

Staff Series

Murphy, Daniel J.

1944

April 6, 1944

GENERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

Mr. Daniel J. Murphy, 3rd Vice-President
4111 Forest Park Boulevard
St. Louis, Missouri

Dear Sir and Brothers:

Local Union No. 337, Food and Beverage Drivers of Detroit have had a serious time lately in maintaining its agreement with its employers. With one of its large employers who had a strictly union shop agreement with our union which even included the check off, the drivers were averaging about \$81.00 per week on salary and commission. Four of the drivers out of a possible one hundred in this employment, in violation of our agreement and without taking it up with the local union or with the business agent, went to the employer and asked him to violate the agreement by not withholding monthly dues in the future which was in accordance with our agreement. The employer told them that he had to carry out the agreement and that he was glad to do so.

Those four men then asked for the employer to open up the wage scale again violating the rules of the union. The employer said no—that if he was demanded to by the union in the regular form he would do so.

The employer notified the union of the actions of these four drivers. The union preferred charges against them, summoned them before the board—some of them appeared and some of them did not. The trial went on and the unanimous decision of the Local Executive Board was that they were guilty of disloyalty to their local and violation of the laws and rules of the local and violation of the agreement between the local union and the employers, which agreement was approved when entered into about a year ago by the union unanimously. The trial went on in the regular form and the men were found guilty and the penalty was expulsion from the union.

Those men did not avail themselves of the opportunity in our laws to appeal to the Joint Council and further to the International Union.

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The local union notified the employer that they were no longer members of the local and that in accordance with the agreement they could not be retained in the service. The employer complied with the agreement and advised the men their services were no longer required.

They then encouraged the other drivers to come out in sympathy and with the result that all of the trucks were tied up. There are over 100 men involved.

We have reason to believe that these four men were under cover agents working from within the CIO International Union of United Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Employees of America. They applied for admission in this United Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Employees, Local Union in Detroit. They were received with open arms and this International Union and its affiliated local unions are financially aiding and carrying on the fight against our union and they have given harbor and encouragement and membership to these rebels who were expelled from the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

The Joint Council of Detroit immediately took up this fight against our union and our employers and decided to protect the employer and they, therefore, banned the trucks with drivers from other unions and they were headed by Organizer Bennett, Bert Brennan and James Hoffa. They were successful in making the deliveries. There are about 35 or 40 of those members and officers of our union who have come from other locals carrying on the deliveries. The fight is pretty bitter. This thing has been going on for several weeks.

Three of the representatives of our unions in Detroit appeared before me here today headed by Organizer Bennett. They told me the story and convinced me that the International Union should give some financial assistance to this local union of ours because of the fact that the local unions in Detroit already have contributed twelve or fifteen thousand dollars and cannot go on indefinitely and because it is a fight for the preservation and protection of the International Union.

They are willing to carry on as best they can but it is my personal judgment that we should give the financial help in the protection of our unions against raids made on them by the CIO Organization referred to above.

This is not a strike. This is a rebellion against the proper discipline in accordance with our laws of four men who broke their obligation and were betraying their local union and the International Union.

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It is my judgment that we are within the law, if we desire to do so, of making a donation of \$2000 per week to the local union No. 337, Food and Beverage Drivers of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, located in Detroit. It costs more than this to carry on the agitation in the controversy of the preservation of our unions against a raiding dual organization.

The Joint Council and affiliated unions agreed to pay any other expense and they ask for no refund of the money they already expended. At least they have not done so up to now.

It must be remembered that Detroit has the largest CIO membership of any city in America.

I want you to send me your vote by wire, voting yes or no, do you approve of a donation for organizing and protection purposes of \$2000 per week to be paid to Local 337, Food and Beverage Drivers of Detroit.

Fraternally yours,

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GENERAL PRESIDENT