

President Trump Held His First Budget Meeting Wednesday

President Donald Trump held his first-ever budget meeting at the White House, joined by newly confirmed Secretary of the Treasury Steve Mnuchin and Director of the Office of Budget & Management Mick Mulvaney.

Offering his congratulations to both and expressing his confidence in the team he has put together, he offered some comments to the press pool before closing the door for the meeting. His comments, however, were none too kind to the existing budget.

The overall message: No more wasted money.

Here are his full comments:

Thank you all. This will be somewhat of an informal meeting. I want to congratulate Mick Mulvaney, who's been confirmed finally—we waited a long time—by the Senate. And he's going to be an absolutely great director. Total confidence in Mick. Known him for a long time. He loves those budgets.

Unfortunately, the budget we're inheriting—essentially inheriting—is a mess. The finances of our country are a mess. But we're going to clean them up. Things that we've been doing, including negotiating deals that have already been negotiated, so you call it re-negotiating—on airplanes and lots of other things, military items—we'll end up either getting many more planes free, or we're going to save a lot of money. But we've already saved a lot; billions and billions of dollars have been saved.

We have enormous work to do as the national debt doubled

over the last eight years. Our debt has doubled over a short period of time. I want the American people to know that our budget will reflect their priorities. We'll be directing all of our departments and agencies to protect every last American and every last tax dollar. No more wasted money.

We're going to be spending the money in a very, very careful manner. Our moral duty to the taxpayer requires us to make our government leaner and more accountable. We must do a lot more with less. And we must stop the improper payments and the abuses, negotiate better prices and look for every last dollar of savings.

We've already imposed hiring freezes on nonessential government workers, and part of our commitment is to continue to do that for the American taxpayer. We have appointed a Cabinet that knows how to manage dollars wisely. I've known many of the folks for a long time. They've been tremendous winners—whether it's Steve or Gary or another Steve, right here. And that's why I will direct them to manage the country's dollars and your dollars very wisely. We won't let your money be wasted anymore. We're going to run government smoothly, efficiently and on behalf of the very hard-working taxpayers—something that the taxpayers haven't seen in a long time. I will be holding everybody accountable for that, and I have no doubt that this group—in particular, this group will do a fantastic job.

I want to congratulate Steve Mnuchin as our new secretary of the treasury. He's going to be outstanding. Tremendous track record—he has a tremendous track record. I have great confidence in him.

So we're going to continue on, and we're going to take this budget, which is—in all fairness, I've only been here for four weeks, so I can't take too much of the blame for what's happened. But it is absolutely out of control, and we're going to do things that are going to be tremendous over the

years. We have to take care of our military. We have no choice; we have to take care of our military. It needs work; it's very depleted. And we have to take care of a lot of other things.

Health care is moving along nicely. It's being put into final forms. As you know, before we do the tax—which is actually very well finalized—but we can't submit it until the healthcare, statutorily or otherwise. So we're doing the health care. Again, moving along very well. Sometime during the month of March, maybe mid- to early March we will be submitting something that I think people will be very impressed by.

And with that, we're going to have a little meeting. And I think the press knows pretty much all of the people at the table, so thank you very much. We appreciate it. {eoa}