

I didn't know about until this point, but which I raised in the airline strike. That was whether or not there were pressures being exerted by somebody at the administrative level to keep them from going beyond a certain figure. Is that what you are talking about?

Mr. RAMSEY. I think that is very true.

Mr. SPRINGER. As I understand it, your thinking at this time is that the Economic Advisers are either bringing pressure or suggesting that any increase not go beyond certain guidelines.

Is that correct?

Mr. RAMSEY. That is correct.

Mr. SPRINGER. Your thinking, then, is that these two Boards are not going beyond those guidelines?

Mr. RAMSEY. I feel reasonably sure that is true.

Mr. SPRINGER. Now, is it your thinking further, on this second question, that this guideline which they are talking about now may be also proposed as a guideline, as I understand it, in the summer and fall, there being a number of negotiations on some large contracts between management and labor, that this guideline would more or less follow that and that is the reason the Economic Advisers at this point do not want them to go beyond a certain figure or a certain percentage? Is that your thought?

Mr. RAMSEY. I think they recognized the settlement in the airlines and other matters raised the ante from 3.2 to 5 percent, as their guideline for settlement of contracts.

Mr. SPRINGER. Their thought was 3½ percent at the time of the airline strike, but approximately a year later it is 5 percent. Roughly, that is their position?

Mr. RAMSEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. SPRINGER. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Ramsey, is it your view that the railroads will not bargain because they think the Government will outlaw strikes under House Joint Resolution 559? Is that the reason why the railroads will not bargain in good faith?

Mr. RAMSEY. I feel that the railroads are at the present time firmly embedded in concrete and depending upon the Congress to save them from a fate worse than death.

Mr. CARTER. Thank you.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Blanton.

Mr. BLANTON. I have no questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Watkins?

Mr. WATKINS. Mr. Ramsey, I would like to call this to your attention: You say in 1967 you asked for a 6½-percent increase.

Mr. RAMSEY. That was our final offer up to the present time to settle this dispute, 6½ percent on the base wages, and then an additional 12½ cents to be awarded to the more skilled men.

Mr. WATKINS. Six and one-half percent and 12½ cents in 1967?

Mr. RAMSEY. 12½ cents in 1967.

Mr. WATKINS. We go from percentage to cents.

I would like to suggest to you that in 1968 you are asking for 5 percent and 12½ percent; is that right?

Mr. RAMSEY. 12½ cents.

Mr. WATKINS. And 5 percent is to make up the base pay?

Mr. RAMSEY. The regular wage adjustment we are seeking.