

Congressional Record

SEVENTY-THIRD CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

War Cry for World Democracy; To-day's Cry for
American Dictatorship

SPEECH

OF

HON. HUEY P. LONG

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

March 13, 1933

Mr. LONG. Mr. President, I do not wish to take any of the time of the Senate, except that I do think that the worthy efforts of certain good citizens of this country to reduce the veterans' compensation should be properly advertised.

The \$35,000 contributed to the National Economy League to reduce the compensation and benefits to the veterans of the war, I think deserves specification.

Here are the people who have supplied the money for this noble effort which now culminates in this debate in the United States Senate. Here are the noble, self-sacrificing citizens who have come to the relief of the little taxpayer in order that they might take the money away from the veterans.

The contributors of \$1,000 or more to the National Economy League, as shown by the testimony of Henry H. Curran, director, before the joint committee on January 9, 1933, were as follows:

Anonymous, \$1,000. That is somebody who did not give his name, I understand.

Grenville Clark, \$1,500.

W. R. Coe, \$1,100.

Mrs. H. P. Davison, \$1,000. I understand that Mr. H. P. Davison is either a banker or a partner of J. P. Morgan.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator from Louisiana yield to the Senator from Pennsylvania?

Mr. LONG. Yes.

Mr. REED. Mr. H. P. Davison died several years ago.

Mr. LONG. Then he is dead. May I trouble the Senator to ask him who was H. P. Davison when he died?

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Mr. REED. He was Mr. H. P. Davison, a man who rendered very high, patriotic service during the World War. He was a member of the firm of J. P. Morgan & Co. during his lifetime; yes.

Mr. LONG. Then the Senator and I are not quarreling over that.

Mr. ROBINSON of Indiana. Mr. President—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator from Louisiana yield to the Senator from Indiana?

Mr. LONG. Yes.

Mr. ROBINSON of Indiana. I assume that that is the widow of Mr. H. P. Davison.

Mr. LONG. Yes. The Senator states that Mr. Davison is dead, but when he was living he was a partner of J. P. Morgan & Co.

Mr. ROBINSON of Indiana. And this item is contributed by Mrs. Davison. This is Mrs. H. P. Davison.

Mr. LONG. And the dead liveth. "Though a man die, shall he live again?"

Mrs. E. Marshall Field, \$1,000.

Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Field 3d, \$1,000. Big department-store, income, inheritance taxpayers; "patriotic service" in delivering a thousand beans in order that they might save a million!

Mr. and Mrs. Childs Frick, \$1,000. Everybody knows that wealthy family.

Mrs. Daniel Guggenheim, \$1,000.

Edward S. Harkness, of Standard Oil, American Telephone, United States Steel fame, \$5,000.

E. Roland Harriman, \$6,000.

Henry Ittleson, \$1,500.

George W. Naumburg, \$5,000.

Harold I. Pratt, \$1,000.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr., \$5,000.

H. H. Rogers, \$1,000—Standard Oil, too.

Mr. and Mrs. Carll Tucker, \$1,000.

Mr. and Mrs. Harrison Williams, \$1,000.

Seventeen contributors, totaling \$35,100.

I send this list to the desk and ask, for the sake of accuracy, that it may be printed in connection with my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The list is as follows:

Contributors of \$1,000 or more to National Economy League as shown by testimony of Henry H. Curran, director, before joint committee January 9, 1933

Anonymous	\$1,000
Grenville Clark	1,500
W. R. Coe	1,100
Mrs. H. P. Davison	1,000
Mrs. E. Marshall Field	1,000
Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Field, 3d	1,000
Mr. and Mrs. Childs Frick	1,000
Mrs. Daniel Guggenheim	1,000
Edward S. Harkness	5,000
E. Roland Harriman	6,000
Henry Ittleson	1,500
George W. Naumburg	5,000
Harold L. Pratt	1,000
John D. Rockefeller, jr.	5,000
H. H. Rogers	1,000
Mr. and Mrs. Carl Tucker	1,000
Mr. and Mrs. Harrison Williams	1,000

17 contributors.....\$35,100

Mr. LONG. Mr. President, it will do no good for me to say anything, except that my vote may be known to my constituents and to the people. I am sorry that I can be of no greater service to this country and to the men who fought for this country than simply to state how I am going to vote.

I am not going to vote this time with Mr. Morgan. I am not going to vote with Mr. Rockefeller. I was not with them when they sent the soldiers to France. I was not with them when they sent them to Russia. I was not with them when they sent them to Italy.

