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HEARING
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON
OFFICE AND CIVIL SERVICE
UNITED STATES SENATE
NINETY-FIRST CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION
ON

S. 1583

A BILL TO PROVIDE THAT APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS IN THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT, INCLUDING THE POSTAL FIELD SERVICE, BE MADE ON THE BASIS OF MERIT AND FITNESS

MAY 8, 1969

Printed for the use of the
Committee on Post Office and Civil Service



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POSTMASTER APPOINTMENTS

HEARING
COMMITTEE ON
POST OFFICE AND CIVIL SERVICE
UNITED STATES SENATE

COMMITTEE ON POST OFFICE AND CIVIL SERVICE

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(II)

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Table with 2 columns: Page and Title. Lists additional information such as 'The Commission on the Status of Women' and 'The Commission on the Status of Children'.

POSTMASTER APPOINTMENTS

THURSDAY, MAY 8, 1969

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON POST OFFICE AND CIVIL SERVICE,
Washington, D.C.

The committee met at 10:05 a.m., pursuant to call, in room 6202, New Senate Office Building, Senator Gale McGee (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators McGee, Fong, Boggs, Fannin, and Stevens.

Also present: David Minton, staff director and counsel; Clyde S. DuPont, minority counsel; Richard G. Fuller and Charles S. Caldwell, professional staff members; and William W. Miller, printing clerk.

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing is convened today to take testimony on S. 1583, a bill introduced by Senators Fong, Bellmon, Boggs, Fannin, Stevens, and the chairman of this committee.

The chairman interjects that he is proud to associate his name with what otherwise might have been interpreted as a partisan measure. But inasmuch as the Senate itself has gone along in this direction with this kind of a recommendation for some time, I think that that record speaks for itself.

The burden of the pending legislation is to provide that, in the selection of postmasters, political affiliation will not be taken into account.

Now, I give this bill and its purpose my own support because I think that the postal service will benefit from the elimination of political considerations in the selection of individuals for positions of responsibility such as that of postmaster.

At the same time, however, I must point out that the title of the bill is in my opinion a bit derogatory to the Civil Service System which has existed by law in this country for almost a century. The title says it is legislation to provide that appointments and promotions in the Post Office Department, including the Postal Field Service, will be made on the basis of merit and fitness.

Now to me that implies that appointments and promotions heretofore have been made on some lower basis and I think that is a wrongful implication, for I would submit that, if we take the title of the bill literally, we are going to end up with some incompetent people somewhere along the line.

In other words, the presence of the political element in the existing structure of today is no indication that in the past we have followed a procedure to louse things up, any more than if we successfully make the moves proposed in this bill that a radical change in quality will be introduced.

The bill as I understand it is designed to remove the political factor as much as is humanly possible from the process, and that has little relevance or little bearing, as I see it, on the basis of personal competence.

There are very keenly competent persons in our Civil Service System, and I would not want by implication in this legislation to demean their services in any way. We all know we can get better, we can raise the level, we can improve by working harder, but I just hesitate to leave the record with that other implication, and that is the reason why I wanted to try to adjust for the purpose of this hearing the intent today, which is to try to make other developments within the Department a little easier and a little smoother and a little more predictable by downgrading the formal political role that each party has sought to fill as it ascends to the White House. The promotions that were undertaken during the past several administrations, and the two that I know best, since they happen to have occurred in the years I have been around here, were made under a very specific policy, that the individuals so appointed would be qualified individuals and possess a considerable measure of competence as persons.

Now, granting that no system is perfect, I think that we have done remarkably well. Sometimes we tend to blame on the individuals involved some of the awkward infrastructures that perhaps ought to be corrected, too. But I think it is important that those who have served and will continue to serve be accorded their proper place of responsibility in the Federal Government.

I want this committee, therefore, to investigate very carefully the program which is being submitted to us here this morning as a replacement for the present system. While I have already committed myself to the importance of the suggested change, I think we ought to be very careful in coming to grips with what we are changing from, and, to hark back to one of our old sayings out in the West, that as we dismantle some of this, you don't take down a fence until you find out why it was put there in the first place, that there are some meaningful elements that I am sure merit preservation.

Likewise, I suppose it would be fair to say with all due respect that two of the very ablest of the architects bearing responsibility in our postal system, Benjamin Franklin and Red Blount—and I go to the two ends of the spectrum now, the very beginning and where we are today—received their appointments and their assignments because of one basic credential: their political connection.

I think we have to face the fact that that is where we are beginning before we become holier than thou. We are beginning in a political setting and we are striving to make constructive changes from that setting into a durable system that will have an ongoing and continuing credential also.

I have reason to think that we have a good chance, because the gentleman at this end of the line of history has reason to know that I think he has been forthright in coming to grips with the problem that confronts us. I just hope we don't strain too many meanings out of the words "taking politics out" of something.

I happen to think we ought to dignify politics and make it the highest profession in the land. That is what our system is all about, so I hope it isn't the very lowest negative concept that is motivating us, but that in this process we hope to raise the level of politics.

I think that makes it a legitimate goal. And if it leads toward a continuing improvement in the postal service, it will have met its test.

At this point, I will have inserted in the record a copy of S. 1583 and the agency reports received by the committee.

(A copy of S. 1583 and the agency reports follow:)

[S. 1583, 91st Cong., first sess.]

A BILL To provide that appointments and promotions in the Post Office Department, including the postal field service, be made on the basis of merit and fitness

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That section 3311 of title 39, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§ 3311. Method of appointment

“The Postmaster General shall appoint postmasters in the competitive civil service.”

SEC. 2. The amendment made by the first section of this Act shall not affect the status or tenure of postmasters in office on the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. (a) Chapter 41 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 3108 the following new section:

“§ 3109. Nonpolitical appointments and promotions

“(a) In the selection, appointment, and promotion of employees of the Department, no political test or qualification shall be permitted or given consideration, and all such personnel actions shall be taken on the basis of merit and fitness. Any officer or employee of the Department who violates this section shall be removed from office or otherwise disciplined in accordance with procedures for disciplinary action established pursuant to law.

“(b) This section does not apply to the selection and appointment of officers whose appointment is vested in the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, or to the selection, appointment, or promotion to a position designated by the Civil Service Commission as a position of a confidential or policy-determining character or as a position to be filled by a noncareer executive assignment.”

(b) The analysis of chapter 41 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by inserting after item 3108 the following new item:

“3109. Nonpolitical appointments and promotions.”

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL,
Washington, D.C., May 7, 1969.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This is in reply to the request for a report on S. 1583, a bill “To provide that appointments and promotions in the Post Office Department including the postal field service, be made on the basis of merit and fitness.”

This legislation was suggested by the Post Office Department to carry out the President's February 25, 1969, recommendation that the Postal Service be placed on a merit basis. The Department believes that there are many reasons which are logical, practical, economical and sensible for the enactment of this legislation. There is no valid connection between a man's political beliefs and his competence in directing employees as postmaster. The enactment of this legislation will utilize the resources of the many willing and capable career employees of the Department, who heretofore declined to take postmaster examinations because they didn't have the right political connection. Under this legislation we will be able to fill vital postmaster positions more quickly and we will have a broader field from which to draw. We strongly recommend and encourage the enactment of this bill.

Under the present law (39 U.S. Code, §3311) postmasters at post offices of the first, second, and third class are appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, in the competitive civil service without term in accordance with the Civil Service Act and rules, and postmasters at post offices of the fourth class are appointed by the Postmaster General without term.

Section 1 of the bill would amend the above law so as to provide that the Postmaster General shall appoint postmasters in the competitive service. The effect of the amendment would be to transfer the power of appointment of post-

masters of post offices of the first, second, and third class from the President to the Postmaster General, and to make the appointment of postmasters of post offices of the fourth class subject to the competitive civil service. The proposed transfer of power to appoint postmasters is authorized by Article II, Section 2 of the United States Constitution.

Section 2 of the bill provides that the amendment proposed in Section 1 shall not affect the status or tenure of postmasters holding office on the effective date of the statute.

Section 3 of the bill would add to title 39, United States Code, a new section 3109 which would prohibit the use of consideration of political tests or qualifications in the selection, appointment, and promotion of employees of the Department. Employees found guilty of a violation of this provision would be subject to removal or otherwise disciplined in accordance with procedures for disciplinary action established pursuant to law.

The new section would not apply to the selection and appointment of officers whose appointment is vested in the President subject to confirmation by the Senate, or the selection, appointment, and promotion to positions designated by the Civil Service Commission as confidential, policy determining or noncareer executive positions.

The Bureau of the Budget has advised that there is no objection to the submission of this report to the Committee and that the enactment of the bill would be in accord with the program of the President.

Sincerely,

(Signed) WINTON M. BLOUNT.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
BUREAU OF THE BUDGET,
Washington, D.C., May 7, 1969.

Hon. GALE W. MCGEE,
Chairman, Committee on Post Office and Civil Service,
U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This is in reply to the Committee's recent requests for the views of the Bureau of the Budget on S. 29 and S. 1583, bills relating to the appointment of postmasters.

In his message of February 25, 1969, on reform of the postal service, the President urged enactment of legislation to eliminate the requirement for Presidential appointment and Senate confirmation of postmasters of first-, second-, and third-class post offices, to provide for appointment of all postmasters by the Postmaster General in the competitive civil service, and to prohibit political consideration in the selection and promotion of postal employees. S. 1583, submitted by the Post Office Department, would implement the President's recommendations.

Accordingly, the Bureau of the Budget urges favorable consideration of S. 1583, as its enactment would be in accord with the program of the President.

Sincerely yours,

WILFRED H. ROMMEL,
Assistant Director for Legislative Reference.

U.S. CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION,
Washington, D.C., May 8, 1969.

Hon. GALE W. MCGEE,
Chairman, Committee on Post Office and Civil Service,
U.S. Senate.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This is in further reply to your request for the comments of the Civil Service Commission on S. 1583, a bill "To provide that appointments and promotions in the Post Office Department, including the postal field service, be made on the basis of merit and fitness."

S. 1583 authorizes the Postmaster General to appoint postmasters of all classes in accordance with merit principles. In addition, with two exceptions, it specifically prohibits the use of any political test or qualification in the selection, appointment, and promotion of employees.

The prohibition does not apply to the selection and appointment of officers whose appointments are made by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, nor to the selection, appointment or promotion to positions

designated by the Civil Service Commission as positions of a confidential or policy-making character or as positions to be filled by noncareer executive assignments.

The Civil Service Commission strongly supports the purposes and objectives of this bill which closes one of the few breaches remaining in our merit system.

The Commission, however, feels it is necessary to point out that a true career system will never be completely realized until the residence requirements for filling postmaster positions which are contained in section 3312 of title 39, United States Code, are repealed. If this is done, it would permit the Post Office Department to make more efficient use of its manpower resources. The postmaster of a small postoffice located in one geographic area could be promoted to a postmaster position at a larger postoffice in another area.

In making this comment, we fully appreciate that in small communities it is desirable that the postmaster be known to the people in the community. Repealing section 3312 would not mean that the same effect could not be achieved by other means. For example, the Civil Service Commission, in conducting its postmaster examinations, can, if it is considered to be desirable, establish the area of competition so that only people in the geographic area concerned would apply. Similarly, if the Post Office Department considers it desirable to have the postmaster reside in the local area, it could be arranged administratively.

The Bureau of the Budget advises that there is no objection to the submission of this report, and that the enactment of S. 1583 would be in accord with the program of the President.

By direction of the Commission:

Sincerely yours,

ROBERT E. HAMPTON, *Chairman.*

The CHAIRMAN. Did you have something you want to say, Senator Fong?

Senator FONG. No, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Blount, we are ready for the presentation which you have prepared. We are glad to have you here this morning.

**STATEMENT OF HON. WINTON M. BLOUNT, POSTMASTER GENERAL,
POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT; ACCOMPANIED BY HON. ELMER T.
KLASSEN, DEPUTY POSTMASTER GENERAL; HON. KENNETH A.
HOUSMAN, ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL, BUREAU OF PER-
SONNEL; HON. DAVID A. NELSON, GENERAL COUNSEL; AND LOUIS
F. WALTERS, CONSULTANT**

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Members of the committee. It is a pleasure to be here to testify on the bill today. Our Department wholeheartedly supports the purposes of this bill, and hopefully our entire intent is in complete accord with the very best of the things that you are indicating in your opening statement, Mr. Chairman. At least we want to associate ourselves with the fact that we are trying to make improvements and not trying to destroy or tear down or indicate in any way that things may not have functioned in the past wholly and completely as we would like.

Nevertheless, I think it has functioned very well under the circumstances. I think the time has come to make changes, as this committee and Members of the Senate have indicated in the past.

Our Department stands on the same ground. But this bill will implement President Nixon's message on February 25, 1969, in which specifically the President urged the enactment of legislation which would eliminate the present statutory requirement for Presidential appointment and senatorial confirmation of postmasters of first-, second-, and third-class post offices; provide for appointment of all

postmasters by the Postmaster General in the competitive civil service; and prohibit political considerations in the selection or promotion of postal employees.

President Nixon made it clear that he considers it essential that the last vestiges of political patronage in the Post Office Department be swept away in order to make possible the development of a true career service for employees in the postal field service.

Proposals to eliminate appointment of postmasters on the basis of political considerations are not new or politically partisan. On June 24, 1949, President Truman, in his message to the Congress recommending further reorganization of the Post Office Department, called on the Congress to enact legislation on this subject saying:

No authority of management is more important than that of selecting the personnel who are to operate the business. If the Postmaster General is to be held responsible for the efficient conduct of the postal service, he should be given full authority to appoint postmasters and other postal employees subject only to the provisions of the Civil Service and Classification Acts. Legislation should be enacted which will give such authority to the Postmaster General.

Moreover, as pointed out, proposals of this character have been made by the various commissions established to study improvements in the Federal Government including the First Hoover Commission, the Second Hoover Commission, and the Kappel Commission on Postal Organization.

Indeed, during the last Congress the Senate passed S. 355 with provisions vesting the Postmaster General with authority to appoint all postmasters on the basis of merit and prohibiting political considerations in postal appointments. These provisions were sponsored by this committee.

S. 1583 would likewise vest the Postmaster General with authority to appoint postmasters on the basis of merit and prohibit political considerations in postal appointments. Further, last year the House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service reported favorably H.R. 16524, which provided for Postmaster General appointments on the basis of competitive examination.

Why the concern over the existence of patronage appointments? The evils were well summed up last year by the President of the National Civil Service League, a nonpartisan organization, in hearings on H.R. 8516 before the Subcommittee on Postal Operations of the House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service as follows:

The present system is inconsistent with the whole concept of merit in Government employment. There is simply no assurance that the best or near best is finally chosen for the job.

The system has the potential for operating as a depressant on the morale and aspirations of the many devoted, able, and experienced subordinate postal officers in local centers. They cannot aspire to the top of the hierarchy in the local office because this post is reserved for political appointment. Thus, an artificial ceiling is imposed on opportunities for advancement except in those occasional instances where a subordinate employee gains political favor and is the recipient of political preferment.

The system contributes to a political, nonprofessional atmosphere that tends to discourage young, vigorous talent from making careers in the postal service. Bright young men rarely consider seeking appointment in the Post Office Department. Yet this is precisely the type of person the Department requires. The available pool of talent shrinks yearly.

The system fosters a political climate in the post offices of our local communities with postal employees tending to assume a coloration of political activity sharply different from their civil service associates in other departments. Not only does

the postmaster enter the career service through a back door in the system, but the manner of his selection erodes the prestige of the service among the largest single group of classified employees in the Government.

The system absorbs the time of high officials who should be concerned with operating problems rather than devoting excessive energy in the endless negotiation and maneuvering incident to the processes of political conciliation. Even the President is not immune to these drains on his precious time. The system places the Civil Service Commission in the anomalous position of participating in a travesty on the concept of merit in public employment.

It may be further noted that on occasion politically appointed postmasters with strong and active political backing tend to feel they can resist supervision by headquarters superiors. This is particularly true since the creation during the past decade of regional offices staffed with career personnel. Such conflict of loyalties clearly impairs good management.

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Since the administration has abolished the adviser system and has taken steps in conjunction with the Civil Service Commission to assure nonpolitical appointment, why then is legislation necessary?

Two basic but overlapping reasons call for the enactment of the legislation:

First. For our efforts to eliminate political appointments to be successful, it is essential that a clear congressional mandate be enacted. This is the purpose of section 3 of S. 1583.

Second. The current requirements for Presidential and Senate confirmation appointment not only label the postmaster positions as positions whose filling involves political considerations, but provides a means by which political considerations eventually could be reintroduced into the appointment system.

This requirement would be eliminated by the first section of the bill. The task force on personnel for the Second Hoover Commission stated: "Appointment by the President and confirmation by the Senate is the foundation for the system."

In today's world, Senate confirmation is an anachronism in the case of the nearly 25,000 Presidential postmasters. Postmaster positions are not policy determining positions but managerial positions. Generally, Senate confirmation is reserved for those positions in the executive schedule which are concerned with national policies and for which salaries are fixed at substantially higher levels than postmaster salaries.

Postmaster positions run from PFS levels 6 through 20. The current salary for a PFS-20 is somewhat less than that of a GS-17 under the Classification Act. Yet, appointments to the Classification Act positions do not generally require Senate confirmation, much less the appointment of a secretary at GS-6 whose salary range is as high as a postmaster at a small third-class post office.

In other Government agencies employees who meet and provide services to the public are selected without Senate confirmation. No special reason exists for requiring Senate confirmation of postmaster appointments.

In conjunction with the President we have done what we can to eliminate political considerations in postmaster appointments. We have ended the political adviser system which had traditionally been used by Democratic and Republican administrations to select postmasters and rural carriers.

Moreover, we are establishing machinery not only to assure that appointments to these positions are made solely on fitness and without

regard to political considerations, but to demonstrate affirmatively that this is the case.

As the committee knows, we are establishing a National Selection Board to advise me on the appointment of postmasters at PFS level 14 and above, and 15 regional selection boards to advise me on all other postmaster appointments. The National Selection Board will include the Assistant Postmaster General for Personnel, the Assistant Postmaster General for Operations, the Executive Director of the Civil Service Commission, and individuals recommended by the dean of a nationally known graduate school of business administration and by the American Arbitration Association.

