

# LOCAL 88 NIXIES

APRIL 1970

VOL. 5

## STATE NEWS

Time is drawing real close for the State Convention in Grand Forks (April 17, 18, and 19th). I am sure the Grand Forks Local's are going to lay out the red carpet for us.

Don Dunn, Executive Vice President is attending from the National Office so I am sure we will have lots of questions to ask him concerning the pay raise and also the strike situation.

Sen. Burdick, Rep. Andrews, and Rep. Kleppe will be attending the banquet. S. Dak. State Pres. Dave Hanson and Vice Pres. Ken Finney and also Minn. State Pres. Donald Dywer will be attending our convention.

Even if you are not a delegate to the convention, drive up to Grand Forks and join us on Sat. night, April 18th, for the banquet and dance. I am sure you will have an enjoyable evening.

By the time this article comes out we will probably know something more about the pay raise but as of now they are still arguing in committees, but the word is out that they are negotiating in a business-like manner.

I would like to announce that I will not be running for reelection this year. I have served my two years in office and I think it is time for someone else to take over the job.

SEE YOU IN GRAND FORKS APRIL 17th, 18th, and 19th.

## THE STATE OF OUR UNION

A number of members of Local 88 became concerned when they read the article regarding union dues in the March issue by Patrick Nilan. Many became defensive that their dues were to be raised. In the first place, no one except the membership can increase your dues. It must be placed on the ballot in March for action by the membership. I would like to point out here that we only received fifty per cent of the ballots back this past election.

Your local officers have no plans to even ask for an increase in in union dues at the present time. The dues structure for Local 88 is adequate at the present time. Should the state and national per capita tax be increased a measurable amount it could be a possibility that some small increase in dues would be advisable in the years to come.

For those members who are always asking, What do I get for my union dues? I wish to emphasize a point that Mr. Nilan brought out. When I came into the Post Office about 13 years ago our dues were about \$2.00 a month. They now stand at \$3.50 per month, or they have increased a matter of \$15.00 a year. Your salary has increased about 45% in just the past 10 years. The only reason for those advances are the fact that there has been ever-increasing union activity during this period. This was partly brought on by the 5 vetoes in 8 years of the Eisenhower-Nixon administration. Another increase in union members active participation could spell even greater success and hopefully forstall another wave of vetoes by the Nixon administration.

As difficult as it has been to get pay legislation through congress, it will even be more difficulty if we should find ourselves at a bargaining table without the tools that union in the private sector have at their disposal. We could very well be fighting for our very existance in the months to come. So when the national officers urge us to write letters concerning certain legislation, let's be sure each and every one of us gets busy and gets those letters in to our elected congressmen and senators. Our officials in Washington write favorable legislation and get it introduced into congress, it is our job to see to it that we convince enough members to get favorable action in each house.

THEY HAD PLENTY OF WARNING  
Pat Detwiller

By now we all know that we made history by being the first organized group to strike against the Government. I will not agree that this is the entire answer, however, there was nothing left for us to do. We could not pay our bills with promises -- and when our President came right out and said he would veto the pay bill till 1979--that's the straw that broke the camel's back. It was very gratifying to hear that most of the strikes were not started by members of the United Federation of Postal Clerks, however, it was also very rewarding to hear that the clerks did not cross the picket lines set up by our brother Carriers. We can be very proud that most of our members controlled their emotions and stood 100% behind their National Officers, it would have been tragic if we would have disregarded our National Officers and went out on a scattered strike of our own, if nothing else we certainly proved that the Postal Employees are well organized and it is further proof that it is the numbers that count. I can't for the life of me, figure out why someone does not want to belong to the Union, this walkout would of been a total failure if it wasn't organized and most likely those individuals that tried something on their own would have lost their jobs.

As this newsletter goes to press the news sounds very enlightning. The latest news from Washington states that we will receive a 6% increase retroactive to last December 27, 1969, than an additional 8% this coming July, also we are to reach our top grade in 8 years instead of the 21 years previous. Also Complete Amnesty for all Postal Workers who participated in the recent strike. If these items become a reality, it will be the greatest raise we

ever got at one time and we must thank our National and Local Officers who stuck to their guns and stayed with the real issues at the bargaining table.

