



# American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

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WILLIAM BURRUS  
Executive Vice President

September 1, 1983

James C. Gildea  
Assistant Postmaster General  
Labor Relations Department  
United States Postal Service  
475 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20260

Dear Mr. Gildea:

I have recently discussed with your representative, John Mularski, the dispute surfacing in the Central Region over implementation of RI-399, the Separation of Craft Assignments. We hear that the General Manager, Labor Relations, Central Region has reached agreement with Mail Handler representatives resolving numerous grievances citing the decision of Arbitrator Bloch in Case No. H8S-5F-C-8027. APWU is, of course, not bound by such Mail Handler settlements. However, the General Manager, Labor Relations for the Central Region has also issued instructions to District Directors, E & LR, with which the APWU disagrees.

The American Postal Workers Union rejects the rationale that the Block decision is applicable to any separation of duties referred to in RI-399. The Union interprets the Block award as limiting the employer's right to make cross-craft assignments under the provisions of Article 7, Section 3B. and C. which clearly apply to "temporary" assignments of employees from one craft to another. The Block award made no reference to RI-399 and in no way dealt with RI-399. RI-399 and the Gamser award in Case No. AD-NAT-311 interpret and apply this issue in a totally different fashion creating an orderly pro-

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cedure for the transfer of duties. RI-399 requires that "no postal installation shall declare employees excess, increase the number of employees and/or increase work hours solely as a result of this instruction." Arbitrator Gamser interpreted the Regional Instructions and stated that the joint manning of certain facilities "does not alter the present dictate of Regional Instruction 399 which would not require that practice be disturbed." (Page 13, last sentence). And at Page 18 of the award, he states that "(N)o employee presently performing any of the disputed operations of (sic) functions is to be replaced except by attrition. No hard and fast demarcations have been made. No wholesale disruptions or reassignments of functions or operations is contemplated."

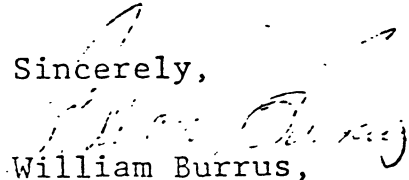
Section 11, D. of RI-399 provides that "no employee's current duty assignment will be modified by removing functions designated to another primary craft until and unless such duty assignment becomes vacant through attrition."

These instructions and interpretations have worked well in the transfer of duties from one craft to another during the past approximately 5 years. The Block award was in no way intended to modify or disturb this procedure.

The Union requests that these instructions relying upon the Block award be repudiated and the parties return to the process intended by RI-399 and supported by the Gamser award.

Please respond at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

  
William Burrus,

Executive Vice President

WB:mc