

SUNDAY LETTERS: Jan. 27, 2019

Bill Pelzer

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Omissions are falsehoods, too

EDITOR: A recent letter to the editor takes The Record to task for printing “false facts.” The writer specifically cited a recent Betsy McCaughey article which stated that “U.S. Government workers receive more pay than their private counterparts.” To illustrate the alleged falsehood, the writer cited a report from the Federal Salary Council which concluded that, “government lags private sector by 35 percent” and therefore the writer concludes, “Verdict: Opinion relying on false facts.”

The writer urges us to “take five minutes to check out these outlandish claims.” I did so. Simply Googling “federal vs. private sector compensation” brings up a significant number of references. It is clear this is a controversial topic.

What is also clear is that from the many available studies and articles (from sources as diverse as the CBO, BLS, Cato Institute, Heritage Foundation, American Enterprise Institute, etc.) on this topic, the only one purporting that private sector compensation exceeds that of comparable Federal employees is, you guessed it, the one from the writer’s preferred source, the Federal Salary Council.

An important fact the writer failed to disclose is that six of the nine members of the Federal Salary Council are representatives of Federal labor unions. Omissions and selectivity can create falsehoods as well.

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