

RAILROAD LABOR DISPUTE

TUESDAY, JUNE 6, 1967

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON INTERSTATE AND FOREIGN COMMERCE,
Washington, D.C.

The committee met at 10 a.m., pursuant to notice, in room 2123, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Harley O. Staggers (chairman) presiding.

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will come to order.

The hearings today will continue on House Joint Resolution 559, dealing with the current threatened railway strike.

Our witness today will be Mr. Paul R. Ignatius, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Installations and Logistics. He will introduce the gentlemen who are with him.

Mr. Ignatius is appearing in behalf of Secretary Robert McNamara, who could not be here this morning. He is at the White House, I understand, attending a meeting now.

Yesterday when I talked with him, he said he hoped that he still would be able to be here. I can understand why he could not be present.

As I intended to explain to the Secretary, we know that he has no responsibility whatsoever in the matter of composing differences between railroads and their employees. We know this. Labor relations is a problem for a quite different department of the executive branch of our Government.

We did think it desirable, however, to consult with him as to how the present dispute between the railroads and their employees might affect the operations of the Defense Department.

I thought I might first give a little background as to why. Probably we would not have had to have the meeting at all, except to clarify some statements that have been made and issued to the press. We thought we should consult with the Secretary personally. We can understand his not being here, however.

On April 28, Mr. Michael Fox and George Leighty, on behalf of railroad labor, sent to Secretary McNamara a telegram offering to meet to arrange for continued rail transport of all shipments necessary to our Nation's military effort and the public health.

This telegram was acknowledged, but the response in general was that such a meeting was unnecessary.

At the urging of members of this committee, such a meeting was subsequently held in the Secretary's conference room at the Pentagon.

That is the reason for this meeting here this morning, to see if there have been any arrangements made, any plans made whatsoever, or considered, to transport war and health materials in case the railroads do not operate.