

STATEMENT

SOLDIERS' ADJUSTED COMPENSATION.

SPEECH

OF

HON. ROBERT L. OWEN,

OF OKLAHOMA,

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,

August 31, 1922.

The Senate had under consideration the bill (H. R. 10874) to provide adjusted compensation for veterans of the World War, and for other purposes.

Mr. OWEN. Mr. President, I am not able, as I had hoped, to vote for this bill in the final form as presented by the majority party of the Senate with no means therein provided for payment. I should feel justified in voting for imposing taxes for the benefit of our young men to the extent required to cure or relieve them of injuries, to support them where disabled or incapable of self-support or in distress, to instruct them in self-support by vocational instruction, and to assist them in developing a home on the public domain. But to tax the American people by from \$4,000,000,000 to \$7,000,000,000 by the certificate plan, without any discrimination whatever, as set forth in the bill, and pay out huge sums for those not in want, not unemployed, and in fine health, does not seem to me wise or defensible. We should be provident with the family purse and use its resources for those in need and not spend our resources for those not in need, lest we then may be compelled to deny those in great need.

I do not feel justified as a temporary trustee of the people's legislative power to put this unnecessary tax on my countrymen without a mandate or instructions from them. My sympathies are with all of our young men desiring the bonus, and I should be glad to support their wishes if the people of Oklahoma through the legislature should express the wish of the State to that effect, but I can not consent to tax our impoverished and troubled people any more without knowing that they wish me to vote this unnecessary tax upon them. The organization of our veterans committed to this plan is said to consist of 25 per cent of our soldiers enlisted and to represent approximately 5 per cent of our people. The members of the Legion are divided in opinion as to its wisdom, and they have advised me both for and against the bill.

The leaders of the party in power have determined to pass the bill, and the passage of the bill is absolutely sure. My vote is not needed to pass it. The Republican Party has the mandate of the country. That party will take the credit for the act, and I prefer that the Republican Party shall take the undivided responsibility for the added taxes which will be required to pay the full liability assumed by the act.

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WASHINGTON : GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1922