

# SEEN and HEARD around the NATIONAL CAPITAL

By Carter Field  
FAMOUS WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT



Washington.—This talk about cutting federal expenditures ten per cent in order to balance the budget is just eyewash, as most folks who know what is going on around Washington will tell you. When first stated it sounds fine, but it doesn't sound so convincing after you begin studying the figures.

In the first place, a considerable part of the total federal expenditures is in the "untouchable" class, to borrow a word from India. For example, the interest on the federal debt. Then there are the payments to veterans, and the payments to farmers, which of course technically do not belong there, but actually — can you imagine a majority of both house and senate voting to curtail payments to farmers?

And any one who thinks that, after all the talk in the last campaign about the government using the money collected in pay roll deductions for old age pensions and unemployment insurance, for ordinary governmental expenditures, congress is going to vote anything like that—so soon—is just ignorant of the ordinary political mental processes.

It finally gets down to the federal pay roll, about \$1,500,000,000 a year. Ten per cent of that would be \$150,000,000 a year. That would be important money to any other person or agency than the United States government. But it is less than one month's relief bill, at the rate of spending for this year—meaning the year ending June 30 next.

It is perfectly true that the government cut all federal salaries almost fifteen per cent back in 1933, and that the country generally thought it was a pretty good idea. But things were different then. In the first place, most folks outside the government service had been taking cuts, some of them much more drastic than fifteen per cent. More important, people working under private employers had been subjected to drastic weeding out processes—the fellow or girl who had kept his job being more or less lucky.

### Piteous Wails

So the public attitude was that the government employees, who up to that act of 1933 had not suffered from the 1929 debacle, were particularly favored and privileged class of workers. So when they were subjected to a fifteen per cent cut, though the wails in Washington and some other places were piteous, there was very little public sympathy.

But now! Actually the workers outside, in a considerable percentage if not a majority of cases, have been the beneficiaries of salary and wage boosts, bonuses, and general advancement, not to mention reduction of hours. So that the government clerks are no longer a privileged class. If anything, the contrary.

There is another point, which in sheer logic has nothing to do with the case, but in the human equation figures importantly. At the same time that this salary cut was voted by congress, the compensations and whatnots of the veterans were also cut. Senators and representatives have never been permitted to forget that, nor to cease regretting it. It gave them plenty of trouble at the ensuing election.

Also, at the same time, congress cut the salaries of its own members. Mrs. Senator and Mrs. Representative have not forgotten that! To be perfectly frank, it is a rather unpopular topic. Up on Capitol Hill the subjects are more or less associated in the collective memory, so to speak.

Which brings us back rather forcibly to the idea that if there is going to be economy it is going to come out of relief. But that is another story!

### Senators Indignant

A small group of senators is very indignant over a proposed compromise in the neutrality bill, which would exempt the Great Lakes and inland waterways from the cash and carry provisions of the senate bill, and allow just that much of the "discretionary" powers granted the President to which, in the house bill, the senators objected so much.

This group of senators has charged all along that the real purpose of the advocates of giving the President so much "discretionary" power was to leave the United States government free in all international difficulties to co-operate, if it wished, with the British empire. In fact, they have been naming particular men, notably, Norman H. Davis, as desiring an accord between the English speaking countries which, the senators feared, would almost surely drift into an alliance in the event of another World war.

They point out that this proposed compromise is very definitely in the interest of the British, since most of the traffic so exempted from the cash and carry provisions of the senate bill would be on the Great Lakes. As only two countries, the United States and Canada, border on these lakes, the discrimination, they point out, is manifestly in the interest of Canada.

But this discrimination is of no value to Canada, merely as Canada, they insist, but only to Canada as a part of the British empire.

They admit that the same sort of discrimination would be important if a war can be imagined in which Mexico is one of the belligerents, but in which the United States is neutral. The exemption affecting the Great Lakes would also affect the Rio Grande river.

### Not Important

But this, the objecting senators insist, is not important; first, because it is difficult to imagine a situation in which it could figure, and second, the width of the Rio Grande along most of its course is not really a problem anyhow.

Defenders of the discrimination in favor of Great Lakes traffic point out that after all the object of the proposed law is to keep the United States out of entanglements—not primarily to prevent war supplies being exported from the United States.

The objection to permitting American ships to carry on the high seas supplies (other than arms, ammunition and implements of war which are specifically embargoed at that time) is that enemy submarines might torpedo them, or enemy warships capture them. Either would involve the United States in the same sort of difficulty with the belligerent figuring in the episode that involved it with Germany during the period of American neutrality in the World war.

