

JCS Pleas For Callup Rejected

Testimony Reveals Chiefs Also Sought Emergency Action

By John G. Norris
Washington Post Staff Writer

Repeated recommendations of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for a callup of reserves and declaration of a national emergency were rejected by the White House, Gen. Harold K. Johnson states, because of the "shivers and tremors" this would create around the world.

Johnson, Army Chief of Staff, disclosed in testimony released by the Senate Preparedness Subcommittee yesterday, that the JCS had recommended unanimously, last spring, last fall and again early this year, some recall of reserves and the declaration of an emergency permitting troops to be kept in uniform.

The Army chief said that for his part he was glad the Administration rejected the callup that he and the other chiefs had advocated.

The Army's reasons for proposing such a reserve call and retention of forces were offered by Gen. Johnson in the same testimony.

"I recommended it for two reasons," he said. "First, it would decrease the turbulence within the active Army, and second, it would increase the speed with which we could have units available for deployment."

Johnson went on to say, however, that he not only recognized the President's reasons for rejecting the military recommendations, but felt now that such a reserve call no longer is necessary. A callup of selected reserves could be useful, he said, but is no longer urged by the Army.

While accepting a "status of vulnerability" earlier, he acknowledged that "in retrospect" the decision of the President was in the national interest. The military leader

See MILITARY, A12, Col. 1

MILITARY—From Page A1

LBJ Rejected Pleas For Reserve Callup

said he understood why American civilian chiefs rejected the military proposal.

"This is because the declaration of an emergency and the mobilization of a powerful nation like the United States would send shivers and tremors throughout the world," Johnson declared.

"The policy of the Commander-in-Chief, announced in his Johns Hopkins speech last April 7, said that we seek no wider war."

At the present time, Gen. Johnson said in testimony given the Stennis subcommittee behind closed doors May 3 and 4, he was not recommending any recall of the Army Reserves, despite the fact that some special skills would be useful to the active Army at this time. He made it plain, however, that he once strongly favored meeting the Vietnam objective by calling reserves and declaring a national emergency that would have frozen men now in service in current jobs.

"May I give a very simple analogy on calling the reserves and not calling the reserves," Johnson testified.

"It is just about like going to Baltimore on the Baltimore Parkway or by taking Route 1," he said. "It is easier to go on the parkway and you have a lot of red lights and relatively constricted traffic on Route 1. Now, had we called the Reserves, it would have been a parkway trip. The way we are doing it, we are fighting our way through the traffic of Route 1."

Sen. Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.) asked Johnson which course he preferred. Johnson noted that he had recommended the recall of the reserves, but noted that such a step would have "transferred the turbulence" from the Regular Army to the "civilian sector of the society."

Gen. Paul L. Freeman, commanding general of the Continental Army Command, testi-

fied that he believed that "we have passed the point that a callup of most types of reserves would be of help to us."

Gen. Johnson said that a year ago military chiefs made an evaluation of the over-all threat facing the United States. Based on that evaluation, he said, "I concluded that in the face of United States and allied strength, the USSR would remain essentially nonbelligerent within the immediate time frame and that we could, without undue risk, reorient temporarily the mission of assigned certain divisions within the United States."

This decision, Johnson went on, permitted the JCS to conclude that the Nation's "Strategic Reserve could temporarily be used for two other purposes than designed: (1) to provide trained manpower for Vietnam and (2) for training "a greatly augmented input into an expansion of the active Army."

Sen. John C. Stennis (D-Miss.), chairman of the Preparedness subcommittee and James T. Kendall, chief counsel of the group, sharply questioned Gen. Johnson on his testimony.

Statements by Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara and other Pentagon chiefs last summer that the Army had "16 combat-ready divisions" available for action overseas was repeatedly put under fire.

Gen. Johnson stated that he and other Pentagon chiefs meant that there were 16 Army division forces ready only if the President called up the National Guard and reserves which were counted on to provide support units, training divisions and other forces needed to deploy 16 divisions and provide the basis for further expansion of the Army.

When the President ruled that there would be no reserve callup or emergency declaration, he said, it became necessary to "cannibalize" some of the 16 Regular Army divisions to provide forces for Vietnam and for expansion of the Army.