

Mr. HARRIS. I can't see that there could be any very significant mediation or any very significant bargaining either. It might be, say, that a penny could be taken off the straight wage increase and put into some kind of inequity program, something like that. But once the determination has been made, it seems to me that the economic package is fixed, that nobody is going to agree to anything that is going to either raise or lower the value of the package.

Mr. SPRINGER. In other words, you think they would pretty well be frozen in their position at the end of 60 days?

Mr. HARRIS. Yes, exactly.

Mr. SPRINGER. This is the thing I didn't know about. I am trying to get some opinions on it. I have been wondering, in view of the fact that a suggestion such as this had never been made before, if there would be any chance to move from a frozen position.

I would take it then it would be your opinion, Mr. Harris, that anyone who got a favorable decision would probably hold onto it without any thought further of negotiation.

Mr. HARRIS. Yes. Either party, whichever one it was.

Mr. SPRINGER. Thank you, Mr. Harris.

Mr. Biemiller, I want to direct this question to you because you are the representative of the largest labor group in this country: You will recall, and I think one member of this committee has introduced such legislation, though I don't know of anyone else who has, in January 1966—though it might have been 1965—the President included a paragraph in his message to the Congress. You are probably familiar with it without my describing it.

But in that paragraph he suggested the possibility of recommending legislation which, I take it, would be compulsory arbitration in the general field of those businesses, industries, whatever you want to call them, which, I understood him to mean, affected the public interest. I take it to deal with health and so on.

Do you recall that particular provision?

Mr. BIEMILLER. There was a sentence in the President's 1965 message, very broad in nature—I do not recall the exact wording—the gist of which was that he would consider sending legislation to the Congress to deal with emergency disputes. I think that was the phrase that was used.

Mr. SPRINGER. In order that this committee might have the benefit of your view—and I might say this as a preliminary, but if I misstate it I hope the chairman corrects me—one member of this delegation asked him at the White House conference with reference to this legislation, if he had any further thinking on sending such legislation down.

I believe the President's reply was in this general way, that he hadn't sent anything down because he could not get what I would assume to be a consensus sufficient to get the legislation passed.

I believe that is the sort of language that he used.

I would like to have your comment in this field because I think this committee ought to have the benefit of where labor would stand should such legislation be proposed.

Mr. BIEMILLER. My understanding of the situation is, first of all, the President has had innumerable people working on the problem but none of them have come up with any answer that he regards as a satisfactory one.