

Mr. Moss. And you have held appointive posts prior to becoming a member of the Federal Power Commission.

Mr. SWIDLER. Not Presidential appointments, sir, this is my only Presidential appointment.

Mr. Moss. I said appointive.

Mr. SWIDLER. I have been an employee of various Government agencies for many years, sir.

Mr. Moss. To your knowledge, is it unusual for a person holding an appointment, upon reaching a decision to retire or not to seek reappointment, is it unusual for one to inform in advance and, in the course of the letter of information, express views as to the field in which they operate?

Mr. SWIDLER. I do not recall any letters similar to this one, in my experience.

Mr. Moss. That is not what I asked you, Mr. Swidler. I asked you if it was unusual, if a man retires to not seek reelection, perhaps as much as a year ahead, he informs his constituents—is it unusual for him to issue in connection with that statement of intent to retire a bit of advice to his constituents?

Mr. SWIDLER. To the extent that I have never seen anything like this before, I would say—

Mr. Moss. You have never seen anything like this?

Mr. SWIDLER. No, sir; I think it is very unusual.

Mr. Moss. Well, I have seen letters informing people that they are not going to seek reappointment, commenting upon personal views gleaned not only from the specific service but from allied interests.

Do you think it is improper that a person do this?

Mr. SWIDLER. Mr. Moss, I tried to make clear in my testimony that what I thought was improper about it was that the letter was not intended to be helpful, either to the agency or to the President, but was intended to imply—

Mr. Moss. How do you know what the intent was, sir?

Mr. SWIDLER. Because he states, sir, and this is the way everybody has interpreted it and I do not think it is susceptible of any other interpretation—

Mr. Moss. When you use the term "everybody," I want you specifically to exclude me. So we must now concede that it does not apply to everybody.

Mr. SWIDLER. Everybody but you, sir.

Mr. Moss. Well, I have talked with others who do not agree with that, so it must then broaden. It is not everybody but me; it is some other than you and perhaps others present here. I do not think you can even say you have reached the point where a consensus of interpretation of this letter is well developed. Or do you think you have?

Mr. SWIDLER. Sir, I know the interpretation that has been given by it in the press, I know what my family and my friends interpret the letter as saying, I know what my fellow Commissioners think.

It seems to me that the reflections I see of the letter indicate that it was intended to embarrass and to imply that there were serious charges against his fellow Commissioners.

Now, if members of this committee did not so consider it, I do not understand why you are having this hearing.