MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford
Senate Steering Committee

TIME AND DATE: Tuesday, November 11, 1975
11:00 a.m.

PLACE: The White House
The Cabinet Room

Thurmond: I am getting very concerned about the Budget Committee's and their attitude on the Defense Budget. They are hitting defense in favor of social programs. It would help if we could get more White House and DOD help with the Republicans on the Budget Committee.

The President: I know Bellmon is strong on defense, but he has a strong conflict of interest. Who else is there?

McClure: Bell and I are the only ones who consistently support DOD. We are usually get three Democrats, but we need the other Republicans.

Thurmond: If you could have the new Secretary of Defense to have them to dinner.

The President: The $7.5 billion cut was too deep. And if we don’t get a SALT treaty, we will have to ask for more.

Thurmond: It is too bad that DOD entertainment can’t be taken out of the Defense Budget.

Brock: There are a number of items like that. If we could have some of them out, it sure would help.

Thurmond: I think these setbacks on Defense will continue unless we make a concerted effort.

The President: Our people are doing all they can on the bill. When does it come to the floor?
Brock: Next week. I think we will lose, and that is why I think we should try to move some of these items out of the DOD budget.

McClure: I think if OMB would work with our people, we might get it moved out.

Scott: I think we must revise the military retirement system. It is just too big a burden. It is a long-term problem and we can't move quickly, but we have to do something. To me it is a part of the military costs and should not be separated out.

The President: There is a bill to stop the GI Bill. That was originally predicated on combat and that situation no longer exists. The House passed it and I think it should be pushed.
THURSDAY, I got a call from the Budget Office at the State Department. They are having a plan to reduce social programs. It will help if we could get some DOD help for a few lines in the budget

P: I know the problem is stronger up there, but why
           because they conflict with our interest also there
           there

McNamara called me. We only can veto against the DOD. We usually get 8 Dems, but we need to be more
           vemod. If you could have me be DOD and then
           agree to change.

P: The 7.5 will return today. And if we
           don't get a SAFT today, we will have to
           ask for more.

P: I know what's going to DOD retirement can be
           taken out of DOD budget.

Biden: I'm sure it's a lot of issues like that. If we could
           take care of them and it some would
           help.

P: I think those attacks on Defense could continue
           under we make the concerted effort.

P: Our people are doing all they can here the
           will when done it come to the floor

Bush: Next week I think we will lose on that

Why I think we should get more some
           of those studies out of a DOD budget.

We know I think if we could work with our people
I think we must move - and without delay. It is just the big moment. It is a long time past - we want more quickly, but we have to be patient. To have it all out - a rush - is not the desired outcome.

I think we should stop C. B. W. That was a rush for combat - it is no longer good. The House passed it - I think it should be passed further.
Mr. Leavitt

Born to me by

Santor Thronend.

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