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THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT.  
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NEW YEAR ON THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT.

Formal official action on the Congressional Front will resume on January 10th 1944. Normally, the session would begin on January 3rd. By Joint Resolution of the Congress however, it was set for the 10th. Several reasons dictated the postponement by one week. Transportation schedules have been extremely tight and members residing on the Pacific Coast would have had scant time to go to and from their homes by the 3rd. In part also, the postponement is for the convenience of the Executive Department. The President's annual message will be presented on the 10th. On the re-convening of Congress, committees will busy themselves at once with pending matters and particularly those on which there has been uncompleted action and which are quite controversial.

ACTIVE FRONT.

Many controversial measures are presently pending and the Congressional Front will be extremely active in the new year. Among other measures there is (1) the House proposal which would put an end to consumer subsidies and on which the Senate has taken no action. It was agreed before the last session terminated that definite action must be taken not later than February 17th. (2) Pending is a very important bill dealing with civil aviation. It has been contended that as presently drawn this measure would destroy the rights of States over all aviation and thus is raised the ancient but durable issue of States rights. (3) Another measure is the Senate Bill to facilitate soldier voting. The original bill provided for a bi-partisan Federal Ballot Commission to supervise soldier voting and at once raised the constitutional issue on the ground that the Federal Constitution confers upon the states complete power to determine the time, place and manner of holding elections. In consequence, the Senate finally enacted a bill which in effect recommended expeditious action by the several states. There is a belief that many states may not act in time to assure to soldiers an opportunity to vote and hence the insistence that the Federal government take action.

OTHER IMPORTANT ITEMS.

(4) Taxes are always important and always controversial. Early in 1943, the Treasury Department suggested a revenue bill to produce about 10½ billion dollars. The Federal Reserve Board suggested nearly 14 billion. Had this proposal been enacted into law, it would have meant a total Federal tax take of nearly 50 billions annually. The House finally passed a bill which would yield about 2 billion. One impelling reason for this action was the fact that about 90 billions of funds already appropriated had not been expended and had in fact not been obligated or ear-marked for expenditure. Congress felt that this unobligated fund should be carefully explored before additional tax burdens are imposed on the public. (5) Before the Christmas recess, the Senate passed a bill to provide discharge pay for men and women in the armed forces. The amount if pay is based on length of service and whether such service was performed at home or overseas, questions have arisen as to whether such discharge pay should be in installments or a lump sum, over what period of time, and whether those discharged for reasons of age or on request should be included. This bill is now being considered by the Military Committee of the House. These are but some of the measures on which Congress will act in 1944 and the year gives promise of real activity on the Congressional Front.