

Rank And File Team REPORTS

FREE

May, 1976

LABOR DONATED

Where is L.V. 1157?

"This take-over of the local by an administrator is awful high-handed--ignoring the wishes of 1800 members."
--a member of Local 1157

If you are a member of Local #1157, you may be wondering what happened to your local. On May 18, I. W. Abel and District Director Joseph Kender slapped a trusteeship on Local 1157. (This means that all local officers are suspended, that Abel has appointed an Administrator named Andrew Toth to govern the local).

It is believed that an anonymous letter from a member of Local 1157 was sent to the District Director alleging financial irregularities within the local. These charges have served as a basis for Kender to conduct an "investigation" and then claim that the local could not handle its own affairs, and that an outside administrator was needed to run it.

UNION POLITICS

To find out what's behind this take-over, let's get down to the nitty-gritty. "Detroit Joe" is up for re-election next February. ("Detroit Joe" is a nickname for Director Kender. When he was first elected to that position, he campaigned to bring the USWA District offices downtown. Recently, he closed all the offices downtown and near the Cleveland steel mills, and moved them to a plush new building on Detroit Rd. in Lakewood.) In 1973, he narrowly won re-election against 3 candidates.



"I gotta get that nigger off my back."

Frank Valenta, a USWA staffman who came in second, has since been transferred out of this district to Indianapolis where he can't cause Kender much trouble. Now Kender must be worried about the upcoming election.

Local 1157 has been led in the past 3 years by Al Forney (pres.) and Slate. RAFT has held important differences with this slate. For example, the slate has not taken a stand on important issues like the right to strike. They have not seen that it will take a rank and file movement to pressure the International into winning back rights into the contract.

But in this dispute, RAFT is 100% against the International's interference in the local, which can only harm us. Al Forney and the majority of his slate are black. Kender is playing the same old game

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"QUALITY STARTS WITH ME"

As you know, this is the motto of R.S.C. As an employee of this company for three years, I personally call this an insult to my intelligence.

When I hear a title such as this, I think of myself first. Then of the company. As of May 5, my fellow employees and I had a safety meeting with our foreman, who in turn informed us that the company was going for quality, and if anything went wrong, we were going to pay.

May 13. General turn foreman explained that the weather was changing. If the company lost quality because of employees taking off, we would have to pay. Our work records have personals and GS-29's that we don't even know about.

In my three years at Republic Steel, I can count my safety meetings on one hand. They wait until someone gets hurt, then they want to give safety meetings. After a man has been burned half to death, they want to give everyone a GS-29. Now it's two GS-29's a week, and one extra if there is an accident.

In the last month, I have seen 4 workers burned. All because the people running the company don't care.

Quality starts with your workers --the workers that produce the steel for you.

We need the right to strike. Join together as a unit.

-- Mr. Kevin Willingham, BOF

FREE GARY TYLER

Gary Tyler is a 17-year old black youth from Louisiana. He is currently on death row.

Gary was on a school bus filled with black students when it was attacked by whites. Someone shot a gun and a 13-year old white boy was dead. Rather than finding the true murderer, the authorities found it necessary to pin the blame on a black, even though:

*The black students in the bus had all gotten down onto the floor of the bus because they saw a white man carrying a shotgun.

*The only witness against Gary testified later that she had lied because police officers threatened her.

*The first two searches of the bus found nothing. Only a third search after the bus was at the police station turned up a gun in an 8" slit in a seat that had been "overlooked" on the first two searches.

*When the shot was fired, the police searched all of the (black) students on the bus, but not the (white) people attacking the bus. And in a town with a 25% black population, they used an all white jury to convict Gary.

The system of courts that will not give justice to a black youth is the same one that has always favored the rich over working people. If Gary Tyler can be executed, than any of us can be framed.

We urge you to support this young man's struggle for his life. For more information, call 321-2065.

FREE GARY TYLER RALLY

NOON, SAT, MAY 29

PUBLIC SQUARE

LOCAL 1157 TRUSTEESHIP

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of racism that the company plays --namely, keep the workers divided by race. Added to this is the fact that Forney is willing to stand up to the company and to Kender. This type of independent black man and independent union official is too much for Kender to take.

