

Mr. GRAY. Fine. I would also like to refer to part of your statement where it states that the bill would also authorize the Secretary of State to transfer to the Organization of American States, without cost an 8-acre tract which we could expect in the NBS site for the construction of a new OAS headquarters and the property at 17th and C Streets. Could you describe this property and why this is part of your transfer?

Mr. MEEKER. The property at 17th and C Streets was land on which the original Pan American Union was built. That building was not paid for by the Government, but paid for by funds which were acquired otherwise by the Organization of American States at that time.

The land itself has, at all times, been property of the Government. The building has a historic interest. It has in it the Hall of the Americas and it has been felt appropriate to make that property permanently a part of the OAS in Washington. They would still have use of it for various ceremonial occasions, for meetings of foreign ministers, and the effect of this bill would be to really transfer the land to the OAS, land which today is held in the name of the U.S. Government, although the U.S. Government did not pay for construction of the building.

Mr. GRAY. Have you placed a value on this property at 17th and C Streets NW.?

Mr. MEEKER. On the land alone?

Mr. GRAY. On our Federal Government's interest in this property. I notice, and I am coming to another question and you may be able to answer both at the same time, that is you propose that the OAS transfer the administration building located at 19th and Constitution Avenue. Have you compared the value of these two properties, the one we are transferring to them and the one you are asking them to transfer to us, 17th and C Streets, and 19th and Constitution Avenue?

Mr. MEEKER. This is made somewhat complicated by the fact that in law, it is not entirely clear who today owns the building on the original Pan American Union site at 17th and C Street. Ordinarily, of course, the owner of the land owns any buildings, fixtures attached to it, so that in a sense the U.S. Government could be said to be the owner of the building as well. However, we have not treated it in that sense because after all, the Government did not supply the funds to build the building.

Mr. GRAY. Who supplied the funds then?

Mr. MEEKER. I think it was the Carnegie Foundation which supplied those funds to begin with.

Mr. GRAY. You are taking the position that a lessor, any improvements made on the property belongs to us.

Mr. MEEKER. As a matter of law, I think that would probably follow, but naturally in dealing with a situation of this sort involving an international organization of which the United States is an important member, we would want to look at the equities.

Mr. GRAY. In other words, you could not place a value as though this property were up for sale by the U.S. Government, because you do not have all of the interest in the building itself.

Mr. MEEKER. I think not.

Mr. GRAY. The land, there is no question about that?