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United States General Accounting Office
Washington, DC 20548

Office of
General Counsel

In Reply
Refer to: B-198080 (TRK)

AUG 13 1980

Mr. Paul D. Lambreth
U.S. Department of Energy
P.O. Box 27710
Denver, Colorado 80227

~~This information is available to the public~~

Dear Mr. Lambreth:

Enclosed is a copy of a letter to me from Danny P. Danigan, Director, Management and Budget Staff, Office of the Inspector General, Department of Agriculture, dated July 25, 1980.

Mr. Danigan states that the Office of Inspector General, United States Department of Agriculture may properly pay for the sale of your Denver, Colorado, residence "provided the sale takes place prior to October 1980." Mr. Danigan specifies no particular date in October; consequently he may mean that the sale, i.e., settlement (closing date), must be on or before September 30, 1980.

Your travel authorization of September 28, 1979, issued by the Office of Inspector General, Department of Agriculture, correctly observes:

"The settlement dates for the purchase of real estate or lease termination transactions for which reimbursement is requested are not later than one (initial) year after the date on which the employee reports for duty at the new official duty station."

Your letter to us of February 28, 1980, states that you physically reported for duty at your new duty station in Washington, D.C., on October 31, 1979. However, we have no proof that you first reported for duty on that date, and therefore we cannot assure you that settlement (closing) may be extended to October 31, 1980. The Department of Agriculture has no obligation to extend the deadline for settlement regardless of the reason it is not concluded within



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1 year after reporting for duty in Washington. See Ronald F. Houska, B-191087, February 28, 1978, copy enclosed.

You may claim real estate expenses directly from Mr. Danigan's office without further action required by the General Accounting Office.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Robert L. Higgins

 Robert L. Higgins
Assistant General Counsel

Enclosure (To Mr. Lambreth only)

cc: Danny P. Danigan, Director
Management and Budget Staff
Office of Inspector General
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250