The phrase "full employment" has caught on. You hear it everywhere. It is the theme of Secretary Wallace's book on "Sixty Million Jobs." Catch phrases are in the air. The "right to work" is the popular theme. Bills are pending before House and Senate dealing with this problem of "full employment." The exact title of the proposal which is receiving legislative attention is "A Bill to establish a national policy and program for assuring continuing full employment in a free competitive economy, through the concerted efforts of industry, agriculture, labor, State and local governments and the Federal Government." The one phrase in the declaration of policy in this Bill which has commanded so much attention, reads as follows: All Americans able to work and seeking work have the right to useful, remunerative regular and full time employment, and it is the policy of the United States to assure the existence at all times of sufficient employment opportunities to enable all Americans who have finished their schooling and who do not have full-time housekeeping responsibilities freely to exercise this right." There's the meat in the coconut. Boiled down then, it says in effect that if you're able to work and want work, there should be a full-time job available and it becomes the responsibility of the Federal Government to give assurance that job opportunities will be available. It does not guarantee a job; nor does it guarantee any certain kind of a job. It merely provides that some kind of a remunerative job would be available if a person was disposed and able to take it.

MISCONCEPTIONS.

There is a heap of misunderstanding about this "full employment" bill. It has provoked heat, emotionalism, spleen, controversy, argument and bitterness galore. With equal vehemence and spirit, it has been assailed and defended, damned and praised, upheld and berated. At the risk of being taken over the coals, let's start by saying that the bill of itself does not create a single job. That it really does is to set up a device or mechanism which it is hoped will ultimately result in sufficient jobs to give everybody an opportunity to work if he is able and willing. What then is this device? Here it is in brief with all the adjectives squeezed out. It proceeds on the theory that the investment and expenditure of money, whether by private enterprise, consumers, state governments, local governments, Federal government or what not will create jobs, so it tackles the problem from the investment and expenditure angle.

HOW IT WORKS.

(1) In January of each year the President shall send a budget to Congress. In that budget, he shall estimate the number of persons in the labor force of the country. This would include workers, farmers and people who work for themselves. (2) This budget shall also include an estimate of the amount of investment and expenditure from all sources that would be required to produce the amount of goods of all kinds that would keep such an estimated labor force supplied with jobs. (3) An estimate of what volume of money is likely to be invested or spent by all types and groups for the period ahead. This might be a year or longer. (4) An estimate of the difference between what is needed by way of investment and expenditure and what is likely to be invested or spent. This difference would be the deficiency to be made up. (5) When there is such a deficiency, the President shall recommend a program of spending and investment by private enterprise and non-Federal agencies or groups to make up that difference. (6) If, despite his recommendations, there is still likely to be a deficiency in such investment and expenditure, the President shall then send to Congress a program of Federal spending and investment on public works as will make up the difference. (7) If it looks as if the estimated spending and investment will be more than enough without the help of the Federal government, steps shall be taken to prevent inflation by holding down such expenditures. (8) A Joint Committee of 30 members of the House and Senate shall study the budget which the President sends to Congress, shall make a report, and present a resolution to Congress which shall serve as a guide to the various Committees in carrying out such a program.

COMMENT.

Perhaps the item which deserves and yet has received the least emphasis in a discussion of this proposal is that the job of surveying the program proposed by this measure and making provision for it is in the hands of Congress. The President can only recommend. It remains for Congress to approve or disapprove and to provide or withhold the funds that may be recommended for a Federal works program.

THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT.

By Congressman Everett M. Dirksen 16th (Ill.) District. 9-22-45

JOB INSURANCE.