

Representative CURTIS. Except for those items that Congress put in under this kind of lobbying techniques I have described—not necessarily government in this instance—a complete embargoing area of textile products, and a long list.

Has the Defense Department ever taken a policy position on the complete embargo that exists in regard to purchasing materials at the most efficient and least cost?

DOD ENDEAVORING TO HELP BALANCE-OF-PAYMENTS PROBLEM

Mr. MORRIS. No, sir. We are simply trying to minimize our procurements of foreign materials chiefly by our installations located overseas in the interest of the balance-of-payments problem.

Representative CURTIS. We are talking about procurement domestically, too. People import into this country. And I would hope that the military is in the business of trying to get products at their cheapest cost, under policies that may be set elsewhere in the Government for entirely different reasons. As far as the military is concerned, I would think you would be trying to get materials and services at the lowest possible cost.

Mr. MORRIS. This is our firm policy, with the single exception of this "Buy American" problem.

Representative CURTIS. And the double exception of the complete embargo on a wide range of products. I mentioned textiles as one.

Now I am asking what—if there is a policy on this?

BERRY AMENDMENT

Mr. MALLOY. If I might respond, Congressman Curtis, I think the items that you are referring to are contained in the so-called Berry amendment, which is an annual provision of the Department of Defense Appropriation Act.

Representative CURTIS. I found out about it just a couple of years ago.

Mr. MALLOY. These provisions have been there for a number of years. I don't know of my own knowledge what position the Department took back at that time.

Representative CURTIS. How about now?

Mr. MALLOY. I do know of an instance this year in which the Congress added a new item to that list. I believe it was called synthetic coated fibers. In that instance we were asked for our views as to whether that should be added and we advised the Congress that we were opposed to the addition of that item until further study could be made. The Congress, however, did add it to the appropriation listing.

Representative CURTIS. Let me hope the policy of the Defense Department is not just to go along with what exists. This should be under review.

COST OF DOD POLICY

How much do you suppose it costs Defense to—the application of this "Buy American" differential and complete embargo? I have seen various estimates, and it is in the hundreds of millions of dollars.