

SIXTEEN LONG YEARS. Ever since 1921, Congress has been laboring with some form of a bill to take the profits out of war. With the passing of time, more ex-service men are coming to Congress and they bring a keen interest and deep appreciation of such a measure. The millionaire fortunes made from the production and sale of war supplies makes excellent ammunition for the crusaders who favor a war profits bill but they are not so important. The real damage of war consisted in the complete disorganization of our internal economy, the high prices, the accumulation of debts, the expansion of our farm domain and our industry, and the complete collapse that ensued when we finally left the artificial basis created by the war. To prevent recurrence of those conditions, the bill to eliminate war profits and stabilize conditions is being vigorously pushed. Seven such bills are now pending in House and Senate. It gives large powers to the President to freeze prices, provides for 95% tax on all war profits which are in excess of the average earnings of an industry for the three pre-war years, provides for conscription of those between the ages of 21 and 31, and gives the President power to mobilize industry and issue licenses to do business. In the previous sessions, the war profits bill has always stirred debate to a feverish pitch.

THIS WILL TAX YOUR CREDULITY. Blase government workers smiled and tittered as a number of quaintly attired persons appeared at the WPA administration last week to press an unusual request. These quaint persons came from Lancaster County Pa. They wore wide brimmed hats and long beards. There was about them a quiet simplicity that gave no hint of the strife, fury, haste and bustle that goes on in this world. They were Mennonite farmers. It seems that the WPA had arranged to build a consolidated school in a rural section of Lancaster County which is almost entirely populated by Mennonite farmers. Children were to be carried to school in a school bus. They did not want their children to be riding in buses because the "will grow up to be farmers and they must have strong legs." Hence they were opposed to the Federal Government aiding or encouraging such a school. All this sounds very amusing. Perhaps we think them quaint and behind the times. Yet, when it is remembered that they have nobody on relief in their community, never lose their cheerful smiles and quiet demeanor, perhaps the more worldly people of this generation are just as amusing to them. And by way of afterthought, when the AAA program was inaugurated, they promised and did cooperate to reduce crops but refused to accept the benefit checks.

Quaint, did you say?

TAKE THE CHOICE. The National Capital offers such a variety of churches and faiths that anyone coming from any corner of the earth may find here a place of worship. Easter Sunday offered services in the following churches: Christian Science, Catholic, Evangelical, New Jerusalem, Rosicrucian, Theosophical, Quaker, Brethren, Divine Science, White Cross, Spiritualist, Church of Christ, Truth Services, Christian Mystics, Nazarene, Yogoda, Unity, Pentecostal, Universalist, Baptist, Christian, Lutheran, Reformed, Unitarian, Methodist Episcopal, Presbyterian, Non-Sectarian, Episcopal, Congregational, Hebrew, Adventist, Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, Jehovah's Witnesses, and many others.

PERSPECTIVE. Congress, like an individual, can fuss and fret and stew and fuss about some measure that for the moment seems to be the most important thing in the universe only to find in the mellow light of perspective that it wasn't so important after all. Some measures, which occupy the spotlight for a brief while are like Shakespeare's description of man "who struts and frets his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more." We're thinking particularly about a measure passed by Congress in 1936 after the AAA was invalidated. The flue-cured tobacco farmers in five southeastern states came to Washington and with a feeling quite akin to desperate resignation, insisted the Congress enact a resolution which would make it possible for these five states, thro their legislatures, to enter into a compact under which they might fix prices and control the production of flue-cured tobacco. Congress did. It went further. It provided \$300,000 with which to get these compacts under way. The tobacco farmers returned home happy and contented. Recently, our curiosity moved us to inquire as to what had happened to tobacco compacts and we were given to understand that nothing had been done and we were given to understand further, that probably nothing would be done. The tobacco farmers are still happy.

GRASSHOPPERS. Soon the tender, emerald-green shoots of corn will nose out of the warm earth and begin reaching to the sky. Caressed by warm winds, nourished by refreshing rain, they will strike deep root and grow deep green and billowy. Corn row will then be "laid-by" and surrendered to Nature's process of maturing. White tassels will shoot up, silks will appear, and each corn stalk will stand as some hardy sentinel to guard man's subsistence. And then our worst fears may be confirmed as little hippety-hoppety grasshoppers appear. Will they ravish these majestic stalks and bring the labor of Man and Nature to naught. Do they come as some harbinger of punishment for all the distrust and grief, and suspicion and iniquity in the world? Were other generations bothered with these ruthless destroyers? Be not dismayed ye contemplative souls! There were grasshoppers long before our time. The history of the Department of Agriculture shows that as early as 1876 (11 years after the Civil War) whole areas in the west and central west were devastated by grasshoppers and the Department asked and received from Congress a special appropriation of \$30,000 with which to buy seed and feed for the devastated areas. It was one of the first seed and feed loans on record. The only difference between

1876 and 1936 is that in the latter year, there were more grasshoppers.

