

## **Smart Voters Can Change the Course of Government**

**May 28, 2002**

I would like to raise some points on an event soon to affect all Americans. It's a familiar scenario – the high cost of doing business, a cost that keeps escalating primarily due to government inefficiency, greed, pandering and political corruption

It's an old story we Americans have come to accept far too passively. The Post Office is in trouble and the public is being told it must endure the third rate increase in 18 months to float it along until the next inevitable hike.

Why is the Post Office having trouble? Columnist Doug Bandow gave his opinion very succinctly in a recent article: "low productivity, archaic work rules and falling demand."

When private enterprises face similar problems they revamp and fine tune their operations or go out of business. They have no government-enforced monopoly that is constantly being subsidized by the general public. It is like nearly all floundering government programs – change nothing but the rates we pay. More money is the only answer coming from the mouths of public employee unions and their political backers.

In spite of poor performance, guaranteed monopoly revenue has encouraged the post office to expand into other markets: overnight and parcel delivery, prepaid telephone calling cards, packing materials, message services; electronic bill payments and even sponsoring a bicycle racing team.

Postmaster General John E. Botter observed "What other entity in the world has 35,000 retail outlets and limits itself to selling stamps?"

Bandow observes, "But what other entity has a monopoly and still doesn't do its basic job well?"

The Post Office lost \$1.7 billion last year and will post \$2 billion this year in spite of an earlier rate hike that brought in an extra \$3 billion. The coming rate increase will cost the public an extra \$500 million a month and will do nothing to improve the situation.

Every postmaster general, education commissioner, utility head or head of other government enforced monopolies promises dramatic improvements in efficiency and performance with more revenue. The only thing the customer gets is more promises and calls for more money.

The free enterprise system made this nation the great industrial power it once was. Government regulation and the burden of increased taxes necessary to support government monopolies are the principal reasons for this decline.

The people with their vote have the power to change and improve the system.

Charley Reese points out that if people are ignorant or have only a selfish interest in what government can give them, he would rather not see them vote. He would rather let the voters who bothered to learn about the candidates make the decisions. He echoes my sentiments. It is the first step in taking back America.

P.S. Everyone should be aware of the latest phone fraud. An individual identifies himself as an AT&T service technician conducting a test on telephone lines. To complete the test you are asked to touch 9, 0, # and then hang up. Hang up without doing as you are asked! If you do what is asked, the person has full access to your telephone

lines, which enables them to place long distance calls billed to your home. This scam originated from many local jails and prisons.

My question to this particular predicament is how do prisoners have unsupervised access to phones in the first place? It should not be surprising that they do or that it is one more unnecessary cost to taxpayers, thanks to the self same politicians responsible for the debacles mentioned earlier.

It requires little research to learn who they are. I have and am happy to do my part to remove them from office. It's a matter of common sense and doing what's right, but sadly, that's something a majority of New York voters have a hard time doing.