

del Este, and the Congress responded to that request. It seemed a reasonable request. We did it without any kind of hearings in this committee from either party. We heard from the administration in attendance at the White House, but in sessions before this committee no testimony was elicited from any source.

The 20 days expired and then we were urged to extend for 47 days. What was the objective of the 47 days? We have only been into it just a few days and we now have for the third time a request for an additional extension.

Secretary WIRTZ. The basic reason underlying the suggestion for the 47 days is to permit the Congress due time to consider a measure of this sort. It is an important matter.

Mr. Moss. You feel, then, that in this instance we should attempt to develop this as fully as possible for the record, in view of the fact that we are, in effect, playing an important role in the mediation of this dispute. We should develop all of the economic factors involved?

Secretary WIRTZ. No, sir; I would not feel that.

Mr. Moss. Why would you not feel that?

Secretary WIRTZ. I do not understand the process before the Congress to be the process of mediation. I would agree completely with the first part of your statement that the circumstances, the elements, involved in the legislative side of it are so important that there should be a full exploration of that.

I do not mean by my other answer to suggest any objection at all to the undertaking of any mediatory efforts on the part of the Congress.

But in terms of your question as to the reason for the period, I think it relates to the legislative process rather than the mediation process.

Mr. Moss. In this proposed legislation, lurking in the background at all times is the assurance that if settlement is not reached an award will be made. You have stated that great care has been taken to draft the language of this proposal to avoid what is now confessed to have been compulsory arbitration.

Yet as I read the second step the Board has the authority to modify its recommendations to reflect factors other than those arrived at in its mediation efforts.

Am I correct in my interpretation of that?

Secretary WIRTZ. Yes, sir.

Mr. Moss. Then how does it differ?

Secretary WIRTZ. Differ from what?

Mr. Moss. From Public Law 88-108.

Secretary WIRTZ. In that in this bill, the proposed resolution, there is the specific instruction by the Congress that the deliberations and determinations of the Board are to be based on an identified proposition referred to specifically, and with modifications limited to those which were permissible under four named criteria. There is that difference.

Mr. DINGELL. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. Moss. I will be happy to yield.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Secretary, isn't it a fact that we are legislating into the hands of the Board authority to make findings upon the parties which will be binding for a period of 2 years?