

★

**GREAT WAR, FLAWED PEACE,  
AND THE LASTING LEGACY  
OF WORLD WAR I**

★



THE UNITED STATES  
WORLD WAR ONE  
CENTENNIAL COMMISSION

PRITZKER  
MILITARY  
FOUNDATION

NHD  
NATIONAL  
HISTORY DAY

# COMING HOME: THE DOUGHBOYS RETURN TO CIVILIAN LIFE



**GUIDING QUESTION:** Did the benefits available to World War I veterans lead to the eventual passage of the GI Bill in 1944?

## AUTHOR

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Milton Hershey School  
Hershey, Pennsylvania

## WHY?

This lesson has personal meaning to my life since I am a direct beneficiary of the G.I. Bill. Students should know the importance of the G.I. Bill and the precursors that led to its passage.

## OVERVIEW

Using primary sources, students will evaluate the benefits that World War I veterans received to determine how the U.S. government learned how to improve benefits for World War II veterans with the G.I. Bill.

## OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will be able to

- › Evaluate primary sources to infer what benefits were provided to World War I veterans; and
- › Defend a position in the debate over veterans' benefits after World War I.

## STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

### CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE

- › CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.9 Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.
- › CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6 Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

## DOCUMENTS USED

### PRIMARY SOURCES

Adjusted Service Certificate, Thomas Montgomery Gregory, May 23, 1931

Thomas Montgomery Gregory Collection, Howard University  
[https://dh.howard.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1004&context=tmg\\_mil](https://dh.howard.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1004&context=tmg_mil)

"The Bonus, the President, and the Legion," October 4, 1922  
*The Outlook: An Illustrated Weekly Journal of Everyday Life*, Volume 130  
<https://books.google.com/books?id=Eem9pK5olhsC&pg=PA182&#v=onepage&q&f=false>

Calvin Coolidge, Armistice Day Dedicating the Liberty Memorial in Kansas City, Missouri, November 11, 1926 (excerpt)  
Calvin Coolidge Presidential Foundation  
<https://www.coolidgefoundation.org/resources/speeches-as-president-1923-1929-18/>

Calvin Coolidge, Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval a Bill Providing for Adjusted Compensation for War Veterans, May 15, 1924  
The American Presidency Project, University of California Santa Barbara  
<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/329322>

H.R. 7959, An Act to provide adjusted compensation for veterans of the World War . . . (Bonus Act), April 10, 1924  
Records of the Senate, National Archives and Records Administration  
<https://www.visitthecapitol.gov/exhibitions/artifact/hr-7959-act-provide-adjusted-compensation-veterans-world-war-bonus-act-april>

“The Legion and the Veto,” October 4, 1922  
*The Outlook: An Illustrated Weekly Journal of Everyday Life*, Volume 130  
<https://books.google.com/books?id=Eem9pk5olhsC&pg=PA182&#v=onepage&q&f=false>

Letter, The United States Treasury Department to Clyde Chilson, January 18, 1918  
National World War I Museum and Memorial, Kansas City, Missouri (1977.13)  
<https://theworldwar.pastperfectonline.com/archive/DE863406-AF43-41C9-ACBC-278860739010>

Political Cartoon, *Driven Off at Last* (reprinted from the *New York World*), October 4, 1922  
*The Outlook: An Illustrated Weekly Journal of Everyday Life*, Volume 130  
<https://books.google.com/books?id=Eem9pk5olhsC&pg=PA182&#v=onepage&q&f=false>

Political Cartoon, *Give them their Bonus and Employment*  
*Veteran's Magazine*

Poster, *In France, Two Popular Trades Taught Disabled Soldiers are Cabinet-Making and Tailoring*, 1919  
Library of Congress (00651588)  
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/wwipos/item/00651588/>

Poster, *Future Members of the Fourth Estate*, 1919  
Library of Congress (00651581)  
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/wwipos/item/00651581/>

Poster, *Future Ship Workers: A One-Armed Welder*, 1919  
Library of Congress (00651580)  
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/wwipos/item/00651580/>

Poster, *Learning to Walk for the Second Time*, 1919  
Library of Congress (00651582)  
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/wwipos/item/00651582/>

Poster, *A Successful Workman*, 1919  
Library of Congress (00651584)  
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/wwipos/item/00651584/>

Poster, *With Compass and T-Square*, 1919  
Library of Congress (00651579)  
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/wwipos/item/00651579/>

Servicemen's Readjustment Act (G.I. Bill), 1944  
National Archives and Records Administration (RG 11)  
<https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=76#>

Sheet Music, “I’ve Got Those Bonus Blues,” 1922  
Library of Congress (ihas.200203402)  
<https://loc.gov/item/ihas.200203402>

## SECONDARY SOURCES

Office of the Historian, “A Bonus for World War I Veterans: May 2, 1922”  
Office of Art & Archives, United States House of Representatives  
<https://history.house.gov/Historical-Highlights/1901-1950/A-bonus-for-World-War-I-veterans/>

“Veterans Of Foreign Wars” (excerpt)  
PBS  
<http://www.pbs.org/opb/historydetectives/feature/veterans-of-foreign-wars/>

## MATERIALS

- > Computer with projector
- > Gallery Walk Worksheet
- > Debate Sources (Set One and Two)
- > Debate Graphic Organizer
- > Ticket Out-the-Door Sheet

## ACTIVITY PREPARATION

- > Project cartoon *Give them their Bonus and Employment*.
- > Hang Gallery Walk stations around the classroom.
- > Print one copy of the following for each student:
  - » Gallery Walk Worksheet
  - » Debate Graphic Organizer
  - » Ticket-Out-the-Door
- > Make copies of the Debate Sources for each student (half the class receives Set One, half receives Set Two).
- > Cut Ticket-Out-the-Door Sheets.

## PROCEDURE

### ACTIVITY ONE: INTRODUCTION AND GALLERY WALK (20 MINUTES)

- > Project the political cartoon, *Give them their Bonus and Employment*.
- > Ask students, *Based on this political cartoon, infer or predict how World War I veterans were treated upon their return home?*
  - » Give students time to think independently.
  - » Ask students to discuss the question with their seat partners.
  - » Share responses as a whole class discussion.
- > Distribute one copy of the Gallery Walk Worksheet to each student.
- > Direct students to walk around the classroom to view the primary sources and complete the Gallery Walk Worksheet.
- > Ask students, *How did the U.S. government meet the needs of World War I soldiers? If yes, then how? If no, why not?*

## ACTIVITY TWO: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS AND DEBATE

- > Divide students into two groups. Provide each group one set of debate documents (Set One or Set Two).
  - » Explain that one group will take the perspective of the government and the president, and the second group will research the benefits from the veterans' point of view.
- > Direct students to complete the Debate Graphic Organizer as they research.
- > Facilitate the debate. Prompt the student groups by asking them, *Did the American government meet the needs of veterans of the Great War?*
  - » Allow each side to begin with an opening statement.
  - » Monitor and allow for multiple points of view to be heard throughout the debate.
  - » Ask students to discuss which side had a more compelling argument and why.

## ASSESSMENT

- > Project the Servicemen's Readjustment Act (G.I. Bill). Explain the G.I. Bill to students.
- > Direct students to complete a Ticket-Out-the-Door, *What was the lesson learned from World War I that helped the U.S. prepare for the homecoming of soldiers after World War II?*

## METHODS FOR EXTENSION

- > Students with more interest in the impact of the G.I. Bill may research the role the bill played in the post World War II years.

