

say well, it is too hard to report whether it is competitive or not. They say they were able to get the information without difficulty, and their judgment is it is not more difficult to report.

Mr. IGNATIUS. As I say, we will look into that, but I think we have always got to apply the standard of cost effectiveness to reporting systems, and we will check with them and ask them perhaps to make some kind of estimate of man-hours and costs, if we were to install this kind of a reporting system.

PROCUREMENT OF TIRES

Chairman PROXMIRE. In his report he pointed out that automobile tires—about \$17 million worth of automobile tires and tubes—are purchased annually under negotiated Federal Supply Schedule contracts. This would apparently affect not only your agency but other agencies, too. This isn't a great deal of procurement compared to what you have altogether, but it raises a very significant point in my mind. They found that there is no reason in the world why the purchase of automobile tires shouldn't be competitive. It meets all of the requirements. You have an ample number of suppliers. You have a homogeneous product that you are purchasing.

It is standardized and so forth. And yet until the Comptroller General moved in on this and called attention to it, procurement was made without competition. Under these circumstances it would seem to me that it would be wise not only to correct this situation here, but for the Defense Department and the GSA, which I think was the particular agency that he quoted here, for your agencies to analyze all your procurements, to find out what particular products would fall into this competitive area, and then insist in these areas where you have an ample number of suppliers, a standardized product and so forth, that procurement is by competition.

Mr. IGNATIUS. Mr. Chairman, I certainly agree with the general proposition, and that is in fact what we have done and that is why we have been able to increase so significantly our competitive procurements.

Chairman PROXMIRE. Has this been done?

Mr. IGNATIUS. With respect to tires, GSA buys tires. The only tires we buy are special aircraft tires or special sizes associated with tactical vehicles.

Chairman PROXMIRE. The reason I raised this is we did not have this example with regard to your agency. It may be that you could establish this across the board, but I would feel better if you, the biggest procurement agency in the Government, could tell me now that you have or will make an analysis because GSA apparently has done it, and that is a fine and efficient outfit, an analysis of your procurement to determine the products you procure, where there are a number of suppliers, where it is a standardized product, where it is possible to have competitive procurement, that in fact you insist that the procurement officials purchase competitively.

Mr. IGNATIUS. We have made such analyses many times in the past.

Chairman PROXMIRE. Can you provide the committee with documentation on this?