

25 PER CENT OF REVENUE PAID TO GOVERNMENT GOES FOR RELIEF OF VETERANS

Group Comprising Less Than 1 Per Cent
of Nation's Population Given Huge
Share of U. S. Income.

LESS FOR MEN WOUNDED OVERSEAS

Ex-Service Victims Disabled in This Country
Fare Better Than Soldiers
Crippled in Action.

BY TALCOTT POWELL

A recapitulation of veterans' relief reveals the fact that less than 1 per cent of the people of the United States receive 25 per cent of the entire federal revenue in direct veterans' relief as a result of the World war.

There were 1,102,814 persons on the monthly soldier relief pay roll at the close of 1931. The nation's population just exceeds 137,000,000. Total income of the treasury, in round numbers, for last year was four billion dollars. Veterans' relief cost nearly a billion last year, and will go beyond that next year.

This is the largest single function of the federal government today. The war and navy departments together do not cost as much. Less than 1 per cent of the population this year will swallow the entire income tax paid by the other 99.2 per cent.

Even though the proposed bonus is defeated, the people of this country, under present relief laws, will have to spend \$100,000,000,000 before the last World War benefit is paid.

Warriors Get Less

The whole of this money does not go to the men hurt in combat, or to dependents of those who died in battle. A man disabled in action overseas is averaging today \$30 a month compensation; a man disabled by disease in this country enjoys an average of almost \$10 more. Dependents of dead soldiers average about \$18 a month.

Discrepancies of the program, carelessly slapped together by congress under stimulus of war veterans' lobbyists, do not end with these inequities among ex-soldiers with service-connected disabilities.

On Dec. 31, 1931, there were 313,737 such veterans drawing regular monthly payments for maladjustments contracted while they were in the army or navy. On the same date there were 326,495 ex-soldiers of the World War drawing a total of \$6,298,338.72 a month from the federal treasury for disabilities which they were unable, even remotely, to prove were connected with their war service.

Quiet Service Pension

Although the legislation under which these men get their benefits is called disability "allowance," it is actually a service pension. The number getting it equals the entire number of American dead and wounded in the World war; it exceeds by nearly 13,000 those receiving money for service-connected disabilities.

Use of hospital facilities, provided originally for war-injured, but opened up by congress for all veterans, provides the same sharp contrast.

At the end of the last fiscal year, there were 35,139 ex-soldiers under treatment in the hospitals. Of these, 33,302 were veterans of the World War and 52 per cent of them were getting medical attention for difficulties incurred long after their return to civilian life.

Still another discrepancy is found in the law under which a relatively small group of emergency officers are permitted to be "retired" if they can prove 30 per cent permanent and total service-connected disability. The lowest rank officer, with his 30 per cent disability, rates almost 10 per cent higher in monthly compensation than the non-commissioned officer or private permanently and totally disabled.

Need Is Not Factor

In none of these cases does the factor of need determine the compensation. The millionaire gets as much as the man of the breadline.

Another legal sophistry propounded by congress is the law which says that certain diseases, notably tuberculosis, shall be presumed to have occurred in the service if contracted before 1923.

Expert medical opinion makes no difference in such cases, and the

behalf of the emergency officers' retirement law. "Ninety per cent of the retired emergency officers were lieutenants and captains. They were platoon commanders, the company and battalion commanders, who led their men in the most desperate fighting the nation ever has known—led them against rifle and artillery fire, machine guns, flame projectors and poison gas; led them through barbed wire and trench and forest, through mud and blood, in a manner which stirred the wonder and admiration of the world—thirteen years ago. These were the officers whose motto was, 'Come on, boys; not 'go on, men!'"

Wrong on Facts

Overlooking the fact that the writer of this stirring bit apparently was unaware of the fact that majors, not captains or lieutenants, command battalions, the other statements contained in the appeal do not square with the facts.

The description is obviously that of the duties of an infantry officer below field rank.

The number of infantry lieutenants and captains enjoying the bounties of the emergency officers' retirement act is not 90 per cent, but just under 33 per cent. Adding to the infantry officers those in the air corps, engineers, field artillery, machine gunners and tank corps, the number of combat officers in the liberal retirement reaches only 49.6 per cent of the total.

Inquiry in Washington among scores of officials interested in the veteran problem revealed a number of remedies for the present unjust and expensive legislation. A mosaic of them is presented here.

Program Is Mapped

1. Raise the compensation payments of men clearly injured in service to a permanent degree, provided they need the money.
2. Raise payments to widows, children, and dependent parents of men who really did die for their country in the World war.
3. Remedy abuses of the emergency officers' pension law.
4. Compensate only for service-connected disabilities.
5. Hospitalize only for service-connected disabilities.
6. Eliminate absurd congressional presumptions of what did or did not happen in the World war when it ended or what a man's physical condition was when he entered the service. Depend instead upon competent medical opinion.
7. Place war risk insurance upon the same business basis that obtains in a private company, with the exception that the government shall make no profits out of its soldier insurance.
8. Treat veterans of all wars alike.
9. Make the economic situation of the veteran a controlling factor in any benefit he receives from the taxpayer.

Under inspired legislation, war risk insurance has been made into an actuarial nightmare, with a billion-dollar liability over and above premiums. In addition, there is a serious movement afoot to forgive interest on bonus loans. This will reduce or wipe out premiums on congress under stimulus of war veterans' lobbyists, do not end with these inequities among ex-soldiers with service-connected disabilities.

