

follow closely developments in this matter, and should they indicate the desirability of a meeting in the future, we will be in contact with you.

It is our hope that there may be an early resolution of the issues between the shopcraft unions and the railroads, and that there will be no interruption of railroad service.

That was the reply from Mr. Caputo. On the morning of May 10, Mr. Fox and I sent a second telegram to Secretary McNamara as follows:

We received a reply from your associate, Mr. V. F. Caputo, to our telegram to you of April 28 offering to meet with you to work out plans for moving all rail shipments essential to the Nation's military effort and the public health in event of a national railroad strike by the shopcraft unions.

Your associate said we would be notified if and when such a consultation became desirable. We respectfully suggest that the proper time is now. We suggest that you designate a responsible and knowledgeable official of your Department to meet with a committee from the railway labor unions and a committee of practical railroad men from the management side to draw up a program for implementing our offer of April 28.

We further suggest that a senior member of the Senate Labor Committee and the House Interstate Commerce Committee be invited to sit with this planning group. The planning group could begin meeting on Monday, May 15, and continue meeting daily until the question is resolved, whereupon a report can be made to the appropriate committees of Congress. Congress will then be better able to judge whether it is truly necessary to deprive the railroad shopmen of their democratic right to strike.

Gentlemen, I want to tell you about the meeting at the Pentagon last Tuesday which resulted from this telegram—and from your own interest in our partial-operation proposal. Before doing so, however, I should like to recall a bit of history.

Back in 1959 we had discussions of a somewhat similar nature with the Pentagon—and when I say “we” I mean in this case both railway labor and management. That was when the Air Force was considering the idea of putting Minuteman missiles on special trains that would keep moving around the country to avoid offering a stationary target for enemy missiles.

The press reported that the plan was for 150 of these special trains. The military people naturally wondered what might happen to these missile trains in event of a railroad strike.

I might interpose here to say that at that time the contracts of practically all of the railway labor organizations were open and we were in negotiations. Naturally, the Air Force wanted to know what they could count on.

So, at their invitation, Mr. Daniel Loomis, as president of the Association of American Railroads, and I, as chairman of the RLEA, went to the Pentagon to talk with them. The results are indicated in a letter of October 23, 1959 to Mr. Loomis and me from Col. Earl C. Hedlund, Director of Transportation, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Materiel, Headquarters, U.S. Air Force, reading as follows:

“In furtherance of recent exchanges of views between representatives of your organizations, Military Traffic Management Agency and the Air Force with respect to the ability of the railroad industry to provide positive, uninterrupted service in support of Air Force Minuteman missile program when and if activated, it is suggested that an understanding along the following lines might be appropriate.

“Both railroad management and railroad labor unite in their positive assurance that there will be no delay or interruption in the maintenance, scheduling, dispatching and operation of missile trains in support of the mobile or fixed missile weapon systems as programmed and directed by the United States Air Force,