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May 2009

Re: The Current State of 2009 NBCU Negotiations

Dear NBCU Member of NABET-CWA:

The latest round of negotiations with NBC Universal concluded earlier this month with no agreement being reached for a new contract. As you know, the parties have been meeting periodically since September 2008 in an attempt to reach a new Master Agreement for members working for NBCU in New York, Washington, D.C.; Chicago, and Burbank. The prior contract expired on March 31, 2009, and very little progress was made in the latest meetings which were held between April 29th and May 5th.

Throughout these negotiations, the company has completely ignored the concerns of our membership and has failed, consistently, to respond to the proposals made by your bargaining committee. The committee's principal goal throughout the bargaining process has been to bolster job security for our members by recasting the basis for assigning technical work, so that present and future employees whose primary job function is performing technical work for NBC Universal would be in the bargaining unit. This proposal would preserve flexibility for NBCU by allowing non-NABET-CWA-represented employees to perform technical functions associated with their normal duties, provided such functions do not become their primary work function. We saw – and continue to see – this proposal as an enlightened way forward for both the company and the Union, a workable framework that provides a solid foundation for the job security of our membership and flexibility for the company as the television industry continues to evolve. However, the company's bargaining team has totally disregarded our fair-minded attempt to move our relationship firmly into the 21st Century, while continuing to press a ruinous seniority proposal that would allow management to protect up to 25% of its most-favored employees from layoff.

Unfortunately, these negotiations have taken place against a backdrop of increasingly hostile behavior from management. The company has announced the pending closure of the Northeastern and Western Hubs so that those operations can be moved to a non-union facility in Georgia and it has begun to roll out its Content Producer concept that attempts to deunionize work that our members have performed at the company's owned stations for decades.

This hostile backdrop, taken in totality with the negative impact of many of the company's proposals, has seriously impeded your bargaining committee's ability to reach an overall agreement with management. In addition to the seniority proposal, other negative proposals include:

- A company proposal to expand its ability to have non-union CNBC employees perform EJ work currently performed by NABET-CWA-represented employees. This proposal could greatly impact staff and daily hire employment in a number of locations.
- A proposal to codify the company's "Content Producer" position at its owned stations. This position, which is made up of elements of engineering and news-writing duties that NABET-CWA-represented employees have performed for generations, has been deemed by management to be a non-represented job by management. Under the proposal, the company *may* assign NABET-CWA members to do this work, but at reduced conditions of employment. For example, these jobs would no longer require the payment of time-and-a-half for overtime or penalties, and would provide less paid vacation. The number of NABET-CWA-represented staff and daily hire local news employees could also be greatly impacted. This issue has become the subject of charges filed with the National Labor Relations Board, and is currently being investigated.
- A potentially damaging proposal to change the meaning of the "Transfer of Work" under Section 6.1, which would void past arbitration awards. The Union has an information request on this issue pending from March, so that it can better judge the extent of what the proposal seeks to do, especially the impact on NABET-CWA-represented staff and daily hire employment. The company has yet to respond.
- The forced resolution of certain local grievances, including grievances covering graphics and editing. Some of these cases are already in arbitration.
- A proposal that would have the effect of eliminating staff and daily hire members' legal right to sue the Company over discrimination claims. This proposal was placed on the table only recently, and months after the commencement of these negotiations.
- A stingy wage proposal with percentage increases, for staff and daily hires, lower than anyone can recall in the history of NABET-CWA/NBCU negotiations.

In contrast, your bargaining committee has made reasonable proposals and counterproposals concerning staff and daily hire members. Our proposals call for fair and equitable wage increases, job classification upgrades, tangible job security, and improved benefits. While limited progress has been made in some of these areas, much of what the Union has proposed has been ignored.

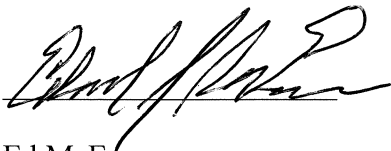
This has created a difficult atmosphere in which to conduct these negotiations. When company representatives sit across the bargaining table and tell us what a great relationship we have, while at the same time attempting to strip away work that our members have done for decades, it does not make reaching an agreement with NBCU any easier.

So where do things stand at this point? Currently, no future dates have been set for the resumption of negotiations. Your bargaining committee is considering all of its options, including asking the membership for a strike authorization vote.

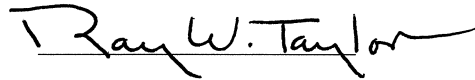
In the meantime, most of the terms and conditions of the expired contract still continue to be in effect, and you should continue working as if a contract was still in effect. More importantly, mobilization activities have been planned for all locations, and you should monitor mobilization notices from your local so that you can fully participate in assisting your bargaining committee in achieving the Union's goals. As we have stated previously, "This is your Contract!"

Thank you for your continued support.


In solidarity,



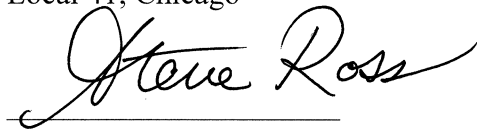
Ed McEwan
Local 11, New York City



Ray W. Taylor
Local 41, Chicago



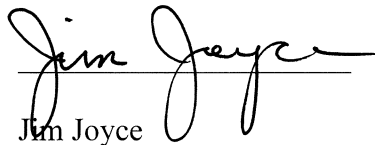
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