



Verizon Condemned for Trampling Rights in Independent Report

from the National

A blistering report from American Rights at Work (ARAW) denounces Verizon for interfering with workers trying to organize, taking a "low-road" approach to what were once good jobs, and letting service quality deteriorate for millions of customers.

"Broken Promises: Verizon Neglects Its Commitment to Provide Good Jobs and Quality Service," details how the company uses aggressive and illegal tactics to stop workers from exercising their rights to associate and organize.

"This report documents the lengths to which a corporation will go to trample its employees' rights, even to the detriment of quality service to millions of its customers and the future of good jobs in the industry," CWA President Larry Cohen said. Read the report at www.americanrightsatwork.org.

ARAW will be sending the report to members of Congress, all the presidential candidates and politicians around the country that have expressed support for the Employee Free Choice Act and have condemned Verizon's actions.

The report by the independent workers' rights group provides first-hand accounts of management's abusive and intimidating behavior from Verizon Business technicians who have tried to organize through CWA and the IBEW. It describes how a technician at a Verizon Business facility in Monsey, N.Y., was disciplined and made an example of for posting a pro-union advertisement. To keep an eye on the worker, the company assigned a manager to sit directly behind his desk.

"I remember sitting in the parking lot, horrified, my stomach turning. . . My manager is sitting right behind me. I gotta worry if I hit the wrong key stroke. It was a horrible experience," described the worker, Christopher Bloncourt. Verizon faces NLRB hearings shortly for its anti-union tactics in this and another Verizon Business location in Pennsylvania.

Verizon's assault on workers was so fierce at

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Verizon Calls for Early Bargaining, Slaps Members in The Face

by Ray Pomeroy

In late October/early November Verizon approached the union with a proposal to bargain early, the union agreed and the first meeting was scheduled in Philadelphia on November 19th.

When the members first heard about the request it looked good on the surface. The assumption being that Verizon doesn't need any labor strife while they are promoting the product they've put all the companies fortunes into (FiOS) and can't keep up with the demand for it at the moment.

What's come out of the meetings is bizarre and what they've proposed is as follows.

The Company's proposal includes employees paying part of the medical premium on a weekly basis, annual deductibles on prescription drugs, additional cost for not using mail order prescription drugs, additional cost for out of network pharmacies, increased cost of mail order pharmacy, HMO's will have drug cost increased, the MCN will cost now, out of pocket maximums would increase, increase in co-pays for doctor visits, penalties for failing to pre certify hospital visits, MEP-PPO eliminated, and increased costs to members for HMO's. In addition, the company demand included the elimination of retiree healthcare for workers hired after 8-3-08.

We built this place and as long as Ivan and Denny are making tens of millions of dollars I see no reason that we should give anything back.

The people running the company aren't stupid (just greedy) and they couldn't possibly have had any real expectation that we would agree to givebacks when the company is in pretty good shape, let alone nine months early. So what are they thinking?

They can't throw this at us now and come back in the summer and claim we've bargained to impasse. That idea has gone around and I'm told that this sort of early bargaining doesn't lend itself to that tactic.

One possibility is they plan to stick to this until the last minute and then go for an extension of what we already have. Maybe do a little "bargaining in the street". We have a lot of members now with very little seniority and the company may have it in its mind that the younger folks will pressure the bargaining team to accept an extension, not knowing how important this round of bargaining is to them.

They could be trotting this out now with hopes of trying to push us into accepting a Voluntary Employee Beneficiary Association

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HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM LOCAL 2107

AT&T Respects Employees' Rights to Form a Union

Since 2005, more than 19,000 of your co-workers from the old AT&T Wireless have joined you by organizing with CWA at at&t Mobility (formerly Cingular Wireless).

Through representation with the 700,000-member Communications Workers of America, 40,000 (and growing) at&t Mobility employees have made a big difference at the company. By joining together in a union, we have negotiated contracts with management, winning significant improvements in our jobs, benefits, and working conditions. These improvements include:

- Wage progression steps that provide automatic 6-month increases;

- Annual wage increases in addition to our 6-month wage progression;
- A health plan that provides better coverage for less cost and that is protected against price increases or changes for the duration of our union contract;
- A grievance procedure which gives us the right to address unfair disciplinary actions and violations of our union contract;
- Improved career opportunities and
- Enhanced job security.

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President's Point of View.....

Denise Burns

ARE WE AT WAR WITH VERIZON?

You bet we are! We are going into a contract year. The battles we are having now will surely escalate. Verizon is slowly, aggressively trying to eradicate the Union and the unionized workers. They have hired Jones Day-a well known union busting law firm to help with this.

