

I think the Board's determination, if it goes to that, would properly cover the point of the time at which section 6 notices could be served, which might be at an earlier period.

Mr. DINGELL. But, as a matter of fact, we have then arrived at the position where the period involved in this legislation is well in excess of 2 years.

Secretary WIRTZ. No, it would depend upon the determination. I should point out, of course, that the period may be shorter than 2 years, either by agreement of the parties or by determination.

I would point out, second, that it would seem to me properly within the Board's authority, the point you have in mind, to indicate that time at which section 6 notices could be instituted, taking account of the time period involved so that it would not necessarily result in more than the 2-year period.

Mr. DINGELL. Let me ask you, Mr. Secretary, how long has it been since there has been any meaningful negotiation between the parties?

Secretary WIRTZ. Meaningful negotiation?

Mr. DINGELL. Yes.

Secretary WIRTZ. Negotiation is too broad a term. I can tell you the facts. The facts are that there was an across-the-board on April 25 and there subsequently have been conversations between the mediators and the parties.

I think the answer to your question is May 1.

Mr. DINGELL. The reason I asked that question is that there have been reports in the paper, in the press, attributed to a number of persons involved in this, that there have been no negotiations for a substantial period of time on the real issues at stake now. Am I correct in that?

Secretary WIRTZ. The more we get into this, Mr. Chairman, and I would like to raise a point that I think is of real importance—

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary WIRTZ. I am being pressed about negotiations since the last period. They are proper questions and I will answer them, but let it be understood the more than point is pressed with me as a mediator, the more I am going to just shut up about mediation and not do a single thing about it. I cannot talk with these parties privately and then get up and testify as to what, when, and who. We can do it one way or the other.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Chairman, I still have the time.

The CHAIRMAN. I know.

Mr. DINGELL. I only have 5 minutes under the rule. I would like to control my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Just a moment.

Mr. Secretary, I sympathize with your stand, but this committee has a very important job to do and I think they are entitled to get everything they can get. Mediation evidently has fallen on its face as of now. It has been brought to the Congress and turned over to us.

I think this committee, acting as a jury of 33, is entitled to get every bit of information, and no one should hold back anything that will help us to make a decision. That would be my ruling on this.