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## Federal Executive Salaries

Salaries for the upper levels of federal service are too low; Pennsylvania pays 165 and New York pays 432 state employees more than Uncle Sam pays the Secretary of State. Moreover, there is too little range at the top; the doorkeeper of the House of Representatives is paid almost as much as a congressman. The Senate passed and the House recently defeated a comprehensive bill that would have revised the whole federal salary structure, including the salaries of congressmen. Preliminary balloting showed a large measure of House support, but on the final roll call a majority of the members did not want to go on record as having voted to increase their own salaries.

Congress is always loath to raise the salaries of others above their own, but the increases are badly needed, as the President and most congressmen are well aware. Some major positions are unfilled, and the government has been losing too many top scientists, executives, and professional men, for it is at the upper levels that government salaries are most out of line. Men who reach these levels must choose between leaving for higher salaries elsewhere or remaining at greater personal sacrifice than should be asked of them.

Despite the earlier setback, a strong effort is being made to get the same or a similar bill through Congress, perhaps without the congressional increases and perhaps with other increases a little smaller than those of the defeated bill. Most government scientists are in the classified Civil Service, where the ceiling—which only a few can reach—is now \$20,000 a year. The new bill will raise the ceiling to perhaps \$24,500. Above the Civil Service grades are some 400 major executive positions which will be grouped into six levels. Level I will include the ten cabinet posts; Level II, nine subcabinet positions; and Level III, 42 deputy and assistant secretaries and the heads of the independent agencies. The remainder of these executive posts will be assigned by the President to Levels IV to VI. The six levels will carry salaries from perhaps \$26,500 up to \$32,500 or \$35,000. Neither in the upper Civil Service grades nor at the executive levels are the proposed salaries comparable to those available elsewhere, but the changes are in the right direction and it would be a mistake not to make them.

On the plus side, this new effort to increase federal salaries has strong Presidential endorsement, and the necessary money is already in the budget. On the negative side, legislative channels are likely to get clogged, and interested congressmen complain that they have received but little encouragement from educators, scientists, and business leaders—the people who can best understand how greatly the proposed changes would help in the recruitment and retention of able people who are needed to give leadership to the whole executive structure.

The defeated bill had a curious omission in its failure to list the director of the National Science Foundation among the comparable positions to be placed in Level III. This omission would have resulted in the thoroughly unjustified downgrading of the entire National Science Foundation. Fortunately, it seems now to be agreed between Congressman Morrison of Louisiana, chairman of the cognizant committee of the House, and the Bureau of the Budget that this fault will be corrected before the bill goes to a vote. Both in correcting this boner and in pressing for early passage of the entire bill, Congressman Morrison should have all the help he can get.

—DAEL WOLFLE