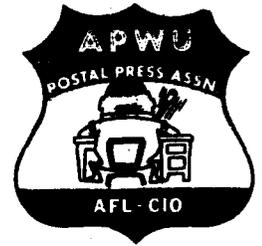




FARGO TOUR GUIDE



Local 88 Box 1874
Fargo, N. Dak. 58107

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FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA

FALL 1998

FARGO WINS NATIONAL GRIEVANCE FOR MAIL PROCESSORS!!!

By John Durham

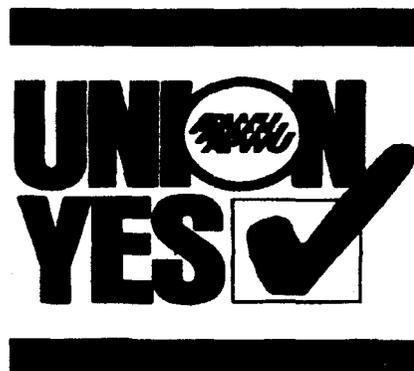
On August 13, 1998 our office received a 12-page fax from APWU HQ in Washington D.C. This document was the arbitration decision we have all been waiting for, and it was definitely worth the wait. The Arbitrator granted our grievance in full, stating that "All grievances shall be made whole, since the filing of this grievance." Since the grievance was initiated by our very own Jeremy Cahill back in 1987, that means 11 years of back pay is in order! (So much for Fargo management's "Operating expenses goals" for this year.) Level 4 mail processors will now be reidentified as level 5, OCR operators.

In ruling in our favor, Arbitrator Mittenenthal outlines the position of both parties, giving a bit of history for reference. The APWU's position was that the mail processors have always performed the duties of the old OCR operator, PS-05. This position is not what we know it today, but rather a position that involved operating an older, larger OCR machine that required 7 people to operate (5 sweepers, 1 loader/prepper, 1 feeder). This OCR operator, PS 05, was responsible for, among other things, dispatching the mail according to dispatch schedules, riffling mail for non-machinable items, verifying mail for specific programs.

As the USPS introduced our current OCR, BCS machines in the 1980s, the Postal Service created the mail processor, PS-04. This new position was downgraded, because the Postal

Service claimed that these employees would not have to function as the old OCR operators. Fortunately, we were able to prove them wrong. I have made a few extra copies of the award if you'd like to read the full document. Please return it for others to read, however, as copies are limited.

As far as back pay and adjustments, the Fargo APWU (myself and Jeremy) is working with our national business agents as I write this article to work out all the details of the award. Please watch your bulletin boards closely, as I'll post updates there as more facts become available. We will also be updating the membership each month at the local union meetings until all is settled, so now is a good time to start attending your union meetings. (Hint! Hint!)



APWU PRESIDENT BILLER OPENS CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

By Moe Biller-APWU President

On behalf of the 360,000 members of the American postal Workers Union, ALF-CIO--whom I am honored to represent here today--I want to once again congratulate you, Mr. Henderson, on your appointment as the 71st Postmaster General of the United States.

You have been given the great honor of heading the United States Postal Service--the biggest, best, most productive, with highest customer value, service in the world. You have been chosen to lead our proud institution into the 21st Century, and we--the leaders and members of the APWU--will continue doing our best to provide reliable, quality service to our customers, the American public.

American's postal workers have helped build the fastest, least expensive, most efficient Postal Service in the world. In March of this year, the distinguished Pew Research Center for the People and the Press did a survey that found that the American public ranks the U.S. Postal Service Number One among all governmental agencies. They gave us an 90-percent approval rating.

Moreover, for three straight years, the Postal Service has achieved record, billion-dollar-plus budget surpluses.

How did such a great achievement come about? It happened because, through our hard work and dedication, postal workers made it happen! We moved record volumes of mail. We provided improved service to the public. At the same time, we helped you keep rates low.

Now, in these negotiations, we are seeking a fair reward for the workers we represent. We will be seeking fair wage increases for America's postal workers.

We also want to see an end to the contracting-out of core postal work--and our jobs--to profit-seeking companies who charge you more to do our work, who can't maintain our own high quality service standards, and who always put the bottom line ahead of their care for the customer. (I can think of no better recent example of this than the Postal Service's ill-advised decision to turn over our flagship product--Priority Mail--to Emery Worldwide Airlines.)

A third key priority for APWU in these talks is our goal of winning true dignity and respect on the job for all postal employees. On this last point, I was pleased to read in a recent interview you gave that you said, "I'm going to treat everyone with dignity and respect, and I'm going to expect everyone to do the same." I hope this message gets to every manager at every level, especially to those down on the workroom floor.

I was also pleased to read your opinion that, "relationships with the labor unions will be built on better dialogue and greater information sharing." Better still, you have been quoted in many interviews as viewing as "vital" the achievement of negotiated agreements in this year's contract talks.

We couldn't agree more, and we will do all we can to help you achieve your stated goal of a negotiated agreement. As you probably know, I often remind our members and the public that we have not had a negotiated agreement--one we could recommend to our membership for ratification--since 1987. That is truly a shame. It has benefited neither the USPS nor the rank-and-file workers.

