

GOV. LESLIE GIVES REASONS FOR OLD AGE PENSION VETO

Full text of Governor Leslie's message, vetoing the old age pension bill, follows:

Mr. President and members of the Senate—I am returning herewith without my approval, Senate Enrolled Act, No. 3,—the old age pension act.

The sincere and warm-hearted advocates of this experimental legislation are entitled to every consideration. It is impossible to approach the problems involved in this measure without feeling and expressing that profound sympathy which is awakened in every breast by any movement, which, even theoretically or tentatively, seeks to put into practice society's most praiseworthy attribute, human charity.

The members of the general assembly who have tried in all good faith to provide for the adoption of such a revolutionary innovation as that involved in old age pensions should be commended for their sympathetic attitude toward the abstract problem of old age indigence and its amelioration.

4,000 VETERANS ASK AID DAILY

Local Bureau Has 20,000 Requests on File.

Indiana veterans are applying for loans on adjusted compensation certificates at the rate of about 4,000 a day. John H. Ale, regional manager of the United States veterans Bureau said today.

Ale has applied for further funds to make loans. The \$400,000 first allotted probably will not last through this week, he said.

Applications now total about 20,000, with loans being made at the rate of 1,000 each day. Fifty thousand of the 92,000 Indiana veterans are expected to seek the 50 per cent loans.

Kokomo Woman Dies

KOKOMO, Ind., March 6.—Funeral services were held for Mrs. Emma McGrail, 61, who died a few hours after suffering a ruptured blood vessel at a store where she was employed as a saleswoman. Her husband, John McGrail, died nine years ago.

Rail Executive Kills Self

PHILADELPHIA, March 6.—Nicholas C. Brooks, 50, an executive of the Missouri, Kansas and Texas railroad, shot himself to death in his room in a downtown hotel here.

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principle becomes engrained upon our government.

The unceasing effort will be to add to the army of pensioners by lowering the age limit, and to double the monthly pension allowance set forth in this act.

Nobody seems to know how much the old age pension plan outlined in this legislation will draw from the public treasury. There have been various estimates.

Delaware Case Cited

A few days ago the small state of Delaware enacted a similar law and its pension law carried an appropriation of \$250,000 to pay the state's half of the old age pension provided for.

The "principle" recognized in

Delaware was the well-established principle that doles can not be paid without money; that public pensions can not be met without increasing taxes.

In Delaware it was recognized that it is bad policy to sign a blank note without knowing where the cash is to be raised with which to meet the note on pay day, and without providing in a business-like, fair, and open fashion the funds

required to take up the paper when it is due.

It is possible to estimate the probable cost of an old age pension system in Indiana if the case of Delaware is studied. Delaware, with three counties, and only 238,380 population, evidently estimates that a law similar to this Indiana enactment would cost the state at least \$125,000 a year for its share.

Indiana, with ninety-two counties, and 3,225,000 population, certainly would be called upon to pay out many millions annually to match the dollars taken from the county treasuries for old age pensions. The aggregate would be staggering.

Yet the old age pension act carries no appropriation and sets up machinery to provide the money for pension payments.

Talks of Confiscation

Personally I am unwilling to approve an act that calls for a large expenditure of public funds by the state and various counties, where no provision is made in the act for raising the fund to meet the obligations. In this act we are offered a plan for adoption of the old age pension plan at the option of the

county, the county to pay half of the pension and the state to pay the other half.

The counties that decline to join the experiment, however, have no "option" when it comes to paying through the state treasury their respective shares of the state's portion of the pensions paid in counties operating as dole dispensers.

There may arise in this connection the question whether a county might be required to contribute money with which to help pay bills incurred in another county by that other county. Where does confiscation begin?

No machinery is here set up as in the case of school aid, to provide for this extraordinary experimental application of the tax money of one county to pension indigents of another county. The proposed law is neither fair nor workable.

The pension allowance proposed in the act is not adequate. There is no provision in the act for money with which to pay the allowance. It fails to do away with county firms and does not meet the continuing demand for institutional care for the indigent.

It merely points the way to more

urgent demands in future for ever-increasing allowances. It makes for systematic pauperism and fails to supply adequate safeguards against abuses of the experimental dole system it proposes to set up in Indiana.

No Way to Know Cost

It taxes the people of nonpension paying counties to help pay pensions to inhabitants of other counties.

There is no way of knowing what the operation of the proposed law will cost county or state, but experiments in other states indicate that the system is excessively costly and that it means increased taxation in a time when tax reduction is the chief demand and at a time when the overburdened taxpayer is finding it more difficult than ever to pay his share of the high cost of government.

If Delaware is a criterion, the measure would cost between \$4,500,000 and \$6,000,000 a year in Indiana. The problem of caring for the old and indigent, first is a family matter and then a community concern.

The modern movement which seeks to unload local problems and expenses upon state and nation is

a dangerous and subversive tendency which threatens to break down that self-respect, self-reliance and moral integrity that are developed by home rule and independent initiative.

This act not only suggests an adventure in high finances without finance, but it calls for a dangerous groping in the dark without adequate knowledge as to the ultimate destination. It is not practical.

It would not meet a need, but would impose an onerous and unnecessary burden on those who already are excessively taxed.

My veto in fairness to the earnest and sincere friends of the act has been forwarded with the least possible delay consistent with a careful study of the act.

The bill, as passed by both houses, was introduced in the senate by Senator James J. Neild (Rep., Lake). Under provisions of the measure counties could give optional pensions, not to exceed \$25 a month, to indigent persons over 70. The state would finance one-half the pension costs and counties adopting it the other half.

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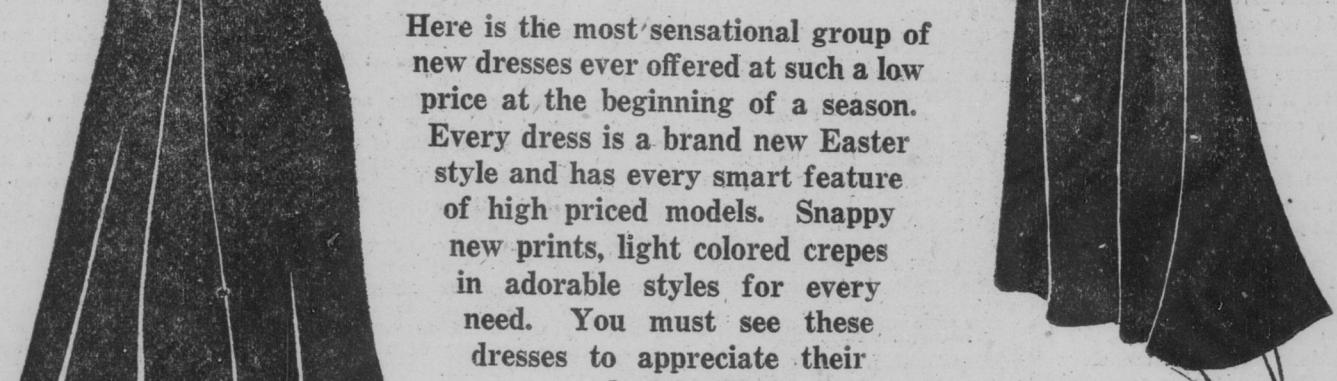
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