

Secretary BOYD. I was trying to respond to Mr. Satterfield's question within the context of his question. I was not relating it to the telegram to which you have referred.

Mr. MACDONALD. Isn't that a very important thing, that these people who are a party to the strike say in their own words that they will arrange continued rail transport of all shipments necessary to our Nation's military effort and the public health? Doesn't that change the entire complex of the matter?

Secretary BOYD. No; I don't think it changes the entire complex.

Mr. MACDONALD. Perhaps I overstated myself. Isn't that a major change?

Secretary BOYD. It is a factor.

Mr. MACDONALD. Is it a factor that you had in mind when you answered Mr. Satterfield?

Secretary BOYD. No. As I said, I answered his question in the terms in which it was placed.

Mr. MACDONALD. Could I ask you the same question, bearing in mind this telegram and its acknowledgement by the Defense Department?

Secretary BOYD. I would accept the telegram as not being an empty gesture. I would accept it as being sent in good faith. I would consider that the acknowledgement meant nothing more than that the telegram had been received.

I still have the problem which we discussed earlier, and that is that I do not know what is meant by "necessary movement," and I do not know who the brotherhoods feel would be deciding what was necessary and what was not necessary.

Mr. MACDONALD. You are at a disadvantage, I think, Mr. Secretary, because you don't have a copy of the telegram. You keep misinterpreting the telegram. I will repeat again that the brotherhoods' offer is to meet with whomever the Secretary of Defense determines proper to be met with, to arrange for continued rail transport for all shipments necessary to our Nation's military effort and the public health.

Mr. ROGERS. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. MACDONALD. After I get an answer from the Secretary I will be happy to yield.

Mr. Satterfield actually has the floor at this time.

Secretary BOYD. I reiterate that it would be a factor, Mr. MacDonald. The fact remains that in discussing impact this morning, economic impact goes far beyond what would constitute, I think by anyone's definition, vis-a-vis the Department of Defense and the railroad brotherhoods, necessary to the national defense and public health.

I think if we were to speculate on a strike for a month, given a broad interpretation of the language in that telegram, we would still have a disastrous impact on the economy of the United States.

Mr. MACDONALD. I yield back to Mr. Satterfield.

Mr. SATTERFIELD. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. ROGERS. I think the point has been made, that the two factors critical to the Nation are not just defense and health alone.

Secretary BOYD. That is correct.

Mr. ROGERS. I think this has been brought out in the testimony and from the President's Council of Economic Advisers.

Mr. DINGELL. Will the gentleman yield to me?