



American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

817 14TH STREET, N. W., WASHINGTON, D. C. 20005

53

August 27, 1973

Mr. E. T. Klassen
Postmaster General
U.S. Postal Service
12th and Pa. Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20260

Dear Mr. Klassen:

A very serious problem faces the Clerical Craft of the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO in that there appears to have been some instructions issued either from the U.S. Postal Service Headquarters, or one or more of the U.S. Postal Service Regional Headquarters, which is causing a number of postmasters to embark upon a program of reviewing existing clerical positions to ascertain which clerical positions should be reverted and replaced by a Level 4 Mail Handler Position.

It is alleged that this is necessary because of the language which appeared in the Mail Handler Memorandum of Understanding agreed to by former Senior Assistant Postmaster General Blaisdell after the conclusion of the 1971 national negotiations. This Memorandum of Understanding was set forth in a letter dated December 8, 1971 of Mr. Blaisdell and Mail Handler National Director Lonnie L. Johnson. In the new Agreement (Mail Handler Supplemental Agreement) there appears Section 12 entitled Mail Handlers Memorandum of Understanding which is essentially a repeat in contract language of Mr. Blaisdell's December 8, 1971 letter.

On the basis of that letter, we find that postmasters are surveying post office clerk positions and removing from post office clerk positions those duties which they believe fall within basic mail handler duties listed in Key Position 8, Mail Handler Level 4, thus creating additional mail handler positions and decreasing the number of post office clerk positions.

We do not object to a literal translation of Mr. Blaisdell's letter of December 8, 1971 and to a literal translation of the language which now appears in the Mail Handlers Supplemental Agreement. As we understand both of these documents, it is intended that wherever a full

eight-hour assignment exists comprised solely of mail handler duties as outlined in Key Position 8, that position belongs to the Mail Handler Craft. We cannot, however, agree that where a post office clerk position exist, and has existed for a long period of time, which contains duties outlined in Key Position 8, as well as duties outlined in Key Position 12 and 13, Post Office Distribution Clerk and Window Clerk, that these positions should now be emasculated in order to provide new Mail Handler positions.

We do not believe that any close reading of Mr. Blaisdell's letter and the Memorandum of Understanding should be a permit to indicate to any management person that existing post office clerk positions should now be segmented, as is apparently taking place in too many installations across the country. Nor do we believe that a determination concerning the craft designation of any position in the Postal Service should take place at any level lower than the U.S. Postal Service Headquarters level and, then only after the affected Craft Union has had an opportunity to fully discuss the matter.

We, therefore, respectfully ask that a directive be issued from the Headquarters level, stopping the existing program pending a full-scale meeting with representatives of this Union and whomever else the Postal Service may wish to include.

Your early consideration and advice will be appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Francis S. Filbey,
General President.

FSF:gd.

CC: Darrell F. Brown
Senior Assistant Postmaster General