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TAFT'S MESSAGE **ON EFFICIENCY** AND ECONOMY

President Sends a Second Statement to Congress on the Work of Special Commission.

Expresses His Approval of the Changes Recommended and Suggests the Statutory Amendments Necessary to Carry Them Out-Sees Increased Efficiency and Saving of Many Millions of Dollars of Public Funds-Urges Further Appropriation to Carry on the Commission's Work.

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

On the 17th of January last I sent a message to the congress describing the work of the commission appointed by me under authority of the acts of June 25, 1910, and March 3, 1911, granting appropriations to enable me to inquire into the methods of transacting the public business of the various executive departments and other governmental establishments and to make report as to improved efficiency and greater economy to be obtained in the expenditure of money for the maintenance of the government. By way of illustrating the utility of the commission and the work which they were engaged upon I referred to a number of reports which they had filed, recommending changes in organization of the departments and bureaus of the government, the avoidance of duplication of functions and services and the Installation of labor saving devices and improved office methods. All of the recommendations looked to savings of considerable amounts. With the message of Feb. 5, 1912, I transmitted to the congress the reports on the centralfzation of distribution of government documents, on the use of window envelopes and on the use of a photographic process for copying records. A number of the reports of the com-

mission had not then been commented on by the heads of the departments that would be affected by the changes recommended, and therefore I did not feel justified at that time in recommending to the congress the statutory amendments necessary to carry out the recommendations of the commission. Since then, however, I have received the recommendations of the heads of departments, and I transmit this message for the purpose of expressing my approval of the changes recommended by the commission and of laying before the congress the reports prepared by the commission.

Local Offices Should Be In the Classified Service-Postoffices. I have several times called attention

would be paid by the pension office in Washington. District Land Offices.

What is true in the matter of payment of pensions is also true in the service under the general land office. The field service of this office could be more efficiently and economically operated if it were provided by law that the office of receiver of district land offices be abolished and the duties transferred to the register, assisted by a bonded clerk and the register placed in the classified service. It has several times been estimated that more than \$200,000 would be saved annually and the efficiency of the service greatly increased by the adoption of such a plan. Internal Revenue and Customs Offices.

Large expenditures are made for salaries of political appointees in the internal revenue and customs services. In both services a direct saving in salaries and an indirect economy through increased efficiency would follow a transfer of such offices to the classified service.

Other Local Offices.

In the other field services the saving which would result from the classification of the local officers under the departments is not as marked or probably capable of as exact estimation as in those mentioned, but there is no doubt that substantial savings would follow. It is not to be doubted that where no saving would result the classification of the local officers would increase the efficiency of the service. It would be desirable also to place all marshals, deputy marshals and assistant attorneys in the classified service, although but little direct economy would result. Supervising inspectors in the steamboat inspection service and the members of the field service in the bureau of fisheries should be placed in the classified service.

Commission's Report on Local Offices. The report on methods of appointment submitted to me by the commission, which covers fully the subject of appointments by the president by and with the advice and consent of the senate and recommends that various local officers, such as postmasters, collectors of internal revenue, etc., and heads of bureaus in the departmental service, be included in the classified service, is transmitted herewith (appendix No. 1). The report and recommendations are approved by me.

Legislation Needed to Establish the Merit System.

In the interest of an efficient and economical administration of the vast business of the government I urge the important reform and recommend that to the navy such vessels as he may the necessary amendments be made to the laws governing appointments, such amendments to take effect not inter than July 1, 1913, so that there may be secured to the people the benefits to be derived from a conduct of their affairs by officers selected on a merit basis and devoting their time and talents solely to the duties of their offices. Consolidation of Lighthouse and Life

Saving Services.

commission's report (appendix No. 2) recommends that the life saving service of the department of the treasury be discontinued as a separate organization and that the maintenance and operation of the life saving stations of the country be made one of the

in accordance with which pensions requiring the use of marine craft and tion of that office and that provision that provision be made for the performance of the work now being done

by it by such other services. With these fundamental recommen dations of the commission I am in full accord, and I recommend that the necessary action be enacted to put them into effect.

At the present time the revenue cutter service is organized as a naval establishment. The country is in effect maintaining two navies and is using one of these navies for the performance of duties of a civil character. The maintenance of two separate naval establishments entails unnecessary expense and is not in the interest of either efficiency or economy. In so far as the duties of the revenue cutter service are of a naval character or are such as can readily be performed by the regular naval establishment, they should be performed by such establishment; in so far as they are of a purely civil character, use should be made of services organized and conducted upon a civil basis.

