

Mr. ROBACK. Who won the award?

Mr. TASSIN. Chromcraft, sir.

Mr. ROBACK. There wasn't any problem of competition on the LAU-3/A as far as the data availability was concerned; is that right?

Mr. TASSIN. No, sir; we had data on that, and competed that item.

Mr. ROBACK. Just as a matter of general observation, you had procurements of LAU-3/A for maybe a dozen or more—I haven't counted them. But in each case you decided that the urgency of the procurement would not permit competition. Why would there be such an unexceptional public exigency in an item which you know you are procuring and that you have to replenish inventories, you have to meet Vietnam demands, some urgent, and others less urgent? In any case, you have a replenishment cycle of some kind. Why did every one of these become, almost every one, a matter of public exigency?

Mr. TASSIN. I can't answer that. The 3/A launcher was procured for the Air Force, and they set their priorities on these procurements.

LACK OF COMPETITION ON AIR FORCE CONTRACTS

Mr. ROBACK. Is the statement that the timing of the Air Force procurement was such that you didn't have time for competition?

Mr. TASSIN. Yes, sir; when we received the requirements from the Air Force for the quantity to be procured, and the delivery requirements as to when they required them, together with their priority designators, it was determined that the length of time, or the timespan between the receipt of the requirement and the award of the contract would not permit—except in these other cases where we did get competition—would not permit others to manufacture, present for test, and commence deliveries in time to meet the requirements of the service.

Mr. ROBACK. Your testimony is that the public exigency, wherever it was determined to be a public exigency in these procurements, stemmed from the procurement requests of the Air Force rather than from the nature of the conflict, so to speak? In other words, it was just the routing procedures of the Air Force which created the public exigency?

Mr. TASSIN. I am not saying that. I am saying I cannot answer the question as to why we did not receive the requirements earlier. I am not privy to this.

Mr. SHILLITO. I think the Air Force can answer better than we can. If you look at the sporadic requirements of the Air Force and the time periods involved, you will find the Vietnam conflict just brought about unforeseen requirements that just necessitated the Air Force requiring these launchers in short order. That is what happened.

Mr. HOLIFIELD. But the basic problem here, Mr. Secretary, it seems to me, is that the procuring office, the single source procuring office, allowed itself to get into a position where you had no competitive sources.

Mr. SHILLITO. That is correct, sir.

Mr. HOLIFIELD. And this is the thing I cannot quite understand, because I can remember in past instances where the Navy was very meticulous about getting additional sources, to the point where they held up a contract with a sole source producer until that sole source producer had trained at least two other industrial groups to produce