

# The Watchdog Reports

*The following items from past issues of The Watchdog, the monthly newspaper of the GAO Employees Association, are republished for the interest of GAO's present professional staff.*

## **Weitzel Sworn in as Assistant Comptroller**

November 1953

Frank H. Weitzel, appointed by the President as Assistant Comptroller General of the United States, was sworn in October 12 at 10 in the General Accounting Office auditorium by Judge James R. Kirkland of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. Comptroller General Lindsay C. Warren, in presenting Mr. Weitzel to take the oath of office, said:

"On June 29, 1953, Frank L. Yates, the Assistant Comptroller General of the United States, unexpectedly passed to his final reward. It was a crushing blow to all of the personnel of the General Accounting Office, who loved and admired him. His memory will long be treasured here for he was a noble public servant and a friend of man.

"In selecting his successor we feel honored and proud that the President came to this office to fill the vacancy. There were several of our officials who were finely equipped for this important post, but I think all of us will agree that no one could have been

chosen who would have met with greater approbation than Frank H. Weitzel. There is no finer example of the career public servant which he has so brilliantly typified. His appointment has thrilled not only the General Accounting Office but the Government as a whole.

"Closely associated with him as I have been over the years, I know him to be a man of lofty character, great integrity, outstanding ability, and high ideals. He is fair, patient, steadfast, and unafraid. I know him to be dedicated to the preservation of the independence of the General Accounting Office, to its nonpartisan and nonpolitical status, and to its position as the agent of the Congress and a part of the legislative branch of the Government. Should those who have the responsibility for the Office, either now or in the future, ever fail to follow any one of these principles, the effectiveness of our work will be destroyed. In his new office, Frank Weitzel will be the same unspoiled, unaffected, modest young man as we work daily side by side with the executive branch for a better and more efficient Government.

**Robert F. Keller  
Succeeds Weitzel**

November 1953

Comptroller General Lindsay C. Warren has announced the appointment of Robert F. Keller, already an Assistant to the Comptroller General, to succeed Mr. Frank H. Weitzel as his Assistant in charge of congressional and interagency relationships of the General Accounting Office.

Mr. Keller was born in Washington, D.C., on August 22, 1913, and had primary and secondary education here. He attended George Washington University and the Washington College of Law where he obtained his LL.B. degree. He also attended the Benjamin Franklin University where he was awarded a B.C.S. degree.

Mr. Keller was appointed to a clerk position on July 16, 1935, and was later promoted to a Claims Developer, Claims Examiner, Senior Claims Examiner, Principal Claims Examiner, Principal Review Examiner. He joined the Navy in 1942 as an Ensign and was promoted to Lieutenant (jg) and Lieutenant. He returned to the Office in 1946 as an attorney in the Comptroller General's Office. He was appointed an Assistant to the Comptroller General in 1950.

During his military service Mr. Keller was cited for outstanding performance of duty and was awarded the Commendation Ribbon by James Forrestal, Secretary of the Navy.

**Ralph E. Ramsey  
Wins Promotion**

November 1953

The Comptroller General announced the appointment of Ralph E. Ramsey as Associate Chief of Investigations to succeed Robert F. Cartwright, who has been appointed Deputy Administrator of the State Department's Bureau of Security, Consular Affairs and Personnel.

**Goodby, Mr. Warren**

April 1954

The high esteem with which Lindsay C. Warren, the Comptroller General of the United States, is held by all the employees of the General Accounting Office was touchingly reflected when the news was released that he would retire from the Office on April 30.

Mr. Warren, who is retiring after completing 13½ of a 15-year term, has made the General Accounting Office the most highly respected Federal agency today. His fairness and understanding has earned for him the respect of all government leaders, but he has been looked upon as a friend by his employees.

The employees of the GAO already feel the loss due to his retirement but are happy that he will be able to enjoy the fruits of years of dynamic leadership.

President Eisenhower put it well when he said in his letter accepting our Comptroller General's retirement: "You have left a lasting mark on government \* \* \* and can take deep

pride in so vast a contribution to better, more efficient governmental operation."

Mr. Warren advised each Senator and Congressman of his request for retirement which was necessitated by advice of his doctors and called on them to "be ever alert to and adamant against attempts to weaken or destroy the powers of the General Accounting Office or to affect its independent status."

He went on to say that the "General Accounting Office is an efficient and hard-hitting agency of which the Congress, the President, and the American people can be justly proud. We have earned and gained the confidence of all three. I am proud there has never been a breath of scandal concerning the work of the Office and its employees."

"The General Accounting Office," continued Mr. Warren, "is one of the few agencies that not only pays its way, but makes a substantial contribution to the Treasury each year. Collections from 1941 to date total \$915 million, most of which had been illegally or otherwise improperly paid out. This amount is twice the cost of running the Office during the same period, and it is a fair statement to say that little, if any, of the amount collected would have ever been recovered except for the work of the General Accounting Office."

After 30 years in the Nation's Capital, Mr. Warren will go back to his old home in Washington, N.C. He became the "watchdog of the Treasury" after a 16-year career in the House of Representatives. He accepted the position

when it was offered to him for the fourth time by President Roosevelt.

#### Former Comptroller Comments on S. S. United States Settlement

June 1954

Recently Lindsay C. Warren, former Comptroller General of the United States, was contacted in reference to the settlement with the United States Lines with respect to the superliner S. S. United States.

In his statement, Mr. Warren stressed: "This settlement should stand forever as a stern warning to administrative officials of the Government who choose to substitute their own views for the mandates of Congress. No man in this country is above the law."

Mr. Warren stated the following in connection with the settlement:

"During the week immediately preceding my retirement as Comptroller General, representatives of the Department of Justice consulted with me on a proposed settlement with the United States Lines with respect to the superliner S. S. United States. I approved the proposed settlement in a letter to the Attorney General dated April 30, 1954—my last day in office—as being in the best interest of the United States. I have just been advised that the settlement has been agreed to by all parties.

"Two years ago I rendered a decision to the then Secretary of Commerce, Charles Sawyer, pointing out numerous misinterpretations and misapplications of the law underlying the contract which had been executed between the former Maritime Commis-

sion and the United States Lines. I advised Mr. Sawyer that the contract was illegal and that the S. S. United States should not be turned over to the company until a new agreement fixing a proper price was worked out. Mr. Sawyer chose to act in direct contradiction to that decision.

"This settlement should stand forever as a stern warning to administrative officials of the Government who choose to substitute their own views for the mandates of the Congress. No man in this country is above the law. I refer particularly to Mr. Sawyer and to the members of the former Maritime Commission—with the outstanding exception of Mr. Raymond McKeough, who not only voted against the subsidy in this case but continued thereafter to voice his vigorous dissent.

"I wish to pay tribute to the courage and integrity displayed during the

course of this controversy by former President Truman and his naval aide, Admiral Dennison, the congressional committee headed by Porter Hardy, Jr., former Attorney General McGranery, Attorney General Brownell, and Maritime Administrator Rothchild. Particularly do I wish to express my admiration for Assistant Attorney General Warren Burger. He is a lawyer of the highest ability and character. His thorough grasp of the issues has greatly facilitated the settlement of this case.

"I feel sure that this settlement will dispel any doubts there may have been with respect to the powers of the General Accounting Office to review the administrative actions of the executive branch. This is especially gratifying to me, coming as it does at the time of my retirement as Comptroller General.