

Mr. Kratzer

GAO

United States General Accounting Office  
Washington, DC 20548

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Office of  
General Counsel

In Reply  
Refer to: B-200715

[Request for Relief of Liability]

January 22, 1981

The Honorable Larry E. Meierotto  
Assistant Secretary-Policy, Budget and  
Administration  
Department of the Interior

DLG 05906

ABC 00397

Dear Mr. Meierotto:

This is in response to your request that Gwendolyn C. Noble,  
Imprest Fund Cashier for the Fish and Wildlife Service, Mississippi  
Sand Hill Crane Refuge, Gautier, Mississippi, be relieved of liability  
for an imprest fund shortage in the amount of \$800.

The record indicates that during the night of March 24, 1980,  
unknown persons scaled a chainlink fence, made a forced entry into  
the refuge manager's office trailer, and stole, among other things,  
the imprest fund safe. The portable safe was not secured to the  
trailer frame because the refuge manager had only recently moved  
into the premises. The sheriff's department and the FBI investigated  
the incident, but apparently have not yet arrested any suspect or  
recovered the stolen items. No evidence contained in the record  
implicates the cashier in any way.

Based upon the investigative findings, you determined that  
the loss occurred without fault or negligence on the part of  
Ms. Noble and, we have been informally advised, while she was act-  
ing in the discharge of her official duties. Since there is evi-  
dence of a forcible entry into the office and removal of the safe,  
and since there is no evidence which in any way implicates the  
Imprest Fund Cashier, we concur. Accordingly, under the authority  
granted us by 31 U.S.C. § 82a-1, we relieve Ms. Noble of all liability  
for the \$800 imprest fund shortage. The loss may be charged to  
the appropriation currently available for the expense of the  
disbursing function.

Sincerely yours,

Milton J. Socolar  
General Counsel



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