

1/2 5/3 6

THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT.  
By Congressman Everett M. Dirksen  
16th District

ARCHIVES. An archive might be described as a repository or storehouse for documents. Since the beginning of the Union, Uncle Sam has had no such storehouse worthy of the name. Important papers and documents were usually stored in some unused room of the department to which they pertained, and when that department became crowded for space, the documents were trundled off to some musty cellar, a barn or an old unused building. This practice continued until a survey disclosed that government documents, some of them of unusual historical value were stored in more than 130 different places, in such an indifferent manner as to jeopardize their preservation. Came a demand for an Archives building. The building has been completed. It is an imposing structure near the intersection of Pennsylvania and Constitution Avenues. A National Archivist has been appointed. He will have a staff of 600 trained persons. They will start upon the immense task of reading, classifying and storing documents that may have future value.

CURBING FEDERAL COURTS. Many times in our history, momentous court decisions have inspired zealous attempts to curb judicial power. Action of inferior Federal Courts and of the Supreme Court in declaring some of the recent legislation unconstitutional has once more given impetus to such an effort and a dozen or more bills have been introduced to that end. One in particular is of interest, introduced by Rep. Cross of Texas. This bill leaves to inferior Federal Courts and to the Supreme Court all present powers to pass upon all matters of law and fact but deprives them of authority to pass upon the constitutionality of an act of Congress. As authority for the right of Congress to thus limit the judiciary, the author of the bill points to Section 2, Article III of the Constitution which provides that, "In all cases affecting Ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, and those in which a State shall be a party, the Supreme Court shall have original jurisdiction. In all the other cases before mentioned, the Supreme Court shall have appellate jurisdiction, both as to law and fact, with such exceptions and under such regulations as the Congress shall make." With such exceptions .... as the Congress shall make," is the language which they contend gives Congress power over the Supreme Court. As for inferior Federal Courts, they are deemed to be the creatures of Congress and their creator is therefore taken to have authority to limit them as it seems fit. If enacted, only a State by filing an original bill in the Supreme Court could attack the constitutionality of an act of Congress.

MAIL ORDER DIVORCES. Look in the Personals Column of dozens of metropolitan newspapers, in all sections of the country and you will notice advertisements which read something like this: "Mexican Divorces easily obtained. Personal appearance unnecessary. Good anywhere. Reliable. For information, address Antonio y Morelos Room 202 Professional Building." The lure is so great for mismatched or unhappy humans that thousands of "mail order" divorces are sold annually in the U. S. all of which are void and many of which are fraudulent. This abuse obtains in several Mexican provinces and has become so great that the American Bar Association, the Dept. of State and the Dept. of Justice have given it attention. This week, the House passed a bill which makes non-mailable, any literature or information with respect to these easy divorces and provides heavy penalties for violation. Just another lucrative racket which will soon end.

BRIEF BITS. The President can look out of the White House Window and see a lithe, bronze figure of Andrew Jackson astride a dashing charger in LaFayette Park .... Uncle Sam is \$40,000 richer by virtue of chain letters containing that amount which went to the dead letter office ... Since the first Congress in 1789, more than 1½ million measures have been dumped into the legislative hopper of Congress ... Section 213 of the Economy Act of 1933 (married persons clause) removed 1600 married women from the Federal payroll in the city of Washington alone.....The Congressional Library now supplies Talking Books to the blind. Some 800 recordings are available and a WPA grant has been set aside for making additional recordings.....For the first time in history, the White House reception for the Congress, set for January 23, was postponed because of the death of a foreign sovereign...Action of the Supreme Court this week in denying to one Joseph F. Bishop, administrator of the estates of 300 victims of the Eastland disaster, the right to have the findings of the lower courts reviewed, will recall that marine disaster in Chicago in 1915, in which many lives were lost, and make impressive, the fact that this litigation has been in the Courts for 21 years.

LEGISLATIVE VERBLAGE. Words are amazing things. Rightly chosen and grouped and softly spoken, they can stir the soul, assuage the anguish of the human heart, stir men to action. Sometimes they can be used to beat ideas to death. Legislators are the champion word-mongers. In drafting laws, they seek to cover all cases and ex-

ceptions and must be mindful that some day, a Court may seek to interpret the intention of the lawmakers by the words used. Examples of word-marathons in the first session of the 74th Congress are the Holding Company Act with 33,500 words, AAA amendments with 25,000, the 1935 Banking Act with 21,000, Social Security Act with 16,000 and so on. Little wonder that each session of Congress will fill 20 volumes the size and thickness of Anthony Adverse.

