

REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP MEETING

May 27 - 8:30 a.m.

AGENDA

8:30 - 9:30 a.m.

I. Foreign Aid Legislation



DIARY OF WHITE HOUSE LEADERSHIP
MEETINGS -- 91st CONGRESS

May 27, 1969

The President arrived at 8:35 a. m. and announced that foreign aid legislation had been removed from the agenda because Chairman Morgan was offended when the Department believed Republicans and not Democratic members of the Foreign Affairs Committee. The subject will be discussed in the bipartisan leadership meeting this afternoon.

Ford reported action on the amendment to the Agriculture Appropriations Bill offered by Conte, fixing a ceiling on production payments to individual farmers at \$20,000. The amendment carried on a teller vote, 112 to 110. A motion to recommit with a similar instruction last year carried by a vote of 230 to 170. A roll call on the Conte amendment would probably carry by a larger margin this year. The plan is to avoid a roll call if possible. Young agreed it would be difficult for the conferees to eliminate the amendment if it was a record vote in the House. Ford said that the lesson in this experience is that a farm bill must be acted upon this year and that it should contain no such payments as those to which this ceiling applies. Hardin said that the Department is "not terribly upset." Philosophically, there should be a limitation, and the vote on the amendment will help to convince farmers to support the new bill the Administration will propose. The Conte amendment is bad because it would increase rather than decrease the total cost of the program. About 6,000 of the 10,000 farmers who receive payments in excess of the proposed limit are cotton farmers. If the limit is imposed, it would trigger the so-called "snap-back" program, which applies to cotton farmers only. This program would require the government to buy cotton and resell it. The cost would be \$160 million more than



the present expenditures for cotton. Arends agreed that some bill must be acted upon before Congress adjourns this year. Hardin said that cotton is in deep trouble for two reasons: first, because there is a surplus of cotton in the world market, and second, because synthetics are replacing a large part of the traditional market. Acreage restrictions will be only a temporary solution. The long range solution includes greater research to perfect better uses of cotton and cotton products. Rhodes said that the present cotton program has been designed to keep small Southern cotton farmers in business. The big cotton farmers in Arizona formerly accepted that rationale and criticized the program but have long since become accustomed to the subsidies and tend now to resist changes in the program. Young said that it should be remembered that whatever drives small farmers off the farm compounds problems in the cities. RMN inquired if it would be fair to say that the Administration favors the principle of a payments limitation. Hardin answered with a question, "Do you want to go that far?" Young counseled caution. Dirksen is opposed to the ceiling because he considers it class legislation against the big farmer. "The tail goes with the hide." Programs should apply to all or apply to none. He stressed the increasing problem of the domestic textile manufacturers and the cotton producers posed by increased textile imports. Arends reminded that any ceiling which forces farmers out of the program will affect only the big farmer, and the bigger the farmer, the more he will produce when forced from the program; and this complicates the surplus problem and increases the expense of the surplus problem. Hardin disclosed his plans to conduct late afternoon seminars to which he would invite Members of the Congressional Committees. The purpose would be to see if a consensus could be reached from which a new farm program could be drafted. Tentatively, the Secretary expects that any new program will involve a long term land retirement device. He expressed the hope that



some bill could be presented to Congress following the Labor Day recess. Young suggested that the Department come to the Hill rather than the other way around. RMN agreed. Hardin asked for some guidance in answering the question frequently put to him, viz, how can you justify reclamation projects which bring new land into production at the same time you are continuing a program retiring land from production. Rhodes said that more and more reclamation is being used to improve water supply for urban areas rather than for agricultural irrigation. Allott called attention to an amendment adopted several years ago which provides no land benefited under a reclamation project can be planted to crops which are in surplus supply. RMN said that when Secretary Hardin finishes his term, there may still be a farm problem, but the problem would not be the Secretary of Agriculture. Hardin said that the new program which he will present will mean more income for farmers and still afford housewives the best bargain in their household budget. It will envision an increase in the share of the budget spent for groceries from 17¢ to 19¢. Taft reminded the Secretary to stay in touch with the Task Force on Agriculture, chaired by Langen. He also said that he would probably vote for the Conte amendment principally because he cannot convince the people the new Administration will have a new farm program substantially different from the subsidy-oriented program of prior Democratic Administrations. Hardin replied that the idea would be to retire the land that is causing the surplus problem and then give farmers a freer hand to compete on the remaining acreage. Anderson suggested that the Secretary attend meetings of farm organizations on the farm rather than on the campus.

