

the property would ultimately be used (Senate Report No. 612, July 24, 1961; House Report No. 851, August 4, 1961).

The House Committee on Foreign Affairs stated in its report (pages 67-68): "This section [section 608] is a completely new authority. It is designed to overcome one of the chief obstacles to fuller utilization of U.S. excess property in this country and abroad. It will allow the AID agency to acquire foreign and domestic excess and other property in advance of a specifically identified requirement under part I programs and under section 607. At the present time it is extremely difficult to match the availability of an excess item with such requirements. The very limited time (usually 30 to 45 days) for which an item is available under normal screening procedures for excess property prohibits a complete review of worldwide needs. Also, the availability may not coincide with the AID requirement. Therefore, even though it could reasonably be expected that the item would be needed in the immediate future, existing authority has been interpreted as not permitting its acquisition and retention."

Considering the foregoing, we are unable to assure you that transfers of excess property to AID for use under section 608 will take place in the future only when AID is able to demonstrate to GSA that such excesses will be used in lieu of new procurement. However, as Mr. Griffin commented at the hearing, we will question any AID requests for domestic excess property which we believe cannot be properly used and will inquire into any nonuse or misuse of such property which comes to our attention. AID uses relatively little domestic excess personal property as compared to the total available; in fact, in FY 1967 its domestic acquisitions dropped about 40% from the FY 1966 level.

In regard to your letter request of September 22, 1967, to the Comptroller General, that Mr. Griffin be furnished with summaries of all of the GSA data to the State cooperating programs carried on by the Federal Highway Administration of the Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Forest Service and Soil Conservation Service of the Department of Agriculture. The data which are readily available concerning these three programs are set forth in the enclosed table.

We have shown the number of line items by major categories of property in lieu of the quantities by major categories; and we hope this will be equally helpful to the Subcommittee. To obtain quantities, we would need to have all GSA regional offices review many individual document folders for the past three fiscal years. A line item on an excess property transfer order normally consists of a stock number, a description, number of units, unit acquisition cost, and total acquisition cost (number of units times unit acquisition cost).

We are informed that the following authorities are applicable to the three programs referred to above:

Department of Agriculture, Forest Service—16 U.S.C. 580a.

Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service—16 U.S.C. 490a.

Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration—23 U.S.C. 308(b).

We hope this information will be helpful to the Subcommittee.

Sincerely yours,

LAWSON B. KNOTT, Jr., *Administrator.*