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Biographical Data - Howard, Mrs. Oliver O. Clipping - Congressional Record

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tion ought to be made.

Mr. HITCHCOCK. Mr. Speaker, I support the proposition that this House recede from its disagreement and agree to the Senate amendment. I favor allowing a pension of \$100 a month to the aged widow of the late Gen. O. O. Howard. I do not feel bound by the so-called rule which stands in the way, because I was not a Member of this House when this iron-clad rule was adopted. It may have been a good rule as a general proposition, but there are exceptions to all rules; and personally I do not feel bound by a rule made by a previous Congress when I was not consulted. I want to decide this question on its merits.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that there are considerations in this case which make it exceptional. For more than forty years of her married life Mrs. Howard suffered as only a wife can through her love and sympathy, because during all that time her husband was crippled by the loss of an arm. She has been living with that husband, and he has been serving his country. I am not one that believes that pensions should be limited to \$12 a month for widows of veterans of the civil war. I believe that the time is coming when we can very properly make not only an exceptional case, but when we can recognize properly and more liberally the real widows of the civil-war veterans. I believe that an exception should be made between the widows of soldiers married since the war and the widows of those veterans who actually fought and suffered in that war and whose wives suffered with them. It seems to me that this country, which is appropriating money for automobiles for officials and for increased expenses of the Government and for higher salaries, need not shrink when it comes to the point of allowing a widow 77 years of age a pension of \$100 per month for the few remaining years of her life. She has suffered not only through her husband, but she was bereaved by the death of her soldier son in the Philippines. I think if the rule is iron-clad, this is a proper exception to make; and I shall vote for it. [Applause.]

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day when we may properly care for all these helpless veterans and their widows, but until that time shall come I believe we should be equally fair to all. [Applause.]

Mr. LOUDENSLAGER. I yield two minutes to the gentleman from New York [Mr. FITZGERALD].

Mr. FITZGERALD. Mr. Speaker, the question before the House is whether it will authorize a pension of \$100 a month to a woman who, having attained the age of 77 years, requires constant attendance in order to perform her necessary and daily functions. Whether heretofore the country has been overliberal in the matter of pensions, or whether it has been niggardly, I shall vote to give this woman sufficient to maintain her in some degree of comfort for the remaining years of her life. [Applause.]

The career of her husband is such of which the country is proud. Annually the people gather at least one day to commemorate his services, and God forbid that his old widow should now, in her few remaining years, be made dependent upon the bounty or the charity of her neighbors, or of those who sympathize with her in her affliction.

I shall vote upon the merits of this particular case, and I hope that the declining years of this woman may not be darkened by the belief that in the years of her trial and adversity a country which she has grown to love and to look upon with great respect, and to the service of which the life of her departed husband was consecrated, has turned a deaf ear to her appeal to its bounty. [Applause.]

Mr. LOUDENSLAGER. I yield five minutes to the gentleman from Alabama [Mr. RICHARDSON], a member of the committee.

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I am in hearty accord with the sentiment expressed by the gentleman from New York [Mr. FITZGERALD] when he speaks of the record of the distinguished services of General Howard, the husband of this widow. It has been my pleasure, Mr. Speaker, for quite ten years to serve on the Pension Committee, and by reason of that service