

letters

Continued from Page 2

Federal wage

I have a Bachelor of Arts degree from Columbia University and am returned after having worked for many years for the Federal Government's Social Security Administration and Health Care Financing Administration. I very strongly urge all college graduates not to work for the United States Government because:

Wages and salaries for Federal workers are 22 percent on the average (and in some cases as much as 50 percent) below the pay that workers in private enterprise receive for essentially the same jobs. The most pay that a Federal employee can receive is \$57,500 a year, which is a trifle compared to the yearly salaries of many private company executives which are in the hundreds of thousands of dollars and which in some cases exceed \$1,000,000.

Federal employees have to pay a high percentage of the premiums for their health and life insurance, whereas, many employers in private enterprise pay all of such premiums for their employees.

Federal employees have to pay into Medicare's Hospital Trust Fund, and effective with January 1, 1984 new Federal employees will also have to pay into Social Security's other trust funds. This

is in addition to paying into the Civil Service Retirement System. It constitutes just a sneaky way by which the Reagan Administration and the Congress have taken Federal employees' money to shore up Medicare and Social Security. Federal employees have their own health insurance and retirement systems and cannot bear these additional taxes.

The Reagan Administration has raised Federal employees' and retirees' health insurance premiums to exorbitant levels and cut their health insurance coverage drastically.

According to the Congressional Budget Office federal employees receive less vacation and holiday than do many people in private enterprise. For example, for many years steel workers have been given 13-week vacations every five years (in addition to their regular vacations during the intervening years) upon attaining a certain seniority.

The Congressional Budget Office also states that Federal employees receive less sick time than do many private enterprise employees.

Federal employees work a 40-hour week while many private enterprise workers have work weeks of less hours. For example, the electricians in New York City



'HOWEVER, AND ON THE OTHER HAND...'

obtained a 25-hour work week many years ago.

For decades Federal employees have paid 7 percent of their total pay into their retirement fund. They have had to pay into their fund far more than people covered by Social Security have been required to pay into the Social Security trust funds. The vast majority of private enterprise retirement plans are fully paid for by the employers with no employee contributions required and private plans are protected by a Federal law, the Pension Benefit Guarantee statute.

Federal employees do not receive Christmas or any other bonuses, or have profit sharing plans, stock option plans, etc.

Federal employees are forbidden to engage in politics. This is a complete violation of their Constitutional rights of free expression and association.

Federal retirees who are under age 62 are only going to receive

about one-half of the cost of living increases that those 62 or older will receive. This constitutes blatant, outrageous age discrimination.

Federal retirees formerly received 1 percent of their pensions added to the pensions at the time of retirement and two cost of living increase each year in order to at least fractionally compensate them for the low pay that they had been given while working. Now they do not get the 1 percent add-on, and they only receive one cost of living increase per year.

Federal retirees have to pay income tax on every cent of their pensions once they get back what they paid into their pension fund. The money that they paid into the pension fund is not taxable, because taxes were paid on it by the retiree, when they were working.

In the past college graduates

sought employment with the Federal Government mainly because of job security and retirement at a comparatively young age on a good pension. Recent legislation has cut down Federal job security, job security has been increased in the private sector by law and recent court decisions, and many private company pension plans provide benefits (including early retirement) that are equal to or more generous than those that are given by the Federal Civil Service Retirement System.

Therefore, college graduates are much better off working in private enterprise with the chance of becoming one of the \$1,000,000 a year corporation presidents or a quarter of a million a year vice-president than working in the Federal Civil Service for cheap-skate pay and second-rate fringe benefits.

Frederick Stark

letters policy

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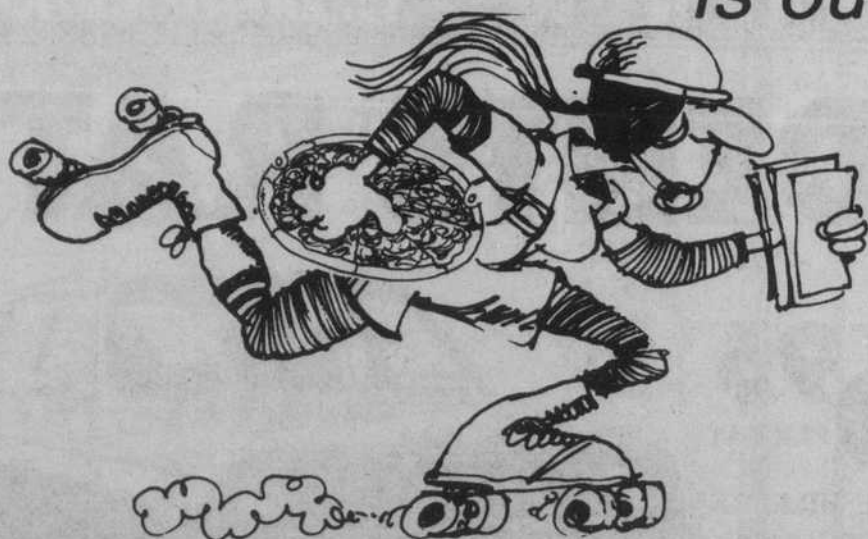
Letters to the editor must be limited to 250 words, typed, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is turned in. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length, style or content.

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