CONGRESS AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA. Congress as provided by the Constitution exercises exclusive legislative authority over Washington, D.C. That means that not a dollar can be expended on city affairs nor could the name of a street be changed without first having a bill enacted by Congress. Similarly, Congress listens to testimony from the District officials and then determines how much shall be expended for police and fire protection, for schools, for health and hospitals, for streets, sewers and bridges etc. Congress also fixes the tax rate. In view of the fact that there are untaxable Federal buildings to the extent of several hundred millions in this city, it has been the custom of Congress to donate a lump sum of money toward district government in lieu of lost taxes. At one time the amount was 9 million; at other times five million; at other times a lesser amount. The amount has always been a source of trouble since District residents want it kept high as possible while members of Congress in the interest of their constituents want it kept reasonably low because such a donation constitutes a tax upon the rest of the people of the country. To settle this troublesome problem, \$50,000 was appropriated last year to study the matter and work out some sort of a formula under which such contributions might be made. Three distinguished men, including Clarence Dykstra, former city manager of Cincinnati, were appointed by the President to make this study. This commission engaged Mr. J.L. Jacobs of Chicago, a tax expert to investigate all phases of the matter and make a report. Mr. Jacobs went to work and fashioned a report that was voluminous and detailed. Then he came before committees of Congress to explain the report and the formula which he had devised. Meanwhile, the Budget transmitted to the Congress by the President contained recommendations for the annual appropriation for the District of Columbia which was based upon the formula developed by Mr. Jacobs. When the committee which handles these appropriations completed its labors, it threw the Jacob's formula into the proverbial ash-can with the terse comment that it was fantastic, visionary, and unworkable and thus the \$50,000 study came to a tragic and inglorious end.

SOIL MAPS. The smart purchaser of land, before making such purchase is very likely to send to some state agency or to the Federal Government for a soil map of the farm he proposes to buy and first studies the soil very carefully. These maps are in detail and describe accurately the character of the soil and are very helpful. Soil surveys however have been made for only limited areas of the country, and every year Congress is urged to provide sufficient money with which to complete soil surveys. It is painstaking work and requires much time and money. Most recent estimate laid before Congress indicates that to complete these surveys would require 12 years, would require hundreds of professional and clerical employees and cost \$38,085,590.

THEORY OF SPENDING. You've heard much about huge Federal expenditures, unbalanced budgets, need for governmental economy and other things which makes of current interest, the theory of spending. In brief it's this: Make it just as hard to obtain money and just as difficult to spend money as possible. Here is how it works. Take the Commerce Department for example. The Chiefs of the various Bureaus first make an estimate of what they expect to require by way of funds for the next ensuing year. In these estimates they must show everything from the number of people employed and their salaries down to stationery and automobiles. This goes for every division such as the Bureau of Fisheries, Bureau of Lighthouses, Bureau of Standards, Patent Office and every other division. These estimates are then turned into the Secretary of Commerce who together with Bureau chiefs and budget officers go over it. Then it is assembled and presented to the Bureau of the Budget. This Bureau listens to testimony on the various subjects and then makes up the Budget. This Budget is presented to the President for approval. The President then transmits it to Congress. The Appropriations Committees of Congress then call in the Secretary of the Department and the Bureau Chiefs for further testimony. Outside testimony is also heard. Then the expenditures are reduced to the form of a bill, presented to Congress and enacted into law. Under existing law, money appropriated for one purpose cannot be used for any other purpose unless specifically authorized. If it is done, the Comptroller General's office which examines all expenditures, even for a very small amount, will refuse to honor it and make the spender reimburse the Federal Treasury. On one occasion, some Bureau Chief in the Department of Agriculture, who without authority expended about \$35,000 some years ago to stamp out a sudden outbreak of hoof and mouth disease was compelled to raise the money and restore it until Congress could enact legislation whereby he was reimbursed. This one may discern that insofar as regular appropriations are concerned, the game is to make it difficult to get money out of the Federal Treasury and then make it almost as difficult to spend it after it has been provided.