



COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES  
WASHINGTON D C 20548

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8-5-69

*General Services Administration*

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RELEASED

AUG 5 1969

Dear Senator Schweiker:

This is in response to your request of May 22, 1969, acknowledged June 11, 1969, that we furnish you a report on certain Government expenses indicated in a newspaper article as being paid in behalf of former President Johnson. Some of the expenses referred to in the article were borne by the Government and some were borne by private contributions. The expenses borne by the Government were paid from funds appropriated to the General Services Administration (GSA). We reviewed the pertinent GSA records and held discussions with appropriate officials. We have obtained information on essentially all of the Government expenses referred to in the newspaper article.

Presidential transition

The Presidential Transition Act of 1963, approved March 7, 1964, Public Law 88-277, 78 Stat. 153, vests in the Administrator of the General Services Administration the authority to provide, upon request, to each President-elect and each Vice President-elect necessary services and facilities, including suitable office space, payment of staff salaries, travel expenses, communications services, printing and binding, and postage, subject to appropriations provided therefor, during the transition period between election and inauguration. The act also authorizes the Administrator to provide, upon request, similar services and facilities to each former President and former Vice President, for a period not to exceed 6 months from the date of expiration of his term of office as President or Vice President, for use in winding up the affairs of his office.

The purpose of the Presidential Transition Act of 1963, as indicated in section 2 thereof, is to promote the orderly transfer of executive power in connection with the expiration of the term of office of a President and the inauguration of a new President so as to assure continuity in the faithful execution of the laws and in the affairs of the Federal Government, both domestic and foreign.

Funds in the amount of \$375,000 were made available to Mr. Johnson from an appropriation of \$900,000 to GSA in the Independent Offices and Department of Housing and Urban Development Appropriation Act, 1969,

*Note - Copies of this report were also requested by*

- Senator Robert W. Packwood*
- Congressman David W. Henderson*
- Senator Richard B. Russell - 10/9/69 and 10/14/69*
- Congressman Frank E. Evans - 10/29/69*

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approved October 4, 1968 (82 Stat. 943), for expenses authorized by the Presidential Transition Act of 1963. The funds available to Mr. Johnson will remain available for obligation through June 30, 1970. As of May 31, 1969, \$86,841 had been obligated against these funds.

There were 15 persons on the presidential transition staff as of May 31, 1969, or one more than indicated in the newspaper article because one secretary was hired subsequent to the article's May 10 dateline. Six of the persons were consultants who were paid \$50 to \$100 a day for each day they worked. The daily consultant fee of \$100 was paid to Mr. Walt W. Rostow and to Mr. Yoichi R. Okamoto. As of May 31, 1969, Mr. Rostow had received \$11,300 and Mr. Okamoto \$6,500. The total payments to the other four consultants ranged from \$75 to \$2,356. Mr. Wyatt T. Johnson, Jr., the Executive Assistant to the former President, and the two Special Assistants to the former President are paid an annual salary of \$28,000. Each of these three individuals had received \$10,122 as of May 31, 1969.

A total of \$76,106 in salaries had been paid to these 15 employees as of May 31, 1969. The remaining \$10,735 of the \$86,841 obligated against the available funds was for the Government's share of employee benefits (\$4,271), travel (\$4,424), printing (\$1,660), and miscellaneous (\$380).

#### Lyndon B. Johnson Library

Public Law 89-169 (H J. Res. 632), approved September 6, 1965, 79 Stat. 648, authorizes the Administrator of the General Services Administration to enter into an agreement--upon such terms and conditions as he determines proper--with the University of Texas to utilize as the Lyndon Baines Johnson Archival Depository, land, buildings, and equipment of the University to be made available by it without transfer of title to the United States. It also authorizes the Administrator to maintain, operate, and protect such depository as part of the National Archives system. See also 44 U.S.C. 397(f) as to the general authority of the Administrator to accept land, buildings, and equipment for the purpose of creating a Presidential archival depository (or enter into arrangements to utilize same for such purpose), and to maintain, operate, and protect them as part of the National Archives system. Federal funds are not available to construct or acquire land for this depository.

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Funds for the operation of the Lyndon B. Johnson Library are provided by GSA's annual appropriation acts under the heading "Operating Expenses, National Archives and Records Service." The estimated expenses for the operation of the Library in fiscal year 1969 totaled \$390,000. As of May 31, 1969, \$331,441 had been obligated against funds available for fiscal year 1969. The Library is temporarily located in the Federal Office Building in Austin, Texas.

GSA officials told us that they had not been provided with a copy of the Library's design plans, had no knowledge of the Library's physical features, and therefore could not comment on specific features such as the replica of the White House oval office, helicopter landing pad on the roof, auditorium, lecture hall, and the archives and audio-visual research facilities mentioned in the newspaper article.

As of May 31, 1969, there were 29 persons on the library staff, all of whom were employees of the National Archives and Records Service, GSA. Most of these persons were recently hired by the Service and all are considered to be permanent members of the library staff. The salaries of the library staff ranged from \$26,264 a year for the Director, Mr. Chester A. Newland, to \$4,600 a year for a clerk-typist. The salaries at present rates amount to about \$250,000 a year.

We were unable to identify the \$454,981 in annual salaries for employees and consultants referred to in the newspaper article. However, the salary rates of both the presidential transition staff and the Lyndon B. Johnson Library staff would amount to approximately \$449,200 on an annual basis.

