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[20969001]

Labor Secretary Elizabeth Dole named a mediator to help resolve the lengthy labor dispute between the United Mine Workers and Pittston Co .

[20969002]

W.J. Usery Jr. , labor secretary during the Ford administration , was named to mediate talks to settle the six-month strike by the UMW .

[20969003]

Previous talks between Pittston , of Greenwich , Conn. , and the union have been sporadic and unsuccessful .

[20969004]

The union called the strike in April after Pittston refused to sign the UMW 's national labor pact .

[20969005]

Pittston seeks changes in health and pension benefits , among other things .

[20969006]

No schedule for formal talks was set , but meetings are expected to begin soon .