

Communications

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Teamster Magazine

July 1999

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Teamster Carhauleders Drive Home Historic Contract

"Today Teamster carhauleders have sent a very powerful message to management across the country - united we win. We have established a new pattern for the Teamsters, we will no longer stand by and watch management step on the hard-working men and women of this country. This contract sets a new standard for all working people," declared Teamsters General President James P. Hoffa.

The votes are in and the ballots counted --Teamster carhauleders overwhelmingly ratified the National Master Automobile Transporters Agreement by a four-to-one margin, and passed all five supplements by wide-margins.

The contract brings to a successful conclusion the first major contract negotiation of the new Hoffa administration.

The four-year agreement, which averted a national strike, secures break-through pension benefits, including earlier retirement and prescription drug coverage. The pact also includes significant wage increases, and job security protections for the more than 13,000 Teamster carhaul members.

Moreover, the contract prevents management from hiring underpaid Mexican drivers and unsafe Mexican trucks to deliver vehicles in the United States.

Teamsters from across the country came together in support of our carhaul



brothers and sisters and to demand a good contract.

More than 6,000 car haulers, family members, friends and union supporters attended solidarity rallies in Detroit, Nashville and Los Angeles. More than 300,000 people visited the Teamsters website on May 31, June 1, and June 2. And, more than 20,000 people called the carhaul hotline during the campaign.

UNITY SPARKS ACTION

With a unified membership, the negotiators were able to put management's back to the wall. The bosses understood that car haulers were ready to strike and that the entire automobile industry could be shutdown.

Despite record profits, management came to the bargaining table fighting to take away even basic member benefits. Though talks began in February, the bosses continued to stall. President Hoffa drew the line in the sand and Teamster car haulers followed through with a 96 percent strike authorization vote - the car haulers were united.

TALKS HIT CRITICAL STAGE

President Hoffa joined Doc Condor and the negotiating team as the talks reached a critical stage. Negotiations came to head over Memorial Day weekend with negotiators working around the clock. The possibility of a strike was very real as the deadline neared and management refused to back down. Teamster carhaul members across the country prepared to shut-down the industry.

Management showed its' first crack just hours before the contract was set to expire.

The bosses agreed to give up their demand to use Mexican trucks and drivers for vehicle delivery. Beating this proposal was vitally important to Teamster negotiators and to future job security. Backing off of the Mexican demands proved to be just the first of many management concessions.

Next, they made an eleventh-hour proposal on issues such as pensions, health insurance, and pay. But they still wanted concessions and were not willing to meet car hauler needs.

TEAMSTERS PREPARE TO STRIKE

Sensing management was starting to break, President Hoffa authorized a 24-hour extension of talks. President Hoffa let the employers know that without a full-victory, a Teamster carhaul strike was imminent.

Members and their families prepared for a strike.

TEAMSTERS WIN

The next day proved Hoffa's instincts right.

On June 1, management backed down and full victory was achieved. Negotiators made no concessions to management.

A unified Teamster membership, supported by an aggressive and seasoned leadership won early retirement, increased pensions, improved job security, better health care, new retiree prescription coverage and significant pay raises.

UNITED WE WON.

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Historic Carhaul Victory Showcases Power of Teamster Unity

We have just emerged from the first big test of our new administration-the contract talks for 13,000 Teamsters who haul new cars across the U.S. As you will read in this issue, we have won a decisive victory. The successful carhaul contract sends a clear message to management-the Teamsters are back!

The campaign we waged to win a good contract shows our commitment to rebuilding the strength of the Teamsters through unity. We are making progress in healing the deep divisions that have weakened our union in recent years. As a result, the power flowing from the growing unity in the Teamsters union is a force that can overcome even the toughest employers.

While bargaining began in February, management stalled until the May 31 deadline approached. Despite earning record profits they demanded major concessions from our members. We drew a line in the sand and the members responded by giving the negotiators a 96 percent strike authorization vote.