RMN invited Dirksen to raise any question of current concern in the Senate. Dirksen referred to a comment made "by a distinguished young Republican Senator" criticizing the attack on "Hamburger Hill" as "senseless and irresponsible." He then read a dissertation by a Roman scholar critical of the



layman who undertakes to advise the professional military officer how to conduct every phase of every military operation.

RMN said that the Post Office Department reorganization message would come to the House today and that Bount would be introduced to the press following this meeting to explain the essentials.

Scott suggested Dirksen might want to explain the action that took place in the Senate Subcommittee on Constitutional Amendments concerning Electoral College reform. Dirksen said that Cook had offered a motion to report S. J. Res 1 (direct vote); Ervin offered a substitute (proportional plan), which failed 8 to 3; Dirksen offered a substitute (district plan), which carried 6 to 5. As amended, the bill was reported without recommendation from the Subcommittee to the Full Committee 9 to 0.

RMN expressed his appreciation for the statements of support which members of the leadership had made concerning the Chief Justice appointment. He said that he would not submit a name to fill the other vacancy until after the Senate had acted on the Chief Justice nomination. Dirksen said that hearings were scheduled to begin June 3. Again, RMN invited those present who were interested in nominating candidates for the Supreme Court to communicate with the Attorney General in order that the President may be able to "operate at arm's length and make the best possible decision." He said that he did not feel himself limited to the Federal courts and mentioned several other sources, including the state courts, the academic community and the Bar at large. However, he did express reservation about an appointment from the Bar, which he feels might raise some possibility of charges of conflict of interest. He does not intend to appoint anyone who disagrees with the philosophy that the Constitution should be strictly construed.

RICHARD H. POFF



HOUSE ACTION, PERIOD MAY 20 THROUGH MAY 26, 1969

Wednesday, May 21, 1969

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS

By a record vote of 347 yeas to 40 nays, the House passed H.R.11400 making supplemental appropriations of \$3.8 billion for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1969.

Previously, the House adopted by roll call vote of 322 yeas to 53 nays, (Ryan, New York) H.Res.414, waiving points of order against title IV of H.R.11400.

Prior to passage, the House considered the following amendments:

SCHERLE AMENDMENT - By a record vote of 329 yeas to 61 nays adopted an amendment requiring universities applying for Federal interest subsidies for construction projects to certify that they are complying with the antidisorder measures passed in the Higher Education Act.

RYAN (NEW YORK) AMENDMENT - Rejected by a division vote of 25 yeas to 140 nays, the amendment to delete title I from the Bill authorizing \$1.2 billion for military operations in Southeast Asia.

ECKHARDT AMENDMENT - To delete from title I the procurement section, rejected by a division vote of 23 yeas to 134 nays.

GROSS AMENDMENT - Defeated by voice vote to delete appropriation for the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities.

HALL AMENDMENT - Defeated by teller vote of 49 yeas to 165 nays, an amendment to eliminate the pay raise for House Members for the balance of fiscal year 1969.

COHELAN AMENDMENT - Defeated by voice vote to eliminate title IV limitation on fiscal year 1970 budget outlays.

VANIK AMENDMENT - Rejected by teller vote of 38 yeas to 165 nays, to reduce limitation on fiscal year 1970 budget outlays for the Department of Defense.

Prior to passage, the House rejected by voice vote the Cederberg recommit motion.



Monday, May 26, 1969

AGRICULTURE AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT

General debate on H.R.11612 was fixed at three hours. The Bill authorizes \$6.617 billion appropriation for fiscal year 1970.

The House accepted the Poage Amendment, transferring \$120 million of the funds within the Bill to the school lunch program.

The Conte Amendment, limiting payments to an individual to \$20,000, was adopted by teller vote of 112 yeas to 100 nays.

Tuesday, May 27, 1969

Continued consideration of H.R.11612.

Program Ahead

H.R.11582 - Treasury Department - Post Office Department Appropriations Act, FY 1970. The Rules Committee granted a rule waiving points of order against section 502.

H.R.4204 - To amend the War Claims Act of 1948 to include prisoners of war captured during the Vietnam conflict.



STATEMENT ABOUT THE PRESIDENT'S
POSTAL REFORM MESSAGE

For the 1970s Instead of the 1790s

Nobody is happy with the Post Office as it exists today. The people it serves are unhappy with their service. Taxpayers are unhappy with the costs. Postal workers are unhappy about their working conditions. And those who are responsible for the system, in Congress and in the executive branch, are unhappy about the entire situation. Something must be done, the country is saying, with virtual unanimity. The President's message on postal reform tells us just what can be done and I hope and trust that we will now proceed to do it.

