In recent years, with the growth of the cooperative purchasing and cooperative selling movement in the United States, much has been said about the so-called "middle man" whose function it is to purvey the head of cabbage from the farmers field to the consumers table or the women's frock from the textile mill to young lady who joins the fashion parade on Easter Sunday. He is the final link in the distribution chain of the country. In recent months, there has been coming up on the horizon, a new middle man, created by Executive Order and clothed with the power and authority of the Federal government. His official name is the Commodity Credit Corporation. He was created in the days of the Blue Eagle by an Executive Order, has power to issue notes and bonds with which to obtain money to do business, and is authorized to buy, sell, lend upon or otherwise deal in agricultural or other commodities. In the early days, these activities were mostly confined to making loans on corn, wheat and other commodities and to take over and dispose of those products if the loans were not repaid. But now he assumes a larger role. When soybeans came into prominence as a war-crop because of oil, the CCC stepped in to take over the entire crop, fix the price, fix the loan value, and then determine who might buy or sell soybeans and how much. When it was proposed to pay incentive payments to grow peanuts, it was also proposed that the CCC take over the whole crop, determine how many tons were to go into peanut butter, peanut oil, ball park peanuts and at what price and how many tons were to go to other purposes. The need for vast quantities of canned vegetables and the difficulties of canners in meeting production costs under OPA ceilings has once more brought the CCC into the picture as the middle man who will see that growers get the new support prices announced by the Secretary of Agriculture and then buy from and sell to the canners, the raw materials by which the canner may make a fair margin on this operation. Thus does the CCC take on new importance as a Federal Middle Man.

JUST IN CASE.

Some weeks ago, the War Production Board made a survey to determine just what our bedrock needs would be in case the enemy was at our gates. That survey shows that we could if necessary struggle along on 25 billion dollars less food and services, 2 billion less beer, wine, tea, coffee and cocoa, 300 million less tobacco and cigarettes, 125 million less drugs, 225 million less beauty aids, perfume and shaving lotion, 400 million less books, papers and magazines (there goes the funny books and Hollywood magazines) 75 million less stationery, pencils and ink, 75 million less toys and games, 2 billion less clothes (last year's hat will have to do) and 2 1/2 billion less gas and oil. We've got it all figured out from that last item. If we had to walk, we wouldn't wear out so many clothes, write letters, have time to read, need beauty cream or drugs, eat so much end would drink more water, feel better and get thinner. Now ain't that smart?

HERE'S THAT DITCH AGAIN.

On July 23, 1942 the President approved a bill passed by Congress calling for an appropriation of $93,000,000 to construct a barge canal across the State of Florida to relieve the oil shortage on the eastern seaboard. No action was taken under this appropriation but on March 19th a sub-committee on War Department Civil Functions reported a bill appropriating $44,000,000 to undertake work on this canal. It was revealed however, in the course of the hearings that the average number of men who would be employed on this project would be 4,000 that it would take at least two years to complete the project, that it would require 29,200 tons of critical materials and that it would cost including barges, tugs and other equipment to make it an effective artery of commerce would not be $44,000,000 but somewhere between $451,000,000 and $1,522,000,000. The Full Committee on Appropriations decided to defer action for a few days and it begins to look as if the ditch across Florida is about to encounter some heavy weather.