Around-the-Clock Contract Talks

The talks came to a head over Memorial Day weekend with negotiators working around the clock. The possibility of a strike was very real as the contract was set to expire and the employers refused to back down. Carhaul members across the country prepared for strike action.

Management showed its first crack just hours before the contract was set to expire.



They agreed to give up their demand for the right to use Mexican trucks and drivers to make deliveries. Beating this proposal was crucial to our members' job security.

Sensing management was weakening, we extended the strike deadline for one day.

As negotiations wore on that night and into the next day, management was still demanding concessions and was unwilling to meet our needs. Hours before the new strike deadline, the employers still wanted:

- A 30 percent pay cut for new employees;
- Up to 20 percent of all employees to work part-time; and
- Small wage and mileage increases.

Teamsters Prepare to Strike

When our negotiators made it clear to the employers that we would strike if needed, the talks took a dramatic turn. The employers made an eleventh-hour proposal offering meaningful gains on issues such as pensions, health insurance and wages.

Though management still wanted concessions, they were clearly feeling the pressure from our united membership and negotiating team.

The next day proved our instincts right.

Management backed down. Full victory was achieved. The Teamsters beat back all of the employers' demands for concessions and won:

- Breakthrough pension gains;
- Increased job security; and
- Significant wage increases.

This contract victory proves that a unified Teamster membership, supported by aggressive and experienced negotiators, can beat back demands for concessions and win real gains for members.

Clearly, the 4-to-1 approval of this contract by our carhaul members shows that strength in unity is the key to success for all 1.4 million Teamsters.

United, we won!

Fraternally,
James P. Hoffa

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Members Consider 25% pay raises, 80% Pension Increases

Northwest Flight Attendants Vote On New Contract

It was a combination—a creative public pressure campaign, Teamster solidarity, and hard bargaining at the negotiating table—that Northwest Airlines' management couldn't beat.



After nearly three years of contract talks, public demonstrations, appearances at shareholders meetings, and internal organizing, Northwest flight attendants, members of Teamsters Local 2000, have won a tentative five-year agreement. The new pact provides major pay increases, historic pension improvements, and gives the workers important job security.

As the Teamster magazine went to press, the 11,000 Northwest flight attendants had not yet voted on the tentative agreement that moves them from the lowest paid unionized flight attendants to the highest.

"This is the agreement that our members sent us to negotiate," said Billie Davenport, lead

negotiator and Local 2000 president.

"We couldn't have won this important victory without the hard work and support of the members of Local 2000 who demonstrated, handbilled, rallied, and lobbied to keep the pressure on Northwest management to do the right thing."

Under the terms of the tentative agreement, Northwest flight attendants will receive an average 14 percent pay increase at the date of signing and an additional 11 percent increase over the life of the contract.

Local 2000 members will immediately get a 3.5 percent bonus on all pay since August 1, 1996. For a flight attendant who had worked one year as of August 1, 1996, flying an average of 75 hours a month, this retroactive pay will total more than \$1,500. A flight attendant with six years of service will get a bonus of more than \$2,100. And, an attendant with 15 years will get nearly \$3,500.

The flight attendants will receive a 60 percent pension increase on the date of signing, and an overall 80 percent increase in the 54th month of the agreement. The agreement also provides the strongest job security language in the airline industry.

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Members Celebrate New Era for Teamsters

Thousands Cheer Inauguration of Hoffa and the General Executive Board



Six thousand rank-and-file Teamsters from around the nation converged on Washington recently to celebrate the inauguration of Teamsters General President James P. Hoffa and the General Executive Board.

"Today is the beginning of a new era for the Teamsters. This inauguration should serve as a wake-up call to management - the Teamsters are back. We're united, we're strong and we're going to fight hard for the working people of this country," President Hoffa said.

Hoffa was sworn-in by his sister, Judge Barbara Ann Crancer, an Associate Circuit Judge in Missouri. Hoffa and Crancer are the only children of heralded Teamsters General President James R. Hoffa.

