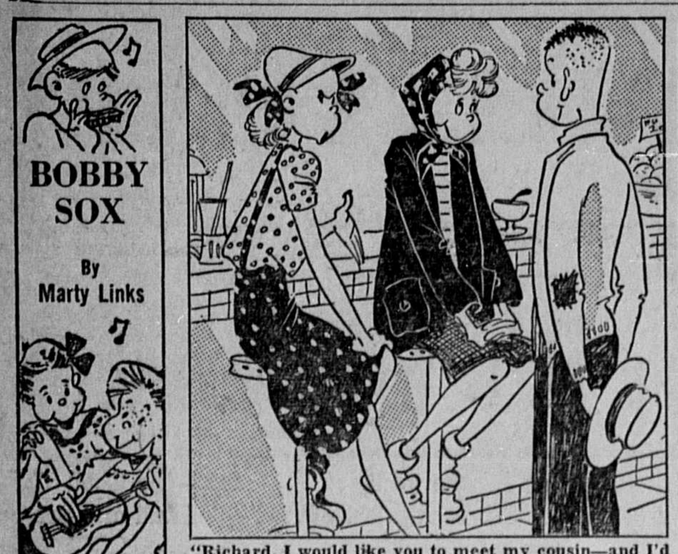

"Richard, I would like you to meet my cousin—and I'd also like to emphasize that she's leaving for home next Monday!"

"What'll they cut besides whiskers?"

NANCY — By Ernie Bushmiller

MUTT AND JEFF — By Bud Fisher

LITTLE REGGIE — By Margarita

JITTER — By Arthur Pointer

REG'LAR FELLERS — By Gene Byrnes

VIRGIL — By Len Kleis

SILENT SAM — By Jeff Hayes

The Muddle in War Surplus Sales

WNU Washington Bureau, 1616 Eye St., N. W.

THE whole machinery of Surplus War Property has broken down and the entire situation surrounding the disposal of more than a hundred billion dollars worth of surplus war material is a confused, disorganized mess.

This is the conclusion of your Home Town Reporter after an investigation, made because we have received scores of letters from veterans asking how they can obtain surplus war properties. There have been more than 280,000 applications from war veterans during the past six months, all wanting to buy surplus property, mostly trucks, jeeps and automobiles. Only in rare instances have they been able to do so.

Here's the situation about surplus property. It is now scattered among eight governmental agencies at 100 different points in the country—Reconstruction Finance corporation for consumer goods, producers' goods, war plants and aircraft; U. S. Maritime Commission for marine property; the state department for goods overseas; the department of agriculture for food and agricultural products; the Federal Works administration for community facilities such as sewers and utilities; the Federal Housing authority for housing; and the department of the interior for grazing and mineral lands and all surplus goods in Hawaii, Alaska and Puerto Rico. Then there is the Surplus Property administration presided over by W. Stuart Symington, who, as administrator makes policy, but who has absolutely no authority over any of the other agencies selling the property.

War Assets Corp. Formed

And to make the confusion more complete, President Truman, back in mid-October announced the formation of the War Assets corporation to be headed by Lt. Gen. Edmund B. Gregory, the quartermaster-general of the army, to take over all surplus property from the other agencies, except the state department, on November 5. Then this was postponed until December 1, then to January 1, and now to February 1. The transfer may take place February 1 under the powers the President has under the new governmental reorganization act. But still there will be divided authority, with General Gregory acting as sales manager and Symington as policy head, but with absolutely no authority over what Gregory or anyone else does with War Assets corporation.

Reason for much of the confusion and misunderstanding is this divided authority, and the fact that nowhere is there an inventory of the property which is declared surplus. Whenever, in the opinion of the army or the navy, property is no longer needed, it is turned over to the various agencies as surplus. The agencies then put it up for sale.

What happens when a veteran goes to buy surplus war property? Say he is in the Philadelphia area. He travels 50 or 100 miles to Philadelphia to buy a truck, a camera and another gadget. First thing he finds out is that some municipality has priority over him and has taken all the trucks fit to use. Then he finds out that there are a hundred other veterans there ahead of him beat on the same mission, and further, that what he expected to buy for ten cents or less on the dollar is much higher and is being sold on a ceiling price fixed by OPA.

Central Authority Needed

All this after he has been shunted around between the Smaller War Plants corporation, the RFC Disposal agency, the department of commerce, and the navy material Redistribution office. And he comes away sore. Everybody he deals with is mad and dissatisfied. Very likely he returns empty-handed.

Whether moving all these sales agencies into War Assets corporation will be a help is a matter of conjecture. Personnel of RFC will still operate the War Assets corporation, and apparently General Gregory is none too sanguine about the success, for he is merely on loan from the army.

What is apparently necessary is a merger of Surplus Property administration and War Assets corporation. Symington, if he stays as administrator, would be policy-making head, and Gregory or someone else would be sales manager, but with the administrator in complete charge for centralized authority.

As a matter of fact, surplus property is a war baby that no governmental agency wants. Remembering the scandals in surplus property after World War I, the whole procedure has been bound up in red tape by the officials, for nobody wants to go to jail as a result of "errors" in surplus property sales this time.

It seems to this reporter it is time for the President to make this centralized authority come true, or else surplus war property will be a continual headache for everybody. The government will lose out and so will the veteran.

Space-Saver Racks For Closet Doors

WHY wish for more and bigger closets if the ones you have are not organized so that all the space is used? Handy racks on the door add readily accessible space for things used every day leaving inside shelves for storage. The racks shown here are carefully planned to hold the things you use the most, yet they are less than three inches deep.

Everyday hats are held in perfect shape by a curved front made to fit crowns. Both small and large articles are held conveniently in the lower rack which also has a hanger rod. These racks are also useful for children's togs and toys. They are easy to cut out of scraps of plywood with an ordinary compass saw from the dime store.

* * *

NOTE — Pattern 283 gives actual-size cutting guides for all parts of both of the racks shown here. Illustrated directions for assembling and a list of all materials required are included. To get pattern 283, send 15c with name and address to:

MRS. RUTH WYETH SPEARS
Bedford Hills New York
Drawer 10
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Name
Address

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