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7/23/76
THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT ON REDUCING FEDERAL PAPERWORK

Last Fall

~~One year ago~~ I directed the departments and agencies of the Federal Government to reduce the number of repetitive Federal reports by 10 percent no later than July 1 of this year.

OMB Director James T. Lynn, who has been carrying out this directive, has confirmed this morning that our goal has not only been reached but exceeded.

As of October 31, 1975, the departments and agencies of the executive branch subject to the Federal Reports Act were employing 5,148 reports to collect information from the public. Today, there are a total of 4,504 forms in use. That reduction of over 600 forms represents a net cut of 12.5 percent and a very important first step toward reducing the Federal burden on the American people.

I might note that several agencies in the government that are not subject to the Federal Reports Act have also made significant ~~program~~ progress. At the Treasury Department, the Internal Revenue Service has achieved a net reduction of 724 forms, or a 31 percent cut, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms has marked up a 25 percent cut in its reporting system. Among the independent regulatory agencies, the Civil Aeronautics Board has cut its reporting forms by _____ percent and the Securities and Exchange Commission has achieved a net reduction of _____ percent.

Ordinarily, this news today would be warmly welcomed, but we shouldn't try to fool anybody. Many of the forms that have been abolished, while infuriating to those who have had to fill them out, are minor in character; the biggest, most intricate forms remain in existence and must still be cleaned up.

More importantly, as we have proceeded during the past year in cutting the number of Federal reports, the estimated number of hours required to respond to Federal reports has actually increased. Greater usage of the uniform Settlement Statement (HUD) and the additional reporting associated with the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (Department of Labor) added over 6,400,000 hours to the reporting burdens placed on American people -- especially American business -- during this same period.

This development is totally unsatisfactory. The people of this country want and deserve a break from the growing suffocation of Federal paperwork.

In my meeting with the Cabinet and agency heads this morning, I have therefore directed that we set ~~three~~ ^{two} new goals for ourselves:

-- First, I am directing the departments and agencies to cut their total reporting requirements by 7 million hours by the end of fiscal year 1977, a 5 percent reduction.

*subject to the
Federal
Reports
Act*

-- Second, I am asking for the recommendations of those departments and agencies for ways that we can cut the reporting requirement by an additional 20 million hours by the end of fiscal year 1978, an additional 15 percent cut. This extra time would permit legislative proposals to be made, enacted and implemented ^{to help} ~~in order to~~ reach our goal.

-- Third, I am establishing a ceiling of 4,700 repetitive reports and 600 single-time reports for executive agencies subject to the Federal Reports Act. This will assure that the hard-won gains of the past year are not lost and that we will have a base from which further progress can be made.