

GAO

Briefing Report to the Honorable
Howard Coble, House of Representatives

September 1988

NATIONAL SCIENCE
FOUNDATION

Allegations of Waste
Within the U.S.
Antarctic Program



043359/136904



United States
General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

**Resources, Community, and
Economic Development Division**

B-231271

September 22, 1988

The Honorable Howard Coble
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Coble:

This briefing report responds to your recent request that we examine a constituent's allegations of waste within the U.S. Antarctic Program and summarizes information provided to you at a July 26, 1988, briefing.

Among other things, the Program was established to ensure that Antarctica is used for peaceful purposes, such as science exploration. The National Science Foundation (NSF) has been assigned overall responsibility to budget for and manage the Program, including logistics support. The U.S. Naval Support Force, Antarctica and a civilian contractor--ITT/Antarctic Services, Inc.--provide, on a reimbursable basis, the major continuing services that underpin the U.S. presence in Antarctica and make possible the science program that is the principal expression of U.S. national interest and policy in Antarctica.

In summary, we found that neither your constituent, who made the allegations, nor NSF officials, who denied the allegations in a May 13, 1988, letter to you (see app. I), could provide us much in the way of documentation to support their positions. As a result, we could not substantiate either position.

More specifically, your constituent told us that he personally observed wasteful practices at NSF's McMurdo Station in Antarctica during the winter of 1987, including (1) discarding of large quantities of unused trail-marking flags and bamboo poles said to cost \$7.00 each, many sleeping bags in good condition, and thousands of feet of recently purchased stainless steel pipe of the wrong size, (2) custody by New Zealand of a usable pickup truck owned by NSF that should be part of the capitalized property under the control of the Navy, and (3) purchase of thousands of light fixtures of the wrong kind that had to be reordered.

NSF officials told us that none of the allegations were true. They said that

- flags, which most commonly cost \$1.45 each, including their poles, are never discarded because they are the life lines for those going out on the trail;
- usable sleeping bags are not discarded, and that unusable ones are sent to the United States for disposal;
- no stainless steel pipe of the wrong size has been bought, and pipe that was bought was in much smaller quantities than alleged;
- no trucks in usable condition were given to New Zealand; and
- no light fixtures of the wrong type had ever been ordered.

Although we could not substantiate the allegations, our inquiries did disclose a 1983 NSF internal audit report and 1987 Navy internal audit report, both of which identified internal control weaknesses that, if not corrected, make the Program susceptible to wasteful practices such as those alleged by your constituent.

NSF officials said that actions have been taken to correct most of the problems noted in these audit reports. However, they have not conducted or scheduled any follow-on audits to review the adequacy of current Program operations or the degree to which their prior recommendations have been implemented. During the course of our work, we suggested that NSF's Division of Audit and Oversight perform a follow-on audit of the Program operations that looks for evidence of waste and resolves the question of whether internal controls are in place and being used to properly manage logistics support of the Program. The NSF internal audit director stated that he could not schedule such an audit at this time because he has other major NSF programs yet to be audited and limited staff.

As an alternative to an audit, members of the NSF Division of Polar Programs, who are responsible for the line management of the Program, visit Antarctica each year and may perform an internal control review of logistics support of the Program of the type required by the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA) of 1982. Agency line managers, not internal auditors, are responsible for

ensuring that programs are being carried out properly and that internal controls are adequate.

FMFIA and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance requires the heads of federal departments and agencies to evaluate the adequacy of their internal control and accounting systems and to report the results of such reviews annually to the President and the Congress. OMB requires agencies to evaluate the vulnerability of their programs to fraud, waste, and abuse, and then conduct detailed examinations, which include testing--called internal control reviews--of those programs and activities generally judged to be most vulnerable.

NSF, however, has not conducted, and has no current plans to conduct, any internal control reviews of logistics support of the Program. According to an NSF official responsible for planning FMFIA internal control reviews, this is because Program officials have not indicated the need for such a review. However, on the basis of our disclosures, he said that NSF will consider performing such a review of the Program.

NSF annually evaluates the overall performance of its support contractor--ITT/Antarctic Services, Inc.--in establishing an award fee. This includes evaluating the effectiveness of logistics support. We noted in 1982 that NSF gave the contractor a relatively low rating for this category but, in subsequent years, the contractor's performance was rated substantially higher. NSF officials told us that the system of annually evaluating the contractor gives the contractor points for moving toward solutions to problems, which--according to the officials--the contractor has been doing. This is why the contractor's ratings may seem high in view of problems cited in the NSF internal audit report, they said.

