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THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT.  
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16th District.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT. When George Davis of Washington, D. C., received his auto license, a notation on the permit stated that because of defective vision, George must use glasses while driving his car. Recently George forgot his glasses and the motor cops caught him without them. Result - \$5.00 fine.....During the Civil War, California which had been a member of the Union for 10 years was threatened with Indian uprisings, attacks along the coastline, and dissention between sympathizers for the South and the North. Union troops were needed in the eastern battles and could not be spared for the California troubles. Accordingly, the Secretary of War asked California to provide volunteers to handle the situation. The state raised money for this purpose by bond issue and was never repaid out of the Federal Treasury. This week - fifty years after the war - the Senate approved an appropriation for \$6,462,145 to repay California for the expense incurred.

THE NEW TAX BILL. Estate and inheritance taxes set up in the new tax measure will level large fortunes in the U. S. in two or three generations. Here's how it will work if enacted. On estates of 500 million bequeathed to one heir, Uncle Sam will take all except 52 million. The first dip for estate taxes would take a little over 298 million, and the second dip through inheritance taxes on the remainder would take almost 150 million. In the next generation, the heir to this 52 million, who also left but one heir would likewise have his inheritance whittled down. Fortunes of 100 millions, would through these taxes be reduced to 12 million. In the case of a million dollars left to a single heir, Uncle Sam will take \$418,600. There are comparatively few big estates. Of estates over 10 million settled in recent years, there were 16 in 1929, 15 in 1930, 17 in 1931, 6 in 1932 and none in 1933. Of all estates between 1 and 1 1/2 million settled there were 149 in 1929, 190 in 1930, 178 in 1931, 99 in 1932 and 57 in 1933. Evidently the depression did a great levelling job.

SOVIET TRADE AGREEMENT. From 1926 to 1930, our exports to Russia averaged 75 million dollars per year, whereas Russian exports to us average about 16 million. From 1932 to 1935, our exports to Russia dropped to a 12 million average per year while our purchases from Russia were about 10 million. Our sales to Russia after having recognized the Soviet government were smaller than before. Early this month, an agreement was concluded with the Soviets whereby they agree to buy 30 million worth of American goods during the next 12 months and in turn, the U. S. agrees to extend to her the benefits of tariff concessions made to Belgium, Sweden and Haiti under the so-called reciprocal trade agreement act of 1934 and tariff concessions that might be made to other countries while the agreement with the Soviets is in force.

PERPETUAL MOTION. (This column has always sought to avoid political interpretations of items which appear but for once, it falls from grace and only so, because the item appear humorous). The new Work Relief Program has set aside sundry hundred of millions for the relief of so-called "white collar professions" and one of the executives chosen by Mr. Hopkins to administer that program is Mr. Henry G. Alsberg of New York, who a few days ago, in a signed article stated that he would "put several thousand writers to work reporting progress of the expenditure of the 4 billion dollar work-relief fund." It's a case of money from the work relief fund for writing about how the work relief fund is being spent. Somewhere in the distant past, we recall the old classic story about the chap who was going to start a rat farm where the cats ate the rats and the rats ate the cats. Relief funds for writing about relief funds has all the earmarks of a perpetual motion plan that might well be registered in the Patent Office.

WHO SHALL PAY THE BILL? For years, Uncle Sam has been aiding in the building of levees along the Mississippi as an item of flood control by paying \$2.00 for every \$1.00 raised locally. After levees were built, and land cultivated, the engineers found it advisable to set back some of these levees. In so doing, about 75,000 acres of land were left outside the new levees and therefore subject to overflow. Owners of these lands felt that they should receive compensation. Getting it from the states, with empty treasuries would be difficult. Why not try Uncle Sam's treasury. They did, in the form of a bill for compensatory damages. The War Department advised against the measure and refuted any contention of liability on the part of Uncle Sam, but the bill passed the House with a goodly majority.

