



COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON

OCT 27 1936 GRR

A-61080

The Honorable,

The Secretary of Agriculture.

Sir:

Reference is had to your letter of October 14, 1936, as follows:

"Upon rare occasions this Department has requested a person who is not a Government officer or employee to come to Washington, D.C., to confer upon official matters. In every case it is administratively determined by this office, in advance, that such conferences are absolutely necessary to accomplish the work undertaken. This practice has met with the approval of your office (A-20,719, December 12, 1927; 4 C.G. 281; 8 C.G. 465).

"It now appears highly desirable to request approval of the practice of inviting private persons to confer with chiefs of bureaus or other officials at places other than Washington, D.C. On several recent occasions it would have been most helpful as well as economical if the Department could have invited several scientists to confer with chiefs of bureaus at one central point rather than require those officials to visit a number of different cities to confer with the scientists individually. The advantages of a group meeting were also thereby lost.

"There is attached a proposed paragraph which it is desired to substitute for Paragraph 3433 of the Regulations of this Department. I desire to emphasize that this authority will invariably be restricted to those rare occasions when it appears to the Secretary or Acting Secretary to be desirable to invite private persons to confer with officials of this Department, either in Washington, D.C., or elsewhere. Your approval of this proposed amendment will be appreciated."

The proposed amendment to paragraph 3433 of the Regulations of the Department of Agriculture, is as follows:

"3433. Expenses of Private Persons. - In no case shall the expenses of a person who is not an employee of the Federal Government be paid by the Department unless such travel shall have been authorized in advance by the Secretary.

"When travel for the benefit of the Department is to be performed by a person who is not a Government employee, the bureau will obtain in advance the Secretary's approval of such travel. The bureau will issue a formal signed travel authorization in the usual form authorizing the actual expenses of transportation and actual expenses for subsistence at not to exceed an average of \$5.00 a day while traveling within the continental limits of the United States, and not to exceed an average of \$6.00 a day while traveling outside the continental limits of the United States. This travel authorization will be forwarded to the Office of the Secretary for approval accompanied by a letter stating the necessity for such travel.

"In exceptional cases persons not employed by the Federal Government may be reimbursed for actual transportation and subsistence expenses without regard to the limitations applicable to Federal employees. In such cases, however, the waiver of limitation as well as the travel involved must be approved in advance by the Secretary."

The proposed amendment is such that this office will not be required to object thereto at this time. See, however, Joint Resolution of February 2, 1935, 49 Stat. 19, and also Joint Resolution of June 17, 1935, 49 Stat. 387.

Respectfully,

(Signed) R. N. Elliott

Acting Comptroller General
of the United States.