On the Great Lakes, they point out, there would be no hostile war vessels. The goods would be bound from United States ports to Canadian ports. Every one might know that they were bound ultimately for another destination—perhaps to one of the belligerents—but there would be no opportunity for any "incident" to arise which might embroil the United States in whatever international conflict was going on at the time.

On the whole, however, the "compromise" seems to have been a sweeping victory for the senators who fought and won, in their branch of congress, the fight for the cash and carry neutrality program.

### Labor Relations Board

Operating almost in a vacuum, as far as public interest was concerned, until the decision of the Supreme court held it constitutional, the labor relations board actually has been formulating policy and setting up something destined now, apparently, to become one of the most all pervading branches of the federal government.

In the eighteen months of its existence, during which nearly everyone believed that it was only temporary—would be thrown out the window by the high court—the board has decided no less than 135 cases. A study of these decisions, as well as the statements and interviews and speeches — never given any prominence because of the conviction of editors as well as business men that it just wouldn't last—gives a fair cross section of the men whose interpretation and administration of the law is now so important.

Following the example of the courts, the board has adopted the policy of expressing no opinions interpretative of the act until the particular case that might be in question should be brought before it. For that reason J. Warren Madden, chairman, and the other members, Edwin S. Smith and Donald Wakefield Smith, are not in a position to answer many of the inquiries that have been pouring in since the constitutionality of the act under which the board is operating has been upheld.

One question frequently asked is whether an employer has the right under the act to appeal for an election to decide with which group of his employees he should deal. It can be stated that the board feels that management should not concern itself in any way with the determination of employee representatives. Its feeling is that such action would be contrary to the words "free choice" as used in the act, and would tend to unrest.

### Find Limitations

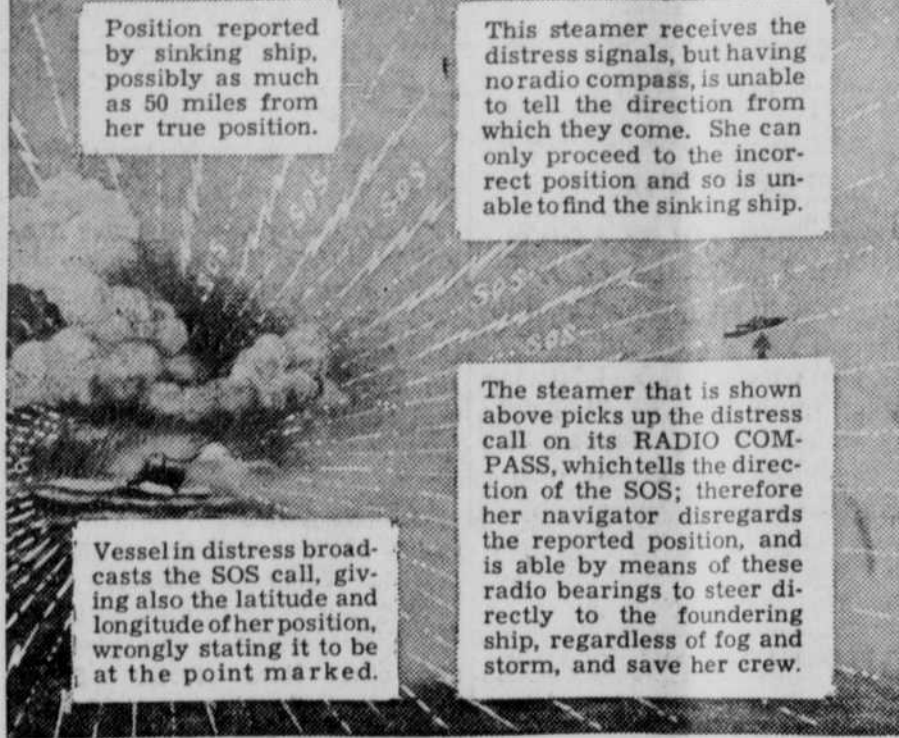
The board recognizes many limitations in the scope of the act. It recognizes it can intervene only in disputes which may burden or obstruct commerce. Such of these disputes as it may enter, must, in turn, be confined to those arising out of an employer's denial of the workers' right to organize and bargain collectively.

It may surprise many to know that the board does not feel that it can concern itself with the normal purpose of organizations—disputes over wages, hours, and other terms of employment. The board does not believe its functions embrace arbitration, conciliation, or even mediation.

