

Senators Should Be Careful in Letters

By Drew Pearson

There are three morals for Senators to learn from the Dodd investigation. They are:

Moral No. 1. Don't write letters just to make someone happy.

Moral No. 2. Don't sign letters carelessly that your assistant writes for you.

Moral No. 3. Don't be afraid to be ungrateful to a campaign contributor. Just because he is generous during an election doesn't mean he can't get you into an awful lot of trouble.

The above morals are inspired by the raft of letters written by various Senators to Gen. Julius Klein, the Chicago public relations man and West German agent.

Some of the letters obviously were written by Senate assistants to save the Senators' time. Some were written just to be nice. Most of them shouldn't have been written. All of them made the writer look foolish.

Take the letter written by Sen. Abe Ribicoff (D-Conn.), a colleague of Tom Dodd's and a man who had reason to know something of Klein's background. Abe gushed all over the printed page.

So did Hubert Humphrey,



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then Senator from Minnesota. The Vice President has now told friends that of the one hundred or more letters exchanged with Klein, all were written by assistants except one. This one included the phrase "with equal candor my dear friend Julius," and then went on to say, "I did not need any lecture from the German Ambassador."

Humphrey had made a speech criticizing the sale of West German products to Communist countries, and the German Ambassador had written him in opposition. "I dislike and resent these letters that come from the Ambassador," Humphrey wrote the West German agent.

Obviously this letter was written by Humphrey himself.

However, the Vice President is still leaving his assistant the job of writing letters in the Dodd-Klein case. Only last week he wrote one, in response to Dodd's stating that Humphrey had given the Senator an OK to leave Washington during the crucial 1964 civil rights debate.

But Humphrey's assistant did not put in his letter the fact that Dodd had told Humphrey he would be away only one weekend plus a day, or that he was going on a mission for General Klein. Instead, Dodd was gone long enough to miss 13 quorum calls at a time when the civil rights debate was at its height and the Administration needed his vote

to help break the Southern filibuster.

The Vice President is a very busy man. Perhaps he should have his time by signing fewer letters.

Note—Illustrative of the Senate habit of sending out letters never seen by a Senator was one mailed by Sen. Eugene McCarthy (D-Minn.), March 11, 1966, to J. Wentworth, Washington, D.C., stating "the remarks attributed to me by Mr. Pearson are wholly untrue." The remarks referred to the attempt by McCarthy and other "dove" Senators to keep the President from getting too deeply involved in Vietnam. The day before that letter was written McCarthy, talking to me about this particular column, had confirmed what I said.

Lead Pollution

The Dodd investigation is not the only place where conflicts of interest have been revealed recently. During the Senate air pollution investigation, Sen. Ed Muskie (D-Me.), revealed that the American Petroleum Institute has put up \$480,000 for the U.S. Bureau of Mines to test the lead in gasoline.

The disclosure was made by Dr. Walter Hibbard, director of the Bureau of Mines.

"A public agency doing research is financed in part by private industry?" inquired Sen. Muskie, obviously surprised.

"That is right," affirmed Dr. Hibbard.

Further questioning by Chairman Muskie disclosed "this kind of activity" in the Bureau of Mines goes back to 1923 when the bureau entered into an agreement with General Motors and Ethyl Gasoline Corp., in cooperation with the U.S. Public Health Service, to make experimental studies.

Dr. Hibbard explained that "we have found this . . . very effective in promoting the wide use of our resources."

"And as a way of supplementing your own financial resources," added Sen. Muskie. He had just learned that the Bureau of Mines had never asked Congress for these funds.

"Is this a deliberate choice as between the budget financing and industry financing of these research projects?" asked Muskie.

"It is a very effective promoter of technology transfer," replied Dr. Hibbard.

Merry-Go-Round

U.S. Ambassador William Rountree has cabled the State Department that the South African government doesn't intend to let Sen. Robert Kennedy (D-N.Y.) keep his promise to return to South Africa. Government officials have notified the American Embassy informally that Kennedy will not be permitted to return.

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