I was not in favor of the war with Germany. I am not in favor of it now. Time has vindicated the position which I took then; and to-day, Mr. President, I am not going to be in favor of the National Economy League's program, regardless of who appears here now feeling, as no doubt he does, that it is a good thing for the country. I am not going to follow along in that kind of an effort here to-day.

They sent the soldiers with the brass bands playing and with the flags flying, promising them that when the camp fires had died down and they had returned home they were going to kill the fatted calf, that they were going to get the robe and put it on the back of the son returning home, and that the greatness of the land would be theirs eternally if ever they had the misfortune to suffer the slightest disability in the cause of serving democracy and humanity and America.

I did not go to that war, Mr. President. I was within the draft age. I could have gone, except for my dependents. I did not go because I did not want to go, even aside from that fact. That question was asked on the floor of the Senate. I did not go because I was not mad at anybody over there, for another reason. I did not go because it was not the first time in history that the sons of America had volunteered themselves as cannon fodder under the misguided

apprehension that it was going to be a fight for humanity, when they were used in that war and in the years following, and are used to-day and will be in the years to follow, for the purpose of centralizing the wealth of the United States and of the world in the hands of the few.

How well did we come out of it? We went into the war with 2 per cent of the people owning 60 per cent of the wealth. We came out of the war with 1 per cent of the people owning 60 per cent of the wealth. We came out of that war and into this war with 5 per cent of the people owning 85 per cent of the wealth. We have come out of that war with dictatorships flowering in Italy, with dictatorships flowering in Germany, with dictatorships flowering all over the countries that we crossed 4,000 miles to "make them safe for democracy." We have come out, Mr. President, not with having made them democracies but instead to make America safe for dictatorship. They have crossed from the East to the West and made America safe for dictatorship, whereas we thought we had crossed from the West to the East to make Europe safe for democracy.

I am not going to be one of those who are going to line up with the National Economy League. I am not going to line up with the program of Mr. Rockefeller and of Mr. Harkness and of Mrs. Davison, nor of Morgan, nor of Mr. Field. If it were necessary in order to balance the Budget of this country, I would feel that I should line up with them; but it is not. I have filed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, and there has been introduced in the House, a program by which we do not need to take any of the money out of the bleeding and wounded and suffering soldiers of this country. I know how little \$30 a month is to a man suffering with tuberculosis, because I have had to treat a few people for tuberculosis out of my own pocket; and I want to tell you that \$30 a month will not support one suffering with the fatal disease of tuberculosis.

Mr. ROBINSON of Indiana. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator from Louisiana yield to the Senator from Indiana?

Mr. LONG. I yield to the Senator from Indiana.

Mr. ROBINSON of Indiana. I only desire to observe that the great majority of those who will be victimized by this legislation, if it becomes law, will receive \$12 a month.

Mr. LONG. That makes the crime five times as bad. I had understood that it was an average of somewhere around \$30 a month; but I am informed by my friend from Indiana that a great majority of the soldiers who are to be victimized by this legislation are actually receiving only \$12 a month.

Mr. President, some of those men have come back and have had to work days and months and years to get their claims established in the United States departments and in the United States courts. In some instances they have had to hire lawyers; they have had to call on their friends; and

after hours and days and years of work and litigation, when the poor devil has established that he is suffering from a fatal disease resulting from his having been incarcerated in the Army of the United States—and I use the word “incarcerated” advisedly—now he comes and finds that regardless of his service, regardless of his status, regardless of his claim, regardless of the court, regardless of law, he is the victim, even though he is receiving the slight pittance of \$12 a month—this man who was sent, under the bonfires and the strains of the band, only 15 years ago to “make the world safe for democracy” in a war that has made America safe for dictatorship.

Mr. ROBINSON of Indiana. Mr. President—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator from Louisiana yield to the Senator from Indiana?

Mr. LONG. I yield to the Senator from Indiana.

Mr. ROBINSON of Indiana. I may observe further to my good friend from Louisiana that in order to receive \$12 a month the veteran must establish the fact that he is 25 per cent totally and permanently disabled; that most of them are out of work. I think a great majority of them have no income excepting this \$12 a month, have families to support, and the only purchasing power they have is that \$12 a month, and now it is proposed that we take that from them in the interest of prosperity.

Mr. LONG. I had understood that, and it is a fact that these men have had to establish, in most cases contradictorily, that they have a 25 per cent permanent disability, in order to get \$12 a month, and now it is proposed that we take that away from them.

I want to say, Mr. President, that if it were necessary in order to balance the Budget to take it away from the soldiers, we would have to do it, maybe, if that were the only course; but it is not.