General President Hoffa has outlined four priorities for the Teamsters. "First, we must continue to heal the deep divisions within our great union. Second, we are going to establish and maintain fiscal viability within the Teamsters. Third, we will establish new procedures to ensure the Teamsters remain free of corruption. And, finally, we are going to focus on organizing and the growth of the Teamsters," Hoffa said.

In his speech to members, General President Hoffa offered his vision for the future. "Let us here proclaim, on this sacred day, that the long nightmare has ended. That six years of division and distrust and dishonesty have ended. That our vision of the future has been realized. And, that this house of labor is no longer divided against itself but united to face the future."

RANK-AND-FILE FAMILY SWEARS IN UNION LEADERS

"I was honored to be the one chosen out of our 1.4 million members. It was a privilege, an opportunity that any Teamster would appreciate," said Local 639 UPS driver, Tony Pinder who administered the oath of office to the new Vice Presidents of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

Pinder continued, "Standing on that stage with President Hoffa and the General Executive Board told me a lot about how they feel about the rank-and-file."

Pinder, who makes deliveries to IBT headquarters, was accompanied by his wife Katrina, twelve-year-old daughter Tiffany, and seven-year old son Anthony. "It was a proud moment for my family and me. Most people see me as an everyday UPS driver, they have no idea that I am even a Teamster, let alone the Teamster who swore in the new General Executive Board in front of thousands of people."

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TEAMSTERS PULL TOGETHER FOR DISASTER RELIEF

Among the victims of the devastating tornadoes that swept through Oklahoma and Kansas recently are members of Teamsters Locals 886, 795 and 516.

Unfortunately, one member lost his beloved wife. More than 40 Teamster families from Local 886 have been left homeless.

In response, the International union is revamping its Disaster Relief Fund to assist union brothers and sisters in rebuilding their lives.

Contributions should be forwarded to the IBT Disaster Relief Fund, 25 Louisiana Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20001. Please make checks payable to the Teamsters Disaster Relief Fund. If desired, please indicate that the contribution is to assist victims of the Kansas/Oklahoma tornadoes.

The money will be used to assist union brothers and sisters in rebuilding their lives. So far, contributions from Teamster locals and members helped the International Union's Human Rights Commission raise more than \$85,000 for the Teamster families who were victims of the Oklahoma and Kansas tornadoes.

Hurricane Heroes

Teamsters have a proud record of quick response to victims in need. When disaster relief organizations moved to assist the affected areas of the 1998 hurricanes, one of the first calls for volunteers went out to the Teamsters, who for decades have provided an invaluable service in getting emergency supplies moved.

Teamster Local 100's Nathan King and his wife, Brenda, (shown below) were invaluable volunteers during Hurricane Bonnie. As the hurricane approached, the Kings drove the Red Cross' Mobile Administrative Supply Unit (MASU) to a staging area in Richmond, VA.

After Bonnie made landfall, they drove the 40-foot rig to the Red Cross disaster operations command center in Wilmington, NC.

John Coyer, a Teamster 100 retiree is another Red Cross hero. Throughout 1998, John took care of the MASU truck and recruited other Teamster retirees to become MASU drivers.

John has driven both short and long distances. In September, he played a pivotal role during Hurricane Georges by driving the truck around the southern part of the country.

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How the members of Local 560 reclaimed their union from the mob

"There is nothing more important to this union than democracy. Our union must answer to only one interest - that of the membership. There is no place in the union for corrupt, self-serving leadership and we cannot function properly under government supervision," says Pete Brown after three months as president of Local 560 in Union City, New Jersey.

Brown and an executive board of reformers were swept into office last March in the local's first democratic election in more than a generation.

Brown's slate was elected with 55 percent of the membership vote. The closest rival slate gleaned a mere 29 percent.

