

THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT
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16th district

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LINCOLN WALKS AT NIGHT -- Once upon a time a tall, slender, dark bearded citizen of Springfield wrapped a shawl around his shoulders, crawled aboard an eastern train and looked sadly down upon a crowd of folks who had gathered to bid farewell. He had forgotten to get beefsteak the night of the election, and the calling-down he received from his wife for this slip-up somehow still overshadowed his being made President of the United States. Abraham Lincoln waved good-bye to the home folks. The crowd broke up and departed rather noisily, rather doubtfully, as the train drew out. It was the last they ever saw of Lincoln alive.

LINCOLN BECOMES PRESIDENT -- Into Washington he went to take his oath of office. A tall, rugged figure -- abused by cartoonists and the people he didn't know, rather helpless in high society -- he became president of a nation bound by the salty shores of Maine, across the lowly marshes of the Mississippi, beset by slavery and the dissention over a question that had haunted the United States a multitude of years.

HE TOLD STORIES -- There is an everlasting debate whether he made his farewell speech at Bloomington; nevertheless he told stories endlessly to illustrate his points. Not many years ago a newspaper editor at Charleston, Ill., attacked the memory of Lincoln, saying that he should not be honored because some of his stories were the sort not to be repeated in polite society. Perhaps so. But when he wanted to drive a point home, he told the most illustrative anecdote at hand, and generally got his point across.

HONORED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD -- Lincoln came into a controversy-torn Washington. He settled down to be a president. He was. When the questions of freeing the slaves was paramount, he acted without fear. When question arose concerning important decisions during the civil war, he acted without fear of the consequences. And in face of disturbing adversities within his own household. The fortitude which this gentleman displayed made him an object of universal worship.

THERE ARE STATUES -- Abraham Lincoln is not only the greatest of Illinois citizens, -- he has been adjudged by authorities as being one of the ten greatest men of history. In the nation's capital there are more than 200 statues of him. It is a testament that this man, who saved the nation from destruction, left behind him a spiritual entity that is known throughout the world.

HIS MEMORIAL -- Across a long expanse of well decorated lawn, a reflecting pool, and what-not, from the Washington monument, sits a tall, marble building known as Lincoln Memorial. Hardened Washingtonians, long accustomed to the sights which thrill tourists, motor by this Memorial building late at night. There is an extraordinary appeal to it, unlike anything else in the east. The statue of the sitting Lincoln, sitting there lighted by a heavy spotlight -- sitting there in the gloomy darkness, is more awe-inspiring than anything else, even the White House. Lincoln was a savior of a nation. He had a homely philosophy. He was of our kind of folks. How could we fail to do reverence to the spirit which has lingered on years after his death on February 12, his birthday?

SHARE THE WEALTH -- There are people in the capital who wag their heads dubiously over Huey Long, the Senator from Louisiana. For some reason he has caught the attention of the nation. A tall, thick-of-girth, shaggy haired person of middle age, he is basically a spell-binder bent upon consuming considerable senatorial time with explanations of his conduct. He is clever, a speaker of limitless charm, careless of consequences, yet adept at satisfying his constituents. He advocates "share the wealth". He would take from the rich to satisfy the poor. He speaks, generally to the galleries. He is the biggest drawing card the senate has had in a century.

EICHER BILL -- Renewed interest has been taken in the Eicher measure which would provide federal payments to those farmers whose lands have been damaged by seepage from the Illinois and Mississippi waterways. The reason for this lies in the fact that the federal land bank agencies have notified such farmers that no more loans will be granted on such lands because, it has been figured, the cost of pumping out the overflow is gradually running them into bankruptcy. The War Department, charged with investigating the situation, admits to a certain extent that there should be some adjustment to farmers for this. Dr. J. P. Kerr of Versailles, Ill., chief of the Illinois Drainage Districts associations, has appeared at these

hearings. It is his contention that the government would not go far enough under the Eicher bill. The tall, slender, white haired doctor, a land owner himself, argues that the government should purchase and retire this sub-marginal land. It is saturated, he says, and therefore little good for crop-raising. Soft spoken, precise, and forceful in an intense sort of way, the doctor has told the committee that once upon a time, when he first saw the land he owns, the Illinois river was a comparative stream that could be waded across. Now, he says, it is a channel of such depth that high barges course its waters, carrying tons of commerce to all points of the world.