I have caused to be introduced, and I have caused to be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, a plan which would avoid doing that, and it is what was promised the people of the United States in the last national campaign. I have introduced a plan to carry out what was promised the people of the United States in the last national campaign; and if it were done, there would not be the necessity of anyone coming here and asking us to inflict upon the veterans of any war any such dire consequences as must be contemplated by this legislation.

I have undertaken to cure this whole trouble of our national deficit and of a depression by carrying out campaign promises. The pending bill is not something that was promised in a political campaign; it was not a part of a campaign; it was not a part of a platform; and it was not a part of the promises of any candidate for President of the United States. My proposal is a part of the promises of

the President and of the man against whom he was running, if we are to take his statements and read them in the light of what must be a reasonable interpretation.

I have proposed that this country embark upon a plan to let the living have a living, and to let those who have a superabundance of property contribute to the welfare of the country. I have proposed that this country be raised from this deplorable and sad state of depression. I have proposed that we go over the top and over the front-line trenches, as my friend from Maryland says, not by reaching down and taking part of the \$12 from some poor, disabled veteran of the World War who is dying with tuberculosis, but I have proposed to leave that poor patriot of this country with his little insignificant \$12 to eke out until the death shadow passes him on.

My remedy is a capital levy tax to pay for the war.

I can see the disastrous consequences of the bill we are now about to pass. We are going to pass it. Sure, we are going to pass it. I am going to vote against it, but that will not make any difference. I may be here to vote a shorter time than some of those who will vote for it, but I have my ideas about the matter.

I propose that every man who owns a million dollars of property should contribute 1 per cent to the Government. I propose that if a man owns \$2,000,000 he contribute 2 per cent to the Government. That would mean only ten thousand dollars for the man who owns a million dollars, and that would leave him \$990,000. If he has \$2,000,000, I would take \$40,000, and that would leave him \$1,960,000. I propose that if a man has \$6,000,000, the Government should take 6 per cent. I propose to take 1 per cent from a man owning a million, and gradually go up until I would impose a capital-levy tax, stopping fortunes at \$100,000,000.

Mr. President, I have proposed legislation for decentralizing and redistributing the wealth of the country, which can be resorted to if anybody wants to balance the Budget. I am not going to offer that plan now, but I show that it can be had, that if there is such a dire necessity that it be had, the bills which have been offered in the House can be passed by the same power that is behind the bill now being passed, and it will necessitate no such things as reaching down into the pockets of the masses and into the pockets of the disabled and into the pockets of the men drawing \$12 to \$30 a month for services they rendered this country.

We might as well decide this matter. This is the first step in the program, and we must decide whether we are going the route of decentralizing wealth, or whether we are going the route of impoverishing the masses. Do not make any mistake about it. Do not let yourself be fooled. This is the initial step in deciding whether or not this country shall

come out by impoverishing the masses, or by putting through a law that will decentralize wealth. We can not get out in any other way but one of those two ways. Either we have to make peasants of the people, or we have to decentralize wealth.

I am going the way the Lord pointed out. I am going the way the Lord said to go, through the decentralization of wealth. I am going the way Daniel Webster said to go; that Thomas Jefferson said to go; that Abraham Lincoln said to go; that Bryan said to go; that Christ said to go. I am going the way that was promised by the last President of the United States and by the present President of the

United States, for both of them advocated decentralizing wealth to get this country out of its distress.

We do not have to go down and take one hundred and fifty or two hundred dollars out of the pockets of the poor little devil who is dying in a hospital to-day, getting \$12 a month, suffering with tuberculosis. We do not have to go down and get a dime out of his pocket, because if we will simply limit the fortunes so that they will not exceed \$100,000,000, there will be no need in this country, and there will be no such plague as we have.

It is not necessary to do this thing, and I, for one, will not support this or any other legislation of its kind.

EXTRACT FROM REMARKS

OF

HON. JAMES COUZENS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

March 14, 1933

Mr. President, the National Economy League, the big-business organizations, and the chambers of commerce ought to hang their heads in shame for driving this thing through Congress. I wonder whether this Government is not a government of the money lenders rather than a government of the people. You may call that demagoguery. I know my friend the Senator from Louisiana is condemned because he makes these unhappy comparisons; but notwithstanding what you may think of him, notwithstanding the ridicule the great press of the country may heap on him, nevertheless the comparisons he makes from day to day, and which I have the honor to make to-day, are odious; and the impression on the American people will be so great that it will be years and years before any Senator who votes for this legislation will be able adequately to defend himself before the American people.

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