

can. But there is a perfectly human tendency for the administration, any administration, Democrat or Republican, to try to put themselves in the best light.

You have specified that you do not know how far the administration can go or is likely to go in accepting your recommendations, either as a matter of general principle, or in terms of the budget presentation in January of 1968.

But I would like to know, for our benefit, how unequivocal is your recommendation that the administration shift from the present budgetary practice to the single budget concept.

Do you feel and did your group feel unanimously this was a desirable and necessary thing if we are going to get the greatest amount of public and congressional understanding?

Mr. KENNEDY. Yes, Mr. Chairman, we did. We were unanimous in that view, and that was supported by the Secretary of the Treasury, the Director of the Budget, and the congressional members of the Commission.

I think each felt that it would be important to have a budget that could have general acceptance, if that could be possible, and to the extent the President can, and the time permits, we are hopeful that it would be included in the forthcoming budget. He is under a time limit, of course.

Chairman PROXMIRE. I realize, and know it is difficult. But after all, if we can perform the many feats we perform technologically in space and elsewhere, it seems to me we could move on something like this that is so important to all of us.

What technical reasons are there that would prevent the administration from acting promptly?

Mr. KENNEDY. Well—

Chairman PROXMIRE. Acting to use your recommendations by, say, January of next year.

Mr. KENNEDY. Well, I think that they could use the format, and they could accept many individual items. Some require further works like the accrual accounting recommendation—and that would take time.

It would appear to me to be advisable to make the shift in two steps rather than little by little over the period to 1970.

Chairman PROXMIRE. The first step that could come in 1968, January of 1968, could give us the budget you have recommended with the deficit or surplus—deficit—

Mr. KENNEDY. Deficit.

Chairman PROXMIRE (continuing). That would develop on the basis of your recommended concepts.

Mr. KENNEDY. That is right.

Chairman PROXMIRE. And there would be more or less a detailed reconciliation that would have to come in a later year.

Mr. KENNEDY. That is right.

Chairman PROXMIRE. Just how will this new budget serve the Congress in giving us a clearer picture of the administrative operations on a program basis? What I am thinking of is the very constructive job the Defense Department has done in putting their operations on a program basis for five basic areas. It has made the defense budget, which is by far the biggest, much more understandable, and I think it has greatly increased efficiency in the Defense Department.