CHINCH BUG PLAGUE--Farm advisers who have been canvassed estimate that the chinch bug plague will be from two to three times worse this year than it was in 1934 when it took countless millions of dollars toll from Illinois crops. They based their estimates upon predictions that the weather will not be much different from last summer's. This has alarmed Illinois' representatives, and they are preparing to appear before the house committee on appropriations to insist that the million dollar appropriation for chinch bug control be retained in the annual bill. Last year only \$900,000 of the \$1,000,000 was spent. Even though \$1,000,000 is hardly enough to adequately control the crop pest, Illinois' delegation is wishful of obtaining this much. There is a possibility of a slip along the line. The Department of agriculture, although studying the situation carefully, has been unable to find any practical means of destroying the parasite--that is, completely eliminating it. Methods of battling it are still in primitive stages. Farmers generally plow a furrow and pour creosote into such trenches. The bugs crawl along, drop into the pits, are either drowned or are burned. But this doesn't stop the flies from soaring from field to field. Although the million will be only a starter, it would enable further research. The slip comes when -- if precedent means anything -- the matter is brought before the house. Last week there was a vigorous fight made on a similar bill designed to devise means of ridding oyster beds of starfish and borers. Those five-pointed starfish, almost phantastical to the land-bound middlewesterner, creep into the oyster beds along the Atlantic and almost smother to death the valuable "crop". Last year, relief workers removed thousands of bushels from starfish from the oyster beds -- but it was enough.

HAVE AN OYSTER -- To a middlewesterner whose mind stops geographically short of the rare sport of pulling in a battling bass, the method of catching oysters is amazing. Back home the customer goes down to the corner grocer and gets a paper pail full of the shelled mullosks. Or he goes to the restaurant and buys half a dozen on the shell at high prices. The easterner dearly loves to fascinate his western visitor with the oyster. Along Chesapeake Bay, not so many miles from the nation's capital, are thousands of little waterfront cottages and cabins. You visit these owners on invitation. You are sitting at the dinner table. Then, suddenly, the host remarks, "How would some oysters on the half shell appeal to you -- fresh caught!" You grin and agree that it would have great appeal. "Come along," says he, and down to the boat landing you go. He grabs a rope tied to a pole and up comes a bushel basket full of oysters, fresh out of the bay. He selects a bucketful, lets down the basketful, and you have fresh oysters that are almost unknown for taste in the middlewest. He buys them by the bushels, dumps them into a basket or large can, and sinks them into the bay, to be used when needed. An oyster cannot "swim" out, so it is there until needed. Oyster fishing is a complicated sport. You charter a skiff, and off you go well into the choppy bay. Once there, if sea sickness doesn't get you first, the leader of the expedition drops anchor, finds long poles with hooks on the end, and dips them into the bay. Very soon he "hooks on" and everybody heaves to help pull whatever it caught, up. If the "catch" doesn't get the best of the heavers, and pull them overboard, there finally appears a tremendous cluster weighing, sometimes 200 pounds. There are hundreds of oysters, clinging fast together like fraternity brethren just before final exams! If the cluster doesn't slip out of the hooks, it's landed. One cluster is quite enough for one cottage for many a day.

WORK FOR THE NEEDY--The senate continues to cogitate over the best methods of distributing the \$4,880,000,000 which would be turned over to President Roosevelt for continuing America's program of returning commercial normalcy. There is nothing particularly political about the hesitation. Both parties are most concerned that the money be spent so that it will do the most good. But with the lengthy consideration comes a suggestion that \$2,000,000,000 of this be set aside as a revolving fund for loans to small industry. It is the contention that if sufficient loans were made to start small industry, the relief rolls of small communities would be diminished by thousands and the purchasing powers of those same communities would be increased by hundreds of thousands. Thus recovery would start at the bottom and spread to the top. As far as Illinois is concerned, it has been suggested that the state government give to each manufacturer, who takes a man off relief rolls for a year, a check for \$100 which could be applied by this factory owner to his state tax bill. The state, it is said, would make this back many times over, through its sales tax. In addition, the manufacturer is permitted to use a star for each registered relief roll worker employed in his ads.