INCORPORATION OF TRADE UNIONS. Wasn't it King Solomon who once observed that there is nothing new under the sun. More and more, the truth of that observation becomes apparent. Today we hear much about the incorporation of labor unions for supervisory purposes. The proposal is not new. To be exact, on June 29, 1866 when Grover Cleveland was serving his first term, he approved an act passed by Congress which was titled, "An Act to legalize the incorporation of National Trades Unions." It was little known and scarcely used. On July 22, 1938, when Herbert Hoover was President of the United States, he approved a bill passed by Congress which repealed the Act of 1866. Here is a historical anomaly. A Democratic President approved the act to incorporate labor unions, a Republican president approved the act which repealed it.

LIBERAL LABOR LEGISLATION. An examination of the laws relating to mediation, conciliation, arbitration, liability, hours, and child labor in the entire liberalism has been on the march a long time. In the last 45 years, Congress has passed 102 measures dealing with this subject matter. The first mediation and conciliation act, known as the Erdman Act was enacted in 1898 and dealt with arbitration of wage and hour disputes between common carriers and their employees. The first 8-hour bill came in 1892 and limited labor on public works of the United States and the District of Columbia. The first Child Labor act passed by Congress came in 1908 but it was limited only to work of children in the District of Columbia. In 1916, Congress passed an act relating to Child Labor which was applicable to the entire country.

NOTE FOR TALLOW POTS, BRADIES, AND OTHERS. Now that the new Railroad Retirement Act has been signed, about 54,000 railroaders who received pensions from the railroads will be transferred to the Government pension rolls. If their pensions were cut in the last seven years, when the going was a bit tough, those cuts will be restored. The new pension act provides for a top of $120 a month but if a retired railroader was getting more than that under the private pension system, the company will make up the difference. It will take about 35 millions annually to provide for the pensions of those transferred from private rolls to the Government. About 5000 railroaders were being pensioned under the Retirement act of 1936 and about 45,000 claims for pensions were filed and under examination. The Retirement Board will proceed with all speed to adjudicate these applications and get the new act under way.

POISON SPRAYS. Have you ever sprayed grapes, fruit and vegetables with poison insect spray and wondered just how strong the solution had to be before it might be harmful to anyone who ate such products? Its been a much mooted question for a long time and after much investigation, the Pure Food & Drug Administration in the Dept. of Agriculture set up certain standards. Since lead arsenate is so generally used to spray fruits, certain tolerances were established. Fruit growers complained that the amount of arsenate permitted on fruit was too low. The Food & Drug Administration thenceupon bought a few hundred white rats and started to experiment. Meanwhile, the feud between orchardists and the Food & Drug Administration continued. Then something happened. When the Agricultural Appropriation Bill left the House and went to the Senate, a provision crept in which provided that none of the funds appropriated for the Food & Drug Administration should be used for laboratory work in determining the effect of insect poisons upon human beings. The justification for this provision was that the Public Health Service was already doing a similar work and there was no use in permitting duplication of effort. The Public Health Service did not ask for a transfer of this function and is not anxious about it. Anyway, it was done and so the white rats were no longer necessary. Only thing to do with them was to administer chloroform. But this will not be the end of the story. In due time, it is expected that the housewives of the land will take up the cudgels in the hope of having this matter properly settled.

LEGISLATIVE RIDERS. In the days of "log rolling" "pork barrels" and other quaint but scarcely defensible legislative customs, there was another much abused device of getting pet legislation through by hooking it on to any bill that came along in the form of a "rider" even though it had no relation to the bill to which it was attached. By this device it was possible to attach an amendment for a tariff on lumber to a bill providing for a postoffice at Podunk. But in recent years, due to a change in legislative rules and procedure, the gentle art of sticking a rider into a bill has fallen into disuse. Recently it has come to light again. After much sound and fury, the House passed a tax bill, providing for certain taxes for the District of Columbia. The bill as reported by a House Committee was pretty much mused up on the floor of the House and additional provisions written into it. It then went to the Senate. The Senators wrestled with it for sometime, scratched out some provisions and wrote in others. Then, at the tail end of the bill, the Senate Committee tackled on a "rider" as a separate title in the bill. This rider embodies the provisions of the Miller-Tydings Bill which amends the anti-trust laws so that manufacturers and producers might set minimum prices on trademarked

The Congresional Front.

