

PATHFINDER

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DOINGS OF CONGRESS

RELIEF BILL PASSED

THE \$2,122,000,000 relief bill long remained a determined, bitter issue between the White House and the Capitol—or, more strictly speaking, between Mr. Hoover and Mr. Garner—and it was not until the last hours of the session that the measure got through. After the President vetoed the first relief bill to reach him, because of the provision for loans to everybody, both houses apparently surrendered and agreed to pass the kind of measure the President asked for. But again the House added a feature objectionable to the President. With Speaker Garner casting the decisive vote it put in a provision that the Reconstruction Finance Corporation make a public report of all loans made by it and the terms under which they are made. The Senate objected to this, as did the President, declaring the good work of the corporation would be largely undone by such publicity, and there was a deadlock. Speaker Garner and his followers absolutely refused to yield, and another veto and a further extension of the session impended when the ingenious Senator Robinson of Arkansas suggested a way out. The monthly reports which would be required did not imply immediate publicity on emergency loans, he said. These reports, he explained, would be delivered to the clerk of the House and secretary of the Senate during the summer months, and under long-established precedents they would be treated confidentially until one or the other house made them public documents. This opinion was unanimously concurred in by the Senate leaders of both parties, so the last obstacle was removed. The President, in announcing that he would sign the bill, called it a “strong step toward recovery.” He also thanked the leaders of both parties for helping to “eliminate the destructive proposals which were from time to time injected into it.” The \$300,000,000 for loans to states, he said, gave assurance “there need be no hunger or cold in the United States,” but he added that he expected no state to resort to it “except as a last extremity.” The \$1,500,000,000 for loans “for reproductive construction work of public character,” he thought, would furnish employment for hundreds of thousands of people. There were some “secondary features” to which he still objected, but not enough to warrant his refusal to approve.

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