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CONGRESSMAN'S REPORT

By Morris K. Udall

NO POSTAL INCREASES THIS SESSION

The House Post office and Civil Service Committee, on which I serve, voted out September 7 a bill to increase postal rates and thus cut the postal deficit. It was not a very good bill but it was better than none. The bill will not be acted on in this session of Congress.

If we don't raise rates the post office deficit is going to hit \$1 billion a year in 1962. This is wrong, and it is serious. Budget deficits are made up of a number of items and this is one of the largest.

The Kennedy Administration had been pushing a bill to raise an additional \$741 million a year. The bill which emerged from the widely-split committee would raise \$521 million when all new rates were in effect.

PROPOSED RATES

As reported from committee, the postal bill would raise regular first class rates from 4 to 5 cents for letters, 3 to 4 cents for post cards. Airmail would be increased from 7 to 8 cents for letters, 5 to 6 cents for cards.

Higher rates would go into effect also for second class--newspapers, and magazines--and for third class--largely advertising circulars, catalogs, small parcels.

INJUSTICES

Regular first class and airmail now just about cover costs of handling. The proposed rates would boost revenues to 123 per cent of costs. However, it can be argued that certain intangibles, such as priority in delivery and the guarantee of secrecy, increase the value of first class service beyond measurable costs.

Even with the proposed higher rates, newspapers and magazines would still only pay 28 per cent of costs. They now pay 23 per cent.

Third class (so called "junk mail"), now paying 67 per cent of costs, would still pay only 78 per cent.

In the coming session I intend to introduce a new bill which will make all classes of mail pay their own way.

COMMUNIST MAIL

The committee's bill would have prohibited the mailing--regardless of postage--of material determined by the Attorney General to be Communist propaganda. The bill did not spell out how the Attorney General is to tell if an envelope contains Communist propaganda.

I belong to a subcommittee which is scheduled, in the coming months, to study the mailing of Communist propaganda. Meanwhile, I am asking persons who receive such propaganda in the mail to send it to my office along with the envelope in which it came.