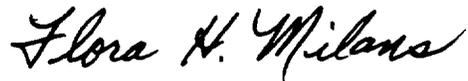
As agreed with your office, we reviewed existing information at NSF's Washington, D.C., headquarters to determine if evidence of waste within the Program existed. We analyzed NSF's May 13, 1988, letter to you that responded to the allegations and discussed them with your constituent and with responsible NSF officials. We also examined annual NSF reports on internal controls, internal NSF and Navy audit reports on Antarctic operations, and selected annual NSF evaluations of the Antarctic support contractor's performance. We did not examine records or observe current operational support activities in Antarctica.

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Sections 1 through 4 provide the details of our examination. Appendix II provides a listing of the major contributors to this briefing report.

Although we did not request official comments on this report, we discussed its contents with NSF's Division of Polar Program officials. We are sending copies of this briefing report to the Director of NSF and other interested parties. If you have further questions, please contact me at (202) 275-8545.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Flora H. Milans".

Flora H. Milans
Associate Director

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ABBREVIATIONS

ANS	ITT/Antarctic Services, Inc.
FMFIA	Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act
GAO	General Accounting Office
NSF	National Science Foundation
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
USAP	U.S. Antarctic Program

SECTION 1

BACKGROUND

The U.S. Antarctic Program (USAP) supports national goals to maintain the Antarctic Treaty, ensure that the continent will continue to be used for peaceful purposes, foster cooperative research contributing to the solution of regional and worldwide problems, protect the environment, and ensure the equitable and wise use of living and nonliving resources. Scientific research continues to be the principal expression of U.S. national interest and policy in Antarctica.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has been assigned overall responsibility to budget for and manage the USAP, including logistics support. Responsibility within NSF for the USAP rests with the Division of Polar Programs, which also supports research in several scientific disciplines in both polar regions.

U.S. policy calls for the maintenance of an active and influential presence in Antarctica. This includes two coastal and two inland stations that are manned year-round. The coastal stations are McMurdo--located on Ross Island at the edge of the Ross Ice Shelf, 2,000 miles south of New Zealand--and Palmer--located on Anvers Island, adjacent to the Antarctic Peninsula. One of the two inland stations is located at the geographical South Pole. The other, the smallest and newest of the U.S. year-round stations, is Siple--located in Ellsworth Land at the base of the Antarctic Peninsula. The Department of Defense and a civilian contractor--ITT/Antarctic Services, Inc. (ANS)--provide, on a reimbursable basis, the major continuing services that underpin the U.S. presence in Antarctica and make the science program possible.

The U.S. Naval Support Force, Antarctica (Navy) provides the primary logistics support for the USAP. This includes operation and maintenance at McMurdo Station (the main staging point for most U.S. activities on the continent) and the year-round operations of a squadron that provides U.S. air support in Antarctica. Additionally, the Navy is responsible for surface and air transport of cargo and personnel, particularly to New Zealand and Antarctica.

A cost-plus-award-fee contract for support of the USAP was awarded to ANS in November 1979 and will expire on March 31, 1990. ANS is responsible for the operation and maintenance of three research stations--South Pole, Siple, and Palmer; carries on major construction in Antarctica; and provides some of the logistics and specialized support, such as operation and maintenance of the research ship Polar Duke.

In fiscal year 1987, the NSF awarded research grants totaling \$12.6 million for the USAP and spent an additional \$104.6 million

to support this research--including \$62.2 million to the Navy and \$36.2 million to ANS.

SECTION 2

ALLEGED WASTEFUL PRACTICES

One of Representative Howard Coble's constituents, who had recently worked in Antarctica, alleged wasteful practices at Antarctica's McMurdo Station by both the Navy and NSF's contractor--ANS. NSF officials denied that any of the alleged practices had occurred. However, NSF provided little documentation to support its position. On the other hand, the constituent could not provide us with documentation to support his observations of the alleged practices. As a result, we could not substantiate either position.

On April 6, 1988, Representative Coble wrote to the Director of NSF and requested a meeting to discuss allegations of waste in the USAP. On April 20, 1988, the Director of the NSF Division of Polar Programs met with Representative Coble to discuss the allegations.