Each of the regional boards will include an outstanding postmaster; an official selected by the Civil Service Commission; and individuals recommended by a nationally known management consulting firm, by the dean of an outstanding school of business administration in the region, and by the American Arbitration Association.

These boards will function in the manner prescribed in Executive Order 11007, issued by President John F. Kennedy in February of 1962, and will be charged with responsibility for advising me on the selection of postmasters on the basis of merit and fitness, without regard to political considerations of any kind.

It may be of interest to the committee to know how the names of prospective candidates for appointment as postmasters will be brought to the attention of the selection boards.

There are basically three ways in which this will be done. The first is by recommendation of an incumbent postmaster who expects to resign or retire. When he knows that he will be leaving, a postmaster will notify his regional director. The postmaster will then evaluate the qualifications of supervisory personnel in his office.

The postmaster will also receive evaluations of potential candidates from the Inspection Service and from supervisors in the regional organization. After considering the Inspection Service and regional evaluations, the postmaster will himself make an evaluation and will submit to the regional review committee the names of the best qualified candidates in his office. The postmaster will not rank the candidates, and may not submit more than three names.

If the regional review committee believes the postmaster overlooked better qualified employees, the regional review committee will then submit to the regional management selection board, through the regional director, the names of persons they believe to be better qualified. As a result of this action, no more than three additional names may be added to the list of names which will be submitted to the board.

The selection board will then evaluate the qualifications of the persons whose names have been submitted by the postmaster and the supplemental names, if any, submitted by the regional director, and will advise me which of these individuals they believe to be best qualified for the job.

Where a postmaster vacancy results from the previous postmaster's death or removal for cause, the process of filling the vacancy will be initiated by the regional director. He will cause an investigation to be made to determine the best qualified supervisory employees in the post office in question. The qualifications of such employees will then be evaluated by a regional review board established by the regional director.

Thereafter, the regional director will submit the names of not more than three persons to the selection board, which in turn will recommend for appointment the person it believes best qualified.

Under either of the two procedures that I have described, the board may decide that none of the candidates named by the postmaster or by the regional director is qualified. In that event the regional director will request the Civil Service Commission to hold an open competitive examination.

As a result of the examination, a maximum of three names will be submitted to the board. The board will then recommend the person it deems best qualified, subject, however, to the requirements of the Veterans' Preference Act.

It may prove to be necessary to modify some of the details of the selection process that I have outlined, but I wish to assure the committee that as long as I continue to hold the office of Postmaster General, the Department will adhere firmly to the principle that, as announced by President Nixon last February, postmaster appointments—

are going to be made on the basis of merit and fitness for the job, and not on the basis of political affiliations or political influence.

We have a chart here, Mr. Chairman, if I might at this time, that illustrates the procedure that I have described. On the left you have the condition of the postmaster himself. If he is going to retire or leave the service, he would make a recommendation after the evaluations to a regional review committee. [See p. 28.]

If this committee determines that other names should be added to the Postmaster's list, they will add up to three additional names for consideration by the management selection board which will make its recommendation to me.

In the event the postmaster dies or is removed for cause, the selection process will be started by the regional director. [See p. 29.]

This is our essential testimony. As I said earlier, this Department wholeheartedly supports the purpose of this bill and would be glad to answer any questions you may have.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, sir.

I guess the differences in the way it is presently handled and in the way it has been handled make it difficult to answer how the differences will have an impact on the Department itself. In my own case, whenever I was entitled to have a hand in the selection of postmasters, it was my procedure never to meddle in local post office postmastership selection. I required that the locals make the nomination, and in this case this would have been the structure of the local Democratic Party.

It was a procedure that the Republicans followed also when they occupied the White House. Now that procedure had some advantages. You had a potential postmaster's peers in the community that he was to serve judging his fitness, and, granting that no party has a monopoly on capability among individuals, it meant that you automatically, in most cases, eliminated a number of eligibles in the other party, whichever that might be at that time, but even so, I suspect there was something to be said for the local judging.

Now the locals forfeited too often their local judgment in factional strife—in associations that each tended to center segments of the group around a favorite candidate. This lent itself to some bitterness.

It is one of the reasons I was always delighted when the House of Representatives was able to take on its traditional role of filling the appointment, for my State did not have often a Democrat in the House of Representatives, so it meant I was the one who was stuck with the problem.

I didn't want the record to omit the view that there is still something basically on the plus side that requires people at the local level to exercise this kind of measuring responsibility. There is something good in the whole process. Now this leaves out the impact on the Department as a whole. I am stressing the participation with responsibility at the local level, which is so conspicuously lacking the moment you start talking about Federal operations, and I think that some good word belongs therefore at that point, that the locals did have this responsibility which will almost be nonexistent under the procedures now being followed.

I should hasten to add, likewise, that what we urged upon the local groups was to pick the best man. If they didn't like the favorite Democrat because of inexperience, pick the Republican; and this happened on a surprising number of occasions.

Generally, I understand it would happen in the smaller communities, but it still happened, and it was faithfully adhered to, so it is to say that there was a process where a community, particularly the small ones where the judgments are a little harsher, a little more across the board, and a little less partisan, did tend to produce postmasters who were competent individuals.

Having made that a part of the record, let me turn to the processes that you now are describing for us.

If we consider that perhaps some political considerations were injected into the process under the steps that you have outlined, does the Congress have some recourse to call it into question, or do the postal employees have some recourse to call into question the person assigned from the general committee that you have designated here?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Mr. Chairman, before I get to the answer to that question, in response to your earlier statement I would certainly like to make it clear that I, too, feel that many fine selections have been made under the previous process, but nevertheless you have to consider the impact on the Department, itself, with more than 700,000 employees. The Postmaster position is one of the top management positions throughout this Department, and yet the record shows more than two-thirds of those selected for these positions were from without the career service, and the impact on the morale and the incentive within the Department cannot be underestimated.

We hope that the vast majority of selections under the process that we are suggesting will be made from the career service and that our procedure will create a chain reaction of promotions down through ranks and will constantly open up positions for people in all levels of the Department.

So we would argue that while the system in the past has functioned in many instances very well, our new procedure has many advantages. I might also add that the postmaster essentially is a managerial position and not a policymaking position which demands that this dignified body should be called upon to give confirmation.

Giving a specific answer to your question, section 3109, or section 3, of the proposed bill in subparagraph (a) second sentence, states:

Any officer or employee of the Department who violates this section shall be removed from office or otherwise disciplined in accordance with procedures for disciplinary action established pursuant to law.

Now, an adverse action proceeding could be initiated against an employee in accordance with established procedures of the Department or other ways could be developed to force obedience to the laws of the land and this would be another law of the land.

The CHAIRMAN. The veterans' preference which now obtains in regard to the appointments of postmasters, is the veterans' preference procedure being eliminated?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Oh, no, sir. It would apply just as it does today.

The CHAIRMAN. That is regardless of the competence of the non-veteran on the register, there is no way that he can be selected over a veteran?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Well, this makes no changes in the status of the veterans' preference law. It will provide that in the future just as it does today.

The CHAIRMAN. Doesn't this in effect water down your quest for the most competent?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. The veterans' preference law, as you understand far better than I, applies when you have open competitive examinations by the Civil Service Commission.

The CHAIRMAN. Would the veterans' preference provisions apply in cases where you were promoting within the Post Office itself?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. It is my understanding that law has nothing to do with internal promotions. At any rate this law does not change any function of the Veterans' Preference Act as it now stands.

The CHAIRMAN. As you accept a nomination in the career service from within, let us say, a given post office, I would assume that there is no one employee there who was the obvious wisest choice. It might be so, but there must be several employees in the wings in that same post office who would consider themselves good postmaster material. How would you select from among them? Does this start with the postmaster himself?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. We have done a great deal of studying and thinking about these problems. Anytime you set up a procedure for selection of promotion of people to an important position there is no way to set up a perfect system, and we have tried to balance our management selection board in such a manner as to give an impartial balanced judgment with men who have that kind of judgment, and we have set up a procedure in great detail as to how this process would start.

In the event that a postmaster is retiring and is going to recommend candidates for selection to the board, he will first seek a report from the Postal Inspection Service. The postal inspectors in that area will give him a report on the people in this post office.

He will also seek an evaluation from the regional office in charge of this post office, and then he will make his own evaluation and make his recommendations to a review committee which is being set up for the

express purpose to oversee the recommendations made by the postmaster himself to try to eliminate bureaucratic politics which happens in any organization.

Whether this is governmental or a private organization, when you have an organization as large as this, you are likely to get bureaucratic politics involved.

So this review committee is to oversee that, to try to again make an effort toward eliminating or reducing the extent of bureaucratic internal politics and get the best selection they can to submit to the management selection boards.

The CHAIRMAN. Assuming that in most cases you would be selecting from among several in a post office, that is, several that might be considered eligible for a postmastership, would there be any consideration along that line of procedure that would accord some special position to veterans?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. I don't believe—

The CHAIRMAN. Not within. So long as they are within the postal service the veterans preference would have no operation, as you envision it?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. I don't believe the present law requires that, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. No, it doesn't require it now. I was emphasizing veterans preference, because you would still be selecting from among a group—in effect you have a panel of candidates—whether in the service or outside among the citizens. I only wanted to make clear for the record what the criteria would be within the service in a particular post office.

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Again it is no different from the way that it is today for any other promotional position within the Department. What we are trying to do is make the promotion to this office similar to the promotion of any other. We have many positions which of course are not subject to Senate confirmation.

The CHAIRMAN. The question that that immediately raises, of course, is the intraservice politics. I remember when I left the faculty at the University of Wyoming to come into this arena, I was often asked how it was to move into the politics of the Nation's Capital, and my reply was an honest one, that there is nothing dirtier than faculty politics because it is so local.

This seems like Sunday school here in the U.S. Senate, and I think the parallel of that is one that has to be carefully weighed within the postal service. I dare say that the local politics, not communitywide but inside the post office, may well be the ugliest of all the politics we are talking about in this whole process because it involves personalities, and it may be that we are jumping from the frying pan into the fire by substituting the dirtiest of local politics for something a little lesser in terms of partisan politics on the national level.

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Mr. Chairman, this is the reason I said we have come up with this regional review committee to try to prevent the kind of internal politics which is often prevalent in promotional situations, whether it is a college involved, or a government organization or business organization.

The CHAIRMAN. In your proposal the regional director of the Post Office Department is envisaged playing an integral part in the selec-

tion of the postmaster. How will the regional directors receive their appointment?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Again, just as they do today; no changes.

The CHAIRMAN. As we have a change of administration, we will put in a new team of regional directors to the Postal Department with maybe one or two exceptions?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. The regional directors are under provisions of the Civil Service Act, as are many positions in the Department, and are not the so-called Schedule C appointments.

The CHAIRMAN. They manage to end up as assistant regional directors each time they change. I mean both parties do this. In other words, you don't leave them running the show. We didn't when we came in in 1960, and I don't think you did when you came in in 1969.

That is why I am asking you where the change may occur there. That will still be essentially the same process, is that right?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. This bill doesn't have anything to do with that.

The CHAIRMAN. So that the regional directors can still essentially reflect a change of administration.

Postmaster General BLOUNT. This bill, again, doesn't have anything to do with any change in the regional director or the way in which the regional director is appointed or any other position in the Department except as postmaster.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes. You see the reason for my question there, General Blount, is that we are trying to divorce postmaster appointments from some of the more direct machinations of partisan selection, partisan politics, which was rather a clear-cut exercise until now. I am probing for how this would be essentially different if we keep the same procedure we have now in the selection of the regional directors.

I would assume that if we had, let us go back to another administration, the one before this or the one before that, either Johnson or Kennedy, and as you review the eligibility of candidates for postmaster, that one's judgment of who meets all the basic criteria could still be shaded a bit by one's own affiliations, even though he would not list that as one of the criteria by which "A" was rejected in preference to "B" in the post office at Cheyenne.

Postmaster General BLOUNT. We have set up again a regional review committee to act on these appointments, and recommendations, all are going to a management selection board. If the management selection board does not feel that the candidates submitted to them qualify, they are directed not to accept any of them, and it gets down to a question of trying to get a panel of the best qualified people before this management selection board.

The CHAIRMAN. The members of the panel, this committee, they would be selected by whom?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Well, by the Department.

The CHAIRMAN. That is, you have regional panels as I understand it?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. The regional management selection board, which is to be made up of the following people: one, an outstanding postmaster within the region; two, a representative of the Civil Service Commission which will be selected by the Civil Service Commission; three, a person selected by the dean of an outstanding

business school within that region; four, by a person selected by a nationally known management consulting firm; and five, from a man recommended by the American Arbitration Association.

The CHAIRMAN. Which group, the advisory board you were just describing or the regional director, would take precedence in the decisionmaking process?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. The selection board.

The CHAIRMAN. In other words, they could overrule the regional director?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. They are the ones who make the recommendations under the proposals of this bill for the postmaster.

The CHAIRMAN. Could the regional director designate otherwise than the recommendation from the board?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. No, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. What would be the regional director's role?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Well, as the manager in effect in charge of that region, he will be responsible to see that this process works.

The CHAIRMAN. In other words, he would submit first in the process, the proposal for postmaster, let us say, in Cheyenne, and then the board itself will pass judgment on his selection?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. If the postmaster is retiring—

The CHAIRMAN. I hope you will forgive this tortuous kind of questioning. I think our record has to be very clear. Otherwise our task of selling it to our colleagues over on the floor is going to be fraught with difficulty.

Postmaster General BLOUNT. If the postmaster is retiring or leaving the service for some good reason, he will start the process and make the recommendations to a review committee. If he dies, the regional director will start the process. In each, the process will start by having the Postal Inspection Service make a survey of the people in that local post office and make recommendations. Postal service officers of the region will also make a survey of the people in that post office and make recommendations. Based on this information the Postmaster will recommend up to three candidates to the regional review committee. This committee cannot veto any of the names submitted but may add three additional candidates from the post office. The review committee can only add names, to be submitted to the Management Selection Board.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me make certain that I have that one distinction. If the postmaster voluntarily retires, the regional director would have no hand in the mechanism, is that right?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. That is essentially correct, Mr. Chairman, but a man who is charged with the responsibility of that region has got a hand in seeing that the process works, and I just don't want to say that he is completely isolated from it because I think that he will be isolated in fact by the way the process works, but it is his responsibility to see that it works.

The CHAIRMAN. In the other case where the postmaster dies in office or is incapacitated, is there another way the regional director would move in that kind of crisis to accept the suggestion through his postal inspectors as to a likely replacement?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. And then at that stage after the regional director has thus acted, that decision of his would be immediately subjected to review by this management board, is that right?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, but who selects the members of the boards?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. In the case of the man from the university, the university will make that selection.

The CHAIRMAN. But who goes to the university and says "We need a man on this board"?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. The Department.

The CHAIRMAN. The Postmaster General?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, sir; designee of the Postmaster General.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Through the Assistant Postmaster for Personnel in the Department.

The CHAIRMAN. The role of the regional director in all of this, because he is in fact responsible for his region, I think remains still in my mind at least a little bit ambiguous, where his responsibility ends in terms of authority.

In other words, in relation to these boards, to this board, the management selection board, even if he is overruled he has no recourse if his preferred nominee is turned down by the board?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. He has no recourse. Now he also cannot veto any of the candidates recommended by the postmaster. His review committee can add to those recommendations but he cannot veto.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there any limit to the total number of candidates that might be laid on the table for final determination?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Well, the postmaster, in the event he initiates the discussion, can recommend a maximum of three. The Regional Review Committee can add to that three a maximum of three.

The CHAIRMAN. And is this three in addition to those that might have been submitted at the local level in the post office?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. That is correct.

The CHAIRMAN. So it is conceivable that you might have eight or nine names?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. It is conceivable that the management selection board will consider a maximum of six, but that does not imply a limitation of the people that were considered prior to that selection process.

The CHAIRMAN. In other words they may have been eliminated along the way?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, and it could have been any number of people considered.

The CHAIRMAN. Under what authorization would they determine that the first three were inadequate and add their own three?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Well, obviously, you get down to a matter of judgment in any of these things, but we do have detailed procedures indicating the kind of things that should be considered; the qualifications for a postmaster, job description, and the kind of basic requirements for managers of this kind of facility. I have out-

lined those previously, I think, to the members of this committee and will be glad to outline them again if you would like.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, there will be other questions as you go along. I think we will come back to that question and you can reemphasize those particular aspects of it.

What would be the position of the Department on a proposed amendment that would authorize the waiver of the residency requirement for large post offices, or permitting at least selection from within the commuting area of the city?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Mr. Chairman, we have been thinking a good deal about this residency requirement. We did not include it as you know in the provisions of this bill because we wanted to look at it further.

We have cases in some of the larger post offices where some of our best carrier people live say a half mile outside of the jurisdiction of the post office and they commute every day, and obviously they seem to be eligible to deal with this matter.

On the other hand, in some of the post offices around the country the residency has a pertinency.

The CHAIRMAN. It would be at least worthy of consideration if we could arrive at a line of separation that would try to preserve for the larger post offices the judgment of looking for a management person other than a resident, and trying to preserve some element of the local limitations on the smaller post offices. Would that be a fair way to put it?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Mr. Chairman, while I personally share the views just expressed by the chairman, our feelings have been that it would be best to pass this bill without adding a number of amendments to it.

We felt it was important to move this bill through as fast as we could and then possibly deal with this other matter at a separate time.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I think you appreciate our problem up here, and that is we are not going to move it without 51 votes, and this is going to be one of the questions that I am confident is going to rear its head. We haven't had a chance to talk about it yet here, but that is why I appreciate your position of wanting a clean bill in order to move it fast, but I suspect that we will get a lot of advice from our colleagues who are not on this committee and whose votes count just as much as the enlightened votes here in this particular group.

So this is our practical question and that is the reason we have got to have some lines of—I suppose you would call them retreat, that we could be prepared to spell out in an attempt to get five more votes or 10 more votes so we can get over that 51 mark.

That is the reason for putting that question to you in that way. It is a practical one, an operational one from this end of the line. You yourself have been giving a great deal of thought to it. I think this reflects the fact that there is something there somewhere, and I dare say that the Senate is not very likely to let this bill go through to the floor unless something specific is advanced, when it comes to the architecture of the residency requirement.

So I do think it would be wise to have your team thrash this out a bit more and see if there aren't some possible directions or guidelines

you can be willing to lay down for us to have a look at. I am sure that we will get questions about it on the floor, and perhaps at a less significant or sophisticated level, when they are shooting from the hip.

