

THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT  
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SEEK TO FIND. Legislative language with its repetitions and long phrases can often be so abstruse as to obscure items of importance. For example, by reading and piecing out the language on several different pages of House Resolution 8539 dealing with newly proposed regulations for the liquor business, you will learn that it shall be unlawful for a distiller, brewer, rectifier, producer, wholesaler, importer or bottler of distilled spirits, wines, or malt beverages to sell, receive or deliver in interstate commerce, any spirits, wine or malt beverages unless they are bottled, labeled and packed in conformity with regulations that will require an accurate statement in the case of blended or rectified liquors, showing the percentage of neutral spirits that was used in such blending and the name of the commodity from which such neutral spirits have been distilled. Sounds puzzling and perplexing. Yet that provision contains great practical import. The market today is filled with blended whiskey, sold at low prices. Much of it contains a blend of neutral spirit. Much of the neutral spirits so used are made from blackstrap molasses but the label does not state that fact. Much gin is made from blackstrap molasses but the label does not say so and the buyer does not know. The above provision in the proposed law would require that the label state whether neutral spirits used in the liquor are made from molasses. You know what the average citizen would do if he noted on the label that the liquor he proposed to buy contained spirits made from molasses. The above provision therefore with the aid of judicious advertising would serve to chase liquors made of blackstrap molasses that has been imported from Cuba and Porto Rico off the market, and save this industrial outlet for the American farmer. However, the blackstrap boys are not asleep and rumor has it that a determined effort will be made to have this provision removed from the bill.

DIGNITY OF THE HOUSE. Everett Parker, age 44, used to raise a little cotton on a small rented farm in Tennessee and give his landlord half to pay the rent. Last year, Congress passed the Bankhead Bill limiting the number of bales of cotton to be produced. Southern landlords therefore did not need as many share-cropping tenants as before and Everett Parker found himself out of a livelihood. To get relief was difficult. He thought it would be easier to procure relief in Washington and accordingly, five weeks ago, he, his wife, and four children aged 6, 4, 2 and 8 months hitch-hiked to the national capital and managed to get on the relief rolls. While in Washington, they tried to see the things of interest and one day Mr. Parker in overalls, Mrs. Parker in calico and the little Parkers in bare feet came to Congress, sat in the front row of the galleries and listened to the debate on the Rayburn-Wheeler Holding Company Bill. Little 8-months-old Hilda Jean blinked at the lights, at the people, at the noisy debate but it meant nothing to her. She knew nothing about unconstitutionality, or death penalties for holding companies. She knew nothing about the Federal Securities Commission or integrated public utility systems. She did know however, that when Nature sent a painful pang of hunger, it was a sign that her little tummy was empty, and in the only way that babies have, she made her wants known to the mother. With all the simplicity and lack of pretense that mountain mothers know, Mrs. Parker heeded Hilda Jean's insistence and nursed her in the front row of the galleries. A House attendant, noting the incident, reported to the official Doorkeeper, who promptly rushed to the gallery and notified Mrs. Parker that she should repair to the ladies' room. Mr. and Mrs. Parker and the four little Parkers promptly left the gallery and the so-called dignity of the House which may with the greatest impunity, be marred by turbulence, confusion and inelegant language was once more saved. Dignity is a funny thing.

LOTTERIES. For three years, Representative Kenney of New Jersey has been hugging the idea that the painless way to raise revenue to cover the tremendous expenditures taking place for a myriad purpose was to have the government operate a lottery. The idea became his pet legislative hobby. Like Cato, the old Roman Censor who on every

occasion would express his pet grudge against Rome's ancient enemy by saying "Carthago est delenda" meaning Cathage must be destroyed, so Kenney, whenever a revenue bill was up for consideration, would suggest that Congress stop taxing and raise the money by lottery. Kenney made a historical study of the matter. He pointed out that in Colonial days, Congress approved a lottery scheme for raising money to build roads, that states used a lottery to raise funds for building roads, schools, and penitentiaries, that churches used lotteries to pay off their building debts. He pointed out that millions of dollars leave the U. S. annually for lottery tickets of foreign countries, that 30 different nations use the lottery, and that Italy supports her navy in part with funds obtained from a lottery. His idea is to have Uncle Sam operate the lottery, sell tickets to everybody, have substantial capital cash prizes every month, and use the proceeds to pay off the soldiers bonus, old age pensions and many other items. Last week, Mr. Kenny's Catonian patience was rewarded when the important Ways and Means Committee of the House started with open hearings on Mr. Kenny's lottery bill.

