

Representative GRIFFITHS Personally I think it is a shame driving around on Italian made tires, but I was told in England that 10 years later they have not made a single improvement, so you can sell them these improvements.

Chairman PROXMIRE. Congressman Rumsfeld?

Representative RUMSFELD. I have three or four questions. The President has made a proposal concerning the merger of the Department of Labor and the Department of Commerce. I might say parenthetically that I approach this in a very favorable frame of mind. As a member of the Government Operations Committee, which will review this reorganization plan, it strikes me that it might very well have a great deal of merit.

I would be interested to know, however, what your reaction might be to the counterproposal concerning the possibility of isolating out essentially economic functions and programs from a number of different agencies, and combining them into a Department of Economic Affairs. The problem comes up as to what the structure of the executive departments should be, and how we can best meet the problems of the country, and I am sure this was debated to some extent. Do you think this has merit, this counterproposal?

Mr. TROWBRIDGE. Well, actually, Congressman Rumsfeld, I think the basic proposal of the President, and as we are trying now to put some real meat on the bones, is that it makes a lot of sense. We are working hard on it right now. We hope to have the details of it available to discuss with you and other Members of the Congress in a short time.

The approach we are taking in implementing the President's proposal is not to build a holding company or a merged Commerce and Labor just the two Departments put together in some form.

We are approaching it really from the basis of what can we do to modernize, to pull together, to coordinate more effectively, to build a new Department in Government using Commerce and Labor Departments as they now exist as the base of it. But we have taken an inventory of other parts of the Government, other agencies, and other functions which they now carry out, and which would logically fit together with Commerce and Labor.

Representative RUMSFELD. Do you anticipate that some economic functions of other departments would be included in the proposed new Department?

Mr. TROWBRIDGE. I think so, yes. Our proposal is to try to pull together the logically related functions of Government in the economic development, manpower development, and economic analysis areas, and first of all we have to apply the criteria of logical fit. Can we put these things together and do they have a relation to each other?

Second, realistically can we propose this and get it approved. These are the tests we are trying to apply right now.

Representative RUMSFELD. I like to think if it is realistic it could be approved.

Mr. TROWBRIDGE. Yes, but everybody's definition of realism always isn't the same.

Representative RUMSFELD. Right. This same question of course came up when there was talk of creating a Department of Science and Technology, and I personally felt that would have been inadvisable;