

Mr. WOLFE. There is one thing certain, Mr. Harvey: The resolution imposes, superimposes, a duty to meet as members of the panel and make an effort. Right now, apparently, so far as the other side is concerned, there is no recognition of any such duty.

I have spoken before this committee on numerous occasions, and on each occasion I have indicated a willingness to talk every day and every hour of the day.

Mr. HARVEY. But you talk about something done by law. I shouldn't think that anything more would be required than the events that have been happening here in the past 30 days over in Vietnam and the Mideast, and so forth, to impose a duty and obligation both upon the part of management and on the part of labor to get together and settle this thing right now. Yet I haven't seen any indication of any desire either on the part of management or on the part of labor to do this.

I have difficulty seeing how they would recognize such a duty at the end of 60 days. I think the 30-day period will just go right by and that will be the end of it.

Mr. WOLFE. Mr. Harvey, so far as management is concerned, there is a most sincere recognition of our duties, and we stand willing, ready, and available to fully assume and carry out those responsibilities. The record in this case is perfectly clear in that respect.

Mr. HARVEY. I think that the President of the United States today has problems which are almost insurmountable which greet him each morning when he wakes up. Very frankly, out of sheer patriotism he should not have to face the problem of trying to resolve a dispute such as this that he is faced with today.

Mr. WOLFE. That, Mr. Harvey, is why we set out at the beginning and made an offer that is comparable to any settlements that have been made in our economy to relieve Congress and to relieve the President of burdens that these parties should willingly and cheerfully assume.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Van Deerlin?

Mr. VAN DEERLIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

At the risk of sounding anticlimactic, because I realize that my colleagues have this thing practically settled now, I would like to ask Mr. Wolfe if in the protracted discussions that have taken place with labor representatives over the months, has the subject of voluntary arbitration not been explored?

Mr. WOLFE. Yes, it has been. The Railway Labor Act contains a provision which makes the last statutory duty of the National Mediation Board an effort to induce the parties to submit the controversy voluntarily to arbitration.

The National Mediation Board carried out that statutory responsibility. The carriers agreed to voluntarily submit all unresolved issues to final and binding arbitration, the procedures to be those set out in the law. They are substantially the procedures described by Mr. Rogers, from Florida.

The unions rejected the proffer of arbitration. Had the unions accepted that proffer, we would not be here today.

Mr. VAN DEERLIN. At about what stage of the proceedings did this occur, Mr. Wolfe?

Mr. WOLFE. That occurred immediately after the National Mediation Board had stated that it had exhausted its efforts, and in a letter suggested arbitration. I believe that was in February, the latter part