



Support postal workers against job cuts, forced relocation, overwork, and reduction to five-day mail delivery!

Employers all over the country are using the recession to slash their workforce, overwork the remaining workers, and cut wages. Postal management is doing the same to postal workers across the country. In the last decade, 170,000 postal jobs have been lost. Now, during the recession, postal management wants to "excess" even more workers (cut more jobs), and also eliminate weekend mail delivery.

That's why over a hundred postal workers took part in a picket in front of the Fort Street postal facility on March 31. That's why postal workers picketed in front of the Highland Park post office on Wednesday, April 14, and then later in front of the Redford post office on May 14 and 28. (Unfortunately, these later pickets were planned without any rank-and-file input, and with hardly much effort to even notify workers, so they became token affairs.) And that's why supporters of the *Detroit Workers' Voice* leafleted in front of the Fort Street post office on Tax Day, April 15, as well as including an article like this in a leaflet distributed widely at the May Day demonstration for immigrants' rights in Southwest Detroit this year.

Postal workers are under attack

Through years of struggle postal workers have won some contractual guarantees against layoffs. But postal management is making a mockery of this by insisting that workers move at short notice to other facilities. Dozens of workers from the Fort Street facility are being moved, some of them to faraway cities, even Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, or Des Moines, Iowa. They are given the ultimatum: either move, or lose your job. And once moved, workers may be asked to move a second time.

There is no concern about what this means for workers' lives and children, and many families are faced with both separation and possible financial ruin. Even when both spouses work for the post office, management thinks nothing of assigning jobs in different cities.

While claiming that there isn't enough work, they subject postal workers to overwork and speedup. At the Fort Street facility, they have removed job classifications from many workers, and assigned them to the "standby room". They then send the workers back to do the very jobs that supposedly don't exist, often assigning overtime as well.

Meanwhile, year after year, at local postal stations all across Detroit, they have extended the routes of letter carriers. And they have forced job combinations on postal clerks and mail handlers. Moreover, these job cuts and forced relocations aren't just taking place at one or two facilities, but all across the country. This is an attack on all postal workers.

As the work has intensified, the toll of injuries has grown. The post office is supposed to find suitable work for injured

workers, but management has violated this contract provision as well. It has instituted the so-called "National Reassessment Program" to deny injured workers their jobs. Injured workers are suddenly told, "We no longer have any work available for you", as management tries to force them to quit.

Postal management acts like a private employer

Why is postal management doing this? Some people think that because the post office is a government agency, it doesn't act like a profit-mad capitalist company. But while the post office is a public service, it is run like a business. And today the capitalists and the different branches of government are united in forcing cutbacks on workers.

Thus the anti-worker campaign in the post office is part of a campaign to drive down the conditions of all workers. It goes hand-in-hand with the privatization drive. In the post office, as in auto and among Detroit city workers and teachers, subcontracting and privatization is used to take away jobs and cut the wages of the remaining workers.

***Come join the
postal worker rally***

Thursday, June 24, 3-4 pm

At Detroit's GWY postal facility

1401 Fort Street, Detroit

Called by the local APWU, NALC, and NPMHU

Hence, just as the attack on the auto workers depressed wages for all workers, so the attack on postal workers hurts all workers. There are postal workers in towns and cities all across the country, and employers will take notice of what happens to them. In attacking us, postal management is serving the interests of CEOs and rich financiers everywhere.

The quality of mail service will decline

Nor does postal management care about the public. The anti-worker drive doesn't only mean eliminating jobs, but cutting service to the public. Management plans to close down many community postal stations across the country, and to deliver mail one less day a week, probably eliminating Saturday mail.

Postal work used to serve as a stabilizing factor for many communities. Removing postal stations and postal workers from our communities will have a negative impact on many working class communities. Just as the collapse of the auto factories and

other industries has hurt working class neighborhoods, so will the down-sizing of the post office.

Rank-and-file workers, unite!

All over the country, postal workers are angry about what's going on. In the last few years, informational pickets have taken place from California to Pennsylvania, from Florida to Ohio, and even in Washington D.C. And now pickets and protest events have begun here in Detroit.

But the leadership of the postal unions has blocked workers from taking action. For example, while the American Postal Workers Union has called a number of pickets around the country, they have been sporadic and uncoordinated. Moreover, at the April 11th meeting of the APWU-Detroit District, it was announced that William Burrus, national president of the APWU, demands that the issue of job cuts and forced relocation be pooh-poohed. Unfortunately, the local union officials agree with this. They insist that the union make the quality of postal service the main issue. Yes, postal workers do care about providing good service to the public. But there's also the issue of job losses, forced relocation, and overwork. **Yet the official "APWU Talking Points" (March 2010), distributed at the rally at Highland Park on April 14, makes the astonishing claim that the threatened reduction to five-day delivery would only have a "minimal" effect on clerk jobs, and says nothing about what would happen to letter carriers.** But five-day delivery would be a disaster for all postal workers, clerks,

letters carriers or mailhandlers, and it would be a signal for even more job losses, even more speedup, and even more relocations.

So it's been up to rank-and-file postal workers to let people know about the full extent of management's anti-worker campaign. The only reason that the local pickets have had some signs about jobs and relocation is because of rank-and-file pressure. Most of the APWU union officials keep saying that other workers won't support postal workers about jobs and forced relocation, but that's simply not true.

Postal workers of all crafts, clerks, mailhandlers and letter carriers, have to stand together if there is to be effective resistance to the anti-worker campaign. And it's important for other workers to join with rank-and-file postal workers in raising their voices against what's being done by postal management. Tell postal management that it's wrong to privatize the post office, to cut back on postal service, and to close community post offices. Let them know that it's wrong to treat postal workers like slaves who can be sold down the river to faraway plantations, or to overwork them in order to cut more jobs.

Public sector workers such as postal workers and teachers, and private sector workers, should unite. The defense of our jobs, our wages, our living conditions, and our public services is going to be a long, hard fight. It's necessary that we all stand together if we are to beat back the arrogant demands of the rich capitalists and the politicians who serve them.

**Defeat postal management's anti-worker campaign!
Fight job cuts, forced relocation, and overwork!
Keep six-day mail delivery and community post offices! []**