



# The Boston Newspaper Guild

## TNG-CWA Local 31245

June 10, 2009

Mr. Arthur Sulzberger, Chairman  
New York Times Company  
620 Eighth Avenue  
New York, NY 10018

Dear Mr. Sulzberger:

We are writing in response to published reports that the *New York Times* Company is taking steps to sell *The Boston Globe*, including preparing to take bids from potential buyers as early as the next few weeks. The Boston Newspaper Guild well understands the financial challenges facing the industry. Nonetheless, we believe that it is our obligation to remind the company that it is the core product of journalism and sales professionalism that provides the marketable value of *The Boston Globe*.

Over decades, members of The Boston Newspaper Guild – reporters, critics, and editors – have won the awards, such as the Pulitzer Prize, that afford the newspaper the prestige it continues to enjoy. Without the important work done on stories like those focused on clergy sexual abuse in the Catholic Church or on President Bush’s signing statements, *The Boston Globe* would not be recognized as one of the premiere investigative newspapers in the United States.

Furthermore, it has been through the efforts of those in the *Boston Globe*’s sales and advertising department – also members of the Boston Newspaper Guild – that The Globe remained extremely profitable throughout most of its history. The sales department cultivated advertisers for both the print and the online edition of the paper, helping to transition the company to the new world of online media. Without their hard work, the Globe could not have become the premiere venue for advertisers in New England and beyond. While we all recognize that the industry’s changing dynamics and the current economic downturn has impacted the company’s revenue, the profits that the *New York Times* enjoyed for most of its tenure as owners of *The Boston Globe* would not have existed without Guild members.

The efforts of our brothers and sisters in the other unions that service *The Boston Globe* are critical to the successful operation of the newspaper and our members respect their work. However, Guild members represent the core of the news operations for the Globe and, as such, are also critical to the sustainability and viability of the paper going forward. Without their labor, *The Boston Globe* is without value to a new owner.

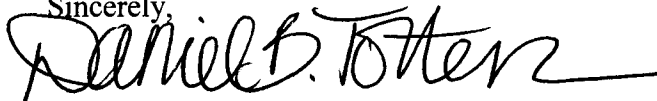
For the Times Company to be in a position of strength with regard to selling *The Boston Globe*, it will have to reach a fair agreement with the Boston Newspaper Guild, one that foregoes the punitive action of cutting the wages of members by 23 percent. This will diminish the value of the paper by forcing the very best workers to go elsewhere.

While the *New York Times* has often advanced the editorial position that companies should treat their workers with fairness, we do not believe that this process has reflected such a belief. Globe workers have suffered through four years of wage freezes, which has already provided savings for the *New York Times* Company, while temporary pay cuts for management have only been instituted in the past few months. Furthermore, the Times Company has been unwilling to give straightforward information to the Guild regarding the financial state of the company, stating that *The Boston Globe* will lose \$85 million this year without providing credible substantiation for that claim and including in that number inappropriate items, such as severance.

In your recent letter to Globe reporters, you stated that “the Guild's bargaining posture made” the task of finding the necessary cuts without imposing a wage cut “impossible” and that “we are now left with no alternative other than to proceed with the wage reduction.” The truth is that the New York Times/Boston Globe’s negotiators, from the beginning of this process, sought to employ bullying tactics, including threatening to close the paper before even coming to the bargaining table. The overall nature of the final proposal was so onerous that the Guild’s bargaining committee did not feel that such an offer could be endorsed. And the reality is that the Times Company does have alternatives rather than imposing a wage cut that will hurt families – they can return to negotiations and agree to third-party mediation, where we can achieve an agreement that treats Globe workers fairly.

Therefore, we reiterate our call for the *New York Times* Company to return to negotiations with the Boston Newspaper Guild and to enter into third-party mediation with our leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel B. Totten". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Daniel B. Totten, President  
The Boston Newspaper Guild  
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