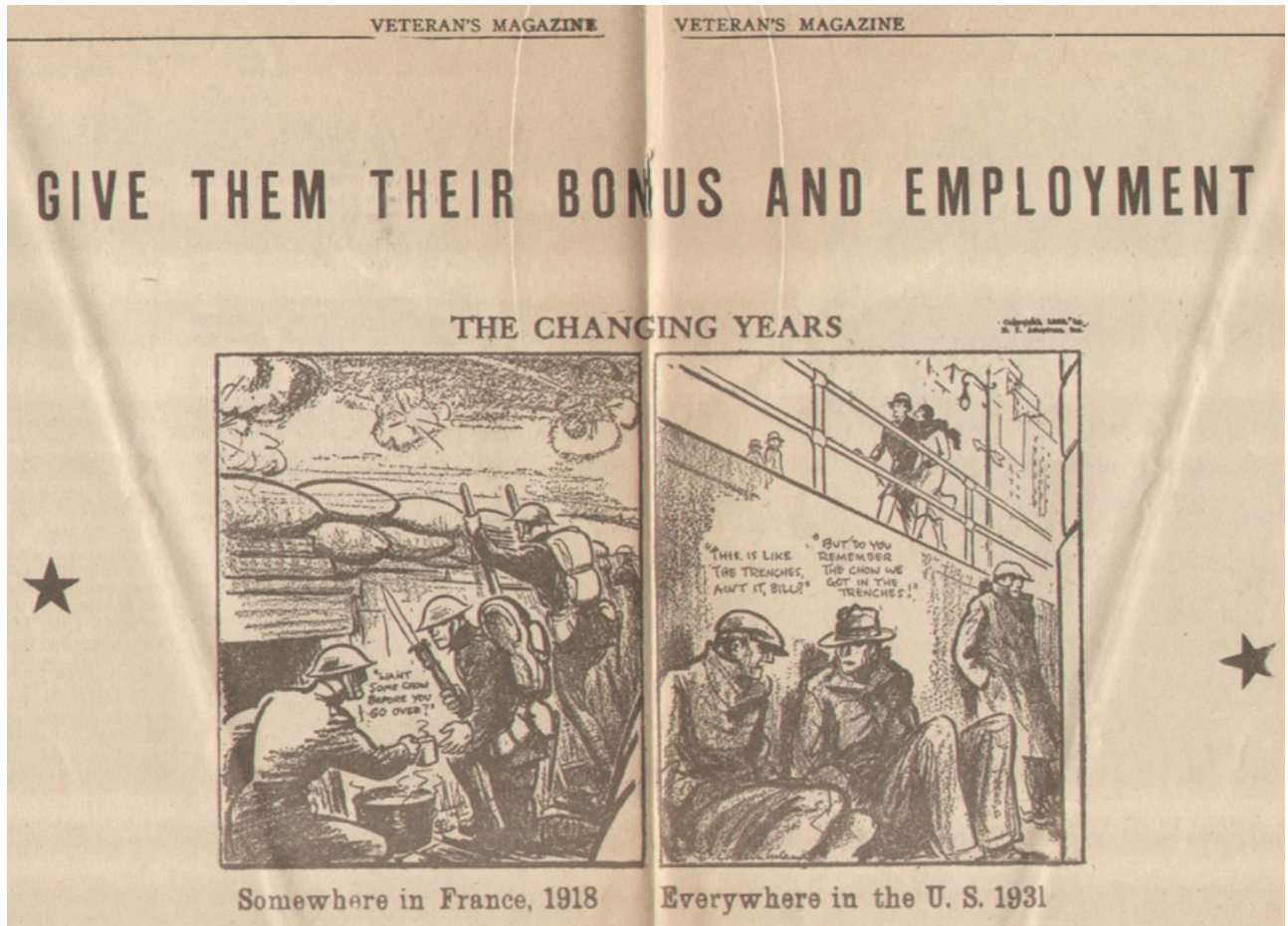
## GALLERY WALK WORKSHEET

**Directions:** As you walk around the classroom consider this question, *Did the U.S. government meet the needs of World War I soldiers? If yes, then how? If no, why not?*

Write bullet point notes based on your observation of the documents

STATION ONE: ADJUSTED SERVICE CERTIFICATE	STATION TWO: SHEET MUSIC, "I'VE GOT THOSE BONUS BLUES," 1922
STATION THREE: LETTER, THE UNITED STATES TREASURY DEPARTMENT TO CLYDE CHILSON, JANUARY 18, 1918	STATION FOUR: WORLD WAR I POSTERS

POLITICAL CARTOON, GIVE THEM THEIR BONUS AND EMPLOYMENT  
VETERAN'S MAGAZINE



SERVICEMEN'S READJUSTMENT ACT OF 1944  
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Seventy-eighth Congress of the United States of America;

At the Second Session

Begun and held at the City of Washington on Monday, the tenth  
day of January, one thousand nine hundred and forty-four

AN ACT

To provide Federal Government aid for the readjustment in civilian  
life of returning World War II veterans.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the  
United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may  
be cited as the "Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944".

TITLE I

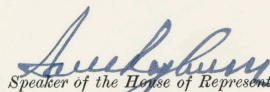
CHAPTER I—HOSPITALIZATION, CLAIMS, AND PROCEDURES


SEC. 100. The Veterans' Administration is hereby declared to be  
an essential war agency and entitled, second only to the War and  
Navy Departments, to priorities in personnel, equipment, supplies,  
and material under any laws, Executive orders, and regulations per-  
taining to priorities, and in appointments of personnel from civil-  
service registers the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs is hereby  
granted the same authority and discretion as the War and Navy  
Departments and the United States Public Health Service: *Provided*,  
That the provisions of this section as to priorities for materials shall  
apply to any State institution to be built for the care or hospitali-  
zation of veterans.

SEC. 101. The Administrator of Veterans' Affairs and the Federal  
Board of Hospitalization are hereby authorized and directed to  
expedite and complete the construction of additional hospital facili-  
ties for war veterans, and to enter into agreements and contracts  
for the use by or transfer to the Veterans' Administration of suitable  
Army and Navy hospitals after termination of hostilities in the  
present war or after such institutions are no longer needed by the  
armed services; and the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs is hereby  
authorized and directed to establish necessary regional offices, sub-  
offices, branch offices, contact units, or other subordinate offices in  
centers of population where there is no Veterans' Administration  
facility, or where such a facility is not readily available or accessible:  
*Provided*, That there is hereby authorized to be appropriated the sum  
of \$500,000,000 for the construction of additional hospital facilities.

SEC. 102. The Administrator of Veterans' Affairs and the Secretary  
of War and Secretary of the Navy are hereby granted authority to  
enter into agreements and contracts for the mutual use or exchange

unpaid balance and accrued interest due on such loan to the holder of  
the evidence of such indebtedness to the extent that the amount of  
adjusted compensation which may be payable will permit.

