

CONFIDENTIAL MEMORANDUM

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TO: Jack, Loretta, Pat, Dick, Mary, Gail, Julie, and Pacifica station managers  
FR: Burt Glass  
DT: 11 March 1997

**RE: Questions & Answers about Pacifica**

Below are some of the questions sometimes asked of Pacifica staff and GB directors, along with proposed answers. We're providing this to you to assist you in answering the concerns of your colleagues and members of the community/public radio family. I call it a "cheat sheet" to help me stay on message and represent the organization accurately and consistently.

You should always feel free to refer questions from the public to me or other designated spokespeople should you feel uncomfortable with answering. Pat has asked that all questions about national programming or about the Pacifica network in general *from members of the media*, however, should be directed to me or her for now. It may make sense to also designate one or two board members -- Jack as chair, Loretta as communications committee chair, perhaps -- as additional national spokespeople.

*While there is nothing in this document that is untrue or incriminating, please do not make and distribute copies to others.*

This document certainly is not the final "word" on answering these questions. Answers may be refined as circumstances changes, and new questions will be included. Please do not hesitate to forward your comments to me at any time so I can incorporate your ideas and edits. I can be reached at (510) 843-0130, ext. 253.

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**Labor Issues:**

**Why did Pacifica management hire a union-busting firm to deal with the unionized workers at WBAI in New York?**

Pacifica remains a pro-union, pro-worker organization. We have never sought to "bust a union." In fact, we welcome organized labor, and have devoted countless hours of on-air programming about the struggle of union and working people.

Recognizing that we lacked the in-house expertise in some aspects of labor law, Pacifica retained the services of American Consulting Group in 1995 to be available by phone to advise us. We paid them \$1,000 for their assistance. To our chagrin, we then heard allegations that the firm had participated in some anti-union activities in its history. To this day, we have been unable to verify these allegations. Still, we cancelled their contract because we value our reputation as pro-union and pro-worker.

We continue to negotiate in good faith with our New York employees to arrive at a fair contract for all parties.

**Why is Pacifica trying to exclude 90 percent of your New York work force from the union?**

Everyone in the Pacifica family must have a role in shaping the organization and their position in it. As a matter of justice, however, we feel uncomfortable with volunteers who do not make their living at WBAI bargaining

for the wages and working conditions of the people who do. Other mechanisms outside the formal bargaining unit of paid employees must be found to communicate the concerns of volunteers.

The National Labor Relations Board is now reviewing this case at the national level, and it would be improper for me to comment further about it until a final ruling has been made.

Now that the New York labor review board found against you, will you be acknowledging the volunteers at WBAI as full members of the union?

The decision by the regional board is under appeal. The National Labor Relations Board is now reviewing this case at the national level, and it would be improper for me to comment further about it until a final ruling has been made.

Why are you trying to gag some of your affiliates and prevent them from telling listeners about your conflict with unionized workers in New York?

Pacifica is not trying to gag anyone. We have no ability, legal or otherwise, to prevent an affiliate or subscriber station from airing a commentary or program. We also have no desire to do so.

Three community radio subscribers to Pacifica national programs have aired so-called "disclaimer" notices before and after the *Pacifica National News*, suggesting that Pacifica is engaged in union-busting. This is a false suggestion, of course, and Pacifica has asked these few affiliates to stop airing them on those grounds. We have no plans to withdraw Pacifica national programming for these stations. Other subscriber stations and affiliates were approached about airing the disclaimers and declined, arguing that such action was misleading and undermined the legitimacy of their programming.

*Governance:*

Why are you reducing the number of seats on Pacifica's board of directors for local advisory board members?

*[Before release of strategic plan:]* Aspects of the strategic plan dealing with governance issues have not been approved and are still flux. We'll be happy to comment after things are finalized.

*[After release of strategic plan:]* The number of board directors from our five station areas remains unchanged. In fact, two-thirds of our board are required to reside in our five station areas -- reaffirming our commitment to remain close to the needs of grassroots community radio. One-third of our board will be elected at-large.

Of those directors from our five areas, half of them will be elected from local advisory boards, and half will be elected by the board.

These refinements were made to create a healthy balance of interests between local and "big picture" perspectives. The board, after all, is charged with the responsibility of guiding the entire network. We think we've hit the right balance to guarantee a voice for everyone.

Also, many board directors were being asked to do "double-duty," serving both on the national Pacifica national governing board and on the board of the local station. The result has been less involvement by board directors in a time when we needed more. These changes should help relieve the burden felt by some board directors while making room for new directors with fresh energy.

Why didn't you just add five signal area members to the Board -- instead of subtracting Local Advisory Board representatives?

