

Iowa State Association of Letter Carriers



President's Report

February 2009

Many of us in the NALC have past military experience. Some of our members are currently serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Let's hope for their sakes that the military is run better than the postal service! If postal management were in the military, they'd be tried for treason!

For years I believed that it's been a matter of incompetence, as opposed to deliberate mismanagement of the postal service. I'm no longer sure. To order local managers to deliberately violate the contract, knowing full well, they will have to pay in the grievance procedure, during a budgetary crisis; for arbitrarily and capriciously imposing a "window of operations"; for making it as difficult as possible for our customers (yes, including the one's that receive mail) to use our service and to receive their mail; for constantly berating the workforce; for paying managers higher level pay and not letting them manage or make any decisions at all; this seems like treason to me! Somewhere there has to be a plan to dismantle the postal service thru incompetence and mismanagement. It may be working.

It hasn't helped that throughout my career, the best and the brightest have not gone into management. How does an organization survive when it's best refuse to look for a "promotion?" Instead, the postal service has a history of promoting people whose sole purpose is to get out of work. How many of you can name a manager who, once promoted, was so incompetent that they had to be promoted again and again until they found a position where they no longer had any responsibilities? How many of you have seen a good manager, retire early, revert back to craft, or, bid to a small office to be left alone? To many of us I would suggest.

On the legislative front, I just returned from the State Chairs Conference in Washington, D.C., where we went to the hill and lobbied our representatives concerning H.R. 22, a bill which will allow the postal service to pre-fund our retiree's health benefits at a slower rate. Congressmen Latham and Boswell have already agreed to cosponsor this legislation, and Congressmen Braley and Loeb sack should be signed on soon. Both Senator's Grassley and Harkin believed they would have no objection and Senator Harkin advised that he would bring the legislation forward if no one from the Government Affairs committee would. This legislation

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will save the postal service billions of dollars per year. Next on the legislative agenda will be the Employee Free Choice Act, which I'll discuss in a future article.

I was reminded while in DC and surrounded by the history of this Country, of a specific item that is located there. It's the constitution of the United States. It begins: "We the People . . ." It does not begin, "We the corporation." It's time that America decides which is more important. Do the people live to serve and protect the corporation, or, should corporations exist to serve the people? I've had numerous discussions over the years with many people who believe in the trickledown theory of economics. It doesn't work! The current economic mess as well as the decline in the middle class proves it. Here in Iowa we constantly hear the drum beat about the business property tax being too high. Yet, they don't want to talk about the huge loopholes in the corporate tax structure, where they can move profits out of state and a corporation like Wal-Mart pays virtually nothing in State tax. Now, the argument against taxing corporations is that they only will pass along the taxes through their products. If true, then let's do away with the individual income tax and only tax corporations. This would be closer to the "fair tax" that many expound.

Lastly, if you think taxes are too high, take a look at the tax rate under Dwight D. Eisenhower. The top tax rate was 91%. At that time, CEO's made only about 30 times the average worker. Why, because the 'very' rich, rather than pay the highest rate, reinvested in either their companies or the profits were passed along to the workers and investors. A look at the federal deficit shows that as the upper tax rate has been cut, the deficit has grown. For more information about taxes, especially Iowa taxes, go to: "www.iowapolicyproject.org"

And as always, you can contact me at: "www.iowalettercarriers.org"

Mike Birkett
President,
Iowa State Assoc. of Letter Carriers
www.iowalettercarriers.org