We all take a dim view sometimes after we spend weeks on it here at the committee having somebody devote 15 minutes' attention to it on the floor and try to change the whole configuration of recommended legislation. But this is still the name of the game, so I do think we have got to live with it.

I keep groping for the elimination of some shades of politics in this thing. As I indicated, we may be substituting some of the most undesirable politics or the dirtiest part of politics in an attempt to get rid of some of the more conspicuous political attributes here at the national level in Washington.

Postmaster General BLOUNT. But, Mr. Chairman, you know we have got many other jobs in the Post Office Department equal to or larger than the postmaster's job and we make promotions every day into those areas, and that is all we are trying to do with this bill, put this position in the chain of command on the same basis, and on the same basis that all of the other departments make their promotions in the executive department.

The CHAIRMAN. We will take the postal inspectors as a group. I would assume it would be fair to suggest that there is some political ratio present among them, and you see it begins to intrude its presence.

Postmaster General BLOUNT. The Postal Inspection Service operates under an Executive order issued by President Wilson in 1917 which essentially requires that this Department be made up of people approximately balanced as between the major political parties, and it is the only part of the Department in which a record is kept in that regard.

While you might have to strain a bit to see that it is an approximate balance at this time, it is not too far out of balance as some of the other departments well may be.

The CHAIRMAN. Would the Department support a statutory provision that would prohibit the payment of salary to any person appointed on a political basis or for the payment of salary to any person who makes such an appointment?

I am trying to think now of the enforcement procedures, once we set up the ideal that is in the heart of your pending proposal. What ways have we of enforcing it or what power to impose penalty?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Again, section 3 provides that the person who does abuse it may be removed from office or otherwise disciplined under the rules of the Department.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, in that discipline process, would the Department support a statutory provision that would prohibit the payment of salary to such a person? Either the one who was so appointed, or the one who made the recommendation or appointed him in fact?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Well, Mr. Chairman, I think we would not have any objection to strengthening this bill in many ways. It has been suggested by others that far more serious penalties should be attached to this.

Again, I would try to put this thing in perspective. Do these provisions apply for the other positions of appointment? I think we should

be consistent throughout the Department and throughout the Government.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I am advised, for example, now that we have a rule affecting nepotism, that this kind of recourse is available where the payment is automatically cut off. In other words, you have got to have an iron-fisted master of the situation somewhere, who can arbitrarily act automatically under the law without having to consult somebody on it.

Postmaster General BLOUNT. This bill provides for automatic action under the law without consulting anyone.

The CHAIRMAN. Under the procedures within the Department, but I wasn't aware at any rate that there was a procedure built in, a "bad guy" let us say, somewhere at the heart, whose job it is simply to be bloodless in a role of this type—where, say, cutting off the salary would be automatic. He would have no judgment to make in a case like that.

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Well, somebody has to initiate any scheme that you provide and this provides for penalties and somebody will have to initiate it as they do violations of any law.

The CHAIRMAN. Do I take it to be your inclination to approve the question of the statutory provision enabling a specified officer or paymaster to cut off salary arbitrarily in the event of injection of either political appointment on the part of the person that accepts the appointment as well as on the part of the person who made the appointment?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. I would not think that you would impose that authority on a paymaster. I would presume that you would have appropriate procedures to prove any such charges, and after that the Department would be required to take such action as the law requires.

The CHAIRMAN. Would that be impossible to legislate as an amendment, in terms of making it specific?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. I don't think it is impossible to legislate, no, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. I am trying to approach it in terms of the feasible.

Postmaster General BLOUNT. One of the things that I think we do feel rather strongly about is that you can't legislate everything, and that we are trying to make this simply another position in the Department, and we have many of them, management positions, responsible positions, which we promote people to, and this should be no different. We think that it should be treated like other positions of responsibility that we have in our Department.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me shift for a moment to the rural carriers in this overall setup. Is that within the bounds of this pending legislation?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. No, sir. It has nothing to do with this legislation.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, then, let me leave them alone for the time being.

Will this proposed measure increase the number of consultants, experts of one sort or another, that you are going to require on your selection boards and your various other operations to make sure that you follow the wisest selection procedures?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, it will require the addition of people to fill these boards that we have described. On the other hand,

we think there will be a substantial savings from within the present system, A number of employees are devoted to these matters. But in any event we don't really think that is the objective of this thing. The objective of this thing is to get the most competent managers we can in these positions.

The CHAIRMAN. I understand that. Can you spell that out a little bit in terms of the stepping up or increasing the number of consultants that would be required under this process, this procedure?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. We have 15 regional management selection boards and one national management selection board made up of five people. The regional board will each consist of four from without the Department and one who will be a regular employee of the Department. The national selection board will consist of two regular employees of the Department and three from without the Department.

We estimate, with the backlog we have, each board will probably be required to meet on the order of something like once a week until we get this thing in hand, and then less time.

We now have in the postmaster section of the Department some 66 people. We think this can be reduced rather substantially. Some of these people are devoted to appraisal rather than postmaster process. There will be some savings of full-time people in full-time positions in the Department here as we take on these part-time consultants.

The CHAIRMAN. How would this compare with your present pool of consultants? Do you have an estimate you can give us of the size of the consultant pool? I am trying to get its relative proportions in regard to what we have envisaged here.

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Separate and apart from the other functions for which the consultants are used, these would be additional consultants on this part-time basis, but there would be the concomitant savings of the full-time positions in the Department now devoted to this work.

The CHAIRMAN. We will be talking somewhere in the neighborhood of, let us say, 70-plus, part-time individuals on the new boards?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. On the regional selection board there are three part-time consultants from outside the Government service. There are 15 boards, that will be 45. In the national selection board there are three more outside part-time consultants which will be a total of about 48.

The CHAIRMAN. And those within the Department—

Postmaster General BLOUNT. In the regional selection boards there will be one postmaster in each region who will just be devoted part-time 1 day a week approximately, and in the national management selection board the Assistant Postmaster General for Personnel and for Operations.

The CHAIRMAN. All right.

Now, who is going to be running that store day to day? You have these people part time. You say you estimate they might meet as often as once a week. Does that mean that the door is locked and every Monday they open it up and meet for 1 day and close it up again? Do you have to have an ongoing operation there?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. I assure you, Mr. Chairman, we are adequately staffed in most of the operations I have looked at; the

operations can continue and they don't have to shut the door just because the postmaster that we select is not there. He can be sick 1 day.

The CHAIRMAN. That is, you have utilized personnel currently within the Department structure that could serve in these roles?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Well, post offices themselves are set up to run whether the postmaster is there or not as any management organization would be. I mean he could be sick 1 day and we don't close the post office for that. He is just simply going to devote a day of service to this board.

The CHAIRMAN. And the staffing of this continuous operation would predominantly be within the service?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, sir; and we estimate that probably each board will need a full-time secretary at least for the beginning. Later on we think it will probably be reduced in workload.

The CHAIRMAN. How much personnel per board would be continuing? By that I mean full time. Just the secretary?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. We estimate just a secretary will be necessary.

The CHAIRMAN. And the director of the board or the supervisor who decides whether the board ought to be meeting Tuesday and Thursday, or five days a week, or meeting in another emergency—each board would have its own selected chairman?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. We would plan, Mr. Chairman, to have a full time administrator here in the headquarters to supervise all of these boards to see that they function properly.

The CHAIRMAN. Riding herd on all the boards, that is one place where the responsibility for all of them would rest?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. That is correct.

The CHAIRMAN. This wouldn't then require personnel out in the field?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. We don't think so except for this secretary that is required.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, the full-time secretary in each board. You could probably pull some of this personnel within the Department from the consultants already in the Department perhaps.

Postmaster General BLOUNT. We wouldn't anticipate doing that.

The CHAIRMAN. Those are all the questions that I have for the time being. We would want to go into further development here, but Senator Fong has some questions he would like to pursue.

Senator FONG. Mr. Postmaster General, we have discussed this problem quite a few times and I think you appreciate my thinking on it, and you can appreciate my position on this committee, being the ranking minority member, that I am getting some criticisms, too, in proposing this bill.

Many questions have been put to me by my colleagues as to why, after 8 years of wandering in the desert, now we come to the promised land we should forgo all this patronage. So you can see that this is not going to be an easy thing to sell to my colleagues.

That is why I would like to make this record as full as possible by asking you a lot of questions. I told you I would be willing to go along with you because you are now starting on a very, very big task in trying to make the Post Office viable. There have been many sug-

gestions that probably the old system will break down at some point if you do not get the innovations that you are asking for. You feel you will be in a lot of trouble if you do not get these improvements. I, for one, am willing to give you a chance, and I shall be willing to go along with you and give you post offices as efficient as you can have.

Now, may I ask you first whether you have the power to implement the changes that you are trying to put through in this bill without the passage of this bill?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. No, Senator. We are asking for removal of Senate confirmation by the passage of this bill and we don't have the power to do that without the passage of this bill.

Senator FONG. So you feel if this bill were not passed that you would not have the power to go along as you have been?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. More importantly, Senator, we are concerned that unless this bill is passed, if we implement and do the things that we have been talking about doing, another administration could come in and undo all of the things we have done, and we feel it is vitally necessary to put in the law this process.

Senator FONG. In other words, even if you thought you had the power to do it, that if you did it, some other Postmaster General can come in afterward and will undo everything you have done?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, sir.

Senator FONG. So, therefore, to see that this is carried on on a continuing basis, such a law is necessary?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, sir.

Senator FONG. Now, under the present system you do have a competitive system, don't you in the selection of your postmasters?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Under the system that is existing now we are not using the so-called advisory system. We are using the processes that I have described to this committee.

Senator FONG. In other words, you have already implemented the bill here as you have proposed to us before its passage?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. As far as recommendations to the President for nominations to the Senate, we have implemented the provisions that have been described. We feel that Senate confirmation of postmasters is the underpinning of the advisory system and again, as I stated, while we have eliminated the use of the advisory system, unless this bill passes, another administration can come in and undo all of the things we have tried to do in this regard.

Senator FONG. In other words, you feel that you now have the power to put in a postmaster without the advice and consent of the Senate?

And has that been implemented at the present time?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, sir.

Senator FONG. So therefore this bill only is a futuristic bill to prevent a future postmaster from reverting to what has been the procedure?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Again, to the extent that the Senate confirmation is the underpinning of the advisory system, we feel very much that unless this bill is passed that another administration could come in and completely reverse the procedures that we have established and go back to using the advisory system.

Senator FONG. I have been asked by my colleagues as to what is the present procedure now. What could I tell them?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. You could describe the selection process that we have described here, which is the process by which we will undertake to make recommendations to President Nixon, who will then place these names in nomination before the Senate.

Senator FONG. Yes. Then after it gets to the President, the President will have to send it to this committee, this committee will have to approve it, and then it goes to the Senate for confirmation?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, sir.

Senator FONG. So really you have not appointed any postmasters since you have come in?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. That is correct.

Senator FONG. You have only appointed acting postmasters?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, sir.

Senator FONG. So it is most necessary that you have this bill to really carry out what you intend to do?

• Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, sir; we think it is a vital and keystone bill to the operation of the changed Post Office Department.

Senator FONG. Now, many of my colleagues feel there is not much difference between what you have offered to them and the present system. The present system calls for an examination of the applicants, and out of the highest three, a selection is made, although it is recommended by a Member of Congress, and that this present system that you are calling for calls for promotion within the ranks.

They feel an examination by all the people who desire to enter the postal service is much more desirable than just a promotion within the ranks. What do you say to that?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Senator, under the operation of the advisory system, the practical facts are that it has in many instances broken down. We found over 2,100 vacancies in postmasters jobs when we came in. Anytime you have a vacancy—and some of those vacancies have existed as much as 6 or 8 years—anytime you have that kind of vacancy at the head of an organization, morale is bound to suffer.

You have a system whereby the majority of the people know that they will not be able to get promotions unless they have a political contact, so the facts are that most of the people within the Department never even bother to try to get these positions because they do not have the political contact and it destroys incentive within the organization itself.

We feel in order to restore incentive within the Department, to provide the opportunity for promotion within the organization, which is basically a good policy, that this bill is necessary.

Senator FONG. Many of my colleagues feel that the Post Office Department in the past 8 years has been filled with Democrats and that people working in the Postal Department largely are Democrats, so your system here would reward the Democrats rather than the Republicans. I presume there is something to that.

Mr. Postmaster General, you see, I am trying to make the record full so that my colleagues who read the record will know all these matters have been gotten into so I don't have to explain to them.

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Senator, I would like to respond to that because I think it is very true, and I think the Republican Party deserves the credit and should take the credit for having initiated this action, and I think that the members of the Republican Party who are

voluntarily giving up their patronage rights at the beginning of this administration deserve a lot of credit. For the past 8 years positions have been filled under the advisory system and largely with members of the Democratic Party, if not wholly. We are asking the Republican Party not to continue this practice and they have agreed.

The Republican Party is making a great measure of sacrifice in respect to patronage regard, but we have to start somewhere if we are to improve the postal service.

Senator FONG. Yes, I understand that.

Postmaster General BLOUNT. And it just seems to me that we have to start at the beginning.

Senator FONG. So we start off with the premise that Republicans are pretty generous if they vote for this bill.

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Well, at the very least they deserve a great deal of credit.

Senator FONG. All right.

Now that we have passed that bridge, let us go on to the reasons why you really want this bill. Now you talk about morale, but when you talk about morale, you are really talking about something which sometimes you can't put your finger on.

One of the things in this morale problem is the question of confirmation. Is it true that in many instances the postmaster has not been confirmed?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, sir. It is also true as I stated that we had 2,100 vacancies. The last administration, right before this administration took office, only submitted 400, 500, or 600 nominations to the Senate, and only 176 of those were confirmed.

So that even though we had 2,100 vacancies, the advisory system of the previous administration could not agree to make appointments to those 2,100 vacant positions.

Senator FONG. And you have instances in your Department where a postmaster had been acting for many years because the appointing or confirming authorities could not agree?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, Senator, as much as 6 and 8 years in some of these instances, and some of the Nation's largest post offices have been without postmasters for as much as 2 or 3 years at the present time because under the advisory system agreement could not be reached. Cleveland, Ohio, one of the Nation's largest, is a case in point. The lack of a permanent postmaster has drastically affected the performance of this post office.

Senator FONG. When you refer to morale problem, is this part of the morale problem you are referring to?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Without question. You have a man heading the office, who everyone knows is not going to get the job because under the advisory system no one will agree to his appointment. Obviously his effectiveness is diminished considerably.

Senator FONG. Now, with that kind of system, how much authority do you have over a man like this, where he looks to his Senator or he looks to his Congressman for this sort of a position, and you as Postmaster General try and secure efficiency, how much authority do you have over this man?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Senator, you have touched a very important point. In many instances, particularly since the institution the regional system in the last decade, largely staffed with career

people, there have been great difficulties within the ranks between the postmaster and the career people because the postmasters feel they are responsible to their Member of Congress, and morale and discipline have suffered as a result.

Senator FONG. And you think that the thinking of the postmaster is somewhat modified, that his thinking that he can run to his Senator has a lot to do with the type of work that he will render to the post office?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Senator, I can tell you this for a fact. Since coming into the Department I have met many, many postmasters, and often times I have been told, Congressman so and so appointed me, Senator so and so appointed me, and I am astounded. Here I am the head of this Department and I would think ordinarily when you have a man in a responsible position of management, the management would have the responsibility and authority of making that appointment but they don't refer to it that way.

Senator FONG. Now, would you consider this one of the big reasons why you really want this?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. I think this is a very vital reason for this change.

Senator FONG. And you feel that for the efficiency of the post office this should be eliminated?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, sir.

Senator FONG. If this were eliminated, that is the advisory position of the Congress, would you be able to shift some of the men who have been doing this kind of work, trying to see who is for whom and whether Congressman or the Senator is for a certain individual and all his meddling into the question of appointment, calling up as to where this man stands and where that man stands, the number of personnel that you have doing this type of work, would they be free to do other jobs?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, sir; very much so. While you can put your finger on the number of people specifically full time dealing with this, it is really difficult to put your finger on how much of the top management time of the Department was devoted to this.

I am led to believe there is a substantial amount of concern and diversion from the important things in the Department by the people at the top of this Department who have to pay attention to these kinds of things. These considerations should not be a burden on the managers of this Department.

Senator FONG. And this has been quite a problem for the Department?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, sir.

Senator FONG. Has it reached you, in the highest position, in the appointment of these postmasters way down in the lower level?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Because we have not followed that system, we have not been bothered with that, but I am led to believe that this has been true in the past of the people that occupied my position.

Senator FONG. You presently have about 4,861 first-class post offices. What is the average pay of the postmasters in these post offices?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. It ranges from grade 9 to PFS-20. PFS-9 starts at \$7,889 a year for first class and a PFS-20 can go up to as high as \$27,000.

Senator FONG. Would you say that most of the 4,861 first-class post offices, the postmasters are in the lower categories rather than upper?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, sir. It would average at \$11,440 for first-class post offices.

Senator FONG. So you are saying then that for jobs that have a salary of \$8,000, \$9,000, \$10,000 average, that you have to come to the Congress for confirmation?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, sir. And as a matter of fact it even goes down to around \$7,821.

Senator FONG. For second-class post office?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. That goes to third-class post offices, which we also have to come to the Congress for.

Senator FONG. You have 7,209 second-class post offices, which probably are compensated at less than \$7,809, is that correct?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. The average for second-class postmasters is \$9,048.

Senator FONG. And then you have third-class post offices, 12,905. These average—

Postmaster General BLOUNT. \$7,821.

Senator FONG. So of the 24,974 postmasters in the first-, second-, and third-class post offices, probably 20,000 of them get less than \$10,000?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. That would be correct.

Senator FONG. I will supply the figures for the average salaries of first-, second-, third-, and fourth-class postmasters.

(Postmaster General Blount subsequently supplied the following figures:)

Average salaries of postmasters

1st-class office.....	\$11, 440
2d-class office.....	9, 048
3d-class office.....	7, 821
4th-class office.....	4, 417

Senator FONG. And in no other Department do you have employees who are receiving that amount of compensation who have to come to the Congress for confirmation?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. That is right, sir.

Senator FONG. And you are the only Department that is required to come to the Hill for confirmation?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Yes, sir.

Senator FONG. And you feel very definitely that you should be treated like the other Departments?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. I think very definitely for the best functioning of this Department we should be on the same basis.

