

NATIONAL TELEPHONE FRACTION BULLETIN

Number 5

November 1976

The National Fraction Meeting will be held in Louisville the weekend of December 11-12. This will be a very important and exciting meeting, as we'll be working out our strategy for the contract campaign. In addition, there will be sessions on affirmative action and our work in telephone, AT&T and monopoly capitalism, the South Africa campaign, the periphery campaign, and a critical evaluation of the work we did in Louisville in the past year. Also, George F. will be speaking Saturday night on the '71 strike, which we'll get as many contacts as we can to, and which will feed into a party.

Let Mary and Danny know when you'll be arriving as soon as possible. Their number is 502-584-6148. We can meet people at the airport. Even if you're driving, give Mary and Danny a call to let them know when you think you'll get in.

If you have any amendments, change of agenda requests, etc., get them to me (Fritz) as soon as possible.

AGENDA

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11

<u>time</u>	<u>session</u>	<u>presentation by</u>
12-1	convenor's report (state of fraction)	Fritz
1-2	AT&T and monopoly capitalism	Jeremy
2:15-3:15	South Africa Campaign	Larry
3:15-4:15	Affirmative Action & Superseniority	Gay
4:30-6	Building a base in the local-the Louisville experience	Harold
8-10	New York Phone Strike 1971	George F.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12

10-12	Contract Campaign	Kim
12:30-2	Periphery Campaign	Mary

CONTRACT CAMPAIGN PROPOSAL

I. PROGRAM
Between now and the August 1977 contract deadline, we will be building an organization within the CWA to fight for a good contract. It will have the following program:

A. Pay Demands

1. \$50 across the board increase
2. For every increase in the cost of living, a corresponding increase in pay. To be adjusted quarterly.
3. Upgrade traffic and clerical to the lowest craft level.

B. Job Security Demands

1. Shorter work week with no loss of pay
2. Pensions: 30 and out at \$800 per month
3. No forced transfers
4. No downgrades
5. No layoffs
6. One extra week vacation for all
7. 5 paid personal days off per year
8. 12 paid holidays per year (the 11 New York now has plus your birthday)
9. End the absence control program

C. Focus: We will focus on the five demands which both meet the needs of the broadest section of the Union and which we believe the greatest number can be rallied around to fight for: ~~XXXX~~ the 3 pay demands, short work week, and pensions.

II. DISCUSSION

A. Pay Demands: Top craft is now losing \$27/week (in New York) to inflation since the last contract. An across the board increase of \$50 is not utopian and will help narrow the pay differential between different sections of the work force.

There is no point in fussing with complicated C.O.L. formulas. The cost of living goes up, the pay goes up accordingly.

There is widespread feeling in the union that traffic has been shit on. I.e. we believe that sympathy exists in plant for traffic upgrades. We will point out that the 5 week training period for a TSBS operator is longer than that for most plant jobs. The upgrade demand will bring operators and clericals into the contract fight and help end the conservatism that many operators have shown in voting for bad contracts (what would they gain by voting "no?") Most importantly this demand focusses on the position of women and blacks in the phone company. These arguments do not apply so strongly to clerical, but given a demand for traffic upgrades, there is no real political motivation for excluding a demand for clerical upgrades as well.

B. Job Security Demands: All of these demands speak to a lack of job security caused by a shrinking work force. Every single one would result in the need for more workers to do the same amount of work. The short work week demand will be a key one. The precise formulation will vary from department to department. Most likely: plant: 35 hour work week with 1 hour lunch at full

pay; traffic: 6 hour tours; clerical: same work time (35 hours) with paid lunch. We should point out that a large section of the workforce (those who work at night) already have this demand, or something like it.

The pension demand will also have a wide appeal. In fact, this precise formulation has already been raised within the union.

The remaining demands are all important, but for various reasons lack the appeal which would make them central. The no layoffs demand, because many phone workers do not feel threatened by imminent layoffs. The no forced transfers and no downgrades demand for the same reason and also because these items are (to some extent) negotiated locally. The vacation/holidays demands because of their lack of relative importance.

III. BUILDING THE CAMPAIGN

Already there are signs of motion in many places around the contract. These have been confined so far to the official level. For example, the Dayton local has been pushing the 30 and out pension demand by mailing out posters on the question around the country. Dempsey in New York has been calling building meetings to plug for a shorter work week and better pay. Lorraine Darrington, an Executive Board member in L.A., has prepared a petition (now being circulated nationally) for traffic upgrades and 6 hour tours.

Our goal is to take these ideas to the rank and file and build an independent organizational vehicle which can fight for them. It is now too early to tell the exact organizational forms that this campaign will take. But we want to take advantage of every conceivable opportunity which taps and directs this motion into rank and file activity. For example, an obvious thing to do would be to take the traffic petition and use it to build a rank and file movement which fights for better pay and working conditions for operators. We will organize petition campaigns and rallies, and put out leaflets and (ultimately) a national newsletter. Through these activities we hope to win large numbers of CWA members to a class struggle perspective around the contract.

In its early stages, the campaign will take on a different form from place to place, depending on how well established we are in the local. In New York, we will: (1) initiate a petition campaign around the major demands. We will first try to get this endorsed by the 2nd Avenue stewards. After enough signatures have been collected, it will be presented to District 1 for endorsement; (2) plan building rallies, to be held in February.

In Seattle, we will try to reconstitute UA as a contract group and undertake the same petition/rally strategy. Only the petitions will be presented to the local meeting in February which will be asked to endorse its demands. In Louisville and St. Louis we will organize a petition campaign, again with stewards endorsements, again being presented to the E Board and membership meeting for endorsement. In these four cities, we will also put out leaflets urging petition signatures, encouraging people to pass them around, etc. Our precise strategy for other cities in which we have members will come out of discussions at the National Fraction Meeting. If things go well, by March we should be able to pull together a national meeting with reps from the different local groups. From there, we should be able to branch out to initiate groups in areas where we are not established.