By Congressmen Everett M. Dirkson
16th Ill. District.
articles. This Miller-Tydings bill was handled by an entirely different committee of the House some months ago, was reported out of committee and ready to be brought up in the House for action. Suddenly and without notice, it was called off. It looked as if it had died, very completely and effectively. Now it bobs up as a "rider" on a bill to which it bears no more relationship than a fish does to a mountain lion. Ho-Hum.

OBSERVATIONS ON COURT PACKING. Without going into too much detail, here is the status of the Court situation to date: The President's original proposal was introduced in February of this year and would have made possible the naming of six new Justices to the Supreme Court. After lengthy hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee, the committee turned thumbs down on the proposal and made its report. Now the whole matter is before the Senate. Several compromise proposals have been suggested. One was to add 2 members instead of six. Another, offered by Senator Logan of Ky. in which Senators Hatch of N. M. and Senator Ashurst of Wyo. join would give the President authority to add one Justice for each vacancy and one for each calendar year including 1937 but not more than six to be added. This proposal if adopted, would enable the President to appoint three Justices during the next six months and another three before 1940, thereby effecting the original proposal over a slightly longer period of time. Now comes a new suggestion for strategy in the Court fight. If the Senate enacts a compromise, there is a notion prevalent that an attempt will be made to secure enactment of the original court proposal in the House. It would then be necessary to send the two measures to a conference committee of the two houses so that the differences might be ironed out. If the members appointed to such a conference committee were favorable to the original court plan, it is conceivable that it might still be passed. However, any report from a conference committee would have to be acted on by both House and Senate and might be filibustered to death or defeated.

EXPRESSED AS A WANT AD. We have ships. We have old ships. We have a lot of old ships. At one time they were valuable. They cost heaps of money to build. The new Maritime Commission says they have no commercial value. It says further that they have no military value. Why keep them, asks the Commission. It answers its own question by deciding to sell these old ships for scrap. It asked for bids. If the first bids had taken the form of a want ad it would have read as follows: FOR SALE - by U.S. Government, 28 steel cargo ships. To be sold for scrap. Bids limited to American citizens. Bidders must scrap these ships within the U.S. Apply Maritime Commission, Washington, D.C. Bids were received on 28 ships. The highest bid was $350,050. That's not much money for ships that cost millions a piece. The Commission asked for new bids. This time if classified columns had been used, the ad would have read as follows: For Sale by U.S. Government, 28 cargo ships. Can either be scrapped or placed in service. In the event the bidder purchases for purpose of placing in service, said vessels must not be operated to or from any port in the U.S. for a period of ten years. Apply Maritime Commission, Washington, D.C. In the second request for bids, you will note no restrictions were placed on alien bidders: Result: New bids totaled $1,121,135, almost three times as much as before. How come? Two bidders from Scotland, two from China, and one of unknown identity were on had to bid. Foreign countries are anxious to acquire scrap iron and steel? Does this augur bigger and better wars over there?

THE NEXT SUPREME COURT APPOINTMENT. It seems reasonably certain now despite the rumors and counter-rumors which have floated through the air, that Joseph Taylor Robinson of Arkansas, majority leader in the United States Senate will be appointed to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Justice Vandeventer recently. Chances are that the appointment will be made just a few days before the adjournment of the present session. Senator Robinson comes from Little Rock, Arkansas and is 65 years of age. He has the distinction of having been a Representative in Congress, Governor of his state, and United States Senator all in the space of 14 days. While a Member of Congress in 1913 he was elected Governor. He therefore resigned from Congress January 14, 1913 and became Governor on January 16th, 1913. He served 12 days as Governor and was then elected to the United States Senate. He has served in that body since that time. The 17th amendment to the Constitution whereby Senators are elected by direct vote of the people was not adopted until May 31, 1913. Hence, the election of Governor Robinson to the Senate was made by the legislature.