Within days after he was sworn in as President on March 19, 1999, Brown began the difficult job of piecing together a local which had been demoralized first by mob control and later by 13 years of government trusteeship. Local 560 made history earlier in the year when a federal court certified it as free and clear of corruption, returning the local to the control of its members.

Earlier in the year, as he ended the government's supervision, Judge Harold Ackerman credited local members for their role in recovering their union. "The real heroes of this story are the members of this union. They wrested control from the evil-doers who had exploited them," declared Judge Ackerman.

Rebuilding Local 560 remains a tough task. Three decades of unfettered mob domination had destroyed pensions and tainted the entire union.

Ackerman imposed federal trusteeship over Local 560 following a 1984 trial which disclosed evidence of bribes, kickbacks, payoffs, beatings and at least three murders. He named Ed Stier to administer the local.

Brown's election marks a transformation for the troubled local that some 40 years ago came under the domination of mobsters led by Anthony Provenzano. Following Provenzano's conviction and the exposure of corruption in the Local's leadership ranks, Brown backed efforts to throw out the gangsters and replace them with new leaders dedicated to reform. At the time, Brown says, he was only one of many rank-and-file members who were willing to stand up to then-President Mike Sciarra who had succeeded Anthony Provenzano's brother, Sammy Provenzano, in controlling the local.

For a time, Brown's voice was muzzled when he was fired from his job and lost his status as a shop steward at ABF. The firing briefly silenced one of Sciarra's most outspoken opponents, but that silence was only temporary. In 1993 Brown, a 31-year Teamster member became a business agent for Local 560 and resumed his outspoken battle for local members.

In testimony during court proceedings to end the trusteeship, Brown described a new agenda for Local 560. "I don't believe there is a true place for government in unions....we are a trade union. We feel we should have our own affairs to ourselves.

However...we all know there is no place for organized crime in any union...I am resolute along with my executive board to see that not only does it not return to Local 560, but to any part of the International union or any local unions."

Federal trustee Ed Stier echoed the sentiments of a membership weary of external controls. He testified that the "the thousands of members of Local 560, the honest men and women of the union and their leadership have earned the right to have their union back."

The final step in the transformation came during March 19, 1999 swearing-in ceremonies where IBT General President James P. Hoffa, describing Local 560 members as "my partners in keeping the Teamsters union free of corruption," declared:

"The working men and women of Local 560 have set an example for ridding the union of both corruption and government oversight. Through hard work and the spirit of true reform, the members of 560 made the difference. They are the shining stars of trade unionists everywhere."

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Hoffa Administration Trustees Texas Local For Failing to Serve Members

Demonstrating the commitment of the new Hoffa administration to member representation and services, the International union placed Local 19, in Grapevine, Texas, under trusteeship on June 18, 1999. According to General President James P. Hoffa, "My administration will take whatever action is necessary to ensure that members receive quality representation."

Local 19 is the first Teamster affiliate to be placed under control of the International Union since Hoffa assumed office in March.

Local 19 President J.D. Potter, a long-time Hoffa supporter, resigned from office prior to the implementation of the trusteeship.

The Local has approximately 3,500 members in four states who work in airline-related industries, a majority at Southwest Airlines and Continental Airlines.

Hoffa named Joe Darmento, President of Local 2727 in Louisville, Kentucky, to serve as trustee until members are assured of quality representation on the job. Darmento is a former airline mechanic and a recognized industry expert. Local 19 Business Representative Mike Ellison will assist Trustee Darmento in running the day-to-day affairs of the local union.

"This is an extraordinary and important measure. We want to introduce changes that will result in the union providing full-representation and better service for the members of Local 19," stated Darmento.

Darmento announced four immediate changes:

- The union will vigorously enforce all collective bargaining agreements;
- The trustee will report to the membership on union finances;
- Local union meetings will take place at locations closer to member worksites; and
- A union newsletter will be published on a regular basis.

