

than on technical matters. Technical difficulties are far overshadowed by legal and procedural blockages.

In this connection I have testified in the past only on issues I consider important because they represent a fundamental weakness in Government procurement policies and procedures. I could easily have kept silent.

I believe my duty is to combat what I condemn and not to assume in advance the privilege of a pure spectator as if our immediate future was already our distant past. President Kennedy once said: "We must not enjoy the comfort of opinion without the discomfort of thought." To this I would add "and the pain of action."

To invoke a future detachment is really to seek an excuse for cowardice or abstention.

I have spent thousands of hours attempting to protect the Government from claims by contractors and to obtain responsible performance by contractors, but I have been hampered rather than helped by Government procurement regulations.

CONGRESS MUST TAKE THE LEAD IN CORRECTING CONTRACTING DEFICIENCIES

The Department of Defense has done little to correct the fundamental deficiencies in the contracting issues which I have raised in testimony before the Congress over the past several years. In this area they show flashes of interest but appear incapable of sustained enthusiasm. Although I am disillusioned, I am not discouraged.

Many in Government and in industry do not welcome criticism. Yet it is not rational for an institution to resent or to prevent criticism. It is the essence of wisdom for every organization to establish its own locus of discontent if it does not already have one; this is essential for its continued survival. An uncriticized society cannot endure.

I know that Congress has attempted to help the executive branch do its job by providing the legal authority to protect the Government's interests through legislation—through the Defense Production Act, the Renegotiation Act, the Truth-in-Negotiations Act—all of which are designed to help the military get its job done in an economical fashion.

Unfortunately, it has been my experience that those in positions of power do not appear willing to use the authority Congress has provided them. This attitude has been wrong for so long that the Department of Defense, by admitting its error, would demonstrate a superb quality. I am convinced that if anything is to be done about this matter, Congress will have to do it. But before Congress can do anything it will have to understand what is actually going on in Department of Defense procurement and why more effort is needed to improve Government procurement procedures. I will try to explain this.

I can do this, sir, in any manner you desire. You may wish to ask me questions on any of the issues you mentioned, and I will address myself to your specific questions.

Mr. BARRETT. Admiral, we are very pleased with what you are doing now and it is very interesting, I am sure, to the committee. I suggest you go on and we will ask you questions when you are finished.

SUMMARY OF NAVAL NUCLEAR PROGRAM

Admiral RICKOVER. Do you wish to hear briefly what we are doing in the nuclear program to get an idea of the extent of work I am re-