

MOE BILLER, President

ROY BRAUNSTEIN, Editor

NEWS SERVICE

AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION, AFL-CIO Headquarters: 1300 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005

President Biller Launches APWU/COPA 2001 Campaign!

Burrus Responds To Postal Governors!

STAND UP & FIGHT

APWU COPA 2001

On Thursday, March 22, 2001, APWU Executive Vice President William Burrus fired off a forceful letter to the United States Postal Service Board of Governors in response to their recent letter to President George W. Bush calling for "postal reform." The Board of Governors had asked the president to, "devote your attention and resources necessary to implement a comprehensive review and overhaul of the postal laws of the United States" and the "system of collective bargaining followed by compulsory arbitration that mitigates against a negotiated settlement and which, moreover, has often placed some 80 percent of our total costs in the hands of a third-party arbitrator with neither understanding of nor responsibility for our role and mission."

Burrus, on behalf of the entire APWU membership, said in his letter to the postal governors, "We reserve the right to voice our objections to privatization or any provision that would limit the right of employees to fully engage in the collective bargaining process to determine their wages, benefits and conditions of employment. . . . You make reference to the 'established system of collective bargaining,' including in the same sentence that 80 percent of your total cost is in the hands of a third-party arbitrator. USPS financial data clearly reveals that bargaining unit postal employees governed by collective bargaining agreements consume but 57 percent (37 million) of operating revenue (64 million). This represents a decline of six percentage

points over the past 12 years so, contrary to your assertion, bargaining unit employee cost is in decline." (The entire text of the Burrus letter is reprinted at right. The letter from the Board of Governors to Bush is reprinted as an insert being mailed with this bulletin.)

Meanwhile, on March 29, APWU President Moe Biller unveiled APWU's 2001 APWU/COPA "Stand Up and Fight" campaign to the union's National Executive Board. In a letter being mailed to all active APWU members, President Biller warned of the attacks on postal workers being launched in the name of "postal reform" and said, "Rank-and-file employees are going to bear the brunt of postal mismanagement unless we stand up and fight!" APWU's COPA 2001 campaign is but the first stage in the union's mobilization against attacks coming from the postal governors, postal management, and the corporate proponents of postal privatization. In the coming weeks and months, APWU will be providing additional information for locals to use in presenting the union's side as this crucial debate unfolds.

In Portland, OR and Charlotte, NC

Basic Arbitration Training Conferences

The Research and Education Department of the American Postal Workers Union will conduct three APWU "Basic Arbitration Training Conferences" in 2001. The training conferences are designed to acquaint local and state union officers and stewards with the techniques needed to effectively prepare a case for basic arbitration.

Students will be required to attend classes daily, meet with the members of their assigned team during evening hours, complete homework assignments and participate in a mock arbitration case.

To register for the conference, participants must submit a written request from their local or state president (on local or state letterhead) authorizing their attendance. Participants also must pre-register prior to the conference deadline. **No walk-ins will be allowed.** Space is limited. Therefore, it is imperative that students pre-register early.

The registration fee is \$100.00 for each participant. Included in the fee is a reception, three coffee breaks daily, and a graduation breakfast. Registration will be held on Monday prior to the convening of the conference at 2:00 pm. **Classes will begin promptly at 3:00 pm on Monday, and the conference will adjourn no later than 11:00 am on Sunday.**

Curriculum

Participants must be in attendance for the entire week to receive a certificate. Instructors will be APWU national officers and business agents. Classes are: Introduction to Arbitration, Preparing the Case, Identifying and Framing the Issues, Threshold Issues, Exhibits and Stipulations, Opening Statements, Rules of Evidence, Objections, Direct Examination, Cross Examination, Closing Statements and Finality of Awards.

Hotel Accommodations

To secure the hotel rates listed below, please inform the hotel that you are with the American

Postal Workers Union. Check-in time for all hotels is 4:00 pm.

Western Region: Portland, OR Monday, May 21-Sunday, May 27, 2001

Benson Hotel
309 Southwest Broadway
Portland, OR 97205
503-228-2000; or toll-free 888-523-6766
Room rate: \$115.00 + 11.5% tax, single/double
Parking: \$20.00 per day
Deadline to reserve hotel rooms: Friday, April 27.
Note: All hotel reservations must be guaranteed with an advance deposit or major credit card.

Southern Region: Charlotte, NC Monday, July 9-Sunday, July 15, 2001

Embassy Suites Hotel
4800 South Tayon Street
Charlotte, NC 28217
704-527-8400; or toll-free 800-362-2779
Room rate: \$105.00 + 12.5% tax, single/double
Deadline to reserve hotel rooms: Friday, June 1.
Parking: Complimentary for hotel guests
Shuttle service: Provided complimentary by hotel to and from airport (contact hotel for hours).
Note: All hotel reservations must be guaranteed with an advance deposit or major credit card. **All reservations must be canceled no later than 72 hours prior to scheduled arrival. Individuals who cancel their room reservation within 72 hours will be billed one night's room and tax.**

For additional information, contact the APWU Research and Education Department at 202-842-4225. Information on the other Basic Arbitration Conference, Officers' and Shop Stewards' Training Conferences and the Advanced Arbitration Training Conference will be published as information becomes available.

