

THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT.

by
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16th District.

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" THE HEAT IS ON "

That strange perversity of nature whereby it has been much warmer in Alaska than it was in Georgia and warmer in St. Paul than it was in Houston, Texas suggests that sub-normal temperatures have visited the Nation's Capitol for weeks. To chase back the frost line in the many acres of public buildings, Uncle Sam has the largest and most efficient non-commercial heating plant in the world. The Federal buildings are connected by $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles of insulated tunnels which are 8 feet wide and 7 feet high thro which heat is delivered to all buildings. In a single January day, the 6 huge automatically-stoked boilers in the central heating plant burned 712 tons of coal to deliver more than three quarters of a million pounds of steam per hour. Since the white-stone Federal buildings would be easily soiled and discolored by smoke, every effort is made to reduce the smoke evil. Uncle Sam sets the best example. In the central heating plant devices in the smokestacks remove soot from the flue gasses and an "electric eye" warns the heating engineers if the fires are giving off smoke.

WAS THE VETO JUSTIFIABLE.

In October 1938, Governor Davey of Ohio became engaged in a controversy with the Social Security Board. The Board said Ohio was not complying with the Social Security Act in connection with old age assistance and withheld from the state a payment of \$1,300,000. A date was set for hearing on the matter in Washington. Officials of the Ohio Old Age Assistance Division appeared in Washington and were prepared to testify. Before the hour of hearing arrived, Governor Davey sent them a telegram and told them to return to Ohio. They did. They did not appear at the hearing. Ohio received the customary payment in September of 1938. It also received payment in November of 1938. But the October payment was withheld. A bill was introduced to reimburse Ohio in the sum of \$1,300,000 for that October payment. Hearings on the bill were held by the House Judiciary Committee. That Committee unanimously reported the bill. It was passed by the House. It went to the Senate where it was reported by the Senate Judiciary Committee and passed by the Senate. It went to the White House. The President vetoed it on the ground that Ohio did not comply with the Act. The testimony indicated conclusively that the Social Security Board paid Ohio in the following month of November 1938 and succeeding months and that no change was made in the Ohio system. It requires a 2/3 vote to override the veto. The House sustained the veto altho 171 voted to override and 153 voted to sustain the President. The interesting question here is whether these funds, which really belong to the aged folks of Ohio, should have been withheld for alleged irregularities of those administering the Old Age Assistance Division.

THE "BIG TRAIN" ENTERS POLITICS.

Do you know who BIG TRAIN is? Ask any dyed-in-the-wool baseball fan. He'll tell you that BIG TRAIN is none other than Walter Johnson who came out of the Idaho bushes many years ago to enter the big league and lead the league for 8 successive years with a total of 3487 strike-outs. Walter Johnson is now 52. He's well preserved. Last year he entered politics and was elected a county commissioner in Maryland, just a few miles out from Washington. He has become rather adept in broadcasting ball games for the Washington Nationals. BIG TRAIN is a Republican and will be a candidate for Congress this year from the Maryland district. If and when he comes to Congress he will meet quite a number of members who performed in the big leagues many years ago.

FARM TENNANCY.

In July of 1937, Congress passed the Farm Tenant Act, making available to farm tenants and persons with farm experience a modest amount of money for loans with which they might purchase farms. Thus far, 75 million has been made available for this purpose and it is expected that by July 1, 1940, about 13,328 tenants will have been

enabled to purchase farms. It is now possible to write the score on this program. There are 6,812,350 farms in the U. S. Of this number, 2,865,155 are tenant farms. This is 42.1%. The average price paid per farm is about \$5300. The loans runs for 40 years at 3%. If there were no increase in tenancy from year to year, it would take about 500 years to execute this program if \$25,000,000 were appropriated this year. The real difficulty lies in the fact that according to testimony of the Administrator of this program, tenancy is increasing at the rate of 40,000 or more every year. This means that if the Federal Government provides loans for as many as 5000 tenants per year to buy farms, the number would still increase at a rate of more than 35,000 per year and that the problem could never be solved. The Act provides that the money shall be distributed among the states on the basis of population and the prevalence of tenancy. Under this formula, 75% of all the loans made were in 16 states, most of which are in the south. In the states of Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi and Texas more than 500 farms have been purchased. In the states which pay the greatest share of the taxes like Illinois, Pa., Ohio and New York, the number ranged from 49 to 116. Some years ago, the State of South Dakota launched a program making state funds available for loans to buy farms. That program has been discontinued and report has it that the State will lose about \$30,000,000.

THE SUGAR ACT IS NOT SO SWEET.

The average per capita consumption of sugar in the U. S. in all forms is about 105 pounds. Theoretically then, every person eats about 30 pounds of sugar from Cuba each year, 25 pounds of American beet sugar, 13 pounds of Florida and Louisiana cane sugar and the remainder from Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Hawaii, Philippines and other places. And thereby hangs a tale. In 1937, Congress passed a Sugar Act. Under that act, the Secretary of Agriculture first determines the amount of sugar to be consumed in the U. S. in the course of a year and then divides the market among the various producing areas according to a formula. That's how Cuba gets about 29% of the American sugar market and sugar beet farmers in our own country get only 23% of the market. Florida and Louisiana where cane sugar is produced get but 6 1/4% of the American market. The avowed purpose of the act is to prevent expansion of sugar production in the U. S. even tho we produce less than 30% of our own sugar requirements. If farmers who produce beets and cane, comply with this program, they are entitled to receive benefit payments. The money for these payments is raised from taxes imposed on sugar manufacturing and runs slightly less than 1/2¢ per pound. This tax is of course passed on to sugar consumers. Before a sugar farmer is entitled to benefits, he must agree not to employ child labor and must pay a reasonable wage as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture. The odd thing about that is that Cuban Sugar farmers can employ mere children if they like and pay the lowest kind of wages and still get nearly 30% of our sugar market. In addition, the tariff on sugar from Cuba has been reduced from 2 1/2¢ per pound as provided by the Act of 1930 to 90¢ per hundred pounds under the reciprocal trade agreement with her. Here's how it's worked. In 1935, we sold Cuba \$60,000,000 worth of goods. In return, we lost \$40,000,000 in sugar duties and bought enough sugar above the world price for sugar to cost another \$43,000,000. Hence, we paid \$83,000,000 for the privilege of selling \$60,000,000 in merchandise. The sugar act is not so sweet.