I have made a point of it to feel out the general public in regard to the work stoppage; it was very gratifying to hear that a very large percent of the people in this area were very sympathetic with us. I have talked to some in the churches, cafes, at the stamp window and in the bars and even though this is not a union town, I found out that the public was very much behind us. The local newspaper printed a few stories that left some of us discouraged, and the story that hurt the most was a reprint from a Washington, D. C. newspaperwoman that referred to just how many people were waiting for Post Office jobs in these large cities, the figures used were in the thousands, Truthfully, the large cities are begging for qualified help. The recent issue of Time Magazine claims that there are 900 vacant jobs in the Post Office in New York at the present time; also that there is a turnover of 23% of personnel. Brothers, that is almost one out of four employees that quit their jobs so how in the world can there be any moral left in the Postal Service?

At the present time, we do not know just what the "Reform Package" will consist of. I believe that we will soon hear more about it, but I think that one item that was negotiated a great deal was the idea of having a Labor Representative on the committee. Up to this time, the "Reform Package" consisted of about nine men, almost all of these men were somehow appointed by the President, and to me that is Politics all over again. We all agree that some change must be made, but we must have a Labor Representative on that Committee or else many of the things we have fought for over the years will be gone. I predict that we will see the "strike" clause in the new reform bill; also a much improved grievance procedure; and also binding arbitration.

I believe that most of the members of The United Federation of Postal Clerks hope that they never have to use this "Work Stoppage" again. We had no choice this time as the Government had plenty of warning way back to the fall of 1968 when there was a small slowdown in New York and Chicago, they should of saw the light then, however, Congress seemed blind and they were much more concerned about Foreign Aid, Vietnam and going to the Moon than they were in getting some of their local problems solved. I don't believe that there are very many people that feel sorry for Congress in regards to this Air Controllers "Sick-In" as they proved just a short six months ago that they could tie up the country from Coast to Coast. That should have been a warning, however, nothing was done about that either till now and they want to make us believe it is a National Tragedy, my feelings are with the Air Controllers 100%. I hate to see different segments of the Government walking out, it could include the Soldiers, Police, FBI, etc., and no one knows where it would end. I know that Congress has certainly saw the light and I ONLY HOPE AND pray that they spend much more time on problems that are right before their eyes. We all know that the mail reaches almost every person in the United States and when it was missing for a few days, it gave everyone time to think a little. There was no one really hurt by the stoppage and I am sure that we proved a point. SIGN THAT NON-MEMBR UP NOW -----

## WHO'S GIVING WHO THE RUN AROUND

By F. F. Fehrenbach President Local 88

Ever since mid-December we have heard a lot about a Postal Authority and package pay deals. Also since about that time, a running battle seems to be going on between the two largest postal unions. Up to this point, I have refrained from taking a stand, but believe it is now time to speak out. After studying this matter from every angle available, I must come to the conclusion that Mr. Rademacher is basically at fault for the breakdown of the United front of all postal unions.

On December 17, 1969, Congressman Udall proposed a package deal verbally that sounded like the administration was going to offer the unions everything we wanted. However, on December 19, 1969, another meeting was held with the Presidential spokesmen. Here the picture was not quite so rosy, although as yet no actual bill was presented. Our national officers were asked to endorse the provisions of a bill before the bill was written. Finally on about December 22, 1969, a committee print was made available. This print that NALC President Rademacher wanted everyone to agree to contained none of these features. No compression of pay steps, no July pay increase, no Civil Service protection, no Union Recognition by law.

Many meetings and many letters a new print came out about mid-March, 1970 which did include a 2-step pay increase, guaranteed Civil Service status and retirement. It did not provide comparability at any further date. We could negotiate with a Postal Authority for compression of steps. But, how can we effectively negotiate when we have no recognition by law, no right to strike, and no unilateral arbitration procedure. We'd receive about as much through negotiation under these procedures as a slave would have negotiating with his master 2000 years ago.

In one of Mr. Rademacher's letters to his branch President, he says the UFPC is willing to trade away a pay raise for no return. I believe it's the other way around. Available information would indicate the Postal Authority package deal has one meager 5.4% pay increase with the provisions of negotiating for additional pay increases. Again negotiate with what?

H. R. 1300 as passed by the Senate would have provided for 7% in 2 steps. A compromise with the House passed bill would have provided something higher.

Mr. Rademacher accuses the UFPC of reneging on agreements reached among the seven exclusives. Six of those unions, including the UFPC, are still united in their efforts to support all of the agreements voluntarily entered into.

Mr. Rademacher acting as spokesman, for all seven exclusives, at a dinner meeting February 16, informed Chairman Dulke, "You are the Chairman--you write whatever postal reform you want and we will support it."

