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Illustrations enlarged

# Red tape hits again; check back 7 times

DALLAS (AP)—Candy Postlethwaite has never seen a day of military service, but she's discovering the meaning of red tape. She has a government check that she can't cash, can't destroy and can't seem to give back to the government.

Four weeks ago Mrs. Postlethwaite received a Veterans Administration check made out to a Ronald Lee Vest. She put it back on

the mailbox for the postman to pick up on his next round.

"I got it back four or five days later, in a different envelope," she said Monday. When she telephoned the VA office, Mrs. Postlethwaite was told to send the stray check there.

But that didn't work. She received it back again, in the same envelope.

Next she tried sending the check

to its originator, the Treasury Department office in Kansas City, along with a certified letter saying she "did not know this person and this person did not live here."

The check was again returned, in a different envelope.

"Then I took it down to the White Rock postal station and gave it to the postmaster," she said.

It came back again.

"Then I took it down personally to the Veterans Administration, again—and I got it back again."

"This was last week, and they told me to mail it to state VA headquarters in Waco. And this morning I received it back again."

After the seventh delivery, Mrs. Postlethwaite phoned the Dallas VA office one more time. "They just said, 'Well, I don't know what else we can do,'" she said.

"If nobody wants this back, I'll be glad to use it, because our medical bills are phenomenal."

But she's hesitant to try that.

At one point she says she called the Secret Service and told an agent she intended to destroy the check. She says she was told, "You can't destroy it; that's government property."

All right, she'd keep it, she told the agent. He replied, "You can't keep it, it's not yours."

Mrs. Postlethwaite is awaiting further instructions.

# War on smallpox nears final victory

NEW DELHI, India (AP)—Doctors directing a massive war on smallpox say they are nearing a final victory that would wipe the disease from the earth.

An international campaign to track down the scourge and halt its spread has drastically reduced the number of cases in India and the three other countries—Ethiopia, Pakistan and Bangladesh—still afflicted by the ancient and deadly disease.

The drop has been so dramatic over the last three months and the remaining pockets of infection so reduced that specialists predict they can eliminate the disease altogether by early next year.

Once gone, smallpox would be unlikely to return, since it can be communicated only by human beings. Health authorities say such a victory would mark the first time a wide-spread disease has been eradicated from the world.

North and South America were declared free of smallpox in August 1973, 28 months after the last case

was reported in the Western Hemisphere. The last case in the United States was in 1949.

"I would put it at 80-85 per cent certain that we will be at zero by the end of December," said Dr. Donald A. Henderson, head of the World Health Organization's smallpox eradication program.

Henderson, interviewed during an Indian inspection trip from his Geneva headquarters, pointed to these statistics to buttress his claim:

-Smallpox fighters recorded 55,127 cases worldwide in May, 48,800 in India alone. Only 5,300 cases were recorded in September, 4,823 in India.

-The medical teams knew of 8,300 outbreaks of one or more cases in India last June. They now know of only 1,150.

-Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, the two Indian states considered the world's most infected area, had 959 new outbreaks a week last May. Now health officials are finding fewer than 100 a week.

# Bentsen campaigns in N.H.

NASHUA, N.H. (AP)—Democratic U. S. Sen. Lloyd M. Bentsen of Texas was to sample his presidential potential Wednesday in New Hampshire, the state with the nation's leadoff presidential primary.

Bentsen, on his second visit to New Hampshire since March, was to spend 11 hours campaigning for the state's Democratic candidates for governor, the U.S. Senate, and House.

Bentsen, 53, a relative newcomer to national politics, was elected to the Senate in 1970. He served six years in the House from 1948 to 1954.

His schedule Wednesday included a news conference, speeches at colleges in Nashua and Durham, tours of a factory and a veteran's club in Manchester, and dedication of a hospital in Nashua.

The candidates in whose behalf Bentsen was to campaign were Richard Leonard, the gubernatorial candidate; John Durkin, the U.S. Senate nominee; and Helen Bliss and Norman D'Amours, candidates for the House.

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