

Mr. DADDARIO. But you weigh these priorities with having something to do with the money manpower and facilities to do it. Is that criteria enough to make such judgments because obviously when the funds are not there, the ability to do this work is restricted. You can accept less than you had the year before. Therefore, things are not being done that you could have done, and it becomes a question as to whether this is important or not. If it is important, it ought not to be judged in this way.

Mr. FINGER. The way our authorizations work, we get authorization by program area. These are adjusted in the process of budget review through the executive branch and through the Congress so that we get an authorization against a program line item. That tells us, in effect, what the maximum amount is that can be spent in that line item. Any increase requires that we first notify the Authorization Committees. If a program area were not cut at all, that would clearly indicate the intent of the Congress to keep that area going along. Our general attitude would be to try to conform with that intent.

Mr. RUMSFELD. Then NASA would reprogram it into another area?

Mr. FINGER. I was trying to avoid that.

No; I think the important thing is that if other areas were cut, we would not have the flexibility to reprogram into those, and we could not reprogram in those cases without coming back to the Congress and notifying Congress of that intent. The issue comes up before the Congress to judge so the program is reviewed.

Mr. DADDARIO. Thank you, Mr. Finger, we appreciate the benefit of your statement and some of the questions we have been able to ask. We will have other questions for the record.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO HAROLD B. FINGER BY THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, RESEARCH, AND DEVELOPMENT

Question No. 1. Do all of the directors of NASA's inhouse laboratories have discretionary funds?

(a) What is the average amount as a percentage of the laboratory's budget?

(b) If all of the directors do not have such funds, what criteria are there to determine who gets it and who does not?

(c) What criteria are used to evaluate the work performed with such funds?

(d) Dr. Pickering stated that he did not have discretionary funds. If you agree that such funds improve a laboratory's capabilities, should not contractor operated laboratories also have such funds?

(e) Was the work on computerized image processing for medical x-rays funded initially by NASA?

Response. NASA has not made use of the approach to discretionary funding as described by Dr. Pickering and others during the hearings of the Daddario Committee, i.e., entirely discretionary without any stated purpose for the funds at all. We have always recognized, however, the importance of allowing our laboratory directors to have flexibility and discretion in the selection of specific tasks to be researched, and in the adjustment of tasks selected, and have developed a research program management system which permits this flexibility. This system provides for definition of the overall technical scope of the research program at three different progressively refined levels, i.e., program, subprogram, and task area. A NASA Center Director is authorized to initiate a research work unit at any time if he has available resources and the unit falls generally within the technical definition of the task area involved. In addition, at any time during the fiscal year, a NASA Center Director is authorized to reprogram funds from one task area to another within the same subprogram if more promising technology areas are identified. This overall management system assures sound overall balance in the agency's research program and provides sufficient discretion to