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Where Your Taxes Go

How Uncle Sam Spends Your Money in Conducting Your Business

By EDWARD G. LOWRY

Author "Washington Close-Ups," "Banks and Financial Systems," etc. Contributor Political and Economic Articles to Leading Periodicals and a Writer of Respected Authority on the National Government's Business Methods.

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XIV.

SYSTEM IS ALL WRONG

The great difficulty that stands in the way of discussing Uncle Sam as an employer is that there is no such person. The men who stand in the relation of employer to their subordinates are nothing but employees themselves, and temporary ones at that, with a very fleeting tenure of office. Cabinet officers and members of congress, to whom the rank and file of employees look for guidance for a solution of their problems, are simply fleeting figures that come and go, with their own interests to serve. They testify freely enough as to conditions of government employment. Senator Carter Glass, recently secretary of the treasury, for example:

"The largely multiplied business of the government cannot be conducted with efficiency and economy unless there be attracted to and retained in the public service a group of highly trained, well-paid and permanent officials of supervisory grades. Uncertainty of tenure in some instances and inadequacy of compensation have closed the public service to many men of the best type or forced them out of government employ at the moment of their greatest usefulness.

"The war has increased the public debt more than twenty-five fold and has augmented the functions and activities of the government in many ways. The duties are greater and the responsibilities are larger than those of other days, to the standards of which it is not to be expected that the government will ever return. The conditions are such that failure to take the necessary action to invite and hold in the public service men of exceptional ability and of real distinction in their fields can result only in grave burdens to the taxpayers of the country and in possible disaster.

"Already the transaction of the business of the government is hampered by deficiencies of personnel due to the return to private life of many men of large capacity who during the period of active warfare were willing and glad to serve their country at great personal sacrifice. I have come to learn that there are heroes in the civil establishments as well as in the military services, self-sacrificing patriots who toll year in and year out for a bare pittance when they could command salaries double or triple the amounts they receive from the government, but who, for the love of their country and for the love of their work, have rejected alluring offers in the field of private enterprise. They were too fine and too patriotic to leave their posts.

"Under the compelling force of patriotism they made willing sacrifices during the war, but with the return of peace the government cannot expect to retain these employees indefinitely, because in justice to themselves and their families they will sooner or later accept the larger opportunities that are open to them in the world of business and industry unless the government proposes to pay them salaries that at least reasonably approach the value of their services.

"Only prompt action by the congress to build up a permanent and dignified civil service which will include men of great ability and high attainments can prevent mistakes and failures in the transaction of the public business, the consequences of which may be calamitous."

Ex-Representative Good, who was chairman of the appropriations committee of the house, is equally frank:

"Today duplication in the government service abounds on every hand. For example, eight different departments of the government, with large overhead organizations, are engaged in engineering work, in navigation, irrigation and drainage; eleven different bureaus are engaged in engineering research; twelve different organizations are engaged in road construction, while twelve, with large overhead organizations, are engaged in hydraulic construction and sixteen are engaged in surveying and mapping. Sixteen different bureaus exercise jurisdiction over water-power development. Nine different organizations are collecting information on the consumption of coal. Forty-two different organizations, with overhead expenses, are dealing with the question of public health.

"The Treasury department, the War department, the Interior department and the Labor department each has a bureau dealing with the question of general education. These departments operate independently; instances of co-operation between them are exceptional. Each of these departments is manned at all times with an organization prepared to carry the peak of the load and maintains an expensive ready-to-serve personnel. A lack of co-operation in the executive departments necessarily leads to gross extravagance. The system is wrong, and congress alone can change the system."

Stories of Great Scouts

By Elmo Scott Watson

"BAT" MASTERSON'S REVENGE ON THE CHEYENNES

One December day in the early seventies a young buffalo hunter down in the Texas Panhandle was busy skinning a buffalo when five Cheyennes of Chief Bear Shield's band rode up, saluted him with a grave "How!" and sat on their ponies idly watching his work. Although the hunter's Sharps rifle was lying some distance away, he was not worried, for the Cheyennes were supposed to be peaceful at that time.

Presently one of the red men dismounted and poked up the Sharps as though to examine it and, as he did so, another reached across and whipped the pistol from the holster in the hunter's belt. Instantly the first Indian struck the white man a murderous blow across the forehead with the rifle and in broken but emphatic English told him to "git." The hunter was outnumbered five to one; he "got."


The victim of the Cheyennes was "Bat" Masterson. William Barclay Masterson was his name, but his success as a buffalo hunter had won him the title of "Bat," as a worthy successor to Baptiste Brown, "Old Bat," a mighty slayer of game in the old days. Masterson reached his camp in safety.

That night he rode stealthily into Bear Shield's village and "cut out" 40 of the old chief's ponies. As he worked he came upon another rider engaged in the same occupation. It proved to be Billy Tighman, a fellow buffalo hunter who later became a famous deputy United States marshal.

When in 1874 a war party swept down upon the Adobe Walls, the buffalo hunters' headquarters, some of Bear Shield's warriors rode with it, and one of the defenders of the little stockade was "Bat" Masterson. Then and there he obtained revenge for the blow which the Cheyenne had struck him.

After the Adobe Walls fight, Masterson enlisted as a scout for General Miles and served with him until the southern plains tribes were subdued. A few years later he was elected sheriff of Ford county, Kansas, Dodge city, the county seat, was one of the toughest cowboy towns in the West, but when Masterson resigned in 1881 it was one of the most peaceful. By his courage and his skill he had established a record second only to Wild Bill Hickok as a tamer of "bad men."

Then he left the West never to return, and today "Bat" Masterson is a high salaried writer on a New York newspaper.



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