

MOE BILLER, President

ROY BRAUNSTEIN, Editor

NEWS SERVICE

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

Panel Rejects USPS Ploy, Allows Pay-Upgrade Evidence

During hearings Sept. 25-26, the Postal Service tried to persuade the APWU-USPS Interest Arbitration Panel to exclude all arguments and evidence in support of pay-level increases for postal workers. The Arbitration Panel rejected management's motion, ruling that the panel would hear evidence from both sides on the question of upgrades, but that it would not consider any evidence about what occurred during the parties' off-the-record meetings.

Commenting on the USPS ploy, APWU Executive Vice President William Burrus stated: "The Postal Service's effort to exclude evidence on upgrades looks to me like an act of desperation. It was bound to fail. The Arbitration Panel will hear that our members deserve a substantial increase in pay. Furthermore, the Postal Service cannot defend upgrading letter carriers without upgrading Clerks, Maintenance employees and Motor Vehicle Service employees."

The APWU presented testimony from expert econ-

omists, job-evaluation experts and union officers. A panel of rank-and-file postal workers testified about the shameful deficiencies in the USPS uniform and work-clothes program.

As this *News Service* bulletin was being prepared for publication, the union was presenting its case for limitations in Article 19 handbook and manual changes. The hearings are to continue on Sept. 27, and then resume Oct. 9-10.



During the Sept. 25 session of the APWU-USPS Contract Arbitration hearings are, at table from left: APWU President Moe Biller, Executive Vice President William Burrus, and Counsel Arthur Luby. Shown at head table are, from left: APWU panel member Carin Clauss and panel chair Stephen Goldberg. (Not shown is USPS panel member Robert Dufek.)

Arbitrator: CSBCS Work Belongs to Clerk Craft

In another important arbitration victory for the APWU, Arbitrator Carlton Snow issued a national-level award Sept. 17, sustaining the union's position that Carrier Sequence Bar Code Sorter (CSBCS) work was appropriately assigned to the Clerk Craft.

"This award should make clear, once and for all, that the operation of automated mail sorting equipment properly belongs to the Clerk Craft," said APWU Executive Vice President Bill Burrus.

The National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) had challenged the decision of the Postal Service to assign this work to mail processors, contending that the function of the CSBCS operator replaces work typically performed by Letter Carriers. The APWU intervened in the NALC's dispute to protect the rights of APWU bargaining unit employees and to defend the assignment of these jobs to the Clerk Craft.

The CSBCS sorts mail into delivery sequence and is designed for use in post offices, as opposed to the Delivery Bar Code Sorter (DBCS), which performs similar functions in the Processing and Distribution Centers. DBCS work has been assigned to mail processors and/or senior mail processors since 1993.

The arbitrator found that, while the CSBCS primarily performs delivery point sequencing, it also performs work not previously done by Letter Carriers. For example, the CSBCS is able to sort multiple routes at a time, and also sorts mail destined for rural routes,

post office boxes and highway contracts.

"In some cases, the CSBCS equipment at a delivery distribution unit will sort for multiple satellite offices so that mail is sorted at one facility and delivered by carriers at another facility," the arbitrator noted.

The arbitrator also observed that "the [CSBCS] operator does not sort mail. He or she operates a machine which sorts mail. . . . [T]he work involved is the operation of a bar code reading machine, and such work is similar to other work performed by Clerks while dissimilar to other work currently or previously performed by Letter Carriers."

The arbitrator also found that the work of both Clerks and Letter Carriers was reduced by the introduction of the CSBCS equipment.

The arbitrator concluded that "management's decision to assign operation of CSBCS equipment to the Clerk Craft did not violate the NALC agreement between the parties."

"This is another major victory for the APWU," said Burrus. "As a result of this decision, there should be no question that the assignment of any future automated mail sorting equipment belongs to the APWU."

Reminder

APWU Ballot Deadline Extended

On Tuesday, Sept. 11, an act of terrorism in the Washington, DC area and New York City resulted in disruption of postal operations and untimely delay of ballots being received by members throughout the country.

The APWU 2001 Election Committee discussed and voted to change the deadline date for ballots to be returned by members of the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO and the APWU Retirees Department to the designated post office boxes from 2 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 5, to:

2 p.m. on FRIDAY, OCT. 12

Further, due to the lack of space available for this time period, it is necessary to change the location for tallying the ballots from the Ramada Inn in New Carrollton, Maryland to:

**Ramada Inn
901 Dual Highway, Hagerstown, MD 21740
Phone: (301) 733-5100**

Statement by President Biller

APWU Calls for Tolerance

(September 27, 2001) — In the wake of the national tragedy of the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States, many ugly incidents have been reported around the country of reprisal attacks against Arab-Americans, individuals who are Muslims or appear to be of Arabic or Middle Eastern background and many other foreign-born citizens and/or visitors.

This is totally unacceptable in our great nation, and it must stop. On behalf of the entire

membership of the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO, I call on all trade unionists, all citizens and all people of good will to speak out against this sort of irrational, emotional, racist retaliation. We must continue to be a beacon of tolerance and understanding to the entire world. Let us not compound this tragedy by inflicting even more pain and suffering on innocent people who already share the sorrow felt by our nation and our friends around the world.