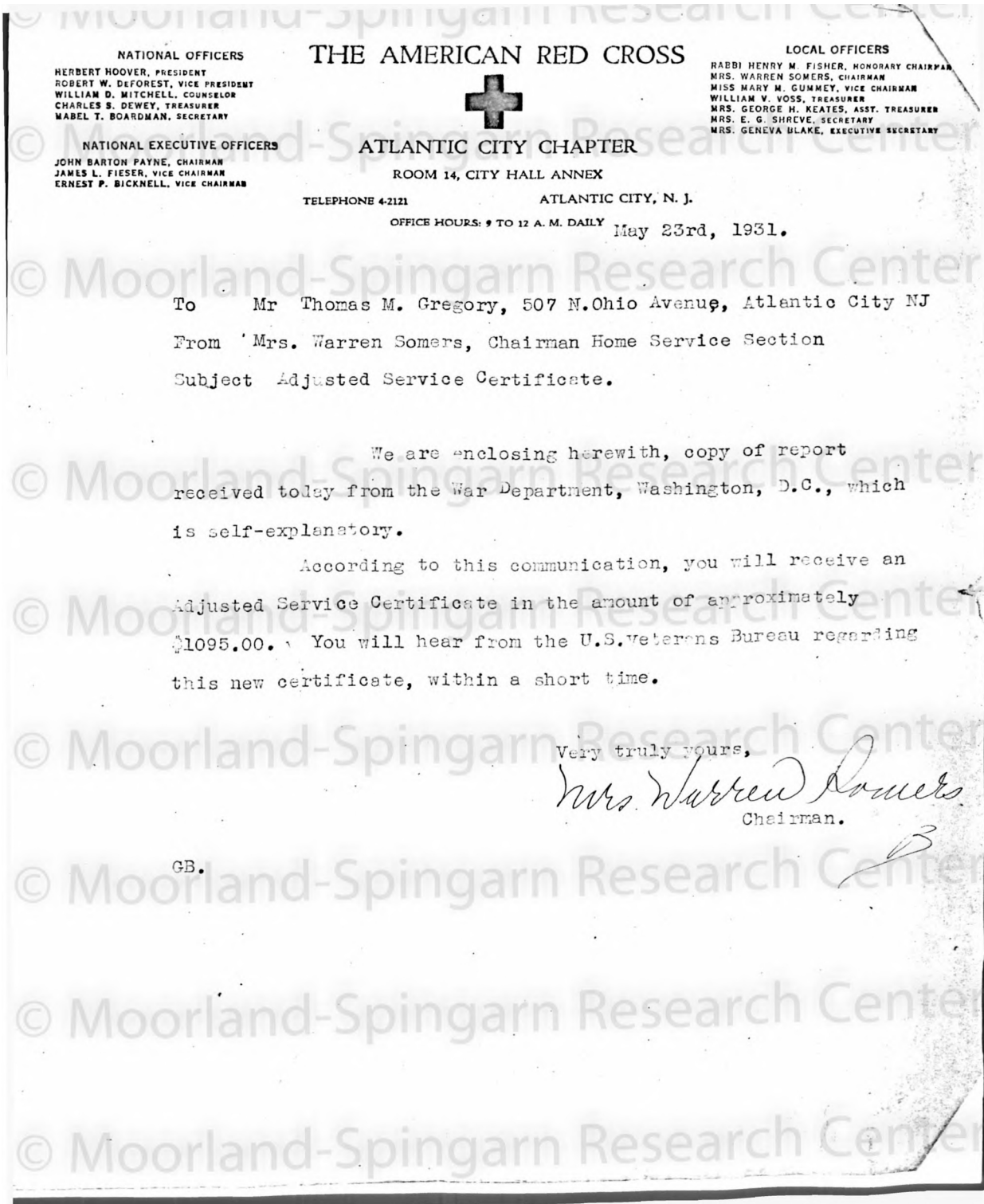
  
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

  
Acting President pro tempore of the Senate.

Approved  
June 22<sup>nd</sup> 1944  
Franklin D. Roosevelt

# GALLERY WALK: STATION ONE

ADJUSTED SERVICE CERTIFICATE, THOMAS MONTGOMERY GREGORY, MAY 23, 1931  
THOMAS MONTGOMERY GREGORY COLLECTION, HOWARD UNIVERSITY



**NATIONAL OFFICERS**  
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CHARLES S. DEWEY, TREASURER  
MABEL T. BOARDMAN, SECRETARY

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### ATLANTIC CITY CHAPTER

ROOM 14, CITY HALL ANNEX

TELEPHONE 4-2121

ATLANTIC CITY, N. J.

OFFICE HOURS: 9 TO 12 A. M. DAILY May 23rd, 1931.

To Mr Thomas M. Gregory, 507 N. Ohio Avenue, Atlantic City NJ  
From Mrs. Warren Somers, Chairman Home Service Section  
Subject Adjusted Service Certificate.

We are enclosing herewith, copy of report received today from the War Department, Washington, D.C., which is self-explanatory.

According to this communication, you will receive an Adjusted Service Certificate in the amount of approximately \$1095.00. You will hear from the U.S. veterans Bureau regarding this new certificate, within a short time.

Very truly yours,

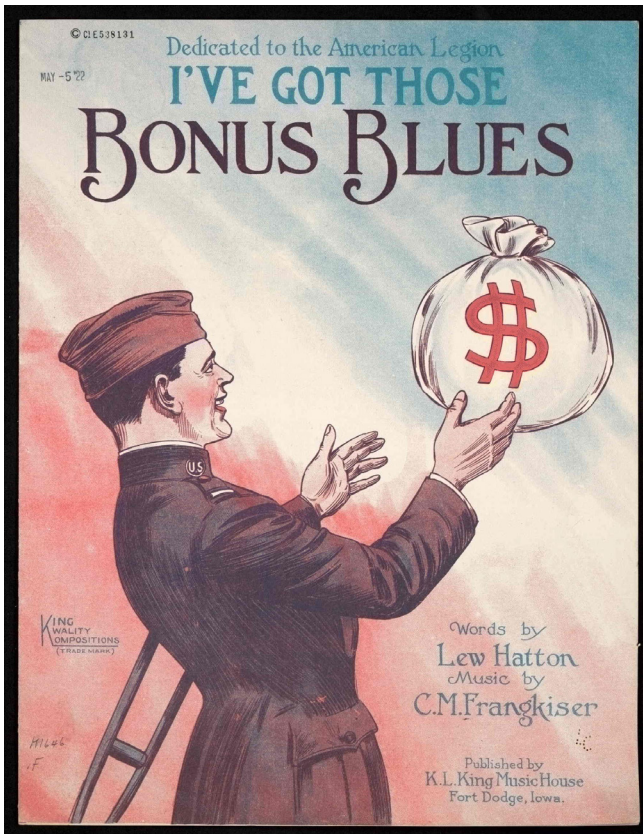
*Mrs. Warren Somers*  
Chairman.

GB.



## GALLERY WALK: STATION TWO

SHEET MUSIC, "I'VE GOT THOSE BONUS BLUES," 1922  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (IHAS.200203402)



### "I've Got Those Bonus Blues," 1922

You've heard of all kinds of blues  
You've heard of blues you can't lose  
You've heard of blues that would make you want to roam  
(And never more would you want to come back home)  
I'm not denyin', I'm even cryin'  
The blues have got me so bad  
I'm nearly dyin', I'm grievin'  
And heavin' sighs and prayin' every day  
(Oh, mailman come my way)  
For here's a new kind of blues  
The kind that I can't excuse  
They're all about the big pay I'll get some day  
(Providin' that it ain't lost along the way)  
I've borrowed from my dad and all my sweetie had  
It's "dough" I'm needin', and I am needin' bad  
(But when I get my Bonus I won't feel so sad)

Yes I've got those Bonus Blues most all the time  
Bluest blues I've ever had and they're all mine  
When I lay me down to sleep I pray the Lord to keep  
That pay comin' on its way to me  
(Oh! won't you kindly hear my plea)  
When I start to sing or hum, those blues get me  
Better days are sure to come, that's plain to see  
Uncle Sam will surely send it  
And I know just how I will spend it  
That will cure those Bonus Blues

**GALLERY WALK: STATION THREE**

LETTER, THE UNITED STATES TREASURY DEPARTMENT TO CLYDE CHILSON, JANUARY 18, 1918  
NATIONAL WORLD WAR I MUSEUM AND MEMORIAL, KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI (1977.13)

*The United States of America*

**TREASURY DEPARTMENT**  
BUREAU OF WAR RISK INSURANCE  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

CERTIFICATE No. 459071

Date insurance effective Jan. 18, 1918


**This Certifies That** Clyde Charlie Chilson

has applied for insurance in the amount of \$ 10,000, payable in case of death or total permanent disability in monthly installments of \$ 57.50

Subject to the payment of the premiums required, this insurance is granted under the authority of an Act amending "An Act entitled 'An Act to authorize the establishment of a Bureau of War Risk Insurance in the Treasury Department,' approved September 2, 1914, and for other purposes," approved October 6, 1917, and subject in all respects to the provisions of such Act, of any amendments thereto, and of all regulations thereunder, now in force or hereafter adopted, all of which, together with the application for this insurance, and the terms and conditions published under authority of the Act, shall constitute the contract.

*W. C. De Lanoy*  
Director of the Bureau of War Risk Insurance.

*W. C. Meador*  
Secretary of the Treasury.



Countersigned at Washington, D. C.,

D. B. Fisher  
Registrar

FORM 711 2-4175

## GALLERY WALK: STATION FOUR

POSTER, *FUTURE MEMBERS OF THE FOURTH ESTATE*, 1919  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (00651581)

# FUTURE MEMBERS OF THE FOURTH ESTATE



Learning the operation of the monotype caster and the handling of type in the printing shop of the Red Cross Institute for Crippled and Disabled Men, New York.

