

access to the news media allows him to manipulate public opinion. As a result, many Americans no longer carefully deliberate political choices, but rely on presidential packaging of issues. Under the pre-

text of expanding democracy, Dahl concludes, the mandate myth expands only the president's personal power, and thus breeds what he calls dangerous "pseudodemocracy."

No Help Wanted

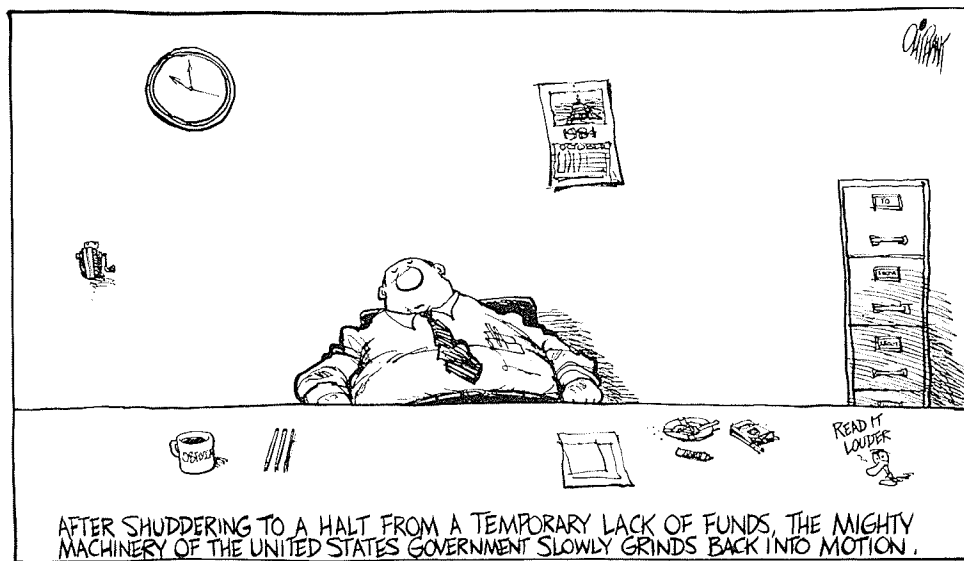
"Uncle Sam Doesn't Want You" by John Heilemann, in *The Washington Monthly* (Dec. 1990), 1611 Conn. Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

Ask a classroom full of college honors students where they hope to work after graduation, and they'll likely tell you IBM, or CBS, or Arthur Anderson. Ninety percent of them, however, never even consider working for the nation's largest employer: the federal government.

Exactly the opposite was true six decades ago when Franklin D. Roosevelt was president. "Washington was deluged with an endless stream of bright young men" eager to get a piece of the New Deal, wrote historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. Thirty years later, President John F. Kennedy's administration received a similar flood of applications. Yet today, half of college students are convinced that government jobs are inherently boring and futile, according to one survey. Oddly, writes Heilemann, a

journalist, "Washington has done remarkably little to counter these perceptions." Instead, under President Ronald Reagan, "federal recruiting was actually designed to reinforce them."

Reagan entered office promising to slash the size of the federal government. Government agencies "were commanded to stop visiting campuses and developing recruiting materials." Heilemann argues that "by making the process of getting a government job as cumbersome, slow, and red-tape-riddled as possible, the administration guaranteed that even the most determined would-be bureaucrats" would ultimately be discouraged. Still, the federal bureaucracy actually grew by 7.5 percent during Reagan's tenure, to more than three million. But the declining quality of



The negative image of federal employees may not turn out to be so funny after all: One report finds a "crisis of competence" within many federal offices.

new recruits pushed the civil service into what political scientist James Q. Wilson has called a "death spiral."

President George Bush made a few promising early gestures. He hired a young, dynamic civil servant, Constance Berry Newman, to head his Office of Personnel Management (OPM). She launched a slick \$39.4 million campaign called "Career America" to woo students. But two years later, almost nothing has changed. Nearly 60 percent of the 236 federal agencies have no recruiting budget whatsoever,

Heilemann observes, and very few send recruiters to college campuses. What's worse, qualifying examinations are given only once a year, and students who pass must wait up to nine months for an interview—and they can't choose which agencies they might like to work for.

It makes no sense, he concludes, to complain about the incompetence of government, as conservatives have, and then ensure that federal offices are staffed not by "the best and the brightest," but by "the best of the desperate."

Casualties of The Cold War

"Ending the Cold War at Home" by Morton H. Halperin and Jeanne M. Woods, in *Foreign Policy* (Winter 1990-91), 2400 N St. N.W., Washington, D.C., 20037-1196.

The Cold War abroad may be over, but the murky underworld of espionage, state secrets, and highly classified government projects is still operating at full tilt—right here at home.

So say Halperin and Woods, both of the Center for National Security Studies. In 1951, as East-West tension was increasing, President Harry S. Truman issued a sweeping executive order extending the institutionalized system of military secrecy developed during World War II to certain civilian government agencies. Congress looked the other way, write the authors, as over the years the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and National Security Agency (NSA), among others, ran out of control, creating a "national security state.

Government secrecy is its hallmark. According to the U.S. Information Security Oversight Office (ISOO), in 1989 exactly 6,796,501 government documents were classified. Yet only three percent were marked with a declassification date—a percentage even ISOO found disturbing. A lot of information is needlessly kept secret. And since 1983, the more than four million federal employees and contractors who handle secret information have been forced to sign agreements limiting their First Amendment rights to political speech; even after retirement, some must submit their writings to the government

for prepublication review.

"The Cold war also intensified the practice of government surveillance of persons and groups in America engaged in lawful political activities," the authors say. The harassment of dissidents and alleged communists by the FBI didn't end in the 1950s. Opponents of U.S. policies in Central America and the Middle East, for example, have been tracked by the Bureau. From 1982 to 1988 the FBI's "antiterrorist" unit began 19,500 investigations of American residents. Moreover, say the authors, even though in 1990 Congress barred the government from denying entry visas to foreigners on political grounds, 345,000 names remain on a "lookout list" of suspect foreigners who are forced to seek special waivers to enter the country.

The combined yearly budgets of the CIA, the FBI's counterintelligence unit, and the NSA probably equal about \$30 billion—but the actual numbers are classified. That violates the Constitution's requirement of full disclosure of federal spending. The authors suggest that "massive cost overruns and technological failures" are concealed by this budget secrecy.

Now that the Cold War is over, the national security bureaucracy is searching for new missions: antiterrorism, a war on drugs, industrial counterintelligence. But now is the time, the authors conclude, to "end the Cold War at home."