In respect to the distribution of the equipment and duties of the revenue cutter service among other branches of the government, the recommendation of the commission looks to the transfer to the navy department of the vessels which are adapted to deep sea cruising and the discharge by the naval establishment of most of the duties now performed by the revenue cutter service upon the high seas. In memoranda submitted on the report of the commission, copies of which are submitted with such report, on the one hand the secretary of the navy raises the question as to whether these duties can be performed by the regular naval establishment without detracting from its military efficiency. while on the other hand the secretary of commerce and labor raises the question whether certain of these duties cannot be performed by the lighthouse service if that service is provided with vessels suitable for the purpose

In view of these suggestions I recommend that in the enactment of legislation providing for the abolition of the revenue cutter service provision be made for the transfer of all the vessels and equipment of the revenue cutter service from the treasury department to the department of commerce and labor; that the secretary of commerce and labor be directed to assign such vessels and equipment to the lighthouse establishment, bureau of

fisheries and other services under his jurisdiction requiring the use of vessels as, in his judgment, is for the best interest of the public service, and that necessity for the inanguration of this authority be given to him to turn over find upon investigation not to be required by his department and which by their character are fitted to serve as useful auxiliaries to the naval establishment.

In thus recommending that the revenue cutter service as a separate establishment be abolished I desire to make plain that such action does not carry with it the discontinuance of the rendering of any valuable and proper service now being rendered by that organization. On the contrary, I am persuaded that all such services will continue to be performed under the system recommended by me with equal or greater efficiency.

It should be noted that the adoption the recommendation

THE OTTIZEN, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 1912.

for public inspection of government contracts be made through the office of the auditors of the treasury in which offices the originals of all contracts are filed. It also recommends the substitution of a certificate for the affidavit required to be attached to the contracts of the departments of war, the navy and the interior and an amendment of the statute which now requires all the contracts of those departments to be in writing. I transmit letters from the secretaries of the departments referred to, concurring in the conclusions and recommendations of the commission. I approve the report and commend it to the favorable consideration of the congress.

Government Expenses For Travel.

The report upon "travel expenditures" of officers and employees of the government (appendix No. . presents a view of existing conditions that can lead to but one conclusion-that under the existing laws and regulations and practices pursuant thereto the allowances for travel are as varied as there are executive departments. The same classes of officers and employees are receiving different rates of allowances, depending only upon the department or bureau in which they are employed. Under similar conditions there should be uniformity. The report recommends that all allowances in the form of mileage be discontinued and that actual cost of transportation bepaid; that in lieu of payment of actual cost of other expenses, commonly known as subsistence, which would include lodging, a scale of per diem allowances be established by the president for the several classes of officers and employees. It is also recommended by the commission that all accounts for reimbursement of traveling expenses shall be certified as to correctness in lieu of the requirement of law in many cases that the verification be by affidavit. The latter procedure is trovolesome and expensive. and the penalty for a false certification is fully as valuable in its deterrent effect as the penalty for making a false affidavit.

With the report are the comments of the war and the navy departments, made at my request. The report of the commission has my approval, and the suggestions therein for a change in the law on the subject are submitted with a request for action in accordance therewith.

Handling and Filing of Correspondence

The handling and filing of correspondence constitute one of the business processes of the government to which, as pointed out in my message of Jan. 17, the commission has paid especial attention. The investigations of existing conditions have brought out clearly that in many cases present methods are inefficient and entail large, unnecessary costs. The features of present practices which stand out most prominently as entailing large, unnecessary labor and expense pertain to the briefing, press copying and recording and indexing of communications. A statement has been prepared giving the results of an investigation of the salary cost entailed in performing these operations in the several departments at Washington. It is the opinion of the commission that the operations of briefing and press copying letters can be entirely eliminated and that the recording and indexing of in-

general supervision or direction such as is furnished by the present commission.

Distribution of Government Documents. Attention is called to the report of the commission transmitted to the congress with my message of Feb. 5 and to the supplementary statement sent herewith (appendix No. 8) on the centralization of distribution of government publications. By adopting this recommendation it is conservatively estimated that \$242,000 can be saved. This is exclusive of the saving which could be made by handling the congressional documents in the same manner. An account kept for thirty-one days with the volume of this business of handling congressional documents

showed an average of twenty-one tons per day. These documents were first taken from the printing office to the capitol, then from the capitol to the postoffice, then hauled back to the Union station, the latter being but a short distance from the printing office. An up to date plant at the printing office which could handle all this would entail an increased capital outiny for permanent equipment of only about \$75,000. The recommendation for centralizing the distribution of documents from the departments, if acted on, will affect the appropriations of seven departments, five independent establishments and the Washington postoffice. I may say in connection with this report and recommendation that the house of representatives, in passing the agricultural appropriation bill for the fiscal year 1913, instead of reducing the cost of distributing government publications in the department of agriculture by \$137,000, has increased to the extent of \$13,260 the amount appropriated for salaries for the division of publications over the appropriation for the current year.

Outlines of Organization.

