

they are begging the question because their costs have gone down to about half. And their returns have doubled.

GSA NOT A JUDICIAL BODY

Chairman PROXMIRE. The staff tells me that GSA represents the Government as a user and not as a judicial body.

Senator METCALF. Well, that is correct. But the GSA is a user of about \$4 billion worth of utility services and should have some people out here representing the Government in these various rate cases and helping these commissions prepare the rate cases. The commissions, responsible for regulation of utilities, gas companies, trucks and business licenses, and many other things, have not either the facilities to prepare a case nor the ability to present it.

Chairman PROXMIRE. Is there any precedent for that?

Senator METCALF. Yes, the General Services Administration has gone in at times and presented experts and helped to prepare cases, but they not only have not nearly enough people involved in this, but they seem not to care at all about presenting the case of a user, even if there is a rate case.

SAVINGS ON SAGE

Chairman PROXMIRE. Is it not true that the GSA did save \$100 million in one case—the SAGE?

Senator METCALF. Just think of the savings that are possible in these huge consumptions of power for our Minuteman missile programs, and a facility out here that we are going to build in Chicago where we are going to use millions of kilowatts of electricity, the accelerator. The biggest consumer of power in America should be interested in rates.

Chairman PROXMIRE. I see that I have to run, although I will be back as soon as I can. I am going to ask Congresswoman Griffiths to take over the chair.

Representative GRIFFITHS (presiding). Thank you.

Senator METCALF. I am very grateful to the Chair for waiting and listening and interrogating me on this.

Chairman PROXMIRE. It is most informative to this subcommittee.

Representative GRIFFITHS. I read your statement last night, Senator. That is why I am here. You did an excellent job. I am very impressed, and I hope the GSA is here.

\$4 BILLION UTILITY BILL

Senator METCALF. I hope the committee will direct some inquiries as to what can be done by the GSA because as the consumer of \$4 billion worth of utility services, where it may be 25 or 30 percent of overcharge at least means that there alone can be savings of over a billion dollars a year—not only to the Government but they will also be instrumental in making a saving to consumers of much more than that.

BALANCE OF PAYMENTS AND LACK OF BIDDING ON DRUGS

Representative GRIFFITHS. I wonder if the lack of bidding on the drugs, however, by the Defense Department was because of the balance-of-payments problem. I assume that must be it.