Some critics think the attitude of the board is very one-sided, but the board does not feel that it is set up to protect the employer—but only the employee. It does not think the employer needs any protection.

© Bell Syndicate.—WNU Service.

## RADIO BEACON



Position reported by sinking ship, possibly as much as 50 miles from her true position.

This steamer receives the distress signals, but having no radio compass, is unable to tell the direction from which they come. She can only proceed to the incorrect position and so is unable to find the sinking ship.

Vessel in distress broadcasts the SOS call, giving also the latitude and longitude of her position, wrongly stating it to be at the point marked.

The steamer that is shown above picks up the distress call on its RADIO COMPASS, which tells the direction of the SOS; therefore her navigator disregards the reported position, and is able by means of these radio bearings to steer directly to the foundering ship, regardless of fog and storm, and save her crew.

Rescuing Vessel Locates Ship That Gave the Wrong "Address."

Prepared by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

THE most magnificent of all lighthouses was built before the dawn of New Testament history, but the most remarkable of navigational safeguards has come only in the past few years.

Day and night a monotonous drone of dots and dashes goes out over the sea, penetrating the thickest rain and fog, to help bring the voyager safely home.

Today radiobeacons are essential equipment on our most important lightships and lighthouses, and apparatus for receiving radiobeacon signals is carried on all modern passenger liners and many other vessels.

Thus, after more than 2,200 years, we approach the solution of one of mankind's oldest problems. The lofty Pharos of Alexandria, erected by the Ptolemies near the mouth of the Nile, has never been surpassed by any other lighthouse in height or in fame. Its name became the word for lighthouse in the Romance languages; the French use it in radiophare (radiobeacon).

But the signal which this magnificent tower gave to mariners was the light and the smoke from an open fire. No progress was made in marine signal lights for many centuries. Only a hundred and twenty-five years ago tallow candles burned in the famous Eddystone lighthouse near the English coast, and until 1816 the May Island light, off Scotland, still used a blazing coal fire to guide ships.

Nearly all the major advances in lights and fog signals—the electric lamp, the incandescent oil-vapor light, the Fresnel lens focusing the beam in the horizon of the mariner, the fast revolving light making it possible still further to gather the rays into powerful beams, and the fog bells, followed by the whistle, siren, and diaphone—have been developed within a little more than a century.

Only in the last 30 years has so necessary an aid been employed as the lighted buoy, boon to the navigator who must bring his vessel into port at night through treacherous shoals and narrow channels.

### Only the Radio Signal Is Certain.

The most notable advance was made 15 years ago, when radiobeacons were placed by the United States lighthouse service on Ambrose Channel lightship and two other stations in the approaches to New York. Thus was solved an age-old problem. Only the radio signal penetrates fog and rain that blot out the most brilliant light. It can carry its message of safety through storms that drown the most powerful whistle.

Above the pilothouse of a modern liner you will see a small rotating coil antenna mounted on a metal frame. This coil receives radiobeacon signals now sent out from important lightships and lightships—more than 120 of them on the coasts of this country.

In approaching the coast, the navigator of a ship with this coil picks up a radiobeacon signal—perhaps the four dashes from Nantucket Shoals lightship, or the single dots from Ambrose. By rotating his radiocompass coil until the signal fades away ("taking the minimum" it is called), he determines the direction from which the signal comes, even from distances of more than a hundred miles.

Anyone who has stood on the deck of a liner in a dripping fog, and has wondered at the courage of the navigators going ahead toward the unseeable, must realize what a blessing this is to tense nerves—how valuable is this gift of science to better navigation and to safety at sea.

Radiobeacon systems now are being extended throughout the world, and radio direction-finders are being placed on more and more vessels, recently even on fishing craft. There also are direction-finding stations on shore which give radio bearings to ships asking for them.

Distance Finding on Great Lakes. A simple arrangement for distance finding is now in use at a number of stations, especially on the Great Lakes. The radio signal and the sound signal are synchronized to be sent at the same in-

stant, and the difference in the transmission time, as measured by a stop watch, gives the approximate distance of the vessel from the station. This is easily computed when it is remembered that sound in air travels approximately a mile in five seconds. The distance, therefore, is roughly the "time lag" divided by five.

A comparison of the number of Great Lakes ships which stranded during the four years preceding the use of radiobeacons, with the number for the four years following, indicates a 50 per cent reduction; also the saving of time by vessels taking radio bearings is a large factor in economical navigation.

