

# Postal Worker West

ISSUED BY  
**OMAR M. GONZALEZ,**  
REGIONAL COORDINATOR



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## If Issa Has His Way

# LAYOFF PROTECTIONS TO BE ELIMINATED

WASHINGTON DC- Postal workers will no longer have contractual lay-off protection and will be subject to the Reduction-in-Force process.

The amendment of Section 1206 of Title 39 US Code being pushed by San Diego (Vista) Congressman Darryl Issa will ensure that no union contract has layoff protections.

What's more, is that if an impasse is reached over a negotiated contract the arbitrator would be barred from granting any protections other than Reduction-in-Force procedures. This would expose thousands of current postal workers to

immediate lay off, which the PMG has indicated is needed to "save" the postal service.

### PMG GIVEN DISCRETION

According to Issa's bill if a CBA is ratified management will have the discretion to apply a Reduction-In-Force that differs from the current law that covers reduction of federal workers.

"This will be devastating to all postal workers and to the service we provide to the American public," says Omar Gonzalez, Regional Coordinator. "So, many of our members take this contractual protection for granted. The PMG's current

Strategic Plan calls for the elimination of 38,000 postal workers in addition to those he has already eliminated.

The PMG has already determined there are too many employees (excess human capital). With no protections against lay offs postal workers will face unilateral reductions in force.

"Members ignore this danger at their own peril. What Congress gives it can take away. In 1970 they gave us collective bargaining and in 2013 they will try to take it away!", said Gonzalez. "Now is the time to act!" he proclaimed.

*See page 3*

## NEXT ROUND OF EXCESSING IMPACTS TO BEGIN

SAN DIEGO- The Pacific Area has issued several Withholding Notices and Impact statements and is being directed by the USPS Office of Strategic Planning in DC to expedite involuntary reassignment of workers.

Regional Coordinator Omar Gonzalez is again challenging their rush to meet without proper advance notice and opportunity for input.

The Area claims pressure is being applied by HQ to get the "protocol" out of the way and begin the excessing process. "No, District or Installation is going to go untouched in the next round of impacts," warns Coordinator Omar Gonzalez. Locals need to educate there members on the process and how all this dis-

ruption relates to the PMG's *Transformation Plan* and Congress's *Postal Accountability & Enhancement Act*.

"Many of our members are not aware of the big picture involved in the excessing , abolishments and repostings occurring. It is critical they be made aware of the drive to privatize USPS and gut staffing and services," declared Omar.

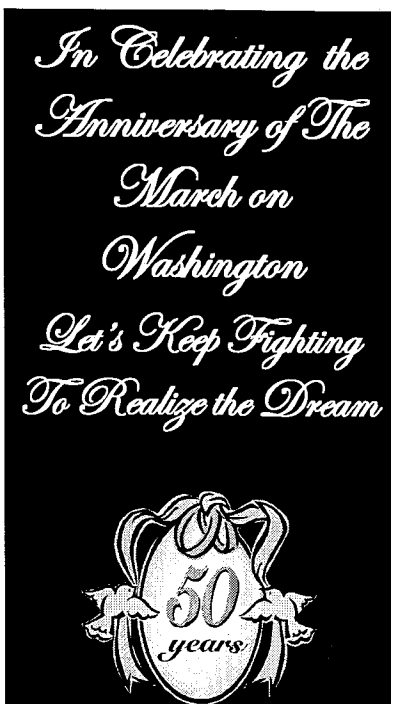
In DENVER the Western Area is also gearing up for the next round of impacts. To help assist locals the Regional Office issued a Guide on The Fundamentals of Seniority and Reassignments. "Its going to get real bad and we need to act now," advises the Coordinator.



### \$3.5 Billion In OT

Management's hair brained staffing plans have gutted many operations resulting in the payment of \$3 and one half billion in OT in FY '13.

