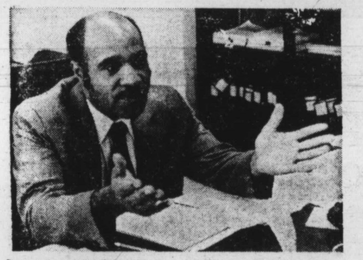
Working for U.S. can be challenging

By Johnnie A. Moore

WASHINGTON — Work for the U.S. federal government is both challenging and interesting. The range of occupations offer a diversity not found in other areas of public service nor in the private sector.

Occupations are as diverse as delivering the mail, finding a cure for the common cold, protecting our environment, inspecting our food, preserving our wildlife, providing welfare assistance, insuring transportation safety, printing and minting our money, conducting our relations with new and old nations around the globe and performing many thousands of other essential public services.

Without a doubt, the work of civil servants touch the lives of Americans many times each passing day.



FEDERAL EXECUTIVE, Maurice Flower, U.S. Department of Housing and Development, discusses his work.

Since World War II, more than 2 million civil servants have been needed to carry out federal programs authorized by law.

These are jobs in the federal service that match nearly any job known in the private sector. Additionally, there are some jobs in the federal government which do not have a counterpart elsewhere.

To carry out its wide ranging missions, America's largest employer has a continuing need to recruit well qualified new workers in a wide variety of career fields.

Just to replace those who retire, die or leave the federal service for other reasons, the federal government recruits several hundred thousand new employes each year.

Under the federal civil service merit system, appointments to jobs are made on the basis of ability to do the job — ability demonstrated in competition with other applicants. Uncle Sam is an "Equal Opportunity Employer."

As such, all qualified applicants receive consideration for appointment without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, politics or any other nonmerit factor.

While educational requirements vary with the job, opportunities are best for those who graduate. If you can, you should complete your education before applying for fulltime employment.

While the headquarters offices of most federal agencies are located in Washington, field activities are scattered throughout the United States and its possessions, and in some foreign countries.

Of more than 2.8 million civil servants, only about 12 per cent are stationed in the Washington metropolitan area.

Government salaries are comparable to those paid by employers for work at the same levels of difficulty and responsibility. Salaries are reviewed periodically and changes are made as needed.

This means that federal careerists may expect, over the years, pay realistically geared to the economy.

The federal government has several pay plans. For most blue collar positions, wages are set from time to time to bring them into line with prevailing wages paid in the same locality by private industry.

The federal government sponsors a voluntary health insurance program for federal employes. The program offers a variety of plans to meet individual needs, including basic coverage and major medical protection against costly illness. The federal government contributes part of the costs of premiums and the employe pays the balance through payroll deductions.

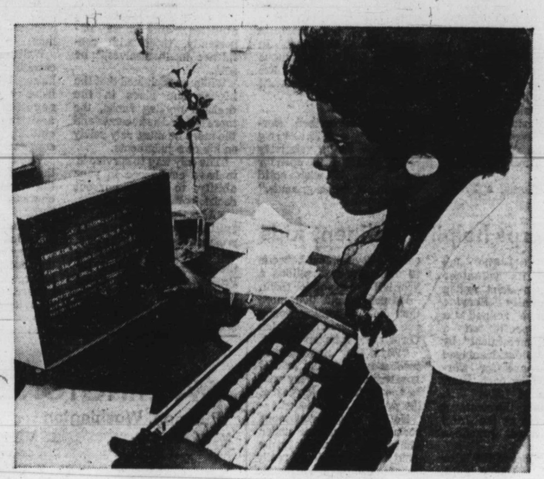
Seven per cent of the salaries of career or career-conditional employes go into a retirement fund.

Their money is withheld from all paychecks as employe shares of the cost of providing the employes or their survivors with an income after completion of their working careers.

The U.S. Civil Service Commission offers federal employment information through a network of federal Job Information Centers.

You may obtain information about federal employment by calling, visiting or writing the office nearest you.

Listings are under "U.S. federal government" in your local telephone directory.



COMPUTER OPERATOR, Shirley Powell, verifies retirement data at the U.S. Civil Service Commission.

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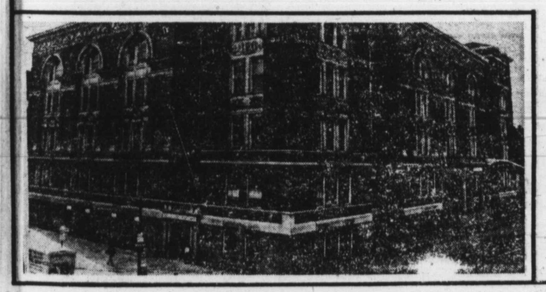

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HOWARD AND CENTRE STS.
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