Senator FONG. Are the members of the national regional boards to be compensated or will they be on a volunteer basis?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. They will be compensated on a consultant basis.

Senator FONG. And do you expect to give them a term of office, or will they serve at the pleasure of the Postmaster General?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. You cannot hire consultants for more than a year, and it will generally be at the pleasure of the Department.

Senator FONG. What do you figure the added cost of the program will be?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Senator, in fact we feel that there will be savings in the operation of the program. We think that most of our appointments will come from within the service and we expect again, as I stated, a chain reaction of promotions throughout the organization, and when you do that, there will be great savings that will accrue to the Department.

For instance, if the assistant postmaster is to be appointed to a vacant postmaster's job, he probably has a great deal of service and he will go into the postmaster's job and then the man below him that is appointed to the assistant postmaster's job again will come in probably at the bottom of the rank for this position which will represent a substantial saving over the man who previously occupied that job, and this will be true down the line in this chain reaction kind of thing, so that overall we really feel that there will be very distinct cash savings involved in operation of the program.

But again I state that this really is not the point of this thing. The point is to seek to get better and more efficient managers and raise morale in the organization and provide more promotion from within.

Senator FONG. I think I have asked you all the questions that I want to ask you, Mr. Postmaster General. I think you are on the right track, even though I feel politically you are taking away from the Republicans a patronage which had come to them, but I am quite sure we can convince our colleagues that this is for the good of the Department.

Postmaster General BLOUNT. Fine, Senator.

Senator FONG. Is that the presentation of the Department?

Postmaster General BLOUNT. This is the presentation of the Department at this time, sir.

Senator FONG. Thank you, Mr. Postmaster General.

(The prepared statement of Postmaster General Winton M. Blount, the Department's draft of S. 1583 with an explanation and reproductions of Charts 1 and 2, follow:)

PREPARED TESTIMONY OF POSTMASTER GENERAL WINTON M. BLOUNT, POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT

Mr. Chairman, I am glad to be here today to testify on S. 1583, a bill to provide that appointments and promotions in the Post Office Department, including the postal field service, be made on the basis of merit and fitness.

I wholeheartedly support this bill which was introduced by six members of this Committee to carry out the recommendations which President Nixon made on February 25, 1969, in his message to the Congress on Reform of the Postal System. Specifically, the President urged the enactment of legislation which would

- eliminate the present statutory requirement for Presidential appointment and Senatorial confirmation of postmasters of first, second, and third-class post offices;
- provide for appointment of all postmasters by the Postmaster General in the competitive civil service; and
- prohibit political considerations in the selection or promotion of postal employees.

President Nixon made it clear that he considers it essential that the last vestiges of political patronage in the Post Office Department be swept away in order to make possible the development of a true career service for employees in the postal field service.

Proposals to eliminate appointment of postmasters on the basis of political considerations are not new or politically partisan. On June 24, 1949, President

Truman, in his message to the Congress Recommending Further Reorganization of the Post Office Department called on the Congress to enact legislation on this subject saying:

"No authority of management is more important than that of selecting the personnel who are to operate the business. If the Postmaster General is to be held responsible for the efficient conduct of the postal service, he should be given full authority to appoint postmasters and other postal employees subject only to the provisions of the Civil Service and Classification Acts. Legislation should be enacted which will give such authority to the Postmaster General."

Moreover, proposals of this character have been made by the various commissions established to study improvements in the Federal Government including the First Hoover Commission, the Second Hoover Commission and the Kappel Commission on Postal Organization. Indeed, during the last Congress the Senate passed S. 355 with provisions vesting the Postmaster General with authority to appoint all postmasters on the basis of merit and prohibiting political considerations in postal appointments. These provisions were sponsored by this Committee. S. 1583 would likewise vest the Postmaster General with authority to appoint postmasters on the basis of merit and prohibit political considerations in postal appointments. Further, last year the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service of the House reported favorably H.R. 16524 which provided for Postmaster General appointments on the basis of competitive examination.

Why the concern over the existence of patronage appointments? The evils were well summed up last year by the President of the National Civil Service League, a non-partisan organization, in hearings on H.R. 8516 before the Subcommittee on Postal Operations of the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service of the House of Representatives as follows:

"The present system is inconsistent with the whole concept of merit in government employment. There is simply no assurance that the best or near best is finally chosen for the job.

"The system has the potential for operating as a depressant on the morale and aspirations of the many devoted, able and experienced subordinate postal officers in local centers. They cannot aspire to the top of the hierarchy in the local office because this post is reserved for political appointment. Thus, an artificial ceiling is imposed on opportunities for advancement except in those occasional instances where a subordinate employee gains political favor and is the recipient of political preferment.

"The system contributes to a political, nonprofessional atmosphere that tends to discourage young, vigorous talent from making careers in the postal service. Bright young men rarely consider seeking appointment in the Post Office Department. Yet this is precisely the type of person the Department requires. The available pool of talent shrinks yearly.

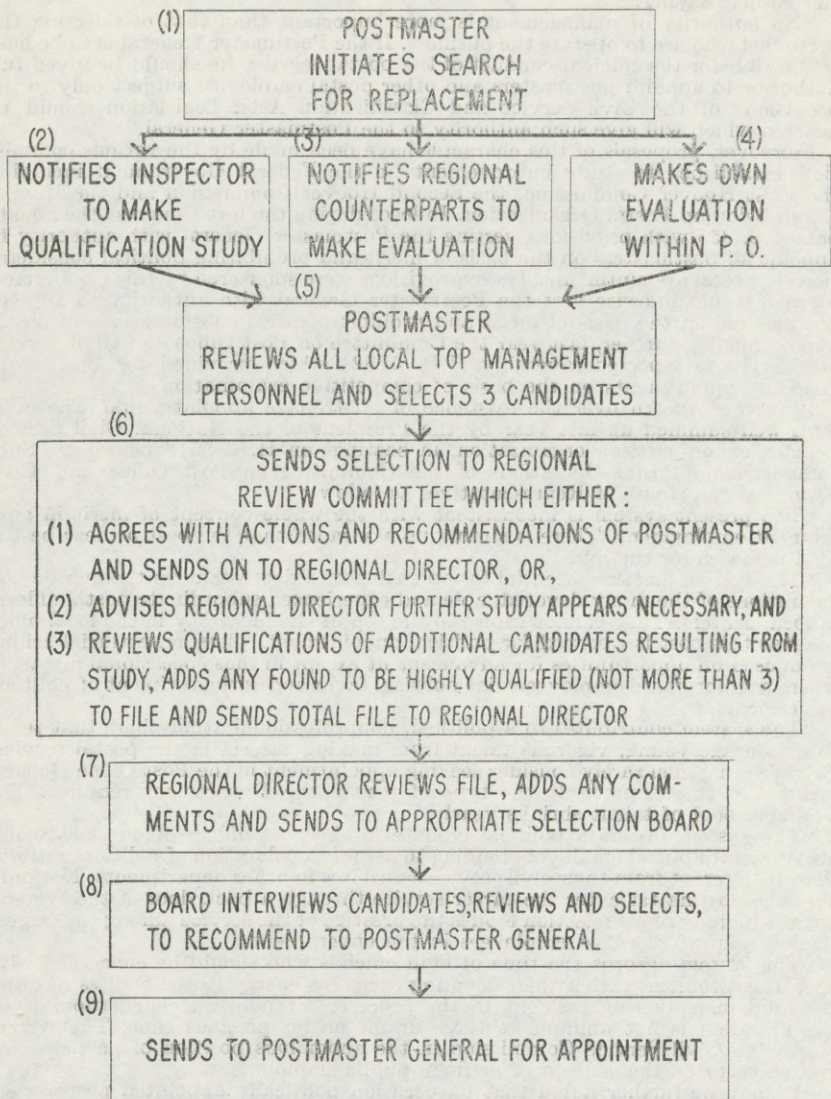
"The system fosters a political climate in the post offices of our local communities with postal employees tending to assume a coloration of political activity sharply different from their civil service associates in other departments. Not only does the postmaster enter the career service through a back door in the system, but the manner of his selection erodes the prestige of the service among the largest single group of classified employees in the government.

"The system absorbs the time of high officials who should be concerned with operating problems rather than devoting excessive energy in the endless negotiation and maneuvering incident to the processes of political conciliation. Even the President is not immune to these drains on his precious time. The system places the Civil Service Commission in the anomalous position of participating in a travesty on the concept of merit in public employment.

"It may be further noted that on occasion politically appointed postmasters with strong and active political backing tend to feel they can resist supervision by headquarters superiors. This is particularly true since the creation during the past decade of regional offices staffed with career personnel. Such conflict of loyalties clearly impairs good management."

Since the administration has abolished the advisor system and has taken steps in conjunction with the Civil Service Commission to assure non-political appointment, why then is legislation necessary? Two basic but overlapping reasons call for the enactment of the legislation. First.—For our efforts to eliminate political appointments to be successful, it is essential that a clear Congressional mandate be enacted. This is the purpose of Section 3 of S. 1583. Second.—The current requirements for Presidential and Senate Confirmation appointment not only label the postmaster positions as positions whose filling involves political consider-

CHART 1

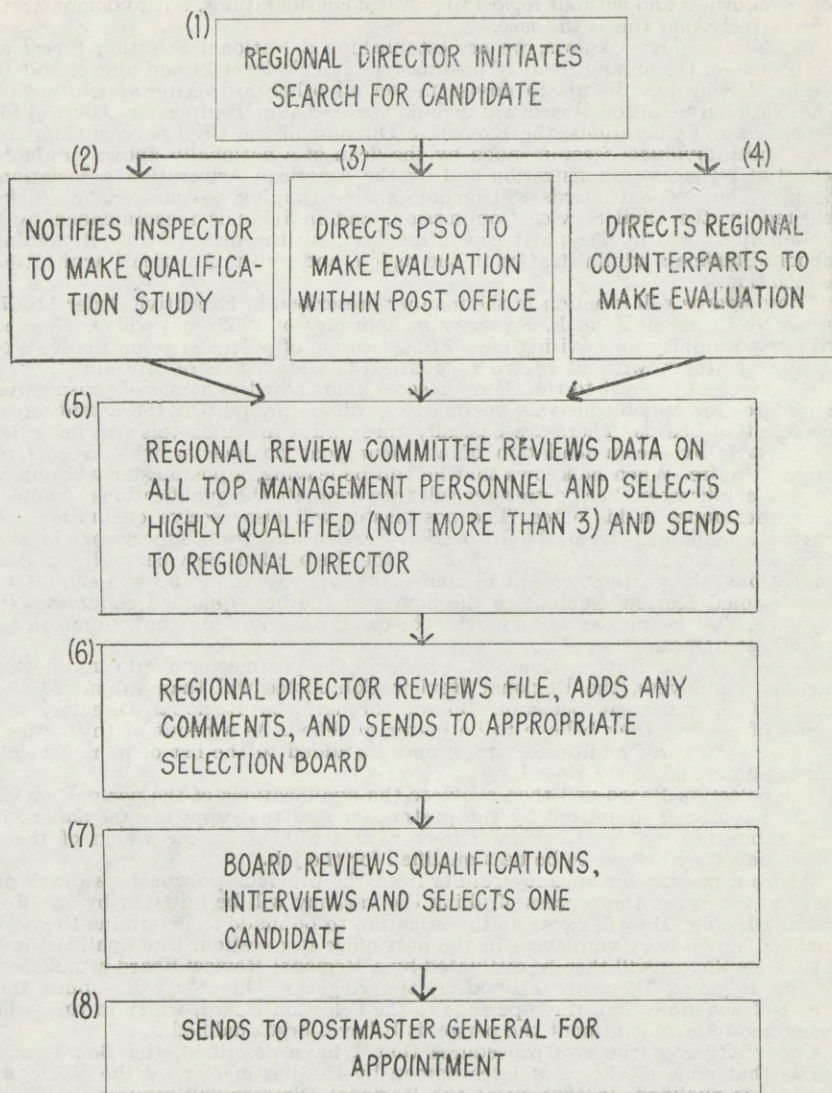


ations, but provides a means by which political considerations eventually could be reintroduced into the appointment system.

This requirement would be eliminated by the first section of the bill. The task force on personnel for the Second Hoover Commission stated "Appointment by the President and confirmation by the Senate is the foundation for the system."

In today's world Senate confirmation is an anachronism in the case of the nearly 25 thousand Presidential postmasters. Postmaster positions are not policy determining positions but managerial positions. Generally, Senate confirmation is reserved for those positions in the Executive Schedule which are concerned with national policies and for which salaries are fixed at substantially higher levels than postmaster salaries.

CHART 2



Postmaster positions run from PFS levels 6 through 20. The current salary for a PFS Level 20 is somewhat less than that of a GS-17 under the Classification Act. Yet, appointments to the Classification Act positions do not generally require Senate confirmation, much less the appointment of a Secretary at GS-6 whose salary range is as high as a postmaster at a small third class post office. In other government agencies employees who meet and provide services to the public are selected without Senate confirmation. No special reason exists for requiring Senate confirmation of postmaster appointments.

In conjunction with the President we have done what we can to eliminate political considerations in postmaster appointments. We have ended the political advisor system which had traditionally been used by Democratic and Republican ad-

ministrations to select postmasters and rural carriers. Moreover, we are establishing machinery not only to assure that appointments to these positions are made solely on fitness and without regard to political considerations, but to demonstrate affirmatively that this is the case.

As the Committee knows, we are establishing a National Selection Board to advise me on the appointment of postmasters at PFS level 14 and above, and 15 Regional Selection Boards to advise me on all other postmaster appointments. The National Selection Board will include the Assistant Postmasters General for Personnel and Operations, the Executive Director of the Civil Service Commission, and individuals recommended by the dean of a nationally known graduate school of business administration and by the American Arbitration Association. Each of the regional boards will include an outstanding postmaster, an official selected by the Civil Service Commission, and individuals recommended by a nationally known management consulting firm, by the dean of an outstanding school of business administration in the region, and by the American Arbitration Association.

These boards will function in the manner prescribed in Executive Order 11007, issued by President John F. Kennedy in February of 1962, and will be charged with responsibility for advising me on the selection of postmasters on the basis of merit and fitness, without regard to political considerations of any kind.

It may be of interest to the Committee to know how the names of prospective candidates for appointment as postmasters will be brought to the attention of the selection boards. There are basically three ways in which this will be done. The first is by recommendation of an incumbent postmaster who expects to resign or retire. When he knows that he will be leaving, a postmaster will notify his regional director. The postmaster will then evaluate the qualifications of supervisory personnel in his office. The postmaster will also receive evaluations of potential candidates from the Inspection Service and from supervisors in the regional organization. After considering the Inspection Service and regional evaluations, the postmaster will himself make an evaluation and will submit to the Regional Review Committee the names of the best qualified candidates in his office. The postmaster will not rank the candidates, and may not submit more than three names.

If the Regional Review Committee believes the postmaster overlooked better qualified employees, the Regional Review Committee will then submit to the Regional Management Selection Board, through the Regional Director, the names of persons they believe to be better qualified. As a result of this action, no more than three additional names may be added to the list of names which will be submitted to the Board.

The Selection Board will then evaluate the qualifications of the persons whose names have been submitted by the postmaster and the supplemental names, if any, submitted by the Regional Director, and will advise me which of these individuals they believe to be best qualified for the job.

Where a postmaster vacancy results from the previous postmaster's death or removal for cause, the process of filling the vacancy will be initiated by the Regional Director. He will cause an investigation to be made to determine the best qualified supervisory employees in the post office in question. The qualifications of such employees will then be evaluated by a Regional Review Board established by the Regional Director. Thereafter, the Regional Director will submit the names of not more than three persons to the Selection Board, which in turn will recommend for appointment the person it believes best qualified.

Under either of the two procedures that I have described, the Board may decide that none of the candidates named by the postmaster by the Regional Director is qualified. In that event the Regional Director will request the Civil Service Commission to hold an open competitive examination. As a result of the examination, a maximum of three names will be submitted to the Board. The Board will then recommend the person it deems best qualified, subject, however, to the requirements of the Veterans' Preference Act.

It may prove to be necessary to modify some of the details of the selection process that I have outlined, but I wish to assure the Committee that as long as I continue to hold the office of Postmaster General, the Department will adhere firmly to the principle that, as announced by President Nixon last February, postmaster appointments "are going to be made on the basis of merit and fitness for the job, and not on the basis of political affiliations or political influence."

A BILL To provide that appointments and promotions in the Post Office Department and Postal Field Service be made on the basis of merit and fitness

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That: Section 3311 of Title 39, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§ 3311. Method of appointment

“The Postmaster General shall appoint postmasters in the competitive civil service.”

SEC. 2. The amendment made by the first section of this Act shall not affect the status or tenure of postmasters in office on the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. (a) Chapter 41 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by inserting the following new section after section 3108:

“§ 3109. Nonpolitical appointments and promotions

“(a) In the selection, appointment, and promotion of employees of the Department, no political test or qualification shall be permitted or given consideration, and all such personnel actions shall be taken on the basis of merit and fitness. Any officer or employee of the Department who violates this section shall be removed from office or otherwise disciplined in accordance with procedures for disciplinary action established pursuant to law.

“(b) This section does not apply to the selection and appointment of officers whose appointments are vested in the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, or to the selection, appointment, or promotion to positions designated by the Civil Service Commission as positions of a confidential or policy determining character or as positions to be filled by non-career executive assignments.”

(b) The analysis of chapter 41 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by inserting the following new item after item 3108:

“§ 3109. Nonpolitical appointments and promotions.”

EXPLANATION OF S. 1583, A BILL TO PROVIDE THAT APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS IN THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT AND POSTAL FIELD SERVICE BE MADE ON THE BASIS OF MERIT AND FITNESS

At the present time, under the provisions of 39 United States Code 3311, postmasters at post offices of the first, second and third class are appointed in the competitive civil service by the President, subject to Senate confirmation. Postmasters at fourth-class post offices are appointed by the Postmaster General. The first section of the bill would amend the existing law to authorize the Postmaster General to appoint all postmasters, regardless of their classification, all such appointments to be in the competitive civil service.

