

Mr. Jack Burdette, Chairman, and  
Members of the Scale Committee,  
Fort Worth Typographical Union #198.

Gentlemen:

In accordance with the suggestion of Mr. Joe Collins, president of your union, concurred in by all present at our last meeting, Thursday, February 14, we are submitting for your consideration and for transmittal to your union a proposal that represents all we can see our way clear to grant. It is all we think should be asked of us.

In order that there may be no misunderstanding and that your members may be fully advised of our attitude, we are submitting it in written form.

Before going into its details, however, we desire to make some comments we consider pertinent to the issues involved, their clarification, and, we hope, their settlement.

We have been negotiating since January 17 and have held nine meetings. We have agreed upon all working conditions involved in your original proposal, the present agreement and our proposal. We have reached agreement on the matter of hours. In the matter of wage scale and other issues, all of which involve added costs, little or no progress toward an agreement has been made.

You submitted in your original proposal a scale of \$60 weekly for a 35-hour work week for day work, or an hourly rate of \$1.714. Your proposal called for a night rate of \$66 a week, a 32½ hour work week, an hourly rate of \$2.03, which, according to our most recent information, would be the fifth highest hourly rate in the United States. It would be exceeded only by the rates of New York City, Chicago, Detroit, and Gary, Ind., practically a suburb of Chicago.

Your original proposal also called for time and one-half for work on six specified holidays, two weeks sick leave, old-age retirement benefits, severance pay, etc.

The publishers, in their original proposal, submitted the present hourly rate of \$1.33 for day work, \$1.40 for night work, with a work week of 40 hours. This would have meant a weekly wage rate of \$53.32 and \$56 compared with the present \$50 and \$52.50 for a 37½ hour work week. This proposal you not only declined to entertain but you even questioned its sincerity.

In a further effort to reach an agreement, we suggested a weekly rate of \$55 for day work and \$57.50 for night work. This, too, you declined to submit with your recommendation for acceptance.

We later indicated a willingness to pay an increase of 12 percent, which is slightly higher than the average of all post-war settlements in cities anywhere near Fort Worth's comparable size. This would have meant a weekly rate of \$56 for day work, \$58.50 for night work, for a 37½ hour work week. This proposal you declined to accept also.

You gentlemen have maintained throughout all our discussions an unyielding stand for \$60 weekly for day work and \$66 weekly for night work. You have made no concessions whatsoever in the matter of wage demands.

In agreeing on working conditions, wherever more than clarification of language has been involved, we believe it is the publishers who have made the concessions, and all such have been in your favor. You say, gentlemen, you are acting under instructions from your union. Such being the case, we do not believe you have been permitted to engage in genuine collective bargaining, but, rather, have been limited to the submission of one figure upon a take it or leave it basis.

For reasons with which we can not agree, you have continued to insist upon a wage rate that presents an increase of 22.9 percent, which is higher than any postwar settlement in cities of comparable size, of newspapers with greater advertising volume, higher rates, and more gross advertising income than those in Fort Worth. The average percentage increase in these cities is 11.6 percent, or \$5.77 per week for day work against the 12 percent, or \$6 for day work, which we suggested.

Birmingham, though it has a population 100,000 greater than Fort Worth, has an exactly parallel competitive newspaper situation. The combined advertising rates in Birmingham are 12.8 percent higher than those in Fort Worth. In 1945, the total advertising volume was 25.3 percent greater than in Fort Worth. In Birmingham, the settlement, made after a strike, called for \$54.84 per week for day work and \$57.64 for night work, with a 40-hour work week, against a 37½ hour work week in Fort Worth. In San Antonio, again after a strike, the agreement reached called for a day scale of \$55, a night scale of \$57.50, increases of 13.7 and 13.6 percent respectively. In 1945, the San Antonio newspapers carried 68.7 percent more advertising than the Fort Worth newspapers. Their combined advertising rate was only 2.2 percent less than the combined rate in Fort Worth.

As to the so-called "fringe" issues, we see no justification whatever for the payment of time and a half for work on six holidays which never have been observed by Fort Worth newspapers. Payment for two weeks sick leave, old-age retirement benefits, and severance pay would all mean added costs above any scale figure we might reach.

There is no justification, competitively or economically, for a Fort Worth scale equal to that of Dallas. Neither daily newspaper in Dallas has competition in its respective field. Each has a far larger advertising patronage than either of the Fort Worth newspapers. Their combined advertising rate is 14.9 percent greater than the combined rate in Fort Worth. Their total advertising lineage last year was 74.2 percent more than that of Fort Worth. At no time in the past 25 years has the Fort Worth scale ever equaled that of Dallas. The scale differential between the two cities has been recognized by your union throughout all these years, because of the circumstances cited. We see no reason why you should insist upon changing it now.

So much for the background of our negotiations. Now the proposal.

A two-year contract, subject to re-opening as to wages only at the end of the first year, on the customary 60 days written notice.

A scale of \$56 for day work, \$58.50 for night work.

A work week of 37½ hours, with continuation of present practices in regard to the work week.

We trust you will see fit to submit this proposal to your union with your recommendation for its acceptance.

CARTER PUBLICATIONS, INC.,

By .....

FORT WORTH PRESS COMPANY,

By .....

Fort Worth, Tex.

Feb. , 1946.