

# Payment For A Job

THERE WOULDN'T seem to be any way to compare civil defense and a zoo, but there is one — of financial inequality.

In adjoining stories yesterday The Commercial Appeal announced the hiring of a new director of Overton Park Zoo and the choice of a new director of Shelby County Civil Defense. Both posts had been vacant several months.

But Charles G. Wilson will be paid \$18,500 a year to run the zoo. Billy Ray Schilling will be paid \$19,764 annually to run city-county civil defense. It's out of line.

TIME WAS when civil defense was a part of the lives of everyone: World War II and the fear of invasion; the Cuban scare of the early '60s and the fear of nuclear rocket attack. There is still a possibility of nuclear attack and that is a part of the civil defense program, but its major functions now include communications and preparation for natural disasters such as tornadoes and earthquakes.

This is not to say its work is not important. At times it could be invaluable. But the director, with a paid staff of about 10, is primarily occupied with planning and coordination. And most of that planning is based on guidelines set down by government agencies and by pre-tested methods of operation. The office is already well organized for the entrance of Schilling.

OVERTON PARK ZOO, while playing no part in human survival, does play a big

part in human life — enjoyment and education. It ranks with Libertyland as the home of Elvis Presley as one of Memphis' top tourist attractions. Its director in charge of a capital investment of a most \$50 million, which includes animals valued at between \$600,000 and \$700,000 depending on market value. He operates on an annual budget of more than \$1 million.

Wilson, director of the Little Rock Zoo, comes to Memphis at a time when he will be watched closely by the Park Commission, the public and his large staff of employees following the controversial resignation in May of Dr. Joel Wallach. His job will not be an easy one. The zoo has slipped lately and revenues have declined. To be successful here he must be many things to many people, and to many animals.

For this he is to be paid \$18,500. Schilling will be paid \$19,764.

THE CIVIL Defense salary may be entirely justified. But the zoo director should be paid more in line with what is expected of him.

The city spent five months searching the nation for a man who would fit the strict qualifications of zoology, organization, public relations and internal labor relations. Then the city and county drew into the same old political well and drew out a man who is in to fill the Civil Defense job, paying him more than \$1,000 more than the man with special education and talent.

We are bemused.