THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT.
By Congressman Everett H. Dirksen
16th District.

WAR DOES STRANGE THINGS.

You probably do not know Mr. Gano Dunn. In any event, he is reputed to be one of the foremost if not the foremost electrical and power development engineer in America. Only a year ago, Mr. Dunn was telling the country and the Congress that Government should not venture into the field of power development and that steam power was cheaper than water power. Came the war. Came our own defense program. Came the National Advisory Defense Commission. Came Mr. Stettinius of the U. S. Steel Company to aid the Government in procuring materials for defense. Mr. Stettinius engaged Mr. Dunn as power consultant. Mr. Knudsen of the Advisory Defense Commission who is in charge of production informed his associates that he needed more aluminum for planes because each plane requires 5 tons of castings. To meet the aluminum requirements of the defense program requires more electric power. A Survey was made. Mr. Stettenius, Mr. Knudsen and Mr. Dunn thereupon asked Congress for $65,000,000 with which to build a new dam in the Tennessee Valley area and also build a steam plant. The dam might be built in two years but more likely in three years. The steam power plant could be built in 18 months. The dam would cost $36,000,000. The steam plant would cost $12,500,000. The dam would produce 90,000 kilowatts. The steam plant would produce 120,000 kilowatts. Three steam plants could be built for the cost of the dam and be built quicker. However Mr. Dunn advocated building the dam. Congress thought or at least some members thought the matter should have a little more attention to make certain that it was advisable to build the dam.

HOBBIES.

Congressman Usher Burdick of North Dakota, big, virile and energetic representative from the wheat country who has authored a great many historical books became curious about the hobbies of members of Congress and sent each one a letter to determine his hobby. The information so obtained was assembled in a mimeographed brochure under the title, "Hobbies of Members of the 76th Congress." It is an interesting and curious document. Farming, hunting and fishing, gardening, music, photography, sports, travel etc. all figure among Congressional hobbies. Quite a number go in for painting, writing, architecture, aviation, music and the arts. Two of the members go in for mountain climbing. Two are oil well prospectors. Two raise racing pigeons. And then of course, there are the collectors. Two collect old violins, five collect stamps, seven collect rare prints and tapestries, two collect pipes, three collect old music, four collect mineral specimens, three collect old firearms, one collects old fans, two collect coins, four collect canes, 32 collect old books, one collects old boat models, and two collect antique bottles. Here is a true cross section of America.

CONGRESS ATTENDS A PRIVATE MOVIE.

Last week, members of House and Senate attended a movie. No, it wasn't a sequel to "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington." It was a series of war films. Arrangements for the showing were made by a member of the House Appropriations Committee. His letter of invitation to every Senator and Congressman stated that they were to be pictures of the German advance into Belgium and that they realistically portrayed the new mechanized technique of modern warfare. "Only Senators And Members of Congress Will be Admitted", said the notice. A postscript to the invitation said:" I urge you to give no publicity to the showing of this motion picture." Obviously, there was much interest. In fact, at least 200 members of House and Senate attended. There were whisperings of secret information to be imparted. The press became curious. Newsmen buttonholed members before and after the showing in the hope of learning all about the episode. The next morning, Washington papers carried an article under the stimulating headline, "Showing Of Nazi War Films Stirs Furore on Capitol Hill." All of which is very interesting and very funny. If anything, the pictures were rather disappointing.
and created as much furore as a gentle morning zephyr blowing thru
the trees on the Capitol lawn. The picture was scarcely discussed by
the members on the following day. It made no impact on a Congress that
is fully determined to keep America out of war and keep war out of
America.

SIX CENTS PER VOTE.

After the enactment of the Hatch Clean Politics Act of 1939, it be-
came apparent that there were at least 250,000 or more persons on state
and local payrolls whose salaries in whole or in part were derived from
Federal funds, who were not covered by the original act. Senator
Hatch of New Mexico thereupon prepared another bill dealing with this
situation. It passed the Senate. It was then referred to the Judici-
ary Committee of the House. There it slumbered a long time. Finally
a secret vote was taken in Committee and the bill was sidetracked. Post
Newsmen began to quiz members of the Committee. Oddly enough a major-
ity of the Committee stated that they had voted to report the bill fav-
erably. This of course did not make sense. A campaign then began to
blast the bill out of Committee. A majority of the members of the
House signed a petition to bring it to the floor. Thereupon the Ju-
diciary Committee took action and reported the bill. At long last, it
came to the floor. The debate was fast, long, and furious but by a 2
to 1 vote, the bill passed. Among other provisions contained therein
is one to limit contributions and expenditures by a political commit-
tee for any one calendar year to $3,000,000. Assuming a total of
50,000,000 votes in 1940, this limitation would average about 6¢ per
vote that could be expended by the national committee of either major
party to elect a President.

3,500,000 or 7,000,000.

"There are 7,000,000 aliens in America", says Senator Reynolds of North
Carolina. "There are about 3,500,000", say officials of the Immigra-
tion and Naturalization Service. Soon we shall know. The task of reg-
istering aliens is soon to get under way as authorized by a recent Act
of Congress. Registration begins on August 23rd, 1940, thru the Post
Offices of the nation and will continue for four months. It will be a
sort of continuing job. Moreover, it will be a herculean task. It
will be accompanied by an educational program thru the schools because
there will be so many non-citizens who have little or no knowledge of
the English language and the story must be brought to them in a way
that they can comprehend. In the obscure reaches of the country and
in the densely populated sections of metropolitan centers, it is fair
to assume that the mandatory requirement of registration may not be
brought to the attention of many for a long time. Also, this registra-
tion will produce it's tragedies. There are thousands of aliens
who entered this country illegally to escape from the tyranny and dic-
tatorship of foreign lands. They were swallowed up in the surging
tide of humanity of the large cities, found jobs, became acclimated
to the traditions of America and entered into the social and business
life of the nation. They could not apply for citizenship because they
entered the country illegally. Now their secret will be disclosed if
and when they register. Then comes tragedy as the process of law be-
gins to send them back home.