10 10 10

## GALLERY WALK: STATION FOUR

POSTER, *LEARNING TO WALK FOR THE SECOND TIME*, 1919  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (00651582)

# Learning to Walk for the Second Time

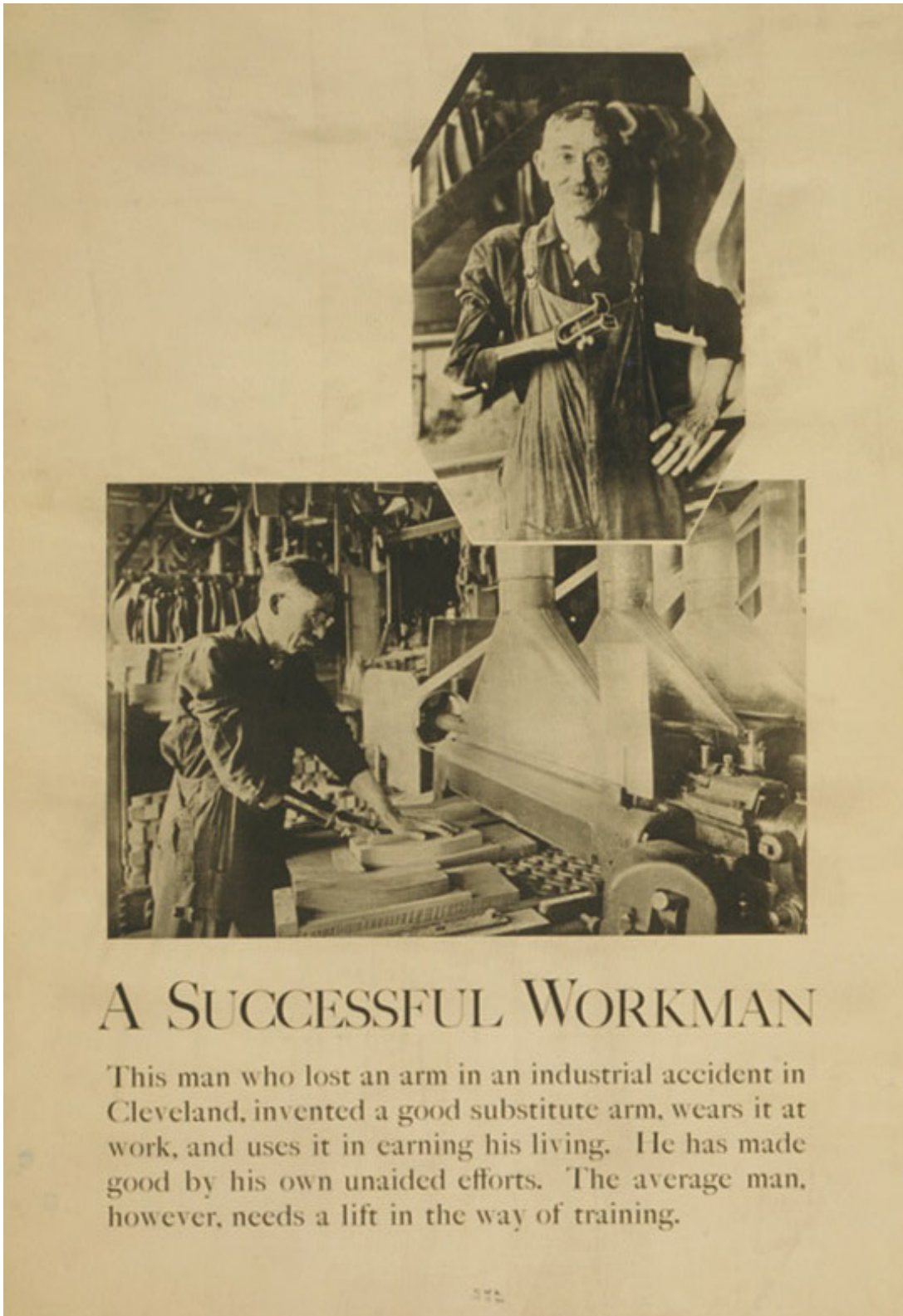
After some practice these legless men walk as well as uninjured persons. The French soldier on the right has been fitted temporarily so that he can get about soon after his operation. The peg leg is worn while the stump is assuming final shape and the more elaborate limb is being made.



These Italian soldiers, in a school at Naples, are being taught to walk on their new legs.

## GALLERY WALK: STATION FOUR

POSTER, *A SUCCESSFUL WORKMAN*, 1919  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (00651584)



## GALLERY WALK: STATION FOUR

POSTER, *WITH COMPASS AND T-SQUARE*, 1919  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (00651579)

# WITH COMPASS AND T-SQUARE



For one-armed men, mechanical drafting has proved a good occupation. This was especially the case during the war. The men are able to handle the instruments with one good hand and the stump of the other arm.

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## GALLERY WALK: STATION FOUR

POSTER, *IN FRANCE, TWO POPULAR TRADES TAUGHT DISABLED SOLDIERS ARE CABINET-MAKING AND TAILORING*, 1919  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (00651588)



Disabled Serbians Working in the  
Carpentry Shop at Lyons, France



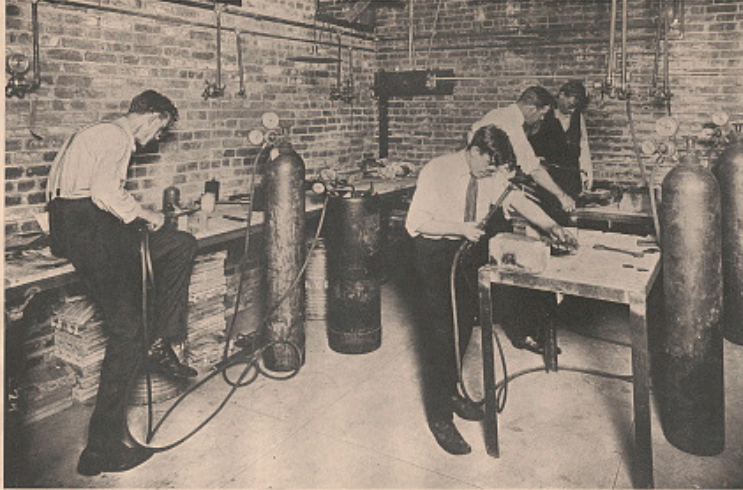
A Tailoring Class in Paris Taught  
by a One-legged Instructor

In France, Two Popular Trades Taught Dis-  
abled Soldiers Are Cabinet-making and Tailoring

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## GALLERY WALK: STATION FOUR

POSTER, *FUTURE SHIP WORKERS: A ONE-ARMED WELDER*, 1919  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (00651580)



### FUTURE SHIP WORKERS

Disabled Men are Taught Oxy-acetylene  
Welding in the Red Cross Institute  
for Crippled and Disabled Men, New  
York City.



### A ONE-ARMED WELDER

His Good Arm Enables Him to Handle  
the Torch as Effectively as Two-armed  
Workmen.



## DEBATE SOURCES: SET ONE

**CALVIN COOLIDGE, ARMISTICE DAY DEDICATING THE LIBERTY MEMORIAL IN KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI, NOVEMBER 11, 1926 (EXCERPT)**  
**CALVIN COOLIDGE PRESIDENTIAL FOUNDATION**

“...Under no other flag are those who have served their country held in such high appreciation. It is, of course, impossible for the eyes of the Government to detect all individual cases of veterans requiring relief in every part of our land. But the Veterans’ Bureau is organized into departments and subdivisions, so that if any worthy person escapes their observation it is because the utmost care and attention could do no more. In the last eight years about \$3,500,000,000 have been expended by the national Government for restoration, education, and relief. Nearly \$3,200,000,000 have been pledged to accrue in future benefits to all veterans. Whenever they may be suffering from illness, whatever may be its cause, the doors of our hospitals are open to them without charge until they are restored to health. This is an indication of praise and reward which our country bestows upon its veterans. Our admiration is boundless. It is no mere idle form; it is no shadow without reality, but a solid and substantial effort rising into the dignity of a sacrifice made by all the people that they might in some degree recognize and recompense those who have served in time of national peril. All veterans should know this and appreciate it, and they do. All citizens should know it and be proud of it, and they are.”