Essentially, the President proposes that the present Post Office Department be replaced by a government corporation, with its own governing board, the power to issue bonds for financing improvements, a system of collective bargaining with employees, and regular reports to facilitate Congressional oversight. He thus endorses a concept that has broad support from almost everyone who has made a close study of the system in recent years. Former Postmaster General O'Brien suggested such reforms two years ago. The President's Commission on postal reform did likewise. President Johnson supported a plan of this sort and now the Republican Administration has come up with specific means of establishing it. This is clearly



not a partisan initiative. This is not the brainchild of a single man or group. This is a bipartisan suggestion with broad support across the country and the reason for that support is that it is so clearly in the interest of all Americans.

As the President has said, there is no Republican way and no Democratic way to deliver the mails. But there is an efficient way and an inefficient way. Right now we are following the inefficient method. This Presidential proposal can put us back on the efficient track.

Our present postal system was designed for the 1790's. The President's system is designed for the 1970's. It is never easy for a political leader to take an advanced position of this sort. All the forces of the status quo rise to confront him; all those who are fearful of any change cling tenaciously to the present.

Clearly, the President does not take a step of this magnitude to win wide political favor. He takes such a step because he believes it is the right thing to do. Most of the past reforms of which Americans are most proud have resulted from precisely this kind of boldness, a readiness to look to the future and to act as it demands. May the farsightedness of Congress now match that of the President.

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STATEMENT ABOUT THE PRESIDENT'S
POSTAL REFORM MESSAGE

An Idea Whose Time Has Come

"There is nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come." If Victor Hugo is right, then indeed, the time has come for a reorganization of the postal system. For too long the American people have felt frustrated by increasing rates and decreasing service. For too long American postal workers have felt frustrated by outmoded conditions and second-class bargaining rights.

President Nixon has proposed to Congress the creation of an independent Postal Service wholly owned by the Federal Government. This Postal Service will become a self-supporting system and proposals for postage increases will be heard by expert rate commissioners just as in other public utilities.

In this new Postal Service, employees will have for the first time true collective bargaining. With the statutory right to negotiate directly with management over wages and working conditions, the postal worker will finally take his rightful place beside the worker in private industry.

With these reforms we can give the mail user faster service, the taxpayer better return for his revenue dollars and the postal worker opportunity for greater and more satisfying contributions.

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May 27, 1969

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

Total reform of the nation's postal system is absolutely essential.

The American people want dependable, reasonably priced mail service, and postal employees want the kind of advantages enjoyed by workers in other major industries. Neither goal can be achieved within the postal system we have today.

The Post Office is not keeping pace with the needs of our expanding population or the rightful aspirations of our postal workers.

Encumbered by obsolete facilities, inadequate capital, and outdated operation practices, the Post Office Department is failing the mail user in terms of service, failing the taxpayer in terms of cost, and failing the postal worker in terms of truly rewarding employment. It is time for a change.

Two years ago, Lawrence F. O'Brien, then Postmaster General, recognized that the Post Office was in "a race with catastrophe," and made the bold proposal that the postal system be converted into a government-owned corporation. As a result of Mr. O'Brien's recommendations, a Presidential Commission was established to make a searching study of our postal system. After considering all the alternatives, the Commission likewise recommended a government corporation. Last January, President Johnson endorsed that recommendation in his State of the Union message.

One of my first actions as President was to direct Postmaster General Winton M. Blount to review that proposal and others. He has made his own first-hand study of the problems besetting the postal service, and after a careful analysis has reported to me that only a complete reorganization of the postal system can avert the steady deterioration of this vital public service.

I am convinced that such a reorganization is essential. The arguments are overwhelming and the support is bipartisan. Postal Reform is not a partisan political issue, it is an urgent national requirement.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND WORKING CONDITIONS

For many years the postal worker walked a dead-end street. Promotions all too often were earned by the right political connections rather than by merit. This Administration has taken steps to eliminate political patronage in the selection of postal employees; but there is more -- much more -- that must be done.

Postal employees must be given a work environment comparable to that found in the finest American enterprises. Today, particularly in our larger cities, postal workers labor in crowded, dismal, old fashioned buildings that are little short of disgraceful. Health services, employee facilities, training programs and other benefits enjoyed by the worker in private industry and in other Federal agencies are, all too often, unavailable to the postal worker. In an age when machines do the heavy work for private companies, the postal worker still shoulders, literally, the burden of the nation's mail. That mail fills more than a billion sacks a year; and the men and women who move those sacks need help.

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Postal employees must have a voice in determining their conditions of employment. They must be given a stake in the quality of the service the Department provides the public; they must be given a reason for pride in themselves and in the job they do. The time for action is now.