NEW FARM ACT. On April 27, 1935, the President signed an Act of Congress providing for conservation of soil and soil moisture as a matter of national policy. This act, known as the Soil Conservation Act and provided for surveys and dissemination of information on soil conservation, preventive measures, for changes in land use, for the growing of vegetation, and for varied methods of cultivation. Came the death of the AAA and after myriad conferences a three page bill was drawn as an amendment to the Soil Conservation Act, which was to serve as a substitute for the AAA. In brief, the original bill provided for the promotion of the preservation, improvement and economic use of soil fertility, gave the Secretary of Agriculture broad powers in order to achieve those purposes, gave him authority to make payments or other grants-in-aid to farm producers on the basis of the acreage of soil improving or erosion preventing crops which they planted, or on the acreage of crop land, or on the basis of a normal production of commodities equal to the percentage of normal national production required for domestic consumption. In other words, the Secretary could set up a program of benefits to farmers based upon the amount of legumes such as soybeans, clover, etc. which they might agree to plant or upon the amount of crops which they produced or upon some percentage of crops produced. This program under the bill is to be executed by the existing AAA machinery and payment to farmers is to be conditioned upon their maintaining a certain acreage in soil enriching crops or upon utilization of their land in such manner as recommended by the secretary. The act does not call for the making of contracts between farmer and Secretary as in the case of the defunct AAA. The Senate Committee on Agriculture, studied the bill and decided it was not within the recent Supreme Court decision. They called in Secretary Wallace and gave him their opinion, then threw the bill out of the window and informed Mr. Wallace that he should prepare a bill setting up 48 little AAA's.

IMMIGRATION. Two bills, one of which sought to restrict the habitual commuting of Canadians across the international border, and the other to restrict the comings and goings of Mexicans across our southern boundary, were reported by the Immigration Committee of the House, but defeated on the floor by objection to their consideration. Figures show that about 7,000 Canadians cross the border daily and work at various jobs in Detroit, depriving our own jobless citizens of this employment. However, the matter is a delicate one and involves fragile international relationships. The State Dept. does not favor this legislation, and quite likely nothing will come of it. Mexicans commute freely across our southern border by the thousands because they, like Canadians have a non-quota status. The new bill seeks to place a limit of 1000 on the number of Mexicans who might come in during any one year. Here also, the matter of international relations is involved.

DID YOU KNOW. that an alien can be deported for stealing a loaf of bread with which to feed his hungry brood, if convicted, but that an alien who is convicted of carrying concealed weapons cannot be deported? Why? Because the former involves moral turpitude and the latter does not. One of many reasons why our immigration, naturalization, and deportation laws must one day be completely overhauled and codified.

SLINGS AND ARROWS. Fourteen Senators and 128 Congressmen served in the World War. Pa. leads with 10, New York has 9, and Illinois and Massachusetts each have 8 .\*\*\*\* Uncle Sam occupies 12 million square feet in 101 of his own buildings in Washington and leases 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  million feet in 103 other buildings. One of the buildings leased is the Arlington Hotel on Vermont Avenue, an old landmark with high ceilings and large rooms. The rental exceeds \$60,000 per year. Many years ago, a bearded and wealthy Congressman, newly elected to office, came to Washington and leased a suite in the Arlington for as long as he remained in Congress. A lease was drawn and he took possession of the suite. Since then, he has made many trips around the world, shot big game in China, Africa and elsewhere and mounted the souvenirs in the hotel suite. When the Rural Resettlement Administration under Uncle Sam's lease took possession of the hotel, they tried to break the lease of the House Member and oust him. Government lawyers looked it over, decided it couldn't be broken. Now, Rural Resettlement clerks, stenos., errand boys and executives fill the place from cellar to garret, occupy every nook and cranny, and fill the place with noise day and night but Congressman Tinkham from Mass. continues to occupy his lone suite, without telephone, maid or dining room service.