

U. S. Court Test Likely On State Agency Probe

By ROBERT K. WALSH
Star Staff Writer

A Federal Court test of the extent of a congressional committee's power to probe a State agency was in prospect today as a result of contempt citations voted by the House against three Port of New York Authority officials.

Most House Judiciary Committee Democrats and Republicans and many other members of both parties, including prominent "States Rights" champions from the South, contended the House action had nothing to do with any issue of Federal interference in State and local matters.

Five Governors Protest

But Republican Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller of New York, Democratic Gov. Robert G. Meyner of New Jersey, and former New York Govs. Harrison, Dewey and Lehman protested not only against the contempt citations but also against the House committee's demand for certain "internal" records and communications of the Port Authority.

Because of refusal to provide such information sought by a judiciary subcommittee investigating activities of the Port Authority, contempt of Congress citations were voted late yesterday against S. Sloan Colt, unpaid Port Authority board chairman; Austin J. Tobin, \$60,000-a-year executive director, and Joseph G. Carty, secretary.

The House voted 270-124 to cite Mr. Colt and 190-60 against Mr. Tobin. The citation against Mr. Carty was adopted by voice vote. The next step is to refer the cases to the Justice Department which must present them to a grand jury for possible indictment and trial in Federal court here. The maximum penalty for conviction would be one year imprisonment and a \$1,000 fine.

The roll call vote on the Colt citation showed close divisions in delegations of the two States most directly concerned. The New York delegation split 21 for and 19 against the citation, with three others not voting. The New Jersey delegation vote was eight for the contempt citation and six against.

Defend Committee

The debate yesterday was highlighted by a defense of the committee by its Democratic and Republican leaders, Chairman Celler of New York and Representative McCulloch of Ohio. They were supported by a Southern Democrat, Representative Willis of Louisiana, in declaring that the committee had ample power to investigate the Port Authority.

They maintained also that the material requested from the Port Authority officers was pertinent to the investigation. They said the committee and not those witnesses were responsible for determining the pertinency of questions. They added that the three officials

were not within their rights to refuse to provide the information, even though acting under orders of Govs. Rockefeller and Meyner.

Mr. Celler charged that the two Governors were "playing fast and loose" with the committee in complaining in telegrams to all House members yesterday that they were denied an ample opportunity to appear at hearings. The chairman recalled that they had been invited to do so and that he suggested a date as recently as August 8. He reported that Gov. Rockefeller sent word he could not come before August 29. Mr. Celler commented that Congress would be close to adjournment by then and have no chance to consider the contempt citations.

Assails Port Authority

Mr. Celler described the Port Authority as "great propagandists" who have tried to pressure Congress and the public against any investigation. He asserted that "they lie in their teeth when they charge that such an investigation would affect every State, county and city in the country" by enlarging the scope of congressional inquiry into local affairs.

Mr. McCulloch told the House that "a false issue of States rights" had been raised. He explained that the Port Authority was originally set up in 1922 under a New York-New Jersey company approved by Congress. He contended that Congress has a right to investigate the Authority and to demand information it deems pertinent to the inquiry. He noted that the Port Authority in recent years has branched out into many fields, such as airport development, not envisioned in the original company.

"A congressional committee has been told it is none of our business," the Ohio Republican said. "The committee has been refused copies of contracts and other data. We are entitled to know if interstate commerce has been burdened, if contracts have been let to the lowest bidders, and why bridge tolls have not been lowered for the benefit of taxpayers who have been paying for many years. The committee has been very careful not to exceed the limits of its jurisdiction. But we have come to the stage where a court test is inevitable."

Other members recalled that the investigation was initiated at the request of the New Jer-

sey delegation in the House last February. Representative Cahill, Republican of New Jersey, said this resulted from reports that the Port Authority planned to build a jet airport in "one of the most desirable residential sections" of New Jersey.

Mr. Celler denied that the controversy was merely a feud between him and some Port Authority officials, or between Congress and the Governors.

"We are not persecutors or prosecutors," he said. "We don't want to send anyone to jail. But we want these records to determine what has been going on in the Port Authority all these years. Are we going to be men or mice?"

Members who sided with the views of Govs. Rockefeller and Meyner contended the matter involved a basic constitutional question touching on the "power of Congress to pry into internal workings of a bi-State agency." They warned that adoption of the contempt citations would set a dangerous

precedent for congressional interference with State activities in every State.

Representative Stratton, Democrat of New York, maintained that the prerogatives and responsibilities of Congress must be upheld but that in this instance he did not like "the way this matter is being handled."

"I believe it is improper, unseemly and unnecessary under such circumstances to try to resolve a constitutional question as complex as this in this way and by criminal contempt means. Surely there is some other way to resolve this issue in a satisfactory and dignified fashion than by voting hastily, in the closing days of this session, to issue criminal contempt citations for distinguished public servants."

One of the most prominent of the Southern advocates of "States Rights," Representative Colmer, Democrat of Mississippi, could not resist the temptation to take a verbal jab at Gov. Rockefeller. He denied

Indonesian Envoy Calls on President

By the Associated Press

Indonesian Ambassador Moe-karto Notowidigdo paid a farewell call on President Eisenhower today.

The Ambassador is leaving Washington at the end of this month for a visit home before becoming Ambassador to India. He told reporters he discussed a variety of matters with Mr. Eisenhower, including the dispute between Indonesia and the Netherlands over West Irian.

that the Port Authority issue involved Federal interference of the kind he said was being used against the South in civil rights cases.

But he added: "I wonder what Gov. Rockefeller thinks about Federal interference now. Surely the chickens have come home to roost."

13 Witnesses Cited by House

By the Associated Press

Thirteen witnesses who refused to answer questions of the House Committee on Un-American Activities in Puerto Rico last November were cited for contempt of Congress yesterday.

All the witnesses had refused to recognize the jurisdiction of the committee in Puerto Rico. The committee was investigating Communist activities in the island.

The citations go to the Justice Department, which will make the decision whether to prosecute. Conviction could carry a \$1,000 fine and a year in jail.

The citations were voted individually by the House and all but one was approved unanimously by a voice vote. A roll call vote forced on the other one produced a vote of 382-0, with Representative Meyer, Democrat of Vermont, voting "present."

THE EVENING STAR
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A-7
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Robert Frost In Line for Gold Medal

Congress expects to complete action, perhaps this week, on a bill authorizing a gold medal for Robert Frost in recognition of his poetry, legislative leaders indicated today.

But Congress probably will adjourn without acting on a proposal dearer to his heart, a National Academy of Culture.

House Banking Committee Chairman Spence, Democrat of Kentucky, plans to seek prompt House approval of a Senate bill providing \$2,500 for a gold medal that President Eisenhower would present to the 86-

year-old New England poet. The House committee late yesterday approved the bill passed by the Senate last month.

Sponsored by Republican Senators Saltonstall of Massachusetts and Aiken and Prouty of Vermont, the bill acclaims Mr. Frost's poetry for having "enriched the culture of the United States and the philosophy of the world." Mr. Frost currently is serving as an honorary consultant to the Library of Congress.

The bill urged by Mr. Frost to establish a National Academy of Culture is still in the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee. Members indicated today that the measure is unlikely to come out before Congress adjourns. Mr. Frost appeared before the committee earlier this year in behalf of the bill.

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46.⁹⁵

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19.⁹⁵

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Here is a truly wonderful selection of 55% Dacron polyester, 45% worsted slacks. Our collection includes pleated and pleatless styles in solid shades and the newest of checks and plaids. We have them in the newest tones of olive, grey, brown and blue.

12.⁹⁵

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'15

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