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June 10, 2020

To: CWA T&T Local Presidents

Subject: Call to Action for Thursday - Stop Work and Reflect

8 Minutes, 46 Seconds—Stop Work.
Thursday, June 11, 12 Noon.
Black Lives Matter.

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I stated in my remarks at our T&T breakout meeting, before the 2020 Presidents meeting, that we would be participating in on-going actions to bring awareness and demand change as we fight against racism. My follow up letter yesterday asks that you and your members send pictures denouncing racism and send them to Ruth Marriott at rmariott@cwa-union.org. We are now planning a second action; I see it as a Solidarity Vigil. The fight against racism will be a marathon not a sprint and we will continue to demand justice and take action for as long as it takes.

As trade unionists and as Americans, we were all outraged by the vicious murder of George Floyd. We are heartened by the uprising of hundreds of thousands of Americans, Black, Brown and white, demanding an end to racism and declaring: “Black Lives Matter.”

Because of Covid-19, it has been difficult for many of us to show our solidarity with this movement.

But on Thursday, June 11, at 12 noon in each time zone, CWA members and allies across the globe will take a stand against racism by doing what trade unionists do when they are protesting for what’s right and fair: Stopping Work.

We are asking all of our members to stop and reflect for 8 minutes and 46 seconds—to remember the length of time the Minneapolis police officer had his knee on George Floyd’s neck.

Obviously, all of our members work in different circumstances and environments. Many are still working at home. Some of our members must care for patients or engage with customers. Please encourage your members to observe the 8 minutes and 46 seconds in whatever way works best for them. Here are some suggestions:

- Gather in a small group in your workplace, socially distanced, and hold signs in solidarity. Downloadable signs are available at cwa-union.org/cwa-against-racism-downloadable-materials
- Stand up in your work location.
- Take a knee in your work location.
- Use your lunch break to hold a socially distanced picket line outside your work location.
- Take a selfie that can be posted in solidarity. Post this with your selfie: 8:46. Stop Work and Reflect. Black Lives Matter. #CWAforBlackLives

Do not abandon customers. Figure out a way to engage in the protest that works for you.

The morning of the protest, officers and shop stewards should reach out to local management to make them aware of the plans for protest and ask them to join the action.

This is not an action that we take lightly. Any time we stop work for any length of time, its serious business. But we are asking you to observe these moments of solidarity on Thursday and in the future because the problems of racism and police violence are deadly serious.

Thank you in advance and Solidarity Forever!

Lisa Bolton
Vice President, Telecommunications and Technologies
On Behalf of President Shelton and the CWA Executive Board