

whether the new equipment will last longer than the several used ones which could be obtained for the same dollar outlay. The question remains, and it remains unanswerable.

f. *Wants vs. Needs.*—It is axiomatic in the field of government procurement that the government buys for only its minimum requirements; that is, it satisfies only needs, never wants. That principle has not been extended to the utilization of excess. Nevertheless, the Comptroller General's report of April 1965 objected that:

"... most, if not all, of the excess property has been provided as additions or supplements to the regular approved and programmed assistance and, as such, has resulted in an additional expenditure of United States resources rather than in a dollar savings to the United States. . . . Moreover, excess property items were being transferred as additions or supplements when the same types of items were simultaneously being purchased new for AID-financed projects and programs."

MR/GPR is wont to take the position that no distinction can be drawn between excess used in substitution for new procurement and excess used in supplementation of programmed requirements.¹⁶ Thus, AID protested to the Comptroller General that the provision of supplementary excess was not a valid basis for criticizing it. To which the Comptroller General retorted:

"We . . . have no objection to continuance of this practice. Our concern and our report deal with AID's failure to place primary emphasis on those uses of excess property which would result in savings . . . consideration (should) first be given by AID to the use of excess property in AID-financed projects and programs, and only after it is assured that such excess property is not needed for these activities should AID allow it to be transferred as supplementary assistance."

The supplementary excess issue is of significance to the Vietnam Mission, so long as the port of Saigon remains congested. Whereas the volume of excess cable requested dispatch in replying, the required information being urgently "necessary in order to release balance of requirements for new procurement using current fund this fiscal year."¹⁷

¹⁶ Although, at the Panama Seminar on Excess Property, an MR/GPR spokesman indicated "that the Congress prefers that excess property be a substitute for new acquisitions rather than as a supplement to the approved USAID program."

¹⁷ MR/GPR/W replied May 2, projecting full satisfaction of the pickup and station wagon requirements, and all the two-and-one-half-ton trucks, if automatic transmissions were acceptable, but only 200 jeeps. Tokyo replied on the same date, projecting partial quantities in each category, including 90 jeeps, and sent MR/GPR/W a copy of its reply. Whether Frankfurt has responded, MR/GPR/W did not know in August. (The decentralization of inventory control in MR/GPR makes this lack of coordination typical. Whereas copies of the MR/GPR/W to Saigon were sent to the three domestic EPRO's, no copies were sent to Frankfurt or Tokyo.)