

Budget Hearings - CBO

February 5, 1982

Bob came up afterwards and said, "Domenici will probably move to get her out of there. We gave everybody who was interested a chance to come shoot at her. And nobody came. We prepared a big briefing book with all the articles written about her put in the back. It was driftsville; but we accomplished our purpose. The idea was to protect Domenici. If we had not held the hearings, people would say we were protecting her. So we let her hang out there. A year ago Hatch was all excited about the conomic forecasting model. Now he's off in other pasture. Armstrong Symms and Grassley are interested in something else. At one time Hollings was mad as hell at CBO. If people had known there would be fireworks--like a year ago--everyone would have been there."

"She was naive to think she'll get 23% increase. Last year she asked for 12 and got 2. Maybe she's asking for 23 to get 4."

I gave Bob my observations that at this time of the season everybody is very busy. But nothing is happening. And even more, everyone is really waiting for the President. He agreed. Maybe this means Congress spends a lot of time gearing up and very little time doing things.

Bob knows instinctively what I'm interested in--the politics of the thing. And he cottons to the politics of it.

Domenici, Gorton and Andrews were only members who showed. PD & SG asked perfunctory questions--I have copy of staff prepared questions.

Mark got into substance and onto CBO performance re. agriculture.

PD smilingly said 'Sen. Andrews, you can get into substance if you wish, although this was supposed to be an oversight hearing.'

MA - "I'm getting to that...I thought this would add something, that it would be a fun deal." (laughter) Then he takes off from a staff question

question re farm bill. He didn't like fact that commodity loans and target prices were "scared" in same way by CBO and asks to "drop me a note" comparing the two and explaining why you did it that way. "We know the thing backwards and forwards. Don't you have the experience, or is this a low priority... Would you send me a report on peanuts and sugar."