The allegations included

- the questionable need for large quantities of trail flags ordered at \$7.00 each;
- the discarding of sleeping bags in good condition that were retrieved and used by New Zealanders stationed at a nearby base;
- the abandonment of a USAP truck that was retrieved and repaired into good working order by the New Zealanders;
- the procurement of between \$60,000 and \$70,000 worth of stainless steel pipe of the wrong type, which was subsequently discarded;
- the ordering of approximately 2,000 light fixtures when only 24 were required; and
- broad statements regarding the lack of NSF oversight of the poor performance of ANS and the Navy.

The Director of the NSF Division of Polar Programs subsequently provided a written response to Representative Coble on May 13, 1988 (see app. I), which addressed each of the allegations. The NSF response stated that

- 9,500 flags, each costing from \$1.40 to \$2.55 with bamboo poles, are needed during a typical year to ensure safe travel during poor weather;

- except for several blood-stained sleeping bags used by accident victims at the site of a plane crash, no sleeping bags were discarded in Antarctica--worn out sleeping bags are shipped to the United States for disposal;
- in 1980 the USAP gave the carcass of a nonworking truck to New Zealand to be cannibalized for usable spare parts--the rest of the USAP vehicle was disposed of;
- no stainless steel pipe of the wrong type was ordered, unneeded spare pipe for a now-decommissioned nuclear power plant was returned to the United States in February 1984 for disposal;
- about 1,600 light fixtures were ordered and required for 4 dormitories and a heavy vehicle maintenance facility under construction;
- the ANS performance is very good and, while there may be situations where ANS has not performed up to standards, NSF requires corrective action whenever ANS performance is lacking; and
- the Navy's work is not monitored as closely by NSF as that of ANS, but NSF evaluates the support provided by the Navy for possible savings.

In June 1988, Representative Coble asked us to contact the constituent, contact NSF officials, and brief the Representative on the results.

Representative Coble's constituent told us that he personally observed wasteful practices at McMurdo Station during the winter of 1987. Examples of waste cited to us included the (1) discarding of large quantities of unused trail marking flags and bamboo poles said to cost \$7.00 each, many sleeping bags in good condition, and thousands of feet of recently purchased stainless steel pipe of the wrong size, (2) custody by New Zealand of a usable pickup truck owned by NSF that should be part of the capitalized property under the control of the Navy, and (3) purchase of thousands of light fixtures of the wrong kind that had to be reordered. However, the constituent could not provide us with any documentation to support the allegations.

We then discussed the allegations with NSF Division of Polar Programs officials. None of the constituent's allegations occurred, they claimed. They said that

- flags are never discarded because they are the life lines for those going out on the trail;

- usable sleeping bags are not discarded, and unusable ones are sent to Port Hueneme in California for disposal;
- no trucks in usable condition were given to New Zealand;
- no stainless steel pipe of the wrong size had been bought and pipe that was bought was in much smaller quantities than alleged; and
- no light fixtures of the wrong type had ever been ordered.

They told us that their May 13, 1988, letter to Representative Coble contains all the information available from their offices in Washington, D.C. Except for invoices to support costs of \$1.40 to \$2.55 for trail-marking flags, NSF officials were unable to provide us documentation to support their responses to each of the allegations.

SECTION 3

INTERNAL CONTROL WEAKNESSES

Our inquiries disclosed a 1983 NSF internal audit report and a 1987 Navy internal audit report, both of which identified internal control weaknesses that, if not corrected, make the USAP susceptible to wasteful practices such as those alleged by Representative Coble's constituent. Although NSF officials said that actions to correct most of the problems noted have been taken, they have not conducted or scheduled any follow-on audits to review the adequacy of current USAP operations or the degree to which their prior recommendations have been implemented. In addition, NSF has not conducted, nor does it plan to conduct, any internal control reviews of USAP logistics support of the type required by the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA) of 1982, and implementing Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance.

NSF INTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS

Auditors from NSF's Division of Audit and Oversight visited Antarctica in January 1982 and issued a September 1983 report on its review of USAP operations. The following were among its findings:

- Storage facilities at McMurdo Station for supply inventories were inadequate. Both the Navy and the civilian contractor (i.e., ANS) needed additional enclosed storage facilities to properly control their supply inventories.
- ANS was not maintaining adequate inventory records and had no perpetual inventory control records at its McMurdo construction inventory area.
- Annual physical inventories of supplies were not being taken by ANS and reconciled with the book balances.
- ANS had an outdated operating manual, which caused variances in the methods of controlling inventories.
- The Navy had never submitted an inventory report of capital equipment to NSF.
- ANS' performance could be improved, and costs reduced, if an effective contract administration program were in effect in Antarctica. This would require the services of one or more properly trained NSF contract administrators.