Appointments in the competitive service to permanent positions are without term in the absence of a statutory term since pursuant to 5 United States Code 7501 an employee in the competitive Civil Service retains his position unless removed for a cause which will promote the efficiency of the service. It would, therefore, be redundant to specify in this bill that postmaster appointments are to be without term. The omission of this phrase, which now appears in 39 United States Code 3311, would not subject postmaster appointments to a term limitation. Similarly, the existing provision for appointments either by promotion or by competitive examination has been omitted as unnecessary since under 5 United States Code 3304 and 3361 and Section 332.101 of the Civil Service Regulations these are normal methods of filling vacancies in the competitive service. The bill would thus permit vacancies to be filled either by competitive promotion from within Government service or by open competitive examination.

Section 2 expressly preserves the status and tenure of postmasters holding office on the effective date of the statute.

Section 3 would add a new Section 3109 to Title 39, United States Code.

Subsection (a) of the new section, which is patterned after a provision in the Tennessee Valley Authority Act (16 USC 831e), would declare a policy of non-political appointments and would make violators of this policy subject to removal or other disciplinary action.

Subsection (b) of the new Section 3109 would allow political considerations to be taken into account in filling positions, appointments to which are vested in the President with Senate confirmation. Postmaster appointments would not be within this exemption since the first section of the bill vests these appointments in the Postmaster General. The only other positions in the postal establishment filled by Presidential appointments are those of Postmaster General, Deputy Postmaster General, Assistant Postmaster General and General Counsel. Political considerations could also be taken into account in filling noncareer executive positions and positions designated by the Civil Service Commission as positions of a confidential or policy determining character. The former are presently provided for by Section 9.20 of the Civil Service Rules, and the latter are presently designated in the Civil Service Regulations as Schedule C Excepted Positions.

Senator FONG (presiding). Mr. Thomas P. Costin, president, National Association of Postmasters. Will you come forward please, sir.

STATEMENT OF THOMAS P. COSTIN, JR., PRESIDENT, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTMASTERS; ACCOMPANIED BY JOHN P. CARTER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mr. COSTIN. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Thomas P. Costin, Jr., and I am postmaster at Lynn, Mass. I am also president of the National Association of Postmasters of the United States, representing 90 percent of all postmasters on active duty.

With me today is our executive director, John P. Carter, who manages our office here in Washington.

On behalf of our members, I want to thank you for this opportunity to appear before you to give testimony on S. 1583.

Basically, this bill changes section 3311 of title 39 of the United States Code in the method of appointing postmasters in certain size offices. It takes the appointing power from the President, with advice and consent of the Senate, and now reposes it with the Postmaster General.

It would invest the sole appointment authority in the executive branch of the Government whereas under the present method it rests with both the executive and legislative branches.

This is not a new idea. As far back as the 52d Congress, the Honorable Sherman Hoar, of Massachusetts, introduced a bill that all postmasters should be elected. The then First Assistant Postmaster General Clarkson strongly favored this when he said, and I quote:

There is no reason why every postmaster should not be elected by the people whom he is to serve. The post offices have been largely the element of discord in national politics. They lead very often to party divisions and party weakness. They have killed off more good Congressmen and more good Senators than all other causes combined.

This statement was made in the year 1890.

Gentlemen, if the express purpose of S. 1583 is to take politics and political consideration out of postmaster appointments, then this certainly will be accomplished, and perhaps we will be able to save "more good Congressmen and more good Senators."

The CHAIRMAN. We have two in mind that we are particularly interested in.

Mr. COSTIN. We are all aware the Post Office Department has been and is today severely criticized for what is commonly termed "politics." There are those who would have us believe that if the

so-called patronage system were removed from the Post Office Department, all the ills and mismanagement of this great service would be eliminated. This is just not true. This is an oversimplification of the problem.

Let us look at the facts as they stand as of this moment. Of the 32,118 postmasters now on active duty, 6,920 are postmasters at offices of the fourth class who do not supervise any employees and who are now appointed by the Postmaster General. They are from small rural communities and have an average pay of less than \$5,000 per year.

Of the 25,198 postmasters remaining, 12,898 run post offices of the third class and receive an average pay of less than \$7,500 per year.

Of the 12,300 remaining, 7,351 are postmasters at second-class offices and received under \$9,000 per year.

The remaining 4,949 postmasters are in offices of the first class. Of this total, 75 offices generate approximately over 65 percent of the mail volume in the United States and use approximately 65 percent of the total man-hours needed to process over 82 billion pieces of mail each year.

I use these facts and figures to point out that since the vast majority of postmasters, some of whom do not even supervise employees, are involved with such a small percentage of the major problems confronting the mail service today, it can be readily seen that the inefficiency as reported by the news media does not exist because of the present method of appointing postmasters.

For the record, it should be shown that all postmasters since 1938 have passed the appropriate civil service examinations and have received their actual appointment through civil service procedures that have been set up not only for the Post Office Department but for all branches of government.

I want to go on record as saying the postmasters of the United States have done and still continue to do an outstanding job in providing the best mail service to the American people with the present management tools they have to work with.

In addition, they provide necessary leadership in many communities where they are the only Federal Government official.

In the book, "The Story of Our Post Office," by Marshall Cushing, published in 1892, the political patronage system as it applies to the Post Office Department was then referred to as the "referee system," and in describing the workings of this method of appointment, I quote:

It is impossible, of course, for the appointing officer to have personal knowledge of the merits of the various [postmaster] candidates; he must secure advice. The best advice almost always is that of the local leader. He has his own personal interest and his own personal success at heart, as well as that of the Department and the public service.

Hence he may be depended upon almost always. The process of giving advice in the matter of [postmaster] appointments is a privilege and not the right of a referee; for under the constitution, of course, the appointing power is alone responsible for the appointments—except where the confirmation of the Senate in the case of certain offices is required.

But the custom of having referees has been necessary and experienced politicians say that the trouble in making recommendations for office is not so much in the fact that recommendations have to be made, but that sufficient courage, promptness and discretion are not used in recommending. Fights for post offices are allowed to go on and drag along for months and months when they might be settled to much advantage, on the merits of the case, almost offhand.

Mr. COSTIN. I would like to restate a very salient point made in the above quotation. That point is, and again I quote:

That the trouble in making recommendations for office is not so much in the fact that recommendations have to be made, but that sufficient courage, promptness and discretion are not used in recommending.

We feel that the present system of advisers has brought many outstanding employees to the Post Office Department as well as provided an avenue for career employees to receive promotion from within.

Again, for the record I want to state that over the past few years approximately 40 percent of the postmasters appointed have come from within the career postal service.

In my travels across the country as president of the National Association of Postmasters, I have found that it is not the method of appointment that makes an individual an effective public servant, but rather it is the individual who has been selected.

If the purpose of S. 1583 is to bring about a more efficient postal service, we are for it. But we want to point out that this is only the first step. Once a postmaster has been appointed, it is necessary to give him the necessary tools to work with—tools in the way of appropriations, tools in the way of training, tools in the way of facilities and tools in the way of modern management methods.

It is only then that postal managers can carry out more effectively the mission that they have; that is, to move the U.S. mail as efficiently and economically as possible. If this is the intent of the bill, then the postmasters I represent wholeheartedly endorse it.

The CHAIRMAN. The case that you make for us to consider, sir, is an eloquent one, particularly as you reduce the actual operating numbers of postmasters who in their own role have a meaningful part in the processes of post office administration where it affects the number of people that might make a difference, or even the mechanical procedures conceivably could make a difference.

I think that you likewise properly allude to the reason why it is so easy to get 51 Senators to vote for an approach like this, and that is, that we just think somebody else probably ought to have the little headaches.

The case that you represent to us for trying to preserve this kind of responsiveness among the postmasters is well worth this committee weighing very carefully before we agree to this jump.

That is why we are holding these hearings, why we especially appreciate taking the time to share from your experience the implications of the pending proposal, and I want to thank you as a spokesman for the postmasters for making this as cogent as you did and putting it across as articulately as you have.

Senator Fong, do you have any questions you would like to raise?
Senator FONG. Yes.

Mr. Costin, you said if this bill had the intent of moving the U.S. mail as efficiently as possible, then you who represent the postmasters endorse it; is that correct?

Mr. COSTIN. Yes, Senator; that is correct.

Senator FONG. Now, actually, you are for the bill? Is that right?

Mr. COSTIN. Senator, we are saying this: it is not the method of appointment of a postmaster that really counts in the operation of an office. It is the individual who is selected under either method

and what we are saying, also, it is not enough just to put a man in as postmaster and say: "You be the best postmaster your community has ever had."

If that man does not have the manpower, the facility, if he does not have the tools that he needs, then he can't be the best postmaster, so what I am saying is that, speaking for postmasters, we are for any system that will give us the things that we need in order to carry out the mission of the Department as set forth by the Congress.

Senator FONG. What you are saying is you do hope that the Congress will give you all the tools to carry on a postal system, and the selection of the postmaster is just incidental to that?

Mr. COSTIN. No, sir; Senator Fong. I am saying whatever method is used, as long as the best individual is selected, this is the beginning process, but it cannot end here. If the intent of the bill is merely to take politics out of the postal service, it doesn't necessarily mean that you are going to come up with a more efficient operation. But if this is the beginning of giving the Post Office Department the tools it needs, including good postmasters such as we have, the money to run their offices and the facilities, then we will have an efficient postal operation.

Senator FONG. Thank you, Mr. Costin.

The CHAIRMAN. Does that mean, Mr. Costin, by implication that we may be going at this backward? That we ought to get a look at the restructuring of the postal system before we pay this much attention to how we select the postmasters?

Mr. COSTIN. Mr. Chairman, what I would say is this: I would say that you can start from either end. If you start with this end, what I hope is that it is not the end of the line. I hope that regardless of what end you start at it is the beginning. If you start with reorganization and end up with a bill such as we have before us today, I think we will come out with the very same ending, a more efficient postal service. We can start with S. 1583. But I am trying to emphasize we cannot stop here.

This is only one part of a big mosaic, and I think this is a good beginning, if you continue on with the reorganization of the postal service and this is but part of it, then we are definitely for it.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me ask you a followup question on that: If the Congress in its wisdom were to decide to fund the post office operations honestly and forthrightly, and in a way that would adequately pay the professional employees, those involved in moving the mail, for the kind of work that they do, if the Congress then would proceed to modernize the postal structure, get with it and not just dribble along in fits and starts but really restructure the postal service in the wisest way possible—if those two steps were taken, is it conceivable that the removal of the postmasters from politics would be less relevant, less meaningful?

Mr. COSTIN. Mr. Chairman, I would say that would be true.

The CHAIRMAN. In other words, it would be more important that we make these other moves. So to turn it around the other way, if we started only with the postmasters and succeeded in getting postmasters out of politics and then lose our great momentum, this will have been a feeble move indeed if we go no further than that.

Mr. COSTIN. Mr. Chairman, this is what the postmasters think.

The CHAIRMAN. This is the burden of your message?

Mr. COSTIN. Yes, sir, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Your hope would be that we do it all?

Mr. COSTIN. Yes, sir, Mr. Chairman, it is the only way.

The CHAIRMAN. But if we had to choose among the efforts, it would be worse if we should tamper with the postmasters and stop them if we started at the bottom end and got the incomes up, got the professional status up, got the restructuring within the post office up into the 20th century, that it would be less harmful at that stage to do nothing about the postmasters.

Mr. COSTIN. Mr. Chairman, I think the situation today is that something has to be done, and whatever little bit is done has to be a step in the right direction. What has happened in the past, Mr. Chairman, is that great strides have been made but we have only gone up one step of the ladder and as the building keeps going up, we just don't keep in step with it.

As a result we find ourselves ever so often so far behind that we have to jump three or four steps to try to catch up and we never do.

The CHAIRMAN. We are also playing catchup, whether it is the salaries or the restructuring. The present administration has advised us that we will receive some proposals, significant proposals for restructuring roughly by the end of the month.

And this committee intends to hold full hearings on those, too. So we don't intend to stop at this point. We can't predict what the will of Congress will be on this. But I think you make an excellent point that we should not nibble at one place and nibble at another and nibble at a third without coming to grips with the overall problem.

I have no other questions. I want to thank you for your contribution.

Mr. COSTIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

(The NAPUS chapter resolution follows:)

TELL FULL STORY, CHAPTER RESOLUTION ASKS

In a resolution passed unanimously by the membership present at the Chapter meeting held on March 12th in Bordentown, N.J., the N.J. Chapter of NAPUS called upon the National Organization to take action on a nationwide scale, through the medium of the press to tell the complete story of postmaster qualification, selections and fulfillment of duties after appointment.

Pointing out in the resolution that persons outside the postal service being considered for the position of postmaster must compete in an open competitive Civil Service Examination, and have their qualifications thoroughly investigated by the Civil Service Commission and the Inspection Service of the Department; the resolution further went on to state that career employees approximating 40% of the appointments, must also qualify on a non-competitive Civil Service Exam, and be thoroughly investigated.

The resolution pointed out that a great deal of criticism has been presented concerning the selection of postmasters, but little if anything has been heard about how the overwhelming majority fulfill their office after appointment.

Copies of the resolution were sent to President Thomas Costin, Jr., and to all Chapter Presidents.

The resolution as passed in its entirety follows:

RESOLUTION

Whereas, persons outside the postal service being considered for the position of postmaster must compete in an open competitive Civil Service exam, and have their qualifications thoroughly investigated by the Civil Service Commission and postal inspectors; and

Whereas, career employees promoted to postmaster positions, approximately 40% of appointments, also must qualify on a non-competitive Civil Service exam and have their qualifications thoroughly investigated; and

Whereas, an abundance of criticism has been presented on methods of selecting postmasters, but little has ever been heard about how the overwhelming majority fulfill their office after appointment; and

Whereas, the postmaster's position as it is being aired editorially in news media across the nation is giving the public the impression that each individual postmaster is solely responsible for all alleged shortcomings of the Post Office Department;

Therefore be it resolved, that the members of the New Jersey Chapter of the National Association of Postmasters meeting in Willingboro, New Jersey this twelfth day of March, 1969, hereby recommend and request that the National officers of the Association take action, on a nationwide scale, through a syndicated columnist or press release to tell the complete story of postmasters, qualifications, selections and fulfillment of duties after appointment;

Be it further resolved, that copies of this resolution be sent to President Thomas Costin, and to all chapter presidents.

Howard F. Haas, Chairman
Resolution Committee

George W. Schuyler, President
New Jersey Chapter, National
Association of Postmasters

The CHAIRMAN. The next witness is Mr. Herbert F. Alfrey, president of the National Rural Letter Carriers Association.

We welcome you, gentlemen, and, Mr. Alfrey, you may proceed.

STATEMENT OF HERBERT F. ALFREY, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL RURAL LETTER CARRIERS' ASSOCIATION; ACCOMPANIED BY CLAUDE E. OLMSTEAD, VICE PRESIDENT; LESTER F. MILLER, SECRETARY; AND JOHN W. EMEIGH, DIRECTOR OF HEALTH INSURANCE FOR NRLCA

Mr. ALFREY. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Herbert F. Alfrey, I serve as president of the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, an organization representing approximately 62,000 regular, substitute, and retired rural carriers.

I am accompanied this morning by Claude E. Olmstead, vice president; Lester F. Miller, secretary; and John W. Emeigh, past national secretary for 15 years who now is serving as director of health insurance for our organization.

Mr. Chairman, may I first express our appreciation for the opportunity to appear before this committee and comment upon S. 1583, the bill under consideration which would remove all political consideration in connection with appointments and promotions in the Post Office Department except for those officers whose appointment is vested in the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate; also appointments and promotions to those positions designated by the Civil Service Commission as a position of a confidential or policy-determining character or a noncareer executive assignment.

At the outset we would like to endorse the declared purpose of this bill which would be to provide that appointments and promotions be made on the basis of merit and fitness. We have always subscribed to such a policy.

Specifically, we would like to comment upon the language of the bill which would add a new Section 3109: Nonpolitical Appointments and Promotions, to chapter 41 of title 39, United States Code. This new section provides that—

In the selection, appointment, and promotion of employees of the Department, no political test or qualification shall be permitted or given consideration, and all such personnel actions shall be taken on the basis of merit and fitness.

Any officer or employee of the Department who violates this section shall be removed from office or otherwise disciplined in accordance with procedures for disciplinary action established pursuant to law.

The appointment of rural letter carriers, since the establishment of the rural service in 1896, has been the prerogative of the Postmaster General. No law has ever prescribed any political clearance, endorsement, or qualification.

Throughout the years, however, before making an appointment to the position of rural carrier from the top three persons on a roster of eligibles furnished by the Civil Service Commission or approving an application for transfer from a career employee, each Postmaster General has sought the advice of a responsible elective official.

This procedure has been known as the "adviser system." Under these procedures, applicants for appointment to a rural carrier position, who were eligible either on the basis of a civil service examination and/or as a career employee, were referred to the political adviser of the party in power.

Generally, the adviser was the Congressman from the district in which the vacancy existed or a Senator in those cases where the Congressman was not of the party in power.

The procedure did involve a type of political recommendation; however, it did not encompass the evils which have been attributed to it. The privilege of recommendation extended to the political adviser was greatly restricted in naming one of the top three eligibles in those cases where the vacancy was being filled by civil service examination.

First his recommendation had to be from one of the top three eligibles certified by the Civil Service Commission. Even among these top three any recommendation had to comply with the provisions of the Veterans' Preference Act. This prevented the recommending of a non-veteran if an eligible veteran was among the top three.

Thus the so-called political aspect of the adviser system was drawn out of all proportion. The public utterances and releases relative to "removing politics from the post office," the adviser system used for recommending rural carriers was grossly and unfairly referred to as a method whereby "political hacks" or "cronies of politicians" were selected as some type of payoff or political friendship award.

It has been strange to us that those persons who made these accusations, and many of them knew the system of appointment, never noted the fact that all persons seeking appointment as a rural carrier had to qualify and establish eligibility either by (1) taking a regularly scheduled civil service examination for the route vacancy and qualifying strictly on the basis of that examination grade and/or (2) qualify by virtue of serving in a career position secured through regular civil service examination procedures which established eligibility to apply for reassignment or transfer to the rural route vacancy.

Despite damaging publicity no official, to our knowledge, ever made any effort, certainly issued no statements, to correct the damaging and erroneous impression given to the public which indicated that rural carriers were purely political appointees and not selections from among persons who had qualified and established eligibility through regular Civil Service Commission examination procedures.

This gross misconception resulted in demoralizing editorials being published in some of the most respected news journals of this Nation.

Such an editorial appeared in the Wall Street Journal in an editorial entitled "Politics and the Post Office" issue of February 12, 1969.

