

to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress, without interruption, to that degree of strength, and consistency which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

Though in reviewing the incidents of my administration, I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that, after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service, with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love toward it, which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations; I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat in which I promise myself to realize without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow citizens, the benign influence of good laws under a free government—the ever favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors and dangers.

GEO. WASHINGTON.

UNITED STATES,
17th September, 1796.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

Mr. PATMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 20 minutes on Thursday, February 26, and for 20 minutes, on Monday, March 1, to extend those remarks and include extraneous matter.

Mr. PERKINS (at the request of Mr. NATCHER) was given permission to address the House for 45 minutes on tomorrow, February 23, after the legislative program of the day and any special orders heretofore entered.

Mr. EBERHARTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 20 minutes tomorrow, February 23, following any special orders heretofore entered.

Mr. HAGEN of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 10 minutes on Tuesday, February 23, 1954.

CLAIMS OF CERTAIN EMPLOYEES OF DEPARTMENT OF PRISONS—VETO MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 334)

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following veto message from the President of the United States:

To the House of Representatives:

I return herewith without my approval H. R. 395, "to confer jurisdiction upon the United States Court of Claims with respect to claims against the United

States of certain employees of the Bureau of Prisons, Department of Justice."

This measure would confer jurisdiction upon the United States Court of Claims to adjudicate the claims of employees and former employees of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, notwithstanding the lapse of time or any provisions of law to the contrary.

The claimants seek compensation for overtime performed on Saturdays during the period beginning in March 1931, and ending in May 1943. They allege that they were not granted compensatory time off on some other workday as required by the so-called Saturday half-holiday law of March 4, 1931. Even for the most recent of the claims the 6-year statute of limitations expired several years ago.

The claims in these cases relate to work performed at different times over a period of more than 20 years. The official time and attendance records which would be required to prove or disprove the issues of fact have been disposed of periodically in the regular manner. Without doubt, necessary witnesses have died or are otherwise beyond reach. This is the very kind of situation which proves the wisdom of a statute of limitation. Without it in such cases it is doubtful whether we can have efficient and orderly administration of the affairs of Government.

If I were to approve this enactment, I could not in good conscience refuse to approve other bills setting aside the statute of limitations on old claims for overtime or other compensation for either individuals or groups of Federal personnel who delayed in presenting their claims.

Leaving aside these very important issues of principle and going to the legislative record of this bill, it would appear that the measure has been under consideration in one form or another since the first session of the 80th Congress. Each successive review by the Department of Justice has indicated that within the then existing statutory framework, Bureau of Prisons employees were granted appropriate time off.

In this connection, it must be remembered that the matter of authorizing payment of overtime compensation to Federal employees has been of gradual development. For almost 50 years, between 1893 and 1942, except where there was express authorization to the contrary, the statutes prohibited the payment of additional compensation for extra hours of service, and there was no law of general applicability establishing weekly hours of duty of Federal per annum employees.

The outbreak of World War II brought a close to the haphazard approaches to this problem. Under wartime laws and those enacted since, definite statutory limits were established to govern the workweek, overtime compensation, and holiday pay. Without doubt, by present standards, the working conditions of the Bureau of Prisons employees for a great part of the period in question would be considered onerous. But they were no more onerous than those applicable to many other groups of Federal employees.

I believe it would be a mistake to single out the group covered by H. R. 395 for the purpose of dealing retroactively with an hours-of-work situation which existed during a long-past period that began almost 23 years ago.

Furthermore, I do not see how this bill could work full justice. Turnover in employment in the classes of employees covered by it was very high, and I have the gravest doubts that the intended benefits would reach more than the relatively few who would become aware of the existence of this act if I were to approve it.

I am in favor of providing Federal employees with the fullest opportunity to adjust grievances. I believe, however, that it is fair to confine them generally to the limitations of law and other reasonable conditions. This case, in my opinion, is especially an instance where the law and the principles of orderly administration should be permitted to prevail.

For these reasons I return the bill without my approval.

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER.

THE WHITE HOUSE, February 22, 1954.

The SPEAKER. The objections of the President will be spread at large upon the Journal.

Without objection, further proceedings on the message will be postponed until tomorrow.

There was no objection.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CHELF (at the request of Mr. NATCHER), for an indefinite period, on account of convalescing from an operation.

Mr. HAYS of Arkansas (at the request of Mr. HARRIS), for the week of February 22, 1954, on account of official business.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to extend remarks in the RECORD, or to revise and extend remarks, was granted to:

Mr. PELY in two instances.

Mr. HILLINGS in two instances and to include extraneous material.

Mr. HOSMER in two instances and to include extraneous material.

Mr. NATCHER.

Mr. YORTY in two instances, in each to include extraneous matter.

Mr. LANTAFF.

Mr. PATMAN in two instances.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Mr. LECOMPTE, from the Committee on House Administration, reported that that committee did on this day present to the President for his approval a bill of the House of the following title:

H. R. 1160. An act for the relief of Cornelio and Lucia Tequillo.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. ARENDS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to.