

LOCAL 88 NIXIES

VOLUME IV

EXTRA

JULY 1969

A REPORT ON CONSULATION ON SCHEDULING AND STAFFING PLAN

In order for all members of local 88 to understand more fully the information covered in the recent labor management meeting in regard to the scheduling and staffing as proposed by management, we will try to here first pose the questions as asked by local 88 and then give management's answers.

Question: Is the concept of managements plan that the mail is to be cleaned up four times daily, at these times, midnight for the trains, four AM for the star routes, 8 AM for the boxing, and at 8:30 PM for the semi truck star routes?

Answer: Yes, this is correct was managements reply.

Question: We then asked which if any of the 4 times mentioned were we experiencing difficulty in achieving this goal?

Answer: Managements reply was that they were using the greater portion of their overtime prior to 8 AM in order to complete the boxing.

Question: The overtime used to clean up the boxing surely does not amount to as much as 80 hours per day?

Answer: We really couldn't say just how many hours are involved.

Question: Wouldn't you agree that the time probably with almost no exceptions would be closer to 5 or 7 hours per day and that this also does not occur every day?

Answer: This could be true as to the overtime but this is not the only consideration. We plan on adding to the responsibilities of the all night tour.

Question: What would these extra duties cover?

Answer: Tour one will withdraw the about 60% directs that are included in the 3rd class matter that comes in on train 7.

Question: What is the purpose of Tour one doing this work? These cirs will not leave Fargo before 8:30 PM when the semi-trucks leave. Is this correct?

Answer: Managements only answer was that they wished to have tour one withdraw the 60% directs and it was correct that the cirs would not leave before 8:30 PM.

Question: It is then a fact that this work by tour one is the same work now being performed by tour two, and we will now stockpile this mail until the midday tour arrives?

Answer: This statement was somewhat denied and then management stated that circs would continue to be worked by the day crew. (It wasn't clear at all by whom this work was going to be performed.)

Question: It is a fact that about 90 man hours on an average day was credited to tour one for working these circs, where in actual practice all this work was performed by tour 2, and that tour 2 received no credit for this mail?

Answer: The first preparing of this mail would be done by tour one to get the 60% directs out.

Question: Would the circs for Fargo then go immediately to the city and still be delivered to the patrons that same day.

Answer: No.

Question: For what purpose then is tour one (on 10% night differential pay) preparing this mail, which was a greater portion of the work performed by the 15 men being declared excess to tour 2? The circs going to the rest of the state do not leave until 8:30 PM and the Fargo circs are not distributed in time for that mornings carrier delivery.

Answer: The mail is available on tour one. (The fact that this mail arrives almost at the very end of the tour ins't being considered. Neither is the fact that working this mail by tour one does not advance any dispatch or delivery.)

Question: Why was this mail recorded as being available at 4 or 5 AM when in fact it was not even dumped until long past 6 AM by the men now on tour two?

Answer: The mail was recorded as available when it arrived at the back dock by the mail messenger who hauls it from the depot.

Question: How can any mail be available while it is still in a sack? (It must first be dumped to determine the amount of working mail.)

Answer: It was all recorded in this manner.

Question: Why was all the mail that arrived on either a semi-truck or set out car reported as available when the first load arrived at the back dock? In many cases the last load didn't arrive until 3 or 4 hours later, but it was all recorded as available when the first load got to the post office, while the greater part was still in the set out car.

Answer: It was recorded as it arrives.

Statement by local 88: This is not true as the hourly count sheets show only one entry for Train 7 and also for the Omaha semi. The Omaha semi was also recorded as being available at 4 AM, when in actual practice this truck is not unloaded until past 7 AM. (Employees that come to work at 8:30 AM have seen this truck still being unloaded at that late time. It is also reported that some of this parcel post is being stored in the basement in order to relieve the congestion on the first floor.)

Question: Management maintains that there are 15 men excess to tour 2. Is it not strange that we usually have two wheeled utility carts of raw North Dakota mail (about 30 to 50 feet) which comes into the post office at 9 AM but which is almost never worked at 3:30 PM because there are no employees available to work this mail, when it is available.

Answer: Managements reply was that it doesn't take tour 3 long to work this mail. (No one can hardly consider this an adequate answer to the question.)