HOOKEY. Congressmen and Senators are playing hookey and if it keeps up, it might be difficult to secure a quorum and continue to do the legislative business of the nation. But 15 members can keep Congress in session. Rules provide that 15 members plus the Speaker can compel the attendance of the hookey-players and send the Sergeant-at-Arms after them. Members who are absent may then be arrested by the Sergeant-at-Arms and brought back to the House. Members may be fined for absence and precedents show that in the past some of them have been fined from 5¢ to \$2. About 40 years, Congress docked from the pay of absent members. Years ago one absent member was arrested and brought to the House and then promptly escaped which precipitated a long and monotonous debate as to whether he could be re-arrested.

THE FARM CENSUS has been completed and shows 231, 312 farms in Illinois, containing 31,668,028 acres with an estimated value, including buildings and improvements of \$2,208,013,198. Compare this with 1930 when we had 214,497 farms in Illinois, embracing 30,695,339 acres at an estimated value of \$3,336,049,028. It will show an approximate increase of 17,000 farms and an increase of about a million acres, but an estimated decrease in value of more than a billion dollars. McLean County leads the parade, having more farms and more farm acreage than any other county in the state. Census figures show 4,210 farms with 720,697 acres with an estimated value of \$78,139,057.

FIRST CONGRESS. On July 30, 1619, 316 years ago, the first elective representative body ever held in the western hemisphere, and precursor of the present Congress was held at Jamestown, Va. It was called the House of Burgesses, patterned on the British Parliament and met in a wooden church. Representatives came by boat, on foot and on horseback, and after prayer and debate, they enacted laws to "govern themselves", the writings of which are still extant today.

COMMODITY DOLLAR THEORY. The Committee For The Nation has prepared a table showing that at Liverpool, England the following amounts of gold were required to buy a bale of cotton: From 1921 to 1929 it took 5½ ounces, in 1929 - 4.6 ounces, in 1930 - 3.1 ounces, in 1931 - 2.1 ounces, in 1932 - 1.6 ounces, in 1933 - 1.6 ounces, in 1934 - 1.8 ounces, in 1935 - 1.7 ounces. To raise prizes for cotton and other commodities, their economists contend that the dollar must be cheapened so that it will require more dollars to buy the same amount of commodities. This will raise prices, and hasten recovery. The dollar, they contend can be cheapened either by reducing the number of grains of gold in the dollar (devaluation) or by increasing the price of gold through Treasury or Congressional action. The Committee, however insists that this function must be exercised by Congress under it's constitutional power to "coin money and regulate the value thereof."

HERE AND THERE. Daily production of crude petroleum in the U. S. is about 2-3/4 millions barrels.....The proposed tax bill, if applied to the 30 million dollar fortune of Senator Couzens, richest Senator, would take 25 million.....The Washington Auditorium, where John McCormack and other celebrities have appeared before packed audiences, has been rented by Uncle Sam for \$50,000 a year and now resounds to the clickety-clack of typewriters.....50,000

Danes are assembling in Copenhagen to submit to the King a demand for better farm prices.....Uncle Sam now pays a little over 2 million dollars per year for rent of buildings in the city of Washington alone.....Total loans of the Farm Credit Administration outstanding in Illinois as of June 30, 1935 (including Federal Land Bank, Commissioner, Intermediate Credit, Production Credit, Crop, and Drought loans was \$161,468,755.

BUS AND TRUCK REGULATION. Both House and Senate have passed a bill to regulate the use of busses and trucks in interstate commerce. In a general way the bill provides that (1) busses and trucks operating as common carriers in interstate commerce must secure certificates of necessity and convenience from the Interstate Commerce Commission (2) contract carriers must secure permits to operate (3) private motor truck carriers must comply with certain requirements for safety and hours of labor (4) and rate schedules must be filed with the Commission. State commissions will continue to exercise exclusive jurisdiction over busses and trucks operating wholly within the state School busses, taxis, hotel cabs, trolley busses, casual or occasional motor truck operators, motor trucks used exclusively for transporting livestock or unprocessed agricultural products or newspapers are exempt from the provisions of the bill, except that they must comply with the safety and labor provisions. This is the first measure to regulate busses and trucks in interstate commerce that has ever passed the Congress, after years of investigation and agitation on the subject.