We have come here today to begin what we hope will be a productive round of good-faith negotiations. We truly want to achieve a collective-bargaining agreement that is fair to the workers, fair to the Postal Service and fair to our customers.

Let me make it clear that we have no interest in concessionary bargaining. I can categorically assure you that no contract that calls on our members to suffer continued downgrading in their living standards and working conditions will ever be accepted, either in a ratification vote or, as a practical matter, on a day-to-day basis on the workroom floor. A fair contract, on the other hand, will go a long way towards improving every aspect of postal operations.

As you said in a recent interview, "These talks give us the opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to working together as a team to forge our future."

Let us not squander this great opportunity. Let us use these talks to try and improve the postal labor-management climate and to create a better postal working environment for the 21st Century.

AUNTIE UNION SAYS:



FARGO APWU GOES TO NATIONAL CONVENTION

By John Durham

July 20-24, 1998, I attended the APWU National Convention, held in Detroit, Michigan. We covered a great deal of ground, acting on almost 300 resolutions. Some of the resolution highlights include:

- Substantial pay increase
- Return of sick leave credit towards retirement
- Payment for overtime violations, no make-up
- Use of seniority for transfers
- Elimination of "Best Qualified" positions
- Option to sell back annual leave

I anticipate a successful contract this time, as National Contract Negotiations officially start on August 25, 1998. The delegates at National Convention passed numerous resolutions to arm our national negotiation team. Statements that I got from our national officers was that of excitement and optimism that we will reach a good settlement before our current contract expires on November 20, 1998.

Speaking of negotiations, I would like to take this time to request from you any suggestions or ideas for our local negotiations.

Our local negotiations could start as early as this January. I need to start preparing for this important event.

Some items that may be negotiated locally are:

- Annual leave % (Amount that may be off)
- Procedures for annual leave selections (state times, cut-off date....)

- Overtime procedures
- Procedures for Acts of God (Storms, floods...)
- Other items that may be locally negotiated

If you have any suggestions or ideas, please submit them in writing to:

Fargo Area Local APWU
PO Box 1874
Fargo, ND 58107

Please include your name, so I can contact you for further details or clarification.

That's all for now. Keep smiling, and don't let anyone give you the shaft-ola!



"You don't need a union -- my door is always open!"

POSTAL CUSTOMER: WHAT POSTAL PRIVATIZATION WOULD MEAN TO YOU.

Some people want to sell off pieces of the US Postal Service to private companies. If you're wondering how that would affect you, consider the following:

Postal Stamp Prices. You might hear the "privatizers" claim they can provide mail service more cheaply than the US Postal Service. It's true that, occasionally, the Postal Service has to increase the price of stamps to keep up with postal costs. But stamp prices have stayed within the rate of inflation--and remember, the Postal Service is self-funded--it doesn't use any taxpayer money to supplement its income.

Universal Mail Service. The truth is, no one really knows how much it would cost to mail a letter if it were done by private companies. It would probably depend on how far your letter is going. Right now, you can mail a letter anywhere--within the same town or from Florida to Alaska or Hawaii to New York--for the same 32 cents.

Rural and Inner-City Delivery. If you live in a rural area, it wouldn't be profitable for a company to offer you service unless they charged a very high fee; and private companies may be unwilling to operate in inner-city areas. Because the Postal Service doesn't have to turn a profit, just break even, it can provide service to every community in America.

The Security of your Mail. If the Postal Service is privatized, there could be dozens of private companies, so your letter might be handled by several different businesses--and who knows how many people would have direct access to your private mail box. If a letter were lost or stolen, who would you turn to for help? Right now, mail fraud is a federal crime. Who will protect you if the Postal Service is no more?

How to Stop Privatization. Postal workers don't want the Postal Service to be privatized; we think it would ruin service for our customers. That's why we're demonstrating today--we want you to know about the threats to your mail service. We must work together to put a stop to the efforts of greedy profiteers who want to skim a profit off your mail service by buying the USPS. Call or write your Congressional representatives in Washington, DC and tell them to act against any attempts at postal outsourcing, contracting out and privatization.

NEWSFLASH

By John Durham

NEW BIRTH? WEDDING? SERIOUS ILLNESS?

If you know any fellow union member that has had one of the above apply to them, please contact a union official or Suze Ament Tour II Custom Service. The Fargo Area Local will send flowers or plants to our members. Most of the time our grapevine works, but occasionally the word doesn't get out until way after the fact. So please help keep us informed of our members' situations.

Suze Ament can be reached M-F during Tour II hours at 241-6100. You may also call President Durham at home (218) 736-5903.

DID YOU KNOW???

Article 10 of our national contract states, "employees becoming ill while on annual leave may have that leave charged to sick leave upon request." Not many employees are aware of this entitlement. As a result, many supervisors are also unaware of this and may attempt to deny this type of request.

I encourage every employee to take full advantage of this benefit should the situation arise. By not utilizing this entitlement, it may be used as a "throw away" item for management during negotiations. The argument that we, "don't use it anyways" could be used, and we could lose this often forgotten benefit.

FORCED OVERTIME?

If you have been forced to work overtime, there are provisions in the contract that allow you to be excused. Article 8, Section 5 of the National Agreement states that anniversaries, birthdays, illness, and deaths are examples of situation sin which management may excuse you from working overtime. This must be requested by the employee, and should be discussed with management as soon as possible.

