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

"WHAT ABOUT OUR GARDEN HOSE - "

Do you recall those hectic days of early 1940 when Nazi legions were moving over Europe and we were deeply immersed in debate and discussion over a change in our neutrality policy. Congress was fairly inundated with expressions from the people on the subject of "Cash and Carry" meaning that if nations at war wanted military supplies from us, it would require cash on the line and be carried in their own vessels. Later came the fall of Dunkirk, that horrible experience that took so many lives. Later, we swapped some of our over-age destroyers in return for certain British bases. But all this did not seem to be enough to stem the tide of Nazi victory and so there came the lend-destroyers in return for certain British bases. Perhaps you remember also that the Bill introduced in Congress to provide for lend-lease carried the highly stimulating number H.R. 1776. It became law on March 11, 1941.

THE LEND-LEASE DEBATE.
The debate on lend-lease in Congress was but a reflection of the debate that took place all over the country. How far should we go in helping freedom-loving nations in their battle against fascism? How far could we go without being embroiled in war? What safeguards should be written into the Act? These questions were duly discussed and when action was concluded in that winter of 1941, Congress felt reasonably certain that it had written some effective safeguards into the Act. In general, you may recall that the Lend-Lease Act gave the President the power to sell, lend, lease, exchange or otherwise transfer defense articles to any country whose defense we deemed vital to the United States. In Section 4 of that Act, Congress also provided that every contract made by the President with any foreign government for the benefits of the lend-lease Act must contain a clause to the effect that such government would not transfer title or possession to such articles without our consent, or permit it's use by any other person or government. This of course was meant to prevent any foreign nation that received tanks, planes and other supplies from us to turn them over to some other country after the war was over unless we consented to such a deal. In addition to that, the formal agreements which we made with lend-lease countries contained a clause to the effect that they would return to us such weapons and articles as were not destroyed or consumed and which we thought would be useful to our defense. In other words, if tanks, planes, guns and other items which we sent them were not destroyed and we wanted them returned, they agreed to send them back.

THAT GARDEN HOSE.
This then, was the basis of our lease-lend operations under which more than 40 billion dollars worth of goods, commodities, weapons, machinery and food was made available to other countries. It was what Edward Stettinius, the Lease-Lend Administrator called the "garden hose" which we loaned other nations with which to put out the fire. But it seems that we forgot something. Nothing was said in the Lease-lend act about the use of our weapons and goods by one of our allies against some other country after the war was over. And now it appears that American tanks are being used by Soviet forces in Iran - one of the countries that signed the United Nations Charter - and that our tanks are part of the military force which is moving toward the Turkish border. Strange, how such a thing was overlooked. And strange also that our weapons might become instrumental in developing another conflict. There is however one thing we can do. We can insist that they send back our "garden hose."