

1951

Red Tape Kept U. S. Worker From Writing to Korea G. I.s

WASHINGTON, Dec. 26 (UP).—Rep. Allan Oakley Hunter, R., Calif., related today what he termed the "prize story" of government red tape.

It seems there was a Purple Heart veteran named Fred, who worked in the Agriculture Department. Fred decided it would be a nice, helpful thing if he and others in his office would write some letters to soldiers in Korea.

What happened to Fred, as the story was told by Rep. Hunter in his weekly report to newspapers in his district, follows:

"The Agriculture Recreation Committee heard of it and ruled they would have to supervise the project. They decided, too, that all Agriculture employees should write letters, and that they should adopt the 1st Marine Division, obtain their names and write to them.

They All Considered It

"The Marines, however, referred the deal to the Defense Department. The Defense public relations office, its civil affairs office and finally the civil liaison office 'considered' it, and at last a colonel promised help if Fred could get a letter of authority from Agriculture.

"This had taken three months, and Fred said he guessed he'd start over with just the fellows in his office, but his boss warned him he 'couldn't go over people's heads.' By the time Fred got his credentials from Agriculture the friendly colonel had been transferred, and no one in the Defense Department could find letter writing 'under the purview' of their offices.

"Defeated, Fred went back to the Marines, who said they dared not touch it since Defense had turned it down.

"Finally Fred wrote to a chaplain in Korea, asking for the

names of G. I.s who got little or no mail. In due time the chaplain's reply came. He couldn't furnish names—for security reasons."

Dr. James Stallings, president of the Agriculture Employees Recreation Association, said Rep. Hunter had the story about right. It wasn't Fred but Ed, however, who started the ill-fated project. Ed, whose last name is Daugherty, went to work on it in January. He abandoned it some months later after writing not one, but twenty, chaplains.

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