

suggesting that we be arbitrary, but we are entitled to more information, and I think we are getting far more information for fiscal 1968, and that it is more accurate and realistic, as I have emphasized.

Representative BROCK. If it is more realistic, then its realism is based upon a realistic hope that there will be no escalation.

Senator STENNIS. Yes; that is a part of the planning of the budget as I understand it. It is valid only if there is no appreciable escalation of the war in numbers, and so forth.

Representative BROCK. As I understand your comment on the Mekong Delta problem, we decided to go in because we felt they were unable to cope with its themselves, the Asians. I have heard that this operation would take an absolute minimum of 50,000 additional troops and that is an absolute minimum, and some estimates have been considerably higher.

I have also heard that it might take an additional 50,000 just to beef up the Marines below the DMZ.

Senator STENNIS. Yes.

Representative BROCK. If this were to become an explosive area. Now that to me adds up to 100,000 additional men, if those two should become serious problem areas.

Senator STENNIS. Yes.

Representative BROCK. Am I wrong in my estimates, or is this something we should not be concerned about?

Senator STENNIS. Well, we should be concerned about it. I have already given my estimate that in my judgment by the end of this calendar year, we will probably have 500,000 men in Vietnam. I just stand on that statement. That is about as accurate as I can be, and I mentioned the Marines and also the Mekong Delta area as part of my thinking.

Representative BROCK. One final question in a different area. You discuss the fact that we have not completely replaced the inventory that we are using, except in the area of long-range procurement of helicopters and things such as that, long-term procurement items.

Senator STENNIS. Yes.

Representative BROCK. I have been very concerned in the last few years over the fact that we have depleted the equipment available to our Reserve and National Guard units.

Senator STENNIS. Yes.

Representative BROCK. Are we beginning to correct that situation or is it still—

Senator STENNIS. Well, they have suffered very severely, and there has been no appreciable correction as a whole yet except in the areas where the units are being specially prepared in training for a possible callup. But, by and large, there has been no repair, appreciable repair of the damage, and that is a big item for the future, too.

Representative BROCK. Senator, you are aware that any organization, government or business, can minimize its out-of-pocket cost by utilizing inventory.

Senator STENNIS. Yes.

Representative BROCK. But there has to come a day of reckoning if they are going to stay in business.