- The NSF contract administrator, as part of his/her duties, should institute a construction inspection program that would ensure quality construction at the lowest cost.

According to NSF officials, some actions have been taken to correct each of the above problems, except for the one involving inadequate storage facilities. A project planned in 1979 to construct additional storage facilities to be completed by 1983 has been deferred to 1992 because of other higher priorities.

The NSF's Division of Audit and Oversight has not scheduled a follow-on audit to review the adequacy of current USAP operations and the degree to which their prior recommendations have been implemented. The need to audit other important agency functions and limited staff are cited as reasons why NSF auditors have not visited Antarctica since January 1982. The NSF Division of Audit and Oversight has about 13 auditors to cover all the activities of the agency, an agency with a fiscal year 1987 appropriation of \$1.6 billion. We previously reported on the lack of internal audit coverage of important NSF functions because of limited internal audit staff at NSF.¹

NAVAL AUDIT SERVICE FINDINGS

Naval Audit Service Western Region auditors have issued reports in 1978, 1980, 1984, and 1987 on selected aspects of the functions of the U.S. Naval Support Force in Antarctica (Navy). The following were included among the Naval Audit Service's 1987 findings:

- Material stored outside at McMurdo Station was not adequately protected or organized to prevent damage or loss. An undetermined quantity of material was stored outside because of a shortage of warehouse space at McMurdo Station.
- Capitalized property, including trucks, was not accurately accounted for. Physical inventories and reviews and verifications of data contained in capitalized plant property reports were not being done.

Written responses from the Naval Support Force to the Naval Audit Service in the summer of 1987 indicated that corrective actions were planned to address the above findings. However, because target completion dates for actions regarding inadequate storage facilities and poor accountability of capitalized property were anticipated after the October 1987 issuance of the audit

¹See Internal Audit: Nonstatutory Audit and Investigative Groups Need to Be Strengthened (GAO/AFMD-86-11, June 3, 1986).

report, follow-up to ensure that planned corrective actions were taken will have to be done in a future follow-on audit. The Naval Audit Service has about 440 auditors, including 110 in its western regional office, to cover all the activities of the Navy. The Navy's fiscal year 1987 appropriation was about \$93 billion. Despite having about a 70-percent greater dollar value appropriation ratio to the number of assigned auditors, the Naval Audit Service has audited USAP activities four times compared to one audit by NSF auditors during the past 10 years.

ANNUAL FINANCIAL INTEGRITY ACT EVALUATIONS

FMFIA requires the heads of federal departments and agencies to evaluate the adequacy of their internal control and accounting systems and to report the results of such reviews annually to the President and the Congress. The annual reports are to identify significant problems--called material weaknesses--as well as plans to correct the reported weaknesses.

OMB Circular A-123, Revised, dated August 4, 1986, prescribes policies and procedures to be followed by executive departments and agencies in implementing the requirements of FMFIA. OMB requires agencies to evaluate the vulnerability of their programs to fraud, waste, and abuse and then conduct detailed examinations--called internal control reviews--of those programs and activities generally judged to be most vulnerable. As part of the requirements, each agency must develop a Management Control Plan to provide for necessary internal control evaluations over a 5-year period.

The primary responsibility for conducting the internal control review rests with the manager of the component, i.e., the person responsible for achieving results in the program or administrative component. Ideally, members of the internal control review team should be selected from within the responsible program offices. One of the essential steps in conducting an internal control review is testing existing controls by selecting a sample of transactions, reviewing the documentation, asking questions, and making other observations and inquiries to determine if the controls are functioning as intended.

Over the years, NSF has identified a number of programs/activities, such as the accountability of personal computers, as being vulnerable, and conducted internal control reviews of these areas. The USAP was rated moderately vulnerable, partially because of the remoteness and inaccessibility of the field operations, and concerns about controls related to supply systems and the accountability of capital equipment. Moderately vulnerable assessments require less intensive and less frequent internal control reviews as contrasted with highly vulnerable assessments, which require a detailed review of internal controls.