HIGHER DEFICITS AND INCREASING RATES

During all but seventeen years since 1838, when deficit financing became a way of life for the Post Office, the postal system has cost more than it has earned.

In this fiscal year, the Department will drain over a billion dollars from the national treasury to cover the deficit incurred in operating the Post Office. Over the last decade, the tax money used to shore up the postal system has amounted to more than eight billion dollars. Almost twice that amount will be diverted from the Treasury in the next ten years if the practices of the past are continued. We must not let that happen.

The money to meet these huge postal deficits comes directly out of the taxpayer's pocket -- regardless of how much he uses the mails. It is bad business, bad government, and bad politics to pour this kind of tax money into an inefficient postal service. Every taxpayer in the United States -- as well as every user of the mails -- has an important stake in seeing that the Federal Government institutes the kind of reform that is needed to give the nation a modern and well managed postal system. Without such a system Congress will either have to raise postage rates far above any level presently contemplated, or the taxpayers will have to shoulder the burden of paying postal deficits the like of which they have never seen before.

Neither alternative is acceptable. The nation simply cannot afford the cost of maintaining an inefficient postal system. The will of the Congress and the will of the people is clear. They want fast, dependable and low-cost mail service. They want an end to the continuing cycle of higher deficits and increasing rates.

QUALITY POSTAL SERVICE

The Post Office is a business that provides a vital service which its customers, like the customers of a private business, purchase directly. A well managed business provides dependable service; but complaints about the quality of postal service under existing procedures are widespread. While most mail ultimately arrives at its destination, there is no assurance that important mail will arrive on time; and late mail -- whether a birthday card or a proxy statement -- is often no better than lost mail.

Delays and breakdowns constantly threaten the mails. A complete breakdown in service did in fact occur in 1966 in one of our largest cities, causing severe economic damage and personal hardship. Similar breakdowns could occur at any time in many of our major post offices. A major modernization program is essential to insure against catastrophe in the Post Office.

A modern postal service will not mean fewer postal workers. Mail volume -- tied as it is to economic activity -- is growing at such a rate that there will be no cutback in postal jobs even with the most dramatic gains in postal efficiency. Without a modernized postal system, however, more than a quarter of a million new postal workers will be needed in the next decade simply to move the growing mountain of mail. The savings that can be realized by holding employment near present levels can and should mean more pay and increased benefits for the three quarters of a million men and women who will continue to work in the postal service.



OPPORTUNITY THROUGH REFORM

While the work of the Post Office is that of a business enterprise, its organization is that of a political department. Traditionally it has been run as a Cabinet agency of the United States Government -- one in which politics has been as important as efficient mail delivery. Under the present system, those responsible for managing the postal service do not have the authority that the managers of any enterprise must have over prices, wages, location of facilities, transportation and procurement activities and personnel policy.

Changes in our society have resulted in changes in the function of the Post Office Department. The postal system must be given a non-political management structure consistent with the job the postal system has to perform as a supplier of vital services to the public. Times change, and now is the time for change in the postal system.

I am, therefore, sending to the Congress reform legislation entitled the Postal Service Act of 1969.

POSTAL SERVICE ACT OF 1969

The reform that I propose represents a basic and sweeping change in direction; the ills of the postal service cannot be cured by partial reform.

The Postal Service Act of 1969 provides for:

- . removal of the Post Office from the Cabinet
- . creation of an independent Postal Service wholly owned by the Federal Government
- . new and extensive collective bargaining rights for postal employees
- . bond financing for major improvements
- . a fair and orderly procedure for changing postage rates, subject to Congressional review
- . regular reports to Congress to facilitate Congressional oversight of the postal system
- . a self-supporting postal system.

The new government-owned corporation will be known as the United States Postal Service. It will be administered by a nine-member board of directors selected without regard to political affiliation. Seven members of the board, including the chairman, will be appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. These seven members will select a full-time chief executive officer, who will join with the seven others to select a second full-time executive who will also serve on the board.

Employees will retain their Civil Service annuity rights, veterans preference, and other benefits.

The Postal Service is unique in character. Therefore, there will be for the first time in history, true collective bargaining in the postal system. Postal employees in every part of the United States will be given a statutory right to negotiate directly with management over wages and working conditions.

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A fair and impartial mechanism -- with provision for binding arbitration -- will be established to resolve negotiating impasses and disputes arising under labor agreements.

For the first time, local management will have the authority to work with employees to improve local conditions. A modernization fund adequate to the needs of the service will be available. The postal worker will finally take his rightful place beside the worker in private industry.

The Postal Service will become entirely self-supporting, except for such subsidies as Congress may wish to provide for specific public service groups. The Postal Service, like the Tennessee Valley Authority and similar public authorities, will be able to issue bonds as a means of raising funds needed for expansion and modernization of postal facilities and other purposes.