Some of you probably haven't noticed or experienced, yet, what is going on at Verizon. First they are adamant about keeping Verizon Wireless (VZW) and Verizon Business (VZB) from organizing. They don't care what the law is, they fire people unlawfully, they badger and threaten. Remember the VZB techs that wanted to be Union and what they are still being put through.

When they aren't doing their anti-union work in house, they try to sell off parts of the company to get rid of the Union and their members as well as the customers that "they" think aren't worth their attention, i.e. aren't profitable.

Right now a big war is on in the New England states. To see how the fight is being fought there go to:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=EbKVwW-HIf4
www.freechoiceatverizon.com

We need to support our union brothers and sisters there and we need their support here. The fight will take all of us working together.

Since the MCI merger, those of you that work in Verizon Partner Solutions (VPS), inside or outside, have seen the work dwindle away as they send it to MCI. The work is diminishing in other departments as well but it doesn't seem so obvious because they keep offering EISP's to get rid of employees; another way to chip away at the Union.

Don't forget the ongoing automation that reduces the number of workers needed. Verizon says it will be handled through attrition but that only means they will offer another EISP. No matter how they say it, bottom line is they are trying to contain the Union and then get rid of it.

They have more and more contractors doing our jobs everyday. If you drive down the road you can see the contractors placing poles and moving fiber. That is our work per the contract. If you see it happening take pictures and let your steward know or call the local office with the location so that we

can get out there. Verizon has also contracted out FiOS work to VCSI (formerly BASSCI). VCSI sometimes gives that work to their contractors. Any time you see a contractor, union or otherwise doing OUR/YOUR work you better start reporting and grieving it.

Don't tell management you don't want to do a job, that gives them an excuse to do away with that job. An example is the Outside Plant Technician title we almost completely lost but eventually was brought back (due to the Broadband Agreement). Any time you don't want to do your job, Verizon will certainly give it to a contractor. You need to hold on to our work. One of our biggest fights will be job security!

If you have had a grievance you will notice that Verizon management stalls us at every possible turn. They won't hear them, aren't available, say we can't get certain documents or tell us we don't need those documents, and delay responding to us about setting grievance dates and times. Some of the time management comes to the grievance with their decision already made and won't even pretend to care or listen to the argument. There was a time when management would work with us to resolve issues before they became problems and some still do, but the majority are buying into Verizon "union-busting".

I could go on and on but I think you should have the picture by now. Verizon wants the Union gone. Imagine what the work place would be like then. The first one to wear a red shirt on Thursday would probably be fired because they would be able to fire you for just that.

Bottom line to all of this is be prepared for a real fight in bargaining this time. If we don't get job security now the next contract may be a moot point because it won't matter what wages and benefits we have if we aren't around to collect them.

If in fact early bargaining goes nowhere, don't wait until August to mobilize - start now! Make it known that job security is #1. Keep your eyes and ears open. Let us know what is going on in your location. Let Verizon know - WE WON'T GO BACK!

"Today, we say that when you pick a fight with any of us, you pick a fight with all of us! And that when you push us, we will push back!"
 Richard Trumka, Sec-Teas AFL-CIO 1995

(bargaining from page 1)

(VEBA) like the UAW just accepted at GM.

There are other possibilities. The company's anti-labor law firm, Jones Day, may have something up their sleeve that I can't even imagine. If you've any doubt that they are anti-union at Jones Day the following is from their website and is Part of the bio of one of the firms Partners, Todd L. Saver:

Todd conducts frequent training sessions and seminars on a variety of topics, including union avoidance.

Todd's client representations include: Verizon,

We formatted the fonts but the words came right from jonesday.com, the items in bold are the first on the lists in their respective paragraphs. If you go to jonesday.com and search "union avoidance" (with the quotes) you'll find five other lawyers' names pop up.

No matter what the ploy, if there is one, our members need to understand that this round of bargaining is likely the most important one any of us here today ever faced.

I can't speak to VEBA's because I don't know much about them and of course there is no telling what Jones Day may be cooking up for the company. What I do know is NOW is not the time for an extension, the company has put all the eggs in the FiOS basket and they need us out there building the network and installing the product, not

walking picket lines. It's up to every one of us to stick together and do whatever is needed to support our bargaining team and bring in a contract we can live with.

In hindsight it appears that Verizon management knew back in 2003 that they were going to trot out "fttp" and FiOS. I think that's why they went for the five year contract, to hold off labor problems while we built the new network.

Because they knew about FiOS and we didn't, Verizon had the upper hand in '03 bargaining, all we knew at the time was they were losing market share. We gave a little on job security and we accepted tiny little annual raises, happy to keep what we had otherwise.

It's time to fix the job security problems, contracting and other issues. Get out there and show the company that you support your bargaining team. Wear RED on Thursday, if you don't have to wear the Verizon logo-don't, if you find someone doing our work that shouldn't be-grieve and come to the membership meetings.