Registration Form

(This form must be accompanied by written authorization from your local/state president on local/state letterhead.)
(Please print or type.)

Name _____ Social Security no. _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home phone _____ Work phone _____

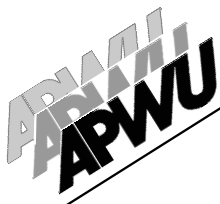
Work hours _____ Local _____

I would like to attend the Arbitration Training Conference in the following region (check only one):

Western Region: Monday, May 21-Sunday, May 27, 2001
Deadline to register for conference: Friday, April 27, 2001

Southern Region: Monday, July 9-Sunday, July 15, 2001
Deadline to register for conference: Friday, June 1, 2001

Mail this form, with a check or money for \$100.00 (made payable to "APWU Arbitration Training") by the deadline to register to: APWU Research and Education Department, Attn. Joyce B. Robinson, Director, 1300 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005.



American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

1300 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005

William Burrus
Executive Vice President
(202) 842-4246

March 22, 2001

The Board of Governors
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Governors:

We the employees of the United States Postal Service who are represented by the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO understand and appreciate your efforts to achieve postal reform. The Postal Reorganization Act was enacted over a quarter century ago and its antiquated rate making procedure places severe restrictions upon the Postal Service in fulfilling its statutory responsibility to provide consistent and satisfactory levels of universal service to the American people. While we support the effort for reform, we reserve the right to voice our objections to privatization or any provision that would limit the right of employees to fully engage in the collective bargaining process to determine their wages, benefits and conditions of employment.

While we support the concept of progressive reform, we are very disturbed with the tone of your letter to the President seeking his attention and assistance. You make reference to the "established system of collective bargaining," including in the same sentence that 80 percent of your total cost is in the hands of a third-party arbitrator. USPS financial data clearly reveals that bargaining unit postal employees governed by collective bargaining agreements consume but 57 percent (37 million) of operating revenue (64 million). This represents a decline of six percentage points over the past 12 years so contrary to your assertion, bargaining unit employee cost is in decline.

Any assertion that the unions rely upon arbitration to achieve unreasonable salary increases is belied by the history of collective bargaining in



- National Executive Board**
- Moe Biller
President
 - William Burrus
Executive Vice President
 - Robert L. Turstall
Secretary-Treasurer
 - Greg Bell
Industrial Relations Director
 - C. J. "Cliff" Guffey
Director, Clerk Division
 - James W. Lingberg
Director, Maintenance Division
 - Robert C. Pritchard
Director, MVS Division
- Regional Coordinators**
- Leo F. Persails
Central Region
 - Jim Burke
Eastern Region
 - Elizabeth "Liz" Powell
Northeast Region
 - Terry Stapleton
Southern Region
 - Raydell R. Moore
Western Region

Page 2
Board of Governors

the Postal Service. Over the past 30 years, the unions have reached voluntary agreements on six occasions and each of these negotiated contracts required wage increases well within the ranges of inflation. On the four occasions that the parties have resorted to binding arbitration, it was postal management who attempted to severely retard wages below any reasonable standard. You need only review management's wage proposals in each of the arbitrated contracts to determine who was the driving force for arbitration. Management's efforts to reduce wages by referral to arbitration have rightfully been rejected by the neutral arbitrators.

Managers, executives and other non-union employees of the Postal Service represent 23 percent of postal service costs, so your general reference to the authority of a third-party arbitrator is misleading and wrong. The rate of compensation increases for these employees has been greater than that for bargaining unit employees. This effort to blame the hundred of thousands of dedicated bargaining unit employees for the current financial woes is a disservice to their service and commitment to the American public.

The real wages of bargaining unit postal employees have remained unchanged from 1971 through 2000. While salaries have increased through collective bargaining, when accounting for the increases in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), these employees enjoy the same income received at the time of Postal Reorganization.

We also reject any responsibility for the negative financial balances expected for Fiscal Year 2001. The increases in salaries and benefits of bargaining unit employees have totaled less than one quarter of the expected deficit in this fiscal year. The deficit is caused in large part by the excessive discounts afforded large business mailers. The rate structure of the Postal Service has been mismanaged to the extent that the revenue lost through discounts is now equal to 50 percent of the total salaries and benefits paid to postal bargaining unit employees. These rate discounts and their impact on total revenue have exceeded management's expectations by far and we the employees will not be held accountable for this misjudgement.

Page 3
Board of Governors

In recent years, postal management has engaged in a gorge of management bonuses equaling hundreds of millions of dollars annually; more than eight billion dollars in capital improvement investments and gross mismanagement of billions of dollars spent on contracts that far exceed the cost of performing the work with postal employees. The most recent failed experience with Emery resulting in termination cost of 400 million dollars or more is but a single example of numerous failed efforts to privatize that have resulted in increased cost.

We share your concern of the need for postal reform but, before our union can join you in this effort, there must be an honest analysis of existing circumstances that avoids placing blame on the dedicated employees. We too urge leadership for change, but with leadership comes responsibility and you must accept your responsibility.

Respectfully,

William Burrus
Executive Vice President
American Postal Workers Union AFL-CIO

WB:rb
opeiu#2
afl-cio