WHAT ABOUT SUGAR: Ask a sugar expert what the annual sugar consumption of the United States is and it is quite likely that he will say that he does not know. If however you ask him what the sugar "disappearance" is in the course of a year, he will have the answer. This is but another way of saying that sugar comes into the market and goes off the market and it does not necessarily disappear by way of the sugar bowl, the candy counter, the canning industry or some other use. And thereby hangs a tale. The average disappearance of sugar for many years has been about 6,800,000 tons more or less. But in 1941, it had jumped to 8,000,000 tons. Now, it's hard to believe that the sweet tooth of the U.S. became sweeter to the tune of 1,200,000 tons of sugar in a single year. Somebody had been storing sugar and that somebody was certainly not the average American consumer. For the present year 1942, there will be available in round figures from all sources about 8,500,000 tons of sugar of which, about 2,300,000 tons will be produced by our own cane sugar producers. From the total of 8,500,000 tons must be deducted about 1,200,000 tons of sugar in the form of molasses to be converted into high proof alcohol for the manufacture of powder. That leaves 7,300,000 tons. From this must be deducted the amount of sugar that will be used by Russia and Great Britain. This amount has not been disclosed for certain reasons. But the difference between 7,300,000 tons and the amount shipped abroad will be the amount available to the consumers of the United States in all forms. Those who are directing the sugar policy give assurance that when canning time comes, there will be ample sugar for that purpose. 

WHERE WERE THEY: There should be some frank discussion of the question of why some members of Congress were not on the floor of the House at the time the so-called but misnamed "pension" bill slipped thru under the unanimous consent rule without objection. There are many reasons and valid ones too why members are not always on the floor. In the first place, there are some committees handling important matters that are in session early and late, and a member cannot be in two places at one and the same time. This is notably true of the Appropriations Committee where members will sit for weeks and weeks, early and late taking testimony on bills involving large sums. This fact has long been recognized by Congress. The other day a resolution is adopted authorizing the Appropriations Committee to sit during the sessions and recesses of the House. These bills must be prepared, enacted by the House, enacted by the Senate and approved by the President before July 1st of each year or there would be no funds with which to operate the functions of government. Secondly, Washington is filled with professional men, representatives from civic bodies, representatives of industries. War has been a hard blow for many. They come to the Capitol to seek defense contracts, defense industries and projects. Business men come to get priority ratings. Representatives of utilities and other purposes come to Washington because this is a bewildering place. There are more than 200,000 people on the Federal payroll in the Capitol. The defense establishment alone is enormous. It becomes difficult to see persons in authority. The Congressman accompanies them. From the time one starts on a call until he returns to the point of beginning is a matter of hours. These are but two of many reasons that can be assigned. When a Member is doing necessary departmental work, he is engaged in public service.

A WORD ABOUT PENSIONS: On the 14th day of July 1939 when the House of Representatives had a chance to vote on pensions for members, the proposal was defeated by a vote of 119 to 73. Had there been a vote in December of 1941 the proposal would again have been defeated. The reason is quite plain. In the case of a very few members who are advanced in years and in service, it would provide some benefits. For the vast majority, it proddes benefits which have little appeal. Private insurance companies can do as well or better. But it is scarcely necessary to labor that point. Let the figures from the actuarial experts of the Civil Service Retirement Board speak for themselves; Take a Member who is 47 years old and has 12 years of service to his credit. He must make written application for an annuity during the year 1942 and has his choice of four options. (1) If he pays $3941.02 down in cold hard cash and then pays $500 per year for 16 years, he can secure an annuity of $13928 when he reaches age 62. That means he pays $11,941.02 in cash and must reach age 62 before retiring. He will be 73 before he gets his money back. (2) If he pays $3941.02 in cash and $500 a year for 9 years of a total of $8441.02 in cash, he can retire at age 55 with an annuity of $66.83 per month. He will be 66 before he gets his money back. (3) If he pays nothing down and $500 per year for 16 years, he can retire at age 55 with an annuity of $38.41 per month. (4) If he pays $500 per year for 16 years or a total of $8000, he can retire at age 62 with an annuity of $99.49 per month. Ask your insurance man if he can't beat this.