One statement in that editorial was—

It's not surprising that many * * * rural mail carriers have contributed to the steady deterioration of the nation's postal service.

This statement was based on the misunderstanding that persons irrespective of merit and fitness were selected on a purely political basis to serve as rural carriers.

This association has objected to the gross unfairness of these charges and, in our opinion, it is most unfortunate that a better understanding of the system was not made possible by official clarification of just how it did operate.

We deeply resented the implication that rural carriers were contributing to a deterioration of our postal service. This is an unwarranted and most unfair criticism of the 31,000 men and women who serve as rural letter carriers.

Mr. Chairman, as president of the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, the organization which represents the rural letter carriers of our Nation, my comments relative to the caliber of the service being rendered could be deemed prejudiced. We feel, however, that our patrons, and those who know anything about rural delivery, would hold that any comparison of the rural carrier work force and the job they perform with any other group of employees and the job they perform in serving the public would rate the corps of men and women serving as rural carriers quite favorably.

We are also quite proud of the unusual and remarkable record of efficiency and productivity of this branch of the Post Office Department. This record is important because it completely dispels the disparaging inference that the record of performance is, at best substandard.

The rural carrier is a traveling post office. He delivers and collects all classes of mail, provides all financial services available at any post office; and he takes this service to the rural mailbox of every family, business, school and other patrons who live along the line of travel.

The number of rural routes grew rapidly in the early part of this century. In 1932 there were 41,602 rural routes which traveled 1,358,000 miles daily, 6 days a week, to serve the 25 million people then residing on rural routes.

The growth in travel and patrons served has been tremendous since that time. Today, 31,000 rural letter carriers travel 1,966,000 miles daily—more than 80 times around the world each day—to serve 38 million patrons.

It is an efficient service which can boast of a productivity record which is certainly worthy of note. Since 1932, rural delivery routes serve an additional 608,000 miles each day, serve 13 million more people, provide service to thousands of new businesses and institutions, have coped with the constantly increasing mail volume and are doing the job with almost 11,000 fewer employees.

These statistics are amazing in that they highlight the tremendous growth of this valuable service which is now serving one-fifth of the population of the United States each day, 6 days every week.

When you speak of good service, you must also look at the cost of providing this service. What is the record of the rural delivery service

in this respect? In 1932, the complete costs of the postal service were \$794 million and rural delivery required 13.4 percent of that postal expenditure.

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1968, the total costs of the postal service were more than \$6½ billion and the rural delivery costs of \$372 million represented only approximately 5.5 percent of the total postal expenditure.

What a remarkable record in these days when the costs of all Government services are rising rapidly. Rural delivery is serving 13 million more people, traveling 600,000 more miles daily, doing it with 11,000 less employees and on a related comparison cost basis—cost of rural delivery as compared to total postal costs—the price tag for making this service available to the public has decreased. When only 5.5 percent of our total postal budget is being required to render this great service to rural and suburban America, we believe it demonstrates that it is a bargain service to the public.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I wanted to make these comments relative to our service in order to note that the adviser system for the selection of rural carriers, which was in effect for more than 70 years, resulted in building and maintaining a work force that renders an excellent service to the citizens of this Nation and contributes greatly to building the prestige of our postal service through an efficient, friendly, and dedicated work attitude.

Because the facts so strongly substantiate this, it seems obvious that the adviser system worked very well. We subscribe to selecting any person and/or promoting personnel on the basis of merit and fitness. We believe rural carrier selections over the years have been from among qualified persons.

We are not yet convinced that the new selection procedures for rural carriers recently instituted by the Postmaster General will be an improvement. There is one aspect of the new selection procedures which we strongly oppose and which has created a most serious injustice.

Mr. Chairman, at this point I would like to have inserted in the record the new selection procedures taken from the recent Postal Bulletin.

The CHAIRMAN. It will be inserted in the record at this point.

(The information referred to follows:)

[From the Postal Bulletin]

SELECTION OF REGULAR RURAL CARRIERS

All Postal Installations

I. GENERAL

The rural route remaining vacant after all rural carriers in the office have had an opportunity to be reassigned in accordance with 749.53, Postal Manual is intended to be filled by appointment of the senior qualified career employee who applies in the office having the vacant route. If there is no qualified applicant, the area of consideration will be extended in the order given below.

II. AREA OF CONSIDERATION

A. Rural carriers serving routes within the county, parish or like State government subdivision in which the office with the vacancy is located.

B. Career employees working in any post office within the county, parish or like State government subdivision in which the vacancy is located.

C. Rural carriers serving routes from any post office in the State having a ZIP Code with the same first 3 digits as those of the office with the vacancy.

D. Career employees working in any post office in the state having a ZIP Code with the same first 3 digits as those of the office with the vacancy.

E. If there are no qualified applicants in D above, the Regional Director will request the USCSC to announce an open competitive examination for the position.

III. POSTING

Each vacancy to be filled shall be posted for 10 days on all official bulletin boards in the office having the vacancy and, concurrently or separately, based on the estimated number of rural carriers eligible to bid, in each office in the area of consideration being circularized at that time.

If only one notice is posted, it shall clearly state that rural carriers will be considered first, then other applicants in each of the areas of consideration. The notice shall give the number of the route, length, heavy duty compensation if any, and physical and other requirements including possession of a valid State driver's license and the securing of SF 46 before appointment. The notice should state to whom the application is to be sent and the date by which it must be received.

IV. METHOD OF SELECTION

A. Action of Postmaster: The postmaster will review, for each area of consideration used, a list of no more than five senior qualified applicants who apply and will select the senior qualified. For any senior applicant who is not selected, the postmaster will submit a report to the local review board explaining the reasons for his selection and the reasons for not selecting applicants senior to his choice.

If the postmaster is himself an applicant and is one of the senior five, the Regional Director will review the file, make the selection, and file the report instead of the postmaster.

B. Action by Regional Director: The Regional Director will post the vacancy in neighboring post offices each time the area of consideration is extended and provide the postmaster of the office having the vacancy with a list of the five senior qualified applicants for his consideration.

C. Action by the Local Review Board: The local review board consisting of two members from the Inspection Service and one appointed by the USCSC will examine each rural carrier appointment reported to it to determine that qualifications and total career service, if applicable, are the sole basis for selection. Where a report is submitted, the action cannot be effected until the proposed appointment is reviewed by the board.

V. SENIORITY

For purposes of selection of rural carriers, seniority will be length of total career postal service (See 749.52 P.M.). *Bureau of Personnel, 4-24-1969.*

Mr. ALFREY. Under the new procedures, approximately 25,000 dedicated, loyal substitute rural letter carriers are denied the opportunity of ever securing a rural carrier appointment. This is a crushing blow to the morale of this group. Many persons may not realize that this large group of employees are noncareer appointees. They hold no civil service status. They are paid only a daily rate for each day they are employed.

They do not benefit by coverage under civil service retirement. They are denied the privilege of participating in the Federal group life insurance program and in the Federal employees health insurance program. Yet they stand ready to report for duty on any occasion when the regular rural carrier is on leave or because of any emergency reason he is unable to serve his route.

The dedication of this group of employees is remarkable. This can be very easily documented by the fact that it is rare indeed when any of the Nation's 31,000 rural routes are not given service due to the absence of the regular carrier.

We could further burden this record with documented evidence of the dedication and outstanding performance of this large group of substitute rural carriers, many of whom have served long years in

this position. We do not believe, however, that anyone would question the fact that they do render an unusual, as well as a very valuable service to the Post Office Department.

Under the previous adviser system for selection and appointment, these substitutes had no guarantee or assurance that they would secure appointment. They did, however, have the opportunity to compete with all others when civil service examinations were scheduled to fill a vacancy.

Approximately 10 percent of all vacancies filled by examination were filled by the ultimate appointment of a substitute rural letter carrier who took the examination, qualified by his score on that written examination and was appointed under regular civil service procedures.

The new Department procedures, for all practical purposes, completely eliminates all future civil service examinations to fill rural carrier positions. This, unquestionably, is a serious blow to the morale of our rural carrier substitutes.

In our opinion, it will make recruitment and retention of substitutes most difficult. And, despite claims to the contrary, we believe it will adversely affect rural service.

We also seriously question the new appointment procedure because it will in some 9,000 to 10,000 small communities of this Nation deny the citizens of that community the privilege of ever competing for appointment as rural carriers.

In many of these communities the only Federal positions are in the local post office. Many of the rural vacancies in these communities will not be filled by the reassignment of a local career postal employee which is one method of filling the position under the Department's new procedures.

They will be filled by reassignment of a career employee from a nearby town or city.

Mr. Chairman, we believe we have an in-depth understanding of the feelings of local citizens when it comes to filling the only Federal positions in that area by moving in an "outsider." It may be possible to justify this on the basis of personnel practices as they may be followed in industry but we predict that the feeling of local citizens in these communities when they learn that local persons will never have an opportunity to compete through regular Civil Service examination for appointment to rural carrier positions in the local post office, will create a far more serious problem than the officials of the Post Office Department seem to believe.

We predict further, Mr. Chairman and members of this committee, that irrespective of the intent of the new selection procedures this will give rise to a local citizen problem which, in our opinion, is going to create a far more sinister political problem than was ever dreamed of under the adviser system of recommending rural carrier appointments.

When these new selection procedures were being formulated, we requested and were given the opportunity to discuss the matter with departmental officials.

We strongly recommended that the new selection procedures not deny local citizens the opportunity to compete for these positions when local postal employees did not desire reassignment.

As we noted above, we not only believe it unfair to the local community but we also see other problems arising when persons outside

that community move in and assume one of the few Federal positions existing in that community.

We cannot, in good conscience, fail to note these most unfair aspects of the new selection procedures which makes it impossible for our rural carrier substitutes and for all other local citizens to ever compete for appointment to the position of rural carrier.

There is still another damaging aspect of this new procedure which we feel quite certain will adversely affect the morale of the rural carrier craft of employees and very likely affect the productivity record of this craft.

It is evidently not known to many persons that the turnover rate in the rural carrier craft is one of the highest rate of turnovers in any craft of employees. Approximately 50 percent of all rural carrier positions are filled by new personnel, either by appointment or transfer, each ten years.

This is due to the fact that approximately 50 percent to 60 percent of all rural carrier vacancies are filled by reassignment or transfer of career employees into the vacant position.

These persons came from the clerk and carrier crafts as well as many other Federal career positions. These carrier employees normally have completed 15 to 20 years of Federal service before being reassigned to the rural position and thus their career as a rural carrier is considerably less than normal career periods of service by employees in other crafts.

Under the new appointment procedures now in effect, only senior employees can be moved into rural carrier vacancies.

"Senior" means total years of postal service, and thus all rural carrier vacancies in the future are going to be filled by employees who have practically completed a normal working career in the postal service.

Although the system is new and no statistics can yet be presented, we would predict that the average age of persons moving into the rural delivery service will now be 55 or higher.

This will in a very short period of years result in a work force that will be far above the average age of employees in any other craft. It will also drastically increase the turnover rate to the point that there will be a 75-percent to 90-percent turnover every 8 to 10 years.

We certainly raise no objection to any qualified person, regardless of age, being reassigned to the position of rural carrier. The present selection procedures issued April 24, 1969, will, however, result in only older employees—for the most part those approaching retirement—being reassigned.

We do foresee some problems arising because of this policy. There is no question but that the difference in work requirements will create certain physical problems for some of these older employees, and from a service standpoint, it is at best questionable that the efficiency record, and perhaps more importantly the remarkable safety record established by rural carriers, can be maintained.

This is not a criticism on any individual but considering that the entire work force will be older individuals, and recognizing the difficulties encountered on thousands of routes because of mud, snow, and other adverse road conditions and hazards it just seems logical that, collectively, a completely older group of employees will not be able

to perform as efficiently or maintain the same level of safe driving practice which has been built up over the years.

Admittedly, this—if it proves to be a problem as we predict—is a matter that the administrators of the Post Office Department will need to cope with. We do believe, however, that it is of sufficient importance that it is appropriate to include it in this testimony.

In summary, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, S. 1583 will by law effect a “no politics policy” which is the intent of the new selection procedures for rural carriers recently promulgated by the Post Office Department.

May we repeat that we subscribe to any policy which will improve selection, appointment, and promotion procedures based on merit and fitness.

Selection on the basis of “senior qualified,” as enunciated by the Post Office Department’s new selection procedures for rural carriers does in many respects meet the test of “merit and fitness.”

This bill, if enacted, will establish by law what has presently been effected by action of the executive branch—the Postmaster General.

We have included in this testimony some background data and opinions which we feel are important in permitting critical comparative analysis of the old adviser system and the new selection procedures.

We happen to believe that the adviser system worked well. It resulted in an elected official submitting a recommendation which we have every reason to believe was most generally reflecting local community opinion relative to fitness.

We repeat again, the adviser system was extremely limited in any recommendation from established eligibility list. On the other hand, we have questioned that the new selection procedures are the best that could be devised.

The injustice dealt the 25,000 dedicated rural letter carrier substitutes of this Nation should be corrected.

Mr. Chairman, we would like to suggest an amendment to S. 1583 which would correct this grossly unfair action against these substitutes and provide an opportunity for them to qualify for consideration under selection procedures to fill local rural vacancies.

Our suggestion is that this bill be amended to provide that any rural route vacancies remaining unfilled after reassignment rights have been exercised by the regular rural carrier work force, and after reassignment procedures applicable to other local employees have been complied with, be made available to rural letter carrier substitutes of record who have served at least 3 years in the position at that office.

This could be effected by authorizing noncompetitive examinations for rural carrier substitutes of record in post offices where rural vacancies exist after reassignment privileges established by law and regulation applicable to local employees, have been complied with.

With this or similar legislative action the present selection procedures for rural carriers would be amended to place these substitutes in an area of eligibility for regular appointment as vacancies occur at the local postal installation in which they are employed.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, we feel an amendment such as we have proposed would correct this present injustice. We do not know that this is the best procedure but the important thing is

that some legislative action must be taken to place these employees in an area of eligibility if the Federal Government—specifically the Post Office Department—expects any reasonable individual to believe that their personnel policies are truly enlightened and fair to the work force.

Mr. Chairman, may I again express our appreciation for this opportunity to appear before this committee and touch upon the provisions of the bill as they are presently related to action already taken by the executive branch of the Government.

Senator FONG (presiding). Thank you, Mr. Alfrey.

Mr. Alfrey, you feel that this bill if enacted will deny substitute carriers the right to take an examination; is that correct?

Mr. ALFREY. Well, the bill as written now would not deny that prerogative, but the new procedures as formulated by the Department will.

Senator FONG. By new procedures the postmaster has the right now to initiate these procedures; is that correct?

Mr. ALFREY. That is right.

Senator FONG. And you feel something should be written in the law so that your substitute carriers should be taken care of?

Mr. ALFREY. We feel that is the only method where they will be given recognition.

Senator FONG. And if we don't do anything, the procedures that are outlined by the Postmaster General which had been in effect will still continue to be in effect?

Mr. ALFREY. Right.

Senator FONG. And this will deny the 25,000 substitute rural carriers the right to take an examination?

Mr. ALFREY. They will never have an opportunity to compete for that position under present procedures.

Senator FONG. Thank you, very much. Thank you for coming.

Our next witness is Mr. Dan Jaspán, legislative representative, National Association of Postal Supervisors.

Mr. JASPAN, we welcome you before the committee and you may proceed with your statement.

**STATEMENT OF DAN JASPAN, LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVE,
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTAL SUPERVISORS**

Mr. JASPAN. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, my name is Daniel Jaspán, I am the legislative representative of the National Association of Postal Supervisors, composed of more than 33,000 postal supervisors, with members in all 50 States and in Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

Our members are employed in post offices, branches, stations, motor vehicle facilities, maintenance units, airmail facilities, and mobile units.

We are grateful to Senators Fong, Bellmon, Boggs, Fannin, and Stevens for cosponsoring S. 1583 and to you, Mr. Chairman, both for cosponsoring the bill and scheduling early hearings on this extremely important legislation.

One of the prime objectives of our Association over the years has been to eliminate political consideration not only from postmaster appointments but from any promotions, appointments, assignments

or any other personnel action. We have always believed, and still believe, that the postal service can be improved if such personnel actions are taken on the basis of "merit and fitness" alone as provided in this bill.

We have never made the statement that politics is a horrid word, or that political appointees are necessarily incapable of performing their duties.

We have many examples of outstanding political appointees in the postmaster ranks. We do maintain, however, that in the long run the postal service will be improved if promotions to the position of postmaster are made from the ranks.

We also believe that supervisory experience in the postal field service is an important requisite for the position of postmaster.

The Post Office Department, under several recent administrations, has pointed with pride to the fact that approximately 40 percent of the postmasters appointed in recent years have come from the ranks.

However, no matter how outstanding these or any other postal employees may have been, they could not have received the appointment without the necessary political endorsement. We are certain that in most of these offices there were people at least as well qualified or possibly better qualified but they were unable to receive the required endorsement.

We all know that, in many instances, members of the local political committees decided that they alone were qualified for the position of postmaster since the main qualification was the political endorsement. We are certain that many Members of Congress have regretted giving their endorsement to some individuals since they alienated many people and often lost the support and friendship of the one who received the nod.

We have heard of many examples where the person appointed as postmaster not only had no basic qualifications for the position, but took no interest in the job. They were fortunate to have assistant postmasters or other supervisors who were capable of running the office and were willing to do so.

Under the present system, selections have been made of people who were not originally qualified but they were given an "acting" appointment for a period long enough for them to meet the qualifications. In some post offices, this has been for a period of years.

We do have a suggested amendment to S. 1583 and feel that you will agree with us that this is necessary under present conditions.

Our proposal is for the residence requirements to be changed so that employees who work in a post office where there is a vacancy for the position of postmaster have residence requirements waived if they do not live within the delivery zone.

With the trend to suburban living, many employees do not live within the delivery limits of their offices. Since political endorsements were necessary for promotion to postmaster, they could see no reason for remaining within the delivery limits since they could never aspire to that position.

The passage of H.R. 1583 would change this situation by giving them the opportunity of becoming postmaster, but they would be denied this promotion because they bought homes outside of the city limits since they thought they could never become postmaster.

In our opinion, the residence requirement should be waived only in the cases of those employees who are employed in the office where the vacancy occurs.

As mentioned above, we are strongly of the opinion that a postmaster should have supervisory experience prior to this appointment. In most cases, the assistant postmaster is the most qualified person in the office.

