

on the securing of the building, that certain buildings had been gutted, that they were open to the public, and that if we would secure the building by boarding it up it would comply with the letter.

In compliance therewith, the owners had a contractor secure the building by boarding up all access thereto. In the meantime, proposals were invited from local demolition companies. Mr. Chairman, the estimates were shocking.

Only recently did I have the opportunity to read the language of H.R. 16948, pending before you this morning. I understand the intent of the bill is to place the performance and financial burden on the District for the demolition and removal of debris of those structures destroyed during the riots of early April.

It is my further understanding that the thought prompting the introduction of this bill stems from the irrefutable evidence that property owners in the affected areas were wholly without protection of their property by either civil or military forces.

With this I most heartily concur. The affected citizens carry a substantial tax burden by virtue of ownership of property in the District of Columbia. Reasonable men would certainly have to agree that the right to levy taxation carries with it the responsibility to protect such property, and failure to so protect, generates a strong moral obligation to assist the taxpayer where demolition is required and so ordered.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for permitting me to express my views.

Mr. WHITENER. Mr. Winn?

Mr. WINN. Admiral, the Washington Post this morning carries an article about arson. This article says: "Two fires set by arsonists and three begun by children playing with matches were reported by the Fire Department yesterday. One fire involved a three-story apartment house already partially destroyed by four previous fires."

Admiral NAQUIN. I read that this morning.

Mr. WINN. There was another article, either in this morning's Post or last night's Star, that gave a recap of the total number of arson fires in the last 30 days. It is unbelievable. It is just fantastic, and this is no criticism of our Fire Department in the District. They probably are running all over like mad trying to cover these things as fast as these people set them.

According to this news article, there was one at 701 Q Street, Northwest, and the officials said that the building had been set afire four times since last month's civil disturbance and said that yesterday's fire was arson.

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The reason that I bring this up is that I think this pertains to H.R. 16948, in the fact that if we were to allow the District of Columbia to clean up the rubble from the riots, I am afraid that the city might get into the business of cleaning up after anybody who might, accidentally or on purpose, set fire to any of the buildings in the District of Columbia. We might be authorizing a racket where a businessman decides to burn his place down because business is not good and then collect the insurance.

Admiral NAQUIN. I have been aware of that.

Mr. WINN. Some have felt that "when in doubt, burn the building