

House Report Assails Former GSA Chief

Washington

A House committee report charged yesterday that former General Services Administrator Arthur Sampson misled Congress in the 1974 acquisition of a \$20 million federal office building in California.

Chairman Jack Brooks (Dem-Tex.) of the House Government Operations Committee, said in releasing the report that the General Services Administration had acquired the building from Rockwell International, a major defense contractor, in violation "of the intent and spirit" of laws establishing the right of Congress to determine where federal buildings are located.

The building at Laguna Niguel, ten miles from the home of former President Nixon, was acquired from Rockwell International in exchange for two Air Force plants.

"It is hard to escape the conclusion that GSA was concerned more with helping Rockwell solve its real estate problems and with providing a handy place for President Nixon to store his papers than it was with providing office space for the federal government," Brooks said.

The report said Sampson's testimony before the committee on the acquisition had been "misleading" in claiming that the building would be quickly filled by federal agencies needing office space in Southern California.

The report also said Sampson and GSA had been "most deceptive in their dealings with Congress" by claiming that housing for low and moderate income employees was available in the Laguna Niguel area.

The absence of such housing was "clearly evident," the report said, because Rockwell had planned to develop its own housing for its employees before it found it no longer had a use for the building.

Brooks said the federal government has "no need" for the building and that it remains "practically empty" because agencies have not moved into it.

Sampson, who has since left the government, repeatedly denied similar charges made by Brooks before the report was issued. Sampson contended that Brooks' charges had discouraged federal agencies from taking office space in the building.

The report asked that GSA tell Congress within 120 days how it will use the building and also submit a plan for its disposal "if no feasible alternative is available."

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