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Civil Service Commission

B-172846

RELEASED

MAY 24 1971

Dear Senator Tunney:

Pursuant to your request of March 10, 1971, we have reviewed the Civil Service Commission's reply of January 20, 1971, to your inquiry on behalf of your constituent, Mr. Philip D. Strong, 10 Holiday Court, Pacifica, California, who is interested in obtaining Federal employment in a senior level position. We have reviewed also the Commission's general procedures for handling applications for senior level positions and its records relating to certain actions that have been taken with respect to Mr. Strong's application for employment. In addition, we have inquired into the status of certain positions for which Mr. Strong has been considered.

We believe that the Civil Service Commission's reply to your inquiry represents a reasonably complete summary of the procedures and practices of the Commission regarding applications for senior level positions. We believe also that Mr. Strong's application for employment has been handled by the Commission in a manner consistent with its established procedures for handling applications for employment in senior level positions.

PROCEDURES FOLLOWED IN HANDLING APPLICATIONS
FOR SENIOR LEVEL POSITIONS

Applicants for senior level positions in the Federal service, in lieu of taking written examinations, are required to submit to the Civil Service Commission resumes of their education and experience and, if applicable, documentary proof of the 10-point veterans preference.

The resumes (applications) are screened initially by the Commission's Bureau of Recruiting and Examining for basic acceptance. Upon acceptance of the applications, the names of the applicants are included on the Commission's senior level register. The applications are retained by the Commission in a central resource file which is used when responding to requests from agency appointing officers for names of qualified applicants who may be considered in filling job vacancies. An

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accepted application is usually retained for consideration for a period of 12 months from the date of the Commission's notice to the applicant that his application has been accepted.

Upon receipt of a request from a Federal agency for names of applicants eligible for consideration in filling a position, the Civil Service Commission screens its files to identify all applications which indicate backgrounds and skills commensurate with the requirements of the position. A panel of examiners from the agency and the Commission reviews and rates these applications. The panel contacts former employers and references, if necessary, to identify the best qualified applicants. The Commission then sends the names of the top-ranking applicants to the agency which made the request.

A Federal agency is not required to fill a senior level position with one of the top-ranking applicants listed by the Civil Service Commission. On the contrary, Federal agencies fill most such positions by reassignment, transfer, or promotion of persons already in the career service.

In recent years, both the legislative and executive branches of the Government have imposed restrictions on hiring by Federal agencies. Civil Service Commission officials estimated that the Commission's senior level register generally listed between 16,000 and 17,000 eligible applicants, and they said that only 820 and 885 appointments had been made from the register during fiscal years 1969 and 1970, respectively.

CONSIDERATION GIVEN TO CONSTITUENT'S
APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Strong submitted an application for employment (Standard Form 171--Personal Qualification Statement) to the Commission on November 4, 1969, pursuant to the Commission's Announcement No. 408 announcing an examination for senior level positions, grades GS-13 through GS-15, in administration, technical services, staff services, management, and professional services. A copy of this announcement is enclosed for your information.

The Commission notified Mr. Strong on November 17, 1969, that his application for employment had been accepted and that he was eligible for the senior level register. On August 17, 1970, Mr. Strong requested an extension of his eligibility. The Commission granted this request and made a notation on Mr. Strong's application which indicated that he was eligible for an additional year.

Commission records showed that Mr. Strong's application for employment had been considered in Federal agency requests relating to four positions. The positions involved, the extent of consideration given to Mr. Strong's application, and the current status of the four positions are described as follows.

1. On September 9, 1970, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requested the Commission to furnish the names of applicants eligible for a GS-15 insuring director position in Albany, New York. Mr. Strong's was one of 46 applications to be considered by the panel of examiners, but HUD canceled its request before the panel had rated the applicants. A HUD personnel official informed us in April 1971 that this position had not been filled.

2. On October 8, 1970, the General Services Administration requested the Commission to furnish the names of applicants eligible for a GS-13 appraiser position in Kansas City, Missouri. Mr. Strong's was one of 26 applications reviewed by the panel of examiners, but it was not ranked as one of the five top-rated applications. The Administration subsequently filled the position from within by promoting one of its employees.

3. On December 1, 1970, the Commission received a request from HUD with respect to a GS-13 appraiser position in Washington, D.C. Mr. Strong's was one of 50 applications selected for consideration. HUD canceled its request, however, and the panel of examiners did not rank the applicants. A HUD personnel official advised us in April 1971 that this position had not been filled.

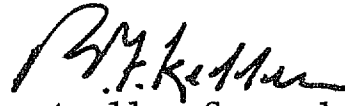
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4. On January 12, 1971, the Navy Department requested the Commission to furnish the names of applicants eligible for a GS-13 realty officer position in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Mr. Strong's was among the 49 applications reviewed by the panel of examiners, but Mr. Strong was not selected as one of the top qualified candidates. The Navy subsequently filled the position from within by promoting one of its employees.

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We trust that the above information will meet the objectives of your request.

Sincerely yours,


Assistant Comptroller General
of the United States

Enclosure

The Honorable John V. Tunney
United States Senate