



## Royal Oak: *Lest we forget*

The actions by postal management during this period (1990-1991), at the Royal Oak Post Office were under investigation by members of Congress due to reports of horrific working conditions being reported to them by employees and lower level managers.

There were also complaints by customers of cutbacks to service which had been provided to them in the past.

The workforce throughout the Royal Oak District was under attack by over zealous managers who used whatever tactics needed to disrupt their lives.

This same group of managers had been investigated in a GAO (Government Accounting Office) investigation done in Indianapolis for the same problems 3 years prior ..and nothing was done!!

They were brought up to the Royal Oak District to spread their acts of aggression against the workforce and to do anything they wanted, in order to "get the numbers".

It isn't as if there wasn't already a group of "wannabe thugs" in Royal Oak, this just made a blending of malcontents being allowed to do whatever they wished to created havoc on anyone that got in their way.

These actions were allowed and condoned by those in higher echelon management positions from Detroit, Chicago, and Washington D.C. They wouldn't end up taking the heat so why should they care.

They (management) got away with it in Indiana so therefore they must have felt protected in one way or another. To quote one of the managers at that time, Christopher Carlisle, "Who do you think they (Congressional Investigators) are going to believe a level 5 carrier or a level 25 manager?"

Yes, it was quite apparent by the conditions in Royal Oak, that it was just a matter of time before a tragedy was going to occur. If it wasn't Thomas McIlvane, it would've been someone else!!

This tragedy was preventable months before the shooting occurred. Congressional staffers had met with postal authorities concerning information that they had been sent by employees documenting the worsening conditions. Management continued to ignore these problems and defended those whom were causing the turmoil by saying any problems were being blown out of proportion.

If these managers would have been removed in the beginning even as far back as 1989, when the Indianapolis GAO study had been done, it would have made a difference.

Another way to have avoided this tragedy would have been for the Postal Inspection Service to have provided security. They were contacted 2 days prior, but those who had the position of authorizing either postal Inspectors or Postal Police ignored the pleas for help!!

Why wasn't the national union getting involved when they were made privy to reviewing "the black book" (records kept on complaints throughout the Royal Oak District concerning harassment, threats, and improper actions taken against the workforce?)

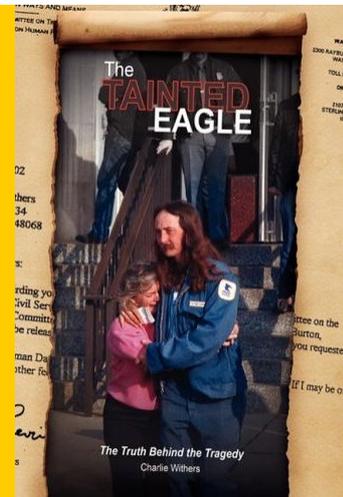
For years we've demanded accountability, and for years, nothing has been done!!

There is still autocratic management going on throughout the USPS and nothing is being addressed.

At a National Convention of the NALC, while the past president Vince Sombrotto was chairperson, a motion that carried to make a national accountability day was approved. The local of Royal Oak wanted the date of November 14, the date of the tragedy to remember and hold future management to be accountable. The national executive council after meeting prior to the convention moved to change the day of accountability to be every February 14. The body at the convention moved the motion to acceptance to have February 14 as Accountability day.

This year the national officers are silent for the day of accountability. The tragedy is not in the fact the national officers did nothing to honor the accountability day. The tragedy is that if we forget, we can not progress toward change for better human working conditions every time the budget constraints demand, as the demand now rears in the ears of present management rank and file.

To find out more of the documented accounts of this history, in which the "Violence Against the Workplace" agreement as signed by Vince Sombrotto, because of the conditions management created, without accountability, I would recommend the book "[Tainted Eagle](#)" by the union steward of Royal Oak, Charlie Withers. His labor will be a historical documented account of his pursuit for accountability and his findings in his pursuit toward transparency in this tragic event that lead to the death of lives that could have been avoided and the battle to get information from a bureaucracy held firm to preserve its power.



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