

I only say that, Mr. Chairman, because this is what the military has given us for years. Whenever we try to dig into these things, they say, "Well, when we have to have things, we have to have them." Of course, that is true. But, having said that and agreed to them, then let's get down to the details.

I recall well this was the time right after the Berlin airlift, and a colonel of the Air Force was testifying as to why it was necessary for the Air Force to set up this supply system. He said:

"As a matter of fact, do you know that if we had to rely on the Army to give us handtools to repair aircraft, we would have just been in the soup."

I said, "Well, what happened? I thought the airlift was a great success. Where did you get these handtools?"

He said, "Why, we had to go in and buy them in the hardware stores in Germany."

I said, "You did, didn't you?"

He said, "Yes, we had to buy them there."

So what is wrong? Really, it is so true. Sure, we have to give the military a priority, possibly on some of these things.

Mr. MARSHALL. Yes.

Representative CURTIS. If, for instance, wrenches or something became in short supply for some unanticipated reason. We did this all the time. We did in the textile industry where we gave priority under our laws to the military procurement of certain textile products that we needed for the immediate war in Vietnam.

Well, I am really just underscoring what your testimony gives to us. I hope that we, our subcommittee, will look into this from the standpoint of a progress report. Evidently some movement has gone forward here, if these broad figures are reasonable, from 5 million to 3 million. I think we need to constantly watch it. I am satisfied we have gone nowhere near as far as we can in this area.

Mr. MARSHALL. Well, it might be a little better than you think, sir. I misspoke. This is 1963 instead of 1953. I said 1953 at first, but it is 1963.

Representative CURTIS. 1963?

Mr. MARSHALL. Yes, sir.

Representative CURTIS. That is much better.

Mr. MARSHALL. So that we have made a 1 million and some decrease in some 2 or 3 years.

Representative CURTIS. We have on that.

Mr. MARSHALL. Yes.

Representative CURTIS. On the other hand, I am going to say again for the record, because I am still in a state of shock from that testimony yesterday from the Defense Department, why it wasn't worth the paper it was written on. I have been relying in the past—I do not intend to get you involved in this—in testing whether or not we were making progress, of how much we were getting into competitive bidding, only to find out, for the indications are very strong, that they have been playing with the definition of "competitive bidding." So that I now can't rely on it. So I don't know whether I can rely on these figures.