

Goldwater Bars State Appointee

By Chalmers M. Roberts
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The State Department has bowed to pressure from Sen. Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.) and withdrawn the appointment of a new department spokesman whom the senator found "personally obnoxious" because of a story he wrote for The New York Times during the 1964 presidential campaign.

Goldwater, who discussed the case with Secretary of State William P. Rogers on the telephone, wrote the Secretary that he could expect "trouble" if he went through with the appointment. Rogers' special assistant, Robert J. McCloskey, said last night that the Secretary had left the decision up to him and other department officials.

The man in question is Arthur J. Olsen, 49, a former United Press and New York Times foreign correspondent in Germany, Poland and Argentina. The offending article was one Olsen wrote from Bonn, West Germany, for the Times on July 14, 1964. It stated that Goldwater, then on the verge of winning the Republican presidential nomination at the GOP convention July 15, had been in "frequent and friendly correspondence" with the Sudeten German leader Hans Christoph Seebohm and "other conservative West German politicians."

Seebohm, now dead, then was the transport minister in the cabinet of Chancellor Ludwig Erhard but had just been chastised by the German chancellor for a militant speech to the Sudeten-German expellees from Czechoslovakia. Seebohm had demanded the return to Germany of those border lands of Czechoslovakia that Hitler had taken but that were returned at the end of World War II.

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ARTHUR J. OLSEN

... appointment withdrawn

OLSEN, From A1

The Seebohm incident, together with reports that Goldwater would spend a post-convention vacation in Germany with Lt. Gen. William Quinn, an old friend, and accounts of approval of the senator's nomination by right-wing German groups, all helped portray the GOP standard bearer as an extremist, much to the joy of the Democrats.

At the time Goldwater denounced as the "damnedest lies" reports of such alleged links between himself and right-wing Germans.

Goldwater raised his objection to Olsen shortly after McCloskey, a former spokesman for State, announced Olsen's appointment on Aug. 18. In an initial letter to Rogers the senator termed Olsen "personally obnoxious," a term usually reserved to block appointments subject to Senate confirmation.

The spokesman's post, however, is not subject to Senate confirmation. Olsen is a Foreign Service reserve officer subject to annual appointment. He had not applied for full Foreign Service status, which would require Senate confirmation. He has been public affairs officer for European affairs since 1966 and has been highly regarded by the press corps, many of whose members had suggested him for the spokesman's post when the last incumbent, Carl Bartch, left for the National War College.

Goldwater's second letter to Rogers told the Secretary he could expect "trouble" if the appointment went through, but he did not explain the remark. To one of the letters, he attached a copy of a page proof from his forthcoming book "The Conscience of a Majority," containing an account of the Seebohm incident and a condemnation of Olsen's story as "100 per cent false."

Rogers was in San Clemente, Calif., yesterday with President Nixon and would not respond directly to a query from The Washington Post. Instead he directed Mc-

Closkey to read a statement
McCloskey was to make today.

It read, in McCloskey's name:

"On Aug. 18 we announced
the appointment of Arthur
Olsen as director of the office
of public relations effective
Aug. 31. Since then the depart-
ment has been made aware of
objections to Mr. Olsen's ap-
pointment. After serious re-
view of these objections and
in light of all considerations,
Mr. Olsen and I have agreed
that he will remain in his
present position as public af-
fairs adviser for the bureau of
European affairs.

"I want to say that the de-
partment retains full confid-
ence in Mr. Olsen and to em-
phasize that the objections to
the proposed appointment had
no relationship to his perform-
ance as an officer of the De-
partment of State. His record
as a department officer has
been beyond reproach."

McCloskey discussed the
case with two senior depart-
ment officials as well as with
Rogers. They were Deputy
Under Secretary for Adminis-
tration William B. Macomber
and Assistant Secretary for
Congressional Relations David
M. Abshire.

Macomber could not be
reached yesterday. Abshire
said that "I would suppose the
basic consideration would be
the Secretary's view of the
objections that were raised.

Obviously if you have an
objection from a senior person
it would have to be considered
on its merits and also the de-
gree of difficulties that mak-
ing the appointment would
make."

Olsen said yesterday that he
had nothing to say "at the mo-
ment."

Others also were involved.
And one of them commented
last night that "this is one
of the most incredible messes
I've ever seen." Another
source said that Goldwater
had intimated to Rogers on
the phone that he had spoken
to President Nixon but this
could not be confirmed at San
Clemente, although White
House Press Secretary Ronald
L. Ziegler was aware of the
case.

An early draft of the Mc-
Closkey statement would have
stressed the interest of the de-
partment in good relations with
Congress, a Rogers specialty,
and would have added that
that desire overrode the de-
partment's wish to see Olsen
take the post as spokesman.

Goldwater's objections were
said to have come "out of the
blue" immediately after the
appointment was announced.
There had been no considera-
tion that Olsen's record as a
newsperson would affect his po-
sition at State.