Local 88 was trying to get management to show the need of removing 15 men from the day tour. The answers by management surely do not justify the great disruption of work hours that are contained in managements scheduling and staffing plan. After more than one hour of argument on this subject, local 88 finally made the flat statement that in our opinion management was deliberately removing men from the day tour and establishing additional jobs on night tours to work the exact same mail during the night hours. Management made no comment to this statement.

Question: When is this proposal to go into effect?

Answer: August 23, 1969 with a posting date of July 11, 1969.

Question: Is it managements intention to post in accordance with the proposals given local 88 on June 27, 1969?

Answer: Yes.

Local 88 then informed management that in that case we would be required to file a violation of national agreement, as the proposal was in direct violation of Article XII C 4 b,c,d of the national agreement. After some additional discussion the meeting broke up and management was going to check with the regional office.

Nowhere during the meeting did management really come out and point out areas where the present staffing is particularly bad, or in need of major overhaul. In fact the accounting office records indicate that the production figures as being fairly good.

During the discussions management was asked, Why are we changing when the present system seems to be working pretty good? The only time management admitted to having trouble in cleaning up at one of the four designated times was for the 8AM boxing in the morning.

Managements answer here was somewhat puzzling but went something like-- even if your old car works pretty good its real nice to get a new car.

Management was also questioned as to what assurances there were that this new scheduling and staffing was going to work as well or better than the old schedules.

Their answer was that there were no assurances but that it should work out very well.

LET'S TELL IT LIKE IT HAPPENED

It is true our post office had what is called a survey and this was supervised by persons from the regional office. We have no quarrels with this at all. What we were concerned with is that we were led to

believe that when something like this is done, we were to be told the reason for the survey and informed what may be the result and the effect on employees of the survey. As has happened in the past, we were not consulted and nothing was explained at all until everything was definite. That is, the decision had been made to add eleven men to the all night, surplussing men from tour 2. The creation of a 12:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. tour. No consideration was given to the impact on the employees and their families. On tour 2, for an example, you must have about 23 or more years of seniority to be able to bid and hold a position with Saturday and Sunday off. We formally had relief positions which had worked out excellent for the local post office and the employee, as they could have Sunday with another week day off during the week. Only two of these remain. Most positions now will have both mid-week days off. These will not work out as well for the post office but change is the decision. These employees might just as well forget about going to church.

Now about the 12:30 to 9:00 p.m. tour. Local management could not cite any advantage to this tour, just that will change. Local box patrons who formerly could expect to receive the air mail or air lift from their boxes after the flights arrive at either 8:45 or 11:30 a.m. cannot expect much of this anymore because there will not be enough "Indians" left to tend to the shop. If you check the questions and answers, you will see the question was asked who was going to work this mail that arrives on these flights and the answer was a shrug of the shoulders and "I don't know!" We were told that we have a surplus of manpower on tour 2 but here again take another look at the answers and the question regarding the abolishing of all those positions on tour 2. For an example, we are abolishing 15 positions but there are carts of North Dakota mail that is left unworked until 3:30 p.m. or later every day. In other words, we are stock piling all this first class mail. To make a long story short, we are taking men off a tour just to take them off even though we cannot work all the mail that is available to work. Is this sensible of a good business practice?

There is only one small problem area and that is occasionally there is a very minor problem getting all the boxing in by 8 o'clock a.m. It would seem natural to add a man or two to the day tour (tour 2), but we are led to believe this is forbidden. Why, we don't know. We have been informed that there will be some substitutes converted to regular status and if there is this minor problem with boxing, why not put one or two additional people on the all night tour to see if this doesn't eliminate the problem. But this was not considered the thing to do either.

There will be ten or eleven men added to tour 1. Why? Your guess is as good as anyones. Are they going to work third class mail and parcel post just in case there is a problem with some box mail in the morning? Keep in mind that all these men will be getting 10 per cent night pay and if they work parcel post, they will be working the same mail now worked by the day tour who do not get night differential pay.

Procedures. What are they? We were not informed about all these changes until they were all definite. We asked if we could submit a proposal to be considered? We got an answer. "Sure, just as long as it agrees with ours." It is quite apparent we were not intended to receive this information too soon, but supervisors knew it weeks before us.

Is it any wonder the morale has dropped and employees are leaving the postal service? You answer the question yourself.

Do you suppose that the supervision staff of this office needs a survey to see if they are utilizing their personal to fullest extent?