The dramatic use of SOS calls in dangers and tragedies of the sea is familiar enough. Radiograms to and from friends on shipboard are commonplace. Radio also serves navigation in transmitting the correct time, a service of prime importance in determination of longitude at sea.

When wrecks obstruct channels, or when storms drag buoys from their normal locations, radio affords a valuable means of broadcasting such urgent information. Radio also transmits reports from mariners who observe defects in navigational aids.

A vessel equipped with a radiocompass can take a bearing on another ship sending radio signals, and thus determine its direction at sea by the same method it would use with a radiobeacon on shore. This taking of bearings between ship and ship diminishes the risk of collision in fog, and it also helps one ship to find another which may be in distress. The rescue of the crew of the British freighter Antioch by the United States ship President Roosevelt in mid-Atlantic in January, 1926, is a notable example of this use of radio bearings.

Capt. George Fried, then master of the Roosevelt, immediately changed his course on receiving the SOS, and radio bearings on the Antioch were taken every 15 minutes. He found the Antioch's position as given was some 50 miles in error; but, steering by the radio bearings, he reached the Antioch in about six hours. After three and a half days' heroic struggle, the 25 men of the sinking Antioch were rescued.

Tragic loss of 42 lives, through lack of equipment for taking radio bearings, is shown in the wreck of the Alaska, which sank the very year that radiobeacons came into use.

One August day in 1921, the Wahkeena, in a dense fog off Cape Mendocino, California, picked up an SOS call from the Alaska. Having then no device for telling from which direction came the call for help, the Wahkeena cruised for ten hours before she could find the sinking Alaska.

### Not So Lonesome Now.

Today, of course, all outside tenders and lightships use radio, and a number of isolated light stations and some tenders are equipped with radio-telephones, which greatly facilitate reports and orders in emergencies.

At remote stations, the lightkeeper's life long has been a symbol of loneliness. Before the days of radio, all the keepers heard was wind and waves, sea birds, or the foghorns of passing ships. During a period of bad weather in 1912, no tender could reach the lighthouse on Tillamook Rock, Ore., for seven weeks. The station on Cape Sable, at the entrance to Bering sea, went for ten months without any mail or news—August, 1912, to June, 1913!

Radio changed all that. "Before we got our radio," wrote one keeper, "a new President might have been elected a month before we knew about it. . . . This time, we heard it as soon as anybody. The last two big prize fights, when it was announced who was champion, we heard it. . . . We listen also to ministers preaching, and there is singing. It is almost the same as being in church. . . . When storms blow, our sets keep us posted; we can take all necessary precautions and follow the progress of the hurricane."

## What Irvin S. Cobb S. Cobb Thinks about

Humane Fox Hunting.

SANTA MONICA, CALIF. —In England it has been decided that fox-hunting is humane. This opinion emanates from the hunters. The foxes have not been heard from on the subject.

Maybe you don't know it, but there's a lot of fox-hunting among us, especially down south. Being but a lot of stubborn non-conformists, southerners do not follow the historic rules. A party at large wearing a red coat, white pants and high boots would be mistaken for a refugee from a circus band. And anybody blowing a horn as he galloped across hill and dale would be set down as an insane fish peddler; and if you shouted "View, halloo! Tantiy, tantiy! Yoicks, yoicks!" or words to that effect, they'd think you were a new kind of hog-caller.



Irvin S. Cobb

Down there they've chased the fox until he's wise. The foxes have learned that the hounds can't follow trail on a paved highway and so quit the thicket for the concrete when the chase is on. A fox has been sitting in the middle of the big road listening to the bewildered pack.

On second thought maybe Brer Fox isn't so smart, after all—not with automobile traffic what it is. 'Tis a hard choice—stay in the woods and get caught or take to the pike and get run over.

### Courageous Republicans.

WHO, besides the writer, can recall when the Democrats held their jubilation rallies the night before a presidential election and the Republicans the night after the returns were in, when they had something to jubilate over? Now the situation is just the other way around. The Literary Digest poll was practically the only thing the Republicans had to celebrate during the entire fall season of 1936.

Still, we must give that diminished but gallant band credit for courage. Here, in an off-year, they're spiritedly planning against the next congressional campaign.

### English Recruiting.

THE English are still having trouble inducing young fellows to join the colors. First, the government tried to increase enlistments by giving every recruit a giddy new blue uniform, absolutely free of charge, and still the lads refused. So now, as an appeal which, 'tis believed, no true Britisher can withstand, the military authorities announce that, hereafter, Tommy Atkins will have time off for afternoon tea.

