

# Patronage Jobs Prove Headache For Congressional Oregonians

By A. ROBERT SMITH  
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Washington Correspondent

Washington - (Special) - Oregon's congressional Democrats are suffering from a collective headache over what used to be called political spoils. The civil service system has eliminated all but a few federal jobs which are handed out to those who can secure the necessary backing of the party in power in Washington.

But patience wears noticeably thin and irritations break to the surface when the Oregon "ins" try to reach accord on these few jobs.

Reps. Edith Green and Robert B. Duncan are seriously considering introducing legislation to narrow the field of patronage even further by abolishing the political recommendation that for years has accompanied presidential appointment of postmasters.

Under the present system, when a vacancy occurs in a postmastership, a political appointee is installed until a permanent postmaster is selected through a combination of civil service and political screening.

**State Carved Up**

The Oregon Democrats have the state carved up so that Rep. Al Ullman handles the postmasters in his district, which covers all eastern Oregon; Mrs. Green handles those in Multnomah county; Sen. Maurine B. Neuberger handles those in the district represented by Republican Rep. Walter Norblad; and Congressman Duncan has assumed responsibility for his district, which for the past two years had been handled by Sen. Wayne Morse when it was represented in Congress by a Republican, Edwin Durno.

Duncan inherited a postmaster problem in the most sensitive place, his home town of Medford, where the local party committee recommended Marvin Madden for the political appointment as acting postmaster. Duncan risked party ill will at home by declining to approve Madden on grounds that he already held a public office, Jackson county clerk, to which the voters had duly elected him last fall. Duncan told the Post Office Department to install Al Bradford, a Medford barber and personal supporter of the congressman. Bradford had served for some years on the Medford city council, a non-paying post. The postmastership pays nearly \$9,000 a year.

While Bradford serves as acting postmaster, the Civil Service Commission will evaluate qualifications of applicants for the permanent appointment, certify three qualified applicants, and Duncan's choice of the three will inevitably get the president's nomination. Senate confirmation for his lifetime appointment would follow almost automatically under this system.

**Major Job in Offing**

Another major Oregon postmastership in the offing is at Salem, where Postmaster Al-

bert C. Gragg reaches the mandatory retirement age of 70 next January. He took office during the last months of the Roosevelt administration and got his permanent appointment from President Truman.

There are reports circulating here that E. D. Spencer, chairman of the Democratic state Central Committee, may be the next Salem postmaster. Spencer already deals in stamps—the kind that housewives collect from grocery stores. The job would pay close to \$10,000.

Presumably, Spencer would be agreeable to Sen. Neuberger, who would have jurisdiction over this appointment sharing or assuming that responsibility.

**Contentious Factor**

Any legislation to remove the political screening from postmaster jobs would provide a fresh talking point, possibly even a contentious factor, in the Oregon delegation's patronage meetings. But Congress shows no sign of washing its hands of this patronage privilege, at least not soon.

The big bone of contention is how to arrive at recommendations to make the Kennedy administration for jobs other than postmasterships, notably state-wide offices such as U. S. marshal, which is still held by a GOP hold-over from the Eisenhower days, Paul Kearney.

The state Central Committee recommended Burdett F. Emery, a Portland probation officer, who also was Mrs. Neuberger's choice. Mrs. Green, however, has declined to endorse Emery—not because of any opposition to him but because she doesn't want to hand over the power for patronage choice to a party agency whose members currently are not her personal loyalists. She thinks the central committee should have submitted a slate of acceptable candidates from which the delegation might select one by majority vote.

**Morse's Role Enigmatic**

Sen. Morse's role in patronage continues to be enigmatic. During the first two years of the Kennedy administration, he tried to avoid taking sides between Mrs. Neuberger and Mrs. Green. He had an election campaign coming up in 1962 and wanted to maintain harmony wherever possible among party loyalists of both ladies.

Recently Morse has sounded more assertive. He told an editor of the Oregon Journal last week that he thought he, as senior senator, should have veto power over the majority choice of the delegation. This caused some wry joking among delegation members about Morse's assumption of leadership through the press—but the senator has yet to demonstrate that he can carry through his ideas and either clear up or compound the headache over patronage which throbs on.

The congressional delegation after one indecisive meeting last Wednesday, plans to try again soon.

past president director, and Ed O'Connor, treasurer. Warren Cook was reelected secretary; Jim Wilson is a holdover director.

The Redwood club elected Bill Lowe, Sandy McGregor and Wally Olander as first, second and third vice presidents; Bob Hill, Tail Twister; Ralph Besse, Lion Tamer; Dean Anderson, secretary-treasurer; Mel Atkins and Pat O'Connell, two-year directors; and Mike Garner, one-year director.

New officers of both clubs will be installed next month and take office July 1.

Bill Healy, education supervisor for the Oregon real estate department, will conduct a lecture for Jackson county real estate brokers and salesmen in the little theater of Hedrick Junior High school at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 8.

The class, last of the spring certificate classes, will discuss "the law of agency."

Grants Pass - Two local Lions clubs have elected officers for the coming year.

Grants Pass builder Guy Page will head the Grants Pass Lions club. New president of the Redwood Lions club is real estate man Don Erickson.

Elected to serve with Page in the Grants Pass club were Carl Stein, Dave Staley and Bill Ausland, first, second and third vice presidents, respectively; Jim Swaggerty, Tail Twister; Bill Spencer, Lion Tamer; Herb Vessey and Walter Krebs, directors for two-year terms; Chet Tompkins,

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