

Detroit Workers' Voice



Detroit Marxist-Leninist Study Group PO Box 28536, Detroit, MI 48228 www.communistvoice.org March. 17, 2010 #85

Help build the postal picket! Come to the APWU planning meeting this Friday! Fight to keep our jobs!

We're losing our jobs and being sent far away to other cities. Enough is enough! It's time for mass action to defend our jobs.

This last Sunday the APWU-Detroit District regular membership meeting voted 29-18 to have an informational picket against excessing and relocations. That would be a small but important start. It was also announced that there would be an open committee meeting to plan the picket on Friday at 1 p.m. And the union leadership promised to have a flyer announcing it distributed on Monday.

But if there really is to be a picket, we have to come out to the meeting and plan it. President Ulmer promised there would be several pickets in February, and there wasn't a single one. And on Sunday, he spoke and voted against having a picket now.

So it is up to rank-and-file postal workers to ensure that there is a picket. This time let's make sure that it really takes place. It's time that we stood up against management and put forward our demands clearly.

Fight excessing and forced relocation

Indeed, we need to be sure that the picket raises our concerns. We should have slogans and signs denouncing the job cuts and relocations. If we don't fight openly against excessing and reassignments, no one else will do it for us. If we don't raise our demands, we have no chance of getting them.

In the APWU-Detroit District, some union officials say that we should only talk about the threat to postal service. And of course we want to see that the public gets good mail service. But we are also concerned about our jobs, and everyone knows it. If we don't talk about our jobs, it will just make us seem sneaky and dishonest. But if we fight openly against the job cuts and forced relocation, it will unite other postal workers around us. And it will gain the sympathy and support of other workers, who also face layoffs, wage cuts, overwork, and other hardships imposed on them by their employers.

Unite postal workers of all crafts

We are only strong if we all stand together -- clerks, carriers and mailhandlers as one, healthy workers and injured workers as one. The picket voted on Sunday was an APWU picket, but we should plan to welcome workers from all crafts. And we should speak up for the interests of all postal workers. Our fight must be to protect the jobs of all postal workers, independent of craft. Indeed, with the present excessing and relocations, a clerk one

day may be a mailhandler or carrier the next. We all know workers who have had to change crafts or lose their jobs. And it's easy to get injured when overworked or moved to a new craft, and then subject to being excessed by the National Reassessment Program. So let's stop the attempts to make us fight among ourselves! Instead, let's stand up together for our jobs.

The first step in a long journey

Let's come out on Friday to help plan a good picket. But if you can't make it on Friday, there are other ways you can help build the picket. You can network with other postal workers and prepare for the picket itself.

And let's remember that this picket is only a start. We need to reach out in many ways to the community and to other postal workers. We will need many pickets and marches. If our movement is strong, this may force politicians to take a stand. But we can't rely on them. Instead, we will need to keep up the pressure as long as postal management keeps squeezing us.

**Come to the meeting
to plan the protest picket**

**Friday, March 19, at 1 p.m.
At the APWU-Detroit District hall
(20530 Southfield Freeway at 8 Mile Rd.)**

We can't rely on the local or national union leadership to organize this for us. The top officials don't want to embarrass postal management. They're into behind-the-scenes maneuvering, and big promises that never seem to come true. And they may even pit one craft against the others rather than uniting against postal management. So we must take it into our own hands to ensure that the APWU picket does take place, and does protest what is being done to us. To do this, we should form networks outside the union structure. And we should use these networks to unite across craft lines, organize joint actions, and ensure that one action builds upon another.

**Fight excessing and forced relocations!
Unite across craft lines!
Organize a powerful picket!
Come to the planning meeting this Friday! []**