None of NSF's five annual FMFIA reports for fiscal years 1983 through 1987 have disclosed any material internal control weaknesses related to logistics support for the USAP. Although line managers responsible for the management of USAP and many of their staff visit Antarctica each year, no FMFIA internal control reviews have been made of the logistics support of the USAP. Furthermore, NSF's Management Control Plan does not include any reviews of internal controls over this activity during the next 5-year period (1988-92).

Only vulnerability assessments (which do not include testing) have been made of the logistics support of the USAP. Without the performance of internal control reviews, including testing, it comes as no surprise that internal control weaknesses related to logistics support for the USAP have never been reported. Members of the NSF Division of Polar Programs could perform an internal control review as part of the required annual FMFIA evaluation process. In the final analysis, agency management, not internal auditors, is responsible for performing the internal control reviews.

According to an NSF official responsible for planning FMFIA internal control reviews, no internal control reviews have been conducted or are now planned for USAP logistics support because USAP officials have not indicated the need for such a review. However, on the basis of our disclosures, NSF will consider performing such a review of the USAP, he said.

SECTION 4

CONTRACTOR PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

As an incentive or inducement to ensure the quality and efficiency of the work to be performed under the contract for support of the USAP, the contractor may earn award fees on the basis of an annual performance evaluation by NSF's Division of Polar Programs. A maximum of 100 points can be awarded for the performance of 17 activities within the 4 broad categories of program management, technical performance, science support, and business management.

Technical performance includes the effectiveness of the activities of the logistics system and construction performance. Business management includes the effectiveness of the activities of the procurement system covering all procurement and subcontracting, and administration of capital and noncapital equipment and inventories. These are the two categories most closely related to the activities discussed in this briefing report.

A grade range of 91-100 is excellent, 81-90 is good, 71-80 is satisfactory, 61-70 is marginal, and 60 or below is unsatisfactory. Unsatisfactory means performance is deficient in substantial areas of effort. Immediate improvement is required in order to permit continuation of the contract; termination may be considered.

In 1982, the contractor received a percentage rating of 70.66 for effectiveness of logistics supply and supply management. The overall performance evaluation score was 77.721 percent. However, in subsequent years, contractor performance was rated substantially higher. For example, in 1987 the overall rating was 87.99 percent. This included scores of 84.04 percent for the effectiveness of the logistics system, 91.87 percent for construction performance, 93.75 percent for the effectiveness of the procurement system, and 85 percent for the administration of capital and noncapital equipment and inventories.

NSF officials told us that the system of rating the contractor in the annual evaluation gives the contractor points for taking actions to solve problems, which--according to the officials--the contractor has been doing. That is why the ratings may seem high in view of problems cited in the NSF internal audit report, they said.

LETTER DATED MAY 13, 1988, FROM DIRECTOR
OF THE NSF DIVISION OF POLAR PROGRAMS TO
REPRESENTATIVE HOWARD COBLE

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20550

DIVISION OF POLAR PROGRAMS

May 13, 1988

Honorable Howard Coble
House of Representatives
430 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-3306

Dear Mr. Coble:

It was my pleasure to meet with you on April 20 to discuss the US Antarctic Program (USAP). Among other things, we discussed allegations of waste within the USAP. We investigated each case, and provide our findings for your information:

Statement: Between 1,000 and 10,000 marking flags had been ordered at \$7.00 each. Is this a necessary expense?

Findings: The USAP support contractor, presently ITT/Antarctic Services Inc (ANS), buys trail flags each year. The contractor follows federal procurement regulations in this, and indeed all, procurement actions. The flags are ordered through the Department of Defense supply system. Several different colored trail flags are needed. They range in price from \$1.05 to \$2.20. The bamboo poles for the flags cost \$0.35 each. We use different colored flags to mark different areas, hazards, and trails. The most commonly used colors are red and green; these cost \$1.45 each, with the pole. We use 9,500 flags during a typical year. The flags are not recoverable. We place flags on trails and roads at 100-foot intervals. At times visibility is less than fifty feet. Flags mark trails and hazardous areas, and are critical to insure safe travel during poor weather. We believe that the expense is necessary.

Statement: USAP sleeping bags in good condition, each costing \$60.00, were discarded. New Zealanders retrieved and used the sleeping bags themselves.

Findings: We discarded several sleeping bags this past season. The bags were used by accident victims at the site of a plane crash, and were returned

Honorable Howard Coble

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covered with blood. Repeated attempts to clean these bags were unsuccessful, and they were discarded. We have no knowledge of anyone retrieving these sleeping bags. Sleeping bags are cleaned in Christchurch, New Zealand. Dry cleaning is not available at McMurdo Station. The Defense Department Property Disposal Office (DDPDO) in Pt. Hueneme, California, disposes worn out sleeping bags.