The outlines of organization of the government, which were transmitted with the message of Jan. 17, have been sent to each of the departments with a request that orders issue which will require that the outline be kept up to date (appendix No. 9). This will not only make available at all times the information needed by congress or the administration when called for and assist materially in the preparation of estimates of appropriations, but will make unnecessary the publication of the official register, thereby saving approximately \$45,000 for each issue. Conclusion.

In submitting these reports, with rec ommendations, I will state that in my opinion each of the foregoing recommendations, if acted on, will contribute largely to increase efficiency. Direct ly and indirectly the changes proposed will result in the saving of many millions of dollars of public funds. This will leave the congress free to determine whether the amount thus saved shall be utilized to reduce taxation or to provide funds with which to extend activities already carried on and to enter on beneficial projects which otherwise could not be undertaken for lack of funds.

Again 1 urge upon the congress the desirability of providing whatever funds can be used effectively to carry forward with all possible vigor the work now well begun. The \$200,000 required for the prosecution of the inquiry during the ensuing year and the \$50,000 estimated for the publication

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C. C. JADWIN.

to the advantages to be derived from placing in the classified service the local officers under the departments of the treasury, of the postoffice, of justice, of the interior and of commerce and labor. In my message submitted to the congress on Jan. 17 I referred to the loss occasioned to the government because of the fact that in many cases two persons are paid for doing work that could easily be done by one. In the meantime I have caused an inquiry to be made as to the amount in money of this loss. The results of this inquiry are that the loss amounts to at least \$10,000,000 annually. For example, it appears that a very substantial economy would result from putting experienced and trained officers in charge of the first and second class postoffices. instead of selecting the postmasters in accordance with the present practice. As the annual operating expenses of the first and second class offices aggregate the enormous sum of more than \$80,000,000, undoubtedly if the postmasters of these offices were embraced in the classified service and required to devote all their time to the public serv-Ice the annual savings would eventually represent many millions of dollars. The saving in salaries alone, not taking into account any saving due to increased efficiency of operation, would amount to about \$4,500,000. At the present time the salaries of postmasters of the first and second class amount to \$6,076,900, while the salaries of assistant postmasters of the same classes amount to \$2,820,000. If the position of postmaster were placed in the classified service and those officers were given salaries equal to 20 per sent more than the salaries now given to the assistant postmasters, the latter position being no longer required, there would be a saving in salaries to the government of \$4,512,900. In the case of postmasters at offices of the third class a large annual saving could be made

Pension Agencies.

An annual saving of nearly \$62,000 could be made if the position of pension agent were placed in the classified service, since the work now done by a pension agent at a salary of \$4,000 and a chief clerk at a salary ranging between \$1,400 and \$2,250 could easily be done by one person in the permanent classified service at a salary varying from \$2,100 to \$3,000. Greater seonomy and efficiency would result from the abolition of the pension agenties and from the adoption of a plan

duties of the bureau of lighthouses of the department of commerce and labor. I concur in this recommendation and urge that the necessary legislation for carrying it into effect be enacted. Both of these services are organized and maintained for the same general purpose-the protection of life and property endangered along the coasts and other navigable waters. Both maintain stations along the coast, which are located for the most part in close proximity. Both have substantially the same business problems to meet in locating, constructing and maintaining these stations; in recruiting the personnel, in manufacturing or purchasing equipment; in purchasing. housing in depote and distributing supplies; in operating a field inspection service, in maintaining telephonic and other means of communication, in disbursing funds, in keeping proper books of accounts and in rendering reports showing financial and other transactions. The maintenance of two separate services, as at present, means a duplication of organization in respect to all of these operations. The recommendation of the commission does not contemplate any essential change in the work of the life saving stations. It is for the transfer of the business the bureau of lighthouses. That bureau, being fully organized for the administration of stations of this character, will be able to direct and manage these stations with comparatively little addition to its present force and equipment. The commission estimates that, in addition to the advantage that will be obtined through having these two services operated by the same orsecured of at least \$100,000 annually and that the saving will greatly ex-

ceed this sum after the first year. **Revenue** Cutter Service.

The report of the commission on the revenue cutter service (appendix No. 2) represents a detailed investigation of the history, organization and activiices. The conclusion is reached that must suffer. all of the duties now being performed by this service can be performed with equal efficiency by other services and that a great economy will result by having these duties so performed. The commission accordingly recommends that the service be abolished as a disbe distributed among other services pendix No. 5) recommends the aboli- work should be prosecuted under s

result in bringing under one general administration all of the work of the government having to do with the protection of life and property at sea. This will result not only in greatly increased efficiency, but in a large saving. The lighthouse establishment is compelled by the nature of the work to maintain and operate a large fleet methods, pointing out wherein they of vessels and supplementary administrative divisions, depots, inspection services, etc., to attend to matters pertaining to their business management. It is thus fully prepared to take over and operate the additional vessels that may be assigned to it and to perform the additional duties with which it may be intrusted at an added expense that will be small in comparison with that now entailed in maintaining an independent service on a military basis.

