

As rank-and-file outrage grows against Trump's plans to attack US Postal Service, unions promote dead-end letter-writing campaign

Tom Hall
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The USPS Workers Rank-and-File Committee is holding an online meeting this Sunday at 3pm Eastern/12pm Pacific, "Mobilize the working class to save the US Postal Service and other federal programs!" Register for the meeting [here](#).

Anger is growing rapidly following Thursday's revelation by the *Washington Post* that President Trump is considering an executive order to take personal control over the US Postal Service. Following years of pro-market restructuring, the move would be the first step in a massive escalation of attacks on the Post Office. The *Post* reported, based on sources in Trump's camp, that he intended to privatize the USPS.

This would be the latest in a series of flagrantly illegal executive orders aimed at taking personal control over all aspects of the government and running the country as a dictator. It follows a previous order establishing his control over independent agencies.

The United States Postal Service is one such agency, overseen by a Board of Governors consisting of the postmaster general, deputy postmaster general and nine presidential appointees. Prior to 1971, the post office was a cabinet-level department of the US government. Trump reportedly plans to fire the Board of Governors and shift control of the USPS to the Commerce Department.

The move opens a new stage in sweeping attacks on the federal workforce, tens of thousands of whom Trump and billionaire fascist Elon Musk have already fired. The USPS is the single largest civilian government agency, with over 600,000 employees. The cuts are aimed at devastating social and public programs on which tens of millions rely, freeing up resources for the military and Wall Street.

In the context of the massive seizure of personal data by Musk and his so-called "Department of Government Efficiency," Trump's aim to grab control of the USPS also raises democratic questions, opening up sensitive communications to monitoring or interference by the president. In particular, it could give him the ability to suppress mail-in ballots to secure the election of Trump loyalists—or Trump himself, given that his camp is now floating having him run for an illegal third term.

Lies about non-existent "fraud" in mail voting in the 2020

election, which skewed towards the Democrats because of COVID measures, were critical to his claims that the election was "stolen," which culminated in the January 6 conspiracy to storm the Capitol and overturn the results.

In a statement Sunday night, the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees called for workers across the United States to "prepare mass action to stop the Trump administration's rampage against federal jobs." The IWA-RFC is also co-hosting a meeting this Sunday with the Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee to oppose attacks on the USPS.

"Things started going backward when [Postmaster General Louis DeJoy] arrived," one New York City postal worker said. DeJoy, a Trump ally appointed to his post during Trump's first term, tendered his resignation on Monday. "When he was leaving I thought, 'things might get better.' But now we have Trump taking over to privatize the Post Office. I hope we fight back. You have to put the effort into fighting Trump."

Another said: "They will try to cut our jobs with the privatization. Trump is not trying to improve the Post Office. It is a service. He wants to turn it into a business with profits for his rich friends. But this is not going to be possible with our Post Office."

One worker wrote on social media: "If the USPS goes private, it will open the door for companies like Amazon to create their own door-to-door mail delivery service for a cheaper price. Cities/Counties will be able to contract out to the lowest bidder and all types of mail delivery services will emerge. People will then be laid off for cheaper labor, just so the USPS can compete. Think, people!"

Wrote another: "The union has lost its way by not being able to strike. Our competitors are all private and make substantially better wages and have superior equipment. The argument that we can't be laid off is a sick joke perpetuated by the upper Union brass."

Rapidly growing support among workers for a national strike or other type of job action was reflected in the extraordinary decision Friday to temporarily shut down the r/USPS subreddit. In a statement, administrators for the page admonished workers that

discussing strikes was “in violation of federal law” banning strikes by federal employees.

“The moderation team is struggling to keep up with the sheer volume of posts and reports,” the statement declared, while complaining about the “toll on our mental health” by this massive opposition.

This undemocratic measure is an attempt to stifle rank-and-file opposition before it gets out of the control of USPS management and the union bureaucracy. In 1970, postal workers launched a massive wildcat strike in defiance of anti-strike laws and both postal union officials and the Nixon administration.

While the end of the strike led to substantial wage increases, the reassertion of control by union officials enabled Nixon to demote the post office to the independent agency USPS. The fact that the USPS is forced largely to rely on self-funding has been a key mechanism for decades of cutbacks at the Post Office. Union officials also allowed the flagrantly undemocratic strike ban to continue in order to give themselves leverage against the rank-and-file.

Faced with growing demands for action, the postal unions are attempting to divert workers’ energy behind pathetic letter writing campaigns. Both the National Rural Letter Carriers Association and the American Postal Worker Union have issued statements denouncing the planned move, only to call on their members to write or call their local Congresspeople.

Such a campaign would have been toothless under previous administrations. But it is absurd under conditions where Trump rejects all limits to his power and is setting himself up as a dictator. A comparison could be made to urging German workers to write to their members of the Reichstag to oppose Hitler being made Chancellor in 1933.

The statement by the National Association of Letter Carriers did not even propose this, instead declaring that it was “fighting like hell against any privatization efforts or reorganizational mandates.”

This a lie. The NALC openly supports Delivering for America, a massive restructuring effort begun under the first Trump administration and continued under Biden, involving the closure of over 1,000 post offices as well as mail routes, and the consolidation of operations into a small number of automated facilities.

When DeJoy announced his resignation Monday, the NALC issued a statement praising his supposed “commitment to ensuring the Postal Service remains a vital institution capable of serving the American public for generations to come.”

Currently, the NALC is moving towards binding arbitration, following workers’ rejection of a provocative sellout contract. While claiming to oppose Trump’s power grab, the bureaucracy is helping to continue a system of labor dictatorship which denies workers not only their democratic right to strike, but even the right to vote on their own contract.

The results have been decades of declining living standards for workers and standards of postal service for the public at large. “They are pretty much setting the Post Office up for failure,” one veteran postal worker from New Jersey told the WSW. “Carriers are getting hurt more frequently from running these long routes

and also with the later starting times, you’re out there in the dark. A lot of carriers are getting robbed and assaulted.

“The lousy raise of 1.3 percent that the head of our union [NALC President Brian Renfroe] settled for? He should really be ashamed of himself. We didn’t get any extra compensation after putting our lives on the line during COVID and he couldn’t even acknowledge that.”

A rural letter carrier from Alabama wrote to the WSW:

“Our work conditions are horrible! Full-time carriers are crossing crafts, working off the clock, and there are too many contract violations to count, while management purposely looks the other way! It’s a hostile work environment, seniority is irrelevant; this is not the job I signed up for! I finally made it to career status and I’m treated worse now than when I was at the bottom of seniority as a new hire!”

In opposition to the betrayals of the union apparatus, the Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee has called for workers to “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.

Among postal workers, there is growing interest in Sunday’s public meeting, “Mobilize the working class to save the US Postal Service and other federal programs!”

One postal worker from the Midwest said:

“My office was changed into a Sorting and Delivery Center and things have changed... I worry for the security of myself and all my coworkers and my fellow citizens. I worry about my customers who rely on us for important documents, paychecks, life saving medications... I want to help... I want to be involved and informed.”

“I will bring more [of my coworkers] to the meeting Sunday,” one postal worker from New York City said. “I agree we need a rank and file leadership.”



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