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NEWS from
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FROM THE NATION'S CAPITOL
BY SENATOR BOB DOLE

DISPUTED SENATE ELECTION

One of the last things I would have expected to be reporting on to the people of Kansas is an election for United States Senator from the State of New Hampshire. But, though it has not received much coverage in the press, this issue is dominating the Senate's time and should be of interest to everyone for that reason alone.

The 1974 Senate election in New Hampshire was contested by Louis Wyman, a Republican Congressman and John Durkin, the former Democrat State Insurance Commissioner. The election night count gave a narrow victory to Wyman. A subsequent recount requested by Durkin reversed the result and Durkin was declared the winner by ten votes. A third count, by the State Ballot Commission, the final State authority in such matters, was requested by Wyman and the result this time was a two vote Wyman victory.

Durkin then appealed the matter to the U.S. Senate which has authority to judge the qualifications of its members under the Constitution. A Senate Committee has spent five months studying the issue and it has now been brought to the full Senate which must consider issues the Committee could not resolve among its members.

PARTISAN REACTION

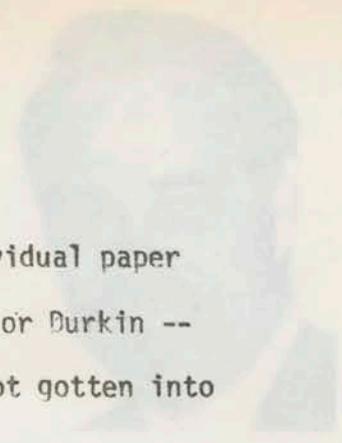
As might be expected, the issue has provoked strong partisan sentiment with Republicans lining up on one side and Democrats on the other. The Republicans argue the November result is impossible to determine and so the seat should be declared vacant and another election held in New Hampshire.

The Democrats argue that the Senate has an obligation under the Constitution to try and settle the matter and, though they acknowledge it will be difficult and time-consuming, they argue that the Constitution requires us to try.

Though the issues are clouded and confused, one thing is clear. It is going to take quite a bit of time before this contested election is decided. Debate on a

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Senate Resolution listing 35 separate issues -- 27 of these are individual paper ballots that the Rules Committee couldn't decide to count for Wyman or Durkin -- began on June 12th, and after a full week of debate the Senate had not gotten into any of these individual questions.

OTHER WORK HALTED

Because of the special nature of this issue, most other Senate work will effectively come to a halt while it is being debated. Committees will not meet. Other matters will not be debated.

In my view, it's unfortunate that we can't find a better way, and I have said as much during the debate. Such matters as the energy crisis, where there is an urgent need for serious legislative attention, should not wait until the Senate finds time to get around to them. They need action now.

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