

5/2/36
[May 2, 1936]

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

PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES. In a few weeks, Republican men and women will be assembling at Cleveland, Ohio and Democratic men and women will be assembling at Philadelphia for the purpose of selecting candidates for the Presidency. These conventions are attended with a deep public interest. Development of the radio has brought them close to every home. You might therefore be interested in the mechanical processes by which candidates are selected. At the Republican Convention at Cleveland, 1001 delegates will assemble, 58 of whom will be from Illinois. It requires a majority of 501 to name the candidate. The hectic and feverish efforts now going on by various candidates is for the purpose of securing favorable consideration by such a majority. Ordinarily there are 2 delegates selected for every Member of Congress and for every Senator but that rule is not uniformly followed. The Democratic states of the south are allowed only 1 delegate for each Member and Senator and 4 at large. Tennessee, since it is partly Republican is given 2 delegates for each of the four normally Republican districts and 1 for each of the normally Democratic districts. Kentucky is allowed 2 for each district and for each Senator. Alaska and Porto Rico are each allowed 3 delegates. Those states which remained in the Republican column in 1932 are given a bonus of 3 delegates so that the whole number of those who will be officially credited to the Republican Convention will be 1001. Convention affairs are run by the National Republican Committee, having one member from each state. This Committee selects the person to act as temporary chairman, the permanent chairman, the person to make the so-called keynote speech, and the convention committees which look after hotel accommodations, decorations, tickets, and other details. The Democratic Convention at Philadelphia will have 1100 delegates. They follow the rule of selecting two delegates for each Congressional district, 2 for each Senator, 6 for the District of Columbia, and 6 for each of our outlying possessions such as Alaska, Hawaii, Porto Rico, etc. Preliminaries, as in the case of the Republicans, are handled by the Democratic National Committee.

SOCIAL CREDIT. You've heard and read much about Social Credit in connection with Alberta, Canada where an administration was elected to office on the pledge of providing every man, woman and child with a credit of \$25 per month to build up purchasing power for all forms of goods and commodities. It failed to work in Alberta because the Province of Alberta had a heavy debt and suddenly found that it had to let its bonds go to default. A bill similar in purpose is now pending before the Banking Committee of the House of Representatives. It goes on this theory: We have many idle factories and plants in the U. S. If all were working, we would have prosperity. Greater production would mean greater employment. As a matter of fact, perhaps only 70% of our plant capacity is now being used. That means that 30% is unused. If we could give every citizen a discount of 30% on his retail purchases of goods, it would mean a greater consumption of goods. For the first three months, this bill proposes a 25% discount on all retail purchases. After that time, the discount would be whatever percentage our unused plant capacity bears to the total amount of plant capacity which is available for production. The idea is worked out by providing that a retailer shall first enter into an agreement with the Secretary of the Treasury. Thereafter, he gives a discount to every person who purchases his goods and makes a record of it. These records or vouchers showing total discounts given are then presented to the bank and the bank gives the retailer full credit on his account for the total amount of all discounts given. The bank certifies to the Federal Treasury, the amount of credit it has given to all retailers for such discounts and receives in return national credit certificates which are legal tender. These national credit certificates are in turn retired out of a Retirement Fund which is built up by turning over one fourth of all the Revenues taken in by the Government over and above whatever is required to keep the national budget balanced. In addition to these discounts, the bill also provides that Consumers Dividends of \$5 per month shall be issued to every citizen for a period of one year. The whole theory is to make possible the purchase of more goods, and the expansion of employment.

NOTE TO ALGEBRA STUDENTS. Be attentive to your algebra. You never know when you may have to refresh your memories on equations in order to figure out your taxes or the taxes of some employer. Take for instance the following excerpt from the Tax Bill as first introduced in Congress: "If the percentage which the undistributed net income is of the adjusted net income is not one of the percentages of the adjusted net income in schedule I or II, then the rate of tax shall be proportionate, being interpolated by the straight line method: That is, by the formula

x $\frac{a - b}{c - b}$ times (e - d) plus d." And while you're about it, also be

attentive and diligent in your pursuit of the elusive mysteries of quadratics, integral calculus, logarithms and other Euclidian lore.

