

WE CAN'T RESTORE OUR COUNTRY IF WE UNDERPAY THE FOLKS RESTORING OUR BUILDINGS

✘ The lowest paid full time employees at the White House—Christopher Liegel and Elizabeth Jackson—make \$37,826 and \$37,983 respectively (they're both "Records Management Analysts"). They presumably also get those great benefits federal employees make.

After those two, the lowest paid people in the White House (specifically, in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building on the White House grounds) are a bunch of craftsmen restoring the stonework in EE0B. If they work full time this year, they'll make \$39,270 for skilled work. And they get no healthcare benefits. All in one of the most expensive cities in the country.

That's because the General Services Administration working for a Democratic President hired a non-union contractor to do the second phase of this project. The union workers who did the first phase of this project—under George Bush—made something closer to \$60,000 a year, plus benefits (the median salary at the White House is \$66,000 a year).

Now, I realize I might get branded as a member of the Professional Left for complaining about this.

But shouldn't the guys working in the White House get paid in the same range as the staffers working in the White House? Shouldn't a President fighting to make sure all Americans have health care ensure those working just outside his own window—working on the offices of his Vice President and others—have health care?

We will not get out of this recession until

wages stop falling. And one way to ensure that happens is to make sure skilled craftsmen get paid a viable wage. Apparently, we have to start that fight right on White House grounds.