

Gentlemen, I don't believe any unions anywhere have made a more generous offer than ours to prevent a strike from hurting our fighting-men in Vietnam and the Nation. We made this offer because we don't want a railroad strike to harm the Nation's vital interests in time of war.

We did not make this essential-shipments offer in order to guarantee a profitable operation to the railroad corporations during a strike. Nor, frankly, did we expect the spokesman for America's railroad corporations, who are patriotic men I am sure, to use the kind of moral blackmail they seem to be using against our essential-shipments proposal.

What they are doing is telling the Government they will create chaos by refusing to schedule the trains we have offered to haul, unless the Government orders them to schedule such trains—and if the Government issues such orders, they will then sue the Government for damages.

Mr. J. E. Wolfe made that last point quite clear, under questioning by Senator Morse, and so did Mr. Rice.

Of course, one can understand why the railroads have taken this position. They hope to use this tactic to force Congress to take away completely the railroad shopmen's right to strike and impose on their employees a form of compulsory arbitration. That is the railroad corporations' goal—to force you to ignore our essential-shipments offer and proceed to enact House Joint Resolution 559.

This brings me to my second topic. Suppose you find that the only answer available under the circumstances is to submit to the railroads' pressure and enact a law forbidding the shopcraft strike now set for 12:01 a.m. on June 19. If that does become your feeling, we would urge upon you the seizure approach rather than the compulsory arbitration approach embodied in House Joint Resolution 559.

Compulsory arbitration is utterly one-sided and unfair when forced on the employees of profitmaking companies. It deprives the employees of their only economic weapon to win fair wages and working conditions.

It brings in the Government to force terms on the employees that may well be more favorable to the owners and less favorable to the men than the men could have won for themselves—and prevents the men from ever knowing what they themselves could have won.

It does this while imposing no restriction whatever on the companies' profits—and those profits clearly would be higher if a smaller increase in wages is forced by the Government on the employees.

Compulsory arbitration is the road to serfdom. For the Government to force private employees to labor for less than they could win for themselves, so as to enrich their private employers, is a fascist arrangement. It is not an American arrangement.

I might add that any Government seizure of an industry where the profits gained through forced labor of the employees are then turned over to the private owners, is also open to this same objection. Mr. Schoene will have something more to say on that question.

Once you start on the path of compulsory arbitration for wages and working conditions you are bound to face demands that prices and profits also be controlled, in simple equity. Of course, we had some-