

Conferences were held between the individual carriers and the organizations; no agreements were reached; both the carriers and the organizations thereupon authorized national handling of the dispute.

Negotiations on a national level began on September 28, 1966, in Washington, D.C. Following a two-day meeting in Chicago beginning October 11, 1966, the parties agreed to seek the assistance of the National Mediation Board. The NMB docketed the case as A-7949. Mediation commenced October 19, 1966, and continued intermittently through January 6, 1967, when the NMB advised the parties that its mediation efforts had been unsuccessful and proffered arbitration. The carriers accepted the NMB's request; the organizations declined. On January 13, 1967, the National Mediation Board notified the parties that it was formally terminating its services.

On October 25, 1966, the organizations had polled their members and received strike authorization in the event a satisfactory settlement was not negotiated. A legal and peaceful withdrawal from service was set for February 13, 1967.

The NMB then notified the President that in its judgment this dispute threatened to substantially interrupt interstate commerce so as to deprive the country of essential transportation service. The President thereupon created this Emergency Board. Hearings began in Washington, D.C., on February 1, 1967.

III. PROCEDURES

The Board warmly commends the parties and counsel for their full cooperation in providing the facts of the case and the arguments of the parties in record time. The Board has given considerable attention in these proceedings to the matters of procedure, and has carefully reviewed the observations and suggestions of prior Emergency Boards. As a possible aid to future boards, we list the following procedural steps taken to expedite the hearing:

Improving the Hearing Procedures

(1) A prehearing conference was held during which the Chairman suggested several ways to reduce the time spent in hearing and to sharpen the issues and argument for the Board.

(2) Opening statements of the parties were relatively brief; main proposals and lines of argument were clearly outlined.

(3) Facts were presented through a limited number of carefully prepared exhibits.

(4) The parties were expressly requested not to read prepared exhibits but, where necessary, to summarize them.

(5) The volume of historical information was reduced and should be kept to a minimum.