"The Teamsters will work to ensure that every member receives the representation that they deserve. We cannot allow inept leadership to jeopardize union members," added Hoffa.

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Protecting Your Dues

Hoffa Administration Ends Financial Mismanagement

From 1991 to 1998, the union's assets plummeted from \$154 million to \$3.2 million according to an internal investigative report presented to the first meeting of the new IBT General Executive Board (GEB) last April.

The investigation revealed that the union barely broke even last year.

Responding to the report, the GEB enacted a six point program of financial reforms, voting to implement budget and accounting systems which had been virtually ignored by the previous administration.

"Our investigation shows that the previous administration ran a spending program that guaranteed deficits. There was no accountability in the budgetary process," General President James P. Hoffa reported to the GEB.

"There were no penalties for overspending. There was no tracking of spending," Hoffa continued, adding:

"We are committed to righting this ship and implementing the tough reforms that are necessary to get the Teamsters back on our feet financially. We are going to make sure members' dues are protected and spent in a wise manner."

No Budget, Big Spending

Under former President Ron Carey, the union spent more than \$700 million in member dues and assets. Federal officials barred Carey from holding Teamsters office in 1997, after finding that he had participated in a scheme to funnel dues money into his re-election campaign.

The report discloses that the prior administration never developed basic financial practices, including the adoption of an annual budget. All the investigators found was a Carey "spending plan" which provided no way to track the spending of dues money.

"Our first reform is to develop and implement budget and accounting systems," said General Secretary-Treasurer Tom Keegel.

"The Teamsters' assets should be invested and protected in a continual effort to build for growth. By squandering \$151 million in assets, the previous administration took advantage of members' dues and lost out on a significant opportunity to invest and earn more money for the union. Our administration wants to get back that lost income and build for the future of the union," Keegel continued.

Balanced Budget, No Dues Increase

"This first step of fiscal reform is just that - a first step. We are repairing years of financial mismanagement and pure carelessness," Keegel pointed out. "For the first time in years, the Teamsters will have a budget and that budget will be balanced.

We will accomplish this without increasing members' dues. And, we are starting specific reforms to make sure all spending falls within the budgetary lines we have established.

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New Union Leaders Cut Costs

The newly-elected General Executive Board has taken several steps to cut costs and to protect the member's dues including:

Cut Bloated Payroll

The Hoffa administration made a commitment to cut the fat in Washington. Before the December election, the International staff had swollen to 600, many of whom had no clear job assignments. A staff reorganization will target savings to help bolster member service areas, specifically in contracts, organizing and political action.

Kill Perks for Defeated Officials

In one of their first official actions, the new General Executive Board killed a scheme by members of the defeated GEB to collect an extra three months of health insurance after leaving office. The Carey board had approved the extra coverage - to be paid by dues income - when it became obvious that they were headed for defeat.

Upgrade Check Processing

The internal payroll processing system is antiquated. Upgrading the way checks are processed will produce savings of \$250,000 immediately, and another \$10,000 to \$20,000 monthly in operational savings. The audit report noted that the old system actually cost the union \$50 for each paycheck processed.

Renegotiate Insurance Contracts

By renegotiating the health insurance plan for union personnel, the GEB anticipates cutting costs by one-third, with no reduction in benefits. Through a review of all insurance costs, the GEB plan will achieve major savings in property and bond insurance, as well.

Replace Outdated Equipment

The previous administration spent more than \$700 million of Teamster dues, but very little of it went to improving services for members. Only one out of 75 staff at the IBT headquarters has internet access, leaving them unable to communicate with locals and members in an effective and timely manner. Most staff members are using computers with antiquated 386 processors, some of which are still equipped with the old 5-inch floppy disks. The Hoffa administration is currently upgrading the computer system at headquarters to improve member communications and service, as well as to improve staff productivity.

