The Federal Mediation Service will be notified by the thirty day notice and will probably attend meetings during the final stages of negotiations if requested by either party.

But remember, the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service is charged with the objective of getting a settlement, and the settlement may not necessarily represent the economic interest of the employers. Mediators are not concerned with the employers nor are they necessarily concerned with the industry’s ability to pay.

The mediators have no authority to impose a settlement on any employer or union; but they may only utilize persuasive techniques and procedures with the objective of trying for a compromise settlement.

Management does not have to permit a mediator to enter into negotiations. But, a mediator can often be helpful in getting a deadlock off center or netting a tough message across.

Remember that many government negotiators, receive their training as labor officials.

While they are not necessarily antiemployer, the labor-oriented mediator may lean toward those with whom he identifies in background and training. It is therefore a prudent idea to check into the mediator’s background in deciding whether to permit him to enter into the negotiations.

If either the management committee or the union has requested the services of the mediator, the mediator can be expected to follow a pattern of:

1. conferring separately with each party in order to understand the facts, issues, progress and roadblocks;
2. scheduling a joint session, and helping the bargaining committees substitute reason for emotion;
3. holding separate conferences to explore all issues raised in the joint conference;
4. making formal recommendations that both parties request;
5. attempting to find the cause for a deadlock and if there is any misunderstanding trying to straighten it out; and
6. also perhaps suggesting compromises or alternative approaches.

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March, 1977