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THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT.  
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16th District

ALASKA THE PARADISE? (Note the question mark.) Come to Alaska! Paradise of farmers! Government Experiment station grows largest Irish potatoes in the world! Huge strawberries! Four will fill a pint box! Grow three crops in 130 days! Etc. These are not the raucous cries of a sideshow barker but the claims that have been made over the years to "sell" Alaska's alleged virtues to the people of the U. S. Sounds romantic and glamorous and hence it is not strange that nearly 200 families were prevailed upon last year to go to the Matanuska Valley in Alaska as "pioneers" to start anew. Each family was given a 40 acre tract, machinery, seed and a \$3000 credit until the land became productive. The \$3000 was repayable over a period of 30 years. To date, it has cost \$18,000 per family to send them there from the states. Two months after arrival, 26 families returned to the states, discouraged by the rains, the long dark winters, the ghastly summer heat. Only 167 families remain. They've been learing things. The huge Irish potatoes grown up there are wet and unfit for food. The strawberries are stringy and tasteless. The beautiful lettuce, rhubarb, tomatoes and what not that are grown look gorgeous but are rotten at the core because of the rapid growth. Three crops a year, but what kind. Sixty thousand white people in Alaska today and each year they import 6 million dollars worth of foodstuffs from the states. Rather eloquent commentary upon Alaska's agricultural claims. Alaska is still wild and still a frontier. Informed opinion has it that in a brief while the rest of the pioneers of Matanuska Valley will return to the states and thus will end another noble experiment.

FOR CLARITY. PWA stands for Public Works Administration and embraces Federal and non-Federal projects which were constructed under the 3 1/3 billion dollar appropriation of 1933. WPA stands for Works Progress Administration and covers those projects embraced in the 4.8 billion dollar appropriation of 1935. Under WPA the cost of creating a job for an unemployed person was \$780 of Federal funds plus \$195 of state, county or local funds making a total of \$975 per job. Under PWA the cost was \$741 of Federal funds plus \$1400 or more of state, county or local funds making a total of \$2200 or over per man. The PWA estimate was made from a study of 1000 completed projects.

SUSPICIOUS CHARACTER. Cuba has a new President. His name is Gomez. He came to Washington recently to pay a courtesy call. The Cuban Ambassador, Guillermo Patterson held a reception for him. Detectives were present at the reception to protect the invited guests, the jewels, the valuables. The detectives reported to Ambassador Patterson that one person at the party was acting strangely, going about as if dazed, and that he stood around and looked at people in a curious way. The Counselor to the Cuban Embassy thereupon suggested that the stranger be casually invited to have a drink so he might be scrutinized without incurring suspicion or creating a social blunder. Gradually, the taciturn stranger was inveigled into conversation. Then it came out. He was Dimitri Naounoff, Minister from Bulgaria to the United States.

PROBLEM CHILD. At age 3 he came from Poland with his parents. They settled in Seattle, Washington. He grew up and worked his way thro high school and thro college. At various periods in his career he was a jewelers apprentice, a lumberjack, a rat catcher, fish merchant, shipyard worker, cattle herder, oarsman, football player. Then he became a lawyer. Then he ran for Congress in 1932 and was elected. He was a quiet person, a hard worker and was given an excellent committee assignment. He was well regarded. He was elected again in 1934. Then things begin to happen. He became ebullient, effervescent, irrepressible. He loved fun. He liked to heckle members on the floor. On January 1, 1935, it is alleged that he plugged in all the plugs on a switchboard at an apartment house about the time the old year was going out and the new year coming in. The police didn't like it. He was arrested, tried, and fined. Recently, he arose early one morning to try out his auto at 70 miles an hour. He was tagged, posted a bond, failed to appear for trial. The judge thought otherwise and requested that he be brought in. Several officers undertook the task. A merry tussle ensued. Finally, he was brought to Court and fined. In the absence of a fine, he was sent to jail. Another member rushed down and paid the fine. Meanwhile, the papers were filled with his exploits. He has become a headache to the police and a problem to the leaders. His name is Marion Zioncheck of Washington.

SO WHAT? In a previous letter, we said something about the celebrated Florida Ship Canal, which is a proposed canal running across the northern end of Florida from the Atlantic to the Gulf. It was started with an emergency appropriation by Executive order. Total cost would run about 160 million dollars. Five million or more has already been expended. When the matter came before the House of Representatives in the form of a request for appropriations to carry on the work, the House Appropriations Committee turned thumbs down. Then it came up in the Senate. There it was disclosed that ship owners would not use the canal because it would be more expensive than to go around the Florida peninsula and it would also take more time rather than save time. Also, prominent geologists pointed out the danger of disturbing the soil water

of Florida. Twice did the U. S. Senate vote on it and twice did the Senate vote it down. Now comes a letter from the Projects Committee of the National Rivers & Harbors Congress, a private organization to the effect that the Projects Committee "Has voted unanimously to endorse as a national project the Atlantic Gulf Ship Canal across Florida as being sound, needful and sufficiently advanced in status and a project that should be promptly constructed in the public interest. So what?

