

Mr. COURTNEY. In the subordinate command. So unless the contract reaches in a single contract—and this is another question.

Unless it reaches in a single contract the \$100,000 limitation, then the Secretary never sees it. He doesn't know what is going on. Isn't that right?

Secretary IMIRIE. Yes, sir.

But this follows a pattern of the entire Air Force sequence of delegations.

Mr. HARDY. Maybe the whole pattern is wrong.

Secretary IMIRIE. It may be. But we do not believe in centralized procurement in the city of Washington.

Mr. HARDY. I wouldn't suggest that we do that.

Secretary IMIRIE. That is the practical effect of the Secretary seeing everything.

Mr. COURTNEY. Well, I don't think we have gotten quite to the point of making that suggestion yet.

But I do think we need to explore the amount of money that is involved in these total awards of contracts which are not subject to anybody's review.

I am not at all sure we didn't make a rather serious mistake when we permitted the lifting of that \$25,000 ceiling to \$100,000, unless we can find some way to make a determination that the reasonableness is applied.

Secretary IMIRIE. Well, as a matter of fact—and not this morning, but commencing about 3 months ago when I came here, which interest was heightened by the spare parts procurement matter of a couple of weeks ago, I, along with the Air Staff and the two major commands that are really involved in this thing, have been going over the exact matter of procurement delegations.

Mr. COURTNEY. Well, what stimulated your activity in that field, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary IMIRIE. Four things.

One, my ignorance of the field when I came here. And this—
Mr. COURTNEY. How did you happen to find out you were ignorant about it?

Secretary IMIRIE. It isn't hard. All you have to do is sit there 1 day. [Laughter.]

The second thing is a natural desire to audit, which is part of running a job.

And the third thing, quite obviously, is congressional interest.

And the fourth thing is GAO.

And all of these formed incentive to see what was going on. And this, indeed, is what we are doing.

Now, I can't suggest to you that we are going to change anything as a result of this. But we might.

Mr. COURTNEY. I don't know that anything needs to be changed.

Secretary IMIRIE. I don't, either.

Mr. COURTNEY. But what bothers me is: I wonder how long it had been since somebody else in similar situation as you are in took a look at it.