



No one's got a corner on brains

Sully and Sally, two full-time regular letter carriers in Sobsatch, Michigan, were meeting for lunch at Harriet's Hash House, conveniently located where their respective routes meet. Discussing current events over Harriet's guacamole pie, they proceed to venture into the macabre state of now.

Sul: Did you read where the Postal Service ran in the red to the tune of half a billion dollars in each of the last two months? I'm worried because I still have 25 years to go on my mortgage.

Sal: You can't lose sleep over something you have no control over. It is what it is. *Que será será.*

Sul: What are you talking about?

Sal: Just like what's happening in this country—home mortgage foreclosures, bank failures, record deficits, double-digit unemployment, layoffs....

Sul: Are you saying that nobody can do anything about anything?

Sal: Right. The Postal Service is losing revenue because of the economy, the Internet age and a decrease in volume, particularly first class mail. You think we can change any of those things?

Sul: What if every postal employee contacted their representatives and senators and asked them to support H.R. 22 and a like bill in the Senate? If passed and signed into law, that would save the Postal Service at least \$2 billion a year. It would give the Postal Service a more reasonable period to prefund future retiree health benefits. No other government agency is required to prefund on the extreme schedule that the Postal Service is presently required to meet.

Sal: It should probably get passed. But they would still need more money to survive. How about cutting down to five-day-a-week delivery? I wouldn't mind having week-ends off.

Sul: You think that's what five-day delivery would do? Think again. Would you like to have Sundays and Tuesdays off forever? Tuesday is the lowest volume day of the week. Guess which day would get dropped? Not to mention *adios* to one-sixth of all the letter carriers. Not to

mention opening the door to the loss of universal service and maintaining the Private Express Statutes.

Sal: What are you talking about?

Sul: You think businesses and patrons wouldn't still demand delivery of mail and parcels on whatever day the Postal Service drops? Congress would hear the clamor, change the law, and private firms would pick up the slack, opening the way for similar delivery on other days.

Sal: OK. But what about the Postal Service's need for more revenue?

Sul: Well, Customer Connect is a start. We haven't even tapped the potential revenue that the Postal Service could enjoy with that. If everyone would do their part, letter carriers would be the saviors of the Postal Service with Customer Connect.

Sal: How do we get everyone to do that?

Sul: Talk. The truth. I don't know anyone who is not interested in saving their job and the company they work for.

Sal: Yeah, I think you're right. And listen, why don't we use the Internet as a friend, not an adversary?

Sul: Huh?

Sal: Look. We got carrier pickup, computers, we deliver to every address in the country. Why doesn't the Service do a tremendous ad campaign. Tell people and businesses that they can use the Internet to have the Postal Service pick up their brake shoes, groceries, shoes, clothing, games, movies, legal documents, everything from across town and have it delivered the same day for a nominal fee. That would increase revenue, wouldn't it?

Sul: Wow, you go, girl! Now all we have to do is get you to postal headquarters.

Sal: I don't think so. We don't have to.

Sul: What do you mean?

Sal: How do you think we're going to be able to succeed with all those other things you've been talking about?

Sul: The NALC?

Sal: Bingo. Now pass the garlic salt.

