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

WORLD'S GREATEST PAYMASTER.

Few would you like to have a job the duties of which include (1) issuing pay checks in the right amount to more than 4 million persons ranging from the humblest private to the ranking general and making certain that each pay check is for the correct amount (2) issuing allotment checks to dependents of soldiers and making certain that each check is for the right amount and is sent to the right address (3) bossing a vast corps of auditors and inspectors who audit billions of dollars worth of war contracts to make certain that payment is authorized and that the goods have been delivered as per the terms of the contract (4) making funds available to officers and enlisted men in all parts of the world who are a part of the Supply Service and auditing expenditure for travel, board, lodging, medical service and a host of other items. All this requires tons and tons of vouchers and documents daily and its proper operation is the responsibility of General W. K. Loughry, Chief of Finance of the War Department - the world's greatest paymaster.

THE FIRST WAAC.

Turn to the story of the first WAAC. If her name implies anything, she must have been a strong and robust person because she was christened Deborah Samson. Born in Plymouth, Massachusetts and one of 10 children, she became a bond-servant for a family in that vicinity and served as a family maid. In spare time, she secretly made her own uniforms and when her period of service as a servant ended, she left the family where she was employed on the pretext that she was taking a better position. Instead, she appeared at a recruiting office and enlisted in April 1781 and was enrolled in the Company of which Captain Jason Thayer was the commanding officer. She enlisted as a Private under the name of Robert Shurtleff and served continuously until the time of her honorable discharge on November 1783. Among other things, she was wounded in the battle of Tarrytown and also saw Cornwallis surrender at Yorktown. After long service, she developed brain fever and was hospitalized. It was then that her true identity was discovered. The case was reported to the Commanding Officer and she was then called to the headquarters of General George Washington and discharged from service. Later she was pensioned and married Benjamin Gannett. Perhaps she can be properly called the first WAAC notwithstanding the fact that she had had to masquerade to enter the Revolutionary Army.

PLANES FOR 400 PERSONS

Recently, the American Academy of Public Affairs of Los Angeles conferred upon Major Reuben Hollis Fleet the Award of Merit for most distinguished and meritorious service in the design and construction of military and naval airplanes vital to war and defense. Major Fleet was the founder of the Consolidated Aircraft Corporation which now builds the celebrated Liberator Bomber and the PBY Navy Flying Boat. Recently Major Fleet stated that in addition to the present plane production program, 4-motor transport planes can be constructed which in addition to the crew could carry 400 soldiers per plane and make an Atlantic hop in approximately 12 hours. Very modestly, Major Fleet says, "I propose nothing more spectacular than building and employing airplanes five times the capacity of anything in the war.
today." There is real modesty.

**POLL TAX AND THE SOLDIER**

On July 23, 1942, the House of Representatives enacted a bill which created the machinery to enable soldiers and sailors in the armed services who are in the continental United States to register and vote. That bill passed the Senate with certain amendments on August 25, 1942. Among the amendments included by the Senate was one which provided that no person in military service in time of war shall be required as a condition of voting in any election for President, Vice President, and members of the Senate and House of Representatives to pay a poll tax or any other tax to any state or subdivision of a state. This amendment was objectionable to members of Congress from certain southern states where payment of a poll tax is required before a person who is otherwise qualified can vote. The term "poll tax" comes from the Norman-French word "poll" meaning "head" so that a poll tax is a head or tax on the person. Usually it amounts to $1 per year and must be paid before a person is permitted to vote in the 9 states which levy such a tax. If not paid, it accumulates and in some states is added to the school tax. Thus it is that over a period of years, accumulated unpaid poll taxes amount to a substantial amount and has the effect of keeping the person who has failed to pay the tax from voting. The provision in the Senate amendment would make this requirement for voting inoperative, insofar as it relates to one serving in the armed services in time of war. An effort will be made to kill the entire measure so long as it contains this provision.