**OFFICE OF THE HISTORIAN, “A BONUS FOR WORLD WAR I VETERANS: MAY 2, 1922”**  
**OFFICE OF ART & ARCHIVES, UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

“On this date, a Hearst newspaper truck from New York City delivered a petition to the Capitol bearing more than one million signatures in support of a bonus for World War I veterans. Momentum had been building for several years for the federal government to compensate servicemen for the difference they lost between pay in the military versus their civilian jobs. The document simply read: “We respectfully petition Congress to pass the soldiers’ bonus act without further delay, and also to levy a sales tax to obtain the money to pay the bonus.” A delegation of House and Senate Members, led by Lester D. Volk of New York and Hiram Johnson of California, accepted the petition on the central steps of the East Front. Inside the House Chamber, the reception was markedly cooler. Representative Walter Lineberger of California, who supported the bonus, nevertheless dismissed the petition ceremony as a ‘pageant’ intended to “commercialize or politicize patriotism.” Lineberger claimed newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst orchestrated the event to boost the re-election prospects of Senator Johnson. Hearst had used his newspapers as powerful outlets to oppose U.S. intervention in World War I. Now Lineberger pilloried the Hearst chain, ‘whose slimy trail of pro-Germanism and traitorous utterances . . . [carried] on the nefarious work of opposing the war and obstructing the path to victory,’ for positioning itself as servicemen’s advocate. Congress passed a bonus in 1922 but President Warren Harding vetoed it. After passing another bonus bill, Congress overrode the veto of President Calvin Coolidge in May 1924 and the measure was enacted. The payment—which provided veterans \$1.25 per day for service overseas and \$1 per day for domestic service—was deferred by the law until 1945. The issue was reopened in the early 1930s, when cash-strapped veterans suffering the effects of the Great Depression marched on Washington to demand an immediate payment.”

## DEBATE SOURCES: SET ONE (CON'T)

**CALVIN COOLIDGE, MESSAGE TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES RETURNING WITHOUT APPROVAL A BILL PROVIDING FOR ADJUSTED COMPENSATION FOR WAR VETERANS, MAY 15, 1924 (PAGE ONE)**  
**THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY PROJECT, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SANTA BARBARA**

To the House of Representatives:

Herewith is returned, without approval, H.R. 7959, a bill "to provide adjusted compensation for veterans of the World War, and for other purposes."

The bill provides a bonus for the veterans of the World War and dependents of those who fell. To certain of its beneficiaries, whose maximum benefits do not exceed \$50, this bonus is to be paid immediately in cash. To each of its beneficiaries who are not to receive such immediate cash payment there is to be provided free insurance under a 20-year endowment plan. The face value of each policy will be based upon the military service, the average amount being at least \$962, payable at the expiration of 20 years or at death prior thereto. After the lapse of two years the holder of a policy may borrow thereon from banks at reasonable rates of interest. If amounts so borrowed are not repaid by the veteran, the Government is obligated to pay to the banks this indebtedness, which ultimately reduces the maturity value of the policy.

An appropriation of \$146,000,000 for the fiscal year 1925 will be required to provide the prorated annual cost of the insurance and to meet cash payments, to those not receiving such insurance. This does not include administrative costs, which will amount to approximately \$6,500,000 the first year. For the fiscal year 1926 an appropriation of \$155,500,000 will be required, and the annual appropriations for the 20-year period will aggregate, according to the lowest estimate, \$2,280,758,542. These and the other figures herein are from the Veterans' Bureau, but the Treasury estimates are materially more.

That part of the annual appropriation not required to meet the cash bonus or to pay policies maturing on account of death will be invested in Government bonds. The face value of the bonds thus acquired plus the interest thereon reinvested will equal during the 20-year period the maturity value of the insurance policies, aggregating at the lowest estimate \$3,145,000,000.

The money spent for the acquisition of these bonds manifestly can not be spent for any other purpose, no matter how urgent our other requirements may be. In other words, we will be committing this nation for a period of 20 years to an additional average annual appropriation of \$114,000,000. This of itself should require most serious reflection, but if we are to have such commitment it should be in some form which would be in harmony with recognized principles of Government finance. The provisions of this bill are not so in harmony. Under it the Government will not have in the fund in 1945 two and a half billions of dollars.

All it will have will be its own obligations, and it will owe two and a half billions of dollars cash. It will then be necessary to sell to the public this two and a half billions of bonds—a major operation in finance which may be disastrous at that time and may jeopardize the value of federal securities then outstanding.

We have no money to bestow upon a class of people that is not taken from the whole people. Our first concern must be the nation as a whole. This outweighs in its importance the consideration of a class, and the latter must yield to the former. The one compelling desire and demand of the people to-day, irrespective of party or class, is for tax relief. The people have labored during the last six years under a heavy tax burden. This was necessary to meet the extraordinary costs of the war. This heavy assessment has been met willingly and without complaint. We have now reached a financial condition which permits us to lighten this tax burden. If this bill becomes law, we wipe out at once almost all the progress five hard years have accomplished in reducing the national debt. If we now confer upon a class a gratuity such as is contemplated by this bill, we diminish to the extent of the expenditures involved the benefits of reduced taxes which will flow not only to this class but to the entire people. When it is considered that less than \$40 a year would pay for the average policy provided by this bill, there is strong ground to assume that the veterans themselves would be better off to make that small payment and be relieved of the attendant high taxes and high living costs which such legislation would impose on them. Certainly the country would. We have hardly an economic ill to-day which can not be attributed directly or indirectly to high taxes.

**CALVIN COOLIDGE, MESSAGE TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES RETURNING WITHOUT APPROVAL A BILL PROVIDING FOR ADJUSTED COMPENSATION FOR WAR VETERANS, MAY 15, 1924 (PAGE TWO)  
THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY PROJECT, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SANTA BARBARA**

The prosperity of the nation, which is the prosperity of the people, rests primarily on reducing the existing tax burden. No other action would so encourage Business. No other legislative enactment would do so much to relieve Agriculture. The drastic executive campaign for economy in Government expenditures has but one purpose—that its benefits may accrue to the whole people in the form of reduction in taxes. I can not recede from this purpose. I am for the interests of the whole people. The expenditures proposed in this bill are against the interests of the whole people. I do not believe they are for the benefit of the veterans.

The running expenses of the Government for services and supplies must be met. Certain other obligations in the nature of investments for improvements and buildings are necessary and often result in a saving. The debts of the nation must be paid. The sum of all these is a tremendous amount. At the present rate it is nearly \$35 for each resident of our country, or \$175 for each average family every year, and must be for some time. This bill calls for a further expenditure in the aggregate of nearly \$35 for each inhabitant and lays nearly \$175 more on each family, to be spread over a period of 20 years. No one supposes the effort will stop here. Already suggestions are made for a cash bonus in addition, to be paid at once. Such action logically would be encouraged if this bill becomes law. Neither the rich nor the profiteers will meet this expense. All of this enormous sum has to be earned by the people of this country through their toil. It is taken from the returns of their production. They must earn it; they must pay it. The people of this country ought not to be required by their Government to bear any such additional burden. They are not deserving of any such treatment. Our business is not to impose upon them but to protect them.

If this bill be considered as insurance, the opportunity for such a provision has already been provided. Nearly \$3,000,000,000 of war risk and Government life insurance is now outstanding, and over \$500,000,000 has been paid on such policies. When this provision was made in 1917 it was on the explicit understanding of the Congress that such insurance was to relieve the Government of subsequent contributions. The then Secretary of the Treasury said in relation to the proposed 4 insurance act: "It ought to check any further attempts at service pension legislation by enabling a man now to provide against impairment through old age, total disability, or death resulting from other causes, and to give all this protection to those kindred who may be dependent upon him and who do not share in the Government compensation." This opportunity was afforded all those who entered the service. It was distinctly understood that it covered every obligation on the part of the Government. The intent of this bill now to provide free insurance lacks both a legal and moral requirement and falls into the position of a plain gratuity.

