

It is unthinkable to us, sir, that there could be a national rail stoppage at the present time.

The CHAIRMAN. That kind of surprises me, because I have said time and again that we say the same thing. But what if it does occur?

Mr. IGNATIUS. We think it cannot occur, and that the means of preventing it has been requested by the President to the Congress in the form of the request for the joint resolution.

The CHAIRMAN. There are three separate branches of the Government. You know that, don't you?

Mr. IGNATIUS. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. I remember in 1952 this same argument was being made in the steel strike when the President said there could not be a strike and he seized the steel mills. He came to the Congress and asked for a law permitting seizure, but the Congress did not give him a law.

The strike did go on and went on for 52 days. I didn't hear of anything too much, and I was a Member of Congress. I don't know whether you were with the Defense Department then or not.

They called them into the President's office and they settled on the same basis they could have settled on on the first day before the strike occurred.

What we are trying to do, if there is a strike, to be concerned about it. I heard the words "impossible," in your statement, and "it could not be done," but that surprises me coming from the Defense Department, that there could not be some plans made. We are seeking help here.

We know that this strike should not happen.

Mr. KEITH. Mr. Chairman, would you yield at that point?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Mr. KEITH. I think I have seen in the Pentagon in many offices a slogan to the effect that the difficult can be done today, the impossible take a little longer; that is, Mr. McNamara feels that no problem is insoluble if one analyzes the situation intelligently, applies initiative and imagination and makes a logical effort to solve it.

This, it seems to me, supports the point you are trying to make.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you for your contribution.

I would like to ask this question: You did have a meeting, finally, in response to the telegram. As I recall, there was a response to the original telegram from Mr. Caputo. He is not here this morning?

Mr. IGNATIUS. He is not in the room, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. He is the Director of Transportation and Warehousing Policy. He said that a meeting did not appear to be necessary, as I recall.

The meeting occurred, and how long did it last?

Mr. IGNATIUS. The meeting was held on the 16th of May. I was present at the meeting, as I testified earlier, Mr. Chairman, and Deputy Secretary Vance was the senior Defense representative, and Secretary Boyd was the senior member of the executive branch at the meeting.

My recollection is that the meeting lasted slightly more than an hour. I would guess perhaps an hour and 15 minutes, something of that order of magnitude.

The CHAIRMAN. Was any representative of the railroads in this meeting at the Pentagon?