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CWA Local 4340

Mobilization 2008

August 14, 2008

By paying attention to the past, we can try to make relevant and meaningful decisions in the future. We are in trying times right now, and our future is at hand. The decisions we make in the next few months will have the potential to affect us far into the future. Here is a small glimpse of the past and is somewhat relevant to the future of some of the members in our Local. Join me in this, the tenth episode of “CWA History – A Brief Review” and explore a bit of the past...

1947: The Strike That Brought An End to the NFTW

This weakness in the NFTW structure was exposed with devastating consequences in the 1947 strike. In 1946, AT&T was not prepared for a strike. But in 1947, AT&T was not only prepared for a strike, it forced NFTW into strike action.

AT&T was determined not to repeat the Beirne-Craig type of national settlement. It flatly refused to bargain on an industry-wide basis. AT&T approached bargaining with a divide and conquer strategy. The company did not make a wage offer until three weeks into the strike and made the offer contingent upon the affiliates agreeing not to clear it with NFTW’s policy committee. Five weeks after the strike began, 17 contracts had been signed. The strike collapsed and the NFTW was finished.

NFTW President Beirne summed up events by saying: “We were trying to make a federation of unions do the job which can only be done by one union in the telephone industry”

During the 1947 strike, AFL and CIO unions lent their moral and financial support despite the fact that NFTW was not affiliated with either the AFL or the CIO at the time. International unions in both the AFL and the CIO aided the strikers with contributions totaling \$128,000. This support was very important in helping NFTW workers survive the strike and regroup into a strong and truly national union.

It is imperative that we, the UNION, all of us TOGETHER, stand united through all that the future has to offer. Many challenges will be presented and overcome. Let us put aside our differences and focus on the issues that we face now, and will face down the road...

More information, including previous editions of this flyer, are available on the Local 4340 website, www.CWA4340.org. Officers and staff at the Local are available via phone at 216-635-4340 or by email at mobilize4340@aol.com.

CWA Local 4340 Mobilization Committee