Another thing we should all be doing, is giving great customer service. You should always be leaving the customer with the thought that "that Verizon person was outstanding" but with Verizon contracting our work out left and right and a contract coming up it becomes doubly important. We need the public on our side.

ACFC News

Kids in the Workplace,TM a free program sponsored by Verizon and the CWA (through the Advisory Council on Family Care), will be offered again for the 2007-08 school year.

This licensed program is available for your school-age children age 5 and in kindergarten through 12 years old. The program will be held in one of the available rooms at your work site and staffed by experienced care providers.

In order to utilize the program, you MUST pre-register your child by completing all required paperwork in advance. **NO** children will be accepted on the day of care without being registered in advance.

For current Kids in the WorkplaceTM users, please note the Kids in the WorkplaceTM registration forms have changed for 2007-08. You can get them at www.acfccares.com Register today, call 1-888-767-7862

For our Riva Road Members:

If you know any parents who haven't registered, please ask them to fill out their registration forms and send them in as soon as possible. If they don't have 10 children, they will cancel the winter break week. We need 5 children for 12/26, 2 children for 12/27 and 12/28 and 7 children for 12/31. Please pass this along to your co-workers who have children.

Is your Verizon cell phone contract ready to expire?

Check out www.getunionwireless.com to get your union discount from at&t

(Trampled from page 1)

an Orangeburg, N.Y., Verizon Wireless worksite in 2003 that management banned employees from talking about the union even while on lunch breaks. The NLRB later found the company guilty of that and other abuses. In Long Beach, Calif., where 170 DSL technicians were determined to organize in early 2007, a senior executive flew in from New Jersey just before the vote. The night before and day of the election, the official went cubicle to cubicle telling workers -- illegally -- that there'd be no raises if the union came in.

Verizon's threatening — and following through on threats — to shut down worksites if employees organize is a common tactic, the report found. In 2001, Verizon said it would close down its Woburn, Mass., call center if the workers voted to unionize. Faced with NLRB charges over these threats and other illegalities, Verizon settled the case

and posted a notice agreeing not to break the law. Yet soon afterward, it shut down the facility and moved the work to South Carolina. The report said the company closed down two other call centers where workers were organizing — in Orangeburg, N.Y., and Morristown, N.J. — moving the work to South Carolina, North Carolina and Arizona, all states with "right-to-work" laws that weaken unions.

The report says Verizon management has followed a "textbook example of 'double-breasting,'" since its creation in 2000, to keep workers in its union-represented division separate from workers at Verizon Business and Verizon Wireless. The company refuses to honor the card-check results that show at least 65 to 75 percent of Verizon Business's technicians in New York and New England want to organize.

ARAW found that the company's customers

aren't treated much better, stating that Verizon management has "shirked its responsibilities as a public utility, pursuing a race-to-the-bottom, low-road business model that is detrimental to both employees and customers." The report criticizes Verizon for failing to maintain or upgrade service for its landline operations while it is diverting its resources to the more profitable fiber optic, or FiOS network. It also slams the company for threatening future service quality to millions of its existing customers by selling off its rural landline access lines.

"Under Verizon's current business model, tens of thousands of secure, well-paying jobs are at the risk of disappearing," ARAW concludes. "The consequences of Verizon's actions go beyond its workforce, as communities lose good jobs, and customers suffer poor service while missing out on the benefits of high-speed broadband."

Attention Verizon Members

Bill Sonnik has retired. Please note the following information.

Sickness and Disability Absence, Family Medical Leave Absence, and Metlife related issues are now handled by: Paula Terveer for Verizon – Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and Washington D.C.

Telephone – (888) 571-7218 Fax – (757) 667-6090

E-Mail – paula.a.terveer@verizon.com

Sympathy to:

- Carol Cooper on the death of her mother.
- Joyce Garner on the death of her brother.
- Curt Jamar on the death of his mother.
- Jim Leakan on the death of his father, retired member Al Leakan.
- Iris Mejia on the death of her brother.
- Gail Taylor on the death of her sister-in-law.

Scholarships

The Union Plus Scholarship Program is available online at www.unionplus.org and is due by 1/31/2008

Dates to Remember

Membership meetings

01/07	Northern Area	6:00 PM
01/15	Southern Area	6:30 PM
02/04	Northern Area	6:00 PM
02/07	Southern Area	6:30 PM

Other Meetings

01/16	ACFC	
01/30	Executive Board	
02/13	Stewards	6:00 PM
02/27	Executive Board	

Other

01/15	Newsletter Deadline
02/19	Newsletter Deadline

Negotiated Holidays-Enjoy!

12/25	Christmas
01/01	New Years Day
02/18	President's Day

08/02/08 Verizon Contract Expires

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