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The Opened Mail From Congress

Washington

The Washington Star-News reported yesterday that the chairman of the Federal Power Commission has admitted his office routinely intercepts and opens mail from members of Congress addressed to members of the FPC staff.

The admission, by FPC chairman John N. Nassikas, was made in correspondence between him and Senator Henry M. Jackson (Dem-Wash.), chairman of the Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, the Star-News said.

The procedure may well

be unique among federal independent regulatory agencies, the Star-News said. Checks with the Interstate Commerce Commission, Civil Aeronautics Board and Securities and Exchange Commission show that mail addressed to individual agency employees — whether from congressmen or not — goes directly to the individual.

Nassikas defended the procedure on the grounds that in the past "important inquiries from members of Congress were sometimes lost or delayed . . . in the course of internal processing . . ."

Associated Press