

# Some Progress, But Strikes Go On

A tentative agreement was reached yesterday in the 18-day-old strike against the nation's largest independent copper producer, but there was little other apparent progress in labor disputes around the country.

Seven striking unions and the Magma Copper Co. tentatively agreed on a new three-year contract early yesterday following all-night bargaining.

It was seen as a major breakthrough in a strike that has shut down copper mines and smelters throughout the West.

The Magma settlement, if accepted by the membership, will put about 3,000 workers back on the job.

It was expected that the Magma settlement would

pave the way for other settlements in the industry. More than 35,000 copper workers have been on strike since June 30.

The proposed new contract at Magma calls for pay increases averaging 92 cents an hour, an unlimited cost-of-living escalator clause, and a 50 per cent pension increase.

Major medical and sickness and accident benefits also would be raised.

The only other bright spot in the labor picture was in Washington, D.C., where a Labor Department official reported "considerable progress" toward heading off a strike by employees of the U.S. Postal Service.

Postal employees are forbidden by law to strike, but there were postal strikes around the country last year

despite the law.

The Manhattan-Bronx Postal Union has said its members may walk out if no settlement is reached.

Some 2,000 Seattle-area meatcutters are scheduled to vote Thursday on whether to go on strike.

Konrad Johnson, secretary-treasurer of the union, has said he is not optimistic about a settlement.

Meanwhile, railroad officials said the United Transportation Union has erected an "insurmountable" obsta-

cle to settlement of a strike against two rail lines.

A railroad spokesman said the UTU has demanded that rules promulgated by the rail lines following the start of the strike last Friday be rescinded. The UTU wants its members to be "paid and treated" as if the rules had never gone into effect, the spokesman said.

The railroads are attempting to change work rules they consider antiquated and unnecessarily costly.

The strike thus far has affected only the Southern Railroad and the Union Pacific, but the UTU has said it will go on strike against three more lines on Friday if there is not settlement.

Negotiations continued in the strikes against the Bell telephone system and Western Union, but there was no report of progress. The dock workers' strike that has brought West Coast port activity to a near-standstill continued with no end in sight.

