

don't you think it is a sad day for the railroads and also the labor unions? Do you think you people want the Congress of the United States to have to make the decision? Don't you think it is a sad day for free bargaining?

Mr. RICE. I will agree with that; yes, sir.

Mr. WATKINS. It could lead into other big unions and big management having to go through the same thing. I can't understand, like many members of the committee, why it has not been worked out. I think it is a lack of talking by both parties. I am not going to take sides here with management or with labor. I believe in both.

After listening to many hours of testimony, though not all of it, it seems to me that no effort is being made whatsoever. Everyone has realized the condition this country is in with boys overseas who have to be taken care of. We realize that.

I just want to know why you can't ask your railroad and the others to get together and make a decision before this time expires. I have said it before and I will say it again, that this legislation is very, very bad. I hate to vote either way, or to think that I have to.

If I have to be counted, I will be counted. But I want to remind you that this is a sad, sad day for free bargaining. If it is going to continue this way over the country, there will be no more free bargaining in America. If everybody takes the same attitude as the railroads' management and labor have taken, it is all over. Of course, I realize your position is with the railroads.

I hope you take that message back.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Brown.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. Rice, you indicated you had 33 years in the Reserves and a number of other responsibilities and honors which obviously qualifies you as a patriotic man.

What have you done, if anything, to urge Mr. Wolfe to negotiate in this circumstance so that we can avoid this strike?

Mr. RICE. To begin with, I gave Mr. Wolfe, as we do in all matters involving labor relations, a power of attorney to act in behalf of our railroad.

I have been in constant touch with him personally and through my representative who serves on his negotiating committee, keeping in constant touch with it and trying wherever we could to make any suggestions that might be helpful.

Mr. BROWN. Have you urged any negotiations since the 25th of April?

Mr. RICE. I have not.

Mr. BROWN. Do you feel it would be desirable?

Mr. RICE. I question that seriously, but Mr. Wolfe could answer that more factually than I.

Mr. BROWN. Do you mean Mr. Wolfe could answer whether you think it would be desirable?

Mr. RICE. It is desirable is my answer directly to you.

Mr. BROWN. That is my question. Do you think it would be desirable if railroad management and railroad labor were negotiating at this moment?

Mr. RICE. I think it is always desirable that people talk. But to meet just for the sake of meeting, when an irresistible force hits an immovable object, serves very little purpose.