RELIEF YARDSTICK. Folks in Illinois get just as hungry as they do in Nevada. Folks in Kansas get just as cold and need as much clothes to keep away the winter's chill as the folks in Minnesota. It takes as much nourishment for a child in Connecticut as it does in Wyoming. Yet, singularly enough, in providing for relief out of the Federal Treasury, states were by no means treated alike. Recent tables indicate that for the years 1933, 1934 and 1935 the average amount per family of Federal funds expended for relief ranged from \$3077 in Nevada to \$369 in Kentucky. Other figures of interest are Wyoming \$1619, Illinois \$1005, Montana \$1141, Michigan \$837, Georgia \$711, Iowa \$556, Vermont \$660, Delaware \$383, Kansas \$763.

HOUSEWIVES ATTENTION. How often, on being quoted a price on some item of merchandise, the mind goes back to what we like to refer as the "good old days," when it was cheaper, or the same or higher in price. It is so delightful to reminisce by saying, "Why, I remember the days when a soup bone really had some meat on it and a 10¢ soupbone was enough for a family of five" or "I can recall milk was 10¢ a gallon and they couldn't give buttermilk away" etc. The following tables, compiled by the Dept. of Labor, may therefore, be of interest in showing just how much One Dollar would buy in the month of February in each of the years 1929, 1933, 1935, and 1936.

Article.	Feb. 1929	Feb. 1933	Feb. 1935	Feb. 1936
Bread	11.4 lbs.	15.4	12.0	11.9
Butter	1.7 lbs.	4.0	2.3	2.4
Milk	6.9 quarts	10.3	8.5	8.5
Eggs	1.9 dozen	4.2	2.5	2.7
Potatoes	2.9 pecks	4.2	3.9	2.9
Plate Beef	4.8 lbs.	9.5	6.8	6.1
Coffee	2.1 lbs.	3.7	3.6	4.1

You will note from this table that a Dollar would buy 23 eggs in Feb. of 1929 and 50 eggs in Feb. of 1933. This is the basis of the argument used in behalf of a Commodity Dollar. Instead of having the value of the dollar go up and down in terms of purchasing power, why not make the dollar buy the same amount year in and year out by making the gold content of the dollar vary according to the change in the general price index.

MAN vs NATURE. Since the dawn of civilization, man has been in constant conflict with nature, seeking to subdue natural forces, and make them work for him, seeking to thwart the destructive forces in nature, and constantly fighting against those natural forces which aim to destroy his supply of food, clothing and necessaries. A tabulation of figures has never been made but it would be interesting to know just how many millions are expended annually for this purpose. Examples are the funds expended to forecast hurricanes and tornadoes, prevent forest fires, conserve our dwindly oil supply, prevent disastrous floods. In the Bureau of Standards we have funds provided to examine into and seek a preventative for rust and fatigue of metals. The Dept. of Fisheries carries on a constant work against the depletion of salmon, weakfish, haddock and against tiny insects which destroy oysters, bass, trout and other varieties of sea food. The Dept. of Agriculture wages incessant warfare against ticks, dourine, Bang's Disease, tuberculosis, mastitis, mamitis, anthrax and other diseases in cattle, erysipelas, paratyroid and cholera in swine, fowl pox, pullorium disease, laryngotrachetis in poultry, and a variety of diseases in horses, sheep and other animals. Unrelenting efforts are made to combat Dutch Elm disease in shade trees, the green aphid, the coddling moth, the Mediterranean Fruit Fly and other parasites that imperil our fruit supply. Studies are forever under way to deal with chinch bugs, black and red rust in wheat, the Army worm, the Hessian Fly and other cereal crop diseases. Between the countless destructive forces in nature and the selfishness of many people who unwittingly assist in the destruction of our material resources, the Federal Government, armed with hundreds of millions of dollars and the most expert advice obtainable becomes a kind of policeman, trying to keep man and nature within due bounds.

HOW OLD ARE THEY? The President is 54, Vice President Garner is 67, Cordell Hull, Secretary of State is 65, Henry Morgenthau Jr., the Secretary of the Treasury is 45, George H. Dern, Secretary of War is 64, Homer S. Cummings, the Attorney General is 66, James A. Farley, the Postmaster General is 48, Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior is 62, Henry A. Wallace, Secretary of Agriculture is 48, Daniel C. Roper, the Secretary of Commerce is 69, Claude A. Swanson, Secretary of the Navy is 67, and Frances Perkins, the Secretary of Labor doesn't disclose her age but we suspect that she is between 48 and 50.