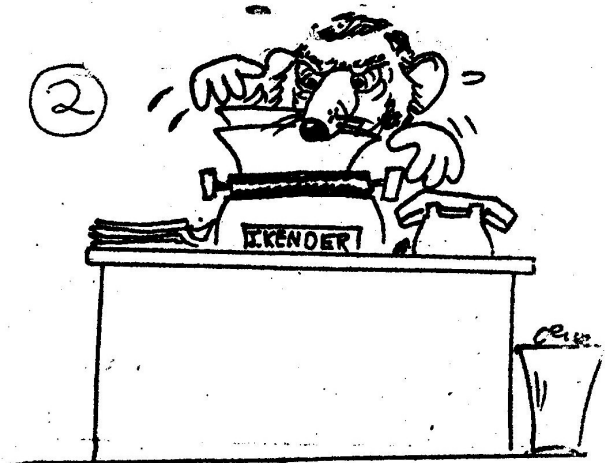
When Al Forney's slate won by a larger margin this time, Kender evidently must have decided that he had to discredit Forney before next year's elections. So he seized upon some alleged "financial irregularities" and the rest is history.

CONSIDER THESE FACTS

*The International Union performed a regular audit of local 1157's books in Dec 1975. Everything was ok. In April, after the alleged charges, the books were called in for special audit. Word leaked out to RAFT Reports that Detroit Joe spent consid-

erable time in Republic Steel's Industrial Relations office searching to find a violation. There was even at least one day when the local president was in the building negotiating for the local, while the District Director without even informing Forney was snooping around to see if he could find something.

RAFT Reports was told that Forney asked Republic Steel Vice-president Storer why Kender was allowed to keep coming back to check personnel files. Storer replied something to the effect that, "I don't want no trouble with Abe." (I.W. Abel) This is another example of co-operation between top union officials and management directed against the rank and file.



Does anyone have any idea where an anonymous letter might have come from?

*Audits are also done regularly by the local trustees. Just prior to this year's election, Robert Greene, Local 1157 trustee, attempted to get the financial books from Chris Stamatis, Financial Secretary (who was on the losing Humphries slate).

Stamatis told Greene that he would not turn over the books. Instead he would, IF the local gave him lost time, allow the trustees to look at the books while he was watching. This is contrary to normal practice -- the trustees have usually examined the books on their own.

*Why did the first request for the audit come from Kender rather than from the International Auditor? And why has the International not yet (as of May 24) stated what the charges are?

*If Forney was not to be trusted in running the local, why did Toth offer to let Forney represent it at a civil rights conference in New Orleans?

*In Local 4309 (Office and Technical at Republic Steel), financial irregularities were discovered and charges pressed against the local president Spero. He was given a 6 month suspension (the v.p. took over) and a \$1.00 (!) fine.

In Local 1098, there were three who were caught with their hand in the till (getting paid lost time while

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LOCAL 1157 TRUSTEESHIP
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also getting paid from the company). For example, Al Klimkowski was found to have received more than a \$1000 over what he should have gotten. His only penalty was to pay back the money.

In neither of these cases -- even though charges were proven -- did the International find it necessary to take over the local. Why the different treatment for Local 1157? Does Detroit Joe have a policy of reward your friends and punish your enemies?

The buck does not stop at Joe Kender. Joe Kender's boss, I.W. Abel has backed him all the way. It was I.W. Abel who sent the letter suspending Local 1157. It is no coincidence that this is the same man who the steel companies' top negotiator was referring to when he said, "This is the time to be grateful for good leadership."

There are two aspects to the union, the rank and file and the officials. Unless the rank and file gets organized, the officials will have a free hand.

