

Washington Could Do With Less Explanation And More Action

By BRUCE BOSSAT

We are hearing again how tough it is to attract and keep able men in key government jobs. The working conditions, it is said, are terrible. Maybe top federal officials need a union.

Gen. Omar Bradley touched the issue in deploring House defeat of a bill to boost military pay, especially for higher officers. It was the first attempt since 1908 at fixing a real career pay scale for the armed forces.

"Inferior inducements attract second-rate men," said the general. "An Army so handicapped cannot hope to produce the Marshalls and Eisenhowers it needs in war."

Chairman Lilienthal of the Atomic Energy Commission also brought up the subject. He was speaking to refute Senator Hickenlooper's charge that an alleged 87 per cent turnover in AEC personnel during 1947 and 1948 was proof of the chairman's "incredible mismanagement."

Lilienthal said simply that he thought holding good men was difficult, but that it was a problem common to many Washington agencies. By way of support, a reporter noted that in four and a half years the State Department has had five secretaries of state, six undersecretaries and a whole flock of assistant secretaries.

Lilienthal agreed with Bradley

that low pay was a big factor. But he got in another point that could bear more emphasis. He recalled that one man, a former manager of the Oak Ridge, Tenn., atomic energy plant, had quit because he found he consumed as much time explaining his work as performing it.

That seems to us to be right on target. The showcase existence of a top federal official subjects him almost ceaselessly to pitiless public gaze. He is as busy accounting for his official behavior as is a Hollywood star explaining his marital ventures.

During the recent war an Army officer put it neatly: "Gosh, I've got so many reports to make out I haven't time to do the things I'm supposed to report about."

Tiresome Routine

Here's just part of the smothering routine followed by a typical top department executive in Washington:

Submit regular reports to Congress on some or all of his activities, as required by law in many instances.

Answer a mountainous correspondence from congressmen who



OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. Williams

DAV Auxiliary Here Wins Prize For Drive

The Disabled American Veterans auxiliary of Roseburg was awarded second prize for its membership drive at the state convention at Klamath Falls June 8, 9, 10 and 11.

The convention was attended by Nancy Wulf, commander-elect, who received first prize, a silver cup, as the individual signing up the most members in the state. She also received first prize, a silver pendant, for obtaining the most members in her district.

Also attending were Leah Carlisle and Dorothy Cherryholme, sandwich his regular duties somewhere among these innumerable command performances. Yes, a union might be just the thing. And a contract with minimum pay and maximum hours fixed. Maximum hours, that is, spent in explaining matters to Congress.

visit the Capitol again to press for any new legislation involving his department. Go dutifully up the Hill whenever Congress decides to investigate him, or his department, or just wants to know something special. The executive is supposed to

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