WASHINGTON'S PRAYER IS STILL APPLICABLE.

In 1783, when Commander-in-Chief George Washington disbanded his Army, he addressed a circular letter to the Governors of the various states advising them of the fact and expressing the earnest hope that victory and independence might be crowned with that kind of spirit which would make this a great country. The closing paragraph of that letter is in the nature of a prayer. In these days of unrest and uncertainty, when despair and defeatism stalk the land, we could find renewed faith in George Washington's prayer. Here it is: "We make our earnest prayer that Thou wilt keep the United States in Thy holy protection; that Thou wilt incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government; and entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another and for their fellow citizens of the United States at large. And finally, that Thou wilt most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility and pacific temper of mind which were the characteristics of the divine author of our blessed religion and without a humble imitation of whose example in these things we can never hope to be a happy nation."

THE HATCH BILL FINALLY HATCHED.

Some weeks ago, we wrote of the Hatch Bill, introduced by the Senator from New Mexico to outlaw all political activity in national elections on the part of those who hold jobs and are on the Federal payroll. The bill passed the Senate without a record vote. For weeks and weeks, it slumbered in the Judiciary Committee of the House. Finally, it was reported out but the teeth had been pulled. Debate began about two in the afternoon, July 20. All day the battle raged. A determined effort was made to enact it in toothless form. An equally determined effort was made to give it good dental work. At eleven o'clock in the night, the roll was called. The Hatch bill was enacted and it contains teeth aplenty. In a sentence, the bill seeks to make those who are on the Federal payroll work at their jobs instead of playing politics. Should any officer or employee in the Executive branch of the government engage in active political work, he is subject to removal from office and in addition is subject to heavy penalties. It is the greatest single step ever taken by Congress in more than 40 years in the direction of clean government, entirely free from activity on the part of those who are beneficiaries of government in the form of jobs on the Federal payroll.

TASTE IN RIDING CHANGES.

Once upon a time, everybody who made a journey rode on a train. Occasionally, journeys were taken by boat. Now and then, one rode on an interurban electric train. Later came automobiles and with them came busses. Still later came the airplanes. First it was a novelty. Now it is a commercial fixture in our transportation structure. This change
in taste has produced many knotty problems with which the Congress now wrestles. Eighteen billions of public funds are tied up in railroad stocks and bonds. Railroad employment has dropped from over 2 million jobs in 1921 to about 940,000 in 1938. Congress is now confronted with the problem of finding relief and succor for the sick railroad industry. One way to measure the loss in passenger traffic on railroads is by considering the loss in passenger revenue miles. A passenger revenue mile is the transport of a passenger for a distance of one mile for a certain charge or rate. In the last 13 years, railroads have lost 24.5 billion passenger revenue miles, busses have gained nearly 20 billion p.r.m's, water carriers have lost about 1.5 billion, electric lines have lost 4.5 billion p.r.m's and air has gained a half billion p.r.m's. Such is the effect of change and progress and such are the problems which such changes produce.

LAND GRANT RATES.

The plight of the nation's railroads has made Congress keenly conscious of the transportation problem. Many bills are pending. All aspects of transportation are being discussed including the existence of a statute relating to the so-called land grant rates. After the Civil War there was a great urge for improved railroad transportation across the country and to provide some incentive for building railroad mileage, Congress authorized the granting of land to railroad companies. Altogether, 150,000,000 acres of public domain were granted with a value of $125,000,000. In return for these grants, the railroads so benefited, contracted to haul government freight at 50% of the regular rates and mail at 80% of the regular rates. This agreement obtains on 14,411 miles of railroad today. So long as government was not in business and had no great amount of freight to haul, this provision was not especially burdensome. Today however, as the Government engages in the building of such improvements as the Grand Coulee Dam, Boulder Canyon Dam and similar projects, it is estimated that this rate contract affects rail revenues to the extent of about $10,000,000 per year. In the transportation bills now pending, an earnest effort is being made to repeal the Land Grant Rates provision on the ground that railroads have long since repaid the value of the land granted by the Government.

INVESTIGATION OF THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD.

Despite the great hue and cry about the resolution adopted by the House of Representatives to investigate the National Labor Relations Board, this resolution is no different of hundreds of similar proposals to investigate agencies of government to determine whether they are functioning according to law. This particular resolution provides that a Committee of 5 Members of the House of Representatives shall have full power to conduct an investigation of the Board and make a report to Congress. Five things are set forth in the resolution. (1) Whether the NLRB has been fair and impartial in its conduct and decisions and its dealings with labor organizations. (2) What effect the NLRB Act has had upon the increase or decrease in strikes, and employment. (3) What amendments if any, are desirable to bring about better relations between labor unions and between employers and employees. (4) Whether the Board has attempted by interpretation to change the intent of the act. (5) Whether Congress, by legislation should seek to further clarify the "term "interstate commerce". Such an investigation could do much good without infringing or impairing a single right that labor, labor organizations and employers now have under existing law.