#### Johnson City Post Office and Federal Office Building

Funds being used for the construction of the post office and Federal office building in Johnson City, Texas, were appropriated under the heading "Construction, Public Buildings Projects" in the Independent Offices and Department of Housing and Urban Development Appropriation Act, 1968 (81 Stat. 345). The act provided \$500,000 for the construction or alteration of small public buildings approved and deemed necessary by the Administrator of General Services.

Funds in the amount of \$440,100 have been allotted for the Johnson City building. The current estimated cost of the building

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is \$412,650, of which \$332,180 is for construction and \$80,470 is for land acquisition, design, inspection, and so forth. The construction contract was awarded on January 2, 1969, and provides for a completion date of October 7, 1969. In May 1969 the building was approximately 21 percent completed.

The prospectus for the building, which was approved by the Administrator of the General Services Administration on September 16, 1968, showed that the building would contain 6,900 square feet of net assignable space, of which 3,600 was to be provided for the Post Office Department, 1,500 for the Department of Agriculture, and 1,800 for other unspecified activities. Earlier design guidelines provided for a building of two stories with a penthouse as described in the newspaper article. GSA officials told us that the term "penthouse" is used to designate the top story of a building when it has substantially less floor area than the lower stories.

GSA officials also told us that, as a result of subsequent design changes, the building will have one story and a "penthouse" and that the net assignable area in the building will be 6,449 square feet, of which 5,023 are on the first floor and 1,426 on the second floor. Under the present plans, the assignable area will be allocated as follows.

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Square footage</u>
Post Office Department	3,396
General Services Administration	374
Department of Agriculture	1,103
Itinerant (traveling teams such as military recruiters)	150
Reserved for National Park Service	424
Unassigned	<u>1,002</u>
Total	<u>6,449</u>

GSA officials stated that Mr. Johnson had not asked for any space and were not aware of any intention on his part to seek space in this building.

The building design plans we reviewed with GSA officials showed that the building will be air-conditioned and will have three exterior parking areas, one with 10 spaces for postal patrons, one with five spaces for official parking, and one for mail truck parking and maneuvering. The plans also showed that the building will have only one elevator and will have no fallout shelter; the newspaper article referred to elevators (plural) and a fallout shelter.

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The space currently being occupied by the Post Office Department and the Department of Agriculture in Johnson City is being rented at an annual cost of \$1,860.

As indicated in the newspaper article, the Government is leasing 1,800 square feet of office space for \$1.00 in the basement of the Johnson City Bank. This space has been leased for use by the Secret Service. The term of the lease is from January 21, 1969, through July 20, 1970. Government expenditures for refurbishing this space amounted to \$10,418, as shown below.

Labor	\$ 5,487
Ceiling, air-conditioning, carpet, and so forth	3,154
Paneling, chairs, refrigerator	1,206
Truck rental	<u>571</u>
Total	<u>\$10,418</u>

A GSA official told us that funds expended for this refurbishing were provided to GSA under the heading "Operating Expenses, Public Buildings Service," in the Independent Offices and Department of Housing and Urban Development Appropriation Act, 1969 (82 Stat. 940).

#### Office space

Space assigned to Mr. Johnson in the Federal Office Building in Austin presently includes the entire ninth floor, three rooms on the second floor for the Director of the Johnson Library and his assistant, and space on the ground floor and basement for the library staff and for the storage of documents brought from Washington, D.C.

GSA officials stated that they understand that the Commodore Perry and Driskill Hotels have made space available to Mr. Johnson but that they are not familiar with the space and that, to their knowledge, no Government funds are involved.

GSA officials also stated that they do not know of any office space in Dallas for Mr. Johnson.

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Office furniture and equipment

GSA records show that office furniture and equipment furnished for the presidential offices in Austin cost \$148,550.31. This amount includes \$59,850.31 for items purchased in fiscal year 1969 for use in the Austin offices rather than in the basement of the Johnson City Bank, as implied in the newspaper article. The newspaper article stated that \$208,400.62 was expended for office equipment. This amount apparently includes an erroneous duplication of the expenditures of \$59,850.31 in fiscal year 1969.

As indicated in the newspaper article, the equipment acquired by GSA on behalf of Mr. Johnson included

- 3 IBM "Selectric" typewriters--one costing \$10,155 and the other two costing \$7,210 each--that automatically retype from recorded magnetic tapes.
- 14 items of IBM dictating and transcribing equipment that cost \$5,890.
- 1 "Destroyit" paper-shredding machine used to destroy classified documents, identified in the newspaper article as a \$445.50 "security-minded waste basket."
- 1 Bates heavy-duty electric stapling machine, capable of holding enough wire for 5,000 staples, that cost \$159.44
- 1 Friden automatic high-speed electric envelope opener that cost \$245.

The items were purchased by GSA through the Federal Supply Schedule.

We were told by GSA building management personnel in Austin that the equipment is located in Federal buildings in Austin.

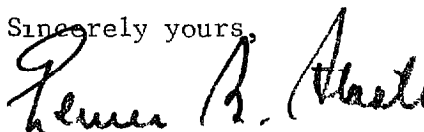
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We hope that the foregoing will be of assistance to you.

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We are returning herewith the enclosure to your May 22, 1969,  
letter to us as you requested.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "James A. Abate".

Comptroller General  
of the United States

Enclosure

The Honorable Richard S. Schweiker  
United States Senate