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**Commonwealth of Massachusetts.**

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EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, BOSTON, }  
January 20, 1863. }

*To the Honorable, the House of Representatives :—*

Many delays and difficulties have been experienced during the past year in the payment of our volunteers. A period of six months has elapsed without the payment of men in the military service of the United States, to whom by law pay is due once in every two months. Through a complication of causes attendant on these delays, and on the working of the army system of payments, which did not originally contemplate the introduction of allotments of soldiers' pay, but only direct payment to the soldiers, in hand,—certain irregularities have sometimes been encountered in securing the receipt of the allotments, not easily understood by the persons interested, and tending to prejudice them against the usefulness of the allotment system itself. The frequent occasion which this department of the State government has to know, and keenly to feel, the hardship of which these delays and irregularities are the cause, and the injustice of permitting their continuance or repetition, if it is possible to prevent them, has attracted to the whole subject much thoughtful and anxious consideration.

The result to which I have deliberately arrived is, that this Commonwealth can, with the consent of the Federal Govern-

ment and without loss to herself, adopt and apply a method or sure relief. I do not hesitate, therefore, in the interest of the soldiers of Massachusetts and of their families, to commend the subject to the wise judgment of the legislature.

It is understood that arrangements are now in progress for the payment of the troops up to the first day of November last. The rolls must have been completed, or should have been so, before the middle of that month. The rolls for the two months' payment due on the 1st day of January current ought now to be ready. I do not perceive that any method we might adopt could probably expedite the payment of the November dues, and the deferred payments for previous months which are to be made at the same time with the November payment proper. For this reason the plan I have the honor to suggest is limited to act from and after the 1st of November last.

I therefore respectfully recommend that the Commonwealth undertake to pay, in notes of Massachusetts banks, or in legal tender notes of the United States, to all her volunteers in the army of the Union, all their wages earned from and after that day, who shall accept the benefits of a plan of payment substantially the following:—

Let all Massachusetts volunteer soldiers who choose, assign all or any part of their accruing pay to the treasurer of the Commonwealth in the manner contemplated by the 62d chapter of the Acts of 1862, "concerning the custody and distribution of funds of the Massachusetts Volunteers." Let the treasurer receive such funds to be distributed in the manner contemplated by the 1st and 2d sections of the Act, or to be held subject to the order of the soldier in the manner provided by the 4th section.

Let the Commonwealth agree with the United States to hold itself indebted (and so declare by law) to all those volunteers who may assign their pay to the treasurer, to the amount of the pay so assigned, and appearing to be due from the United States to such volunteers respectively—by the pay-rolls made up for the guidance of the Federal disbursing officers, copies of these pay-rolls duly certified being transmitted to the treasurer. Let the volunteer, who may assign his pay in whole or in part at his own election, as he now does, be credited by the treasurer, on the date of receiving a proper copy of his pay-

roll, with the amount of the assigned pay thus appearing to be due to him, which sum so standing to his credit the treasurer then shall distribute through the town treasurers, or retain on interest, in the manner provided in the Act of 1862, according to the election of the volunteer.

The effect of this arrangement would be to make it the duty of the treasurer to pay to the town treasurers for the benefit of the volunteers' families, or to hold subject to the orders of the volunteers themselves, their wages, either in whole or in part, as the case might be, without regard to receipts into the treasury of the Commonwealth from the treasury of the United States. Thus, the Commonwealth would intervene to pay, for the account of the United States, to the soldier's family, all his wages so assigned and due, or hold the same to be paid to his order drawn in favor either of himself or of others in such portions as might please him.

It would, unless in rare cases of exception, become for the interest of every soldier to assign his whole pay to the treasurer of the Commonwealth, for then, without any risk to himself, it would be remitted to his own town, or remain on interest in the State treasury to be paid out to himself on his own order, on demand, as he might need the money—the treasury becoming, in one word, a savings-bank for all our soldiers, with this advantage, that the money would be ready for the soldier and his family on the day his rolls should arrive here, *at all events, and without any regard to delays in the payments due from the United States.*

The benefit of such a scheme to the soldier is manifest; and the ease with which funds can be remitted to the regiments from here, would render it much better for the soldier generally to assign his whole wages, and draw on them when wanted, whether in camp or hospital, whether with the regiment or on detached service, than to await the advent of the Federal paymasters.

But the question occurs, how shall the Commonwealth be repaid and protected? Let it be arranged with the secretary of the treasury that an amount of United States' currency, or a certificate of indebtedness bearing interest from the date when the payment was due from the United States, shall, in the lack of coin, be delivered to the treasurer of the Commonwealth,

corresponding to the amount on the pay-rolls appearing to be assigned to him by Massachusetts Volunteers, as often and as soon as such pay-rolls are filed—such currency or certificate to be received for by the treasurer, as a reimbursement to the State for assuming the payments to the soldiers called for by the rolls and assignments.

Thus the troops would be promptly and wholly paid, at home, where the payment is the best for them, or in part at home and in part in the field, as each one might prefer.

Want, suffering, disappointment, anxiety, and distrust, would be averted by a beneficent, kindly, safe, and just intervention of the government nearest to the domestic scene, and best able to adjust with ease the arrangements needed for the greatest good of all.

It will be easy, I think, for the State to make a prospective bargain with the banks, to borrow at a very low rate of interest, say one million of dollars on the fifteenth day of each alternate month, to be drawn for as it shall be needed to meet the necessities of the treasury, created by this plan.

I think it is clear that thus without loss, the government of this Commonwealth can, in the truest way, perform a parental duty. Every interest of society, public as well as private, is in some way involved in this being done. I cannot imagine any proper objection on the part of Congress to an immediate enactment to permit the secretary of the treasury to accede to such a plan; and I respectfully suggest to the general court such an amendment of chapter 62 of our Acts of 1862 as shall substantially agree with the plan I have thus sketched for your consideration.

If it shall be the opinion of the legislature that mature reflection encourages assuming the payment of our Volunteers in advance of receiving from the United States the funds therefor, only so far as it may be needful in order to secure the prompt distribution of their allotments, I shall cheerfully concur in the endeavor to carry into effect its final decision.

JOHN A. ANDREW.