRACTIONAL COINAGE. Production of small coins for 1935 was reported to be the largest in 15 years and the reasons ascribed for the increase include increased attendance at movies, repeal of prohibition, and slot machine use. In round number, the mint struck off 81 million nickels, 85 million dimes, 331 million pennies and 44 million quarters during the last year.

SILICOSIS. West Virginia is perhaps the most mountainous state in the union. It has some splendid rivers and other natural resources. These rivers are narrow and swift, but can scarcely be put to good use unless the surface of the state is re-made or the barrier effects of the mountains are thwarted. Thus it is that years ago, the engineers for the Union Carbide & Carbon Company determined to construct a tunnel thru one of the mountains and enable the New River to run thru this tunnel and under the mountain so that it might be used for generating power. The work has been in progress and will take many years. Something grim and tragic happened. Several hundred men died on the job. Nobody knew why. A country doctor had an idea - puzzled over it - finally decided that the men died from "silicosis." The word comes from silicon, meaning quartz sand. "Silicosis" means an infection as the result of fine dust or sand in the lungs. Nothing was done about these deaths. Many of the victims were buried in a potters field. But the matter by strange and devious routes came to the attention of Congress and today an investigation and hearings are under way before a sub-committee of the Labor Committee to determine the exact cause of these deaths and the responsibility therefor.

PETITIONS. What happens to petitions that are sent to Congress or to the individual members? When Congress was first organized in 1789, a rule was adopted whereby they could be presented on the floor by the member who received them. As years went by, the petitions became so numerous that a time saving device had to be adopted. Accordingly, the practice today is to lay the petition on the desk of the Clerk of the House with a short statement, made by the member, stating the general nature of the petition. This short report is then printed in the Congressional Record and the petition is filed. At least a dozen petitions will be received every day and often the number has run into hundreds. They vary from a dozen signers on up. Highest number was the petition for the bonus in the 73rd Congress bearing a million or more names. These petitions cover every form of subject matter. In a single day, Congress will be petitioned not to place this country in the League of Nations, not to have the U. S. participate in the Olympic games in Germany,

to restore Prohibition to the national capital, to pass a substitute for the AAA immediately, to deport all aliens, to annul the reciprocal trade agreement with Canada, to outlaw block booking and blind selling of motion picture films, to allot one half of all radio time to educational, religious, labor, agricultural and other non-profit making institutions etc. It is a healthy thing for citizens to manifest this interest and petition their government.

WOULD YOU BE SUPERSTITIOUS? Congressman Vernor W. Main, newly elected in the 3rd Michigan district would have reason to feel superstitious if he looks back to contemplate the record of members from that district since 1920. In 1935, that district was represented by Henry M. Kimball who died after 11 months in office; in 1934 by Joseph Hooper, who died of a heart attack about 30 minutes after making a short speech on the floor; his predecessor was Arthur B. Williams who died of an operation in 1925, while still in office; before him was John Smith who died in office after serving 21 months; before him was William Frankhauser who committed suicide while in office. Mr. Main says he is not superstitious.

RADIO. A recent resolution introduced in Congress to investigate the Federal Communications Commission, which supervises radio communication, and to investigate radio broadcasting companies generally in the hope of compelling an allocation of 50% of all radio time to educational, religious, social, labor and other non-profit organizations draws attention to the increasing importance of radio in the social, economic and political life of the nation. The country is divided into five zones, running from north to south and the FCC and its predecessor, the Federal Radio Commission have sought to allocate broadcast licenses so as to serve all sections of the nation. As of June 30, 1935, there were in force 45,561 Amateur Radio Station Licenses, 623 regular radio Broadcast Licenses, 194 municipal police radio stations and 58 state police radio stations operating on conventional frequencies between 1500 and 2500 kilocycles, and 393 police stations operating on an experimental basis. The FCC spends more than a million dollars annually to supervise communications and has built up a highly skilled technical staff of engineers. To serve all sections of the nation and keep the air clear so that radio fans might enjoy the best and most selective reception has become a huge business. One item of interest is that more than 440 stations were operating without broadcast licenses last year and that 370 of these were closed by the FCC. In states like Texas, small stations can operate for a long time before field investigators ascertain their location and cite them for operating without a license.

NEW FARM PROGRAM. 78 farm leaders from all states rushed to Washington after the Supreme Court invalidated the AAA and held a conference. A Committee of 13 was chosen to draft recommendations for a new program. The committee labored early and late, finished its report, submitted it to the conference of leaders where it was unanimously adopted. All farm organizations were represented. Substance of the recommendations were (1) A rental and benefit program at equitable rates to promote withdrawal of acres to effect soil conservation and balance of supply and demand. (2) Rental program to be based on withdrawal of a percentage of acres or on quotas of a product or on basis of both acreage and quotas, payment to the farmer to be conditioned on his having adjusted his acreage. (3) Funds for the program to be appropriated by Congress. (4) The levying of reasonable processing taxes on livestock and dairy products whenever approved by the producers. (5) Retention of the valid sections of the AAA and continued use of 30% of all import duties to develop foreign and domestic outlets for farm products. (6) Distribution of farm products which come into the hands of a government agency through cooperatives. (7) Preservation of the American market for the American farmer.

STRIFE IN THE SENATE. Senator Nye of North Dakota and a Senate committee have been investigating certain aspects of the World War, including financial transactions and war loans to develop a background for neutrality legislation. The Committee spent some \$200,000 for that purpose. Stellar witness was J. P. Morgan. From the alleged findings of the Committee, Senator Nye reported his conclusions that President Wilson and Secretary Lansing had "falsified" in certain particulars with respect to some alleged secret treaties. Two members of the Committee took umbrage at this, made statements that they would withdraw. Putting the tarred stick on President Wilson, stirred the ire of the caustic Senator Glass, former Secretary of the Treasury in Wilson's cabinet, provoked him to make reply on the Senate floor. Speech of Senator Glass on the Senate floor was one of the most bitter denunciations in years, made Senator Nye turn red, made him leave the floor. Almost every Senator was on the floor to listen. This is the first lively tilt in the Senate since the demise of Huey Long.