

69TH CONGRESS }  
1st Session }

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES }

REPORT  
No. 221

## H. R. BUTCHER

FEBRUARY 8, 1926.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and  
ordered to be printed

Mr. VINCENT of Michigan, from the Committee on Claims, submitted  
the following

## REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 2933]

The Committee on Claims, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 2933) for the relief of H. R. Butcher, having considered the same, report thereon with a recommendation that it do pass, with the following amendments:

Strike out the first line and insert in lieu thereof as follows: "That the General Accounting Office be, and it is hereby authorized."

In line 10 strike out all after the word "Kansas."

Strike out all of line 11 and insert in lieu thereof the following: "due to the lack of evidence to support certain war-time disbursements."

### STATEMENT OF FACTS

The amount of \$299.78 which this bill directs to be credited in the account of former Second Lieut. H. R. Butcher, Quartermaster Corps, United States Army, represents funds which he alleges he disbursed but for which credit is denied because proper evidence of the disbursement thereof has not been furnished.

These disbursements were made under the stress of war-time conditions resulting in the handling of large accounts by officers with little disbursing experience and oftentimes with the aid of an insufficiently trained personnel. As no evidence of fraud is apparent in connection with these alleged disbursements, your committee recommends favorable consideration of the bill.

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, January 26, 1926.

Hon. CHARLES L. UNDERHILL,  
*Chairman Committee on Claims, House of Representatives.*

MY DEAR MR. UNDERHILL: Further reference is made to your letter of the 6th instant forwarding a copy of H. R. 2933, a bill for the relief of H. R. Butcher, former second lieutenant, Quartermaster Corps, United States Army, in the sum of \$299.78.

The records disclose that the balance of \$299.78 outstanding in the accounts of Lieutenant Butcher is made up of overcredits; that is, credit was taken on certain vouchers for more than was actually paid thereon. However, in an effort to adjust these discrepancies the finance officer, Fort Riley, Kans., in whose custody the retained records of Lieutenant Butcher were stored, reported in part as follows:

"It is the opinion of this office that all items not explained in full or accounted for by this indorsement are within the enabling act, and relief should be given Lieutenant Butcher for these errors, as it is apparent there was no fraud; and with 100,000 soldiers in the camp and the personnel that was available at that time it is the personal knowledge of the writer that it was impossible, as well as impracticable, for Lieutenant Butcher to personally attend to all actions of his personnel, and he should not be held for errors that were made under the conditions."

It is not the policy of the War Department to recommend relief for disbursing officers for such shortages in peace time. However, due to the abnormal conditions which existed during the period of the World War, I feel that in all cases where it is evident that the transactions are free from fraud and collusion that favorable action should be taken upon any legislative measure having for its purpose the relief of the accountable officer, and recommendation is therefore made accordingly in this case.

In this connection I wish to state that it is my intention later on, when all items possible have been removed from the difference sheets of disbursing officers during the period of the World War under the provisions of the act of April 21, 1922, to recommend to Congress that legislative relief be given to all worthy cases.

Sincerely yours,

DWIGHT F. DAVIS, *Secretary of War.*

COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES,  
Washington, January 19, 1926.

Hon. CHARLES L. UNDERHILL,  
*House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.*

MY DEAR MR. UNDERHILL: Replying to your letter of January 6, 1926, for a report on H. R. 2933, Sixty-ninth Congress, first session, introduced by Mr. Dickinson, December 7, 1925, entitled "A bill for the relief of H. R. Butcher," and now pending before your committee, I have the honor to advise that the amount of \$299.78, which the bills directs to be credited in the account of former Second Lieut. H. R. Butcher, Quartermaster Corps, United States Army, represents funds which he alleges he disbursed but for which credit is denied because proper evidence of the disbursement thereof has not been furnished.

These disbursements were made under the stress of war-time conditions resulting in the handling of large accounts by officers with little disbursing experience and oftentimes with the aid of an insufficiently trained personnel. No evidence of fraud is apparent in connection with these alleged disbursements and in view of all the circumstances no objection is now offered to the proposed congressional relief.

As, however, the amount of \$299.78 was disallowed by this office in the final settlement of the accounts of said former disbursing officer, it is suggested that there be substituted for the words "Secretary of War," in line 1 of bill, the words "General Accounting Office," and may I offer the further suggestion that all following the word "Kansas," line 10, be stricken out and there be substituted therefor the words "due to the lack of evidence to support certain war-time disbursements."

Sincerely yours,

J. R. McCARL,  
*Comptroller General of the United States.*