In addition, the National Agreement also states in Article 8 that no full-time regular employee will be required to work penalty overtime as long as there is sufficient volunteers available. So you should never be forced to work penalty overtime as long as there is someone else who is willing, available, and qualified to work the needed penalty overtime.

FARGO APWU MEMBERSHIP AT ALL-TIME HIGH!!!!

The Fargo Area Local APWU has hit an all-time high in membership, which now stands at 212 members. This increase is due to a rise in hired employees, higher number of dedicated employees, and an increase of errors and wrongdoings by management that has affected too many decent workers. As a result of the numerous overtime violations and errors on the annual leave calendars, we have seen a record number of employees join the APWU.

We still have a small number of non-members. Hopefully in time these employees will join us in the continuing efforts by the APWU to maintain our current standards of wages, benefits, and working conditions. With an increase of membership we can only increase our overall chances of success. Thank you to all members of the APWU!!!!

APWU WINS GRIEVANCE ON NIXON DAY OF MOURNING

In a recent national level award, Arbitrator Shyam Das sustained the APWU's grievance, granting administrative leave to employees who were non-scheduled or on leave for any reason on Wednesday, April 27, 1994, the Nixon Day of Mourning.

This case revolved around President Clinton's Executive Order which closed the federal government on the day Nixon was buried. Postmaster General Runyon issued an announcement which stated that the USPS would suspend regular mail service and administrative leave was granted. However, those employees who were off that day did not receive administrative leave.

The arbitrator ruled that the appropriate remedy for this issue would be Postal Service to grant the equivalent benefit to those employees who were denied the administrative leave. The issues relating to the implementation of this remedy were remanded to the parties.

LET'S GET ORGANIZED!!!

NATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS MUST BE STREAMLINED AND FOCUSED

By Stephen A Albanese, NBA "B"

Several months ago I wrote an article about the upcoming national negotiations and my opinions that we need to change caused some controversy. That is good because we need to keep talking about our negotiating style of the past.

We have a national convention coming up and I hope this matter is debated on the convention floor. If it is I will again speak out because it is important to do so.

My main concerns were and still are preparing huge books of contract proposals, creating a circus-like environment, and professionalizing our bargaining tactics. Let me address each point briefly.

Submitting dozens, or in some cases hundreds, of proposals on the first day of negotiations is bad for two reasons. First, we only have 90 days to bargain. There is no way to address volumes of proposals in that time frame. Inevitably, we must withdraw the bulk of them, and in doing so, we create a library of unachieved bargaining demands as well as wasting valuable time.

Second, negotiations must be done in private. Having hundreds of observers and toll free hot lines is hardly an environment that produce good negotiations. No one is going to speak with candor if there are hundreds of observers, each of whom will leave the room with their own spin on what was said. Negotiators must have confidence that what they say to each other is a work in progress, subject to change, subject to error, and subject to modification. This honest and private give and take exchange is vital if we are to reach an agreement.

Third, name calling and character assassinations tend to move parties further away and personal insults cause unreasonable positions to harden. The name of the game is reach an agreement, not embarrass the other guy into submission. That worked in a school yard, not at the negotiating table.

Now, I said before we need a lean, mean list of proposals and I mean that. You have to have been in a coma the last three years not to know that subcontracting, rate protection from automation, abuses in the rehab program, and unjustified job reversions are issues we need to formulate proposals on. These items and the wage package should be the focus for the full ninety day period. We should commit ourselves right from the outset to address these issues and have a solid mindset to keep the bargaining focused on these matters. Space does not permit me to address each of these areas in more detail. That will be the subject of my next article.

WHAT ARE WE UP AGAINST IN THIS YEAR'S CONTRACT TALKS?

To place our expectations of the upcoming APWU contract negotiations into the proper perspective, we need only go back to the last sessions in 1994. To refresh our memories, here is a synopsis of what the U.S. Postal Service was seeking and what they likely will seek this time around:

- A 3 year contract (normally they're 4)
- Elimination of COLA's
- Wage freeze for 2 years
- No step increases-frozen in current step
- 3 year study and agreement to change pay structure to eliminate anomalies
- New entry step AA for grades 4, 5, 6, and 7, discounted at 10% below current entry rates
- Night differential to be cut from 10% to a flat 50 cents per hour
- Sunday premium payable only for hours actually worked on Sunday
- Sick leave cut in half from 4 hours to 2 hours per pay period
- Drastic cuts in Annual Leave
- No increase in uniform or work clothes allowances
- Numerous cuts in lump sum payments and no pay increases

It is obvious how management in Washington feels about all the hours and hard work that we all put in to make this by far the best Postal Service on the planet. They try to portray us to the media as lazy, overpaid and unproductive slugs, but we know the truth. It's another contract year, and I suggest we look at it with a bit of guarded optimism.

PPA Reprint



FASTEST GROWING U.S. EXPORT? JOBS?

By Donald Markay

The global economy has had an adverse impact on postal employees. There has always been international trade, however several critical factors converged to cause a rapid impact and major dislocations in many U.S. industries. Containerized shipping, a transistor-computer telecommunications revolution and the attendant mobility of finance capital came together to make it feasible to create industries in less technologically developed, lower wage nations to produce goods for export to the USA.

