

MR. KUYKENDALL. First, I want to go on record as saying that when both Houses of Congress have to spend untold hours listening to a great deal of very learned testimony and possibly have to pass an act of Congress as a result of the failure of collective bargaining, it is impractical, unfeasible, and certainly uneconomical.

We are here as a result of a failure. I don't think we are going to get completely clean, regardless. In fact, I wonder if we deserve it.

I would like to ask a couple of questions.

When did the bargaining actually begin? You had the chronology down yesterday. I am not talking about the notices, but when was the first meeting?

MR. WOLFE. The first meetings were the meetings on the properties of the individual railroads. We represent roughly 200 railroads. The meetings were on varying dates. They were in July and August 1966.

MR. KUYKENDALL. When did your group first meet?

MR. WOLFE. Our first meeting, Mr. Kuykendall, began on September 28, 1966.

MR. KUYKENDALL. This is, I think, a very important question: How much time has your group and representatives of labor on the corresponding, opposite numbers—how much time have these two groups spent in open bargaining without Government referees of one kind or another since the date of September 28, 1966?

MR. WOLFE. There were a good number of days. I don't have the record with me as to exactly the number of hours or days, but we did meet on quite a number of occasions.

At the same time we were meeting with many other unions. We were meeting with the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, with the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, with the so-called Leighty group. That was maintenance of way, signalmen, dining car employees, telegraphers, and with other unions.

I would say we spent about as much time as we usually do in a national wage and fringe case.

MR. KUYKENDALL. I have gotten the impression, in watching the progress of this whole case for several months—and I want you to comment on my comment, if you will—that it seems now for several months that these two parties were on a collision course and would collide right here in this room.

It seems we have been sitting waiting for you to be here for a long, long time. The overall purpose of my statement is as much to try to find out what has caused this as how we can prevent it in the future, how we can help write legislation.

Mr. Pickle is trying to do this now. He has written a bill that is up for consideration. I want to try to find out if you have the impression that you were almost destined to end up here for many months now in these negotiations?

MR. WOLFE. No, sir. As I testified, it was our purpose, our sincere purpose, to try to dispose of all the demands we had before us from 24 unions in a peaceful way through the processes of collective bargaining.

I never did give up hope, although I realized that with this particular group our problem was difficult. But we did make agreements with 13 unions representing roughly 74 percent of all railroad employees, so even though we were not completely successful in what I thought