We do not believe that the postmaster should be selected from a position that is more than three levels below the level of the postmaster where there is a one-level difference between the postmaster and assistant postmaster, or that he should be more than four levels below the postmaster where there is a two-level difference between the postmaster and assistant postmaster.

This is in line with the present order of consideration proposed by the Post Office Department. We are sure that, if the residence requirements are waived, as suggested above, an excellent postmaster can be selected from within the office.

The removal of political endorsement from postmaster appointments should make it easier to eliminate political consideration from all appointments under the postmaster since he will not have any obligations to a sponsor.

Although no one can prove that politics has been used in promotions, there seems to be little doubt that in many, if not most, of the larger offices political backing was the most important factor in promotions.

Many well-qualified employees have been bypassed for promotions to supervisory positions because they did not know the right people. The enactment and enforcement of the provisions of S. 1583 would give an opportunity to employees who are now denied such opportunity.

In the interest of a better and more efficient postal service, we strongly favor the enactment of S. 1583 as quickly as possible and with the amendment to waive the residence requirement in cases where the employee of that office who aspires to be postmaster does not live within the delivery zone.

We strongly suggest an "area of consideration" identical with the present regulations of the Post Office Department as outlined above.

Again, we thank the chairman and other members of the committee for their interest in improving not only the postal service but the morale which has suffered in many offices due to political interference.

We appreciate the opportunity of expressing our views.

Senator FONG. Thank you, Mr. Jaspan, for a fine statement.

Our next witness is Mr. James H. Rademacher, president, National Association of Letter Carriers.

Mr. Rademacher, we welcome you before the committee.

STATEMENT OF JAMES H. RADEMACHER, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS; ACCOMPANIED BY J. STANLEY LEWIS AND GLENN M. HODGES

Mr. RADEMACHER. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, for the record, my name is James H. Rademacher, I am president of the National Association of Letter Carriers, with headquarters at 100 Indiana Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. We have more than 210,000 members located in all 50 of our States and in all our possessions.

We appreciate the opportunity of discussing with you our ideas on S. 1583. It is certainly a bill noble in purpose, and Senator Fong, Senator Belmon, Senator Boggs, Senator Fannin, Senator Stevens, and you, Mr. Chairman, should be highly commended for making such a bold move in an attempt to improve the postal service.

However, we have certain misgivings about this legislation which we would like to share with you.

There is a strong tendency at this time to remove the Postal Establishment entirely from the supervision and control of the Congress—and, in doing so, to remove it from the supervision and control of the American people.

We see this tendency in the proposal to abolish the Post Office Department and supplant it with a Government-owned corporation. The present bill would, in our opinion, be another step toward achieving this undesirable end.

We feel that every effort should be made to resist the trend. The post service—the essential system of communications in a democracy such as ours—is far too important to the social, economic, and political welfare of the people ever to be removed from the control of the people through their elected representatives in Congress.

Nobody in his right mind would claim that the present system of selecting postmasters is perfect. The present system, however, is far worse in theory than it is in practice.

There are many postmasters in this country whom we consider to be incompetent, or worse. But, in my opinion, there is a surprisingly large number of good, able, and dedicated postmasters who are a credit to the service.

We feel there has been an unfair attack in recent months upon the quality of the Nation's postmasters. We sincerely doubt that the elaborate system of choosing postmasters suggested by Postmaster General Blount would produce a better breed of postal executives.

In the April issue of *Postal Life*—the official organ of the Post Office Department—there is a lengthy story on the Postmaster General's plans for appointing postmasters and for making other promotions within the establishment—once he is given that power.

He envisages three "independent" boards to handle these chores.

I submit, Mr. Chairman, that there is not—and cannot be—in Government any such thing as an "independent" board.

Postmasters for the largest 400 offices would be selected by something called the national management selection board, which will consist of two Assistant Postmasters General, the Executive Director of the Civil Service Commission, a person appointed by the dean of a nationally known school of business administration, and a person named by the American Arbitration Association.

There is no suggestion that anyone on that Board should come from the postal unions. Labor would not be represented in the deliberations which would determine who the postmasters will be.

I might also point out that the administration in power will control three of the five votes on the board. This does not indicate that politics will be forgotten in the process, and it does not give promise to any kind of "independence" either.

It seems most unlikely that the two Assistant Postmasters General and the Executive Director of the Civil Service Commission would oppose or ignore the political desires of the President or of his Postmaster General.

We are pleased that the new instructions do provide for the consideration of letter carriers and other postal workers where the appointments of postmasters in levels 6 through 9 are being considered.

This would affect very few offices where letter carriers are employed but it still is a morale builder to know that at least somewhere a rank-and-file worker can be considered for the top job.

I might underscore our feeling in this regard, which is that all of the talent in the postal service is not confined to the ranks of supervisors. There are many skilled, capable rank-and-file workers who would make good postmasters, if for no other reason than the fact that they are able to get along with people.

In any case, Mr. Chairman—if the Congress does decide to change the manner of selecting postmasters—we hope and pray that the necessity of confirmation by the Senate is not abolished, too. We want you to retain—at the very least—the right of veto over the appointments the Postmaster General may make, until such time as there is evidence that the policies enunciated by the Postmaster General are truly working.

We are not satisfied that the policies will be followed, since to date there has been a total ignoring of the 700,000 postal workers in appointments. We feel there has been ample time to give consideration to the great talents within the postal establishment and that it should not be necessary to seek recruits from other agencies of government and big business.

A postmaster, to be a success, must have a talent for human relations. He must know how to get along with his patrons. He must be dedicated to the job of giving his patrons the best possible service. He must be able to get along with his employees. He must be dedicated also to the job of creating and maintaining high morale which, in turn, produces superior service.

Politicians—and I use the word in its most complimentary sense—understand human nature. They should—or else they are in the wrong line of business. And, in choosing executives with a talent for human relations, I would far prefer the judgment of politicians than I would the relatively bloodless and antiseptic processes which the Postmaster General proposes.

It is also our opinion, Mr. Chairman, that this legislation puts too much power in the hands of the Postmaster General.

It is claimed that, by making the Postmaster General the sole appointing officer for postmasters and rural letter carriers, you would be taking politics out of the post office. With all due respect, we cannot see how this can be true.

The Postmaster General is himself a politically appointed official and, in a very imperfect world, his appointments must necessarily have, at least, a touch of politics about them.

Under the proposed system, Mr. Chairman, a ruthless and cynical Postmaster General could be the most powerful dispenser of patronage

in the Nation. He could become a political "boss" of colossal proportions.

I don't say that the present Postmaster General would have any inclinations along these lines. But, who knows who will succeed to this high office in the years to come? Surely it would be unwise to hand to the Postmasters General of the future such an enormously negotiable blank check.

We must admit, also, that we are not reassured by the type of appointments the Postmaster General has been making in the field service.

Mr. Blount has shown no discernible predilection to choose executives from the career service. We strongly disapprove his action in placing young men—who have served a short apprenticeship in the Post Office Department—as acting postmasters in certain cities.

It is quite a blow to the morale of postal employees in a community to have a new "boss" sent in from Washington, D.C.—particularly when the young man so chosen has had only the most theoretical experience in postal matters.

We were also not reassured, Mr. Chairman, when the Postmaster General came to the conclusion that he could not find anyone in the entire Postal Inspection Service worthy of being its Chief and felt compelled to reach out to the Central Intelligence Agency for his candidate.

These incidents have made us doubt whether—once given the sole appointive authority over postmasters—he would be as interested in making selections from the career service as he now indicates. There seems to be an alarming tendency to downgrade and underrate everyone presently in the career service.

The postmaster is the living embodiment of the Federal Government in his community. It is very important that he remain so. I am certain the American people do not want him to be superseded by a faceless executive, an anonymous nonentity—no matter how efficient that nonentity may be.

The American people could not care less who is head of their local telephone company—or who is their regional director for American Can or Union Carbide—but they do care, very much, who their postmaster is.

They look to him for leadership in community affairs. They feel that, as Government more and more becomes an impersonal monster, the postmaster is just about the last remaining touch of humanity the Government has to offer its citizens. They don't want to lose him.

There seems to be considerable thinking at the corner of 12th and Pennsylvania Avenue, however, that this is an anachronism. The tendency seems to be that the postmaster is an unnecessary ornament on the postal machinery. We hear alarming reports that—given the power—the administration will transfer the direction of local post offices to carefully selected potentates in the sectional centers, thus doing away entirely with the position of postmaster.

As employees and as citizens, we oppose this entirely. We do not want our post offices run by remote control by some executive in a distant postal factory—by somebody who is insensitive to local con-

ditions and who is virtually removed from access by the local patrons and the local employees.

We would rather work with the postmasters as we know them—the good, the bad and the indifferent—than to have to operate in the coldly impersonal atmosphere this system would create.

We also hear, Mr. Chairman, that the administration wants the power to transfer postmasters and top supervisors at will from community to community. If a man is doing a good job in a smaller post office, he will be promoted (whether he wants it or not) to a larger office. If a man is not cutting the mustard in a larger office, he can be transferred to a lesser office more compatible with his talents.

The effect of this, too, would be to depersonalize the office, to remove the human touch from postal operations. We do not want this kind of depersonalization to take place. And, while we have no intention of speaking for postmasters, I might say that I have not as yet come across a single postmaster who approves of this proposal.

Indeed, most postmasters with whom I have discussed the idea have said, flatly, they would resign rather than be shuttled around outside their own community.

The Post Office, Mr. Chairman, is the most human of all the agencies of Government. It touches—in some way—every single man, woman, and child in the Nation every working day of the year. It has serious faults—we know that. It is sometimes exasperating—it is often less than efficient. Its efficiency can and must be improved—but the improvement must not be achieved at the expense of the warm and human quality which the Post Office—through its postmasters, its postal clerks, and its letter carriers—shares with the people of the United States.

To highlight my statement very briefly, we must appear today opposed to the immediate enactment of this legislation now before the committee. The reason for our opposition as expressed in our statement is that we are totally disenchanted up to this time concerning the methods being suggested for the appointment of postmasters.

We would respectfully urge the committee to ask for a listing of all acting appointments that have been made to determine whether or not the committee is satisfied that the recommendations being made by the Post Office Department are workable and are in accordance with what they declare is in the best interests of the service.

From the appointments that have been made we wholeheartedly agree that politics is not involved in the appointment of top level officials of the Post Office Department. I very frankly say to you that there are no politicians at the head of the Post Office Department today.

The letter carriers of whom we are concerned are not going to be considered in offices where the salary of a postmaster is above level 9. We do not feel that all the talent in the Postal Establishment is confined to the supervisory positions. There are many capable and able letter carriers who could qualify, because in our opinion one of the most important qualifications for a postmaster is the ability to get along with people. If he gets along with the taxpayer and the people who are working in his Postal Establishment, he has got an efficient

operation, and the letter carrier certainly fills the bill concerning that qualification.

Mr. Chairman, it has been testified to this morning by the departmental spokesman that two-thirds of the Nation's postmasters are noncareerists. I would subscribe to the fact that all of them perhaps are politicians, in one way or another, but two-thirds of the present postmasters have not come from the ranks.

So now, Mr. Chairman, we are being asked to accept the theory that two-thirds of the Nation's postmasters when they leave office, will be willing to urge the appointment of a career man contrary to the policy that prevailed when they themselves got the appointment.

We think that the policies are cumbersome, that they certainly can be improved upon, and all that we say about your legislation—and we commend you for wanting to do something about merit promotion, certainly we are for it, we have testified in the past and we don't want to issue a contradictory statement here today—but all that we are urging is that the Senate committee withhold approval of this bill until such time as the Post Office Department proves to the committee that what they are planning is workable and in the best interests of not only the postal employee but the taxpayer as well.

Through your questioning, Mr. Chairman, this morning you have brought out a very important point as to the cost of additional consultants, and when it has been mentioned that there are 2,100 vacancies, I am sure the chairman can very quickly analyze what the evaluation by regional teams could mean costwise under the new proposal when you have 2,100 officers under consideration. We do not want to appear here today just to oppose, but to caution and urge the Senate committee to look into the matter very carefully.

One way in which they can satisfy themselves is to have the Senators acquire a copy of the listing of the names of those who have been appointed, where do they happen to come from, what is their experience, the nature of their appointment, and so on.

We understand they are only acting appointees at this time and they are called officers in charge, rather than acting postmasters.

One final note, which we mention in our testimony, of great concern is that historically the postmaster has been the one link between the citizen and the Government. In every community you have a postmaster and he does represent the United States of America.

We feel that on the drawing board, once Congress relinquishes confirmation, this is a proposition which would create a sectional center head without any postmaster. This is a danger, we feel, to the very nature of the postal service and to the very purpose in the beginning of having a representative of the Government in every community.

So we only urge, we don't necessarily oppose, but we urge strongly that this committee take a very close look at the proposition before they relinquish the historic rights which are the rights of the citizens of this country as well to have somebody overseeing what is happening to the postal service within that community.

Senator FONG. Mr. Rademacher, as a very dedicated and effective leader of the letter carriers association, you speak for the letter carriers, and I think your information is that the letter carriers in this system probably will not be given much consideration in the appointment as postmasters. Do I echo your thoughts in that respect?

Mr. RADEMACHER. That is correct, Senator.

Senator FONG. There is no examination that the letter carrier is really not able to come for is there?

Mr. RADEMACHER. That is correct and under the recommendations by the Postmaster General, letter carriers would be considered—as will other employees—only in post offices where the position pays a wage in level 9 or below, which would make the consideration of letter carriers very few and far between.

Senator FONG. In other words the promotion will go to the supervisor rather than to the letter carriers?

Mr. RADEMACHER. That is correct and even if that was certain, we might look more favorably upon this bill, but that isn't assured because as I say, with two-thirds of the people who are going to recommend the new postmaster coming from the outside, it would appear to us that they would have a tendency to lean toward the outside and not toward merit promotion.

Senator FONG. I see. And you feel that your letter carriers should be given the opportunity to really compete?

Mr. RADEMACHER. We feel that letter carriers and all postal employees—we don't want to be selfish in this respect, but all postal employees—should be evaluated and considered, because again I reiterate, for purposes of reemphasizing that all of the talent is not in the persons of the management in the postal establishment, the supervision.

We also have very talented letter carriers who have quite an excellent background and could serve well as a postmaster.

Senator FONG. In accordance with your request, we will request the Postmaster General to give us what you have requested, the names of the people who are now acting postmasters.

Mr. RADEMACHER. Thank you. I think it would be most enlightening to this committee and informative as well.

Senator FONG. That will be done. Thank you very much.

Mr. RADEMACHER. Thank you for permitting us this opportunity today.

(Postmaster General Blount subsequently supplied the following figures as requested by Senator Fong:)

ACTING POSTMASTERS

State	Office	Officer in charge	Title when installed	Legal residence	Date of installation
Alabama	Eufaula	H. D. Nolan	Clerk	Eufaula, Ala.	Mar. 28, 1969
	Gainesville	Mrs. Juanita Frieds	do	Gainesville, Ga.	Feb. 28, 1969
	Sayre	Mrs. Flora Ellenburg	do	Dora, Ala.	Apr. 18, 1969
	Headtsburg	Thomas Farrell	Assistant postmaster	Headtsburg, Calif.	Mar. 14, 1969
California	Laguna Beach	H. L. Almond	Postal inspector	La Crescenta, Calif.	Mar. 7, 1969
	Los Angeles	Spiro B. Ratalovich	Chief, methods and plant improvement branch	Cupertino, Calif.	Mar. 14, 1969
	San Ysidro	Frank M. Perkins	Assistant postmaster	San Ysidro, Calif.	Mar. 11, 1969
	Tustin	Brian J. Gillespie	Postal manager	New York, N.Y.	Mar. 31, 1969
Colorado	Westminster	Lee A. Hagberg	Assistant postmaster	Westminster, Colo.	Mar. 7, 1969
	Mystic	Francis R. Fain	do	Mystic, Conn.	Mar. 14, 1969
	Fountain	Electa M. Heisler	Carrier clerk	Fountain, Fla.	Mar. 14, 1969
	St. Petersburg	Bert B. Barnes	Retired annuitant	Arlington, Va.	Apr. 4, 1969
Georgia	Blackshear	Alton A. Burgsteiner	Assistant to the postmaster	Fountain, Va.	Apr. 29, 1969
	Ludowici	Rabun D. Phillips	Regular clerk	Blackshear, Ga.	Mar. 14, 1969
	Toccoa	Benjamin W. Payne, Jr.	Assistant postmaster	Ludowici, Ga.	Mar. 21, 1969
	Ririe	Mrs. Tella Z. Miller	Carrier substitute clerk	Toccoa, Ga.	Mar. 14, 1969
Idaho	Benson	Benjamin C. Smith	Assistant postmaster	Ririe	Apr. 25, 1969
	Bloomington	Ervin L. Giese	Clerk, Washington	Washington	Apr. 11, 1969
	Bridgeport	Stanley E. Brothers	Assistant postmaster	Bloomington	Mar. 14, 1969
	Dowell	Mrs. Theresa A. Wolfe	Assistant to the postmaster	Bridgeport	May 9, 1969
Illinois	Flanagan	Mrs. Delores B. Koopman	Carrier substitute clerk	Dowell	Mar. 14, 1969
	Glenwood	Mrs. Betty Hudson	do	Flanagan	Mar. 28, 1969
	Havana	Ira W. Mangum	Assistant to the postmaster	Glenwood	Mar. 7, 1969
			Superintendent of Bartonville, classified branch of Peoria.	Peoria	Mar. 28, 1969
Indiana	Homewood	Robert G. Peterson	Assistant postmaster	Homewood	Mar. 7, 1969
	Kewanee	M. Wilson Murphy	Postal manager	Detroit, Mich.	Mar. 31, 1969
	Mackinaw	Mrs. Doris M. Hasty	Regular clerk	Mackinaw	Apr. 11, 1969
	Odin	Mrs. Flora B. Petray	Carrier substitute clerk	Odin	Mar. 28, 1969
Iowa	Oregon	Francis T. Loan	Assistant postmaster	Oregon	May 9, 1969
	Skokie	Edward P. Fruhe	do	Skokie	Mar. 14, 1969
	Wood Dale	Roy W. Hallin	Methods technician	Wood Dale	Apr. 28, 1969
	Springfield	William E. McElroy	Postmaster, retired annuitant	Springfield	Feb. 28, 1969
Iowa	Wonder Lake	Mrs. Lorraine W. Murphy	Carrier clerk	Wonder Lake	Mar. 14, 1969
	Grabbil	Mrs. Doris J. Linn	Carrier substitute clerk	Grabbil	Mar. 21, 1969
	Unionville	Mrs. Mable R. Maners	Substitute clerk	Unionville	Mar. 28, 1969
	Valparaiso	Mr. William R. Pennington	Assistant postmaster	Valparaiso	Mar. 14, 1969
Iowa	Westport	Mrs. Lucille M. Blauvelt	Substitute clerk	Westport	May 9, 1969
	Burlington	Mr. Arthur R. Petersen	Acting assistant postmaster	Burlington	Mar. 14, 1969
	Chariton	Mr. Kenneth E. Lee	Assistant postmaster	Chariton	Apr. 4, 1969
	Muscataine	John D. Barger	do	Muscataine	Apr. 11, 1969
Iowa	Newton	Mr. Wayne H. Wendel	do	Newton	Apr. 11, 1969
	Oakville	Mrs. Allene Carlson	Carrier clerk	Oakville	Apr. 11, 1969
	Storm Lake	Claire W. Tymeson	Assistant postmaster	Storm Lake	Mar. 28, 1969
	Sutherland	Mrs. Isabelle Elsbury	Regular clerk	Sutherland	Apr. 11, 1969

