

AMSPECBLOG**Bureaucrats on Vacation: Bane or Boon?**

By Doug Bandow on 1.5.11 @ 8:53AM

The European Union leads the world in certain areas. including paying bureaucrats huge salaries for not doing much work.

Reports the *Daily Telegraph*:

Fury over soaring EU spending and a 3.7 per cent pay rise for Eurocrats last year, the best paid politicians in the Western world, has spread to pro-European federalist countries such as Germany as painful national austerity measures hit voters.

Despite being paid six figure salaries, 1,962 of EU's most senior civil servants have been allowed to join a "flexitime" scheme, originally meant for lower paid secretarial staff, that gives an extra 24 days off work every year for those that put in an extra 45 minutes a day in the office.

The perk comes on top of annual holidays of 24 days as well as seven days off for public holidays, and in 2010, 11 "non-working" days out of the office when the Brussels institutions are closed in summer and at Christmas.

The allowances mean that last year many EU staff were entitle to 66 days or 13 weeks or a quarter of the year off work.

My first reaction to this story was what a waste of money! But then I thought, would Europeans be better or worse off if these meddling officials spread across the continent like locusts, "working" longer and harder? I had to admit, if you're going to have big government, maybe this is the way to do it. Pull the least productive people out of society into government by paying them a lot of money for doing nothing important, and then let them stay home a lot. How to provide a lot of patronage without hurting too many people too badly!

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