Chairman Dulski made his decision on February 26 and announced that he would mark up his postal reform bill H. R. 4 and insist on action by the House Senate conferees on H. R. 1300. Mr. Rademacher immediately went on TV and denounced the Chairman and threatened a

strike of the letter carriers. He also publicly blamed the UFPC as being responsible for the Chairman's statements.

A question I should like to have answered is why is Mr. Rademacher suddenly supporting legislation he has a mandate to oppose as provided by the NALC convention in 1968.

I therefore ask each and every member of Local 88 to start a letter writing campaign to their congressmen. Urge them to support the legislation as sponsored by the United Federation of Postal Clerks and the other five exclusives.

It would appear that the well-planned strategy as laid down by the Administration forces has paid off. It would appear that they came to the conclusion that as long as the postal unions were working in harmony they would be too strong to defeat. The question before the Administration then was how do we drive a wedge between these forces. Sure we will meet with only the President of one of the large unions and we can verbally promise him anything. He will proclaim a great victory to the remaining organizations and when they have doubts about the sincerity of these offers he will naturally insist that these offers were made. When the offers actually come out on paper, they are, of course, not anywhere as good as first reported and the seeds of mistrust have been planted. It would appear Mr. Rademacher has surely walked right into a well-oiled trap which the Administration has set for him.

It sure seems strange that the NALC President would suddenly support an Administration sponsored package deal. This same administration clearly admits that postal employees deserve a raise, based on comparability figures twelve months old. This fair-minded administration then asks that this overdue raise should yet be deferred another six months.

While I don't have the information of what is contained in the latest package bill, I can't help but believe that postal employees are again going to suffer in the end. The action taken by Mr. Rademacher has helped a hostile Administration get legislation sponsored that will in the end crippled the employee unions.

Much has been said about strikes and the right to strike in Federal employment. The railroad unions do have the right to strike. In recent years, however, they have been unable to exercise that right. It is very unlikely that it would be much different with us if we did have the right to strike. This matter should rightfully be settled in the courts as to the constitutionality of the no strike clause we are now required to sign. The fact that we could have the threat of a strike would give our organization leverage at a bargaining table. The right to ask and receive third party binding arbitration is of much more importance, and certainly a must if we are going to negotiate effectively. A hostile administration isn't really concerned with giving the unions a vehicle by which we can bargain effectively. Blount surely isn't going to sponsor or agree to anything favoring unions and I refer you to page four of the March postal clerks magazine. Don't fail to read the entire section. Have the wife read it too. For that matter, anyone else you can interest in reading it too. Don't be afraid to ask your friends for help, but you must be the one to inform him of the true facts.

## I Plead Innocent

by Ed Mayer, Financial Sec.

Well, another election has come and gone and seeing that you have enough confidence in me to have elected me again, I'll do my best to keep us out of the red.

With the Postal Work stoppage, the checks from the National were a little slow in getting back to us. Even so, our account now rests on the \$500.00 mark.

The Local paid out \$75.00 recently for new members, most of this went to our worthy President F. F. Fehrenbach--Congratulations-- we must keep trying to sign up those new members, as you know that we have lost some members over to the carrier craft, let's get on the ball and sign up these new subs, especially the Gals. Remember it is worth one month's dues for each new member signed up.

We also made contributions of \$119.00 for sick members and memorials last year. I PLEAD INNOCENT if some member was missed. I would guess that there were cases when a member was missed, there is a committee that this is supposed to be reported to and they in turn notify me and I will get the contribution out as fast as possible, so it is up to all of you to see that this little project is carried out.

The tickets that Grand Forks sent us to sell for their Convention fund didn't get too much response here. Which goes to show that if you need money, don't expect someone else to get it for you.

Tour 3 News

Harvey Lien

At this time I would like to notify all the clerks on this tour that I will no longer be your Chief Steward for the Union as I am going over to the day side (Tour 2) on the results of the last bidding. I am sure that by the time this paper comes out, more bids will be posted.

Before I leave this tour, I would like to thank you for your support and understanding in the many problems that we have had with management. I enjoyed working with you guys and I am sorry that I was not able to do more for you. I would like to make one suggestion to all the clerks that they meet and introduce themselves to all the new Subs and also urge them to join the Union so that the new chief steward may handle any troubles that may arise for them. The other clerks on Tour 1 and Tour 2 hardly ever see any of the subs so it is up to you clerks on this tour to make them feel welcome in the Post Office and help them with their problems that come when you start any new job.

