



“The time is now for all Mail handlers to join in, and add your voice to the protests against these ideologues who would do us harm.”

Some of the problems that we are facing have been created by the Postal Service itself. As you have been previously informed, bargaining for a new contract officially started on August 30. Just prior to the start of bargaining, the Postal Service went to Congress in an effort to eliminate the no-layoff clause from its collective bargaining agreements, and to pull out of the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, and the Federal Retirement Plans. None of these issues belong anywhere but on the bargaining table, and I have made that clear to management. Notwithstanding their misguided plans to side-step the Unions, we intend to work diligently to try to secure a bargained agreement prior to the November 20 deadline.

While all of these other issues are boiling over, the Postal Service now wants to close over half of the large processing plants in the country. This is another bone-headed move on their part that will only serve to drive away customers due to the deterioration of service (similar to 5 day delivery). They are attempting to take the “service” out of the Postal Service. Again, we are fighting them tooth and nail on this plan as well.

Now, let’s hear about the Postal Service’s latest “jobs plan.” While most of the powers that be in Washington DC are looking for ways to create jobs and stimulate the economy, the Postal Service wants to go in the opposite direction. Their “jobs plan” is to eliminate one hundred thousand jobs through attrition over the next couple of years, and then to lay off an additional one hundred and twenty thousand employees. Then, they want to go out and hire one hun-

dred and twenty thousand low-wage, no-benefit employees to replace those they just laid off. How’s that for “stimulating the economy”?

So, yes, we are under assault, and it is an all out attack on Mail Handlers and other postal employees. We will fight back with all of our might against those who would do us harm, but we can’t do it alone. The time is now for all Mail handlers to join in, and add your voice to the protests against these ideologues who would do us harm. Please read over the in-depth articles in this issue of *The Mail Handler*, and do your part in fighting back. This could be simply writing a letter to your Congressman and Senators on the pending legislation. It could mean attending your Branch union meetings to get the information available at the local level and to band together with the Mail Handlers and other employees in your facility. It could mean writing a “letter to the editor” of your local newspaper to educate the public on the issues facing us. Whatever you do, do something. The time is now to get involved, because, quite literally, your job depends on it.

Fraternally,

John F. Hegarty
National President