

SENATOR SAM ERVIN ★ SAYS ★



By an overwhelming vote of 64-17, the Senate has passed a bill to require Senate confirmation of the Director and Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

The bill, which I introduced, if it becomes law, would apply to OMB Director, Roy Ash, and his Deputy, Frederic V. Malek, and all future directors and deputy directors. The measure provides that the Senate have an opportunity to inquire into the qualifications, background, and fitness of these officials in the same manner as is required for virtually all other policymaking positions in the executive branch of the government.

The question arises as to why Congress has raised this issue after many years of allowing the matter to lie dormant. The Bureau of the Budget was established in 1921 by the Congress. At that time, the Senate favored confirmation of the Budget Director. The House, however, took the view that the position was merely one of gathering certain financial data for the President and of performing certain personal services to the President.

Congress at that time concluded that the Director and his deputy would not wield major powers and allowed the President to make these appointments without confirmation.

Over the years, however, vast changes have occurred in the structure, responsibilities and authority of the Office of Management and Budget. Even the name of the agency was changed in 1970 to the Office of Management and Budget. The Bureau's once small staff has now grown to about 700 persons. What was once a bureau with limited housekeeping duties has developed into a super department with enormous authority over every activity of the Federal Government.

Now with the Federal budget representing about one dollar out of every four spent in the country, the Director of OMB has powers never before asserted in this country. Members of Congress are often dismayed when they seek the opinion of an executive department or agency in respect to some legislative proposal affecting that department or agency. No reply is given by these offices concerning any fiscal matter without the permission of the Office of Management and Budget. What this amounts to is a ban on all financial data involving the executive branch unless and until the OMB decides to release it.

I certainly do not take issue with the President's need for officials to assist him in exercising management and control over the Federal budget just as I do not quarrel with him having officers to carry out our defense policies. It is ironic, however, to require the Senate to confirm the appointment of a second lieutenant or the promotion of any Army officer and deny the Senate the power to pass on the fitness of individuals who manage the fiscal affairs of the country.

The issue involved relates to the role that Congress should play in developing the Federal budget. I favor a reduction in Federal spending, and I think that in order to achieve this, Congress is going to need to have access to a great deal more information than it is now able to receive from the departments and agencies. At the present time, the Executive branch through the OMB has a virtual monopoly on the budget process. It is paradoxical and

Real Estate Transfers

Ray McCotter Realty Co., Inc., to Clarence Ray Jordan and wife, Sondra Jordan. Property in Wilson Creek Heights.

Norris G. Dillahunt and wife, Helen M. Dillahunt, to Jimmy H. Thompson and wife, Jacqueline C. Thompson. Property on New South Front Street.

Ada H. Mattocks and husband, Herman E. Mattocks, to John Richard Moore, Jr., and Sonia Mattocks Moore. Property on Trent River.

James W. Shank and wife, Helen S. Shank, to Mark Sherwood Splain and wife, Henrietta Mills Splain. Property in No. 6 Township.

J. G. Dunn, Jr., and wife, Margaret G. Dunn, to Lee Russell Sanders, Sr., and wife, Mildred Whitford Sanders. Property on Queen Street.

Glenn Gray Hassell and wife, Lois S. Hassell, to David A. Jones and wife, Peggy W. Jones. Property in Riverview Park.

Alvera Bryant Jarman to Alvera Bryant Jarman and husband, David Jarman. Property on Jones Street.

Carrie McCoy to Katie Pugh Codgell. Property in No. 1 Township on River Side Road.

Carrie McCoy to Ervin Gardner. Property in No. 1 Township on River Side Road.

Harold I. Dowling and wife, Elsie F. Dowling, to James B. Cox and wife, Deloris D. Cox. Property in No. 7 Township.

Branch Banking and Trust Company to Charles William Kafer and wife, Rebecca M. Kafer. Property on Forest Drive.

Leonard G. Rice and wife, Elizabeth G. Rice, to Dewey M. Haye and wife, Evelyn Rice Haye. Property in No. 2 Township.

Roberta K. Hokanson to Charles Joseph Johnston. Property in Havelock Park.

T. S. Fulcher and wife, Lela

belittling for Congress to have to wait until such time as the budget comes before it in a total package before it can begin undertaking its tasks of appropriating monies. Within the time frame, this sometimes amounts to legislating in virtual darkness.

Unless the Senate can require confirmation of the Director and Deputy Director of OMB, Congress cannot hold OMB accountable to it in any fashion nor have access to vital data needed to establish levels of revenues and expenditures.

This is the heart of the debate now going on over this issue and it relates directly to a reasonable restoration of power between the legislative and executive branches of the Federal Government.

T. A. Karam and wife, Marion E. Karam, to Tryon Realty Co. of New Bern, Inc. Property in Southgate.

Tryon Realty Co. of New Bern, Inc., to Callie A. Sutton and wife, Ruth H. Sutton. Property in Bernview Park.

Paul W. Crayton and wife, Flossie D. Crayton, to Bruce Lucien Paradis and wife, Polly H. Paradis. Property in Havelock.

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