

thing that would be a relatively small operation that would find that the bulk of its work was clearing up misunderstandings.

The public would know where they could register a grievance. We in Congress who felt one of our colleagues was in error and we did not want to make "a Federal case" out of it could pass the word around over to the grievance committee and maybe, again, it would be a misunderstanding, but these kinds of things could be clarified.

Well, I think those are the points I wanted to make, and I want to thank the committee for the opportunity to present these views.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Curtis.

You have been articulate and you have done your homework. I just want to make this observation before we go into the questioning. Bearing in mind that we want to hear every Member of Congress who wants to be heard on this bill and all other bills for that matter, we had hoped that we could wind up this hearing today.

Now, we are going to have to give Mr. Aspinall some time today. There is an urgent request that we hear him on a matter out of his committee, and therefore this may continue on at the will of the committee.

Ask as many questions as you like, but bear in mind if we are going to wind this thing up today—well, use your own judgment. I am going to take some of my own medicine, but I want to ask Mr. Curtis, had you given any thought—you are recommending a permanent standing committee—have you given any thought to two things, bearing in mind that you and I share certain views about economy and running the Government as economically as possible and the Congress, of course, being part of the Government, the cost of setting up a standing committee?

That is No. 1, and No. 2, Where are we going to find space around here? We have got so many committees and so many subcommittees and subdivisions of committees. Where will we find room for a standing committee?

Mr. CURTIS. My response to that is this. Indeed I have thought about it. Let me suggest that whatever you spent, a hundred times over, merely to get on top of the misuse of counterpart funds would save considerable sums of money. And in an indirect way there would be further vast savings to the Government. I am not unaware that some of the loosenesses of handling the counterpart funds has been deliberate; I say deliberate, intentional on the part of some in the State Department—because it is through this kind of operation that I would suggest that some of the votes are obtained which results in Congress failing to look at foreign aid with an objective eye.

I am one who has favored the theory of foreign aid, but have argued for years that we ought to be at a level of below a billion dollars instead of around three to four.

I am just giving a big figure in here, in sizes of billions, in order to illustrate that I am probably understating the case when I say that money properly spent to look into the use of counterpart funds—and I do not think this would require much—would produce great savings. This would be part of putting the GAO accounting system over the congressional books, just to have an independent audit, but GAO would have to have a place to report, and this committee could be one place to report.