

Remarks
of
Vice President Al Gore
at
Electronic Commerce/ Procurement Event
White House
October 26, 1993

We said the National Performance Review report wouldn't sit on a shelf when we announced it 49 days ago. In fact, what I remember best is one of the President's remarks. He was talking about all those times in the report we say that the President "should" do something. "Wherever it says should," he said, "this President will."

We got started right away -- with Congress as our partner.
And we've already done a lot.

First, executive orders and Presidential Directives.

The President has signed executive orders:

- * establishing clear customer service standards in federal agencies
- * reducing agency internal regulations by 50%
- * creating Labor-Management partnerships
- * building approaches to regulator planning and review

He's also issued Presidential directives:

- * establishing the Community Empowerment Board so we can get to work coordinating the resources of government to work for communities

* Chartering the Presidential Management Council so we can begin applying the lessons of the Quality Revolution managers in business know about ... to government.

* Ordering agencies to come up with a plan to reduce the number of full time Federal jobs by the 252,000 urged in the Report.

Lots of progress.

Now, I feel about NPR the way I heard somebody once talk about Noah's Ark: it was great that he built the thing -- but why didn't he swat those damn mosquitos when there were only two of them?

We're interested in all the NPR recommendations, large and small.

But today we tackle the big ones.

First, we're announcing a package of legislation. We're going to eliminate special interest privileges, like that wool and mohair subsidy. We're going to eliminate duplication whether it's polar orbiting satellites or HUD vouchers. We're going to eliminate the obsolete, eliminate fraud, cut red tape and give federal workers the power they need to get things done.

~~It's a huge package of legislation.~~

Second, we'll move on procurement reform. No area is more important.

After all, we're talking about a system that takes 49 months to buy a large computer system -- and where at one agency it took 23 signatures to get approval for one PC. Where we have ten pages of regulations for buying ashtrays. We take at least three weeks to buy something worth \$30,000 -- something companies can do in about two weeks.

That's got to change.

And I'll tell you something else that has to change. Too often suppliers who give us good products and services at good prices never hear from us again. We're going to give good suppliers business again and again. And those who don't produce are the ones we'll stop calling.

We're very pleased with what's been done with procurement reform so far. Later we'll hear from our allies in Congress about legislation they've been working on to further implement procurement reform.

But today the President is going to do something that doesn't need legislation.

Today we begin a process that will move us from a paper-based system to an automated, electronic system when it comes to soliciting business from us, ordering, invoices, payments and everything else.

We not only want to eliminate paperwork -- we want to eliminate paper.

That's environmentally correct, something that always makes me happy. It also makes good business sense. It increases competition. It helps small business. And it reduces costs. We have some studies that show the new system taking a process that now takes three weeks -- and cutting it to five days.

To tell you more about this Presidential Memo and how it fits into the themes struck by this Administration, it is my pleasure to introduce the man whose vision inspired this process. He is creating a government that works better and costs less. The President of the United States .. Bill Clinton.