The bosses keep claiming that 80% of all postal costs go to labor. They fail, of course, to point out that a large percentage of that supposed figure is managerial. They also fail to point out, although they do report, that Overtime costs were \$500 million over the amount paid in OT last year! Good going !



# PMG Says You Want Him To Continue Cuts

During a recent NPR interview the Postmaster General implied that postal workers want him to continue to close postal facilities and post offices, cut service, reduce hours and eliminate jobs.

National Public Radio was reporting on how the PMG is in the cross fire of congress and the unions over the management of the postal service.

Responding to a statement by the carrier's union that technology, bad economy, retiree contributions and poor management all contribute to the postal service's problems the PMG claimed the unions are misguided, not him.

"I think they [unions] are not reflective of their membership," said the PMG. "I speak to the people in the field and time and again they have said to me, - 'Don't give up on this stuff; my job is at stake', claimed the PMG.

## IS THE PMG CORRECT?

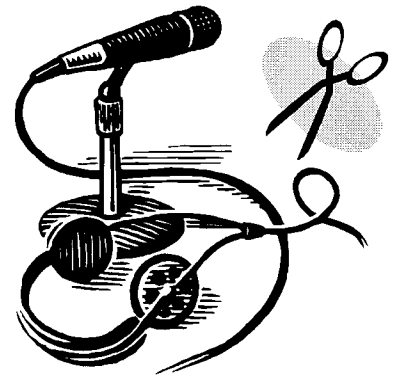
Do postal workers really want the PMG to continue to keep doing his "stuff"?

While there are some bloggers that support the PMG and management in their *DRIVE* to transition the postal service, it is hard to imagine a majority of postal workers want the PMG to continue

to do "his stuff". What stuff is the PMG doing? Here is just a sampling of the PMG's supposed efforts and goals:

- **Elimination of the entire Postal Vehicle Service and contracting out transportation of mail.**
- **Cutting the window clerks and window service by 33% .**
- **Cutting custodians and custodial service by 37%**
- **Cutting mail processors and mail processing by 41%**
- **Cutting overnight 1st class mail delivery standards**
- **Closing community post offices and selling historic post offices**
- **Cutting more than 38,000 additional postal jobs within two years**
- **Forcing involuntary reassignments of thousands of postal workers**
- **"Detailing" hundreds of impacted postal workers beyond the 50 miles radius restrictions**
- **Forcing postal workers out of the federal health plan programs and into a management run health plan**
- **Closing and consolidating postal processing plants**
- **Forcing overtime on those that don't want it and denying OT to those that wish to work it.**

The PMG has the gall to tell NPR reporters



that the unions are misguided and that unions do not reflect their members.

"Perhaps the PMG really does believe that. He is management after all is he not?," quizzed Regional Coordinator Omar Gonzalez.

"Or maybe there are some workers who actually want to believe the PMG has their best interests at heart. I venture to say that the unions do not do enough internal education of the membership," say the Regional Coordinator.

"There is so much discontent and for that matter disconnect on the workroom floor. Too many of our own union members believe that their union is the bigger problem and that the union does not do anything for them," exclaimed Omar.

Management's propaganda works. The bosses claim 80% of the postal services problems is labor and too many workers actually fall for that lie !

## Is The Postal Service Broke?

Approximately 70% of the consolidations planned for this year have been completed and many more will follow in early 2014. The reason given for the need to consolidate is the dire financial condition of the Postal Service. Is the Postal Service broke?

No, but it is in financial trouble. While mismanagement plays a major factor in the financial woes of the P.O. the fact is that 100% of the losses in Quarter 3 FY13 are the direct result of the pre-funding mandate imposed by the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) passed by Congress in 2006 with no actual recorded votes.

The Postal Service actually made a profit of \$660 million in the 3rd quarter of this fiscal year. But, then it is forced to make a

\$5 billion payment to the US Treasury resulting in what the media and our own management calls a "loss".