This may be a new notion for peacetime, but, during the great war, the custom was maintained even up at the front. Many a time I've seen all ranks, from the brigadiers on down, knocking off for tea. However, this didn't militate against his majesty's forces, because, at the same hour, the Germans, over on their side of the line, were having coffee—or what the Germans mistake for coffee. And the French took advantage of the lull to catch up with their bookkeeping on what the allies owed them for damage to property, ground rent, use of trenches, billeting space, wear and tear, etc., etc.

Did it ever occur to our own general staff that guaranteeing a daily crap-shooting interval might stimulate volunteering for the American army?

### The Job of Censorship.

ONE reason why moving pictures are so clean is because some of the people who censor them have such dirty minds. To the very pure everything is so impure, is it not? That's why some of us think the weight of popular opinion, rather than the judgment of narrow-brained official judges in various states, should decide what should and what should not be depicted. Anyhow, there are so many movies which, slightly amending the old ballad, are more to be pitied than censored.

Sponsors of radio programs also lean over backward to be prudishly proper. But without let or hindrance the speaking stage, month by month, grows fouler and filthier. Suggestive lines once created a shock in the audience mind. The lines no longer suggest—they come right out and speak the nastiness.

Sauce for the goose isn't sauce for the gander, 'twould seem—or maybe, after the reformers get through saucing radio and screen, there wasn't any left over for the so-called legitimate stage.

IRVIN S. COBB.  
©—WNU Service.

### Ancient Coin Found

A coin so small that it is not as large as the head of a tack was discovered near Antioch in a silver purse 10 feet underground, and it is believed to have been used 500 years before the birth of Christ.



FAMOUS  
HEADLINE HUNTER

## FLOYD GIBBONS ADVENTURERS CLUB

Hell  
Everybody

"Buried—But Not Dead"

By FLOYD GIBBONS

ADVENTURE sure laid an icy hand on the shoulder of Joseph Kurtiz, who sent me one of the best written yarns I've had to date. Joe lives in Brooklyn now and at last writing could have used a job. He gave up his youthful ambition to be a mining engineer as a result of events related in today's story, and switched to mechanical engineering. But, if you ask me, the magazines are looking for people who can write like Joe.

Accordingly, I'm following his script pretty close. In April, 1920, Joe was a surveyor with the Glen Alden Coal company, Scranton, Pa. It was his first job, and he was assigned to investigating "pillar robbing" in the Cayuga mine. I'll explain.

Miners must leave enough coal to support the roof of the mine, which consists of shale, a scaly rock, that caves in easily. Pillar robbing means stealing coal from these remaining supports, and is illegal, since it may cause cave-ins in which workers are killed, gas and water mains burst, even explode, and brick buildings standing on the land collapse. It's earthquake, fire and flood.

### Fine Place for an Avalanche.

The Cayuga had been deserted for fifty years. Inside Joe and three companions found pillars cracked and crumbled by the weight of millions of tons of rock they had held up for five decades. As supports they were useless and might just as well have been mined out. Old timbers erected by miners to protect themselves in those far, bygone years were rotted, useless. A touch and they collapsed to fungi-infested, mildewed dust. Not much between Joe and the millions of tons of rock over his head.

Worse, the workings were of the "pitch" type—each chamber like a long, sloping tunnel, some very steep. The roof was dangerously cracked. Slabs of shale hung so loose a breath would send them crashing to the floor. Fallen rock covered the steeply-slanting floor in sizes from a fist to a dining-room table. This "gob" can start an avalanche on the slanting tunnel floor.

Joe's duties—lovely job!—were to climb over this loose rock, covered with slime. If he made it, it was safe for the others to come up. If he didn't and started a fatal avalanche—Joe forgot to tell about that.

### A Pocket of Gas Was Ignited.

Well, sir, Joe climbed gingerly upward, clinging to the glistening coal pillar at the side, peering ahead by the faint light of the lamp fastened above his cap-visor. He stepped, light as a falling feather, testing every foothold. At the top of the "human fly," as Joe calls himself, was to establish a point for the transit—a surveyor's instrument—to shoot at.

Joe never made it. Twenty feet from the top—Bom! An explosion like a giant bassdrum shook the earth in a bolt of livid flame. GAS! Joe's light had ignited a pocket of whitedamp!

