

Morse, Neuberger Clash in Senate Over Increase in Postal Rates

By A. ROBERT SMITH
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Washington — (Special) —
Sens. Wayne Morse and Richard L. Neuberger have thrown down the gauntlet to one another in a fresh rupture of their personal relationship as Oregon's two Democratic senators.

Morse claims Neuberger has violated the established practice by which Oregon senators heretofore have avoided open clashes. He indicates that Neuberger is asking for trouble if he doesn't conform.

Neuberger claims the price of getting along with Morse is too high for him to pay. He says he won't remain silent about his convictions.

A Democratic party peace-maker from Portland, C. Girard Davidson, Oregon's national committeeman, meanwhile is seeking to heal the personal breach that has divided the senators for months, dating back to the Civil Rights debate of last August, and which was intensified by events of this past week.

The senators are sharply divided over whether postal rates should be increased across the board, but the heart of their new dispute is the manner in which each senator has expressed his differences with the other.

Plans for Outlays
It all began last week when Senator Neuberger announced in the Senate on Wednesday that he had decided to vote for the request of the Eisenhower administration for a postage increase bill that would boost first class out-of-town rates from 3 to 5 cents.

Neuberger, who previously opposed higher postal rates, said after listening to much testimony he concluded the increase was in the "public interest." The first-class rate hasn't been increased since 1932.

He noted that he is sponsoring a postal workers' pay



SENATOR MORSE
Asking for Trouble

increase bill and he favors a postal building program, and that there are constant demands from the Pacific Northwest for river development appropriations and removal of the transportation tax.

Neuberger's Vote Decisive
"Legitimate as these needs are, we cannot always advocate only the spending of public funds and the lifting of burdensome taxes. We cannot always evade the responsibility of facing up to the need to collect revenue," averred Neuberger.

Thursday morning, as a member of the Senate Post Office Committee, Neuberger's vote gave the postal rate bill a favorable majority of 7-to-6. Six Republicans and Neuberger were for it, six Democrats against it.

Thursday afternoon, Senator Morse took the Senate floor and roundly denounced the proposed increase in first-class rates as "brazen" and "unholy."

Neuberger went immediate-

ly to the Senate chamber, where Morse was saying that the proposed 5-cent stamp "is a brazen attempt on the part of newspaper editors and magazine publishers of this country to make a grab bag out of our nation's mail bags. I am one senator who does not propose to let the newspaper editors and magazine publishers get by with this avarice, when they seek to impose upon the taxpayers of this country this unconscionable burden that we are already paying by way of the Post Office deficit."

Later he called the proposal "an unholy tax upon the heads of the American taxpayers which seeks to deny them free access to this channel of enlightenment and dissemination of educational information which is necessary to keep this democracy strong."

'Vital' to Education
"I do not take the position, either, that second and third class mail users should pay a higher rate. I take the position that they could pay more than they do now. But I still say that second- and third-class mail is also vital to the educational processes of the nation."

At length, Neuberger rose and interrupted Morse in an effort to determine just what he was for. As he explained in an interview later, Morse had criticized newspapers and magazines, chief users of second- and third-class mail, but later said he didn't take the position that these users "should pay a higher rate," but that "they should pay more."

Neuberger: Does not the senator think he has been very outspoken in his criticism, in view of the fact that he has not yet heard the evidence?

Morse: I have not been living in a vacuum. I have been reading avidly on the subject. I think I know what the senator has in mind as evidence



SENATOR NEUBERGER
Says Price Too High

and if it is what I think it is, not evidence at all.

Neuberger: Then, if the senator is familiar with the evidence—

Loyal Fondness Endures
Morse: I am waiting to hear my colleague tell me what he thinks the evidence is. The burden of proof is his. Let us hear the evidence.

Neuberger: The senator's junior colleague has not come to the floor to indulge in criticism of anyone.

Morse: The senator's senior colleague has, let me assure him.

Subsequently, Morse said: I want my colleague to know, first, that my difference with him on this issue—and it is abysmal; I can imagine no bridge that can span it in any way—indicates no lack of loyal fondness for my colleague. On the contrary it demonstrates that the people of Oregon sent us here to exercise our honest judgment on issues.

"Having said that, I say most good naturedly and respectfully to my colleague that I have listened to many non sequiturs in my 13 years in the Senate, but I have never listened to one that is more absurd than the one my colleague has just made when he pointed out that the senators from the Northwest are sent to congress from time to time for the purpose of securing large public works and that therefore a 5-cent postage stamp ought to be imposed upon the people of the United States in order to reduce the Post Office deficit."

