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

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, as a member of the President's Cabinet is charged by Federal statutes to give legal opinions to (1) The President of the United States, (2) to heads of executive departments and (3) to the head of the Veterans Bureau. Nothing in the law compels him to render opinions to Congress as to the constitutionality of pending legislation. Nothing in the law requires him to act as legal adviser to Congress. On July 9th, Senator Byrd of Virginia secured passage of a Senate Resolution requesting that the Attorney General transmit to the Senate "as soon as possible" his opinion on the constitutionality of the so-called Guffey-Snyder Coal Bill which provides for the regulation of the soft coal industry, the creation of a coal reserve, the creation of a Coal Commission and a compulsory tax which would virtually compel every coal operator to join the coal code. The Attorney General has as yet, made no public announcement on what he will do about the Resolution but if he follows precedent, he will probably refuse to render such an opinion. The singular thing about this situation is that there is a general consensus of opinion that the bill is unconstitutional and secondly that the President has requested its enactment, regardless of "reasonable doubts" about its constitutionality.

NOW READ THIS. On the first day of the session of a new Congress, members raise their right hand and listen to the Speaker as he administers the following oath: "Do you solemnly swear (or affirm) that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States, against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that you take this obligation freely, without mental reservation or purpose of evasion, and that you will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office upon which you are about to enter, So help you God?" The members answer "I do." Apparently, every member must then determine for himself, what he thinks is constitutional, except where the matter has been determined by the Supreme Court.

SLINGS AND ARROWS. Rock Creek Park in Washington, is a vast, rambling park, taking its name from Rock Creek, a small gurgling stream which contained far more water a 100 years ago than it does now. As far back as 1807, Robert Fulton, inventor of the first practical steamboat, the Clermont, came to Washington and gave a demonstration of an underwater torpedo and also a miniature submarine to President Madison, and members of the House and Senate. Fulton was the original inventor of the torpedo and three years later, Congress made an appropriation to carry his ideas into effect.

Consumption of cigars dropped from 8 billion in 1920 to 4½ billion in 1934. Ninety per cent of all cigars sold are under 5¢ and 45% of that number are two for five and three for ten.

Robert E. Lee, noted Confederate General of the Civil War, lived in a beautiful home on the banks overlooking the Potomac where Arlington Cemetery now stands. The homestead is in the cemetery and is maintained as a museum, visited by thousands each year. Recently, a bill to appropriate \$50,000 to erect an equestrian statue to Lee in Arlington Cemetery was refused by Congress. Reason: A number of patriotic organizations objected on the ground that Lee was a traitor to the Union cause. Which proves that the Civil War is still being refought.

NYA - is a new alphabet group, designating the National Youth Administration. Its function is to provide assistance to students who wish to attend college but have no means. It makes no loans and provides no scholarships. What it does is to provide jobs for needy students which will pay approximately \$15 per month. Any public or private college or university of collegiate grade is eligible. Any needy student desiring to attend college and secure this assistance should write directly to the President of the college or University which he wishes to attend.

RAYON. In Fredericksburg, Va., Lewisburg, Pa., and other eastern cities are large industrial plants which manufacture rayon. Rayon is a substitute for silk and is used in the manufacture of dress goods, men and women's hose and countless other textile commodities. Cheap cotton linters or fibre or wood fibre is dissolved and chemically treated and then spun into rayon thread which has that sheen and gloss so typical of silk. In 1934, the United States produced 210 million pounds of rayon, which is the equivalent of one half million bales of cotton. Since the AAA (Agricultural Adjustment Administration) is paying cotton farmers to reduce cotton acreage, the cotton folks deemed it proper to ask for a processing tax on rayon equal to 5½¢ per pound. The rayon factories protested that it would run them out of business so the Senate refused to impose the tax during the recent debate on the AAA amendments.

DRAW YOUR OWN CONCLUSIONS. In 1921, the U. S. exported 359 million bushels of wheat. Other exports were in proportion. Herewith a tabulation of exports and imports for 1934 and 1935.

What We Shipped To Other Countries.

1934 (11 months ending June 1.)		1935 (11 months ending June 1.)	
Wheat	35,000,000 bushels		20,000,000
Tobacco	427,000,000 pounds		341,000,000
Lard	66,000,000 pounds		10,000,000
Pork	140,000,000 pounds		120,000,000

What other countries shipped to us.

