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COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

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8-19-70

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AUG 19 1970

Dear Mr. Conyers:

Reference is made to your inquiry dated July 23, 1970, requesting our consideration of matters discussed in a letter dated July 15, 1970, which you received from Mr. Dean A. Robb of the Law Offices of Goodman, Eden, Robb, Millender, Goodman, and Bedrosian. In his letter, Mr. Robb requested an explanation regarding the arrangement that the National Transportation Safety Board (Board) has with Hoover Reporting Company, Inc., relative to charges made to the public for transcripts of Government hearings.

In May 1969, the Board requested bids for providing transcription and report preparation services covering Board hearings for the period July 1, 1969, through June 30, 1970. The solicitation provided that a bid price in excess of \$1.00 per page would not be considered responsive. It also provided that a surcharge, not to exceed 50 percent of the basic price per page, could be assessed for copies of transcripts of hearings held outside the Washington, D. C., area and for copies ordered after transcription. Further, the solicitation provided that the price charged to the public could not exceed the price specified in the bid.

Four bids were received in response to the solicitation, ranging from \$0.635 per page to \$0.79 per page. The Hoover Reporting Company submitted the low bid (basic price of \$0.635 per page) and was awarded the contract on June 18, 1969.

Our Office has generally held that the Government is concerned with prices to be charged the public for transcripts of Government hearings only to the extent of ensuring that such prices are reasonable. In this instance, in its solicitation the Board established a ceiling price of \$1.00 per page and the contract provides that the price charged to the public shall be the same as the price per page charged to the Government.

The transcript purchased by Mr. Robb covered Board hearings held in New Haven, Connecticut. Because the hearings were held outside the Washington, D. C., area, the price per page charged for the transcript by the Hoover Reporting Company was \$0.95--the basic price per page of \$0.635 plus a surcharge, as provided for in the contract, of 50 percent of the basic price.

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The Board maintains copies of all transcripts on file in the Accident Inquiries and Records Section, located in the Normandy Building, 1626 K Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. Except for transcripts of confidential proceedings, copies of all transcripts are available for public inspection. No charge is made to the public for this service.

The information contained in this report was obtained principally from Board records. The Board, however, has not had an opportunity to review and comment on the contents of the report.

We trust that the information presented herewith will serve your purpose. In accordance with your request, we are returning the correspondence that you furnished.

Sincerely yours,



Acting Comptroller General  
of the United States

Enclosures

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.  
House of Representatives