

3/16/40

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

FIXING THE PRICE OF COAL.

In 1935, Congress enacted the Bituminous Coal Conservation Act. Its purpose was to conserve our coal resources and stabilize the coal industry. This act divided the nation into coal areas; set up a Coal Commission and authorized that Commission to hold hearings, take testimony and then fix minimum and maximum prices for coal, based on the kind, type, and energy producing quality. The Commission set to work on this huge problem. Truly, it is huge. There are thousands of kinds of coal, produced in 30 states, from more than 15,000 mines. Coal operators who joined the Coal Code paid 1¢ per ton to pay expenses of the administration of the act. Those who did not join the code paid 19.5¢ per ton. The Act of 1935 was invalidated by the courts. Congress passed the Coal Act of 1937. This Act also provided for a Coal Commission; The new Commission under the new act sought to hasten things a bit by preparing price schedules without hearings. Once more the court knocked out these schedules. Hearings were resumed. Then came the transfer of the Coal Commission and the administration of the Coal Act to the Department of Interior. In its new location, the work of the Commission went forward. It is indicated now that the schedule of prices may be announced about April 1st, 1940. Thus it required five years from the passage of the original act before the schedules are ready. One reason why the task is so monumental is because different freight rates figure in coal prices. One item of hope is reflected in the diminishing gas pressure in areas now supplied by gas. Wherever this happens people revert to coal.

THE KERNEL OF THE CENSUS NUT.

On June 18, 1929, Congress passed an Act to provide that the 15th census of 1930 "and all subsequent decennial censuses" should be restricted to inquiries relating to population, agriculture, irrigation, drainage, distribution, unemployment and mines. Another Act passed August 11, 1939, extended the scope of the census to include information on housing, dwelling units, and structures. Came 1940 and time for the 16th decennial census. The Census Bureau in collaboration with other agencies framed the questions to be submitted to the people. Included were questions No. 32 and 33. Question No. 32 seeks an answer to the "Amount of money, wages, or salary received (including commissions)" for 1939. Question No. 33 wants to know, "Did this person receive income of \$50 or more from sources other than money, wages, salary" for 1939. The Census Bureau argues that the questions are proper, necessary, and within its authority. Several members of the House and Senate and quite a number of citizens argue that these questions are not authorized, that they constitute snooping and that they are improper. They also contend that if these may be asked, other and more intimate questions might be included. Hence the row.

FORMULA FOR A NAVY.

Two years ago, Congress provided for an increase in the strength of the U.S. Navy so that it would consist of 660,000 tons of battleships, 175,000 tons of aircraft carriers, 412,000 tons of cruisers, 228,000 tons of destroyers and 82,000 tons of submarines. The recent bill passed by the House to increase the number of aircraft carriers, cruisers and submarines will provide a Navy of 1,724,480 tons of combatant ships that are under-age. The life of a battleship is figured at 26 years; of aircraft carriers and cruisers at 20 years; other surface vessels at 16 years; and submarines at 13 years. Normally, the formula for building a navy would be to determine the size of the navies

of those nations who might become our enemies and then build a Navy that is strong enough to cope with that combined strength. But it costs money to build ships. Economic factors enter into the picture. So the formula by which an expansion of our Navy is provided is that amount of increase which (1) Will add strength to our Navy (2) provide some protection against any possible enemy combination (3) can be accomplished at a reasonable rate of construction (4) would not bring about excessive burden to the Federal Treasury (5) can be brought about with available skilled labor (6) and which if stepped-up or abandoned would not overly disturb economic conditions.

CINCUS.

That looks and sounds like some ancient Roman word. It isn't. It's not even a word. It's a coined combination which refers to the Commander-In-Chief, United States Navy. Cincus in this case is Admiral Richardson and thereby hangs a tale. When King George VI and Queen Elizabeth paid us a visit, Admiral Richardson was detailed by State and Navy Departments to serve as the King's aid. In appreciation, the King gave him an autographed photograph which graces the Admiral's home. A photographer for LIFE, taking some snaps of the Admiral also snapped the photograph. Thus it came to the attention of a rugged Representative in Congress from Vermont. He telegraphed the Admiral for details. The Admiral obliged. Thereupon Vermonter Plumley examined the Constitution found that Article 1, Section 9, Clause 8, forbade any "person holding any office of profit or trust" under the United States from accepting "any present, emolument, office or title of any kind whatsoever from any king, prince or foreign state." Vermonter Plumley examined the debate on the Constitution, quoted from the debates, from the Federalist, from Commentaries on the Constitution, from Supreme Court decisions, from Opinions of the Attorney General, from Digests on International Law, to show that the Admiral should not have accepted the photograph. It's Cincus move.

CONFUCIOUS IN THE NEWS

Good old Confucius! For 2400 years he has been reposing in an Oriental grave and yet he is upon thousands of tongues today. "Confucius say-" and then begins those modern improvisations, some witty, some bawdy, some clever, some ribald, some unmentionable. And now Confucius comes to government. Recently, some devotee of the ancient Chinese sage wrote the Federal Communications Commission requesting that defamations of what Confucius said be barred from the air. The FCC advised that it did not dictate or direct the program policies of radio stations. Thus did Confucius make the news.

PRESIDENTIAL POSSIBILITIES.

VI. Paul Vories McNutt. - Democrat.

Broad shouldered, ruddy, handsome, with a shock of silvery white hair, he is often referred to as "tall, tan and terrific." He has something of an imperial bearing and easily fits the romantic conception of a king or prince. He will be 49 in July of 1940. For a time he practiced law but liked scholastic work in preference to law and by progressive stages became dean of the Law School at the University of Indiana from which he graduated to the governorship in 1933. Indiana governors cannot succeed themselves and at the end of his term, the President appointed him as High Commissioner to the Philippines. In 1939 he returned and was made Administrator of the Social Security Act, which position he now holds. In 1928 at the national convention of the American Legion at San Antonio, he was elected as national commander. He is rated as a firm and forceful administrator, a fluent and vigorous speaker, and is equipped with a vast amount of energy.