Philosophy of this republic throughout its history has been that the government had the right to call upon its citizens to take up arms in time of emergency. Such a duty was an obligation of citizenship, and the United States supreme court has repeatedly said that no one could become a citizen who would not bear arms under such circumstances.

Nowhere in the basic law of the United States is there any admission that enlistment in times of emergency implies a contract between the soldier and the government by which the citizen is to pay the citizen afterward for defending institutions which he presumably believes are worth fighting for.

Lobby Presses Legislation

Present veteran relief legislation has piled up under constant urging by a veterans' lobby, of which the American Legion has been the spearhead. The American public has not understood the inference and consequences back of these laws. Voters have not been critical, because of their patriotic belief that their taxes were going to aid those injured in service or the dependents of those who died in the war.

Flaming appeals have been made constantly, both to congress and the public, for passage of the various measures. A typical example of such appeals is contained in a widely circulated pamphlet published in

Surely none can gainsay the fact that when men like Louis J. Borinstein, Chamber of Commerce president, are willing and glad to give up time that should be devoted to personal affairs and to sacrifice their own desires for the work of the organization, that our citizenry should try to look at the difficult problems facing the Chamber of Commerce from the inside out rather than from the outside in.

This is still clean-up week. Remember the American Legion Relief Station at 118-120 E. New York Street can use discarded clothing of all kinds.

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UTILITY TAXING CUT DEFENDED BY OFFICIALS

State Board Members Say
They Followed Law in
Valuation Slash.

Depositions in which the three members of the state tax board averred they followed the law when they slashed \$47,418.816 from the admitted tax valuations filed by the Indiana Electric Corporation over a six-year period, were being studied today by attorneys for Perry township, Marion county.

The tax board's method of assessing utilities was attacked by S. C. Kivett, Martinsville attorney, who took the depositions for the township. He was assisted by Russell Wilson, attorney.

Members of the Indiana legal staff of Samuel Insull were present at the hearing to interpose objections to Kivett's examination and watch

the proceedings, which may cost the utility \$175,000 in the township.

Lobby Chief Attacks

Those present included Glenn Van Auker, chief of the Insull lobby, who, according to Philip Zoercher, tax board member, appeared on behalf of the utility at each of the assessment hearings in question, and William P. Evans, chief of the local legal staff.

Kivett announced the Perry township damage suit, originally filed in Marion superior court two, had been taken, on change of venue, to Hendricks circuit court.

Zoercher, Pliny Wolfard and James Showalter, board members, testified in the depositions that they followed "the law to the best of their ability and knowledge" in fixing the assessments.

Taking the utility report and tax board valuation for each year, Kivett questioned Zoercher as to the reason why, in 1926, the tax board had not taken the admitted valuation or "book value" of the property by the utility in its return, but, instead, slashed it from \$12,137,169 to \$4,180,820.

Claims Rate Raise Averted

"Such a valuation would have resulted in higher rates to pay-ees," Zoercher said. "They could take this high valuation and go before the public service commission

and show they were not getting a fair return on their valuation and thus get rates raised," Zoercher said.

"There never has been a complaint raised before. The public knows that we have tried to be fair and honest in every assessment we make."

"Who do you represent in making assessments?" demanded Kivett. "The state," Zoercher replied. "Then, why do you always look out for the interests of utilities?" asked Kivett.

"The United States supreme court has ruled a utility is entitled to an 8 per cent return on its investment, and a high assessment would make that impossible, thus resulting in legal contests and we know that such value would not stand in court," Zoercher said.

In answer to a query from Evans, Zoercher asserted members of the board "never were influenced by any outsiders" and the electric corporation always had produced all figures requested.

STIMSON JOINS PARLEY

Secretary of State Takes Seat at Arms Reduction Conference.

GENEVA, April 19.—State Secretary Henry L. Stimson appeared for the first time at the world disarmament conference today, soon

after the general commission approved the American claim that general armament reduction to the lowest possible level be the first goal of the conference.

Rheumatic Cripples

New Medicine Guaranteed to Free Your Muscles and Joints in Less Than a Week or Money-Back.

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CLEVELAND . . . \$4.00
Leave 11:30 p. m. Return Sunday night.

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Leave 10:15 p. m. Return Sunday night.

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100% pure wool Zephyr yarn sweaters. Beautiful combinations and solid colors. Lacy weaves. Complete size assortment. You need one or two of these sweaters for street, sports, business or school wear.

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5 LBS. 10¢

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Wrist Watch \$5.00 guaranteed Ingrain Watches only 7 to close out at **\$1.69**

Smocks Small, medium and large sizes, fast color broadcloths, former \$1.00 and \$2.00 values **50¢**

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NEW LOCATION—MAIN FLOOR

Dress Shirts One lot of 436 counter soiled broken sizes firsts and irregulars **25¢**

Pajamas One lot of 67 broadcloth pajamas formerly up to \$1.69 broken sizes **44¢**

Athletic Shirts 220 Knitted athletic shirts, all sizes **5¢**

Felt Hats 189, former \$2.50 counter soiled fur felt hats, broken sizes **25¢**

Ties 214 Men's silk and rayon ties, assorted patterns. Some solid colors. Formerly up to 50¢ **5¢**

Socks First quality and sub-standard in assorted colors regularly 10¢ **6¢**

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