

# WHO NEEDS THE POSTAL SERVICE?



## WE ALL DO! And we need H.R. 8603 to keep the Postal Service a public service.

In 1971, when postal reform took place, 24% of Postal Service revenues came from federal subsidy. Since that time, federal appropriations to the Postal Service have shrunk to only 12% in 1976. When this is combined with rising delivery costs, increased numbers of households demanding service, and double digit inflation, it is no surprise that the Postal Service is in financial trouble!

Yet some people have tried to blame the Postal Workers and the Letter Carriers themselves for postal problems, calling the workers "inefficient." The facts prove them wrong. One means of measuring productivity is a comparison of the pieces of mail processed per man-year. In 1971, it was 120,212; while by 1976, it had risen to 130,564 pieces per man-year. This increase in productivity can be attributed in part to the increased use of machines. Over 60% of the letters are mechanically processed today, compared to 28% in 1972. So actual work hours devoted to mail processing have declined by more than 7% over the last five years, meaning that more than \$1 billion in costs have been avoided. So much for the inefficiency argument! Still this increase in productivity has not been enough to offset the rising costs and inflation.

The new bill before Congress is now H.R. 8603 as amended by the Senate Post Office and Civil Service Committee (in lieu of S.2844). It provides the Postal Service with the funds it needs to maintain a high level of public service demanded by the public. The dollar bill we had in 1971, buys only seventy-two cents today, and the Postal Service is only asking that this loss of purchasing power be restored. The passage of H.R. 8603 would protect a public service that reaches every citizen of our country. It would provide for the following:

- Keep postal rates from rising
- Maintain 6-day delivery
- Keep small post offices open
- Restore the number of deliveries and pick-ups of your mail
- Improve postal service for all Americans
- Set up a Postal Commission to study problems and recommend permanent solutions

If H.R. 8603 is not passed, you can expect rising postal rates, and drastic cuts in deliveries and services.

So the American Postal Workers Union and the National Association of Letter Carriers are puzzled over the furor being

raised over a subsidy for such a worthwhile public service. The care with which Congress seems to be guarding every dime of the proposed postal subsidy would have us think that they watched over every appropriation of funds with similar care.

Was there no outcry when the Coast Guard received \$513 million in subsidies, or when the Department of Commerce was appropriated \$1 billion 877 million for housing payments, or when a half billion dollars was spent for the Bicentennial? We are not questioning the validity of these subsidies, but the Postal Workers and the Letter Carriers feel that the postal subsidy is more crucial to the daily lives of every person in our country. And we can't help but question the priorities of the Executive Branch and the lawmakers who appropriated monies for programs so ridiculous that they have won Senator Proxmire's notorious Golden Fleece Award, which exposes the "biggest, most ridiculous example of government waste." Here are a few of the "winners":

- NASA for spending \$20 million since 1965 to house and research the moon rocks
- The National Science Foundation for a \$260,000 study of passionate love

- A \$102,000 study of the effects of alcohol on the aggressive behavior of sunfish
- A \$57,800 study of the body measurements of airline stewardesses
- A \$500,000 study to determine why rats, monkeys, and humans clench their jaws.

The members of the American Postal Workers Union and the National Association of Letter Carriers strongly suggest that Congress give due consideration to proposed federal subsidies and their effects on the tax payer. There is no other as far-reaching into the daily lives of all Americans. It all becomes a question of priority. Support a valuable public service that you could not do without . . . support the Postal Service, and enact H.R. 8603.

**The Postal Workers and the Letter Carriers need YOUR help!**  
Contact your Senators and Congressmen immediately! Urge early enactment of H.R. 8603.

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**The American Postal Workers Union (AFL-CIO) Francis S. Filbey, General President**  
**The National Association of Letter Carriers (AFL-CIO) James H. Rademacher, President**