The manufacturer moving to a low-wage nation to export products to the USA cuts labor costs. I refer to these as "domestic job exporters." (DJE). Proponents argue this helps by reducing prices to the customer. However, the reduction can be small, even non-existent. The DJE can leave prices the same and still retain current market share until other producers follow suit and initiate price cuts. Prices can of course be cut to increase market share. Occasionally, a DJE can combine the production cost cut with great marketing and raise prices. NIKE is a well-known example. However, the prime beneficiary is the company exporting jobs overseas, just as those adversely affected are the employees losing their jobs.

This article will briefly review several problems associated with the massive job dislocation caused by DJE's. The exporting of much of our manufacturing base has been a deliberate process.

LOSING MARKET SHARE TO FOREIGN MANUFACTURERS AND USA JOB EXPORTERS

In numerous industries, U.S. manufacturers lost market share, both in domestic and international sales. After the destruction of so much of the world's industrial plant during WW II, U.S. market share was high. With the rebuilding of Europe and Japan, and other newly industrializing nations, U.S. market share fell. Foreign trade can be viewed in two parts. First, imports from nations whose citizens own the manufacturing plants doing the exporting. Second, imports from factories in low wage nations owned by foreign nationals from high wage nations, including the U.S. The focus here is on domestic job exporting.

WORKING BOTH SIDES OF THE STREET

Politician: (to Joe and Mary Six-pack). Look here what we've done for you. The USA has Social Security, workers' com-

pensation, child labor laws, The National Labor Relations Act, minimum wage, Civil Rights Laws, I and II, American with Disabilities Act, Family Medical Leave Act, Medicare, overtime laws, and to ensure a safe workplace and environment we have the Environmental Protection Agency, the Food and Drug Administration, and OSHA.

Politician: (to manufacturer) If you want to get around all of these taxes and regulations (mandated costs), move your factory overseas and we'll reduce or eliminate tariffs.

Proponents of job exporting policies have never explained why on the one hand they have been voting in new laws which raise the cost of U.S. labor, while not stopping the exportation of our industrial base or in many instances, accelerating its exportation with the recently approved NAFTA. The only explanation is that it has proved good politics for more than two decades; they keep getting re-elected.

Where will it stop? Will it? Are the exports of any US industry hurting our national welfare or national security? Will it be acceptable to contract out the building of tanks, submarines, fighter jets and missiles, to say, China? Why should free labor compete with slave or serf labor? What else but serf labor can one call nations where they have no freedom of speech, of association, for political or labor union purposes? Is the massive dislocation often in one fell swoop of hundreds or thousands of jobs to a serf labor force worth some cheaper consumer goods?

THE GOLDEN YEARS

How has the overall economy fared with the policy of exporting manufacturing jobs? The corporation that exports jobs profits immensely, the workers and their communities suffer terribly. The Post Office provided an average job 30 years ago in comparison to the jobs in manufacturing and service sectors. Postal wages have largely retained their purchasing power while the average wage in manufacturing and service sectors have not. Therefore postal pay is relatively better. Have the lower wage costs resulted in greater US economic growth?

The Wall Street Journal said it best. "Viewed over a longer historical period, these growth rates fall short of what the U.S. economy proved it could accomplish in the golden age of the 1950's and 1960's...U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth from 1950-1973 averaged 3.9% per year. Since then it has slowed to annual average growth of 2.6%. In the latest Economic Report to the President, Mr. Clinton's advisers predict a further slowing to a long-term trend of 2.4%. Whatever happened to the information revolution, the age of innovation and so on? These differences are anything but trivial. Had the U.S. economy continued to grow at the golden-age average of 3.9% per year,

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FASTEST GROWING U.S. EXPORT? JOBS?

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total GDP would be about 37.5% higher than it is now. Put another way, had we continued with whatever mix of policy brought us annual GDP growth averaging 3.9%, the economy would have generated a GDP of around \$11 trillion instead of \$8 trillion in current dollars, or more than \$40,000 per capita instead of \$30,000." (1)

The domestic U.S. economy in the period 1950-1973, with existing tariffs was a productive economy. The point is that the good labor market, meaning real increasing wages and benefits, did not stop the economy from growing. On the contrary, many economists will argue real wage increases are a necessary part of a self-sustaining cycle of growth in the economy.

Also, income inequality has increased, in particular from the workforce the Postal Service draws from. "Average wages and salaries for men, after adjustment for inflation, are below the levels of the late 1960's. The pressure is most acute on young male workers with only a high school education: Between 1973 and 1993, they lost 30% of their real incomes. An average male high school graduate who was 30 in 1972 saw his earnings decline over the ensuing 20 years (after adjustment for inflation), even as he was growing older and presumably more skilled and experienced."