Statement: A USAP truck had been abandoned. New Zealanders retrieved the truck and repaired it into good working order.

Findings: The New Zealand Antarctic program (NZARP) uses non-US manufactured trucks (now Toyota). The USAP uses US-manufactured trucks (now Ford). Before 1974, both the NZARP and the USAF used Dodge trucks. Our last Dodge truck was made in 1972; it could no longer be economically repaired in 1980. Since the NZARP still had a Dodge truck at that time, the USAP gave the carcass of the non-working 1972 Dodge to the NZARP in the spirit of international Antarctic cooperation. The NZARP cannibalized the carcass for usable spare parts for their sole remaining Dodge. The rest of the USAP vehicle was disposed of. All vehicles procured for the USAP since 1972 are either still in service or have been disposed through the DDPDO at Port Hueneme.

Statement: Between \$60,000 and \$70,000 worth of stainless steel pipe has been ordered. The pipe apparently was the wrong type and was discarded.

Findings: Stainless steel pipe bought as spares for the now decommissioned nuclear power plant was kept at McMurdo after the plant was decommissioned in 1972. After many years, we decided there would not be a use for that pipe. As part of the clean-up program, we returned the pipe to the US in February 1984 for disposal by the DDPDO. Small pieces of stainless steel pipe scrap resulted from the cutting and fitting of pipe in constructing the water distillation plant. This scrap was returned to the US for disposal in February 1987. We know of no instances where the wrong pipe was ordered.

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Statement: Approximately 2,000 light fixtures had been ordered; only 24 were required.

Findings: The total number of light fixtures purchased for new construction during FY 1986 through FY 1988 was about sixteen hundred. This was the largest series of procurement actions involving light fixtures in the program. The fixtures were bought for four dormitories and a heavy vehicle maintenance facility under construction. About ten of these fixtures were damaged in shipment, and about 350 remain to be installed in the fourth dormitory planned for construction in FY 1989. We installed the rest in the buildings as planned. In addition to the sixteen hundred, a few fixtures of various styles are bought to replace broken fixtures that can not be fixed. At no time in recent history has the program ordered two thousand light fixtures.

Statement: ITT/ANS was not up to the task and NSF turned a blind eye.

Findings: The support contract between the NSF and ANS is a cost plus award fee contract. As part of the award fee setting process, the NSF convenes an annual award fee panel. The panel asks participants within the USAP for evaluation comments. The panel carefully considers and evaluates all comments, positive and negative. The contractor's performance ratings have consistently been in the "very good" range and have increased over the last several years. In addition, the Pacific Division, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, acting as our agent, inspects newly constructed buildings as part of the acceptance process. The inspectors have been very favorably impressed by the quality of the ANS construction. While there may be some situations in which ANS has not performed up to standards, NSF does not turn a blind eye, and requires corrective action whenever the ANS performance is lacking.

Statement: The Navy is also being wasteful.

Findings: This statement is very broad in scope. In addition to the contractor, the Naval Support Force Antarctica (NSFA) provides support to the USAP. Since

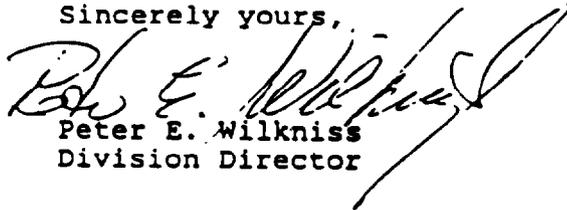
Honorable Howard Coble

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the NSFA is a US Government Agency, the NSF does not monitor the work of the NSFA closely as it does the contractor, ANS. However, NSF evaluates the support provided by NSFA for possible savings. A recently concluded A-76 type study determined that the public works function could be more economically performed by the contractor. Transfer of the Public Works function from NSFA to ANS is now underway.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide you with the information you need to answer your constituent. We are pleased that you participated in the US Antarctic Program this past season and saw our activities first hand.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Peter E. Wilkniss", written over a printed name and title.

Peter E. Wilkniss
Division Director

MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS BRIEFING REPORT

RESOURCES, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Flora H. Milans, Associate Director, (202) 275-8545
Lowell Mininger, Group Director
James E. Gwinn, Evaluator-in-Charge

(005750)

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