

appropriation of \$3,281,094,541.60 for Army and Navy expenditures arising out of the war. But this insignificant sum of more than three and a quarter billion dollars was a comparatively small item, for the same law granted to the President immense powers which included a money outlay of more than the original sum appropriated therein. The President was authorized to place orders with any person for such ships or material as the necessities of the Government—to be determined by the President—might require during the period of the war; to modify, suspend, cancel or requisition any existing or future contract for the building or purchase of ships or material; to requisition and take over for use any plant in which ships or materials are built—in short gave to the President and to him alone full authority to buy, requisition, order, take over or cancel whatever is necessary for the conduct of the war. The floor leader of the Republicans in the House stated, while this bill was under consideration, that in his opinion “no man on earth has or ever has had such absolute powers as were bestowed by the Congress of the United States upon our present President.”

On July 14 there passed in the House—with a viva voce vote, Mr. Meyer London not objecting—the Aviation Act which set aside \$640,000,000 in a lump sum for the pay and equipment of additional officers and enlisted men, in such numbers as the President might deem necessary, and for the purchase and production of all types of aircraft, guns, armament, aviation fields, barracks, etc. And here the same gentleman who on the previous occasion had complained of the unlimited powers that Congress had granted to the President explained on the floor: “If I had my way about it, I would pass this bill without saying a word.” And though he was not able to shut off debate entirely, nobody seemed to care to discuss the merits or demerits of this bill, for after a few unimportant remarks from some of the would-be authorities on aerial warfare in the House, the act was passed without opposition.

The second bond issue came before Congress in September and was passed promptly and without the slightest opposition on September 6 and 13 in both Houses by a viva voce vote. The Socialist seems again to have been absent. It authorized the Sec-

retary of the Treasury, with the approval of the President, to borrow on the credit of the United States \$7,538,945,640 and to issue therefor bonds in addition to the \$2,000,000,000 bonds already issued. Of this sum total \$4,000,000,000 was set aside for establishing credits with allied governments. Furthermore, in addition to these bonds and certificates of indebtedness the act authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to borrow from time to time such sums as in his judgment might be necessary to meet authorized public expenditures, and to issue therefor war-savings certificates. The entire sum of war-savings certificates outstanding must at no time exceed \$2,000,000,000.

The second war appropriation followed immediately. It was reported to the House on September 6th and passed on the 18th by a viva voce vote—once more without the vote of the Socialist member of the House being recorded against it. It carried \$5,356,666,016.93 and \$635,000,000 for the emergency shipping fund, thereby raising the limit of expenditures under the shipping act to \$1,734,000,000. The last appropriation passed in this session of the Congress amounted to \$176,250,000. It is known as the military and naval insurance act and established a Division of Military Insurance to provide a) governmental family allowances and compulsory allotment of pay for the support of dependents, b) compensation for death, or disability due to injury or disease resulting from service, c) ability to get additional insurance at low cost. It, too, passed without a dissenting vote.

The total appropriations and contract authorizations for the fiscal year 1918—exclusive of \$7,000,000,000 for loans to the Allies aggregate to \$14,390,730,940.46; with the seven billion dollars loaned to the Allies to \$21,390,730,940.46.

But this is only a small beginning, and shows but one phase of the activity of the War Congress of 1917. Far more important, perhaps, is the work of these “representatives of the people” that deals with the rights and liberties of the population. It may be rather bromidic to refer to the worn-out phrase of the “War for Democracy.” But since it is the official version we cannot very well overlook it. Certainly, if it is or is to be a war “to make democracy safe in the world,” the United States Congress has nothing to do with that particular end of the job. It did