

COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON

A-8437

March 18, 1925.

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The Honorable,

The Attorney General.

Sir:

I have your request of March 7, 1925, for decision whether the appropriations under your control are available for the purchase of judicial robes for judges of the United States District Courts.

The purchase of personal furnishings in the nature of wearing apparel for the use of officials or employees of the Government, in the absence of specific statutory authority, is not authorized unless the service for which the appropriation to be charged is made could not be as satisfactorily or expeditiously performed without their use and they are not such as the employee or official could reasonably be required to supply as equipment necessary to qualify them for the work for which employed or appointed. 3 Comp. Gen. 433, 926, 940; 4 id. 123.

The wearing of judicial robes is customary in

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the courts but it is reported they have never heretofore been furnished at the expense of the United States. The judges have themselves apparently recognized the robes as an article of personal apparel in connection with the custom of wearing them, and this having now all been long established, there is no proper basis for furnishing them at the expense of the United States, under an appropriation for general expenses, but specific appropriation therefor would be necessary.

The appropriation "Miscellaneous Expenses" and "Supplies", act of May 28, 1924, 43 Stat. 221, does not provide specifically for judicial robes nor do I find any other appropriation under your control making such provision. It accordingly appears you are not authorized to furnish such robes at the expense of the United States.

Respectfully,


Comptroller General.