



COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

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MAY 14 1968

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Dear Mr. Speaker:

The accompanying report points to one way in which the Department of Defense can improve its airlift of cargo to Southeast Asia and the Western Pacific area and achieve substantial economies.

The Military Airlift Command of the Department of the Air Force has responsibility for providing overseas airlift services for all military departments, and most of its military flights to Southeast Asia originate at Travis Air Force Base, California.

The extent of the United States commitment in Southeast Asia underscores the importance of using to the greatest possible extent available cargo space in all aircraft dispatched to that area.

We estimate, however, that, during the period July 1, 1965, through October 31, 1966, airlift capacity for about 21 million pounds of cargo on aircraft dispatched from Travis Air Force Base was unused even though ample cargo was on hand awaiting shipment. Although critically needed and paid for, cargo space valued at about \$15 million was not used.

We believe that this situation at Travis was caused primarily by two problems: a scarcity of personnel having the experience necessary to supervise adequately and carry out efficiently air cargo shipping operations and a weakness in procedures for communicating and coordinating information on availability of cargo space on special military flights to the Far East not originating at Travis.

We brought our findings to the attention of the Secretary of Defense and proposed corrective actions. In reply, the Secretary of the Air Force agreed in general with our findings and advised us that improvements were being made.

A follow-up review showed improvement in the use of available cargo space on flights out of Travis, with the exception of flights not originating there. We therefore are recommending that the Secretary

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of the Air Force require that the Commander, Military Airlift Command, take the necessary steps to ensure that accurate load information is properly prepared and forwarded to the appropriate air bases to increase the use of aircraft cargo space. We are recommending also that the Secretary of Defense require that the appropriate internal audit staff review the matters covered in this report to provide additional assurance that the necessary corrective actions are taken and effectively implemented.

We are reporting this matter to the Congress to point out the benefits to be realized from better management of military transportation of cargo, particularly in high-cost airlifts to Southeast Asia.

This report is also being sent today to the President of the Senate. Copies are being sent to the Director, Bureau of the Budget; the Secretary of Defense; the Secretary of the Air Force; and the Commander, Military Airlift Command.

Sincerely yours,

FRANK H. WEITZEL

~~Asst~~ Comptroller General
of the United States

The Honorable John W. McCormack
Speaker of the House of Representatives