Considering this bill from the standpoint of its intrinsic merit, I see no justification for its enactment into law. We owe no bonus to able-bodied veterans of the World War. The first duty of every citizen is to the nation. The veterans of the World War performed this first duty. To confer upon them a cash consideration or its equivalent for performing this first duty is unjustified. It is not justified when considered in the interests of the whole people; it is not justified when considered alone on its own merits. The gratitude of the nation to these veterans can not be expressed in dollars and cents. No way exists by which we can either equalize the burdens or give adequate financial reward to those who served the nation in both civil and military capacities in time of war. The respect and honor of their country will rightfully be theirs forever more. But patriotism can neither be bought nor sold. It is not hire and salary. It is not material, but spiritual. It is one of the finest and highest of human virtues. To attempt to pay money for it is to offer it an unworthy indignity which cheapens, debases, and destroys it. Those who would really honor patriotism should strive to match it with an equal courage, with an equal fidelity to the welfare of their country, and an equal faith in the cause of righteousness.

**CALVIN COOLIDGE, MESSAGE TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES RETURNING WITHOUT APPROVAL A BILL PROVIDING FOR ADJUSTED COMPENSATION FOR WAR VETERANS, MAY 15, 1924 (PAGE THREE)  
THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY PROJECT, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SANTA BARBARA**

I am not unmindful that this bill also embraces within its provisions the disabled of our veterans and the dependents of those who fell. To state that the disabled veterans and these dependents are entitled to this additional gratuity is to state that the nation is not meeting its obligation to them. Such a statement can not truthfully be made. The nation has spent more than \$2,000,000,000 in behalf of disabled veterans and dependents of those who died. It is now spending for compensation, training, insurance, and hospitalization more than \$400,000,000 annually. Solicitude for the disabled veterans and the dependents of those who lost their lives is the nation's solicitude. To minister to their every need is a sacred obligation, which will be generously and gratefully met. The nation stands ready to expend any amount needed for their proper care. But that is not the object of this bill.

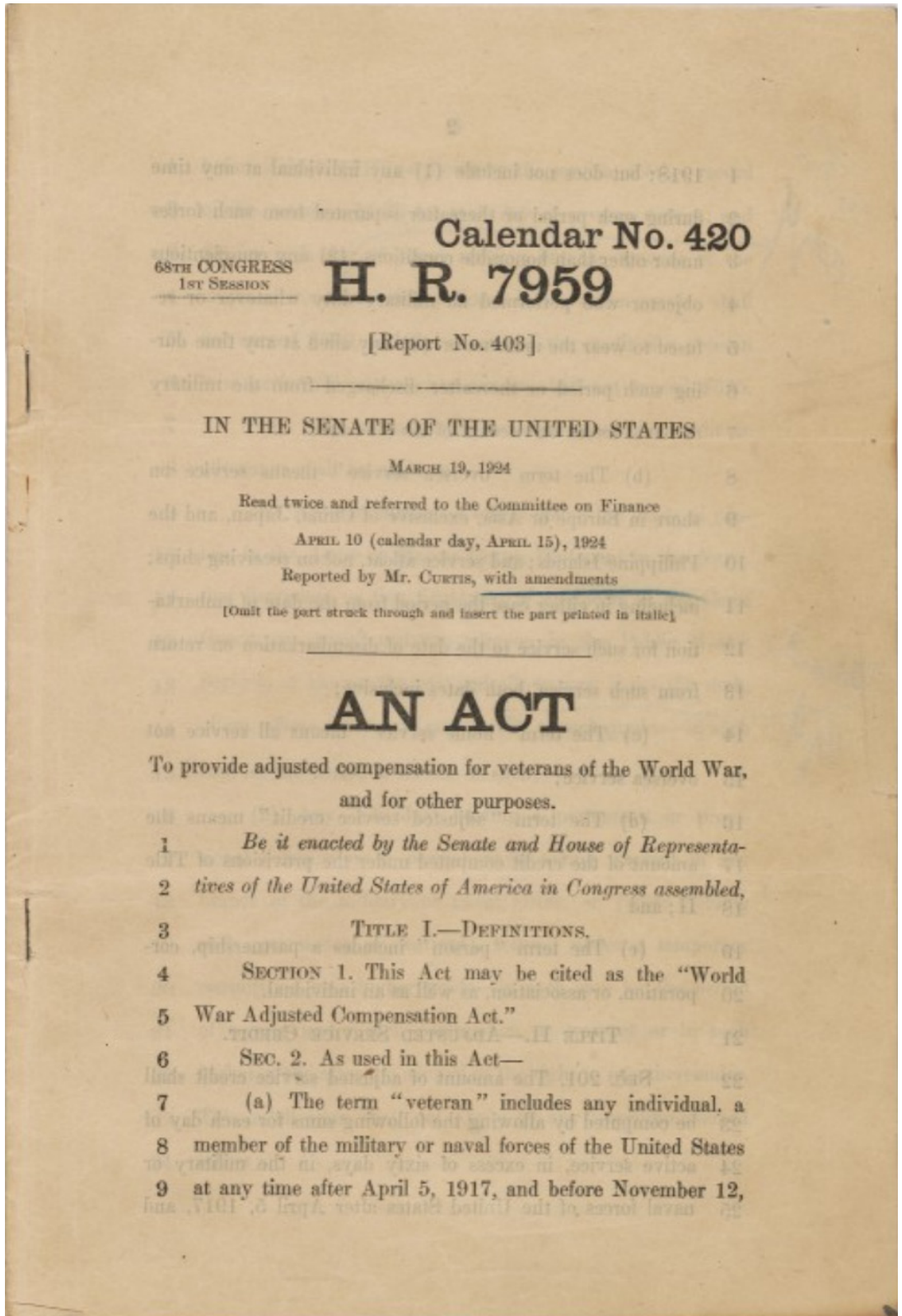
America entered the World War with a higher purpose than to secure material gain. Not greed but duty was the impelling motive. Our veterans as a whole responded to that motive. They are not asking as a whole, they do not want as a whole, any money recompense. Those who do seek a money recompense for the most part, of course, prefer an immediate cash payment. We must either abandon our theory of patriotism or abandon this bill. Patriotism which is bought and paid for is not patriotism. Our country has maintained the principle that our Government is established for something higher and finer than to permit those who are charged with the responsibility of office, or any class whose favor they might seek, to get what they can out of it. Service to our country in time of war means sacrifice. It is for that reason alone that we honor and revere it. To attempt to make a money payment out of the earnings of the people to those who are physically well and financially able is to abandon one of our most cherished American ideals. The property of the people belongs to the people. To take it from them by taxation can not be justified except by urgent public necessity. Unless this principle be recognized our country is no longer secure, our people no longer free. This bill would condemn those who are weak to turn over a part of their earnings to those who are strong. Our country can not afford it. The veterans as a whole do not want it. All our American principles are opposed to it. There is no moral justification for it.

CALVIN COOLIDGE

THE WHITE HOUSE, May 15, 1924

**DEBATE SOURCES: SET ONE (CON'T)**

H.R. 7959, AN ACT TO PROVIDE ADJUSTED COMPENSATION FOR VETERANS OF THE WORLD WAR . . .  
(BONUS ACT), APRIL 10, 1924  
RECORDS OF THE SENATE, NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION



## DEBATE SOURCES: SET ONE (CON'T)

### "VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS" (EXCERPT)

PBS

"Since the late 18th century U.S. servicemen and women have been deployed overseas. Today there is more support for those who have served but veterans continue to fight for just compensation.

"Abraham Lincoln famously raised the need for veterans and their families to be looked after towards the end of the Civil War. In his second inaugural address in 1865 he stated that the nation needed 'to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan'.

"Sick and scarred, veterans began forming local organizations in 1899 when they returned from the Spanish-American War and the Philippine-American War. Supporting each other, they worked to secure rights and benefits for their service.

"Later these organizations combined to form the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the first national organization within the United States that represented returned soldiers from abroad. Membership increased steadily as more returned servicemen from foreign wars became disgruntled with the government response to their predicament.

