



Activity Escalates as Mayor, MTA Officials Meet with Rev. Jackson, UTU's Williams

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Oct. 13) The Friday of the fourth week of the transit strike saw an escalation in activity by parties both directly and indirectly involved with ending the 28-day standoff between the MTA and the UTU.

At about 1 p.m., Mayor Richard Riordan, Board Chair Yvonne Burke and CEO Julian Burke met at the Pasadena Hilton for discussions with Rev. Jesse Jackson and UTU General Chairman James Williams.

Earlier, the Los Angeles City Council passed a resolution urging Riordan "to immediately take the necessary steps to end the MTA strike and restore our collapsed transportation system."

In fact, by mid-morning the mayor was on his way to the Pasadena Hilton for an 11 a.m. meeting with the MTA bargaining team and UTU leaders.

The Rev. Mr. Jackson, speaking at the council session, urged the two sides to go into a room and bargain "until the smoke comes out." Afterward, he headed for the Pasadena Hilton to meet with the mayor and MTA and union leaders.

Lipsky, Conner address council

MTA Chief Operating Officer Allan Lipsky and Transit Chief Tom Conner, who also addressed the city council meeting, said the agency wants to see a resolution of the strike and buses back on the road. They urged the operators to read for themselves the contract proposal, a summary of which was mailed to their homes on Thursday.

The UTU scheduled a 6 p.m. meeting, Friday, at the Convention Center to present the MTA's final offer to its membership. Although union chief James Williams told the media that no formal vote would be taken, he predicted that when he had explained the offer, "the MTA will hear a resounding no."

In a [news release](#) issued late Thursday, the MTA said the UTU had made "misleading statements" about the agency's final contract offer. The release said the union had "falsely accused the MTA of trying to 'bust' the union and reduce the number of full-time operators by hiring part-time operators."

The MTA mailed letters to union members homes, Thursday, describing the agency's final offer and is distributing flyers on the picket line that summarize the offer. In addition, operating division managers are meeting with striking workers to answer their questions, directly, about the proposed contract.

Meantime, MTA negotiators and leaders of the ATU and TCU met at the bargaining table on Friday.

Members of the California legislature also have become involved in the labor dispute. CEO Julian Burke met Thursday afternoon with a group

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of Los Angeles-area legislators, headed by Assembly Speaker Bob Hertzberg, D-Van Nuys, to brief them and answer questions.

State Sen. Richard Alarcon, D-Van Nuys, chairman of the senate's industrial relations committee, and Assemblywoman Gloria Romero, D-Los Angeles, have tentatively scheduled a 10 a.m., Monday, hearing at the Old State Building to discuss the strike.

[Back to MTA Report](#)