

The original documents are located in Box D15, folder “House Speech Budget, January 15, 1959” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE GERALD R. FORD , JR., January 15, 1959

The memorandum from the Director of the Budget, Mr. Maurice H. Stans, dated December 31, 1958 will not in any way whatsoever interfere with the hearings of the House Committee on Appropriations. Any witness for the executive branch of the government under this memorandum is given full authority to answer questions "frankly." The full text of the memorandum from Mr. Stans to the Secretary of Defense is as follows:

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HONORABLE NIEL A. McELROY

The President will shortly present his budget for the fiscal year 1960 to the Congress. As you know, the normal process of budgeting results in recommended amounts that in many cases are less than the agency head had requested.

It is understandable that officials and employees will feel strongly about the importance of their own agency's work, and will sometimes believe that a larger budget might be in order. Such feelings, however, must be related to an awareness that our budget resources are not adequate to accommodate in any one year all of the things that might be desired. The President is responsible for reviewing the total needs of the executive branch in the light of tax and debt policy and for deciding among competing requests for priorities. Executive branch personnel are expected to support the President in his budget recommendations.

As you and your staff prepare to justify your portion of the budget before Congress, you will want to observe the requirements set forth at the President's direction in Bureau of the Budget Circular No. A-10. It is expected that witnesses will carefully avoid volunteering views differing from the budget, either on the record or off the record. While direct questions at hearings must be answered frankly, it is expected that a witness who feels that he must set forth a personal view inconsistent with the President's budget will also point out



that the President's judgment on the matter was reached from his overall perspective as the head of the Government, and in the light of overriding national policy. The witness should make it clear that his personal comments are not to be construed as a request for additional funds.

Please see that a reminder of this reaches all officials and employees who participate in hearings on appropriations and on legislation directly related to budget proposals, including civil functions of the Corps of Engineers.

(Signed) Maurice H. Stans, Director.

It should also be pointed out that the executive branch of the federal government, whether Democratic or Republican, has pursued the same policy. As a matter of fact under the Truman Administration a much more severe and restrictive limitation was imposed on witnesses from the executive branch of the federal government when they were testifying on behalf of the President's Budget.

For example on November 15, 1946 the following memorandum was issued and personally signed by former President Truman:

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR OF THE BUREAU OF THE BUDGET

I have noticed that on several occasions certain department and agency officials have shown a tendency to seek from Congress larger appropriations than were contemplated in official budget estimates.

The estimates which I transmit to Congress reflect a balanced program for the executive branch as a whole, and each individual estimate is considered in the light of this program, its relationship to other estimates, and the fiscal position of the Government. While agency witnesses before congressional committees must feel



free to supply facts in answer to questions of committee members, I cannot condone the practice of seizing upon any opportunity which presents itself to indicate an opinion, either directly or indirectly, that my estimates are insufficient.

When you notify the heads of the various departments and agencies of the amounts to be included in the 1948 Budget for their activities, I wish you would include a reminder that I shall expect them and their subordinates to support only the President's estimates in hearings and discussions with members of Congress.

(signed) Harry S. Truman

It should be stated on behalf of the Chief Executive whether Mr. Truman or Mr. Eisenhower, that as head of the Executive Branch of the government the President has the right to expect that his aides and assistants will represent his views. This is the orderly and proper way to run such a vast and complicated business involving over 4½ million military and civilian employees and a budget totalling \$77 billion.

It should be reemphasized that as long as all witnesses are given clearance to express their personal views when interrogated by a direct question there will be no interference with the responsibility of the Committee on Appropriations to carry out its duty to determine the validity of budget or executive programs.



STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE GERALD R. FORD, JR., January 15, 1959
Delivered on Floor of House of Representatives
Reference Budget Director's recent memo to Secretary of Defense

The memorandum from the Director of the Budget, Mr. Maurice H. Stans, dated December 31, 1958 will not in any way whatsoever interfere with the hearings of the House Committee on Appropriations. Any witness for the executive branch of the government under this memorandum is given full authority to answer questions "frankly." The full text of the memorandum from Mr. Stans to the Secretary of Defense is as follows:

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HONORABLE NEIL A. McELROY

The President will shortly present his budget for the fiscal year 1960 to the Congress. As you know, the normal process of budgeting results in recommended amounts that in many cases are less than the agency head had requested.

It is understandable that officials and employees will feel strongly about the importance of their own agency's work, and will sometimes believe that a larger budget might be in order. Such feelings, however, must be related to an awareness that our budget resources are not adequate to accommodate in any one year all of the things that might be desired. The President is responsible for reviewing the total needs of the executive branch in the light of tax and debt policy and for deciding among competing requests for priorities. Executive branch personnel are expected to support the President in his budget recommendations.

As you and your staff prepare to justify your portion of the budget before Congress, you will want to observe the requirements set forth at the President's direction in Bureau of the Budget Circular No. A-10. It is expected that witnesses will carefully avoid volunteering views differing from the budget, either on the record or off the record. While direct questions at hearings must be answered frankly, it is expected that a witness who feels that he must set forth a personal view inconsistent with the President's budget will also point out that the President's judgment on the matter was reached from his overall perspective as the head of the Government, and in the light of overriding national policy. The witness should make it clear that his personal comments are not to be construed as a request for additional funds.

Please see that a reminder of this reaches all officials and employees who participate in hearings on appropriations and on legislation directly related to budget proposals, including civil functions of the Corps of Engineers.

(Signed) Maurice H. Stans,
Director



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For example on November 15, 1956 the following memorandum was issued and personally signed by former President Truman:

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I have noticed that on several occasions certain department and agency officials have shown a tendency to seek from Congress larger appropriations than were contemplated in official budget estimates.

The estimates which I transmit to Congress reflect a balanced program for the executive branch as a whole, and each individual estimate is considered in the light of this program, its relationship to other estimates, and the fiscal position of the Government. While agency witnesses before congressional committees must feel free to supply facts in answer to questions of committee members, I cannot condone the practice of seizing upon any opportunity which presents itself to indicate an opinion, either directly or indirectly, that my estimates are insufficient.

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It should be reemphasized that as long as all witnesses are given clearance to express their personal views when interrogated by a direct question there will be no interference with the responsibility of the Committee on Appropriations to carry out its duty to determine the validity of budget or executive programs.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

BUREAU OF THE BUDGET

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

January 14, 1959

Dear Congressman:

This afternoon I have been very much interested in the news ticker reports of Congressman Flood's criticism of the Bureau of the Budget and of my letter to the agencies.

I want to thank you for your immediate response and clarification of the purpose of the letter. As I am sure you know, Section 206 of the Budget and Accounting Act contains a prohibition against individual requests for appropriations or increases in items of appropriations.

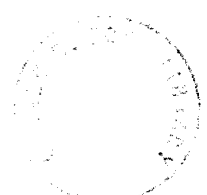
The procedures outlined in my letter are not new. They have been enforced for many years, but have been reiterated from time to time to help agency witnesses in answering committee requests frankly.

Thank you again for your support.

Sincerely,

Maurice H. Stans
Director

Honorable Gerald R. Ford, Jr.
House of Representatives
Washington 25, D. C.



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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Sincerely,

(Signed) Maurice H. Stans

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