

4005 Hanover
Dallas 5, Texas
May 16, 1949

Dear cousin Amon:

The letter herewith submitted on the subject discussed with you in telephone conversation last Saturday evening bears the signature of the President of our Local 851, National Federation of Federal Employees rather than my signature as a Member, Executive Board of that organization. It was felt that perhaps you would prefer it that way.

The National Headquarters of our organization has been requested to do what it can in connection with this matter in Washington, D. C. Requests were dispatched by telegram last Friday morning to Senators Tom Connally and Lyndon Johnson and Speaker Sam Rayburn, for their assistance in obtaining some immediate protective measure. The following replies by telegram have been received but were not incorporated into the letter to you signed by Mr. Benedict, as we considered that perhaps you had rather they not be shown therein:

"Reurtel I am taking up your recommendation with authorities here and am urging sympathetic consideration. Glad to cooperate."

/S/ Tom Connally, U. S. Senate

"Will be glad to get the information contained in your telegram to the President for his consideration in connection with possible issuance of Executive Order along lines you suggested. As soon as possible will give you report on reaction received."

/S/ Lyndon B. Johnson

wanted to your help

I would not bother you with this situation now facing so many of us, except that I believe if you feel the matter warrants, you ~~have the power and know the manner and means of helping us~~ obtain some equitable measure of protection to the many hundreds, perhaps thousands, of "nonpreference" employees, who are generally rendering outstanding service in their various positions and are of much value to the Government agencies in which they serve.

As for myself, I am one of the six adjudicators referred to in the letter to you signed by Mr. Benedict, and I am one of the seven non-veteran employees with an "excellent" efficiency rating who has helped instruct and train the veteran employees being retained. I worked hard to help pay for my education, and I studied hard to get my university degrees, A.B., M.A., and LL.B., and my license as an attorney. My present salary, before deductions, is \$4855.80 per year (having been Professional Grade

3 in Civil Service long enough to have received three within-grade promotions, that is, salary increases). I know my work thoroughly and like it, although it is recognized as one of the most difficult and trying legal positions in the Veterans Administration. I know I truly earn every dollar of my salary, and I want to keep my position.

Thank you so much, for anything you may do to help us.

Paulanne Ream
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2411 Emmett Street
Dallas, Texas
May 16, 1949

Mr. Amon G. Carter
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Fort Worth, Texas

Dear Mr. Carter:

By reason of certain provisions of Public Law 359, 78th Congress, known as the Veterans' Preference Act, hardships are being brought upon many hundreds of career Government employees over the country, who have had long terms of service.

In brief, Section 2 of the law referred to provides that preference shall be given, in certification for appointment, in appointment, in reinstatement, in reemployment, and in retention, in all civilian positions in all Government agencies, to all persons who have military preference.

Section 12 of the law reads, in part, as follows:

"In any reduction in personnel in any civilian service of any Federal agency, competing employees shall be released in accordance with Civil Service Commission regulations which shall give due effect to tenure of employment, military preference, length of service, and efficiency ratings: Provided, That the length of time spent in active service in the armed forces of the United States of each such employee shall be credited in computing length of total service: Provided further, That preference employees whose efficiency ratings are 'good' or better shall be retained in preference to all other competing employees and that preference employees whose efficiency ratings are below 'good' shall be retained in preference to competing nonpreference employees who have equal or lower efficiency ratings: and provided further, . . . "

It follows that under this law any military preference employee with only one month of civil service and only a "good" efficiency rating shall be retained over and above, or may displace any non-preference employee of many years of invaluable experience in the service with an "excellent" or "very good" rating.

We are wholly in accord with the laws which give veterans special rights, privileges, and preference, relative to pension, compensation, bonuses, education, training, vocational rehabilitation, housing, purchasing of automobiles, treatment and hospitalization, and other things to which they are entitled. We are in sympathy with the general idea and intent of the Veterans Preference Act, and specifically with reference to preference in obtaining new positions and with reference to reemployment and reinstatement, and the manner provided for computing total length of service. The preference extended with reference to retention in all Government positions, to the total exclusion of non-preference employees without regard to their length of service or efficiency ratings, is the feature of the law which is proving to be too harsh on career employees without military preference.

As an example of this, six adjudicators, one authorization officer, and two rating claims specialists, all professional career employees of from more than seven to more than twenty-nine years of satisfactory civil service, seven of whom hold "excellent" efficiency ratings and two "very good" have received letters of dismissal from employment at the Veterans Administration Regional Office, Dallas, Texas, to become effective June 10, 1949. The employees in this office whose services are to be terminated have in the majority of cases trained or assisted in training the preference employees with less civil service who are being retained. The attached newspaper clipping refers to two of these non-preference employees in this office who, by reason of this, may not be permitted to finish working the required period of time in order to receive full retirement benefits, as is otherwise provided by law.

It appears probable that the present law will be changed within several months, so as to limit preference with respect to civil service retention, this being in accordance with the Hoover Commission Report, which the President of the United States has stated publicly that he favors in its entirety, and also following the recommendation of the United States Civil Service Commission. It follows that the President, upon having this matter brought to his attention, will be in favor of protecting the career employees immediately, as several months hence would be too late in many such cases all over the country, of which the few above are cited.

In view of the limited time, effort is being made to obtain a remedial measure through an Executive Order by the President, to prevent dismissal of career employees, who entered on duty prior to December 7, 1941, or have rendered as much as a total of seven years of satisfactory civil service. This Local feels that the date line, December 7, 1941, or the seven years of service, are equitable measurements in classifying civil service employees as "career" employees.

Any assistance you may lend in obtaining a protective measure to the many career nonpreference employees affected in this matter will be greatly appreciated by all concerned.

Yours very truly,

/s/ O. V. BENEDICT

O. V. Benedict, President
Local 851, National Federation of
Federal Employees, Dallas, Texas.