Proposals for changes in classes of mail or postage rates will be heard by expert rate commissioners, who will be completely independent of operating management. The Board of the Postal Service will review determinations made by the Rate Commissioners on rate and classification questions, and the Presidentially appointed members of the board will be empowered to modify such determinations if they consider it in the public interest to do so.

Congress will have express authority to veto decisions on rate and classification questions.

The activities of the Postal Service will be subject to Congressional oversight, and the Act provides for regular reports to Congress. The Postal Service and the rules by which it operates can, of course, be changed by law at any time.

TOWARD POSTAL EXCELLENCE

Removing the postal system from politics and the Post Office Department from the Cabinet is a sweeping reform.

Traditions die hard and traditional institutions are difficult to abandon. But tradition is no substitute for performance, and if our postal system is to meet the expanding needs of the 1970s, we must act now.

Legislation, by itself, will not move the mail. This must be done by the three-quarters of a million dedicated men and women who today wear the uniform of the postal service. They must be given the right tools -- financial, managerial and technological -- to do the job. The legislation I propose today will provide those tools.

There is no Democratic or Republican way of delivering the mail. There is only the right way.

This legislation will let the postal service do its job the right way, and I strongly recommend that it be promptly considered and promptly enacted.

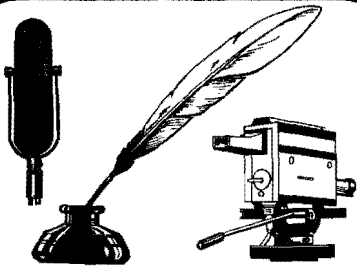
RICHARD NIXON

THE WHITE HOUSE,

May 27, 1969.

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CONGRESSMAN
GERALD R. FORD
HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER

**NEWS
RELEASE**

--FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE--
May 27, 1969

Remarks by Rep. Gerald R. Ford, R-Mich., Republican Leader, U.S. House of Reps.
on the floor of the House, Tuesday, May 27, 1969.

Mr. Speaker: It is often true that what we need the most for our own well-being we assiduously avoid. There is little question in my mind that complete re-direction of our postal system is, as President Nixon today has told us, "absolutely essential."

There is also little question in my mind that if the sweeping reforms proposed by the President are to become reality, it will only be because postal employes finally recognize that the proposed new United States Postal Service is in their own self-interest.

Mr. Speaker, the American people want a thorough-going change in the operations of the Post Office Department. They want improved, efficient, fast mail delivery. The taxpayers want postal reform. They are sick of subsidizing the Post Office Department to the tune of nearly a billion dollars a year. I don't think anyone will have to sell the President's proposed new Postal Service to the people.

But the President and all others who recognize the imperative need for putting delivery of the mail on a business basis will have to do a selling job on postal employes and the Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the proposed creation of a government corporation to run the United States Postal Service is an idea whose time has come. This is not a partisan political issue. Former Postmaster General Lawrence O'Brien strongly supports the new concept for an improved mail service.

Its time has come because all of the facts show postal reform to be in the enlightened self-interest of all of the American people, including our 750,000 postal employes.

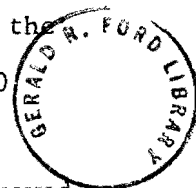
Regrettably I understand that representatives of postal employes have vowed to fight the proposal for a Postal Service Corporation down to the last mail bag. It is my guess that their views will change when they see what it will mean in terms of their own self-interest.

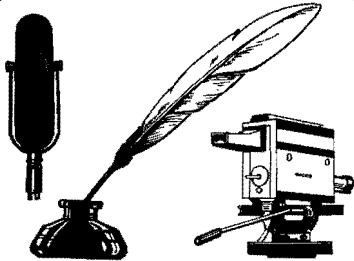
Whatever the significance for other federal employes, the fact remains that postal workers under the President's reform plan will be able to engage in true collective bargaining for the first time. In addition, the plan calls for binding arbitration of stalemated disputes.

As President Nixon expressed it, "The postal worker will finally take his rightful place beside the worker in private industry."

Mr. Speaker, the Congress must take every vestige of politics out of our postal system. Postal reform deserves the support of every member of Congress, regardless of party.

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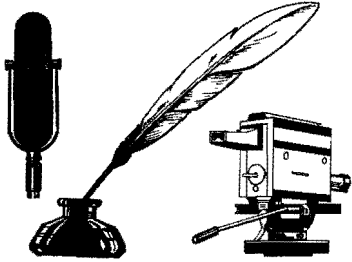
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