

The mission of Oklahoma City Air Materiel Area is basically to support the Boeing aircraft in the Strategic Air Command. These are the B-52's the B-47's the KC-135, and the KC-97—the latter two being tankers.

The work force of Oklahoma City is widely scattered in its living area, that is where you have people commuting 25, 50, and even 75 miles.

Because of its relationship to SAC, there are frequent callout of maintenance directorate crews to visit SAC installations day or night.

The command was interested in having its work force nearby, so it wouldn't consume an hour or two in reaching the base. There were indications that the cost of living nearby, in Midwest City, was high. It was reported that there were instances of landlords and merchants taking advantage of the work force, both military and civilian.

The command was concerned about this, but had no basis to go to the city fathers and to try to take action to bring the facts before the right people.

Certainly the command is aware of the Bureau of Labor Statistics and its figures on cost of living.

But we were talking about this community adjacent to Tinker Air Force Base, which is relatively small, and so far as we know does not have any separate breakout. And this area was the area where it was charged that the merchants and landlords were taking advantage of the people.

Mr. HÉBERT. What could you do about it, if they were, with statistics?

Colonel ALMAND. Well, it was felt that if we could get some figures that we could go to the mayor and the city officials and point these facts out, based upon a study that had been made by a recognized authority.

Mr. HARDY. That is the most amazing situation, how that kind of a situation which goes on around in the proximity of every military installation in the United States. And it is the first time I ever heard of one that didn't have somebody that was riding herd on that kind of business all the time.

You mean to tell me there is nobody there at Tinker that was keeping track of this kind of business—

Colonel ALMAND. That is what we were trying to do—

Mr. HARDY (continuing). And you had to go out and get a separate contractor to perform a job which somebody normally would be expected to be doing on a contracting basis within the base?

Colonel ALMAND. Sir, this is not something that military installations staff for. It is not a recurring type workload. I believe we would be criticized if we staffed to do this kind of thing.

Mr. HARDY. I wouldn't think you would have to staff to do it. It is the kind of thing it would seem to me you would learn almost automatically.

I live in Norfolk, and I have naval installations, that are comparable to what you have, on both sides of the river. And if the Navy ever undertook this kind of thing, I would think they are crazy.

I don't understand, to save my life, this crazy argument you have just presented here to justify this.