



# WHY WE ARE HERE & WHAT WE CAN DO!

---

Over the years, we have bargained good contracts, first with US West and then with Qwest. These contracts have improved our wages, benefits, working conditions, and job security. In recent years, we have bargained hard to protect our gains and continue to make improvements. However, the changing structure of the global economy, the communications industry and Qwest itself affect our power and, thus, our ability to protect what we have and to gain further improvements.

Qwest weathered the actions of past executives that nearly destroyed the company. The company is finally begun to see real profits again. The stock price has stabilized. Shareholders received a dividend in the first quarter of 2008.

With a new CEO and renewed strategies for growth, Qwest plans to build on its nationwide internet network to provide data, voice and video services. It plans to invest in that network, to upgrade its plant within its 14 state region to maximize its attractiveness to local consumers and businesses. It hopes to use its contract to provide network services to the federal government as a springboard to attract new business customers of all sizes, both in region and nationwide. It would build on partnerships with Verizon Wireless, DirecTV and others to compete for customers in its region.

The telecommunications industry is also changing. The ability to bundle services like landline telephone, internet, wireless and TV is increasingly critical. All telecom companies face increasing competition from the largely non-union cable sector. In response, we can expect Qwest to seek to cut its costs, including labor costs. Yet again, we will face a major fight to protect our health care benefits.

The political climate has also begun to change after years of deregulation, the erosion of labor laws, globalization, the anti-labor slant of the National Labor Relations Board, massive corporate anti-union activities and the reduction of the percentage of workers represented by unions.

Thus far, we have protected the majority of the hard won gains that we have made in the past in the areas of wages, pensions, health care, working conditions and job security. Indeed, CWA is one of the few unions that have been so successful in protecting our standard of living. We have not only to deal with Qwest, Verizon and AT&T but also to fight against the debilitating effects of deregulation that have decimated workers and unions in industries such as trucking, energy, and airlines.

In 2008, we face a hard struggle and new challenges. But we are strong. Qwest employs 21,000 union-represented workers, 57% of the company – including 19,000 CWA members. Our success will depend upon the involvement of our members – not just in collective bargaining but in the political arena as well.

Now is the time to get involved! Our Bargaining Team needs your help! Our retirees need your help! We all need to rely on each other! Contact your Local Officers, Stewards, & Activists to find out more about what we can do to gain a fair and equitable contract for us all!

**It is up to us, the members!**

# Our Bargaining Team is Ready! Are You?

The CWA Bargaining Team consists of 4 elected members and 2 district staff:

Suzie Miller- Colorado

Kent Anderson- Utah \*Retiree

Ken Saether- Oregon

Malachy Sreenan- Washington

Jay Boyle- District 7 Staff

Reed Roberts- District 7 Bargaining Agent

In case of an emergency or someone getting sick there is also an alternate to the committee- Tim Donovan – Minnesota.

Our committee will be very busy reviewing proposals both to and from the company. Their efforts will be targeted on bargaining to obtain the best contract they can for us all! Without the identifiable support of the membership their job will be twice as difficult. The company will attempt to tell them what the members of QWEST want and will settle for, thus eliminating your voice at the bargaining table.

With your help and participation this will not happen. If each work location is supporting our representatives through the wearing of t-shirts, or buttons, even work place activities the company will view the membership as **UNITED!** The impact upon bargaining will allow for our representatives at the table to have more ability and leverage against the company as to what our membership needs and wants as a result of this bargaining. By showing solidarity each member contributes to the overall goal of gaining a fair contract.

Simply put, if you believe that what we do on the shop floor or at our offices goes unnoticed by senior management, you are wrong. The company has precise plans on what to do and how to report all mobilization activities throughout the entire company. They will know about the 3 members in the small town just as much as the 100's in the big city offices. They will also evaluate the activities to determine how much they can attempt to take away.

**It's easy to say NO Givebacks! But we must show the company that there is leverage behind our committee, and that leverage is you the membership! Show your support get involved today!**

## BE PART OF THE SOLUTION!! CONTACT YOUR LOCAL TODAY!



opeiu3, afl-cio

