

[ca October 1940]

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

TUNGSTEN FROM CHINA

We think of tungsten as the stuff from which the filaments of incandescent electric globes are made but it has many other uses. Among them are the manufacture of high-speed tool steels, radio filaments, the preparation of chemicals and pigments, the tanning of white leather and the manufacture of carbides and abrasives. Hence tungsten becomes such an essential item in our national defense needs. Oddly enough that huge inert country of China has been the world's principal source of tungsten and when the Japanese invaded China, this supply was imperiled. Some tungsten ore is found in the Western states, but total United States production has never exceeded 3500 tons of concentrated ore in any one year. About 70 per cent of our tungsten supply has been received from China and in order to assist both China and our own needs, the Metals Reserve Company, which is a subsidiary of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, has agreed to buy Chinese tungsten at a value of \$30,000,000 with deliveries to be made over a period of years. This will enable China to liquidate United States loans to her through the Export-Import Bank.

IT DON'T MAKE SENSE BUT IT'S TRUE.

This week, Congress enacted a measure to give those world war veterans who were actually engaged in combat on foreign soil a better break in the matter of disability compensation by permitting the character, place, type, and intensity of their overseas service to be given full consideration in determining whether their disabilities were the result of military service. This bill is the result of a curious bit of information which was tabulated only recently. Investigators took the 81 counties in the state of Mississippi and examined into the records of all the men who served in the World War from that state. They found that of the 28,067 who served overseas, only 2.24% were noted at the time of their discharge as having suffered some disability; of the 26,993 who served at home, 14.007% were noted at time of discharge as suffering from a disability. In other words, 7 times as many were disabled in some degree or other serving at home as were disabled in overseas service. This did not seem to make sense. This does not make sense and it was put down as a result of careless or casual examination of the overseas veteran at time of discharge. Congress, to equalize this situation, therefore passed the above described bill.

BIG INSURANCE AGENT.

How would you like to write a million insurance policies? That must be the dream of every insurance man's life. It is'nt likely to happen except in the case of Uncle Sam who is making provision for life insurance for the boys who go into the new army. Government life insurance was made available to world war veterans 23 years ago and more than

1,000,000 made application for policies. Nearly 600,000 of these policies are still in force. After the war, Congress amended the laws to make it possible to re-instate this insurance where it had lapsed or to convert it from ordinary life into other types of insurance. Once more, after the lapse of a generation, the government undertakes to make life insurance available to men in the military and naval service. To prevent confusion, the new coverage will be known as National Service Life Insurance. It will be payable on death in installments, will be based on the accepted American Mortality tables and will be calculated on a 3% basis. For a 5 year period, it will be on a basis of a net level premium and may thereafter be converted into ordinary life, 20 payment or 30 payment life contract. The limit will be \$10,000 per person and if the insured person is totally and continuously disabled for a period of six months or more, premiums may be waived. We are an insurance-conscious people and the new army may provide a million policies or more. What an order?

LAWS WEAR OUT

When a machine wears out and is no longer useful, it goes into the scrap heap. When a law wears out and is no longer useful, it too often remains on the law books. Often laws become harmful long before they fall into dis-use and should be repealed. They seldom are taken from the books. Bruce Barton became a candidate for office some years ago on a platform to repeal a law a day but found it difficult to repeal a single one during an entire Congress. Buckle, the historian records, that human progress is measured not by the laws which go on the books but by those which come off. Recently the Committee on Revision of Laws has been giving attention to this subject of archaic and useless legislation and has recommended the repeal of many laws. One, discovered recently in the Code for the nation's capital provides that a party to a legal action may request an appeal from the justices to the King. Yep! That's still on the books, believe it or not.