The writer continues, "Since 1967, higher earners have done far better than lower earners. After peaking in 1973, real annual earnings in the bottom 20% have dropped by 24%, while those in the top 20% have increased by 10%. Inequality of family income, as measured by the Gini ratio, is the highest its been since the Census Bureau began collecting that data in 1947. For a slim sliver at the top, life has been especially pleasant. Business Week reported recently that a CEO's wages and compensation typically are about 105 times those of the average worker in his company; back in 1974, the comparable figure was about 35 times." (2)

However, some view the falling wages of American workers as a good thing. Donald Fites, chairman of Caterpillar, Inc., said in 1991, "There is a narrowing of the gap between the average American's income and that of the Mexicans. As a human being, I think what is going on is positive. I don't think it is realistic for 250 million Americans to control so much of the world's GNP." In 1991 Fites was paid \$2 million yearly. Also at that time, Caterpillar was troubled by unhappy worker bees at Caterpillar's main honeymaking hive in Peoria, Illinois. Apparently this was the company's spin on the worker bees' attempt to keep their share of the honey produced.

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A2 THE WALL STREET JOURNAL WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 2, 1995

MANUFACTURING IN MEXICO...

UNDER THE NEW ERA OF THE NORTH AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

(A Briefing on the Maquiladora Program)

Since 1965, over 2,000 U.S.-owned manufacturing companies have reduced manufacturing costs by as much as 50%—without sacrificing quality—through Mexico's Maquiladora Program.

In just four hours, you can learn how your company can increase profitability by taking advantage of the benefits that the Maquiladora Program provides.

This briefing will explain:

- How Mexico's production sharing industry works.
- How the shelter plan program can help your company establish a Maquiladora without a large capital investment or long-term commitments in Mexico.
- The preferential tariff treatment that NAFTA affords Maquiladora importations into the United States.
- The NAFTA rules of origin.
- The rules and regulations administered by the United States Customs Service that impact on Maquiladora importations into the U.S.

For information, contact BeeBee Sainz:



COLLECTRON
OF ARIZONA, INC.

225 N. Freeport Drive • Nogales, Arizona 85621
Tel: (602) 287-6695 • Fax: (602) 287-5403

Briefing Dates and Locations:

August 22, 1995
Ritz-Carlton
Dearborn, Michigan

August 23, 1995
Nordic Hills Resort
Itasca, Illinois

August 24, 1995
Hyatt Regency
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

FASTEST GROWING U.S. EXPORT? JOBS?

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AUTO IMPORTS BY THE DOMESTIC JOB EXPORTERS

The exporting of jobs by U.S. manufacturers could not be done without the cooperation of U.S. national leadership. The politicians responsible I label "Republicrats." Bipartisanship at work.

Reviewing the financial press one reads of how many manufacturers are pressured by shareholders and competition to reduce costs, improve profits and move manufacturing overseas. Read any commentary in the financial press about the GM strike to verify this. What strikes me is how blithely this is reported. Politicians are urged to continue this process. Apparently there is no sense of community, of loyalty to one's fellow Americans.

Let's look at the Mexican-U.S. trade, post NAFTA. Exports to Mexico have increased from \$41.6 billion in 1993 to \$56.8 billion in 1996. Imports have increased and the U.S. 1993 trade surplus with Mexico became \$16.8 billion deficit in 1996. Its estimated that less than one-sixth of our exports are consumer goods for the Mexican people. A full one-third are factory components. Doubt it? In 1996 we exported 46,652 cars to Mexico as Mexico exported 550,662 to the United States. Mexico's truck exports to the U.S. are six times higher than the U.S. truck exports to Mexico. In 1997 auto and truck exports from Mexico to the U.S.A. hit 800,000 vehicles. The Mexican auto and truck exports to the U.S.A. are expected to exceed 1 million in 1998. These exports were fueled by \$8 billion invested in auto factories and plants in Mexico since the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and another \$8 billion is expected to be invested by 2000.

Throughout the 1960's, General Motors (GM) was the nation's largest employer. Some years ago, both McDonalds and Wal-Mart surpassed GM. More efficient production methods are only one part of the reason for the reduction of auto manufacturing employment in the United States. New York Times writer Sam Dillon reported that "Since 1978, General Motor has built more than 50 parts factories in Mexico, which today employ 72,000 workers, making its parts subsidiary, Delphi Automotive Services, Mexico's largest private employer." He notes that in Matamoros, Mexico, "thousands of Mexican workers earn \$1 to \$2 an hour producing instrument panels and steering wheels for GM cars and trucks."

GM is not the only US carmaker manufacturing vehicles in Mexico for export to the United States. Ford has 11 plants in Mexico and it is expected that Chrysler, now owned by Mercedes-Benz, will also build there. Volkswagen which has already closed its Pennsylvania plant is producing its new Beetle in Mexico for export to the U.S.A. In 1998 Volkswagen expects to build 450,000 vehicles. Japan too, is citing factories there.

Wall Street Journal writer Joel Millman writes that "Mexico is rapidly becoming the hottest destination for auto production,... ..It is next door to the world's largest auto market. It offers wages that make line worker cringe from Detroit to Stuttgart...and it is home to a growing legion of parts suppliers."

Its also interesting to compare the handling of Japanese car exports to the USA with that of U.S. auto manufacturers exporting the U.S. auto industry and jobs to Mexico and then exporting cars to the USA. The Japanese share of the auto market began to rapidly grow in the mid-1970s as they exported cars to the USA. By the 1980s, with the big 3 auto makers, GM, Ford and Chrysler, and the United Auto Workers (UAW) lobbying Congress, modest import controls were established. The U.S. also leaned on Japan to build factories in the U.S. rather than export all the Japanese autos from Japan. Chrysler even got a government loan which enabled it to survive and later thrive.

