

Our experience shows a definite reluctance on the part of Federal agencies to respond fully and completely to our requests for information on legislation, unless the administration favors the legislation involved. This reluctance is particularly apparent when cost estimates are needed.

For example, when a pay bill is under consideration, we find it extremely difficult to obtain from the Post Office Department an estimate of the cost of the measure. Yet when Department representatives testify on the bill in the presence of reporters, they readily produce figures to show how drastically the bill will add to the postal deficit.

This attitude on the part of the executive branch extends to all legislation with which we are concerned. When the administration favors the measures, assistance and supporting research are readily available. When the administration opposes the legislation, however, it is most difficult to obtain the data we need.

In matters not concerned with specific legislative measures, we have experienced a similar reticence. The Civil Service Commission, for example, has refused the committee information on examinations prior to providing this information to the agency concerned. We are told that Commission rules do not permit this disclosure until "proper authorities" are notified.

When Bernard Flanagan was being investigated, our initial review of his military file showed that it was complete. The file was returned to the Department of the Army, but when the committee requested it and received it a second time, we found that it had been censored. We were advised that the deleted information would not be provided us. No reason for withholding this part of his file was given.

In our investigation into the "numbers racket" in 1955, we encountered similar opposition from the Small Business Administration. This agency would furnish the committee only with a copy of the Form 57 of George McDavitt, Director of SBA's Compliance and Security Section. The remaining part of his file—which was important to our investigation—was refused the committee. We were told that the information it contained was for the use of the executive branch exclusively.

On innumerable occasions, when charges have been made against employees of the executive branch, agencies have refused to furnish this committee with details of charges. We have been told that this information is to be kept private as between the individual involved and the agency, and that there is no authority to release it to us.

Please do not hesitate to let me know if I can be of further assistance in this matter.

With kind regards, I am,
Sincerely yours,

OLIN D. JOHNSTON.