For all the new members on this tour, Cy Wilson is your Hospital Plan representative for the UFPC plan. Ed Skelbar is your representative for the Benefit Association. Cy and Ed both happen to be on your tour.

Saturday, April 4, was a big day for the three top subs as they became regulars. They are Harold Johnson, Fred Doxey and James Schlenker.

## HIGH COST OF HEALTH INSURANCE

by Cy Wilson, Hospital Rep.

I'm sure all of you who have had any experience with hospitals lately realize how rates are sky-rocketing. Twenty years ago we had 1/4 as many beds available in FM hospitals and the cost per day for a semi-private room was between three and five dollars per day. The best private rooms were about seven dollars per day.

Although the area served by these hospitals has held stable or if anything decreased in population, yet today with about the same population and four times as many hospital beds available, they are always full. Sometimes it is necessary to put patients in the aisles. This is in spite of the fact a semi-private room costs 33 dollars per day (the last time I checked was about a month ago, they may be more now). This fact leads me to believe many people are taking advantage of hospital care that isn't necessary. Apparently the feeling is its free, my insurance will pay it. But is it free? Rates are constantly being raised to cover the added costs and we all must pay them even if we never see a hospital. The average cost per day in a Fargo hospital is about \$60.00 not counting the doctors fee.

One thing we can all do to help keep our costs down is not to "pressure" your doctor into admitting you or one of your family unless HE feels hospitalization is indicated. Then of course there should be no question about it; that's what our insurance is all about.

Many times the patient would be as well or better off at home and both Fargo Clinic's are well-equipped and staffed for minor surgery and nearly all diagnostic work.

I feel that hospitals are the real "villians" in rising insurance premiums but on the other side of the coin, we are indeed fortunate to have such fine well-equipped hospitals available.

The average doctor has only increased his office calls about one dollar in the last twenty years. Five dollars is about average for a non-specialist. It costs more than twice that much for a plumber call, even if he just says hello. Specialists have raised their office calls to about 8 or 10 dollars, so I don't see how we can fault our doctors. Surgeons--well that's something else.

One thing more, probably the most important thing we can do to reduce our costs is to contact our congressmen and ask their support of legislation now in the committee's of both houses. The bill now being considered in the Senate is S-1772 and in the House HR-767.

Anyone needing assistance or information in regard to filing a claim may contact me either at work (please no phone calls at work unless it is an emergency). You are welcome to call me at home 235-5871. Insurance forms are available in locker #38.

## Happenings From The Auxillary

Mrs. Charles Simonson

Spring is officially here and it is time to look for new ideas and make new friends. We will be calling to invite all the new members Wives of the Federation to our next meeting. It will be on April 9, 1970, at 8 P.M. at the home of Mrs. Helen Streed. The address is 1001 South Drive, Fargo, North Dakota. Everyone is welcome. If you don't wish to come alone, call a friend and ask them to come with you.

The State Convention is coming up fast and everyone is busy making plans and getting ready for a busy three days. It will be held up at Grand Forks, North Dakota, this year on April 17, 18, and 19. If you can't make it for the entire Convention, why not drive up there on Saturday night and take in the Banquet and the speeches, they should be extra interesting this year with all the action that has taken place in Washington, D. C. the past few weeks. Remember our National Officers and some Congressmen will be there.

Well, that's all the news for now. We plan on being pretty busy for the next two months. If you have any questions about our organization, please feel free to call me.

Party Time  
Pat Detwiller

The third annual "Coffee-Fund" party is now history, it was held at the Bowler the first week in February and as usual there were complaints. We knew that the party this year would have to be somewhat abbreviated from the one held in 1969 as there was less money in the treasury due to the wiring of the Vending Machine room and due to the cost of the Piped-In Music. The Vending Machines seem to be getting a very good play now and I am sure that the treasury will be building up at a faster pace. I believe that plans should be made right now for next year's party as music groups are getting harder to get and are booked up quite full, we would surely like to have some volunteers to serve on that committee. We may plan another card party sometime after the Convention, maybe around the first of May. We would like a few ideas on that, too, the last one held was a little disappointing as there were more guests than members, however, they all had a good time and we were able to show a profit for the Auxillary and for the Local. There also was some talk of a Stag Night for the members---- come on now, let's have some volunteers to get some of these things rolling, with the membership that we have we certainly should have more Social Life than we do----let's hear your views.