

They know the business value of competence. They cannot afford waste and inefficiency. Of all employed persons in the U. S. today, one in every nine is on a public payroll; yet *less than half of them are selected by any sort of merit system*. The majority are political appointees selected because they helped get out the vote and not because they are fit for the job assigned to them.

Taxes and Patronage

So long as the government payroll is open to political appointees the number of unneeded public servants continues to grow. This is a principal cause of rising taxes. Five billion dollars annually spent on public payrolls! Today the tax on a package of cigarettes is from 6½ cents to 8 cents; 2 cents on a bottle of beer; 4 cents on a movie; from 3 to 5 cents on a gallon of gasoline; \$25 on the average automobile; 11 cents on a deck of cards. Taxes on business franchises, income and profits are steadily rising. Government reaches deeper and deeper into the pockets of its citizens. Out of every penny of taxes a large part goes to pay unnecessary salaries to workers who, because of lack of skill, training or control, are unable or unwilling to do half a day's work. The arguments on the score of righteousness, competitive opportunity, and career service are compelling enough in theory. But theory is one thing, and dollars and cents another. The business value of the merit system, established by case histories, is provable in terms of dollars and cents.

Cincinnati vs. St. Louis

Clarence Dykstra reports that it took only 615 policemen costing \$1,000,000 employed under the merit system, to police 72 square miles of Cincinnati. But in St. Louis it took 2,000 cops costing \$5,000,000 to police 64 square miles of St. Louis. Cincinnati has a merit system, but St. Louis has a spoils system

masquerading as a "merit system." It would need more than the tax on the sale of 150,000 automobiles annually to pay for the difference in cost in St. Louis.

More Work, Fewer Workers

Scientific tests for speed and accuracy in sorting mail enabled the Post Office Department to handle more mail with fewer clerks. The merit system for these positions alone has saved the United States in salaries—not to mention speed of dispatch—over \$60,000 a year to date—enough money to pay the postage for mailing 6,000,000 pamphlets.

A Million Dollars Lost in Three Months

After a year of effective merit system administration in the State of Michigan, the political machine recently gained ascendancy at the polls over the administration of Governor Murphy. A large number of positions which had been in the classified service were promptly excepted therefrom and filled by political appointees. Payrolls for the first three months of the new administration exceeded those paid out during the Murphy administration for the same period by approximately one million dollars. The citizens of Michigan rose up in arms and demanded the merit system back!

Wage Scale Compared

In Philadelphia, county officials are not under the merit system but city officials are. The county employes receive an average of \$1.11 per day more than the city employes and do exactly the same kinds of work under civil service law. A survey made by a body of experts in municipal affairs has declared that adjustment of county salaries and abolition of unnecessary county offices will save the taxpayer \$7,500,000 in four years.

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