In another equipment upgrade, the GEB projects that a complete overhaul of the union's internal communications and telephone system will result in direct savings of approximately \$3 million per year. The installation of the new phone system will produce immediate savings of \$18,000 each month, including savings of up to 50 percent on credit card calls and 10 percent on cellular calls.

Sell the Luxury Condominium

The new Executive Board is selling a luxury condo where a top official of the Carey Administration lived at the members' expense.

Full-time staff, huge chandeliers, plush carpeting and lots of marble greeted visitors to the condo (shown below). The penthouse patio offered a panoramic view of the national monuments, the Pentagon and the Potomac River.

Monthly condo fees also paid for a swimming pool, card room, underground parking and other fancy amenities.

"Luxury condo? I thought those perks had been sold. Carey told me so!" said Anthony Murietta a member of Local 763 in Seattle, Washington.

The new GEB expects to get a high sales price for the condo. Proceeds will be put into the union's treasury.

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Teamster Women Continuing the Fighting Tradition

In 1996, women were paid 74 cents for every dollar men received. Over a lifetime of work, losing 26 cents-on-the-dollar adds up.

According to a recent study by the AFL-CIO, the average 25-year-old working woman will lose \$523,000 to unequal pay during her working life.

Addressing issues of concern to women has been a long-held Teamster tradition. The union was at the forefront of the struggle for working women to earn equal pay.

Teamsters raised the issue 85 years ago when women entered the workforce during World War I and earned significantly lower wages than men for performing the same work.

Although equal pay became law in 1963, women are still paid less than men are, even when they have similar education, skills and experience. Teamster women are working closely with other union men and women to close the gap.

Today's rank-and-file Teamster women are becoming more active in the Teamsters union, with many holding leadership positions.

Teamster men and women are participating in the AFL-CIO's "Ask A Working Woman Survey". The results of the survey will help all unions address issues of concern to women.



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Teamster Members and Overnite Workers Demonstrate at Overnite's Chicago Terminal

Three hundred Teamster members from across the country recently joined in solidarity with Overnite workers for a demonstration in front of Overnite Transportation's Chicago terminal.

Although it was not a strike, the extraordinary show of solidarity apparently terrified the terminal manager because he quickly shut down the facility for about a hour and refused to let trucks in or out.

Word of the solidarity demonstration quickly spread across the country, energizing Teamster supporters throughout the Overnite system.

"It boosted our confidence enormously," said John Culberson, road driver from Overnite's Atlanta hub. "First, Mr. Hoffa walks our dock in Atlanta, then three hundred Teamsters join our brothers in Chicago for a demonstration of solidarity. This is why we voted to be Teamsters."

The demonstrations were timed to coincide with the resumption of contract negotiations, which began on the same day in Chicago.

From Portland, Maine to Portland, Oregon, from Miami to San Francisco, Teamster locals across the country staged similar informational demonstrations.

"We will either have a contract with Overnite, or we'll shut this company down," said John Murphy, International Vice President and Director of Organizing.

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Teamsters join Congress, U.S. Transportation Department, Freight Carriers in a Call for Highway, Truck Safety

In a demonstration of the Teamsters commitment to truck and highway safety, the union has endorsed a major campaign to educate the public about the dangers of driving in the "No-Zone"-the blind-spot areas around trucks where crashes are more likely to occur.

As part of the campaign, Teamster members, joined by General President James P. Hoffa, went to the U.S. Capitol to demonstrate various truck safety programs such as handling aggressive driving, truck maintenance and pre-trip inspections of vehicles.

"The Teamsters union is committed to truck and highway safety," said Hoffa. "We believe that an educated public, combined with professional drivers, will reduce the number of highway fatalities involving tractor-trailers."

The "No-Zone" campaign urges motorists to avoid driving in blind spots around tractor-trailers where they can not be seen by a truck driver who is changing lanes or making a wide turn.

In addition to the Teamsters union, the "No-Zone" program is supported by members of Congress, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the Motor Freight Carriers Association, which represents unionized trucking companies. The program is sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration.

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