Sometime before June 30th, Congress will be called upon to extend the life of the Office of Price Administration. As everyone knows, the Act was designed to protect price levels, keep prices in line with wages, protect the quality of goods and bring about a reasonably uniform distribution of such goods and supplies as might be available for civilian uses. Thus, OPA has become a household word. There was a general appreciation among all classes and groups that OPA was necessary to reduce inflation and keep things in line. This does not mean that is perfect or that its solution for some of our problems has always been correct. In fact, the author of the FRONT shares the belief that in some respects OPA has built up such a cumbersome and complicated set of rules, restrictions and regulations as to defeat its own purpose. But that is not quite what we started out to say. The main purpose of this column was to provide a few facts concerning living costs in other countries where they have no OPA or if they have, it is not enforced.

CLOTHING, SHOES, ACCESSORIES.

Many countries are now suffering from real inflation. The value of money has gone to nothing. The printing presses have been kept busy printing money and the more they print, the less value it has. In France for instance in the first war, the Franc had a value of 10%; today it is 2%; in Italy the lira had a value of 5% or more; today it is 1%. As the value of money diminishes, prices go up. In France, a good dress costs from $200 to $300; women's shoes sell for $40; a silk scarf costs $26; a women's hat costs $100; a good purse made of cloth and cheap leather costs more than $80. In Greece a good pair of shoes would cost $180; a man's cotton shirt of very ordinary quality costs $20; a pair of men's cotton hose $6; a handkerchief $3.00. In Italy a suit of the most ordinary kind costs $250 and a pair of shoes $80. These prices are in American money and one can readily appreciate what that means in comparison with our own price levels.

FOOD AND GROCERIES

War has of course caused a tremendous shortage of food in most countries and in consequence, prices have soared. The people are fortunate to get food even at staggering prices and long queues of people may be seen standing before bakeries and grocers, patiently waiting for such food as is rationed on rationed cards. Black markets appear to be the rule rather than the exception. In Italy, wine which is regarded as a staple article of diet is $4 per quart and olive oil which is used as shortening and salad dressing is $3.50 per quart. Beef sells at $5 per pound, ham at $6.50 and sugar at $3.75 per pound. In Turkey, butter sold at $2.00, pork at $3.50, Ham at $8.00 and mutton at $1.50 per pound. In Syria bread is $1.00 per loaf, apples $1.00 per pound, eggs $1.60 per dozen, a small chicken costs $6.00 and a moderate sized turkey costs $32.

MISCELLANEOUS

The standard price for a new auto tire in many countries was $1000; toilet paper ranged from $1.50 to $3.00 per roll because of paper shortage; gum sold for 75¢ per package in Iran and a single aspirin tablet costs 15¢; American cigarettes which found their way into the black market ranged from $1.25 to $2.00 per package. Such are the prices in other places in the world where no effort was made to keep their economy intact and to curb the disastrous effects of inflation.