Billings Enjoy Reduced Rate
Neuberger subsequently agreed that "there is nothing at all personal in this matter," for senators can express differences "in the best of spirits."

The debate then raged on. Neuberger said the hearings he attended showed that "by far the majority of the users of the mail, in terms of volume, including first-class mail, are various businesses throughout the country."

Friday, Morse took the floor again and said that "when we refer to the fact that businesses use first-class mail to send out their bills—whether they are private utilities or department stores or what-not—I wonder whether anyone really thinks that the businesses pay for that postage."

Burden on Consumer
Morse argued that a business simply tacks the postage charge onto the cost of its product or service to the consumer so that "by increasing the rate on first-class mail we would be increasing the burden on the so-called little fellow, the general consumer in the United States."

Morse said he had campaigned "all over the state of Oregon in opposition to an increase in the first-class postal rate. I do not intend to walk out on my commitments in that campaign, unless someone can bring forth a preponderance of evidence which will show that in 1956 I was mistaken. However, I am satisfied that the people of my state did not think I was mistaken."

Sunday night, at a dinner meeting held at Morse's apartment, attended by the five Democrats of the state's delegation, their wives and some staff assistants, C. Girard Davidson, Oregon's Democratic National Committeeman, sought to turn the discussion to talk of the value of party unity, after a long discussion of the Snake river development problem.

Morse reportedly claimed he never would have taken off on Neuberger's position in the way he did had not Neuberger interrupted his prepared manuscript by asking pointed questions.

Neuberger reportedly retorted that Morse misjudged him if he thought Neuberger would sit silently in the chamber while Morse denounced a position of his as brazen and unholy.

Morse reportedly contended

that Neuberger was challenging him on a major issue of his recent reelection campaign.

Neuberger subsequently had his Portland office check newspaper files of the 1956 campaign. He said they found no stories which would support Morse's contention he made postal rates a major issue. He said Morse also failed to mention postal rates among the issues in his statement printed in the 1956 Voters' Pamphlet.

In separate interviews, the senators frankly disclosed their feelings about the whole affair and threw down the gauntlet to one another.

"I didn't start this hassle," declared Morse. "The record will show that I have never taken the initiative to challenge my colleague. But when a senator challenges me, I'm going to defend myself, I don't care who he is."

He said Neuberger had started the hassle by interrupting his speech with questions. He said his attack on Neuberger's position was "definitely not" premeditated that he had a prepared text which contained none of the language Neuberger objected to. The Congressional Record shows that Morse departed

from his text with the terms "brazen" and "unholy" well before Neuberger entered the fray.

Morse contended that Neuberger had no business interfering with his speech, that it is not in the interest of the state when its two senators clash openly in debate on the Senate floor.

Too High a Price
"If he disagreed with my position, why didn't he state his position on his own time?" exclaimed Morse. He said that is the practice he always followed during the long period when his colleague from Oregon was Republican Guy Cordon, a conservative with whom Morse disagreed almost across the boards.

Neuberger, in an interview, declared: "If in order to go along with Senator Morse I have to suppress my honest convictions regarding postal rate policies, that is too high a price to pay. And if in order to get along with Senator Morse I have to sit silently and in acquiescence while he describes an action that I have just taken as brazen and unholy, then that is also a price that is too high to pay."

Neuberger said he regarded

this postal rate decision as the "most difficult" he has had to make since becoming a senator.

Davidson Wednesday predicted the Oregon senators would stick together on 90 per cent of the issues but parried questions about how they would get along personally.

Davidson has been acting in the role of peacemaker for the past few days in an attempt to heal wounds inflicted by the two senators upon one another.

The national committeeman said the debate "shows that Oregon has two independent minded senators. That's what the people of Oregon expected. They take a position and are able to defend it. I'm proud of it. I don't expect that either one will call the shots."

RINGS DISAPPEAR

Syracuse, N. Y. — Lillian Gardiner told police she pinned her two diamond rings, valued at \$700, to her dress while she washed the clothes. She forgot about them, finished the washing, went to the grocery store and then discovered the rings were gone.

United Plane Forced To Land at Eugene

Eugene — A United Air Lines plane made an emergency landing here Wednesday with one of its engines dead. Airline officials said it was a precautionary measure and that the plane was in no danger.

The plane carried a crew of five and 58 passengers and was en route to Portland from Los Angeles.

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