

## Like a Letter

ter carrier) that requires no higher-level education or formal training, and no stressful, high-pressure work, is really sticking it to the stamp-buying public. Cut wages and institute a productivity bonus.

Privatization is the best solution to the Postal Service's problems. "But service won't be as good, or as secure," the postal unions would respond. Not true. United Parcel Service delivers package mail that the Postal Service could not make money on. Not only does UPS do it world-wide and very successfully, but also profitably. Let forward-thinking managers and productive workers operate a private service, and Mr. Frank could truthfully boast that the American people are getting "the best [mail] service in the world."

BRUCE R. HUTTON  
Letter Carrier

Nashville, Tenn.

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My wife and I just returned from delivering the mail. No, we are not Postal Service employees, we are part of a growing workforce, unpaid, unnoticed, but carrying out the Reagan-Bush philosophy of private citizens doing what government no longer does.

Each day we receive at our house on East 24th Street several pieces of mail addressed to the equivalent number on East 21st, 22nd and 23rd streets, as well as to our immediate neighbors. Apparently, not only does the Postal Service consider mail on time if it arrives within three days, but it also considers mail delivered if it's dropped off within three blocks of the intended recipient.

Through conversations with friends and neighbors, we have learned that we are only a small part of a vast army of unpaid deliverers of last resort, spurred by the hope that if we deliver mail intended for our neighbors, maybe they will release our improperly delivered mail. But the experience is not entirely negative. We have even met new neighbors and gotten some good exercise while spending time together. And we have that satisfied feeling that our voluntary efforts will permit the Postal Service to limit the 1990 price for its monopoly service to 30 cents.

ERNEST BROD

Brooklyn, N.Y.

## Turning Back the Tide

tulations on your excellent Jan. 5 page-one article on Michelin. I hope you will consider more articles showing successful companies that have taken long-term approaches to achieve marketing and, ultimately, corporate success. I also hope this will help to re-educate American businessmen in order to reverse the decline of our industrial position.

## No Milk and Honey In Land of Worker Bees

I read with fright the Jan. 4 editorial-page article in which Gary Burtless asserts Americans work more nowadays because they like to, and if they did not do so they would only waste time watching television.

There are many reasons why Americans work more, but the primary one is that we are poorer. Housewives need to work to pay the bills. Though I earn 12 times what my father did at my age, I cannot afford a house, as he could. Working mothers indicate national poverty, not happy worker bees.

Benjamin K. Hunnicutt's companion article suggests work is now our substitute religion. Most of us are not its apostles, but converts by sword. I am a lawyer—I found my huge big-firm-associate salary not worth the sacrifice of all leisure time. I saw a partner severely berate an associate because he left a major closing to go home after working 40 straight hours instead "of grabbing a couple of hours' sleep on the floor, like the rest of us." I was criticized for seeing my father the weekend before he had major surgery rather than documenting a corporate refinancing. Incidents like this led me to leave and enter private practice. I would rather have time with my wife and daughter than money.

But Mr. Burtless sees a world where the working classes are desperate for overtime not because they need to eat, but because that is the best way to fill their vacuous minds. He provides intellectual justification for those who seek to impose a bleak, grinding, culturally impoverished future upon us.

JEREMY D. WEINSTEIN

San Francisco

