

# STAND UP AND FIGHT!

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## NEWS SERVICE

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April 4 Congressional Hearing Presents Forum for APWU Enemies!

## Postal Workers Attacked By USPS Board of Governors, Postal Management and Mailers!

American Postal Workers Union President Moe Biller is calling on all APWU members to begin mobilizing in the face of the coming onslaught on our wages and our jobs from the Postal Board of Governors, USPS management and business mailers. Biller will call on the APWU National Executive Board to consider an emergency plan of action at its March 29, 2001 meeting.

The Board of Governors recently wrote to President George W. Bush and former House Postal Service Subcommittee Chairman John McHugh (R-NY), urging them to, "devote your attention and resources necessary to implement a comprehensive review and overhaul of the postal laws of the United States." This was followed by a USPS news release proclaiming that "universal mail service is at risk . . ." due to "a potential loss of \$2 billion to \$3 billion this fiscal year . . ." caused by "fiscal challenges faced by the Postal Service." What was the number-one "challenge" listed by the USPS? It was the damnable lie of "wage rate increases that exceed the rate of inflation." Business mailers have chimed in by calling for a special commission to examine "postal reform." It all adds up to intensified attacks on our wages and collective-bargaining rights, plus renewed calls for postal privatization!

President Biller alerts all APWU members and officers concerning the postal oversight hearing tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, April 4, 2001 by the House Committee on Government Reform. Reports indicate that witnesses will include Postmaster General William Henderson, representatives of the Postal Board of Governors (which meets on April 2-3 in Washington, DC) and the director of the General Accounting Office. One of the central questions to be addressed, according to USPS Senior Vice President for Public Affairs Deborah Willhite, is "how we went from a \$200 million loss to projecting a \$2 billion loss. It is a very good question, and we have a very good answer."

To which President Biller replied, "We know what your answer will be. It will be a repeat of the blatant falsehood the USPS circulated in a news release earlier this month claiming that postal workers' wage increases 'exceed the rate of inflation.' They know full well that's not true, but how else can they cover up their mismanagement, bonuses for the bosses, in-town 'moving expenses' for executives, and the Postal Rate Commission's failure to implement an adequate rate adjustment? They blame it on the postal collective-bargaining process and our hard-earned wages—especially now that we are heading into arbitration for a new contract!"

Biller also put the timing of complaints about postal wages and collective bargaining in the context of the recent attacks on labor's interests by the Bush Administration and its right-wing allies in Congress. "The anti-labor forces smell blood in the water," Biller said, "and they want to add the blood of postal workers to their feast, as they rip their pound of flesh from the Postal Service. We've already seen the attack on the much-needed OSHA Ergonomics Standard. We know they're training their sights on postal workers next, and we must be prepared to 'STAND UP AND FIGHT!'"

(Due to the short notice given by the Government Reform Committee about the postal oversight hearing, updated hearing information will be posted exclusively on the APWU website, [www.apwu.org](http://www.apwu.org).)

Workers Vote 193-117 for APWU Representation

## Greensboro, NC, MC of A Drivers Say, 'APWU YES!'

In one of the largest APWU organizing victories to date, full-time drivers at the Greensboro terminal of Mail Contractors of America (MC of A) on March 14 voted "APWU Yes," 193-117. MC of A is the largest mail-haul company in the United States, and the Greensboro terminal of 370 drivers is the largest unit in the company. The APWU already represents drivers in the Des Moines, Memphis and Jacksonville MC of A terminals and is currently in contract negotiations with the company.

It was a hard-fought, year-long campaign, sponsored by the NC Mail Haulers and Postal Labor Local, currently representing the East Coast Leasing drivers based in Greensboro.

Early on in the campaign, the workers faced professional union-busters and their slick, captive-audience meetings and anti-union tactics of intimidation. It was this kind of use of union-busters that led to the 200-strong APWU "Union Buster Go Home" demonstration last spring at MC of A headquarters in Little Rock, AR. By the time the union election took place, the APWU and MC of A management worked out a cooperative "partial neutrality" agreement, where no professional union-busters were used, no captive-audience anti-union meetings were held, and the union driver-organizers had 24-hour access to the break room and parking areas of the company.

### Drivers Led Strong Campaign

One of the great strengths of the campaign was that it was led by the drivers themselves. Mark Williams, ECL driver and vice president of the NC Mail Haulers Local, was the lead organizer. MC of A drivers Casey Barber and Doug Cowan were assigned as ad hoc organizers for the national union, as were Lawton Vaughan and John Rybak, MC of A drivers and union activists from the APWU First Coast Local in Florida. MC of A drivers including John Reese, Dan Talton, John Rea, Brent Beashears and many others too numerous to mention worked hard throughout the year, getting union cards signed and talking up the union.

Sixty drivers had their picture published urging their co-drivers to vote union yes, and many more wore union hats and buttons during the campaign. Lead field organizer Mark Dimondstein helped guide the campaign throughout, and APWU organizer and Baltimore MVS craft director Rich Shelley rounded out the APWU organizing team. APWU activists O.W. Sweeney, Melissa Dimondstein, Larry Hughes (from Greensboro), Jim Fowler (from Indiana) and Glenn Meadows (from Asheville) assisted in the union election campaign, as did Joe Price, president of the NC Mail Haulers Local Union. Wherever MC of A drivers loaded and unloaded, they enjoyed much cooperation and support from APWU rank-and-file members.

The Greensboro MC of A drivers took a stand for respect and dignity, a true voice on the job and better benefits and working conditions. Many of the issues moving the drivers to action are the kind of union-won rights and protections many APWU members at the USPS already have and take for granted: just-cause protection, income protection, paid sick leave, larger company contributions to health insurance, guaranteed seniority, a decent pension plan and access to a fair grievance procedure.

The NC Mail Haulers Local and the proud new union drivers of MC of A will be quickly getting to work picking a negotiating committee, meeting with workers on contract demands, commencing contract negotiations with the company and building up a strong union.

Thumbs Up for APWU!



Thumbs up! Celebrating the Greensboro MC of A victory are, left to right: local APWU activist Melissa Dimondstein, MC of A driver Casey Barber (in back), lead field organizer Mark Dimondstein, MC of A driver Doug Cowan, NC Mail Haulers local president Joe Price (seated), local APWU activist O.W. Sweeney, lead organizer Mark Williams (in back), APWU organizer Rich Shelley, and MC of A driver John Reese (seated).