

Game Plan Outline

The fate of all of our programs this year depends on how we do on the Hill, where we've got to mount an all-out effort.

There are some new elements this year that complicate the problem:

- The whole process will be severely compressed in time. Our fate will rest largely on what we do between now and April 15 -- the deadline for the Budget Committees to report the First Concurrent Resolutions.
- The new budget process will be fully in operation, and will determine our top line. Even our old friends on the Armed Services and Appropriations Committees now recognize the power of the budget process.
- The DoD budget will carry a record-high number and will provide real program growth.
- And, being a political year, we'll have an extra measure of old problems -- the unpopularity of Defense spending, competition with domestic priorities, a tight economy.

All this means that we've got to repeat all of last year's efforts -- and then some.

First, be sure we keep up the old traditional efforts -- but move faster and improve the quality. We must:

- Carefully track the whole budget process, in close coordination with the oversight committees.
- Present concise, convincing justification for each program, demonstrating how it serves national security requirements or policy objectives.
- Draw on the latest and best intelligence information to illustrate the nature and magnitude of the threat which our programs must counter.

But the old efforts won't be enough this year:



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- We can't wait to make our big efforts in testimony in February, March and April and then push hard on the floor next summer. We will start our testimony in late January -- probably the 27th. The crucial time for testimony will be February and March.
- We must help our traditional Committees -- Armed Services, and Appropriations -- come to a reasonable position on our policies, programs and funding, across the board, by March 15 -- that is when they report to the Budget Committees. Those reports will set the tone for our support for the entire year.
- We must work with the Budget Committees to arrive at reasonable target figures for the Defense category by April 15. That is when they report their first Budget resolutions. Those targets will tend to turn into rigid ceilings as the year progresses.
- We must, of course, work with our traditional friends, providing them with ammunition in the form of talkers, figures, intelligence data, etc., to use in mark-up and debate. But we must also work the whole Congress. Some of the old friends we've relied on have lost their clout and we need a wide base.
- But in doing all this we've got to be careful to avoid overkill. We must use the master target list, worked up by the Legislative Affairs Office and coordinate with them to be sure we all don't gang up on some of the same Members -- not only does it make them mad, but it makes us look poorly coordinated.
- We must remember that there's a federal law against "lobbying" and there are people on the Hill who might love to catch us off base -- so our approach is to offer to brief and explain; not to pressure or beg for votes.
- And we must have no inter-Service competition for an extra slice of the pie -- we all work together for the President's budget.
- We must try to use the Budget Process to our advantage. We developed an effective group to work with in the Senate Budget Committee late in 1975. We must try to put one together in the House Committee. Legislative Affairs will coordinate this effort.



- We should set up group meetings on the Hill throughout the year, starting early. We will welcome invitations from groups sponsored by both parties, and conservatives and liberals. Many of us have friends in particular State delegations. Appearances in response to State delegations would be most appropriate.
- We must make sure that the Armed Services and Appropriations Committees are offered everything we give to the Budget Committees. There are jurisdictional sensitivities, and we don't want to get caught in the middle.
- We should establish biweekly DoD briefings for all Members on the Hill this year on intelligence information and broad topical subjects. We will ask for Armed Services Committees' sponsorship, but we want to reach Members who are not regularly informed through our committees. Senior DoD officials and officers will be asked to propose various subjects and present briefings. Again, Legislative Affairs will be in charge of coordination.
- We should disseminate on the Hill declassified intelligence put out through Public Affairs and the press. Public Affairs and Legislative Affairs will coordinate this.
- We should hold regular breakfasts, normally hosted by the Secretary, with a variety of Members. Most should be on the Hill, sponsored by a friendly Member. In this we'll give first priority to the Budget Committees. Various military and civilian officials will attend as their area of responsibility comes up for consideration on the Hill.

Finally, and most important, is our credibility -- we must avoid over-selling, high pressure or fancy footwork. Our message should stand on its merits. We must tell it straight, keep it concise, and be ready with solid back-up data to answer questions.

