

in order to determine the land's "best use." And if that use cannot be carried out within the limits of River's restriction, he said, "I shall not hesitate to request and work for a change in the law."

Well, there is no doubt that the President will be called upon to do just that. The military, as it happens, is in complete agreement with the city's planners that a substantial portion of the old airfield should be developed, in accordance with an urban renewal plan, primarily as a residential community.

The absence of a completed plan, however, has proved to be a severe detriment in trying to sell that sound idea. While pleading with Congress to reject the Rivers ban, for example, Washington's official and civic leaders were handicapped by their inability to say precisely what the plan would provide. Moreover, some civil rights leaders, perhaps for purposes of simplification, have spoken of the re-use broadly in terms of "public housing." That is not the idea at all. The premise on which the planners are proceeding is that the new community will provide a broad range of various types of housing, and possible major public uses as well.

There is a danger now, in view of the moratorium, that the planning effort may relax. It must not. Even given the normal problems and ineptitudes of the planning process in Washington, there is no reason why a definite plan for the area should not be in hand within a year. The aim should be to present it to the next Congress—accompanied by the President's promised request for a change in the law.

EDITOR,
The Washington Star,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR SIR: Your excellent editorial of September 21, 1966, entitled "Bolling's Future" renders a distinct public service in highlighting an acute and growing economic problem facing local and state bodies. These bodies suffer fiscal difficulties aggravated in part by the erosion of the tax base by the Federal government which holds numerous poorly utilized pieces of potentially valuable real property throughout the nation.

The Subcommittee on Federal Procurement and Regulation of the Joint Economic Committee, on which I serve under the Chairmanship of Senator Paul H. Douglas of Illinois, issued a report in May, 1966, calling attention to this problem, and recommending that a high level committee or commission be appointed, first to identify all such federal properties, and, second, to recommend their highest public use under current circumstances.

Undoubtedly the tax base can be greatly helped by this recommendation, federal expenditures reduced and the general economy strengthened.

A further thought worthy of serious consideration would be to make Federal properties subject to local taxation as was done under the RFC Act in order to help local bodies which render police, water and other services to Federal agencies. But perhaps more importantly to exert a fiscal pressure to insure that unneeded Federal properties be declared excess.

Sincerely,

THOMAS B. CURTIS.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
BUREAU OF THE BUDGET,
Washington, D.C., April 17, 1967.

HON. THOMAS B. CURTIS,
House of Representatives,
1336 Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. CURTIS: Thank you for your letter of October 11, 1966, enclosing a tearsheet from the Congressional Record of October 10 containing your views on the need to improve the management of Federal real property.

You may recall from the Bureau's testimony last year before the Subcommittee on Federal Procurement and Regulation of the Joint Economic Committee, we shared your concern in the need to assure a stronger sustained effort to achieve better utilization of real property and to speed the return to local tax rolls of unneeded properties. At the time of the hearings we advised that we were studying the problem and were discussing recommendations for improvement of our pro-