

I ask your opinion. Don't you think that is a reasonable approach?

Secretary WIRTZ. Yes, I think the only question is about it not being followed up. The suggestion that it has not been given full consideration would be a dubious basis in my mind. I think you have had pretty direct representation from the Secretary of Transportation and from the Secretary of Defense that in their judgment this situation is not one which lends itself to that approach.

If the question is as to whether they responsibly arrived at that conclusion without further consideration with the parties, you would understand by deferring to their judgment on that, or at least to their responsibility on that.

I would think it a mistake for the Secretary of Labor to get into the question of mediation with the parties on the question of what transportation can be adequately supplied under the circumstances, not because it is a matter of no interest—because it is a matter of very real interest—but when it comes to working out, in your suggestion, what can be done by way of something along lines of this kind, I would feel no real competence myself to do it.

Mr. MACDONALD. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Brotzman?

Mr. BROTZMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Relating to House Joint Resolution 559, Mr. Secretary, it is my understanding from reading this bill and from the testimony that has been adduced thus far before the committee, that this contemplates the continuation of the collective bargaining process, under the aegis of this so-called "Special Board" that is to be appointed.

Will this special board be taking testimony, mediating, or what will their function be as you envision it?

Secretary WIRTZ. The contemplation would be that they would be mediating at all times through the 90-day period. They would, if the mediation had not proved successful on the 30th day, hold a hearing. The resolution does not specify—

Mr. BROTZMAN. And the purpose at the end of the 30 days would be what?

Secretary WIRTZ. The purpose would be this: As suggested by the resolution, they would take as the starting point for their consideration the mediation proposal of April 21, and they would inquire of the parties and receive testimony from the parties as to what their position is.

In practical terms, I take it that at that hearing they would say, "We want to know plainly the lines," whether in public or private being up to them, "what is the matter with this proposal that seems to so many people so unreasonable."

I guess you could call it in legal language kind of show-cause proceeding. "Why don't you put it into effect? It seems reasonable to a lot of other people. What is wrong with it?"

In technical terms, I would call that an extremely forceful mediation device which would include among other things, an attempt to attach as much public attention to that as possible.

If, after another 30 days, there is still no settlement, that determination would be filed with the mediators, it would be filed with the President and with the Congress, for no purpose except to make it a matter of clear public notice and attention.