THE KING CAN DO NO WRONG. When the government needs money for some purpose, it has been the common practice to start the printing presses, print a quantity of handsome bonds, sell them to banks, individuals or corporations and so raise the money. That bond is an express promise to the person who buys it that Uncle Sam will pay him a definitely fixed rate of interest and will pay off the bond at it's maturity date whether it be 1, 5, 10, 20, or 50 years. Heretofore, such bonds always contained a clause stating that they they were payable in gold. Those clauses were inserted at a time when the price of gold was a little over \$20 an ounce. Now, however, gold has gone to more than \$35 an ounce. If you had a bond which you purchased ten years ago while gold was at the lower figure, and could make Uncle Sam pay in gold now, you would get 65% more than what you paid for the bond. To collect in gold however, it would be necessary to sue Uncle Sam in a Federal Court. This right to sue is not an inherent or constitutional right. Long ago, when kings ruled over the people of different countries and had unlimited power over the lives, and property of their subjects, there existed the general philosophy that the King could do no wrong. If he could do no wrong, there was no reason why a subject of the king should be permitted to sue him. Sometimes, officers and agents of the king did wrong and the only way to redress these wrongs was for the king to permit the person who had been wronged or harmed to sue. That principle still exists in our government. We have no King of course, except for the people. They are the sovereign power. They delegate their power to the President, to Senators, to Congressmen and other elective officials to represent them and administer the government. The only reason a citizen can sue the government is because the government permits him to sue. At the present time, the holder of a bond can sue the government for the difference between what he paid for the bond and what it is now worth in gold. On a \$1000 bond, it might amount to as much as \$650. One suit has already been filed. If the bondholder were successful, the courts would be flooded with similar suits. To stop this possibility, which would be embarrassing to the government, the President sent a message to Congress last week, recommending legislation that would terminate the consent which the government has voluntarily given to be sued on it's securities, coins and currencies. In other words, the sovereign power has decided to withdraw it's consent to be sued.

FARMERS HOME ACT. Last week, the Senate passed the Farmers Home Act. This act creates a Farmers Home Corporation of five members with a capital of 50 million dollars and authority to issue up to one billion dollars worth of bonds, the proceeds of which are to be used to help farm tenants, share croppers or those who recently were farmers to buy a farm and all the machinery necessary for it's operation. Under this act, a farm can apparently be purchased with no down payment. The Government supplies all the cash, fixes as low an interest rate as possible and gives the purchaser a long time to pay. On the surface, it looks splendid. In practice, it will not be so easy. First, there is a clause in

the bill which states that "due consideration shall be given to the desirability of avoiding expansion of production for the market of basic commodities for which the price is lower than the parity price as defined in the AAA." Secondly, "so far as practicable, the Corporation shall assist beneficiaries of the program to become established upon lands now in cultivation." According to the AAA, corn, wheat, tobacco, cotton and other items are still below the parity price. It is apparent therefore that if a tenant or share cropper wishes to buy a farm, he must buy one already in cultivation. Third, if the services of appraisers of the Federal Land Bank are available, no farm land shall be bought by the Corporation save upon appraisal by one of the appraisers of the Federal Land Bank." If there is any instance on record where a Land Bank appraisal was as high as the appraisal by the owner of the farm, it would be quite rare. Yet, if the Federal Land Bank appraisal was lower than the price demanded by the farm owner, the tenant who made application to purchase such a farm could get no consideration. All of which tempts the conclusion that Senator Bankhead of Alabama the author of the bill has some definite idea in mind in this Farmers Home Act. Down in Alabama, the average price of a small farm is about \$1900. Cotton is the principal crop. The same Senator Bankhead was the author of the first Bankhead Bill which limited the amount of cotton that could be produced and caused many share croppers and tenant farmers to be ousted and forced on relief. They are in extreme distress but they can still vote, and they are rather bitter toward the first Bankhead bill. Next year, the Senator will be up for - but perhaps that would be an unkind thing to say.

TRAGEDY. The young man or woman who came out of high school or college in June 1929, hugging a diploma and filled with high hopes has gone through six years of depression in an effort to find a niche in the world. Estimates are that of some 7 million such graduates between the ages of 18 and 29, nearly 2½ million are out of work. In the younger bracket from 18 to 24, 44% of the high school graduates and 35% of the college graduates are out of work. In October 1934, 300,000 people on relief had never even had a job of any kind. Ninety per cent of this number ranged in age from 16 to 25. There is a fine pride about youth with some schooling. An unsuccessful effort to find a job at home, impels them to "hit the road." That is one reason why one third of all those who go to the so-called transient or "hobo camps" established by the Government are between the ages of 18 and 24.