

Does that answer your question?

Mr. BROWN. Yes.

Secretary WIRTZ. I would like to add to that that I think there is a certain amount of discouragement that comes to the parties in going through what they have properly gone through in something of this kind that mitigates that a little bit.

Mr. BROWN. If this situation is carried to its extremity, if 559 is passed, and the procedures outlined in 559 are carried to their extremity, what will be the situation after January 1, 1969?

Secretary WIRTZ. It would be that the matter would be open as it would be at the end of any contract period under the Railway Labor Act.

Mr. BROWN. And is it possible that we would go through the same procedure again? Is it possible?

Secretary WIRTZ. It is possible, but you will understand my adding that it is no more possible than it is with respect to all of the other contracts that are opened at any time under the Railway Labor Act.

Mr. BROWN. But this does become a precedent for that possibility?

Secretary WIRTZ. You have gone further than my reactions would justify. I recognize that practically the fact is that whenever we take special action it has an effect upon the future.

To suggest that this now becomes a precedent for the next disagreement that arises between any parties in the railroad industry, with the suggestion that there is a likely reliance on that precedent, does not accord with my expectation.

I point out that in this last year, despite the 1963 action, we had what I think was the strongest, most vigorous private collective bargaining throughout most of the railroad industry that we have had in a long time, and it included the parties to the 1963 case.

They bargained out their differences themselves.

Mr. BROWN. May I ask an assumption now? Let us presume that the news came that the unions and management settled the railway strike right now.

Would you favor the presentation by the administration or the consideration by the Congress of permanent legislation to avoid going into this extremity in the future?

Secretary WIRTZ. I think in a sense it would renew the very active concern about and interest in developing whatever is the proper pattern for the future, as far as this emergency dispute matter is concerned.

I think it is true that in a very real sense the arising of this crisis has made it difficult to consider that other matter.

Mr. BROWN. At this time?

Secretary WIRTZ. That is correct.

Mr. BROWN. May I ask one other area of questions?

If this involvement were not nationwide, would the competitive pressures on both the union and the various segments of the industry be such that a less than nationwide strike might be settled with more ease than a nationwide strike?

Secretary WIRTZ. Yes, I suppose so. I will answer very briefly because the question of the desirability of nationwide handling of these cases as distinguished from property by property handling is a