

After the NALC contract rejection: Organize the working class to save the US Postal Service!

USPS Workers Rank-and-File Committee
14 February 2025

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The USPS Workers Rank-and-File Committee hails the rejection by our brothers and sisters of the tentative agreement for city carriers, for only the second time in 55 years. Letter carriers have taken a stand not just against poverty wages, but against the conspiracy to privatize USPS and eliminate tens of thousands of jobs, under the so-called “Delivering for America” program.

But the fight is not over. It is only just beginning. We have to prepare ourselves to fight against the entire anti-worker “labor law” framework which will now be brought to bear to strip us of our rights.

USPS and NALC have until February 18 to come up with a new proposal to put to a vote. The next step in this “process” is binding arbitration. This means that USPS administrators and the bureaucrats from the National Association of Letter Carriers will use a “neutral” arbitrator to impose the contract we have just rejected, with some cosmetic changes at most.

The NALC bureaucracy, including president Brian Renfroe, will say that we can do nothing because of a ban on strikes by federal workers. They are passively accepting this flagrant denial of our rights under the First Amendment. In so doing, they expose themselves as stooges of USPS administrators and corporate politicians. Postal workers never rejected the strike weapon and used it in 1970 and 1978. Provisions for strike action are still in the NALC constitution, which the bureaucrats conveniently ignore.

The worst thing we can do is to wait for the next contract and new union elections to fight. If they get away with this, it will be the last contract with USPS as

a public entity. As for union elections, experience proves no amount of “pressure” or musical chairs at the top will change their nature as pro-management sellouts. At UPS, yesterday’s so-called “reformers” in the Teamsters are helping carry out massive automation-driven cuts, while placing the resources of the union at the disposal of the right-wing Trump administration.

We must act now to fight back. The first step is for us to adopt the principle that this entire process has no legitimacy. We must organize independently of the NALC bureaucracy, and appeal for as wide support as possible in the working class. We must build up a network of rank-and-file committees at post offices around the country. These organs, open to all USPS workers but strictly excluding management or union officials, will give us the power to enforce our democratic decisions, countermand violations of our rights and transfer power to the rank-and-file.

In asserting our independence, we will put ourselves in the best possible position to face down the attacks that are coming.

We must also draw the lessons of other struggles against sellout contracts. This especially includes the 2022 railroad contract, where workers faced off against anti-strike laws, both parties and sham “mediation.”

In addition to **real** wages which far exceed inflation, we must fight against the elimination of routes and the closure of facilities, the TIAREAP electronic monitoring system—which was imposed on us through a “Memorandum of Understanding,” lack of safety provisions in the heat and cold, end the abuse of CCAs, and above all, save USPS as a public service and not a profit-making enterprise.

We propose our co-workers take up the following

demands as “red lines” for any future contract:

- The end of Delivering for America and guarantees of USPS’ future as a government agency. All delivery routes and local post offices shuttered as part of DFA over the last few years must be reopened.

- The end of TIAREAP and other monitoring systems.

- Inflation-busting raises, adequate cost-of-living adjustments, and full funding for healthcare and pensions.

- The hiring of all CCAs to full-time status, with full-time pay.

But much more is at stake than the contracts for NALC or, for that matter, the rural carriers in the National Rural Letter Carriers Association and the clerks in the American Postal Workers Union.

The Trump administration is on the rampage against the working class, with federal workers and immigrants being targeted first. Violating the Constitution and decades of law whenever it suits his purpose, Trump plans to destroy every government program not directly related to war, policing working class neighborhoods or funneling money to Wall Street.

Trump officials have already confirmed to the *Washington Post* that he intends to privatize USPS. Whatever has not been dismantled of the postal network will be handed over to oligarchs like Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos, where workers will be squeezed to the limit to make profits for Wall Street.

Trump’s attack on immigrant workers are part of a systematic violation of the rights of the whole working class. If, as he intends to do, he can deport millions of not only undocumented immigrants but also “legal” immigrants and even US citizens, including to black sites at Guantánamo Bay and elsewhere, then nobody is safe. He is attempting to redefine citizenship, previously based on being born on US soil, as obedience and loyalty to government.

NALC bureaucrats say we have to dutifully obey the anti-labor laws, but Trump is not only ignoring the law but deliberately breaking as many as he can in order to set up a presidential dictatorship. Meanwhile, the Democrats are enabling him and union officials are either doing nothing or openly supporting him.

Banning our right to strike is not just a violation of our First Amendment rights, but completely takes away our primary means of defending ourselves against job

cuts. In 1981, Ronald Reagan fired PATCO air traffic controllers for daring to strike against understaffing. Now, Trump and Musk are firing hundreds of thousands of federal workers for no reason other than giving more tax cuts and business to the oligarchs.

Saving the Post Office is totally bound up with defending democratic rights. The future of the working class in the US and the whole world is at stake.

Our power is in our numbers. Workers, who create the world’s wealth, can defeat a conspiracy of a handful of fascists and oligarchs. None of our rights were won without a struggle against the power of the corporate elite. This includes the postal strikes in 1970 and 1978. Everything we have won in more than a century is being clawed back.

City carriers must appeal for unity across the whole USPS workforce. Rural carriers and clerks must join our fight because our contract will set the pattern for theirs. We must also establish communication with federal government workers facing massive layoffs, and private sector workers at UPS, Fedex and others.

Critically, we must appeal for support from postal workers around the world. Last year, Canada Post workers carried out a nationwide strike, which was ultimately shut down by the federal government. At Royal Mail in Britain, workers are fighting against a corporate takeover by billionaire Daniel Kretinsky.

In these and other countries, workers have formed rank-and-file committees to oppose both management and union sellouts. They are affiliated with us through the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees.

If you agree with this, join us today! Contact us by filling out the form below.



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