"There was some recognition by Congress that veterans needed support when the United States entered World War I. A new system of benefits was established including programs for disability compensation, insurance, and rehabilitation for the disabled. But many argued it didn't go far enough.

"Following World War I the veterans' organizations became more organized in fighting for their rights. They believed that soldiers should be entitled to additional compensation for sacrifices they had made while others stayed home to earn higher wages.

"Congress responded with the Adjusted Compensation Act of 1924 which gave a "bonus" to each veteran – though this was not to be paid until 1945. As the Depression worsened, the veterans became frustrated with the delay in the payment and they began to lobby Congress and President Roosevelt. Their pleas fell on deaf ears and in 1932 some 20,000 veterans marched on the Capitol in protest.

Membership of the Veterans of Foreign Wars grew in response to the Bonus Movement, increasing from 5,000 in 1915 to almost 200,000 in 1936, when Roosevelt's veto of the Bonus Bill was finally overridden.

"The dedication of these veterans' to their cause prompted Congress to reconsider their treatment of soldiers who returned from foreign wars..."

## DEBATE SOURCES: SET TWO

OFFICE OF THE HISTORIAN, "A BONUS FOR WORLD WAR I VETERANS: MAY 2, 1922"  
OFFICE OF ART & ARCHIVES, UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

"On this date, a Hearst newspaper truck from New York City delivered a petition to the Capitol bearing more than one million signatures in support of a bonus for World War I veterans. Momentum had been building for several years for the federal government to compensate servicemen for the difference they lost between pay in the military versus their civilian jobs. The document simply read: "We respectfully petition Congress to pass the soldiers' bonus act without further delay, and also to levy a sales tax to obtain the money to pay the bonus." A delegation of House and Senate Members, led by Lester D. Volk of New York and Hiram Johnson of California, accepted the petition on the central steps of the East Front. Inside the House Chamber, the reception was markedly cooler. Representative Walter Lineberger of California, who supported the bonus, nevertheless dismissed the petition ceremony as a 'pageant' intended to "commercialize or politicize patriotism." Lineberger claimed newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst orchestrated the event to boost the re-election prospects of Senator Johnson. Hearst had used his newspapers as powerful outlets to oppose U.S. intervention in World War I. Now Lineberger pilloried the Hearst chain, 'whose slimy trail of pro-Germanism and traitorous utterances . . . [carried] on the nefarious work of opposing the war and obstructing the path to victory,' for positioning itself as servicemen's advocate. Congress passed a bonus in 1922 but President Warren Harding vetoed it. After passing another bonus bill, Congress overrode the veto of President Calvin Coolidge in May 1924 and the measure was enacted. The payment—which provided veterans \$1.25 per day for service overseas and \$1 per day for domestic service—was deferred by the law until 1945. The issue was reopened in the early 1930s, when cash-strapped veterans suffering the effects of the Great Depression marched on Washington to demand an immediate payment."

POLITICAL CARTOON, *DRIVEN OFF AT LAST* (REPRINTED FROM *THE NEW YORK WORLD*), OCTOBER 4, 1922  
*THE OUTLOOK: AN ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY JOURNAL OF EVERYDAY LIFE*, VOLUME 130



DRIVEN OFF AT LAST

## DEBATE SOURCES: SET TWO (CON'T)

"THE BONUS, THE PRESIDENT, AND THE LEGION," OCTOBER 4, 1922

THE OUTLOOK: AN ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY JOURNAL OF EVERYDAY LIFE, VOLUME 130

# THE BONUS, THE PRESIDENT, AND THE LEGION

**T**HE Adjusted Compensation Bill was, with two exceptions, submitted to the President by Congress in substantially the form reported in *The Outlook* for September 13. The two exceptions were the omission of the clause providing that funds for the bonus might be paid from the interest on our foreign debt, and the withdrawal of the plan for a \$350,000,000 reclamation project which was to be made a part of the rehabilitation programme.

In perhaps the clearest and most cogently reasoned statement which Mr. Harding has yet issued, the bill as submitted to him was vetoed on September 19. The President's statesmanlike veto is in exact line with his previous views on the bonus question, and deserves study in full. But perhaps the following excerpts cover its most important conclusions.

The President says:

In legislating for what is called adjusted compensation, Congress failed, first of all, to provide the revenue from which the bestowal is to be paid.

Moreover, it establishes the very dangerous precedent of creating a treasury covenant to pay which puts a burden, variously estimated between \$4,000,000,000 and \$5,000,000,000, upon the American people, not to discharge an obligation, which the Government always must pay, but to bestow a bonus which the soldiers themselves, while serving in the World War, did not expect.

He goes on to acknowledge the very real obligation of the Government to those "who left the armies injured, disabled, or diseased," and describes what is being done for the men broken by the war. Five hundred and ten million dollars is the charge on the Government on this account in the year 1922, and the President estimates that next year probably more than \$470,000,000 will be required. There has been grave evidence that this money has not all been wisely and advantageously spent, but the President is right in pointing out

that this total indicates that the country wishes to deal properly and generously with its disabled men.

Of the actual benefits which the proposed bill would bestow on uninjured veterans, the President says that the bill states in effect, "We do not have the cash, we do not believe in a tax levy to meet the situation, but here is our note; you may have our credit for half its worth." This," says the President, "is not compensation, but rather a pledge by the Congress, while the executive branch of the Government is left to provide for payments falling due in ever-increasing amounts."

Of the financial arrangements called for by the bill the President further says:

When the bill was under consideration in the House, I expressed the conviction that any grant of bonus ought to provide the means of paying it, and I was unable to suggest any plan other than that of a general sales tax. Such a plan was unacceptable to the Congress, and the bill has been enacted without even a suggested means of meeting the cost. Indeed, the cost is not definitely known, either for the immediate future or in the ultimate settlement. The Treasury estimates, based on what seems the most likely exercise of the options, figure the direct cost at approximately \$145,000,000 for 1923, \$225,000,000 for 1924, \$114,000,000 for 1925 and \$312,000,000 for 1926, making a total of \$795,000,000 for the first four years of its operation, and a total cost in excess of \$4,000,000,000. No estimate of the large indirect cost ever had been made. The certificate plan sets up no reserve against the ultimate liability. The plan avoids any considerable direct outlay by the Government during the earlier years of the bill's proposed operations, but the loans on the certificates would be floated on the credit of the nation. This is borrowing on the nation's credit just as truly as though the loans were made by direct Government borrowing and involves a dangerous abuse of public credit. More-

over, the certificate plan of payment is little less than certified inability of the Government to pay, and invites a practice of sacrificial barter which I cannot sanction.

The President defines the essential elements of public credit thoughtfully and clearly:

It is worth remembering that the public credit is founded on the popular belief in the defensibility of public expenditure, as well as the Government's ability to pay. Loans come from every rank in life, and our heavy tax burdens reach, directly or indirectly, every element in our citizenship. To add one-sixth of the total sum of our public debt for a distribution among less than 5,000,000 out of 110,000,000, whether inspired by grateful sentiment or political expediency, would undermine the confidence on which our credit is builded and establish the precedent of distributing public funds whenever the proposal and the numbers affected make it seem politically appealing to do so.

The difficulty of arranging for an expenditure at this time which might have been easily accomplished during the war is outlined in the following words:

It is sometimes thoughtlessly urged that it is a simple thing for the rich Republic to add \$4,000,000,000 to its indebtedness. This impression comes from the readiness of the public response to the Government's appeal for funds amid the stress of war. It is to be remembered that in the war everybody was ready to give his all. Let us not recall the comparatively few exceptions. Citizens of every degree of competence loaned and sacrificed, precisely in the same spirit that our armed forces went out for service. The war spirit impelled. To a war necessity there was but one answer, but a peace bestowal on the ex-service man, as though the supreme offering could be paid for with cash, is a perversion of public funds, a reversal of the policy which exalted patriotic service in the past, and sug-

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## DEBATE SOURCES: SET TWO (CON'T)

"THE LEGION AND THE VETO," OCTOBER 4, 1922

THE OUTLOOK: AN ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY JOURNAL OF EVERYDAY LIFE, VOLUME 130

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gests that future defense is to be inspired by compensation rather than consciousness of duty to flag and country.

