

it is a fact that we are continuing to get bids within the statutory limitation, and we are getting cars.

Most of our needs are being met by one of the manufacturers that has been classified as "small business"—American Motors. I think our principal purchases in the last few months have been of their Rebel, which has proven to be an excellent car. The Post Office is using a special model for its requirements, and it is doing an excellent job for Post Office.

Mr. BROOKS. Will this help maintain them in business as the smallest of the major manufacturers?

Mr. KNOTT. Right.

Mr. BROOKS. Are they just spot purchases? They are not long-time commitments a year or a couple of years in advance? They can't project a production run, can they?

Mr. KNOTT. Right. That's it.

Mr. BROOKS. If we have any real problem on the bidding, just pick out one that likes to cooperate on a price basis and give them a guaranteed purchase for a couple of years in advance. They can schedule their work, their hours and employees, and their acquisition of parts and steel, et cetera, and build them for us at a good price, within the price framework and schedule that you are trying to maintain. It might encourage the others to be a little more helpful too.

Mr. KNOTT. Right. Certainly we are not going to admit that we can't buy within the present statutory limitations until we reach a point where we are not receiving any bids at all.

Mr. BROOKS. What was the reason, if you recall, why the other three manufacturers have not been beating on the door so often? Did they give you a reason as to why they were reluctant?

Mr. KNOTT. Well, I think they actually did submit bids.

Isn't that true, Mr. Abersfeller?

Mr. ABERSFELLER. Yes. And we have bought some from all manufacturers, Mr. Chairman, but American Motors has been the principal producer.

Mr. BROOKS. Have the others been willing to furnish you the cost of the safety equipment that is now required?

Mr. ABERSFELLER. It is not now required, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BROOKS. The safety equipment, or the information?

Mr. ABERSFELLER. They provide the safety equipment, but not the information relative to its cost.

Mr. BROOKS. Have you asked them for it?

Mr. ABERSFELLER. Yes.

Mr. BROOKS. What reason did they give for not telling you what it cost them?

Mr. ABERSFELLER. Each company has a somewhat different reason. But generally the thrust of the answers goes to the position that the information is proprietary. One company indicated it would be relatively useless, in any event. And to some extent there is merit in the third argument, which is that it is difficult to assess the cost.

For instance, some of the safety standards, as you know, Mr. Chairman, go to improving the construction of the dashboard. It is awfully difficult, it seems to me, for anyone to make a proper assessment of what the cost would be for the improvement in strength.

Mr. BROOKS. They have all the costs, and they could just say it costs \$50 or \$500. They have the figures.