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ACTION Remarks re; Failure of Passage

For years the country has demanded a more businesslike system of estimating and appropriation. Party platforms, the press, and enlightened public sentiment have all voiced the demand for a budget system. Such a system, carefully considered and wisely drawn, was passed and sent to the President. The most essential part of a budget system is the independent audit of the expenditure of public money. Only through an audit of expenditures in the executive departments entirely independent of the departments can we hope for that thorough scrutiny of public expenditure which is essential to efficiency and economy. With the view of accomplishing that result the budget bill provided that the two officials at the head of the independent audit could be removed only for cause and by concurrent resolution of the Congress or by impeachment. The President vetoed this measure on the ground that his prerogatives were invaded, because the President was not vested with authority to remove these officials, and thus the most essential feature of the whole budget system, that of a thoroughly independent audit of governmental expenditure. The attempt to override the President's veto, though supported by a considerable number of Democrats, failed through general opposition on the Democratic side.

An attempt to meet the President's wishes, in an earnest effort to secure budget legislation, even in an imperfect form, has, after being adopted in the House, met defeat in the closing hours of the session by the action of Democratic Senators. And thus for the moment this great reform which the Republican Congress has tried to carry out is defeated by the presidential veto. But the defeat is only temporary, for we shall pass a budget bill the first of the next session.

Before the budget failed the House of Representatives reformed its rules so as to provide for a single appropriating committee. This is the most remarkable action taken by a legislative body in self-denial with a view of economy, efficiency, and businesslike methods in American history.