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THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT.
By Congressman Everett M. Dirksen
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BONUS. By a vote of 318 to 90, the House this week passed the Patman Bill to pay the soldiers adjusted service certificates. For the bill were 247 Democrats, 61 Republicans. Against it were 55 Democrats and 35 Republicans. With some exceptions, the opposition vote has certain geographical implications as indicated by the fact that members from New York, Conn., New Jersey, Mass. were solidly arrayed against it. The moneyed East and the agrarian west are still at grips and the struggle becomes quietly more acute as time goes on. Little was said aloud on the subject but one of the flies in the bonus ointment was the possibility of a sales tax. Four bonus measures were voted upon. The Patman Bill, providing for the issuance of Treasury notes to pay it with safety provisions empowering the Treasury to retire these notes if prices increased too much; the Vinson Bill carrying an authorization which was interpreted as calling for the issuance of 2.2 billions in tax exempt bonds; the Tydings Bill providing for the issuance of coupon bonds dated Jan. 1, 1936 in lieu of the present certificates; and the Andrews Bill, providing for the payment of an additional \$1 per day for home service and \$1.25 for foreign service, the aggregate to be figured at 4% compound interest from November 11, 1918 until date of payment. Roughly, the Patman and Vinson bills provided for cash payment of the balance on each certificate, amounting in the average to \$415; the Andrews Bill would give each service man about \$150 and the Tydings Bill would give a bond for the balance due. The Tydings and Andrews Bills seemed wholly unacceptable because they took too much from the soldiers balance and would make little contribution to recovery thru improvement of purchasing power. The Vinson Bill might have passed but for the fact that looming in the shadow was the possibility of a message from the President, suggesting the need for additional taxes to retire the bonds that might be issued to pay the bonus and leaving the gate wide open for the advocates of a national sales tax. Congress would then have been squarely in the cross fire of a demand for the payment of the bonus from one side and a demand from the taxpayers against higher taxes on the other. The result would have been a huge question mark because Congress is just as much opposed to a sales tax as it was in the days when Mayor La Guardia was in Congress and lead the opposition which killed such a tax. An interesting side light is the fact that when the Governor of the Federal Reserve Board was testifying before the House Banking & Currency Committee, he was asked a hypothetical question as to the soundness of money issued against bonds as compared with Treasury notes issued against the general credit of the Government. He said they were equally sound. That question contained the nub of the controversy between the Patman and the Vinson Bills.

COTTON. All is not well in the south. In fact an economic crisis is at hand. This is borne out by a report made by Mary Conner Meyers, a lady lawyer for the Agricultural Adjustment Act who made an investigation and a report which is not yet published. The reason is that when the Bankhead Cotton Bill was passed last year, giving each cotton farmer, tenant, and share cropper a certain allotment of cotton which he could sell and imposing a tax equal to 6% per pound over that allotment, large farmers and plantation owners found that only half as many tenants were needed as before. Consequently, those tenants were discharged and compelled to go on relief. In addition, exports of cotton fell off and the price tumbled \$10 per bale recently. Friends of the little farmer thought that at least 3 bales of cotton should be exempt from tax, even tho the allotment was below that amount. They brought in a bill to so amend the cotton act. A merry fight ensued. It was a case of large farmers and plantation owners against small farmers. The small farmers won and the House passed the bill, exempting 3 bales (1500 pounds.) Thousands of tenants and share croppers in the south live on \$150 per year, which is 3 bales of cotton at 10% per pound.

FINANCIAL DANGER. When the wheat is separated from the chaff in the ever continuing controversy as to whether the size of the national debt is imperiling the credit and inviting disaster for this country, the following figures are illuminating because so much has been said about the vast strides made by Great Britain toward recovery. In 1932, the U. S. debt was \$370 for every man, woman and child, in England it was \$991. Income in the U.S. for every man, woman and child was \$313, in England it was \$363.

COMPETITION FOR FARMERS. Last year, nearly \$600 million dollars worth of agricultural imports came into the U. S. despite crop reduction. Included are wheat, oats, hay, pork, cheese, eggs, cream, etc. from Canada, beef, rye, oats, corn, wheat from the Argentine, barley and rye from Poland and Latvia, eggs from China, butter from Australia and the Scandanvian countries and many other items. Meanwhile, the Reciprocal Trade Agreements negotiated with some nations, while

improving our exports of farm products to a degree has been robbing the American working man of his job and his purchasing power so that where the American farmer has gained a foreign customer with a low standard of living, he has lost a customer with a low standard of living, he has lost a customer at home with a higher standard of living. Result: at least a 100 or more members of Congress are supporting a measure introduced by Rep. Scrugham of Nevada (Democrat) to repeal the authority given by Congress to the President to negotiate such reciprocal trade treaties.

A WORD TO MINERS. From Amarillo, Texas to St. Louis must be 700 miles. From Amarillo to Detroit must be 1000 miles. In the Amarillo oil fields, millions of cubic feet of natural gas go to waste daily. The Governor of Texas is the leading spirit in a move to construct a pipe line from Amarillo to St. Louis and Detroit to use this gas. The cost will be about 60 millions. That's a lot of money. It is proposed therefore to create a Texas corporation to build this pipe line and borrow the money from the FWA. The proposed line shall have a capacity of 200 million cubic feet per day. This is the equivalent of 8000 tons of coal per day which would be taken away from coal miners and railroads. In 1933, 103,000 men made a living in Illinois mining coal at the rate of 78,000,000 tons per year. In 1923, only 44,000 miners were employed and produced 37,000,000 tons of coal. Consumption of natural gas in Illinois in 1929 was equivalent to only 130,000 tons of coal but five years later (1933) it had jumped to one and one third million tons. The new proposed pipe line if operating to capacity would produce the equivalent of 3 million tons of coal per year. Since 90% of all Illinois coal is handled by railroads, since mines and miners pay taxes to state, counties, cities, school and park district, and since miners use machinery, copper cable, dynamite, powder and general supplies, railroads, railroad employees, mines, miners, taxing bodies and others will be interested in this proposal.

OBSERVATIONS. In 1881, General Adolphus Washington Greeley with 25 men, made the first expedition toward the north pole to establish 13 circumpolar stations where data might be assembled to exactly locate the north pole. 17 of the crew dies. General Greeley, now 91 years old still lives in Washington, and last week, 54 years after the ill-fated expedition, Congress voted him a Congressional Medal of Honor. According to the most recent chart of the National Industrial Conference Board, the cost of relief per case for the entire U. S. rose from \$15.40 in July of 1933 to \$34 per case in November of 1934. One member of Congress has become so disturbed over the uncanny accuracy of straw votes, such as conducted by the Literary Digest, that he has introduced a bill to prohibit and make illegal, the taking of such a poll. In 1932, General Chas. G. Dawes resigned as Chairman of the RFC and shortly thereafter that same RFC made a loan of 90 million to the General's bank in Chicago. Only 33½ millions have been repaid thus far so the RFC had to step in and take control of the security behind the loan. This security included a controlling interest in the Public Utility Securities Corporation which in turn controls the LaClede Gas Light Co. of St. Louis. Now it develops that this RFC-controlled gas and light company in St. Louis has violated section 7a of the NRA. Just a case of where government has gotten so large and unwieldy that one alphabetical group violates the rules and regulations of another. So much interest has been manifest in alleged activities of Reds to communize our sailors that Rep. Maverick of Texas made a speech on the subject under the title, "Are The Boys In Blue Reds Or Have Our Admirals Got The Russian Snakes?"