

Protest of)

Date: November 20, 1987

FEDERAL MARKETING COMPANY)

) P.S. Protest No. 87-108

DECISION

Federal Marketing Company (Federal), a division of VIP, Inc., has protested a proposed procurement to award a single contract to furnish office supplies to over 35,000 postal facilities. Notice of the intended procurement was published in the Commerce Business Daily (CBD) on September 14, 1987.^{1/} Federal states that a single company could not handle the postal contract and its regular customers efficiently. It also suggests that some manufacturers might give the single contractor special prices or rebates not offered to other dealers, in possible violation of antitrust laws.

The contracting officer, in his report to this office, states that the Postal Service is seeking ways to consolidate purchasing to maximize efficiency and to obtain the best pricing. The CBD announcement was to gather information on whether there are firms capable of providing office supplies on a nationwide basis. He contends that the protest is premature since no specifications have been written and no decision concerning the proposed procurement has been made.

We agree with the contracting officer, and dismiss the protest as premature. A protest against a future procurement is premature since the precise nature and provisions of the solicitation are speculative until a solicitation is actually issued. Catalyst Financial Corporation; The Breitman Company, Comp. Gen. Dec. B-213684, February 28, 1984, 84-1 CPD &246. The proper time to raise objections would be after issuance of the solicitation.

The protest is dismissed.

^{1/}The notice reads in pertinent part as follows:

OFFICE SUPPLIES ON A NATIONWIDE DISTRIBUTION BASIS Not a[Sollicitation] ...
Sources sought for Nationwide Distribution of Office Supplies. The Postal Service plans to contr[act] with one firm to distribute office supplies to over 35,000 Postal facilities. ...
At this time there is no RFP.

William J. Jones
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[checked against original JLS 3/15/93]