

CITIZENS PROPOSE U. S. OWNERSHIP OF D. C. TELEPHONES

Government ownership and operation of the telephone system in the District of Columbia as a permanent proposition favored by the Mid-City Citizens' Association. At its meeting last night the association voted for Government ownership of this utility. A resolution for Government ownership and operation of the street railway systems was referred to the committee on legislation. The association went on record as opposing the Johnson rent profiteering bill.

is unfair, and favored the appointment of a civil director instead. The Washington, Baltimore, and Annapolis Electric Line is to be requested by the association to move its terminal to some point east of Fourteenth street.

WORK AUTHORIZED AT MUSCLE SHOALS PLANT

The machinery will be put in motion today looking to the expenditure of \$60,000,000 by the Government in the development of a water power site on the Tennessee river, at Muscle Shoals, Ala. The order authorizing the construction was signed late yesterday by President Wilson.

The plant, located in the very heart of the Southern agricultural district, will be used for the manufacture of nitrogen from the air to be used in fertilizer during peace time and in munitions during the war.

WOMEN WILL MARCH IN ST. PATRICK PARADE

NEW YORK, Feb. 26.—Immediately following the announcement that the Ancient Order of Hibernians of New York county would have no parade on St. Patrick's Day because of patriotic scruples, the Ancient Order of Hibernians of America, New York county board, yesterday announced that it would "howl the biggest and the loudest an' the most wonderful peera-ad iver shewing up 'I'd avoo."

Nothing that has ever been seen in a St. Patrick's Day parade will be missing and everything that has ever been missing will be included. For the first time in the history of Irish parades in America there will be women among the marchers.

Congress What It Did Yesterday

"Profiteering" as a Topic in the Senate—Union Labor Attacked by Senator McCumber—Prospects of Compulsory Labor Under "Martial Law"—High Financiering Discussed—Administration Bills for More Power Pending—Amending the Railroad Bill in the House—Taking Over the District of Columbia Telephone System—Loyalty of German-Americans.

By W. V. BYARS.

It is not likely that a compulsory labor bill will be brought to vote in either house of the present Congress. It is still less likely that the Congress will pass any bill openly nullifying the prohibition of "involuntary servitude" by the Thirteenth Amendment, with its only exception against duly convicted criminals.

Under two bills now pending in the Senate, however, the attempt might be made to evade this amendment. It might be evaded under the McCumber bill, though Senator McCumber denies that the "conscription of labor" is the purpose in view. His bill would make registration compulsory for all males between the ages of eighteen and sixty-two years. Once registered and supposed to be thus in the military service of the country, they might be assigned "under martial law" to any work said to be necessary for "winning the war."

Senator McCumber (Hon. Porter J. McCumber, L.L. B., North Dakota, Republican) spoke at length in the Senate yesterday, with all his arguments supporting the compulsory registration system proposed in his bill, which, he mentioned only incidentally without dwelling on it.

With the collapse of the Bolsheviks in Russia and "profiteering" at Hog Island as texts, he said that the case of Hog Island, shameful as he thought it, was not isolated but typical of what had been going on all over the country. Nine-tenths of the people of the United States are not going to allow the country to be held up by one-tenth, he said. He described this one-tenth engaged in the "hold up" as "drunk with power, swelled with importance, guided by no standard but that of more and more and more."

The time had come, he added, for the people of the country to accept this challenge. In connection with the method of acceptance, he touched on the history of lynchings by vigilance committees and "committees of safety" composed of "law-abiding men."

Connecting the recent past with the era of vigilance committee control in California before the civil war, he suggested long rope and the short shrift, without using such unparliamentary language.

He did not intend, however, to threaten the eminent financiers of the American International Company with "summary justice" administered by "law-abiding" members of a committee of safety. After having condemned profiteering by financiers sufficiently for purposes of impartiality, in human nature was never better illustrated than in the history of Hog Island. As he is not a member of the investigating committee, Senator Nelson supplied them with additional information on financial "hogfishness."