WHO, WHAT, AND WHERE ARE THE JOBLESS. 3,250,000 families have been certified as eligible for works-program employment. (WPA) These families include 4,885,000 workers or a little less than one half of the total number of unemployed. They constitute 10% of all gainful workers in the U. S. Thirty five percent live in rural areas. 82% are white, 15% negro, and 3% other races. 28% are women. 16% possess no previous work experience. Of this 16%, two thirds are young people between the ages of 16 and 25, the other one third are women. 27% of the total number are over 45 years of age. 34% of the relief workers were normally employed in the building and construction industry. 80% have some skill that can be utilized on relief work. 5% were formerly skilled workers and foremen in manufacturing plants. 18% were classified as semi-skilled. 20% of the relief workers total are farm operators or laborers whose skill can be used on reclamation or conservation work. 11% of all relief workers were of the so-called "white collar" group such as nurses, teachers, artists, preachers, salesmen, engineers, etc.

PENDING TAX BILL. When you read this, the House will probably have passed the new administration tax bill. It is 249 pages in length, contains 62,000 words, contains mathematical formulas and logarithms for calculating taxes. The following paragraph taken from page 16 of the bill indicates what a complicated thing it is: "If the undistributed net income is a percentage of the adjusted net income which is more than 30 (and such percentage is not shown in the foregoing table) the tax shall be the percentage of the adjusted net income equal to the sum of 7.5 plus fifty five one-hundredths of the amount by which the percentage which the undistributed net income is if the adjusted net income exceeds 30." The history of the tax bill in brief is this: To pay off the bonus requires 120 millions per year for nine years; to pay benefits to farmers under the new Soil Conservation Act requires about 500 million per year. The Treasury therefore needs new permanent revenues of 620 millions per year. To pay commitments made to farmers under the AAA before it was invalidated by the Supreme Court requires 173 millions per year for 3 years. It is proposed to raise the 173 millions by a windfall tax on the processing taxes which processors kept after the Court voided the AAA. This tax is estimated to yield 100 millions annually. The other 73 million will be obtained from a capital stock tax. To obtain the 620 millions of permanent revenue, it is proposed to repeal present taxes on corporation incomes, excess profits and capital stock taxes and substitute a graduated tax on all profits which corporations fail to distribute to their stockholders at the end of the business year. It is estimated that repeal of the existing corporation taxes and substitution of the new levies will effect a gain of 620 million dollars per year or the amount deemed necessary. The philosophy of the bill is to compel corporations to distribute dividends so that they may be taxed in the hands of the shareholders. Principal objection to the bill is that it does not give corporations a chance to lay up a reserve with which to meet emergencies. An example is the American Telephone & Telegraph Co. which, despite the depression continued to pay dividends to stockholders out of surplus at a time when such stockholders really needed dividends to get along.

ULYSSES S. GRANT. Birth anniversaries are important. Observance of them saves great men from obscurity, preserves their inspiration for generations to come. What a vast loss to our people if we failed to remember the Carpenter of Nazareth at Christmas, if we failed to remember Washington and Lincoln in February, if we missed the inspiration of Memorial and Armistice Days. On April 27, we keep alive the memory of Grant. Altho born in Ohio, we claim him for Illinois because he lived with his brothers at Galena and was appointed by Governor Yates as Colonel of the 21st Volunteers, from which he rose to the rank of General. He was appointed Colonel at age 39 and had to borrow money to buy his uniform. He was defamed and reviled in the Congress in 1861 but Lincoln's answer to his defamers was, "I can't spare the man - he fights." When complaint was made that Grant drank whiskey, Lincoln naively remarked that if he knew what kind of whiskey he drank, he would send some to his other generals. When everybody was clamoring for a march on Richmond, to break the Confederacy, Grant disagreed and said, "Lee's tent was the heart of the Confederacy." He was right; others were wrong. He never set foot in Richmond. After eight years in the Presidency, he retired only to find that his business partner had absconded and left him bankrupt and hopelessly in debt. In constant pain, propped up in pillows, he labored on his Memoirs to pay off his debts. A magnificent example for all generations.