THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT
BY CONGRESSMAN EVERETT M. DIRKSEN
16th ILLINOIS DISTRICT

MANPOWER RESERVOIR.

The first registration of manpower between the ages of 21 and 35 brought the names of 17,220,000 men under the jurisdiction of the Selective Service System. Those who registered on February 16, 1942 in the 20 and 21 age bracket totalled 1,800,000. Those, between ages 37 and 44 who registered on the same day totalled 7,000,000. The number of young men who are expected to reach age 20 in 1942 is 1,200,000. Thus the total Manpower Reservoir now stands at 27,220,000.

DEFENSE EXPENDITURES.

In the fiscal year which began on July 1, 1940, Congress appropriated or authorized defense expenditures amounting to 26 billion dollars. For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1941, the total was 110 ½ billions. For the year beginning July 1, 1942 it will be 58 ½ billion. To this must be added the sum of 10.3 billion which will be required to complete the authorized two-ocean Navy. Thus the total defense outlay for three years is a little over 205 billion. Last week, Congress considered and passed the largest defense appropriation bill in the history of the Republic. It carried nearly 43 billion dollars for defense. Of this amount, nearly 11 billion is for the pay, clothing and food for the army, over 11 billion for additional airplanes and aviation requirements and 10 billion for ordnance which includes tanks, shells, rifles, powder, ammunition and other war instruments.

ROYALTY.

Two weeks ago, Washington entertained a royal visitor. It was George I, King of the Hellenes, a fine-looking gracious gentleman whose land has been despoiled and overrun by the Nazi's. Last week, Washington entertained another king. It was His Majesty Peter II, King of Yugoslavia. He too comes from a country despoiled and conquered by the Nazi's. King Peter is but 19. He was but 11 when his father was assassinated in 1934. During his boyhood, a Council of Regents ruled in his behalf but when the Prime Minister agreed to cooperate with the Axis, the people rebelled and enthroned Peter. He and his staff were then compelled to flee after the bombing of Belgrade. After Peter comes, Queen Wilhelmina of Holland.

ARE ILLINOIS OIL WELLS BEING DEPLETED?

On June 23rd, the office of the Petroleum Coordinator recommended a daily production of 3,833,000 barrels of liquid petroleum and certified to each oil producing state a certain daily rate of production. For Illinois the Coordinator certified a rate of 301,000 barrels daily. One year ago it was 353,700 barrels. In June 1942 it was 320,800 barrels. The release carries this explanatory note: "The decrease of more than 15,000 barrels daily in the rate for Illinois reflects the continuing reduction in the productive capacity of the oil pools of that state." Can it be that the petroleum pools of southern Illinois are facing depletion?

CONFLICT IN THE HIGH COURT.

Recently, there was sharp and spirited conflict of opinion in the Supreme Court of the United States. It involved the basic issue of constitutional freedom. The facts are simple. Three towns- one in Alabama, one in Arizona and one in Arkansas, passed ordinances prohibiting the sale of books, pamphlets and commodities without a license. A religious sect sold books and pamphlets from door to door without first obtaining a license and were forthwith arrested for a violation of the ordinance. They promptly appealed to the high court on the ground that such an ordinance was a denial of freedom of the press and freedom of conscience. As finally decided, the court split 5 to 4 in its decision. It did
decide by this thin margin that the basic constitutional freedoms are not absolute rights and must be considered in the light of other powers of government in the interest of orderly living. Chief Justice Stone delivered one of the most vehement opinions in the history of the court and stated that this type of a tax was better adapted to curtailing freedom and the dissemination of ideas than were the so-called stamp taxes which served to kindle the flame of the revolutionary war.

HISTORY AND THE WRECKING CREW.

A wrecking crew is tearing down the National Hotel at the corner of 6th and Pennsylvania Avenue in the nation's capital. As the dusty bricks come down and the rafters and beams tumble, one of the boys may pause long enough in the business of destruction to soliloquize as follows: "This was a great old place in its day. To think that it was opened on February 22, 1826 when John Quincy Adams was in the White House. It was the last word in hotels. Henry Clay and John Calhoun used to visit in the lobby and lodged here, General Scott lived here before the Mexican War made him prominent. Old Sam Houston used to spin yarns here. They gave a public dinner in this very place for Abe Lincoln. Andy Jackson used to be a regular guest. O well! I guess history is like that. Look out for that loose rafter. It might hit you."

DESTINY OF RUBBER SCRAP PILES.

What will happen to that pile of old tires, hot-water bottles, girdles, rubber heels, bath mats and what not which you saw piled up at the service stations? In due time, it will be loaded in cars and sent to a reclaiming plant. There it will go thro ten steps or processes and come out in the form of sheets of usable rubber. It will pass across a string of knives and be cut into small chunks. It will be shredded. It will be cracked into still smaller pieces. It will pass over strong magnets to remove all metal. It will be dusted. It will go into huge kettles filled with caustic soda to eat away the unusable fabric and non-rubber materials. It will be de-vulcanized. It will be washed. It will be forced thro a screen and come out in the form of black spaghetti. It will be cut into short lengths. It will be heated to a high temperature and run thro rollers. It will come out as refined rubber in sheets ready to go back into tires, hot water bottles, rubber pants, girdles, rubber heels and what not.