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

BACK TO SHANKS MARE.

One hundred fifty years ago, the inhabitants of the 13 original states did most of their travelling on foot and horseback. One hundred fifty years later, it appears that the descendants of those early settlers together with a great many other folks in the thirteen original states will again do a lot of travelling on foot. The first gasoline rationing program will apply to the original states plus four additional jurisdictions. It is estimated that the 11,000,000 millions motorcars in this area consume 1,500,000 barrels of gasoline daily, 90% of which comes by tanker vessel from the oil centers. Since the average gas consumption for passenger cars in the U. S. is 55 gallons per month, a rationing order for 20 gallons per month will reduce motor traffic to less than 50%.

KNOTHOLE BRIGADE GETS PRIORITY.

The sweet smell of spring not only inspires romance but stimulates thoughts of lawnmowers, housecleaning, Victory Gardens and the many chores which are the customary accumulation of winter. Shadeds and fruit trees need pruning. The screens must be dusted off and painted. Odd repair jobs about the house clamor for attention. With this in mind, a Congressional secretary inventoried his store of household tools and gadgets preparatory to making a heroic assault on the work which had accumulated around the family menace in the nation's capital and discovered that he needed a bit for his brace vrchowith to bore a hole. Thare-upon he took himself to a local hardware store and was advised that the desired bit was in stock but that it was under a priority which required that he state the purpose for which the bit was being purchased. A proper blank was presented to him for this purpose and he gave the matter brief and thorough study. After due deliberation he wrote "Bit to be used to bore a hole thro a fence around Griffith Stadium." The clerk was satisfied, the bit was surrender and all parties to the transaction were happy. Of course the pun in this incident lies in the fact that Griffith Stadium is the American League Baseball park. Thus it appears that the knothole Brigade gets priority.

CHURCH COLLECTION ENVELOPES.

Today, most churches use a system of church collections whereby the member puts his weekly contribution or pledge in an envelope and places it in the collection box on Sunday. Recently a rumor developed that because of the paper shortage, such envelopes would be classified as non-essential and their use and manufacture discontinued for the duration. The War Production Board advises that it is only a rumor and that no such action is contemplated. All it asks is reasonable economy in the use of such envelopes.
Because of war requirements, 200,000 telephone installations will be denied in the year 1942. Denial is based on the fact that these installations are not essential to the war effort. The result will be a saving of 53,000 tons of lead, 35,000 tons of iron and steel, 54,000 tons of copper, 6500 tons of zinc and 1890 tons of rubber. Suppose each of these phones averaged 100 calls in 1942. That would mean 20,000,000 hellos.

MILITARY AND NAVAL DECORATIONS.

On April 27, 1783, George Washington recommended that a "badge of military merit" be awarded to three enlisted men who had distinguished themselves for bravery in the Revolutionary war. Before that time, bravery was rewarded with an officers commission but the Continental Congress complained of the additional cost because of the difference in officers' pay and enlisted men's pay, so the idea of a decoration was devised. Principal military decorations consist of the Medal Of Honor for risking life beyond the call of duty, the Distinguished Service Cross for exceptional heroism, the Distinguished Service Medal for exceptionally meritorious service and the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism and extraordinary achievement in aerial combat. The Medal of Honor, the Distinguished Service Medal and the Navy Cross are awarded to members of the Navy, Marines and Coast Guard.

TEMPERANCE AMONG SOLDIERS.

For more than a year, there has been a continuing interest in a Senate bill known as S. 860 which was introduced by the late Senator Sheppard of Texas. In general, it would prohibit the sale of alcoholic liquors, beer, wine and ale on any military camp or reservation or within such reasonable distance of a military camp or reservation as might be determined by the Secretary of War. Section 4 of this measure conferred the same authority on the Secretary in dealing with prostitution in the vicinity of camps and cantonments. The War Department has opposed that part of the bill relating to liquors, first, because no beverages stronger than 3.2% beer can under existing regulations be sold on military reservations, secondly, because a high degree of temperance has been achieved through present War Department policy, and third because military personnel while away from a military reservation are subject to the same laws which apply to civilians.