Mr. Harding apparently believes that the passage of the Adjusted Compensation Act would not obviate the need, real or political, of a later passage of pension legislation similar to that which has followed all our wars in the past:

It is to be remembered that the United States played no self-seeking part in the World War and pursued an unselfish policy after the cause was won. We demanded no reparation for the cost involved, no payments out of which obligations to our soldiers could be met. I have not magnified the willing outlay in behalf of those to whom we have a sacred obligation. It is essential to remember that a more than \$4,000,000,000 pledge to the able-bodied ex-service men now will not diminish the later obligations which will have to be met when the younger veterans of to-day shall contribute to the rolls of the aged, indigent, and dependent.

It is as inevitable as that the years will pass that pension provision for World War veterans will be made, as it had been made for those who served in previous wars. It will cost more billions than I venture to suggest. There will be justification when the need is apparent, and a rational financial policy to-day is necessary to make the nation ready for the expenditure which is certain to be required in the coming years. The contemplation of such a policy is in accord with the established practice of the nation, and puts the service men of the World War on the same plane as the millions of men who fought the previous battles of the Republic.

We trust that, with or without an adjusted compensation act, the country will never again witness such a pension scandal as followed the Civil War. Probably the President is right in saying that some form of pension system is

### THE OUTLOOK

inevitable, but there have been abuses of our pension system in the past which should never be permitted to recur again. Indeed, the War Risk insurance plan, which the Government had the foresight to adopt, was supposed to obviate the need of an alms-like pension system.

#### THE VETO SUSTAINED

As readers of The Outlook know, the House voted to overrule the President's veto by a vote of 258 to 54. The Senate voted to sustain the veto by a margin of four votes. Among the Republican Sena-

tors who voted to override the veto were Senators Capper, Cummins, Kellogg, La Follette, Lenroot, Lodge, and McCumber. Seventeen Democrats joined their Republican colleagues in an attempt to overrule the President. Among them were Senators Culberson, Heflin, Hitchcock, and Reed.

There were twenty-one Republicans who voted to sustain the veto, and they included Senators Borah, Calder, Moses, Newberry, Pepper, Smoot, and Wadsworth. Senators Williams, Glass, Owen, and Underwood were among the seven Democrats to vote to sustain the veto.

## THE LEGION AND THE VETO

The position of the American Legion is defined in a statement sent to The Outlook by its Commander, Hanford MacNider, at our telegraphic request.

**S**PEAKING before his organization a month or so ago, the President of the Bankers' Association of the State which has the highest per capita wealth in the Union said, "To say that our country cannot afford to adjust in some small measure the difference in compensation between the man who went to war and the man who stayed at home is to indict us for incompetence and to impeach us for ingratitude." The offering of a man's life and his services with the colors at least should receive equal consideration with the services of contractors, manufacturers, railways, and shipping interests. These obligations have been or are being paid, and they are undoubtedly proper debts, but the obligation to the veteran still remains and will remain until some adjustment is made. The Nation stands behind us when we say that the economic handicap of the veteran is not the Nation's intention or wish. Its representatives in Congress time and again have expressed this feeling by the passage of this legislation by large majori-

ties. President Harding has prevented its enactment into law. Heretofore he has stated that he believed some such legislation should be passed. He asked that a revenue feature be part of the measure. He now suggests that a pension system in the future would be the proper solution.

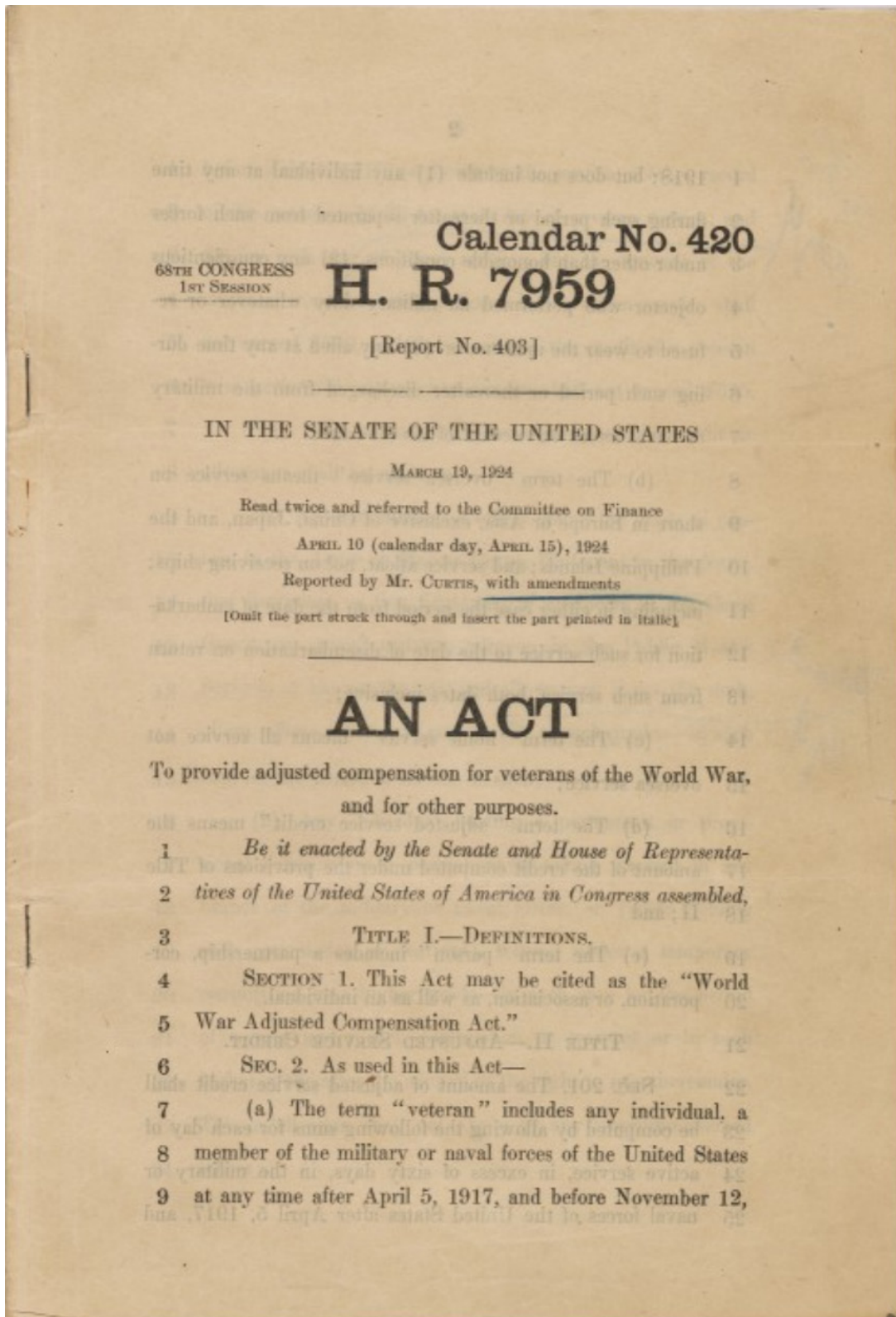
The American Legion feels and always has felt that if benefit to the veterans concerned were provided now, no great pension system, except for the disabled, would be necessary during the coming years to meet their handicap. Not only would immediate adjustment save the Nation billions of dollars, but it would restore the faith of men sorely tried by what they feel to be National ingratitude and injustice.

The battle for adjusted compensation has only just begun. The President has made the task doubly hard, but no one can stand between the wish of the people and fulfillment of what they believe to be a just obligation. The first bills introduced in the next session of Congress will be for adjusted compensation. Postponement for a few months will only strengthen the measure, and we shall win this fight. We are right, and right always prevails in America.

HANFORD MACNIDER.

## DEBATE SOURCES: SET TWO (CON'T)

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**TICKET-OUT-THE-DOOR**

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