PRESS RELEASE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE, INC.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Inc. strenuously opposes the agreement entered into this day between the General Services Administration and the Bell System which finds the Bell System to be in compliance nationally with the Department of Labor's revised order No. 4 and endorses the contractor's nationwide and affirmative action plan.

In view of the massive record made by the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission against the Bell System in hearings this past year before the Federal Communications Commission revealing that the nation's largest private employer has engaged and continues to engage in pervasive patterns of discrimination against blacks, Spanish-speaking Americans, and women, the hollowness of the corrective measures agreed to by the General Service Administration can only be interpreted as yet another signal from the present Administration that it is not seriously committed to implementing the national policy to end discrimination in employment.

The agreement's major weakness is that it fails to identify and provide relief for any persons who have been aggrieved by
the Bell Systems discriminatory practices. GSA has ignored §60-2.1 of revised Order No. 4, where the Department of Labor specifically requires all government agencies to extract such class relief for all previous victims of a contractor's discriminatory practices. Therefore, despite the requirements of §60-2.1 of Order No. 4, blacks and females who have been restricted to lower paying jobs in the Bell System will not under the agreement receive any back-pay. In addition, the agreement leaves standing the Bell System's discriminatory wage transfer policy which prohibits employee wages when transferring from increasing above a nominal percentage above the employee's prior wage in his or her former job. The result of this system is that the employees traditionally assigned to the lowest paying jobs -- namely blacks and females -- will continue to suffer wage discrimination when transferring to the new job made available to them under the agreement, whereas white and male employees transferring to these same jobs will receive higher wages for the same work.

The agreement also stifles transfer opportunities for blacks and females by failing to include any provisions for advanced entry into jobs. Even though the EEOC has uncovered evidence that white males were in some companies were hired off the street without previous experience into the better paying jobs and were allowed to skip the lower paying, entry jobs, today's agreement
fails to create such advanced entry opportunities for blacks, and females.

While the agreement prescribes various goals and timetables for the Bell System with respect to the hiring of blacks and females, some of the goals are totally inadequate. Under the agreement the Bell System is committed nationally to improving the composition of minority new hires by a figure of one and one half times the minority composition of the relevant labor market. Therefore in those areas of the country where the Bell System has its worst record with respect to the hiring of blacks, in the South, and Southwestern United States, additional affirmative action efforts are not required. The telephone companies in those areas will merely have to creep into compliance with the law. Furthermore the 10% hiring goal for the number of women working in outside craft jobs is totally unjustified in a work force where females occupy close to 40% of the Labor market. Similarly, the commitment to a 5% goal for its number of male operators is equally unjustifiable.

The complete disregard of the agreement for the requirement of the federal equal employment law is further evidenced by the failure of the GSA to eliminate or even alter the Bell System's employment tests which are perhaps the single greatest impediment for employment and advancement of blacks at the Bell System. This approval of the company's affirmative action plan without first establishing the validity of the Bell System employment tests.
which have been shown by the EEOC to have a discriminatory impact upon blacks is in complete disregard of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Revised Order No. 4 and the Supreme Court's recent decision in *Griggs v. Duke Power*.

Further questions concerning the inadequacies of the agreement, may be directed to NAACP counsel, at 1712 N. St., N.W., Washington, D.C., telephone number 202-333-9070.