

The impact of that strike was limited due to its short duration, but reports of the chaos which resulted in passenger and commutation service and in particular industries such as automobiles, coal, and steel indicated a potential national catastrophe had the stoppage continued.

Even with such a short strike, there was serious disruption. Widespread layoffs were reported. Lack of newsprint forced newspapers to publish without advertising. Construction industries suffered shortages. California and Arizona suffered an estimated \$450,000 daily loss in agricultural commodities which could not be shipped.

New England, which imports a great percentage of its food, considered emergency action and Connecticut was reportedly without certain types of foodstuffs.

Limited strikes during the period between 1946 and the present were prevented from reaching the disaster level by short durations and by the ability of shippers to switch to other rail carriers not affected by the strike, but were still of serious impact.

The 1966 strike called by the Firemen on eight railroads forced 32,000 commuters in Chicago and 12,000 in Boston to shift to other modes and produced serious traffic congestion. General Motors closed down seven plants and Chrysler and Ford shortened shifts, affecting over 100,000 auto workers.

In a nationwide strike the impact would be magnified several times and rerouting to other railroads could be accomplished as it has been through ICC measures during such partial strikes.

Should a stoppage of national scale occur, there would be little the Government could do to lessen its impact. Even if agreements could be reached to move essential commodities it would be difficult to determine which should move and to solve problems of mixed trains and products indirectly, but crucially, related to the production and use of essential commodities.

Should accommodation be developed, there would still be significant costs and delays which would adversely affect the flow of defense materials.

During a Presidentially declared emergency, the Department of Transportation could, by Executive order, be charged with coordinating the movement of essential commodities in a manner which would permit priority utilization of available capacity of other modes.

It has already been pointed out, however, that this available capacity is limited and could be used for only those commodities for which feasible alternatives exist.

Emergency action by the ICC to assist shippers in finding alternate means of transport is similarly limited by the capacity considerations and the specialized nature of much of rail service which would be affected.

I have attempted to develop for you the very serious impact a stoppage of rail service would have on the economy and upon the effort to support the Vietnam action.

In my opinion, the effects are sufficiently serious to warrant special action by Congress to prevent them from occurring. The joint resolution before you is designed to prevent the threatened stoppage.

At the same time, our policy toward labor relations is based upon the desire to maintain collective bargaining as the preferred method of settling disputes.