

Mr. WINN. Do you have any comments on that?

Mr. RUPPERT. I think that the businessmen in the riot areas definitely can feel, as I pointed out in my testimony, it. I mentioned apartments. No one is even interested in looking at these locations. It may not be anywhere near the riot area.

Mr. WINN. Do you handle leasing?

Mr. RUPPERT. We are property managers.

Mr. WINN. You do handle leasing, then?

Mr. RUPPERT. Yes, sir.

Mr. WINN. It will be a big problem for you or those of you who handle properties to lease, particularly in the surrounding territory.

Mr. RUPPERT. Yes.

Mr. WINN. And your buildings here, Mr. Ruppert? Are you going to rebuild those buildings?

Mr. RUPPERT. We are in a more-or-less no-man's land there at 7th and New York Avenue. We are above the downtown progress area. We stop at New York Avenue. We are below the Shaw urban renewal area which stops at M Street.

The 1000 and 1100 blocks run from the Library up to M Street. These buildings are located on the west side of 7th Street, and this is within the Federal City College area. I do not know whether it is fully designated at this time as such, but the buildings are so proposed. I think it has been designated as a permanent site for the Federal City College campus. It remains to see how soon they will have to take the properties. At this point, I do not know.

One of the problems that we do run into, even without this thing of being in no-man's land, not knowing what to plan, so many of these properties were burned down that were on narrow lots, and if an owner says: "I would like to rebuild," he had a store that had a 20- or 25-foot frontage, and due to the new building code, fire regulations, off-street parking regulations, it is not economically feasible for him to just rebuild to replace what he had there. If he is in a financial position to assemble a larger parcel and to attract other business in to warrant building a bigger, better building, why, it becomes a question. You cannot afford to put in the same one-story building that you were accustomed to for the last 50 years. You would have to build to the highest and best use in order to do that.

Mr. WINN. The bill, H.R. 16948, that is before us would require the District to remove the buildings. Do you think that most people you are acquainted with in that area, whether the District cleans up the rubble or not, will go back into business down there?

I am just trying to get your idea as to whether they will or not.

Mr. RUPPERT. The only block that I can speak for is definitely the 1000 block of 7th Street. There are three stores on the corner of 7th Street and New York Avenue, which we manage. They will definitely not go back.

Mr. WINN. They will not go back?

Mr. RUPPERT. It is too small to warrant rebuilding—the area. It is 20-foot frontage. There is a jeweler who has been there all of his lifetime. He lives above the store there. He is not rebuilding. He is not relocating in the same area.