

executive branch department and agency personnel have accumulated valuable technical knowledge which may be helpful to the committee in processing proposed legislation.

"Over the years, the Bureau of the Budget and the executive branch departments and agencies have been most cooperative, and requested comments have been forwarded to the committee within a reasonable time.

"During the past 2 years, however, the staff of this committee has found it increasingly difficult to obtain agency comments on pending legislation, and there has been an average delay of from 4 to 6 months. Informal conversations with department and agency personnel reveals that although their comments are forwarded to the Bureau of the Budget for required clearance within a reasonable time, the Bureau retains them and fails to forward them to the committee. Informal staff discussions with Bureau of the Budget personnel result in promises of rapid action, but the reports are not forthcoming.

"As a result of this practice, the committee's business is seriously hampered since it is unable to obtain the official position of the executive branch, and it experiences great difficulty in obtaining from the official sources having the best knowledge of the facts, information necessary to enable the committee to perform its functions. In some instances the committee has found it necessary to act without the benefit of this information.

"Another practice which the Bureau of the Budget has engaged in is to hold back its own comments, as well as those of appropriate agencies, until the evening prior to an executive session of the committee at which final action is scheduled on pending bills. Although comments have been requested many months earlier, they are filed at the last moment and the committee has on occasion deferred action on pending matters until it has had an opportunity to examine and study the materials submitted.

"These practices have led the staff to conclude that either the Bureau of the Budget has suffered a breakdown and is unable to process the materials, or it is conducting a deliberate program of obstructionism, designed to prevent committee and ultimately Senate action on pending legislation.

"WALTER L. REYNOLDS,
Staff Director."

SENATOR GALE W. MCGEE

AUGUST 17, 1960.

DEAR SENATOR HENNINGS: In connection with the study in which your subcommittee is engaged concerning the withholding of information by executive offices, may I say that the experience which I have had since coming to the Senate has not been so much the refusal to give information as it has been to give a complete story.

Other instances encountered have been where Government agencies will write a long letter but will say nothing. This practice seems to have increased according to my information. On two occasions, I have written to the Department of the Interior, and the replies were carefully hedged so that the picture was not completed to my satisfaction.