ATTEND HEARING

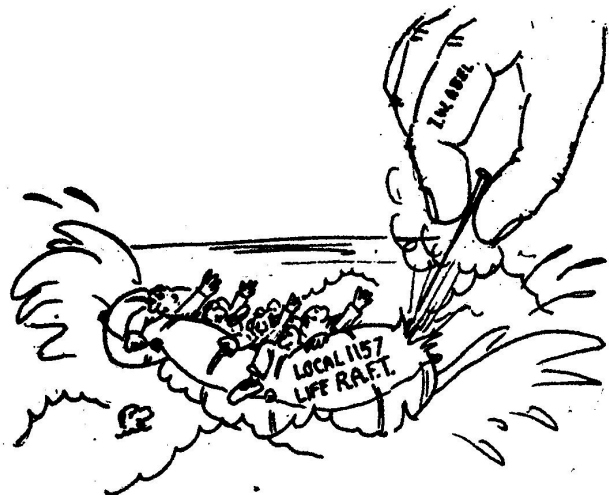
WED, JUNE 2, 9:00 AM

at USWA District Office,
14600 Detroit Rd, Lakewood

(Charges are supposed to be made public at this hearing.)



"Abe! You gotta help me. He's after my job, and we don't want any spades in our deck."



Don't make big waves in a little boat.

SHORTS



rank and file is basis for union's power

WHY RAFT?

Some people have asked why have a group like Rank and File Team (RAFT)? Why not just support good union officials?

There are several reasons why rank and file organization is necessary.

1) rank and file organization stands simply for the rank and file, from our own point of view, for our own needs. We let the companies and their high paid officials look out for themselves. Unfortunately, all too often the union officials forget which side they are supposed to be on. Rank and file organization can help keep the pressure on.

2) Even good officials often get caught up in the negotiations and legal requirements. Rank and file organization helps keep the pressure on and can give a good official more backing. Without a rank and file movement to keep them honest, many officials such as Joe Kender who talked about the rank and file when they were running for office, forget all about what they stood for as soon as they get into that position of power.

3) The company is organized, the union is organized, we need to be organized too! As recent events show, one local is still at the mercy of the International. Rank and file organization needs to be spread from local to local. This way we will not be isolated from each other. And we will be able to put more pressure on the International, which after all, makes most of the rules for this union.

4) The strength of the union is not smart negotiators, but it is the rank and file.

So, if you agree, get with it, join RAFT, and let's make some changes!

STRIP MILL: The metallurgical dept at P-building in the 98" Cold mill has a safety problem. There is a condition that exists because of flooding caused by a leaky roof. These employees have to work with electricity, which is very dangerous.

Mr. Malinek, who is head of the met dept, informed the workers that when business picks up (it already has!), it would be taken care of. That is ridiculous! An unsafe condition needs to be taken care of immediately.

This needs to be remedied now! The safety dept has been advised, but nothing has been done yet. . . .

A few months ago, RAFT Reports reported that the stockers in M-building were given the work of the weighman's job, which was eliminated. For cutting out the job of a fellow union member, the stockers were supposed to get a 1-point (10¢/hr.) increase. But even this paltry increase has not yet come. WHY? . . .

Several employees around the plant have told RAFT Reports of long delays in getting Metropolitan Insurance to pay health claims. More on this in the next issue. Meanwhile, if you have any complaints, contact RAFT. . . .

(a) BOF Charging aisle craneman Chuck Kronik told BOF supervisors and others that the trim bins on the charging floor were about to fall down. Kronik urged that the bins be emptied because they would not last the 5 days till down turn. No reply.

(b) Kronik then approached ass't superintendent Kohler and advised him of same. Kohler's reply: what are you a structural engineer--we'll take care of it.

(c) end result: a couple days later the trim bins fell, completely severed from the charge floor. Anyone underneath would have been instantly killed. . . .

CONDOLENCES DEP'T: If you think you had a bad year financially last year, stop feeling sorry for yourself. Pity poor Wm. De Lancy, president of Republic Steel, who last year suffered an income drop of \$47,000 -- more than most of us made in the last 3 years! We hope he was able to manage on only \$274,000 (not counting stocks, etc.) Our sympathy is also extended to Republic Vice-Pres. Waldo who suffered an income drop last year of \$33,000, down to a cool 178 grand.

RAFT

RANK AND FILE TEAM
Box 99004, Cleve 44199
phone: 391-2286

I would like more information on RAFT

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE Local #