

4/21/34  
[April 21, 1934]

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

ALKY-GAS. The history of alky-gas may be summed up somewhat as follows: Paul Beshers of El Paso, Illinois suggests to the Gridley Lions Club in the course of an address, the idea of converting domestic grain into alcohol and compelling the use of such alcohol in gasoline in the proportion of 10% as a farm relief measure. Development of the idea by the Gridley Lions Club, Keystone Steel & Wire Co., the Prairie Farmer and other agencies until it became nationally known and was publicized in national magazines. Introduction in Congress of a half dozen bills embodying the idea. Demonstration on June 9, 1933 on the Washington Memorial Highway of the merits of alky gas as compared with regular gasoline, which demonstration was sponsored by the author of this column in connection with technical experts from the American Auto Association, the various oil companies, experts from the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Standards, members of Congress from many states, and proponents of the alky gas idea. During the summer and fall of 1933, engineers and chemists at Iowa State College carried on their tests and demonstrations of alky gas. The same was being done by the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Standards. Independent research work was and is now being carried on by the manufacturers of motor cars, by oil companies and others. Visit to White House by Hon. Henry Wallace, Secretary of Agriculture, Chester Davis present head of the AAA, George Peek, former head of the AAA, Dr. Tugwell, Economic Adviser of the Department of Agriculture. The Department of Agriculture, while not in a position to make a public announcement on this proposal is known to favor the alcohol gasoline idea. The President was not convinced that it is a matter of major importance and hence made no affirmative recommendations. Gradual realization by experts who have been watching the curtailment policy of the administration, the prospects of bumper crops despite acreage reduction in cotton, wheat, corn and other commodities that our problem is still one of demand and the creation of a demand for farm commodities within our own borders. Gradual enlistment of the interest of such recognized authorities on technical problems as Dr. Hale of the Dow Chemical Co. at Midland, Michigan, Dr. Francis P. Garvan and Dr. Buffum of the American Chemical Foundation, Mr. Vincent, President of Packard Motor Car Co. and others in the alky-gas idea. Intimation by a well known oil company that it may soon market a motor fuel consisting of 71% kerosene, 25% alcohol, and 4% "casing head" (this is a highly volatile liquid, which is a by-product of refining and is liquified by refrigeration and gives quick starting qualities to motor fuel) and gradual recognition of the possibilities of alcohol as an element in motor fuel. Rapid expansion of the use of alcohol as a motor fuel in England, Germany, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, Australia, and other countries, now running into hundred millions of gallons. Publication of a book on "Power Alcohol And Farm Relief" by the American Chemical Foundation of which Dr. Christensen, Dr. Hixon and Dr. Fulmer of Iowa State College are the authors and distribution of 50,000 copies. (This office has a limited number of such volumes which it will send on request). Preparation for a hearing on alky-gas before a Senate sub-committee of which Senator Bennett C. Clark of Missouri is the chairman and to which many distinguished technical experts will be called to testify. The idea that rolled forth from Gridley Illinois is gaining speed, momentum and size, attracting the interest, attention and support of big men in national affairs who see in it, the solution of mid-western farm surplus problems.

FACTS ABOUT BRAIN TRUSTERS. (No. 2) Dr. Mordecai Ezekiel, born in Virginia, graduated from University of Maryland in agriculture, in 1918, went to Reserve Officers Training Camp at Plattsburg in 1918, commissioned as a second lieutenant, served in infantry, did not go overseas, discharged in December 1918. From 1919 to 1922 worked in Bureau of the Census, preparing text for census reports. From July 1922 to 1930, served in Division of Farm Management, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, off and on, developing statistical analysis of price movements in grain. From February 1930 to March 1933, served as Assistant Chief Economist to the Federal Farm Board. During this time, was granted year's leave to go abroad under a fellowship from the Guggenheim Foundation to study economic conditions in England, France, Germany, Italy and Russia. His book, called Methods of Correlation Analysis used as text book in many agricultural colleges. Has published many magazine articles. Holds degree of Master of Science from University of Minnesota (1923) and Doctor's degree from Brookings Graduate School of Washington, D. C. in 1926. Wrote two articles on Russian agriculture which were published in "Wallace's Farmer" in 1931. He is 35 years of age, is married and has two sons. (Next week, Dr. Rexford Guy Tugwell, Brain-truster No. 3).

AGRICULTURE. When farmers get together, they talk of crops, prices, and farming. When business men get together they talk of volume, sales, profits, conditions, credits. When workmen get together, they talk of wages, hours, jobs. When bankers get together, they talk of discounts, profits, credits, money. When Congressmen get together, in cloak rooms and corridors for moments of relaxation, they talk of all these. Just now, they, and also the Department of Agriculture is concerned about the farm outlook. The break in grain prices, last week, the report by the Department of Agriculture that despite acreage-curtailment, the winter wheat crop this year is expected to exceed last year's crop by 140 million bushels, the report that the corn crop this year will exceed last year's crop by 200 million bushels, the movement of new wheat to market in July of this year, are all very disquieting. Add to this the apprehension of the Department of Agriculture in administering the new Bankhead bill for compulsory crop control as distinguished from voluntary control, and the picture is rather dismal. Next week, committee hearings will begin on the Kerr bill to regiment tobacco growing and tell each farmer in major tobacco producing states, how much he may raise and sell. The prophecy of the author of this column six weeks ago that Uncle Sam may yet tell the farmers of Illinois how much corn, wheat and hogs they may raise and make them procure a certificate or permit to that effect may be just around the corner.

VETERANS. A scheme is on foot to post the names of all veterans receiving compensation or pensions from the government in the post offices of the cities in which they reside. The idea is to shame some of them into withdrawing from the pension rolls. If this is done, can there be any objection by anybody anywhere to the publication of income tax returns by posting them in the post offices?

POETIC SUMMARY OF CORN-HOG PROGRAM. Taken from a report published by D. A. Fitzgerald of the Brookings Institution.

"Six million pigs went to market,  
 Thirty million pigs stayed at home,  
 One million pigs made relief meat,  
 Five million pigs made none."

"FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD." (Believe it or not) Senator Huey (Call me Kingfish) Long: "I have in my office now, thousands of letters which are four months old. I have several thousand letters, that I have not been able to answer since this session of Congress met." Congressman Gray from Indiana. "You may call a horse a cow but the application of the name 'cow' will not make the animal a female bovine or at least will not change a horse to a cow so that you can milk it, nor give the animal a status from which to make butter, sell buttermilk, start a dairy, or a cheese factory." Congressman Foulkes of Michigan. "The trouble with Dr. Wirt seems to be a 'brain-storm,' I am told, that followed the drunken debauch of his maudlin informants. In an orgy, in which certain people seem to have consumed 'strange drinks and had strange thinks' and in which their brains deserted them, they conceived the nightmare that the 'brain-trust' was engaged in communistic deviltry." Senator Smith to Senator McNary, "I cannot furnish the Senator brains to take in a simple fact." Congressman Britten from Illinois. "The report that I have in mind states that Ambassador Bullitt (to Russia) will sleep in a baby-blue bedroom, adjoining a bathroom 25 feet square surrounded by all the glories of the Czarist era.... The dining room will seat 300 people. The show place of the embassy is the ballroom, surrounded by marble columns and decorated with crystal chandeliers, 10 feet in diameter."