Senator Owen spoke on conditions now existing in our foreign export business and on the most effective remedy for them. As they are illustrated by the discount on the American dollar in some neutral countries, reaching as much as 25 per cent, he proposed a bank, devoted exclusively to foreign business and to maintaining the parity of the American dollar abroad. He thought that American bankers may be at times disposed to "kill the goose that lays the golden egg," and that they do not always realize that banking should be dependent on commerce rather than commerce on banking.

The McAdoo business control bill was the unfinished business of the Senate, but was not called up. The Overman blanket power bill was under consideration by the Senate Judiciary Committee without a conclusion being reached. The King judiciary subcommittee heard further testimony from Gustavus Ohlinsler against the loyalty of the German American National Alliance. In answer to questions by Senator King, he said that the alliance represented only a small fraction of the 30,000,000 German-Americans of the United States. He replied in the affirmative when asked if German-Americans as a rule were not "absolutely loyal."

The Senate adopted the King resolution, calling on the Postmaster General for information on the offer to take over and operate the telephone system in the District of Columbia. He was asked to inform the Senate of his authority for doing so. In the House Mr. Johnson introduced a bill providing the authority and the system for using it, including compensation, after awards made by the Interstate Commerce Commission and possible appeal to the courts.

Senate and House coincided in bills for a "new era" on the farm. A bill by Senator Lewis provides for small farms of 40 to 160 acres to be improved at public expense and supplied on deferred payments to competent farmers. In the House Mr. Norton introduced a carefully drawn measure of personal credits, supplementing the existing farm loan machinery so that loans at not over 6 per cent might be secured on a system now followed in France. Mr. Norton applies the principle of the building and loan association and adopts it to the control of the land bank organization as now existing.

The House spent the day in debating what Mr. Lenrot described as merely "perfecting amendments" to the railroad bill intended to prevent the "absurdity" of language which he thought does not express the real purpose in view. One of these amendments, perfecting the first section on compensation, leaves the interpretation of the question of the three-year average rate as a maximum to the courts of the future, if there is no voluntary settlement. A court disposed to lean one way or the other, might have somewhat less difficulty in leaning the "railroad way" under the "perfected phraseology." Amendments limiting compensation by percentages of any amount were voted down. Amendments adopted do not leave the "railroad bill" less a RAILROAD bill than it was before.

Mrs. Thomas A. Edison is one of the incorporators of "The Recreation Association of America," intended to promote "play, playgrounds and public recreation" without profit of any kind to the promoters. Mr. Helvering introduced a bill in the House to charter it.

Congressman Alvan T. Fuller sent Speaker Clark his resignation from the Committee on Expenditures in the Department of the Interior. He resigned on the ground that the committee was an unnecessary expense and that it had done nothing whatever. He thought a number of Congressmen on the sixty standing committees of the House might better be put to doing some useful work for the country and quoted with indorsement a statement that the majority of our Congressmen are doing nothing more important than "telling stories and practicing up to see who can spit the farthest." In that connection, he protested against the system of committee management, which he thinks, reduces the average Congressman to "little more than a figurehead."

The Secretary of War asked the Senate for four and a half million dollars additional for extra employees in the War Department. The Secretary of the Treasury needs \$300,000 more for enforcing the espionage act through the Customs service. As the diplomatic and consular appropriation bill, which the House has passed, has been reported to the Senate, its items of appropriation, increasing steadily, are still almost incredibly small, compared to totals of "cost plus" contracts which have followed diplomatic failure to secure "Peace without victory."

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ONLY AMERICAN ON THE FLORIZEL BELIEVED LOST

The State Department today received a report from the American consul at St. Johns, Newfoundland, saying that W. Stevenson, New York, was the only American citizen on board the ill-fated Florizel. He is believed to have been lost.

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