

**STATEMENT OF RICHARD O. HAASE, CHAIRMAN, LEGISLATION
AND TAXATION COMMITTEE, WASHINGTON BOARD OF REALTORS**

Mr. HAASE. Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee.

I would like to read a prepared statement for the Washington Board of Realtors.

It supports this bill, H.R. 16948.

My name is Richard O. Haase, and I appear today as Chairman of the Legislation and Taxation Committee of the Washington Board of Realtors.

Unfortunately, we had very short notice of this hearing and as a consequence, had little time to prepare a comprehensive statement on H.R. 16948. We would like this Committee to know that our Association supports this legislation because we feel that removal of the rubble, created by our recent riots, is the responsibility of the local government, just as it is the responsibility of the local government to remove trash and debris. If the local government had performed its function and duty to maintain law and order during the riots of April, there would be no need now to determine who bears the responsibility of removing the damaged buildings.

We feel that it would add insult to injury to require the property owners to remove the ashes of what was once a proud possession. In many cases these property owners lost everything they owned. Many will not be in a position to rebuild, and, if they do, it is doubtful that they will be able to insure their property due to the potential future risk.

If, through H.R. 16948, the local government is required to remove riot-caused debris, then in future disturbances better protection may be given to property.

I thank you.

Mr. WHITENER. Thank you.

Mr. Winn?

Mr. WINN. Thank you, Mr. Haase, for a very fine statement. We are sorry that we do not have more time for discussion, but you have a comprehensive statement and I think you have made your point very clear here. That is why this Committee is looking into the problems presented by what has happened.

POLICE AND GOVERNMENT PROTECTION

Do you think that additional police protection and additional responsibility of the local government could protect the property under the circumstances of the April 4th and 5th riots?

I am not saying that they could not have improved the situation. I think they have admitted that they probably could have done a better job under the circumstances, but when anything like that takes place, they cannot protect everybody's property, although we expect it.

Do you think we really have enough police in the District of Columbia police department, or did have, to have prevented it, and whether, if we doubled the police force, we could have protected or could protect all of the properties that we would all like to protect?

Mr. HAASE. Mr. Winn, I think that hindsight in retrospect is very good. What I would say sounds like good judgment now. We have