The U.S. auto makers got the Japanese on the level playing field which meant import controls coupled with using higher-wage U.S. workers in Japanese factories here. It seems as soon as the Big 3 returned to profitability the UAW became an adversary. And they could break the union in a way they couldn't before. They could ship the jobs away, to Mexico in particular. Does it need saying that the wage differential between U.S. and Mexican workers is much greater than the differential ever was between U.S. and Japanese workers? Does it need saying that as the Japanese auto makers became more profitable, Japanese workers saw their wages rise? The clear impression of the auto wars over the last 15 years was that no damn foreigner was going to destroy the U.S. auto industry, taking the profit and jobs therein. No, if the U.S. auto industry was to be destroyed, true, red, white and blue American corporate suits would do it. The process underway was well noted years ago. The March 12, 1984 U.S. News & World Report had this item. "America faces the danger of becoming a nation of rich and poor....Millions of well-paying blue collar jobs in auto, steel, and other fading industries are vanishing, replaced by lower-paid service jobs."

IMF, WORLD BANK "BAILOUTS"

In the last several years, Mexico, Indonesia, Korea and Thailand have been involved with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for debt restructuring. Some casual observers of world news may believe this to be humanitarian aid, such as feeding starving refugees. Not so.

In commenting on the Mexican bailout, Rep Jim Leach, (R) Iowa, said "As the Mexican debacle symbolizes, the wrong people, i.e. the American public-got called upon to bail out the wrong group, i.e. debt holders" (3) More specifically, "What happened with the Mexican bailout was that the money went to

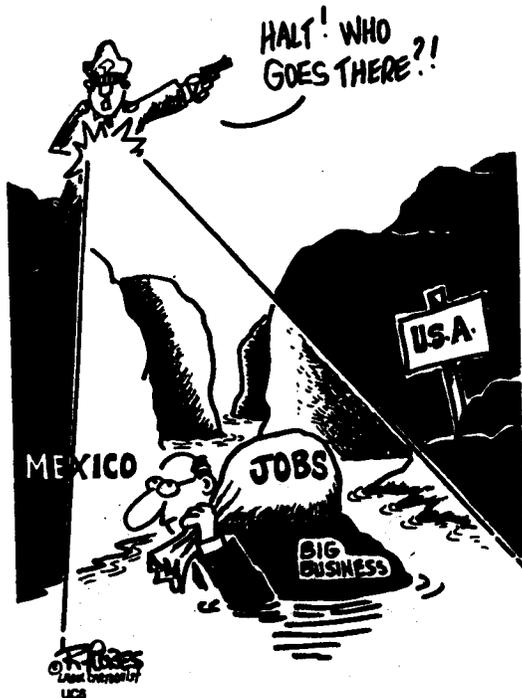
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 the Wall Street types and rich Mexicans who had purchased dollar-dominated "tesobonos", issued at interest rates-like 16%- that had risk written all over them. After two years Mexico is now growing again in peso terms, but what the braggarts seldom note is that every Mexican worker took a 50% pay cut in world purchasing power terms, that inflation decimated the rising middle class, and that political instability is now on the uptick." (4) And so much for U.S. exports to Mexico.

The IMF bailout for Indonesia, Korea and Thailand is the same scenario, with the difference that the Japanese and Europeans were the prime lenders in these nations. According to the Financial Times, the banks had the following invested; U.S. banks, \$43 billion, Canadian banks, \$15 billion, Japanese banks, \$271 billion, European banks, \$353 billion. As a share of the investing banks' capital in the emerging Asian markets, the breakdown was a follows; U.S.A., 12%, Canada, 46%, Europe, 48% and Japan, 109%.

Critics of these bailouts have pointed out that the profits are private, the losses are socialized. The discipline of the market is removed. Why worry about risky loans if the governments will cover your losses.



All members are invited to submit articles for the paper. All articles to be printed must be signed. Opinions expressed are not necessarily the opinion of the Editor, the Local, or the APWU.

COMPARATIVE TARIFFS?

Nations can increase their living standards enormously within one generation. Japan and Germany rebuilt. Taiwan, South Korea and Singapore have undergone a technological revolution and raised living standards. Exporting was a large factor in developing these nations. The USA by contrast built its industrial base behind a tariff wall in the 19th century.

The past is, the past. Perhaps to modify the dislocations in the developed nations, a two or three step tariff can be imposed based on a comparative cost of living index. Lower wage nations would have the higher tariffs. The idea would be to prevent massive dislocation and the loss of many industries. This is not to say to hell with other nations attempts to raise their living standards. Mexico is a nation of more than 85 millions. There is no reason the Mexican auto industry can't develop to build cars for Mexicans and Central Americans. Thailand, a nation of more than 60 million has used tariffs and agreements with car manufacturers to create such an auto industry.