1934 (11 months ending June 1.)		1935 (11 months ending June 1.)	
Butter	689,000 pounds		21,000,000 pounds
Fresh Beef	233,000 pounds		4,575,000 pounds
Fodder	113,000,000 pounds		354,000,000 pounds
Total meats	40,546,000 pounds		73,763,000 pounds
Wheat	10,596,000 bushels		23,603,000 bushels
Rice	35,411,000 pounds		80,376,000 pounds
Beans	12,500,000 pounds		35,600,000 pounds
Tomatoes	46,000,000 pounds		77,000,000 pounds
Onions	3,900,000 pounds		13,500,000 pounds

POTATO WAR. On the eastern shore of Virginia, are two countries - Accomac and Northampton where 5000 farmers plant about 40,000 acres of potatoes annually and raise enough potatoes to fill 10,000 freight cars. In the last few years the price of potatoes has declined steadily until it went below \$1 per barrel and the potato farmers were faced with a loss, especially with another crop coming on. They decided that potatoes were worth \$1.60 per barrel of any man's money not including the commission and hauling charges. But how to get \$1.60. They decided to organize and not leave a potato go out of the district unless it was properly cleared and brought the minimum price. They did organize. They declared an embargo. Their stern faces indicated that they meant business. No guns, no weapons, no violence, no harsh words. Just grim determination. The potato war has been going on for weeks. The potato blockade is carried on with military provision. Districts are divided and placed under the control of captains and sub-captains. Roads are patrolled by sentries. No truck, bus, or boat can get in or out of the Virginia potato district without proper clearance papers. Only one boat and one truck have tried to bootleg. The owner of the truck and master of the vessel are now doing duty elsewhere. How long the Potato War will last is a matter of speculation.

SALMON. The business of catching and packing salmon on the Columbia River shows a net income of nearly 12 million dollars per year. Salmon is a major industry in Oregon. The industry is now threatened in a most unusual way. Salmon are hatched in fresh water.

The little fingerlings make their way out to the sea, reach maturity, then fight their way back up the river over falls and rapids to spawn and die. It is during this homeward trek back that salmon are caught. Now enters a strange development. Under the PWA, construction of two dams was authorized in the Columbia River. For the Bonneville Dam, 31 million dollars was appropriated and for the Grand Coulee Dam, 61 millions. Construction of these dams will prevent the homeward run of salmon, compel them to spawn in waters below the dam and make possible their ultimate extermination. To avert this industrial tragedy, a little over three million dollars has been appropriated for so-called fish ladders or elevators, to enable the salmon to continue their upstream journey. Thus far, such devices have not been successful and it now becomes a fruitful speculation as to whether a few PWA projects may ultimately destroy a huge natural industry.

YOU AND YOUR UNCLE SAM. A discussion of Federal taxes, as a general thing creates little perturbation in the mind of the average citizen because the taxes he pays to Uncle Sam for maintenance and operation of the government are indirect and therefore not sharply experienced. Yet, Mr. John Citizen pays most of the tax bill. Take the fiscal year, ending June 30, 1935, Uncle Sam collected \$3,299,435,527.18 in taxes and spent twice that amount. These revenues came from the following sources: (1) Income tax \$1,099,230,382.70. (2) Excise taxes \$1,673,982,831.24 and (3) Processing taxes \$526,222,358.24. Excise taxes come from tobacco, cigarettes, liquor, jewelry, furs, oil, gasoline, gum, candy, soft drinks, etc. Processing taxes come from basic commodities. In fact therefore, beer drinkers paid Uncle Sam \$211,215,000 in taxes last year because these taxes are passed on to the consumer. Pipe smokers and tobacco chewers paid \$54,000,000, cigarette smokers paid 385 million, cigar smokers 12 million, gasoline users 161 million. All of which proves that the average citizen who drinks beer or liquor, drives an automobile, chews gum or smokes, or purchased an electric ice box or piece of fur or jewelry, paid this bill. Likewise, every man, woman and child who bought a cotton garment or pair of cotton hose, ate a pork chop, a slice of bacon or a succulent spare rib, or who ate bread, peanuts, rice, sugar or anything made therefrom, helped to pay the 526 millions of processing taxes. The only way to escape Uncle Sam's tax collect is to go on a permanent diet, eat nothing, and join a nudist camp.