

69TH CONGRESS }
1st Session }

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

{ REPORT
No. 220

JOHN A. OLSON

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

Mr. APPLEBY, from the Committee on Claims, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 2329]

The Committee on Claims, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 2329) for the relief of John A. Olson, having considered the same, report thereon with a recommendation that it do pass with the following amendment:

In line 6 strike out the figures "\$1,500" and insert in lieu thereof "\$900."

After the word "appropriated," in line 6 insert "in full settlement against the Government."

The full facts in the case are given in the following letter of the Secretary of Agriculture, which is made a part of this report:

JANUARY 11, 1926.

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

DEAR MR. UNDERHILL: Reference is made to your request of December 21, 1925, for a report upon the bill (H. R. 2329) for the relief of John A. Olson.

This measure is identical with other bills for the relief of Mr. Olson which were in the last three Congresses. In response to a request, the department submitted to the Committee on Claims, under date of August 8, 1919, copies of all papers in this case for use in the consideration of H. R. 7140. A further report on H. R. 963 was submitted September 21, 1921, and a report was also submitted on March 17, 1924, on H. R. 1454.

The record in this case discloses that John A. Olson, of Olson, Wash., permitted forest officers to occupy temporarily a cabin which Mr. Olson owned within the Olympic National Forest; that the roof of the cabin caught fire from a heated stovepipe while the forest officers were cooking breakfast; that every effort was made to extinguish the flames, but due to the fact that water was not available, the house and its contents were burned.

The building was a one-story frame structure of two rooms and an attic with an extension used for a woodshed. The siding was of cedar and the roof of spruce shakes. Although the house had not been regularly occupied for some years, it was still in a condition to be made habitable. It contained some homemade beds, a kitchen table, two stoves, a few pictures, some kitchen utensils and china-

ware, pans, knives and forks, some food, and probably other articles which were not noted by the forest officers before the building burned.

While the accident which caused Mr. Olson's loss was unavoidable, it is recognized that the fire was started through forest officers cooking a meal while occupying the cabin. The department recognizes a measure of responsibility in this matter and recommends that Mr. Olson be compensated for his loss. It was estimated by forest officers at the time of the fire that the cabin and furnishings were worth approximately \$900.

Sincerely yours,

R. W. DUNLAP, *Acting Secretary.*

JANUARY 14, 1926.

Submitted to the Bureau of the Budget, pursuant to Circular No. 49 of that bureau, and returned to the Department of Agriculture under date of January 13, with the advice that the foregoing is not in conflict with the financial program of the President.