

"We therefore strongly urge the enactment of House Joint Resolution 559."

Mr. Chairman, this completes Secretary McNamara's statement.

There is a statement that Gen. Earle Wheeler would have made had he been here. General Meyer is representing General Wheeler and is prepared to read that statement for the record, should you desire.

The CHAIRMAN. Would you please proceed, General?

General MEYER. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, this statement is General Wheeler's personal statement.

"I am pleased to have the opportunity to be heard before this committee today. My remarks to you will be brief.

"The Secretary has told you the basic reasons why the Department of Defense urges enactment of the proposed legislation. I subscribe fully to these reasons.

"When General Westmoreland appeared before Congress on April 28 he said 'Our President and the representatives of the people of the United States, the Congress, have seen to it that our troops in the field have been well supplied and equipped. When a field commander does not have to look over his shoulder to see whether he is being supported, he can concentrate on the battlefield with much greater assurance of success. I speak for my troops, when I say we are thankful for this unprecedented material support.'

"It is my belief that we should not, if it is humanly possible to avoid it, do anything which could jeopardize this superlative logistic support for our forces in Southeast Asia.

"Let me be more specific with reference to the railways' part in this support.

"Over 40 percent of the total freight shipped by the Department of Defense, exclusive of those petroleum products transported by pipeline, is moved by the Nation's railroads.

"During the first 9 months of fiscal year 1967, our rail shipments totaled 5.4 million tons. This amounts to 20,000 tons, or approximately 625 carloads, every day.

"For example, during this month of June, 140,000 tons of ammunition are scheduled to move by rail to our ports for shipment overseas. It takes about 150 railcar loads of ammunition to load one ammunition ship. We estimate that 975 carloads of ammunition for Vietnam will be moving this week; next week 900 will move.

"Without this rail transport, our ability to maintain sufficient stocks of ammunition for our troops in Southeast Asia would be seriously impaired.

"The movement of heavy military equipment is especially dependent on rail carriage. Combat vehicles, such as tanks and armored personnel carriers, are being moved daily to and from Vietnam in a program of repair and redistribution.

"During the next 2 weeks, over 3,000 railcars will be needed to transport ammunition, weapons, tactical vehicles, rations, and other combat supplies for Vietnam.

"In summary, the splendid performance of the railways is an essential factor in the Nation's logistic effort in support of the war.

"I believe that a complete stoppage of rail service in this country would have a direct impact on our overall defense activities—and particularly our combat operations in Southeast Asia—which we cannot afford.