A further benefit of no little importance that will also be secured will be that of relieving the department of the treasury of duties which are in no ways germane to the primary function of that department.

The Consolidation of Auditing Offices. The report upon the organization and methods of work of the accounting offices of the treasury (appendix No. 4) management of these institutions to recommends that the offices of the six mitting herewith a copy of this memauditors be consolidated under one auditor and that the auditors of customs accounts located at the principal ports and known as naval officers be made assistants to the auditors. An increase in the efficiency of the treasury audit will be one result of the carrying out of these recommendations, and the saying of expense when the consolidation has been fully completed will amount ganization, a direct economy will be to at least \$200,000 a year, based upon current appropriations. The present organization, under which six independent auditors are engaged in the one work of final audit of the government accounts, is certainly one that can produce only diversity of practice and proreduce, inefficient use of personnel and equipment and delay and uncertainty ties of this branch of the government of requirements from which the public service and its relations to other serv- as well as officers of the government In my opinion a change in law to

carry into effect these recommendations of the commission which have my approval will be in the interest of the public service.

The Returns Office.

The report upon the "returns office" tinct organization, that its equipment of the department of the interior (ap- is of the utmost importance that the

coming and outgoing letters can be reduced at least 50 per cent.

Though the commission is making independent investigations of methods followed in handling and filing correspondence in certain bureaus and services, the results of which will be embodied in reports describing such are defective and recommending changes to make them conform to the most approved practices, the general pollcy pursued is that of working in close co-operation with the departments and services through the means of joint committees. To the end that these committees might all work as nearly as possible along uniform lines and that the departments and establishments might have before them the conclusions reached by the commission relative to fundamental principles and the best practices in respect to the performance of this class of work, the commission has prepared and I have sent to the heads of departments a memorandum setting forth the principles which should govern in the matter of handling and filing of correspondence. This memorandum also contains suggestions for the use of labor saving devices in preparing and mailing letters. I am transorandum (appendix No. 7).

On the basis of this memorandum ac tive efforts are now being made in all of the departments for the improvement of the methods of handling and filing of correspondence. These efforts have resulted in radical changes in existing methods and the effecting of large economies. The flat filing syst than forty pounds in weight, he is as tem has been substituted for the old big as his finer furred cousin, the cumbrous folded and indorsement sys- tufted eared Canada lynx, far handtem. Carbon copies of letters have been substituted for press copies. The briefing of documents has been entirely discontinued in a number of services. and in others the maintenance of book records of incoming and outgoing communications has been discontinued. The effort is being made to make correspondence files self indexing and tary that a bobcat had attacked him thus avoid the necessity for making and using secondary filing devices. This work can only be intelligently prosecuted as the result of painstaking and detail investigation of the special conditions to be met in each particu-

lar service. Many months will therefore be required to carry out this work throughout the entire government. It yet?"

of results are inconsiderable in comparison with the economies which can be realized.

WILLIAM H. TAFT. The White House, April 4, 1912.

Eureka!

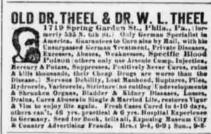
Hiero, king of Syracuse, consulted Archimedes in regard to a gold crown suspected of having silver alloy. The mathematician pondered long in endeavoring to detect the fraud and still had the subject in his mind when he got into his bath. The bath was full and overflowed. Then the thought occurred to him-exactly as much water must overflow as was equal in volume to the size of his body. Then came another thought-if he put the crown into a vessel of water and weighed the overflow, then nut into the water a piece of pure gold weighing exactly as much as the crown, the overflow should weigh exactly as much in one case as in the other, provided the crown were pure. Electrified by the thought, he leaped from the bath and ran naked through the streets, shouting, "Eureka, eureka!" It is added that his test proved that the smith had in fact cheated the king. The cry is now familiarly used as an exclamation of triumph at a discovery or supposed discovery.

The Busy Bobcat,

The wildcat of the North woods, red lynx, bay lynx, bobcat, or whatever we may elect to call him, says a writer in the Outing, has been discribed as a bundle of live wires actuated by the spirit of Satan. Running up to more somer and much more savage. I have seen them fight dogs desperately, and a full grown wildcat will play havoe with a flock of sheep. But no cat has ever been known to attack man except in the effort to get away when cornered. Some time ago I found a man in Maine willing to swear before a nowithout provocation, but I decided to abide by the advice of Manly Hardy, gone from us now, who wrote me that a man who would swear to anything of the kind was a born liar anyhow.

Spring Harbingers. "Noticed any robins in the parks as

"None in the parks and very few in the newspapers."-Washington Herald.



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