



'ANGUS BARKS'

By Jeff Francis
AEG Executive Board

Trouble in Plant I

Two disciplinary suspensions issued last week by Plant I management are unfair and unwarranted. The circumstances surrounding both cases should be a concern to all members.

POOR PLANNING

The first case involves an engine lathe operator with 3 years service who arrived new in 1-74 on August 23rd. He was given seven days training, at most, on some of the most critical final turn operations in RPMO. He was given planning that was faulty and incomplete. He was told to train with a disgruntled engine lathe operator of 35 years, who was retiring on Sept 1st, due to a previous disciplinary action. Plant I management was fully aware of all these circumstances.

The new engine lathe operator did the best he could. He took detailed notes of the instructions he was given by the veteran operator. On his second day he was cutting parts. He followed the planning. Where the planning was silent, he followed his written notes. According to testimony by co-workers and inspectors from his old area and new area, this is an operator who cares about his work, and makes sure his dimensions are cut to nominal size.

But the directions he was given caused him to leave false cuts on 11 parts that escaped to the customer. The flaws were not visible, so they got by final inspection, but they can be felt with a dental pick.

When the non-conformances were discovered, Plant I brought the parts back and fixed them all. But it was a black mark on Plant I's reputation, and a black mark for the manager of Plant I. So naturally, management's reaction is to suspend the hourly guy.

For the Union, the clincher came on Oct 20th, when the Plant I Compliance Manager revised the planning by adding specific directions for avoiding false cuts, adding 3 detailed drawings, and adding a dental pick. Any machinist with an ounce of objectivity who reads the old planning and new planning will see why the Union says this suspension is unjustified.

HEALTH BY HYPOCRITES

The second case involves an auto lathe operator in 2-74 who walks at lunchtime. On 5 days management claims his walk exceeded 18 minutes. The time periods are too small to claim abuse of Company time. Instead he is accused of misvouchering. The evidence against him includes secret spying done by the Plant I Compliance Manager, and video clips from perimeter cameras pointed in-plant. On none of the 5 days did the Company sit down with him or his supervisor and ask for an explanation of his vouchers. The Union contends his vouchers are accurate.

Beyond that, everyone knows the Company actively encourages walking at lunchtime. They painted a perimeter path, distributed pedometers, promoted Health by Numbers, organized and advertised plant wide walks & set up water stations.

That Plant I management will stoop to this level of personal headhunting, suggests we should do the same. Our members know which managers abuse company time, in far more serious ways, and the Union is prepared to make personal and public accusations, if that's the name of the game in Plant I.

Last week stewards and members in Bldg 74 tried to convince individual managers these suspensions were the wrong way to go. Training, job procedures, spying and vouchering are explosive issues in Plant I. Our advice went unheeded. Starting with the new year, we will take the next step, to advise our members on how to best protect themselves in Plant I.

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