

As a result of its own observations and studies over the years, the Bureau of the Budget recognizes that a new permanent organization is needed to work continuously on the improvement of administrative procedure. Many worthwhile recommendations were made by the temporary conferences created in 1953 and 1961, but each conference came to an end while much remained to be done. Improvement in administrative procedure and achievement of a desirable degree of uniformity among the agencies is a tedious, time-consuming process for which temporary, ad hoc efforts are essentially unsuitable and wasteful.

The Bureau also believes that the form of organization proposed in S. 1664 is desirable for a number of reasons:

1. In our view it combines desirable features from the various proposals that have been made and builds upon successful past experience, which the Bureau, as participant in the recent conferences, has been able to observe at first hand. The last Conference, which transmitted its final report to the President on December 15, 1962, demonstrated the practical benefits to be gained from a cooperative effort along the lines proposed in S. 1664. At the President's request the Bureau of the Budget, on February 27, 1963, asked agencies to report their views and the status of agency actions with respect to the Conference recommendations. A partial analysis of the replies indicates widespread approval of the recommendations. Many of them have already been put into effect in many agencies, and in nearly all agencies definite time schedules have been set for following through on unfinished matters which can be dealt with under existing agency authority. The results are not expected to be dramatic, but we believe that they will be important, particularly to those persons whose private interests are affected. A sustained effort through a permanent Conference can result in a wide variety of improvements which, added together, will greatly increase the speed and efficiency of the administrative process while maintaining essential fairness.

2. A full-time Chairman of recognized stature and prestige is needed to assure that the Conference pursues its objectives energetically and that its recommendations are fully understood and appropriately considered by responsible authorities. However important these problems of administrative procedure may be, they often are forced into the background of agency effort by the pressures of even more important agency responsibilities. The Chairman should be free to concentrate on these matters and to help the agencies pool their resources for an attack on common problems. Over a period of time he and his staff should acquire unprecedented knowledge and understanding of the administrative process throughout the Federal Government. This would be an invaluable resource for the Conference and its committees, and also for each individual agency as it reviews and evaluates its internal processes from time to time. In addition to his responsibilities as a member and Chief Executive of the Conference, S. 1664 would authorize the Chairman, upon the request of the head of any agency, to furnish assistance and advice on matters of administrative procedure. In this respect and others, such as the collection and dissemination of statistics deemed helpful in improving administrative procedure, he would carry out responsibilities now carried out in a more limited way by the Office of Administrative Procedure in the Department of Justice.