Mr. FINDLEY. My feeling, Mr. Burke, is that even though we may have a need for local currencies, let's say, a year from now and 2 years from now, we have a greater need to meet our balance-of-payments crisis. I say let's use the local currencies for immediate sale to U.S. visitors, and then when the other need arises for currency let's face up to it at that time.

Let's utilize every means of reducing the payments balance right now. In fact it might be wise in view of our payments plight to review some of the programs using local currencies that are in operation or planned. Maybe we could wisely make some adjustments and put some of them on the shelf or even cancel some of them in order to ease the payments deficit.

If we proceed with the philosophy that has recently prevailed in the U.S. Treasury Department we tend to keep these programs in being and out of critical review. I can think of several good reasons why we should free these local currencies immediately for purchase by U.S. visitors.

I can't think of any real valid reason to deny U.S. visitors the opportunity to buy those currencies right now.

Mr. BURKE. Thank you very much.

Mr. HERLONG. Mr. Byrnes.

Mr. BYRNES. Mr. Chairman, I want to say that I believe the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. Findley, in his usual constructive fashion has made a real contribution to the work of the committee in facing up to the problem we have before us.

I want to compliment the gentleman for his work in the original enactment of the legislation which permits tourists to use foreign currencies in their travels and for his followup work on that legislation.

The very idea that we have to restrict that program until we get into a near-excess classification or an excess classification just doesn't make any sense. Why shouldn't the currency be converted into dollars at the earliest opportunity?

There is no loss to us. There may be a real benefit in that our balance of payments will be improved.

Let me ask this, though. You mention some 33 countries in which our Government has local currency holdings, most of them acquired, you state, "under postwar programs other than Public Law 480, and under conditions which make the currencies of little or no prospective value to the United States."

Do we have freedom of action with respect to the use of these currencies?

Mr. FINDLEY. No, sir.

Mr. BYRNES. I was under the impression that the basic agreement under which we acquire such currencies limit the uses to which they may be put. Is that correct?

Mr. FINDLEY. That is absolutely true.

Mr. BYRNES. So that it would be unlikely that we could obtain the approval of the local governments to use them other than for the restricted purposes specified in the agreements. What did the gentleman's study reveal with respect to this area?

Mr. FINDLEY. In my statement I perhaps didn't make my suggestion clear. I recognize that these particular currencies are frozen and frankly of no prospective use to the United States. But if we should