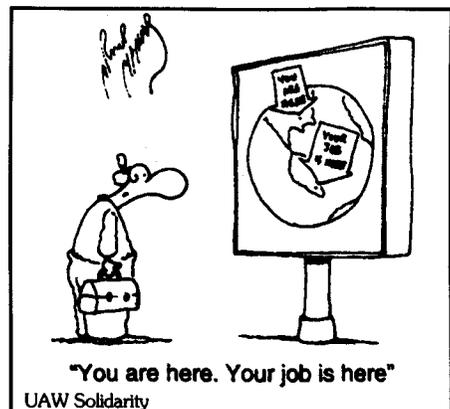
REVIEW A NEED FOR POSTAL UNIONS

The global economy as practiced by the U.S. has depressed U.S. wages over the past two decades, while S & P 500 corporate profits are growing as reflected in that stock index and CEO salaries. Of what value is this information to the postal employee? If any of this information was new or presented with a different insight, perhaps some postal employees will realize how important the union is to their welfare, now more than ever. No one owns the future. The postal unions may not be successful in the future. But without the postal unions our lot would be much worse. Can anyone plausibly suggest otherwise?

The global economy's effects have been working their way through the economy relatively slowly for postal workers. The editor hopefully has made it clear that the employment possibilities for most workers is terrible as contrasted with 30 years ago. Therefore, in the event the terms of our employment is adversely affected, it may be prudent to adjust one's finances for the future.

FOOTNOTES

1. Editorial, Wall St. Journal, March 26, 1998
2. Steven Rattner, Managing Director, Lazard Freres & Co., N.Y. Wall St. Journal, May 23, 1995
3. Wall St. Journal, April 10, 1995
4. Editorial, Wall St. Journal, December 17, 1997



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By John Durham

WINDOW JOBS ARE UNDER ATTACK!!!

Fargo management has pulled the trigger once again on our full-time Tour II positions, reverting another FTR window job with Sat/Sun days off. This brings the total to 4 Tour II days jobs that management has reverted or abolished in the past six months. I guess management wants to concentrate on more upselling various products and services. Forget the past experience and knowledge gained by senior clerks. Helping a customer fill out an insurance claim or assisting someone mailing a package to a foreign country isn't nearly as important as trying to get them to pay with a credit card. Maybe next week management will install a SnowCone machine. Or maybe the next question that will be required is "would you like fries with that?"

APWU is officially opposed to such moves. We will write letters, file grievances, and do whatever is necessary to not only preserve our jobs, but also maintain the high level of satisfaction that the American Public has enjoyed. Recent polls have rated the USPS first in government services. Let's not let a few misguided managers run our business and our jobs into the ground.

DID YOU KNOW???

An employee may be designated a successful bidder no more than five (5) times during the duration of the National Agreement unless such a bid:

1. is a job in a higher wage level;
2. is due to elimination or reposting of the employee's duty assignment, or
3. enables an employee to become assigned to a station closer to the employee's place or residence.

(Article 12.3.A of Nat'l Agreement)

If you are unsure of the number of bids you have left, you may check it automatically by calling the phone bidding number at 1-800-222-2415 (you must know your PIN). If you don't remember your PIN, you may contact Human Resources.

TORN PANTS? RUINED SHIRT? FILE A CLAIM!!

Article 27 of the National Agreement states that an employee may file a claim within fourteen (14) days of the date of loss or damage to his or her property while on duty or on postal premises. Subject to a \$10.00 minimum, an employee may

use PS Form 2146 to file the claim. The damage or loss must not have been caused in whole or in part by the negligent or wrongful act of the employee.

You may get forms from your shop steward. After completing Part 1 of the form, turn the claim into your shop steward for completion of Part 2. The steward then forwards the form to the employee's supervisor for proper processing.

BIDDING ON PTR JOBS

Article 37.3.A.1.b lists three items under PTR duty assignments:

1. **Newly established** PTR duty assignments are posted to currently qualified PTRs in the same salary level who are eligible to bid, and to currently qualified FTRs, regardless of salary level who are eligible to bid.
2. **Vacant** PTR assignments are posted to currently qualified PTRs in the same salary level who are eligible to bid.
3. **Residual** PTR assignments are posted for bid to currently qualified FTRs regardless of salary level, who are eligible to bid.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH:

We need to inform the American public that when USPS sells out our work to private companies, the victors are big, greedy corporate mongers. The losers are the American people, as well as our customers, families, and every postal worker today.

Vincent Tarducci

Philadelphia BMC Local APWU

Sources: Eagle's Eye, The Hi-Lites, The Heartbeat, The Youngstown Dispatcher, Press On, The Voice, Labor Notes, Philly Parcel.

POSTAL SHORTS

SUSPENSION:

At the Steiner Station in San Francisco, a supervisor assigned a carrier to do a certain route. The problem was that it was this carrier's day off. She didn't notice there was nobody delivering this route until five in the afternoon. Then she banged on the bathroom door and got another carrier to deliver this mail on overtime. In hurrying through this route, the carrier forgot to deliver an accountable, and was slapped with a seven day suspension! There's no word of any discipline being issued to the supervisor for the more serious error of forgetting to assign an entire route...

MAIL PROCESSORS WIN OCR OPERATOR POSITIONS AT NATIONAL-LEVEL ARBITRATION

A national-level arbitrator has ruled that, under certain circumstances, postal workers assigned as Mail Processors, level 4, are entitled to be re-identified as OCR Operators, level 5 (Case No. H7C-4S-C 3749, Arbitrator Richard Mittenthal).

