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THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT.
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THE WORLD DO MOVE. In 1908, the State of Oregon enacted a law providing minimum wages for women and children. That law went to the Supreme Court of the United States in 1917. In passing upon that law, one Justice did not participate. That left 8 of the 9. The Court handed down a 4 to 4 decision. In the case of a tie, the law in dispute gets the benefit of the doubt and was therefore upheld as constitutional. Shortly prior to 1923 the District of Columbia enacted a similar law for women and children. In 1923, that act was passed upon by the Supreme Court and was declared unconstitutional by a 5 to 3 decision. Chief Justice Taft sided with the minority. Profiting by the decision of the Court, the states of New York and Washington enacted minimum wage laws for women and children. The New York law was on the books a long time before it came before the Supreme Court, but come it did in June of 1936 when the Court threw it out by a vote of 5 to 4. Last week, the Washington law came before the Court and was sustained by a vote of 5 to 4. The box score therefore is that in 29 years, the Supreme Court has been to bat on minimum wage laws for women and children four times, it "struck out" twice and "hit" twice. It's the last hit that counts and it can be expected that states will now get busy and push thro legislation providing for minimum wages for women and children.

SOME KIND REMARKS ON FERTILIZER. In 1877, the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States remarked that we had enough free land to last for 500 years. Twenty five years after that remark was made, all the "good" free land was gone. In those early days, the soil seemed to be an inexhaustible resource. All one had to do was to plow it, plant seed, wait for rain and sunshine to make a crop, and continue that procedure year in and year out. Then we became conscious of several things. One was that wind and water was eroding the top soil, carrying it away and destroying the fertility of the land. The nation today is erosion conscious as never before and millions upon millions of dollars will be spent to teach farmers how to terrace the land, scientifically drain it, strip-crop it and do other things to prevent erosion. The other fact is that we've become fertilizer conscious. We realize that each crop takes organic matter out of the soil and that fertility can be maintained only by putting organic matter back into the soil. That means fertilizing. Quarter of a century ago, virtually 90% of all fertilizer used was natural. Today, about 90% is synthetic in the form of nitrates, phosphates, limestone and the like. Twenty years ago, the plant food content of a ton of fertilizer was only 278 pounds. The balance was inert, inactive substance. Today the plant food content is about 365 pounds per ton. It is carefully estimated that a dollar spent for fertilizer will increase the value of an oats crop by \$2.47, wheat by \$5.37, cotton by \$5.56, corn by \$5.57, sweet potatoes by \$4.16, potatoes by \$4.22. New ways are being devised to make the application of fertilizer more effective. Chemists and engineers at Muscle Shoals are working to bring about a variety of fertilizer that contains as much as 1000 pounds of plant food per ton, thereby saving to the farmers freight charges on inert material that has no soil or plant food value.

PROGRESS OR RETROGRESS IN AIR SAFETY. "Airplane travel isn't all that it's cracked up to be" said some amateur wit recently in commenting on the latest air accidents and then promptly proceeded to contend that there are more plane accidents now than in former years. Many other folks have said the same thing and it only proves how dangerous it is to generalize from a particular instance. Now for the brutal facts which always have a habit of disturbing unfounded contentions. Department of Commerce Records show the following table of air accidents involving passenger fatalities: In 1927 - 1, 1928 - 7, 1929 - 6, 1930 - 5, 1931 - 9, 1932 - 9, 1933 - 3, 1934 - 7, 1935 - 4, 1936 - 7. The average for 1936 is no greater than in previous years. Then it is contended that more people have been killed recently in plane accidents than in former years. That is quite true. 1927 showed but one death, 1928-15, 1929-18, 1930-24, 1931-26, 1932-25, 1933-8, 1934-21, 1935-15, 1936-46. Who so many in 1936? Simply that planes are much larger, have greater passenger carrying capacity, and are being more widely used. Taking it all in all, including passenger miles flown, fatalities for 1936 were smaller than in any previous year.

HOW CLOSE IS THE CONSTITUTION TO YOU. A bill was introduced in both House and Senate to compel barber shops in Washington, D.C. to close on Sunday except that a barber who closed his shop on Saturday as a matter of religious belief might keep his shop open on Sunday. That sounds simple enough and similar provisions prevail in many localities by virtue of city ordinances. Now, if you'll go back and look at the first amendment to the Constitution, you'll find that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or the free exercise thereof;" On many occasions, the Supreme Court in interpreting that amendment has said that "In this country the full and free right to entertain any religious belief, to practice any religious principle, and to teach any religious doctrine which does not violate the laws of morality and property, and which does not infringe personal rights is conceded to all. The law knows no heresy, and is committed to support no dogma, the establishment of no sect." What the above mentioned law seems to do is to require observance of Saturday as a matter of religious belief in order to keep his shop open on Sunday. That would be in violation of the Constitution. There are perhaps several hundred thousand people who observe Saturday as the Sabbath who feel that such a law would be discriminatory and hence are opposed to it. During the last 40 years, nearly 150 compulsory Sunday observance bills have been introduced in Congress. None of them were ever enacted into law. Those who observe Saturday as a holy day find their protection in the first amendment to the Constitution.

DUST BOWL. Take a small scale map of the United States. Place a pin at the point where Colorado, Texas and Kansas come together. Around that pin, draw a circle to embrace about 100 counties. That circle will include a segment of the five states of Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico. The land in that circle constitutes the so-called "Dust Bowl" about which we've heard so much. It's the area where the land has become dry and powdered by lack of moisture and unwise tillage. That powdered earth is whipped about by prevailing winds and brings nightfall to cities in the daytime and carries destruction in its wake. Special effort will be made through emergency appropriations to induce the farmers in that circle to plow lister furrows running east and west or on contours so as to hold the soil, or to induce them to plant grain sorghum or Sudan Grass to fix and hold the soil. This dust bowl emergency program is estimated to cost an additional \$5,000,000.

JUDGE LYNCH. Every citizen has a kind of a dual citizenship. First he is a citizen of the state in which he lives. Secondly he is a citizen of the United States. In his capacity as a U.S. citizen, the Constitution guarantees him certain rights. Among others things, the 14th amendment to the Constitution provides that "No State shall..... deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." Now, take the case of a Negro in a southern state who having been accused of crime, whether rightly or wrongly is taken from the custody of the sheriff by a mob and hanged to a convenient telephone pole. It is commonly called lynching. The State makes no effort to bring the lynchers to justice. Is that denying to a citizen the equal protection of the laws and if so, what shall be done about it? Lynching still occurs, altho not so frequently as in former years. From 1882 - to 1892, the average number of lynchings per year was 155.8; from 1893 to 1903, the annual average was 133; from 1904 - to 1914 it was 69; from 1915 to 1925 it was 50; from 1926 to 1936 it was 16; in 1936 it was 9; Sentiment has gradually developed to the point where Federal action was proposed and several attempts have been made to enact an anti-lynch law. Two such were before Congress. One was introduced by Rep. Mitchell of Illinois and another by Rep. Gavagan of New York. The Mitchell bill is not very drastic, permits of much interpretation and seemingly would not accomplish the purpose. Because it was less drastic it was reported out of the Judiciary Committee for action by Congress. Some member then raised a point of order against its consideration and the matter went to a vote. By a vote of 257 to 122 Congress decided not to consider the Mitchell bill. It will now consider the far more drastic Gavagan bill which was brought out of committee by a petition signed by a majority of the members. This bill has plenty of teeth and if enacted into law, will make both lynchers and the states and counties whose officers suffer lynching to take place liable to suit in a Federal Court.

THE GUESS WENT WRONG. There are two ways in which a housewife could make up a family budget. First, she could determine how much money was available for spending for the week and then estimate the amount of food, clothing, fuel and other items she could buy and stay within that limit. The other way would be to estimate the expenditures for the week and then try to find the money with which to cover those items. Government can do much the same thing in making up its budget. Last year, it adopted the latter course. Expenditures seem to have first been figured and then an effort made to find revenues to cover them. In seeking such revenues, it was determined by legislation in 1936 to do away with the corporate income tax and substitute a so-called tax on the undistributed net profits of corporation. By taxing these profits unless corporations issued these profits to stockholders instead of keeping them in the corporation treasury as a reserve it was hoped that such taxes added to the increased taxes that stockholders would pay on the extra dividends they would receive would bring 840 millions into the Federal Treasury in March of this year. The taxes are now in. Instead of 840 millions, the collections amounted to a little over 700 millions. We're 140 millions short for the first quarter of the year. Somebody guessed wrong. Result? Since the Treasury figured on this money in its calculations, Uncle Sam must now borrow.

AIN'T WE A BIT FUNNY. Men are jobless because factories have no place for them. Factories have no place for them because the public does not buy enough of factory goods. The public does not buy enough of these goods because it does not have the money. The public does not have the money because it's jobless. (2) Farm prices were too low because we had a surplus. We had a surplus because people could not buy. People could not buy because they had no money. They had no money because they had no jobs. They had no jobs - well, you go on and finish it but what we started to say was that now that the records are complete for 1936, we find that in 1936, we imported 78 million pounds of tallow, 310 million pounds of hides, 67 million pounds of tobacco, 15 million bushels of flaxseed, 257 million pounds of wool, 39 million bushels of wheat, 31 million bushels of corn, 4 million bushels of rye, 400,000 cattle, 172 million pounds of fish, 6 billion pounds of sugar, 15 million gallons of liquor, 198 million pounds of prepared fish, 3½ million gallons of wine, 87 million pounds of canned meat, 60 million pounds of cheese, 10 million pounds of butter, 14 million pounds of sausage casings, 301 million pounds of barley malt, 87 million pounds of canned meat etc etc etc etc.