At one time the PMG was denouncing this unfair burden and everyone ( unions and management) was focused on getting that monster off the back of the Postal Service. But, soon after the CBA was negotiated the Legislative Strategic Plans of the bosses shifted and once again postal workers, their union , their wages and their benefits were being blamed for the problems that plague the Postal Service.

"The PMG claims almost daily that USPS loses \$25 million a day. The reality is USPS wastes millions, the government takes billions and the privatizers blame it on the workers," laments Regional Coordinator Omar Gonzalez. "Until we get the pre-funding burden lifted we will continue to be victims of the media and even our own bosses," declared the Union Coordinator.

One of the stables of postal employment is the fact postal workers enjoy good government health benefits.

But the PMG, and his cronies, want to change that by their efforts to impose a US Postal Service ran health plan.

Most postal workers take their health insurance for granted because the selection, enrollment and utilization of benefits is simplified. Likewise, most postal workers don't realize Employer contributions to their health insurance is covered under Article 21 of the union contract.

Management's plan to take postal workers out of the Federal Employee Health Benefit Program (FEHBP) will take out 1 million postal employees and retirees out of the federal program. Then the bosses would establish the premiums workers pay subject to future contract negotiations.



## A SICK PLAN FOR YOUR HEALTH BENEFITS

For many postal workers this may seem like no big deal especially with the PMG claiming it will help save the postal service. But, the reality is coverage will likely change.

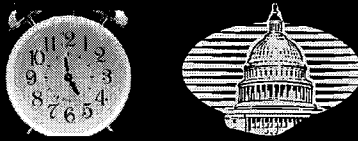
"Funding of the plan would be at risk because it would remove us from the US Treasury securities and expose us to fluctuations in the open market which will eventually undermine the availability of money to cover actual health care," said Regional Coordinator Omar Gonzalez.

Add to this concern is the projected need to change providers and increased out-of-pocket costs. A recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) report exposed many of the risks of a postal ran management imposed health plan.

"You know what makes all this truly sick, is Issa's proposal to repeal the value of our fringe benefits which will undercut health benefits. So we must make sure neither Issa nor the PMG infect our health plans," said Omar.

## Recess Is Over

CONGRESS COMES BACK  
AFTER LABOR DAY-CALL NOW



(202) 224-3121

ask for your representative & senators. And go to [apwu.org](http://apwu.org) hit the Contact Your Legislator link to compose letters to:

OPPOSE HR 2748 (Issa Bill)

OPPOSE S 1486 as written

## Postage Hike Decried

Raising concerns over the anticipated hike in postage rates major mailers are calling on the Postal Board of Governors to forgo such an increase.

So called "Commercial Customers" have informed the BoG of the negative results of a postage increase should the governors vote to increase postage at their September meeting.

The mailers also expressed a concern that raising postage will deter from the current focus of operational and structural changes and result in reduced volume that will cut into revenues.

## ENNUI EPIDEMIC RAMPANT ON WORKFLOOR



Safety Officials can't explain it, union representatives are at a loss on how to contain it, and postal bosses actually seem to thrive on this disease afflicting thousands of postal workers.

The disease infects the heart and moves to the mind which causes an inability to feel passion and results in the absence of any wish to do anything.

The diagnosis? *Apathy*

The prognosis? Unless you give a damn and act- "**DOOM**"

## AFTER 35 EDITIONS BOSSES TO CHECK RULES ARE ACCURATE

The Handbook that contains the rules of postal employment, pay administration, employee benefits etc. has no responsible author.

After 35 years, postal management is to implement procedures that will ensure the Employee & Labor Relations Manual will

be current, accurate and complete. This long over due action is as a result of an audit by the OIG.

The bosses have responded by promising to implement a process to identify who is responsible for the contents of the ELM by the end of 2013 and correct the process.

Postal workers can expect a newly revised policy handbook to reflect the current corporate policies, forms and procedures. "I am amazed but not surprised,

that for so many years the most critical handbook ( besides Handbook 912 CBA) has no actual oversight. I have often said that despite all their resources our bosses can't help but mismanage," said Regional Coordinator Omar Gonzalez.