GRIEVANCES SHOULD BE FILED IMMEDIATELY

Any Mail Processor who believes that she or he is performing the work of an OCR Operator, as described in the arbitration award, who does not have a pending grievance seeking to have their position re-identified as an OCR Operator, level 5, should file a grievance immediately. Pending grievances should be re-examined to ensure that they include all the elements listed below; if they do not, they should be modified and new grievances should be filed.

This award resulted from a case in Fargo, ND where Mail Processors were performing certain duties which Mail Processors were not expected to perform and which, when added to their regular duties, required that they be made OCR Operators. These duties are: pre-selecting machine readable mail and transporting it to the machine; verifying or riffling the mail to check for accuracy; and knowledge of dispatch schedules and being responsible for meeting such schedules.

5. Assert that the violation of the National Agreement has been a continuing violation, going back as far as there is evidence that the duties in question have been the responsibility of the Mail processors.

6. Request as a remedy: (1) re-identification of the positions as OCR Operator, level 5 positions; and (2) back pay for the entire time of the continuing violations.

The Fargo case could have a wide-reaching effect, possibly resulting in the creation of thousands of Level 5 OCR Operator duty assignments. APWU President Moe Biller and Clerk Division Director Bob Tunstall congratulated APWU counsel Darryl Anderson and Clerk Division Assistant Director Cliff Guffey for their successful handling of this important case.

GRIEVANCES SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS:

1. Assert that the grievants' positions have been misidentified and that the grievants are entitled to have their positions identified as OCR Operator, level 5 positions. If possible, attach copies of the position descriptions for both positions.

2. Rely on Section 235 of the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM), which permits employees to challenge the salary level, title, or identification of their positions.

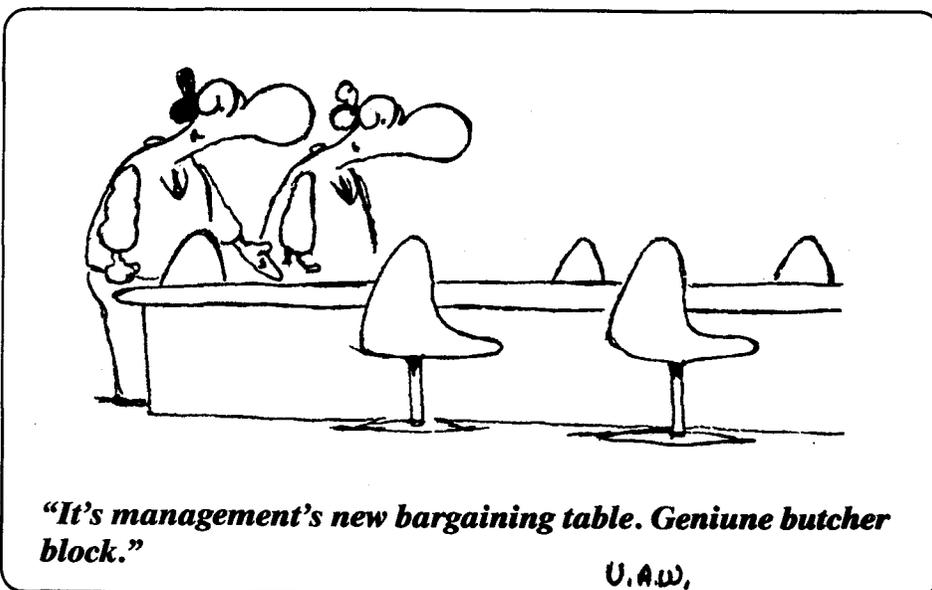
3. Make reference to Article 19 of the National Agreement, which requires management to follow the requirements of the ELM.

4. Assert that the Mail Processors in question are responsible for:

* pre-selecting machine readable mail and transporting it to the machine;

* verifying or riffling the mail to check for accuracy; and

* knowing dispatch schedules and meeting dispatch schedules.





"There's a very upset Inspector from OSHA to see you, sir."

FARGO AREA LOCAL

P.O. Box 1874
Fargo, ND 58107

Officers

President John Durham
 Vice President Cheryl Schaeffe
 Financial Secretary
 Amy Tuscherer
 Recording Secretary Mary Gillespie
 Sergeant-at-Arms Beth Parrow
 Trustee Richard Olson
 Trustee Pam Glaesman
 Tour 1 Rodney Brasel
 Tour 1 Alt Barry Barr
 Tour 2 Stations Rick Morales
 & Branches
 Tour 2 Alt Beth Parrow
 Tour 3 John Durham
 Tour 3 Alt Dana Klassen
 CFS Sue Carnahan
 CFS Alt Marlene Perez
 Maintenance
 Tour I Curt Christianson
 Tour II Vacant
 Tour III Vacant

Committees

Safety & Health Mary Gillespie
 Neil Bjerke
 Social & Rec Vicki Nordman
 Social & Rec Alt Karen Pallock
 Editor Don Markay
 Health Plan Rep Suze Ament



FARGO, ND

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

PLEASE
DELIVER TO: