

CWA letter rebuts Umphred strike comments

Representatives of Communication Workers of America locals striking Commonwealth Telephone Company submitted the following statements in answer to Commonwealth President Bill Umphred's statement of Dec. 17 that appeared in area newspapers.

1. The demands for wages and fringe benefits were not decided upon by C.W.A. leadership on the national level but were decided upon by the membership in each one of the six Commonwealth Locals. These demands were then further condensed and refined by the Bargaining Committee comprised of a representative from each one of the six locals and the State Director of C.W.A. Each demand was thoughtfully arrived at after serious consideration of our local peoples needs.

2. The union has never considered that the company is out to break the union. We realize that a union not only is beneficial to the employees but to the company as well. It brings about a uniformity of treatment that is much more desirable to deal with than the individual whims of each employee. The union too looks back with satisfaction at its past relationship with the company and also looks forward to the resumption of a mutually beneficial relationship.

3. Union leadership was lead to believe that the 9.4 percent offer was a shift in

money from pension to wages only because we had three different quotes made on the cost of the pension and at this point we are still not sure of its real cost.

4. The company claims that the final offer is the largest dollar settlement ever offered the union members. With this the union agrees but we would also like to point out that the percentage increase gets smaller each year leaving us with a dollar increase that remains almost constant each year based on a dollar that has been badly eroded by inflation.

5. The company keeps comparing the earnings and benefits of our people with other employers not engaged in the same type of business. We feel that the only legitimate comparison is with another company engaged in the business of communications. When this is done some very serious short comings are evident. Lets take as an example the job classification installer-repairman. This is the person who installs the phones in homes and business places and maintains them. Under the 9.4 percent increase as proposed by the company a Commonwealth installer is still \$31.53 a week or \$1639.56 a year behind a Bell System installer. Under the unions demand of 12.5 percent, this same Commonwealth installer would still be \$27.55 a week

or \$1432.60 a year below a Bell System installer. Looking at the job classification of operator, we find that a Commonwealth operator under the company offer of 9.4 percent is \$25.02 a week or \$1301.04 a year below a Bell operator. Under the union demand of 12.5 percent this same operator would still be \$21.40 a week or \$1060.80 a year under a Bell System operator. These large differences

exist between all other job classifications. The union is mindful that Commonwealth Telephone being a rural operation company is in no position to match Bell wages but we also feel that too large a difference exists today. It is interesting to note that just a few years ago the difference in wages between the two companies was only in the area of ten dollars per week in some classifications compared to

the wide difference that exists today. The area of fringe benefits has also seen a gradual widening each year.

6. The union has constantly talked about compromise while the company has talked in terms of "Final Offer". The union has kept a low profile in regards to press releases because we felt we could not win through the news media what we had failed to win at the

bargaining table while the company has seen fit to keep up a continuous barrage of letters to its employees and countless releases to the news media in an attempt to discredit the union and its leadership.

Higgins is president of Fire Co.

Conrad Higgins was elected president of the Kunkle Fire Company in elections held Dec. 19.

Thomas G. Landon will serve as vice president of the goup; William Jones Jr. as secretary, and Lawrence Hilbert Jr. as treasurer. Jack Dodson will continue as chief of the fire company. Edwin King is assistant chief and trustees include Fred Dodson, Alan Race and Edward Condon.

A fire company spokesman said membership dues collection is now underway. The fire company is also planning a banquet to be held March 6.

Kingston Township meets under new rule

Certificates of election issued by the county board of election and court en banc certifying to the election of three new supervisors, Herbert Hill, Daniel Wisnieski and Ambrose Gavigan, were presented by solicitor Ben L. Jones III, at the reorganization meeting of the Kingston Township supervisors Monday night.

The supervisors were seated, having been sworn in previously by District Magistrate Earl Gregory. Willard Piatt who served

as chairman last year was named permanent chairman. Edward Hall was appointed vice chairman and Michael Stanley, secretary-treasurer, and township manager. Atty. Jones was reappointed as township solicitor.

John Dana was reappointed zoning and health officer at a salary of \$212 per month. Harry Owens was reappointed to his position as custodian of the township building at a salary of \$166.50 per month.

Bloodmobile will conduct first 1976 Back Mountain drive

The first of three 1976 blood collections in the Back Mountain will be held in the Gate of Heaven auditorium, Feb. 3, from 1:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Mrs. Robert Cartier, blood program coordinator at Gate of Heaven, has announced that 14 Back Mountain Churches, Commonwealth Telephone

Co. employees, and the Back Mountain Jaycees will aim for their quotas during this collection.

Last year 584 units of blood were collected in the Back Mountain area. 714 units were released to Back Mountain residents in four local hospitals, Wilkes-Barre General, Mercy, Nesbitt Memorial and

Wyoming Valley.

Mrs. Robert O'Konski stated that volunteers are needed and that she will accept the names of persons who will help with registration and the kitchen.

Mrs. William Boyle, RN, will accept the names of volunteer nurses.



BLOODMOBILE VISIT—Back Mountain volunteers and Red Cross personnel who will assist in the Blood Drive at Gate of Heaven Church, Feb. 3 are shown above. Seated, left to right, June Shellhamer, Blood Program Director, Wyoming Valley Chapter, American Red Cross; Mrs. Robert Cartier, Gate of Heaven program coordinator; Mrs. Robert O'Konski, PTG president. Standing, Mrs. Donald Hale, publicity; Sally Metzger, Blood Program administrative assistant, Red Cross; Mrs. William Boyle, RN, nursing personnel.

Walters reelected chairman

Phil Walters was reelected chairman of Dallas Township supervisors at the reorganization meeting on Monday night. Frank (Pete) Lange was reelected vice chairman. Glenn Howell began his 15th year on the board and

was reelected secretary-treasurer, a position he has had since he came on the board.

Atty. Frank Townend was reappointed township solicitor at an annual salary of \$1,000. Fred Lamoreaux will continue as roadmaster.

Four sworn into office

Four reelected councilmen were sworn into office at the reorganization meeting of Dallas Borough Council, Monday night, at the borough building.

Oaths of office were administered by District Magistrate Earl Gregory to William Carroll, Kenneth Young, Harold Brobst

and Peter Arnaud. Jerry Machell was reelected as president of council and William Berti as vice president. Ralph Garris was reappointed as secretary and also as superintendent of roads. William Baker was reappointed treasurer of the council.

Welcome Wagon meet Monday

The Welcome Wagon Club of Wyoming Valley will meet Monday Jan. 12 at 8 p.m. at the U.G.I. Building, Kingston. Final plans will be made for the

wine and cheese party to be held Jan. 31.

Guest speaker will be Mrs. Elaine Freeman from UGI's Consumer Services. Guests are welcomed.

School menus

DALLAS
Jan. 12 - 16

Monday—Salisbury steak with sauce, mashed potatoes, buttered corn, parker house roll-butter, fruit, chilled milk.
Tuesday—Chipped ham bar-que, special relish, buttered sliced carrots, apple sauce, donut, chilled milk.
Wednesday—Chili con carne, Italian bread and butter, tossed salad-dressing, strawberry fruit cup, chilled milk.
Thursday—Inter. & West. Pizza, green beans, lettuce wedge-dressing, pudding, chilled milk.
All other schools—Soup-crackers, meat and peanut butter sandwiches, relish, ice cream sandwich, chilled milk.
Friday—Thursday's menu reversed.

GATE OF HEAVEN Menu

Jan. 12-Ravioli, green beans, bread & butter, pears, milk.
Jan. 13-Pizzaburgers, chips, salad, ice cream, milk.
Jan. 14-2 cuts Pizza, celery & carrot sticks, peaches, milk.
Jan. 15-Turkey on a stick, French fries, peas, bread & butter, applesauce, milk.
Jan. 16-Macaroni with meat sauce, corn, peanut butter celery, bread & butter, choc. pudding, milk.

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Jackson police in-out-in in supervisor's meeting

Police Chief Don Jones and his patrolmen were reappointed, resigned and withdrew their resignation all within five minutes at the reorganization meeting of Jackson Township Supervisors on Monday night.

A motion was made by Fred Fielding, seconded by Frank Elenchik to reappoint Jones as police chief. Jones submitted his resignation which was not acted upon immediately.

The three patrolmen were then reappointed and they also submitted their resignations. Before action could be taken on the resignation, taxpayers present voiced their support of the police officers and Gerald Bernstein, speaking on behalf of some of the residents present, commended the police on their outstanding performance of duty and asked that they rescind their resignation.

Fielding explained that there had been a difference of opinion on the part of the supervisors concerning police salaries but following lengthy discussion, agreement was made to meet the salary requests of the patrolmen.

Andrew Stofko, newly elected supervisor stated that he could explain how the township could save \$6400 annually. He said that it was his opinion that Jackson Township could have adequate protection with only two policemen.

Bernstein asked what would happen

if the community continued to grow as it has during the past few years. He stated that if the township had to have full-time policemen it would cost more than it does for the four part-time men. He went on record that it was his opinion that the present system had been working satisfactorily with outstanding police protection.

Stofko replied that only two policemen were necessary and if more assistance needed the township could call in the state police.

This brought further protests from the floor and residents indicated they were more than satisfied to have their taxes go towards the present police coverage.

Stofko then brought up the matter of paying Patrolmen Bert Balliet's salary and expenses while attending the mandatory police training school. He stated that he objected to doing this. It was pointed out, however, that this had been approved by the supervisors at an earlier meeting.

Stofko then moved to rescind the approval to pay Balliet while attending training but there was no second to the motion.

Chief of Police Jones and the patrolmen withdrew their resignations and a majority vote by Fielding and Elenchik reappointed them to office.

Atty. Ben Jones III presented the supervisors with the deeds for the streets in Fieldcrest, accompanied by descriptions of the roads and the modifications of the 1965 map as approved by the Luzerne County Commissioners, who agreed to changing it from R-1 to C-1. The supervisors passed a resolution to have the deeds recorded by township solicitor, Atty. Blythe Evans.

Other reorganization appointments included the reappointment of Henry Zbieck, secretary-treasurer; Fred Fielding, chairman of the board; Frank Elenchik, co-chairman; Jack Bombick, road foreman; Frank Elenchik, assistant road foreman.

Robert Culp was reappointed zoning and building officer. and Laing Coolbaugh was reappointed for a three year term on the zoning board.

Atty. Blythe Evans was reappointed

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