

Nation's Business presents the following:

THE WITHERING BLIGHT OF BUREAUCRACY

A man we know manages a small factory. It seems his 16-year-old son wanted to get a job in the factory during summer vacation. Fine! said the father, who promptly boasted to his foreman about the "chip off the old block." The foreman, a cautious fellow, warned the father that, to employ the boy for a few weeks, he would have to do these things:

Apply to the city government for a special permit for the employment of a minor.

Serve formal notice on the War Manpower Commission that a job was about to be filled.

Deduct 20 percent from wages paid to the boy, for income tax purposes.

Apply, at the end of the boy's employment, to the Internal Revenue Bureau, for permission to refund the 20 percent, since the boy would not be earning enough in the vacation period to make him eligible as an income tax payer.

Report the boy's earnings along with his own, at the end of the current tax year, and pay taxes on them, since the boy is a minor.

Report to the War Manpower Commission at termination of the boy's employment.

Report to the city government at termination of the boy's employment.

P.S. The boy attended summer camp.

An unknown author sent in the following verses:

As head of the division of provision for revision
Was a man of prompt decision, Merton Quirk.
Ph.D. in calisthenics, PDQ in pathogenics,
He had just the proper background for the work.

From the pastoral arena of Aloma, Oklahoma,
With a pittance of a salary in hand,
His acceptance had been whetted, even aided and abetted,
By emolument that netted some five grand.

So with energy ecstatic this fanataic left his attic,
And hastened on to Washington, D. C.,
Where with verve and vim and vigor he went hunting for the nigger
In the woodpile of the WPB.

After months of patient process Merton's spicular proboscis
Had unearthed a reprehensible hiatus,
In reply by Blair and Blair to the thirteenth questionnaire
In connection with their inventory status.

They had written, "Your directive when effective was defective
In its ultimate objective, and what's more,
Neolithic hieroglyphic is, to us, much more specific
Than the drivel you keep dumping at our door."

This sacrilege discovered, Merton fainted, but recovered
Sufficiently to write, "We are convinced
That sabotage is camouflaged behind perverted persiflage;
Expect me on the 22nd inst."

But first he sent a checker, and then a checker's checker;
Still nothing was disclosed as being wrong
So a checker's checker checker came to check the checker's checker
And the process was laborious and long.

Then followed a procession of the follow-up profession,
Through the records of the firm of Blair and Blair;
From breakfast until supper some new super-follow-upper
Tore his hair because of Merton's questionnaire.

The file is closed, completed, though our hero, undefeated,
Carries on in some department as before.
But victory is in sight, not because of, but in spite
Of Merton's mighty efforts in the war.

A peculiar thing about some of these hyphenated words mentioned earlier is that no one seems to know exactly what they mean. They are very definite sounding words but they mean different things in different places. It generally depends on the agency or the commodity. "Policy-level":—Everyone knows it means that there is a level where policy is made. If you ask for a decision on a question you may be told it must go to the "policy-level". If you ask if it will be final, no