

# O'LEARY IS OUSTED; MOSES GETS POST

**Mayor Dismisses Triborough  
Bridge Official as Deutsch  
Finds He Shirked Duties.**

## FUSION CONTROLS BOARD

**Burkan Only Tammany Man  
Left—High Salaries and Need-  
less Jobs Denounced.**

The LaGuardia administration gained control of the Triborough Bridge Authority yesterday when the Mayor dismissed John Stratton O'Leary as a commissioner and replaced him with Park Commissioner Robert Moses.

Mr. O'Leary was removed after Aldermanic President Bernard S. Deutsch had informed the Mayor that he had found many of the charges against the official justified. Paul Blanshard, Commissioner of Accounts, had accused Mr. O'Leary of inefficiency and neglect of duty. Although Mr. Deutsch reported that the public hearings on the charges had not substantiated all of them, he said there was sufficient ground for removal.

Similar charges made earlier by Mr. Blanshard against Fred C. Lemmerman, another O'Brien appointee to the Bridge Authority, resulted in the resignation of that official. He was replaced by George McLaughlin, former Police Commissioner and now an active Fusionist.

The appointment of Mr. Moses in addition gives Fusion two of the three places on the Authority, leaving Tammany represented only by Nathan Burkan, a district leader in the Seventeenth Assembly District. Mr. Burkan said last night that he would not resign unless Federal authorities asked for his resignation.

### Moses Serves in Four Jobs.

Mr. Moses, by virtue of his most recent appointment, becomes one of the busiest officials in the Fusion ranks. In addition to being a commissioner of the Triborough Bridge Authority, he holds three other positions. He is Park Commissioner for the entire city, chairman of the State Council of Parks and president of the Long Island State Park Commission. Only the Park Commissionership is a salaried post, the others carrying no compensation.

By special act of the Legislature, Mr. Moses was permitted to hold his State posts at the same time he served the city. In appointing him on the Bridge Authority, the Mayor assumed that the legislation was broad enough to cover the extra position.

Mr. O'Leary disputed the Mayor's right to remove him. He recalled that the Mayor, in turning over the hearings in his case to Mr. Deutsch, had admitted that he was prejudiced. He said he had agreed to have Mr. Deutsch conduct the hear-

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ings and make a final determination.

Instead, he said, Mr. Deutsch had acted as a referee or master in the proceedings and had transmitted his report to the Mayor. Had he known that this procedure would be followed, Mr. O'Leary said, he would not have consented to the arrangement. His removal, however, is wholly within the Mayor's discretion, and Mr. O'Leary's chances of a successful appeal from the ouster order were rated at zero at City Hall.

## Hopes to Elaborate Project.

In announcing the appointment of Mr. Moses the Mayor said:

"I have appointed Robert Moses to the vacant position on the Triborough Bridge Authority. He was chairman of Governor Lehman's emergency public works commission, largely responsible for the drafting and passage of the Triborough Bridge Authority Act, and for the inclusion in the contract of more adequate approaches in place of millions of dollars of unnecessary granite.

"He is in charge of the State parkway approaches to the bridge in Queens and of the development of Randall's and Ward's islands as city parks to be accessible by the bridge.

"He is an old associate of Commissioner McLaughlin and will work with him. I believe that with these appointments this great project will be rapidly completed without delay, politics or patronage.

"I hope that one effect of Mr. Moses's appointment will be to save enough money on the bridge construction to build an adequate parkway approach through the Bronx, connecting the bridge with the Westchester Parkway system by way of Pelham Bay Park. There is no reason why the approaches through the Bronx should not be just as adequate and attractive as those in Queens."

Since Mr. Blanshard trained his guns on the bridge authority, Mr. Lemmerman has resigned, Mr. O'Leary has been removed, Joseph Johnson, general manager has resigned and George H. Coombs Jr., counsel to the authority, has resigned. The set-up is now distinctly different from the one created by Mayor O'Brien, who made the first appointments.

## Neglect of Duty Charged.

In substantiating the charges against Mr. O'Leary, Mr. Deutsch made clear that there was no evidence of any personal dishonesty on his part. Rather, the official was taxed with failure to grasp his duties as a commissioner and with

neglecting to inform himself of the nature of his work.

Charges that political favoritism had been exercised in the selection of the Authority's personnel were substantiated by the testimony that John F. Curry, Tammany leader, had been consulted on Mr. Johnson's appointment. In addition, Mr. O'Leary had told engineers they could obtain work from the Authority by seeing the Democratic county chairmen in Manhattan, the Bronx and Queens.

Although the Mayor had given Mr. O'Leary a further opportunity to be heard at 11:30 yesterday morning, the latter did not appear at City Hall. He contented himself with objecting to the Mayor's action by letter. Mr. Burkan, who represented Mr. O'Leary as counsel, also was absent. Reached later at his home in Great Neck, he said:

"If Colonel H. M. Waite, the Deputy PWA Administrator, indicates that he is unsatisfied with my handling of the Triborough Bridge project and the Federal moneys for the bridge, I shall gladly resign.

"I shall not do so, and see no reason for doing so, unless Colonel Waite notified me in writing that my services are not satisfactory to the Federal Government. I have been two months on the job and have got the project well under way. I took it at the sacrifice of a lucrative law practice. I made that sacrifice to put thousands of men to work and for that reason only. I have no comment on the appointment of Mr. Moses."

## Deutsch Assails Patronage.

Mr. Deutsch was outspoken in his criticism of the high salaries paid by the Triborough Bridge Authority. Without exception, he said, the ranking officers of the body were paid more than they had received while in city employ, adding that the Federal PWA had criticized these salaries as excessive.

He also found fault with the number of positions, declaring two many jobs had been created. He found, likewise, that Mr. O'Leary had not taken the trouble to meet the Federal representatives who were in position to grant a loan for the bridge. In summing up the case against Mr. O'Leary, Mr. Deutsch said:

"I find that the respondent meant well. He never intended to betray a trust. His weakness is that he has believed himself to be a figurehead, that he has no conception of the duties of his position, and that he has relied entirely upon his colleagues and his subordinates to formulate decisions and to make up his mind for him.

"It must be borne in mind that the project involved the ultimate spending of \$50,000,000. It appears from the evidence that the respondent did not give to the business of the Authority that degree of attention and care which the magnitude of the project necessitated."

Mr. O'Leary is a Bronx resident and has large real estate interests in that borough.