

nature of much of our work, and which, we were told, might well result in cutting some of the pay rates.

How could we possibly, after setting out to get a very badly needed pay increase, come back to our people with an agreement cutting some of the rates? We could not go along with that.

After the Emergency Board's report the chief management negotiator told us if we could make him a serious settlement proposal he would give it profound consideration. We responded positively to this request.

We cut back substantially on our original requests and on March 29 submitted our new proposal. It was rejected by management within 5 minutes—that was the amount of “profound consideration” that it got.

Management then promised a counterproposal at the next meeting. At that meeting, held on March 31, they made no specific counterproposal. Nor did they do so on succeeding days.

Meanwhile, as you know, we set a strike date for April 13, Congress forced a postponement for 20 days, and the President appointed three special mediators headed by Judge Fahy.

Between April 14 and April 22 we met every day and sometimes twice a day with these three Presidential mediators, in a prolonged and intensive effort to settle this dispute. During that period we made a second cutback in our original proposals.

At the request of the panel, we modified our proposals and offered to settle for a 6½-percent general pay increase plus 12½ cents inequity increase for the skilled men, both as of January 1, 1967; and a further 5-percent general increase plus a 12½-cent inequity increase for the skilled men, both as of January 1, 1968; plus 3 weeks vacation after 10 years and guaranteed holiday pay for the eight holidays already in our contracts.

At no time have we received from the railroads any firm offer on which to settle this dispute.

The Mediation Panel, to our regret, made a proposal to both sides on April 21 that was substantially less favorable than our own proposal. “We cannot say our proposals contain precisely the correct figures,” the Panel conceded, but they affirmed that “our terms are reasonable and not unjust.”

Their pay proposal called for a 6-percent general increase to run for 18 months from January 1, 1967, to June 30, 1968, plus a “down payment” on the skilled men's pay inequity of three 5 cents adjustments, as of April 1, 1967, October 1, 1967, and April 1, 1968.

The President's Panel also made two other important recommendations: That the “job evaluation study” idea be dropped out of the settlement, and that we be free to negotiate for improvements on other money items or on rules during the contract period. We were glad to accept these last two recommendations, but we found the Panel's pay proposals inadequate and the 18-month length inadvisable.

The railroads also rejected the Panel's proposals, taken as a whole. When the railroads finally held a bargaining session with us on April 25—the first one since March 31—their chief negotiator told us they would consider a general 6-percent pay increase for 18 months, but he said they would give consideration to only one 5-cent inequity increase for the skilled men and he tied that to further adjustments in the pay rates, upward or downward, based on a job survey.