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

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In Reply
Refer To: B-202455

May 28, 1981

The Honorable James B. Edwards
The Secretary of Energy

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On March 4, 1981, Chairman Richard L. Ottinger, Subcommittee on Energy Conservation and Power, House Committee on Energy and Power requested an opinion concerning the establishment and operation of the Department of Energy's Energy Policy Task Force. On April 20, 1981, we issued the opinion, and a copy was provided to you.

In our opinion we recommended that you take actions to reconstitute the Energy Policy Task Force so that a more satisfactory balance of energy issues may be represented in its membership. We believe this is particularly important because of the absence of effective representation from several of the interests specified in the Federal Energy Administration Act of 1974. The provisions of this Act regarding advisory committees also extend to DOE.

As you know, section 236 of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 requires the head of a Federal agency to submit a written statement on actions taken on our recommendations to the House Committee on Government Operations and the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs not later than 60 days after the date of this letter and to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations with the agency's first request for appropriations made more than 60 days after the date of this letter.

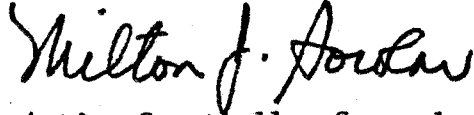
The opinion also noted that many of the problems encountered in the establishment of the Energy Policy Task Force might have been avoided if recommendations of past GAO reports concerning advisory committees had been followed. In this regard we ask that you provide the above mentioned committees an update on the status of your progress in accomplishing these prior report recommendations. The pertinent reports include our February 2, 1979, report, "Use, Cost, Purpose, and Makeup of Department of Energy Advisory Committees," EMD-79-17, B-127685 and our September 30, 1980, report "Conduct of DOE's Gasohol Study Group: Issues and Observations," EMD-80-128, B-200545.

Copies of this letter are also being supplied to the Director, Office of Management and Budget; the Chairmen, House Committee on Government Operations, Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, the House and Senate

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Committees on Appropriations; the Administrator, General Services Administration; and Chairman Richard L. Ottinger, Subcommittee on Energy Conservation and Power, House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Sincerely yours,



Acting Comptroller General
of the United States