

Mr. ROBACK. There is also the problem of redistributing to other areas of need, so that you have to persuade or direct the commander to let go. Now, if you only persuade him, he may not let go; whereas, if you command him, that means that the Army Materiel Command may need or want to have jurisdiction. The issue of control over overseas supplies involves the question of the commodity manager making the decision. The man in charge of the commodities makes the decision as against the combat commander, so to speak.

Mr. MORRIS. I think that the thing that impressed me is this: It is the function of the commodity manager to obtain asset visibility and make asset knowledge available to all appropriate levels of management. Where there is a real problem of allocation of critical, scarce assets, this must be handled at higher command levels; for example, MACV has his materiel allocations board. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have an allocations board today. It is exercised only on such things as the M-16 rifle, where we can't produce as many as we would like to have. So someone must decide priorities, and that is the job of the higher levels of military command, not of the commodity manager.

Mr. LUMAN. Do you presently have enough communications capability to run the supply system the way you think it should be run?

Mr. ROBACK. Of course he is not running the supply system.

Mr. MORRIS. Well, sir, we have tremendously improved communications capability. We need more capacity in certain areas, and will always perhaps want more than we have. For example, the Defense Logistics Supply Center in Battle Creek is becoming deluged with literally millions of interrogations per month. We are not able to satisfy all possible customers. This we must improve. It is both a matter of the long-lines circuit and the capability of the computers at that site. So we have strains, and the more we make use of high-speed communications, the more we generate a requirement. So it is a chicken-and-egg kind of problem.

Mr. LUMAN. Take the situation today. I understand if you have a requisition from Vietnam, it goes to Okinawa to see if they can fill it out of their present stock. If they can't it is passed on back to the States. This is an economic way to get rid of Okinawa's surplus. But it also causes a delay of perhaps 3 to 5 days.

Now, theoretically, couldn't you have a system whereby either the 14th ICC knew what was on Okinawa and therefore could direct requisitions to the right place; or the people back in the United States knew what was in Okinawa and could take all requisitions, referring back to Okinawa those that they can fill?

Mr. MORRIS. In time I suspect we will have that. It is not so much a matter of communications today, but again of capacity and full visibility. The 14th ICC would not have a capability as yet of absorbing this knowledge of Okinawa; I wouldn't think.

Dr. Brooks?

Mr. BROOKS. Not at the present time; no, sir.

Mr. MORRIS. But in time it might well have.

Mr. LUMAN. How about the U.S. depots, ICC's? Would they have the capability of knowing what is on Okinawa?

Mr. MORRIS. As soon as Okinawa can give them full visibility. It is receiving tens of thousands of tons a month from Vietnam now, which it is having to identify, classify, and report.