

10/28/39

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

WE GIVE THANKS A WEEK EARLIER.

Three weeks from the day that you read this paragraph, the nation will observe the new Thanksgiving Day. By a Presidential proclamation of August 14th, we give thanks a week earlier in 1939 and 1940. Ever since 1775, we have had some sort of a Day for thanksgiving. In 1775, it was observed on the 20th of July. Since then it has been a sort of calendar rover, having been observed in May, December, April and November. The first Presidential Thanksgiving proclamation was issued by President George Washington when he set aside the fourth Thursday in November, 1789 as a day for prayer and thanksgiving. It remained for Sarah Josepha Hale, editor of the celebrated magazine known as Godey's Lady's Book to start a crusade for a fixed Thanksgiving Day. She began this crusade in 1827. Her efforts found a sympathetic response in President Abraham Lincoln who, in 1863 issued a national proclamation setting apart the last Thursday in November for that purpose. In 1864, Lincoln issued another proclamation designating the last Thursday as Thanksgiving Day and from then on, the precedent was established.

DESTRUCTION AND INSTRUCTION.

Chicago boasts a school on South Dearborn Street. It was established in 1932. It is called Workers School. It is conducted at night from 7:00 to 10:15 p.m. Bargain fee for a regular course of 11 weeks is \$2. The regular fee is \$3. It issues a bulletin which comes to all Members of Congress. The first three nights of the week are devoted to general instruction for all persons in all subjects. Thursday and Friday nights are designated as Youth Night. Now what do they teach in this school? Space does not permit listing all subjects since many courses are devoted to Political Economy, History, Fundamentals of Political Education and the like. But here are some subjects that are of more than ordinary interest in view of the investigations of communism and subversive activities now being conducted by a Congressional Committee. This school among other things offers courses in Elementary and Advanced Russian, Marxism-Leninism, How Socialism Works, Survey of the History of the Communist Party in the U.S.A., Foreign Policy of the Soviet Union, Women and the Democratic Front, and History Of The Communist Party Of The Soviet Union. A Committee working on the destruction of Communism, a school working on instruction in Communism! What did you say?

TOUGHEST JOB IN TOWN.

The position of Administrator of the Wage-Hour Division in the Department of Labor has been described as the toughest job in town. Wage Hour Administration had a birthday party last week. The Act has been in effect for one year. One of its birthday presents was a new Administrator in the person of Colonel Philip Fleming who replaces Elmer Andrews, the first Administrator. Colonel Fleming is really a Lieutenant Colonel but hopes to receive a full colonelcy soon. He is a West Point graduate and was one time football coach at that institution. He helped to build the Panama Canal and worked on flood control on the Mississippi River for many years. Under the present administration, he has served with the Public Works Administration and is

highly regarded as a trouble shooter. He is short in stature, has dark impressive eye-brows, disports a stubby gray mustache and wears a friendly smile. He is the gentleman who has been assigned to the "toughest job in town."

FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD OF OCT. 26th
(A one-minute speech by Rep. Andersen of Minnesota)

Mr. H. Carl Andersen: Mr. Speaker, for the past 18 years having a brother in the veterans' hospital at St. Cloud, Minn., it has been my duty to go there two or three times a year to visit him. I see him and some 700 other boys there, most of them in that institution, if you please, because of poison gas and shell shock, a grim reminder of the last World War. Today I am deeply shocked by the action of the body at the other end of the Capitol, wherein an embargo against the exportation of poison gas was refused by a vote of 54 to 36. I repeat, I am deeply shocked that any parliamentary body in this world would vote to ship poison gas, of all things, out of this Nation, of all nations, supposedly a free, peace-loving Nation, dedicated to the preservation and not to the destruction of mankind. (Applause.)

MUNITIONS AND FOREIGN TRADE.

The Division of Trade Statistics in the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce has compiled and submitted some recent figures to indicate the proportion which the export of munitions bears to our entire foreign trade for given years. In the year 1916, the value of all domestic exports was about 4.1/4 billions dollars. That was the year before we entered the world war. Firearms, cartridges, gunpowder, other explosives, airplanes and parts, and acids constituted 11.46% of that total. In 1917, total exports were 6 1/4 billions and the above named munitions were 15.27% of the total. In 1918, total exports were 5.8 billions and the above munitions constituted 7.9% of the total. In 1938 total foreign exports were approximately 3 billions and munitions were but 2.48% of the total. For the first eight months of 1939, total exports were 1.9 billions and munitions exports were 3.96% of the total. These figures include exports to all countries.

ALASKA FOR REFUGEES AND VACATIONS.

The recent suggestion that Alaska be peopled with refugees, brings to mind that this great empire which we purchased from Russia for \$7,200,000., contains but 70,000 persons in spite of the fact that it is larger than Norway, Sweden, and Finland combined. The 70,000 now there are about half white and half Indian. This number means that the density is but 1/10 of a person per square mile. Alaska could support 10,000,000 people with ease. This territory is rich in fish, silver, gold, platinum and coal. Annual production of fish and minerals aggregates \$80,000,000. Alaska is the only spot on this continent where tin is produced in paying quantities. Airplanes are used like taxis. This suggests why Alaska is strange to us. It's a case of transportation. It is now proposed to build a highway from Seattle, Washington to Fairbanks, Alaska. Such a highway would have to traverse Canadian soil. It would therefore have to be provided by a treaty between Canada and the U.S. and would require legislation by Congress. Such a highway would make Alaska accessible in winter and summer and might convert it into something of a vacation spot for folks who now believe that it is a cold and barren place.