



The announcement that an agreement had been reached came at a 7 a.m. news conference. Joining the Rev. Jesse Jackson at the podium were, from left, MTA Chief Labor Relations Officer Brenda Diederichs, CEO Julian Burke, Supervisor and MTA Chair Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Mayor Richard Riordan and UTU General Chairman James Williams. PHOTOS BY JOSÉ UBALDO



## MTA, UTU Hammer Out Tentative Agreement to End 32-Day Strike

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By BILL HEARD, Editor  
(Oct. 17) After struggling almost around the clock since Friday, MTA and UTU negotiators hammered out a tentative contract agreement, early Tuesday, that is expected to bring a swift end to the 32-day-old strike.

**Hours of  
Contract  
Talks  
Waking  
LA's Mass  
Transit  
System**

"We've done it!" Mayor Richard Riordan announced to a somewhat bedraggled press corps during a 7 a.m. news conference held only 10 minutes after the agreement was reached.

"Today, we emerge with a victory," said the Rev. Jesse Jackson, who had conducted shuttle diplomacy between the MTA and UTU teams throughout the wee hours. He added that bus operators are "better off today than they were 32 days ago."

**Ratification meetings set**

The UTU scheduled a membership meeting at 6 p.m., Tuesday, at the LA Convention Center for a presentation of the tentative agreement and contract ratification vote. The MTA Board was to conduct a closed-door session at 2 p.m. in Board Chair Yvonne Burke's office at the Hall of Administration to discuss ratification.

"We regret the hardship and inconvenience that this strike has caused to so many transit-dependent citizens of Los Angeles County," said Burke. "But, I can assure you, our bargaining with the UTU was necessary to protect the long-term financial interests of the MTA and continue to maintain and expand service to our customers."

With approval of the agreement, the MTA expects to have 85 to 90 percent of buses rolling on Wednesday. Metro Rail operations will require a longer leadtime of perhaps 36 hours to get most trains operating on all three rail lines.

The amount of bus and rail service the MTA can offer within those timeframes will depend to a great degree upon the numbers of employees who report back to work promptly.

**Burke thanks customers**

"We will work to return service to its full capacity as soon as possible," said CEO Julian Burke. "We thank our customers for their support and ask for their continued patience...."

MTA ads in Wednesday's newspapers will announce that passengers can ride free on all Metro Bus and Metro Rail service on Wednesday, Oct. 18, and Thursday, Oct. 19. September passes will be accepted through the end of October. November passes will go on sale Oct. 25.

Keeping the two sides apart in bargaining talks over the past three days were issues that included the number and scheduling of part-time operators. The MTA also sought to save \$23 million toward the \$438 million operating deficit looming over the next 10 years.

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