Splinter! Crack! Crash! The shock jerked rock toppling from the roof, dropped it on the loose "gob" on the steeply-slanting floor! THE SLIDE IS ON!

At first, with thumps scarcely audible above the rolling rumble of the waves of flame over his head, then, in a roaring crescendo, jagged rock raced, leaping and thundering downward past Joe, hurtling into the hell of darkness far below.

### Buried—and in Inky Darkness.

Joe's lamp had gone out with the explosion. But above him was a blinding glare—a marching surf of blue-and-red-streaked fire, lighting up the chamber overhead. Blistering white heat above—thundering flood of angry rock below! Joe clung to the pillar on his stomach, ducking hurtling rocks, shrinking from the blazing heat above. With clawing fingers and toes that vainly sought foothold in the hard floor, he lay there—it seemed ages—aching muscles a-torture. The slide diminished. The "carbonic oxide" above burned fitfully, threatening any second to seek out with its rainbow flames another pocket, spreading in chain explosions through the underground terrain, burying Joe and his companions.

Joe thought of the others. Had they been crushed to a jelly-smear under those tons of rock—trapped in some doghole or cross-cut in a pillar?

The rolling flames died, went out. In the inky black Joe groped for a match, lit his lamp. The floor was clear. He stepped out. Instantly he tobogganed down on a slab of rock he had overlooked. Four hundred feet below he brought up short on the heap of loose rock. It had blocked the entrance completely.

### No Wonder Panic Seized Him.

Joe was CAUGHT LIKE A RAT. He sat on a rock, wondered that he was not frightened, began to figure his chances of seeing sunlight again. It seemed suddenly very precious, sun and open air. Air! The rock had sucked much out, the explosion had driven more out and the fire had burned he didn't know how much of the life-giving oxygen in that black pit. Would the rest last: till they got to him?

Then, Joe says, panic did grip him. He shouted himself hoarse. He smashed a rock repeatedly against a pillar, listened. Not a sound. Just silence. TERRIBLE SILENCE. Joe saw slow death ahead—suffocation, thirst, starvation. Unwounded, he wished for death—swift death, rather than this drawn-out agony. Now he could only wait helplessly.

Joe says he prefers to forget the next nine hours. Imagination can be the most horrible form of torture. But—his companions had escaped. With all hope gone for Joe, they had notified the surface. A relay of rescue crews, working as only mine rescue crews can, dug through the pillar from an adjoining chamber and pulled Joe out nine hours later.

From that day on the only coal Joe can stand looking at is in a stove. He quit the mining engineer career cold. But I still say he can write like a professional. What do you think?  
©—WNU Service.

### Gold Spike Joined First Transcontinental R. R.

It was a gold spike driven with two silver sledges that dedicated the joining of the two railroads which completed the first transcontinental railroad in the United States, observes a writer in the Cleveland Plain Dealer.

The Union Pacific was built west from Omaha, while the Central Pacific was built east from Sacramento. The rails of the two roads were joined on May 10, 1869, by a ceremony at Promontory Point, on the tip of an isthmus projecting into Great Salt lake, Utah, from the northern shore.

The last spike to be used in the railroad was made of gold, and was presented by David Hewes, a prominent citizen of California. Also, a specially prepared tie of California laurel wood had been provided for the ceremony. Leland Stanford, president of the Central Pacific and formerly governor of California, immediately after the ceremony the gold spike and the laurel wood tie were removed and an ordinary tie and iron spike substituted. The gold spike is in the museum at Leland Stanford university.

### "E Pluribus Unum," the U. S. Great Seal Motto

"E Pluribus Unum"—one from many—is the Latin motto which appears on the obverse of the great seal of the United States. It is thus the "official" motto of the government, and by act of Congress is also inscribed on the coins.

The motto was originally proposed on August 1, 1776, by a committee of three which had been appointed by the Continental Congress to prepare a device for a state seal. The committee consisted, incidentally, of Benjamin Franklin, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson.

Their suggested seal, states a writer in the Cleveland Plain Dealer, was not accepted, however, and it was not until June 20, 1782, that the motto was adopted as part of the second and successful device, which was submitted by Charles Thomson, secretary of Congress.

It was in 1796 that Congress directed the employment of "E Pluribus Unum" on the coinage. On the great seal it is inscribed upon a scroll issuing from an eagle's mouth. It also so appears on many coins.

The motto itself is an ancient turn of phrase, to be found in a number of the classical authors.