"The National Union has to be on high alert to ensure that any revisions to the ELM don't violate Article 5 (Prohibition of Unilateral Action) and Article 19 (Handbooks/Manuals) by containing conflicts with our CBA," said Omar.



# HAPPY LABOR DAY

**WHAT IS LABOR DAY?** The last big Bar-B-Q of the summer? The first of the year end holidays? Actually it is a holiday created by the unions to celebrate the contributions made by workers to the strength and well-being of the United States.

The first state to pass a law honoring workers was Oregon in 1887 followed by Colorado, New Jersey and New York. In 1894 Congress passed an act establishing Labor Day. But the first Labor Day was celebrated on September 5, 1882 by the NY Central Labor Council.

Today, most workers don't even realize this holiday is about and for them. Long forgotten is the original proposal calling for the holiday... **" a street parade to exhibit to the public the strength and esprit de corps of the trade and labor organizations of the community, followed by a festival for the recreation and amusement of the workers and their families."** **GOD BLESS ALL WORKERS!**

## PSE & NTFT Issues

- ◆ The Regional Coordinator's Office is reminding locals and PSEs working in retail that managers violate the CBA when they assign City Carrier Assistants to perform clerical work.

Manager's are misapplying the CCA job description claiming the CCAs may perform clerical duties and be required to pass a scheme exam.

Locals were previously advised by the Regional Coordinator that such cross craft assignments violates the CBA (page 279) and Article 7 Section 2 , as well as, the PSE MOU. If clerical work hours are reduced grievances must be initiated.

- ◆ The recent PSE agreement to convert 399 PSEs to career status only resulted in 5 Western Region PSEs being converted at the L.A. Installation. More conversions are contemplated as management breach their caps

Also locals, like San Francisco MVS, are successful in having PSEs converted. Local Unions must monitor the caps, monitor deployment and aggressively pursue violations of PSE MOUs. Education of the regular workforce is also critical to ensure no union member sees PSEs as the enemy.

- ◆ Locals are reminded that the USPS HQ COO /EVP has issued a memorandum that declares where employees working in NTFT duty assign-

ments of less than 40 hours a week are regularly working less hours than the PSEs , and those hours would otherwise be available to be performed by the career employees (same day or tour etc.) , the hours of the NTFT duty assignments should be appropriately adjusted to modify the hours and/or to achieve a more desirable work schedule.

Locals must monitor and police this issue to ensure that adjustments are made to balance the workload. This will help reduce unnecessary impacts on the career workforce and still help protect the PSEs.

- ◆ The recent M.O.U. on PSE seniority establishes certain criteria such as the fact that PSE separations due to lack of work must be done installation wide by juniority.

In addition PSEs who are separated due to lack of work must be reappointed ahead of more junior PSEs. Also, PSEs who are separated due to a lack of work must be reappointed before management can hire new PSEs if the need for hiring arises within one year of the separation.

The MOU also clarifies that when a PSE's 5 day break occurs and management determines there is a need to reduce the number of PSEs, the PSE with the most seniority must be reappointed and the most junior PSE in the installation must be separated instead.



Special Thanks To The Eastbay Unionizer For Printing And Submitting An Article

Authored By

Regional Coordinator

Omar Gonzalez

Which Earned A First Prize Award for Creative Writing From the Postal Press Association

## RENT A TRUCK AND A MANAGER?

Claiming there is no money to buy new vehicles management is soliciting vendors to lease mini-vans and cargo trucks for carrier delivery services with a color scheme to keep up with their postal image.

Meanwhile the postal big wheels are also soliciting vendor input from corporate America to develop a plan for postal corporate succession of executives and officials-. Their competency models must include: *Innovative Thinking, Big Picture Thinking and Accountability* among other factors.

It can't be easy running a \$65 billion government corporation- but soliciting postal managers that think and are also accountable ! What are they THINKING ??