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From the Congressional Record

The Congressional Front

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SHIFTING GOVERNMENT

Mr. Dirksen. Mr. Speaker, in 1939, Congress enacted a measure known as the Reorganization Act which conferred upon the President certain powers to reorganize and consolidate the various agencies in the executive branch. In pursuance of that authority, the President issued five reorganization plans. A recent estimate of the effect of these plans indicates that about 115 different agencies of Government have in one way or another been affected. Some have been abolished altogether. Others have been transferred from one department to another. Some have been abolished and their functions transferred to other agencies. Some have been slenderized and renamed, and still others have been expanded. Two of the most provocative changes were the transfer of the Immigration and Naturalization Service from the Department of Labor to the Department of Justice and the transfer of the Civil Aeronautics Authority to the Department of Commerce. It takes a considerable time for those dealing with Government agencies to readjust themselves to so many changes.

FARM PARITY

For many years a substantial portion of the membership in Congress was lukewarm on the subject of parity prices and parity income for farmers because parity as recognized by the Farm Act of 1938 applied only to the 5 basic commodities of cotton, corn, wheat, rice and tobacco. These commodities were selected because we have always produced and exported the surplus and the price of these commodities was most quickly affected by lower world prices or by a curtailment of the world market as a result of war or the export restrictions in other countries. Growers of citrus fruits, flax, hops, soybeans, and many other commodities as well as producers of milk, cheese, and dairy products were, therefore, not particularly enthusiastic about parity unless their products were included. For some time congressional committees have had under consideration some modification of the basic Farm Act of 1938 to make it more inclusive and bring other crops and products into the parity picture. It remained, however, for the House Committee on Banking and Currency to bring in a bill relating to commodity loans on farm commodities which contains a provision reading as follows: "It is the policy of the Congress that other purchase, loan, or other operations of the Department, taking into account the funds available for such purposes for all commodities and the ability of producers to bring supplies into line with demand, shall be carried out so as to bring the price and income of the producers of such commodities to a fair parity relationship with other commodities." This may appear as a lot of involved language to the average person but it does in fact constitute the recital of a legislative policy that may result in parity for all commodities whether basic or not. It seems amazing, indeed, that a policy so drawn should be announced by Congress in the last 7 lines of a measure which dealt entirely with the subject matter.

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It is estimated by the Bureau of the Census that between October 16, 1940, and July 1, 1941, 832,000 young men will have attained the age of 21. That means that they have moved across that invisible line which separates 20 from 21 and makes them eligible for military training under the Selective Service Act. From October 16 to July 1 is 257 days. In that period there will have been 832,000 birthdays, or an average of 3,237 birthdays every day.

THE NEW OATH

Congress takes its own medicine. In order to assist in rooting communism and subversion out of government, it has inserted in all of the departmental appropriation bills a provision to the effect that no part of the funds can be used to pay the salary of any person who advocates the overthrow of the Government by force and violence. That same provision was written into the appropriation bill which provides the funds for the legislative branch of Government. Therefore every Member of Congress, before he can receive his salary, must take an oath which reads:

I solemnly swear that I do not advocate the overthrow of the Government of the United States by force and violence; that I am not a member of any organization that advocates the overthrow of the Government of the United States by force or violence; and that I am a citizen of the United States.