

REMARKS BY HONORABLE JOHN E. FOGARTY, 2nd DISTRICT, RHODE ISLAND,  
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON POST OFFICE AND CIVIL SERVICE, 3/1/54.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee. As a Member of Congress, I am very much interested in the legislation now pending before your Committee proposing pay increases for postal employees. As a Member of Congress, I was much pleased when I first heard that Postmaster General Summerfield had proposed a pay increase to the Committee. I can assure you, however, that this pleasure was rapidly dissipated when I had an opportunity to study the Fry proposal. There are many sections of the proposal that cause me deep concern.

I do not believe that any member of this Committee or Congress can with good conscience support any proposal that grants a salary increase of \$5,150 to one employee and \$10 to another. Nor do I believe that we, as Members of Congress, can support a proposal that gives extremely small increases to those in the lower pay brackets and excessively high increases to those in the higher pay brackets.

I was shocked to learn that the proposal has downgrading features. The proponents of the plan piously proclaim that no one in the service will have his salary reduced, and then proceed to set up a lower scale for those who will be hired tomorrow. The downgrading feature of the bill is proudly set forth as an achievement by the authors of the proposal who state on page 17:

"The total estimated initial added cost of installing and launching the pay plan will therefore amount to not more than 4 percent of annual payroll, or \$80,000,000. This increased payroll cost, however, will tend to level off and decrease slightly over the years as the new ranges take effect at all levels."

I was dismayed to read that the plan apparently proposes to revive some of the practices in existence prior to the establishment of Civil Service. On page 4 of the proposal, we find this alarming statement:

"Although it is traditional in the postal service for supervisory positions to be filled by employees advancing up through the ranks, there should be no arbitrary barriers to prevent these positions being filled if necessary by qualified personnel who have gained the necessary experience outside of the postal service."

Where in the name of common sense can you train men for service in postal operations except in the Postal Service? There is no comparable operation in the United States. Are we to have a return to the "Spoils System" in the Federal Government. Is this "necessary experience outside the postal service" gained in political committees and parties? I do not believe that it can have any other meaning.

Further reading has convinced me that the proposal is a dangerous one. Employees will have no security in classification; they will have no protection in law. They will be the helpless pawns in the hands of the administrative chiefs.

I am further convinced on reading the report that it is not a study but rather it is an attempt to establish a thesis. Every trick and artifice is resorted to to make the wages of postal employees

look good comparatively. The wages of teachers, a group of fine people whose meager pay has become a national disgrace and a national scandal, are selected as a basis of comparison. The average salary of regular clerks and carriers has been used rather than the average of all clerks and carriers--today 35 percent of all clerks and carriers are Indefinites or substitutes; yet the Fry company has set up an average pay using only 65 per cent of the employees, and these 65 per cent the higher paid employees.

Furthermore, it is evident that it is absolutely impossible for a small handful of men to conduct a study in the limited time at their disposal and come forth with a sound proposal. According to my information, the firm of George Fry and Associates was retained by the Post Office Department in November. By mid-February, they presented a detailed plan to this Committee. The study group was composed of eight men--four from Fry and four from Governmental agencies other than the Post Office. These eight men, totally unfamiliar with postal operations, report that they analyzed 1200 positions and studied 46 installations. Does anyone seriously believe that this is possible? The results of the study reveal an almost complete ignorance of strictly postal operations. They know something of stenographic work and a few other fringe activities. They reveal a shocking lack of understanding of clerk and carrier duties and responsibility. The low evaluation they place on the functions of these two groups are sufficient to discredit the entire study.

Postal efficiency and economy depend principally upon the knowledge, dexterity and accuracy of postal clerks and letter carriers;

Each mistake adds to the cost of handling. Intelligent men with extraordinarily trained memories and quick reflexes make for a good service. We must pay adequately to secure this type of employee. The super man at the top is a myth of modern management--it is the men who do the work who make the record.

I sincerely recommend to this Committee that they do not accept this secretly and hurriedly conceived program of Fry and Associates. According to my information, the employees were not consulted and the Fry plan is the work of amateurs in postal operations. Let's have a real reclassification program under the supervision of Congress, so that the welfare of the service and the welfare of the employees will be given careful consideration. Let's not accept that hastily conceived and poorly concocted program.

In the meantime, postal employees sorely need a pay increase. Vote them their pay increase and study reclassification. I hope that the Committee will not waste too much time on the disjointed Fry proposal, but will proceed rapidly to pay legislation so that we will be able to act on a pay measure in the very near future.