THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT.

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TO ONE AND ALL, GREETINGS.

For the seventh consecutive year, it is the privilege of the author of the Congressional Front to sit in the Congress of the United States. For the seventh consecutive year, it is his privilege to publish the Congressional Front. For the seventh consecutive year, he renews his pledge to keep it as free from partisanship and politics as human frailty will permit, and to bring to the readers a symposium of fact and data, which it is hoped, will prove interesting and informative. In the spirit of truth and accuracy, the Congressional Front is re-dedicated to the general welfare.

THE SEVENTY-SIXTH CONGRESS.

At 12:00 noon, on January 3rd, the Clerk of the House of Representatives of the 75th Congress, called the new Congress to order and ordered a roll call. He then entertained the necessary motions under which a Speaker was elected. The Hon. William B. Bankhead of Alabama was selected Speaker for the third time and after a brief inaugural address, administered the oath of office to the entire membership on mass. Thus was the 75th Congress in the nation's history opened. March 4th, 1939 will mark 150 years of Congressional sessions under the Constitution and it will be interesting to observe whether the spirit of '78 will be in evidence in this session.

NEW COMPLEXION, NEW TEMPER.

Anyone who has served in previous sessions of Congress might have observed a change in the temper of Congress as early as on the opening day, even tho' no legislative activity was at hand. It is one of those things that manifests itself to a subtle sense. But there is a reason. The political complexion of the present body differs materially from its predecessors. In the 75th Congress which expired on June 16th, 1938, there were 331 Democrats, 89 Republicans, 5 Farmer Laborites, and 2 vacancies. In the present Congress, there are 261 Democrats, 169 Republicans, 1 Progressive, 1 Farmer-Laborite, and 1 vacancy. This means many things. For one thing, the ratio on committees will be 3 Democrats to 2 Republicans, heretofore it was about 4 to 1. But more than that, it means much in legislative processes.

THE STRENGTH OF A MINORITY.

If a bill is brought to the floor under the unanimous consent rule, a single objection can kill it. If it is brought up under a suspension of the rules, it requires a 2/3 vote for passage and the majority party can no longer command that vote. If it is sought to bring it up by securing a discharge of a committee from further consideration of a bill, it requires 218 signatures of members, and those are difficult to obtain. The only other method is to secure a special rule from the steering committee which is officially known as the Rules Committee. All administration legislation is handled by the latter method. But the administration faces some hostility in the Rules Committee because its membership embraces a number of Democrats who were definitely on the purge list. From all this, it would appear, that all will not be quiet on the Congressional Front during the ensuing months.

THE PESKY BALANCE SHEET.

More and more, we become budget-minded and display concern over the Federal balance sheet. Unfortunately, it is a fantastic affair, the size of a mail-order catalogue, and so studded with facts and figures as to give a mathematician a headache. Yet every citizen should know in a general way how the government keeps house so that in his discussions of the matter, his argument is founded on fact. Here then is a bit of bookkeeping, skeletonized so it will be easy to remember and broken down to the nearest millions and billions.
Most folks income consists of a Saturday night paycheck. Others have income from farms, from stocks and bonds, business enterprises etc. In the case of Uncle Sam, his income consists of income taxes, tolls, customs receipts, revenue taxes on whiskey, excise taxes on matches, cosmetics, auto tires, cameras, shot guns, and a few stray dollars from people who once defrauded him and whose consciences now begin to keep them awake at night. For the official business year which begins on July 1, 1939 and ends on July 1, 1940 the Government estimates that its total income will be about 5 2/3 billions.

**Outgo.**

Outgo is painful to talk about but talk about it we must and here it is. For ordinary running expenses of the regular departments of government about 865 millions; for unemployment relief including the CCC about 2 billion; for public works including highways, flood control, river and harbors, etc. about 1 billion; for national defense about 1 1/8 billion; for interest on the public debt, a little over 1 billion; for veterans 539 million; for farmers 700 million; for social security 928 million; for railroad retirement 127 million; for miscellaneous items about 200 million. The total outgo will be about 9 billion. That means that the deficit will be about 3 1/3 billion. Unless new taxes are imposed, this amount must be raised by additional borrowings for which new bonds must be issued. On June 30, 1930, the national debt will be 44½ billion dollars. At this moment it is 39½ billions. That's real money.