

Mr. GURNEE. We do not normally do that now, sir.

Mr. BLATNIK. Mr. Harsha.

Mr. HARSHA. I either misunderstood you or there is a conflicting previous statement you made. You said the Army is without authority or funds to effect their removal.

Mr. GURNEE. That is correct; as long as we make the determination that these vessels in their present location are not obstructive to navigation.

Mr. HARSHA. Have you not made that determination?

Mr. GURNEE. We have made the determination that these vessels in their present location are not obstructive to navigation.

Mr. HARSHA. You have made that determination now?

Mr. GURNEE. That is correct.

Mr. HARSHA. Under that determination, you are without authority and without funds to remove them?

Mr. GURNEE. That is correct, sir.

Mr. HARSHA. How do you arrive at this formula of 50/50, when the navigation prospects of the river are not going to be impeded?

Mr. GURNEE. The purpose of this legislation, of course, is not necessarily to improve the navigation of the present stream; it is to remove the unsightly remains of the wrecks as they now exist. As we stated, we think there should be a contribution by some local interest on the grounds that there is a substantial benefit to the land.

Mr. HARSHA. That does not benefit the Federal Government or benefit the general public; that would benefit the developer.

Mr. GURNEE. But the removal of these wrecks would extend the usefulness of the bay for small watercraft.

General NOBLE. There are two things. I can understand your question, sir. We are really in a gray area. The navigable waters of the United States are more extensive than the channel. And so one might consider that, while these things are not obstructing current navigation, they are still in the navigable waterways of the United States. So it is in this area of general imprecision that one can raise all kinds of questions.

This law would serve to clear up this kind of question.

Mr. HARSHA. Should a law be passed before the Department of Interior concludes its study and recommendations?

General NOBLE. Should it be?

Mr. HARSHA. Yes.

General NOBLE. We think it should, sir. However, that that study is underway we feel is pertinent to the committee's determination on this.

Mr. HARSHA. From the looks of that picture, it looks like the land immediately adjacent to these bulkheads or these boats is marshland.

General NOBLE. I am not familiar with it, sir.

Mr. GURNEE. I have not see the land, on the ground, but from the chart that I have I believe that this is not marshland, except for a very marginal strip.

Mr. HARSHA. I just wondered how it could be useful. It looks like, to me, without filling it in or—

Mr. GURNEE. I think the area to which you referred may be the wrecks themselves. This partial water area here, where you see brush growing, that brush is growing right in the wrecks. Those are the