Kansas	Girard	Mr. H. K. Decker	Assistant postmaster	Girard	Feb. 28, 1969
	Leavenworth	Mr. Walter F. Kane	do	Leavenworth	Apr. 16, 1969
	Nekeoma	Mrs. Della M. Keener	Career substitute clerk	Plush Center, Kans.	Apr. 18, 1969
	Plainville	Robert D. Dopita	Assistant to postmaster	Plainville	Mar. 14, 1969
	Ulysses	C. Wesco Cation, Jr.	Civil service examiner in charge at Wichita	Wichita, Kans.	Mar. 21, 1969
Kentucky	Watkins	Howard C. Gunning	Career substitute clerk	Watkins	Do.
	Cornettsville	Mrs. Letitia B. Little	Postmaster, Dice, Ky	Dice, Ky	Apr. 11, 1969
	Glasgow	James T. Rogers	Assistant postmaster	Glasgow	Apr. 4, 1969
Massachusetts	West Warren	Walter J. Rys	Regular clerk	West Warren	Mar. 31, 1969
	Wilmington	John K. Kenney	Assistant postmaster	Wilmington	Apr. 14, 1969
Michigan	Algonac	Bernard J. Nugent	do	Algonac	Apr. 18, 1969
	Fenton	Leroy Emery Taylor	Acting assistant postmaster	Fenton	Apr. 18, 1969
	Grand Rapids	Charles E. McGinn	Postal inspector	Milwaukee, Wis.	Feb. 14, 1969
	Hastings	Glenn Kahler	Assistant postmaster	Hastings	Mar. 28, 1969
	Kawkaulin	Mrs. E. W. Claus	Career clerk	Kawkaulin	May 7, 1969
	Lincoln Park	Frank J. Locher	Assistant postmaster	9381 Fox, Allen Park, Mich.	Mar. 17, 1969
	Saginaw	Frederick C. Arnold	do	Saginaw	Mar. 17, 1969
	Shelby	Marvin C. Near	do	Shelby	Mar. 7, 1969
	Walton Lake	Mrs. Jenny Whitaker	Career clerk	Walton Lake, Mich.	Apr. 23, 1969
Minnesota	Hector	Lloyd Hable	do	Hector, Minn.	Mar. 14, 1969
Mississippi	Ocean Springs	Clay M. Parlin	Assistant postmaster	Ocean Springs, Miss.	Apr. 16, 1969
Missouri	Joplin	B. D. Stone	Postal inspector	Springfield, Mo.	Mar. 7, 1969
	Hannibal	W. H. Garrett	Assistant postmaster	Hannibal, Mo.	Feb. 28, 1969
	Curryville	Roy E. England	Career clerk, Bowling Green	Bowling Green, Mo.	Mar. 21, 1969
	Verona	Mark W. Smith	Career clerk, Springfield	Springfield, Mo.	Apr. 18, 1969
Nebraska	O'Neill	Harold E. Weiler	Assistant postmaster	O'Neill, Nebr.	Mar. 14, 1969
	McCook	Francis L. Hassler	do	McCook, Nebr.	Mar. 28, 1969
	Bellevue	Philip A. Dufry	do	Bellevue, Nebr.	Apr. 4, 1969
	Bassett	Gerald W. Osborn	Assistant to postmaster, Ainsworth	Ainsworth, Nebr.	Do.
	Deshler	Walter A. Struve	Career clerk	Deshler, Nebr.	Apr. 18, 1969
New Hampshire	Franklin	Thomas J. Keating	Assistant postmaster	Franklin, N.H.	Apr. 11, 1969
New Jersey	Atlantic City	Seymour deBeer, Jr.	Superintendent of mails	Atlantic City, N.J.	Apr. 18, 1969
	Bound Brook	Edward J. Curvey	Postal manager	Mahany City, Pa.	Mar. 14, 1969
	Budd Lake	Mrs. Ethel C. Kuzma	Career clerk	Budd Lake	Do.
	Frenchtown	Clarence W. Tange	do	Frenchtown	Apr. 11, 1969
	Mantua	Mrs. Beulah Melson	Assistant to postmaster	Mantua	Apr. 18, 1969
	Normandy Beach	William Taylor	Career substitute clerk, Lakewood, N.J.	Normandy Beach	Mar. 14, 1969
	Stockholm	Mrs. June M. Sims	Temporary substitute clerk	Stockholm	Do.
	West Berlin	Richard M. Luxton	Foreman of mails at Philadelphia	West Berlin	Do.
New Mexico	Silver City	Fletcher F. Accord	Postal inspector	Tucson, Ariz.	Mar. 14, 1969
New York	Camden	Joseph Hite	Assistant postmaster	Camden	Mar. 21, 1969
	Cazenovia	Herman C. Munger	do	Cazenovia	Apr. 18, 1969
	Churchville	Robert J. Fallon	Assistant to postmaster, Avon, N.Y.	Avon, N.Y.	Mar. 14, 1969
	Corning	Joseph J. Kay	Postal postmaster	Corning	Apr. 4, 1969
	Cothoes	E. Jackson Bryant	Postal manager	Cothoes	Mar. 14, 1969
	Hthaca	R. Donald Wilkinson	Assistant postmaster	Hthaca	Mar. 28, 1969
	Mount Vernon	Fred V. Mills, Jr.	Postal inspector	Minneapolis, N.Y.	Feb. 17, 1969
	North Vernon	Dorman R. Youmans	Assistant postmaster	Manuel	Mar. 14, 1969
	North Tonawanda	Louis F. Gosch	Postal inspector	Rochester, N.Y.	Feb. 14, 1969
	Oswego	William R. Cummings	Postal inspector	New York, N.Y.	Apr. 7, 1969
	Pearfield	Thomas J. Joyce	Postal manager	Rochester, N.Y.	Apr. 18, 1969
	Port Jervis	Andrew P. Mayan	Assistant postmaster	Port Jervis, N.Y.	Mar. 14, 1969
	Washington Mills	Mrs. Lois W. Halligan	Career substitute clerk	Washington Mills, N.Y.	Apr. 4, 1969
	Worcester	Curtis T. Dettling	Career regular clerk	Worcester, N.Y.	Mar. 14, 1969
North Carolina	Southern Pines	Lawrence C. McCrimmon	Assistant postmaster	Southern Pines, N.C.	Do.

ACTING POSTMASTERS—Continued

State	Office	Officer in charge	Title when installed	Legal residence	Date of installation
Ohio	Bolivar	Mrs. Loretta A. King	Career substitute clerk	Bolivar, Ohio	Apr. 18, 1969
	Canton	Raymond A. Van Lieu	Postal inspector	Cincinnati, Ohio	Feb. 18, 1969
	Dayton	Thomas G. Condrion	General superintendent of mails	Dayton, Ohio	Feb. 25, 1969
	Massillon	Robert L. Moorhead	Superintendent of mails	Massillon	Mar. 14, 1969
Oklahoma	North Jackson	Harry C. Burleigh	Station superintendent, Youngstown, Ohio	Youngstown, Ohio	May 2, 1969
	Moore	Jessie R. Tener	Assistant postmaster	Moore, Okla.	Mar. 26, 1969
	Woodward	H. W. Campbell	do	Woodward, Okla.	Mar. 14, 1969
	Boardman	Mrs. Carol Getz	Career substitute clerk	Boardman, Oreg.	Mar. 7, 1969
Pennsylvania	La Grande	Melvin Westenskow	Assistant postmaster	La Grande, Oreg.	Mar. 28, 1969
	Coos Bay	Gary Packer	Postal manager	Denver, Colo.	Do.
	Biglerville	Miss Carrie Raifensberger	Career clerk	Biglerville, Pa.	May 9, 1969
	Carlisle	Maynard L. Kitter	Assistant postmaster	Carlisle, Pa.	Mar. 7, 1969
South Dakota	Coalport	James H. Hahn	Career clerk	Coalport, Pa.	Apr. 25, 1969
	Paoli	Anthony DiFranzo	Superintendent of mails	Paoli, Pa.	Apr. 4, 1969
	Patton	Frederick L. Swisher	Career clerk	Patton, Pa.	Apr. 11, 1969
	Plumville	Mrs. Mary J. Colkitt	Career substitute clerk	Plumville, Pa.	Do.
Tennessee	Scranton	Bernard J. Harding	Postmaster retired annuitant	Scranton, Pa.	Apr. 30, 1969
	West Milfin	B. Raymond Meehan	Assistant postmaster	West Milfin, Pa.	Mar. 14, 1969
	Kimball	Lyle E. Foltz	Career clerk	Kimball, S. Dak.	Apr. 18, 1969
	Hitchell, S. Dak.	Raymond P. Matre	do	Hitchell, S. Dak.	May 2, 1969
Texas	Fayetteville	Carlton C. Lyle	Assistant postmaster	Fayetteville, Tenn.	Mar. 28, 1969
	Seawanee	Emmett H. Cardwell	Assistant to the postmaster	Seawanee, Tenn.	Do.
	Channeyview	Hershel P. Smith	Assistant postmaster	Channeyview, Tex.	Apr. 23, 1969
	Dallas	H. G. Wriggle	do	Dallas, Tex.	Do.
Vermont	Edna	Herman J. Vanistrom, Jr.	do	Edna, Tex.	Feb. 28, 1969
	Lytie	Marjorie N. Schapaugh	Career clerk	Lytie, Tex.	Mar. 31, 1969
	Sulphur Springs	Delbert J. Tyler	Assistant postmaster	Sulphur Springs, Tex.	Mar. 7, 1969
	Texas City	Alfred B. Couch, Jr.	do	Texas City, Tex.	Apr. 4, 1969
Virginia	Colchester	Claude L. Hanson	Clerk-foreman	Detailed from Burlington, Vt. post office	Mar. 28, 1969
	Hiltons	Walter T. Salyer	Mobile unit clerk	Hiltons, Va.	Do.
	Upperville	Wesley R. Kenny	Career clerk	Upperville, Va.	Mar. 7, 1969
	Hudson	Elmer N. Olson	do	Hudson, Wis.	Feb. 14, 1969
Wisconsin	Union Grove	Glenn H. Jensen	do	Union Grove, Wis.	Mar. 14, 1969
	Kenosha	Paul H. Naef	Assistant postmaster	Kenosha, Wis.	Do.
	Ellsworth	John E. Campbell	Career clerk	Ellsworth, Wis.	Mar. 28, 1969
					Apr. 4, 1969

Senator FONG. At this point I will insert into the record a statement of the Government Employes' Council of the AFL-CIO and a letter addressed to the chairman from the Chamber of Commerce of the United States.

(The aforementioned material follows:)

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYES' COUNCIL, AFL-CIO

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, the Government Employes' Council and its 35 AFL-CIO unions desire to express their support of legislation removing from the political arena appointment of postmasters and rural letter carriers.

We are grateful for this opportunity to comment on S. 1583, a bill introduced jointly by the Chairman of this Committee, Senator Gale McGee, the ranking minority member, Senator Hiram Fong, and four other committee members.

Since the inauguration of the postal system in the late 18th century, designation of postmasters has been a subject of political patronage and political controversy. When the amount of business transacted by the Post Office Department was small, the Nation could possibly afford the luxury of a patronage system. The size of our population and the volume of commerce did not require the types of administrative skills a postmaster must possess today.

In recent years, the volume of mail has spiraled beyond anything the founders of our republic could envision. Directing the prompt and efficient processing of mail in this era requires the use of techniques unheard of when our society was in its infancy. Management of our gigantic postal operations demands maximum talent in the field of administration, particularly in larger offices. In short, as a nation, we can no longer afford to appoint postmasters on the basis of politics.

Career postal workers have been named increasingly as postmasters in recent years. Postmaster vacancies were filled by career employes in 38.3% instances in 1966. In 1967 the figure rose to 42.6%. While the number dropped to 36.1% in 1968, the general trend has offered encouraging recognition of the role career postmasters should play in the efficient processing of mail. But it does not by any means solve the entire problem.

If the Post Office Department is to attract the type of ability needed to fill these critical jobs, they must, in our view, be designated as career positions.

This means, in turn, that postmasterships should be awarded to present career workers on the basis of merit and competitive examination. Individuals should be selected for postmaster jobs from the career staff in the post office where the vacancy exists.

These principles should apply to second and third class post offices, as well as first class facilities. While the smaller post offices do not process the same volume of mail as in the large urban areas, experienced and highly competent management is equally important.

The rationale for making such appointments from among the employes in the particular post office in question is simple. This method will recognize the ability of those who have labored long in the public service. It will provide also additional advancement in the career ladder, which does not exist at present.

In this connection, it is pertinent to refer to information supplied by Assistant Postmaster General Richard J. Murphy in March 1967. He stated that only about 10% of the Department's workers have much hope of promotion within 10 years. An additional 10% could serve 25 years or more without promotion.

Making all postmaster positions available to individuals already in service will provide prospect for advancement to those whose opportunities are severely limited at the present time.

Competitive examinations can be a useful tool in determining performance capability in two ways. First, they can provide a yardstick which enables the appointing authority to rank individuals according to scores. Second, they can be used to measure the individual's knowledge of postal operations and the skills required to put that knowledge to practical use. For these reasons, the examinations should be utilized as part of the selection process.

In this connection, the test should emphasize the candidate's ability to deal with his employes and the public. When the public service aspect of postal affairs and the need to deal with organized employes are as apparent as they are today, it is obvious that postmasters should possess particular strength in these areas.

An important part of the ranking process must include years of service in the Department. This is an essential ingredient in recognizing the value of progressive

performance, which comes with experience. It can be an important element in establishing ranking on an impartial basis.

On February 19, 1969, the present Postmaster General announced details of a plan to appoint future postmasters "on a non political merit basis."

We have little doubt that the President of the United States and the Postmaster General are seeking some means of achieving the objectives envisioned by S. 1583 to eliminate political considerations in making selections and to give deserved recognition to career postal workers in arriving at these decisions.

At the same time, the procedures outlined in the plan fall far short of the stated goal.

For postmaster vacancies in the 400 largest post offices, a National Management Selection Board will be created.

The composition of the Board and the method of arriving at the nominees it will consider leave serious doubt that political affiliation can be ignored.

Among the five members of the National Board will be two Assistant Postmasters General, both of whom are political appointees themselves. A third member will be designated by "the dean of a nationally known school of business administration."

Thus, a majority of the Board can be controlled by members whose political impartiality is not guaranteed.

Our second concern revolves around the nominations offered by "management," which has an obligation to adhere to the political philosophy of the party in power.

Postmaster vacancies in the remaining 31,800 post offices will be filled by Regional Management Selection Boards.

In this instance also the composition of the selecting body raises a question about political bias.

In addition to an area postmaster chosen by the Postmaster General, a representative of a management consulting company, and a person named by a business administration school official will sit on the five member panel. As in the previous case, "postal management" will nominate up to three career workers to the Regional Board.

These matters, as well as the unlimited authority of the Postmaster General to make postmaster appointments under S. 1583 make it imperative that Congress retain careful scrutiny of the entire process. The most effective way to secure this Congressional oversight is the tested procedure of Senate confirmation.

Postal service is a unique function of our Government. It cannot be compared to any other operating inside or outside Federal Service. Because of its public service aspects, special importance attaches to public involvement in postal affairs. It would be totally impractical to expect the public to participate directly in postmaster appointments. However, this function has been served traditionally and well by Senate confirmation of postmasters. The practice should be continued.

With these observations, Mr. Chairman, the Council commends the Committee for its intense interest in a vital problem of government management.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, D.C., May 8, 1969.

HON. GALE W. MCGEE,
Chairman, Committee on Post Office and Civil Service,
U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chamber of Commerce of the United States urges enactment of S. 1583, the objective of which is to further remove from politics the selection, appointment, and promotion of postmasters and other employees in the postal service.

One of the most important prerequisites of managing is the right of the manager to select his own assistants according to his own standards. For many years, this has not been the right of managers of the postal system, at least as far as postmasters are concerned.

Under the present practice, as you are aware, the selection of postmasters is subject to political test through members of Congress and through local party mechanisms. As a result, there is the ever-present risk that a postmaster may be hired more for his political ability than for his administrative ability. The postal service is too important to the nation for us to tolerate that risk any longer.

We support the selection process already announced by the Postmaster General to eliminate patronage. The modifications of Sections 3311 and 3109, as contained in S. 1583, are necessary to put the process into effect.

I would appreciate you making this letter a part of the record of Committee hearings.

Cordially,

DON A. GOODALL,
General Manager, Legislative Action.

Senator FONG. Are there any other witnesses? If not, the committee stands adjourned.

(Whereupon, at 12:30 p.m., the committee adjourned to the call of the Chair.)

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It is noted that the election process already announced by the Political Council to the members of the Council. The members of the Council are not to be elected at all and it is necessary to put the matter into effect. I would appreciate you taking the matter to the Council of the Council.

Very A. Yours truly,
General Secretary, Political Council
Senator Fove, etc. etc. etc. If not, the committee stands adjourned.
at 12:30 p.m., the committee adjourned to the call of the Chair.

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