

Live Bait & Ammo #181:

Beneath the Bottom of the Barrel Lies a Snitch

Article 41 of the UAW Constitution describes the duties of a UAW member. Section 2 states: “It shall be the duty of each member to render aid and assistance to brother or sister members in cases of illness, death, or distress, and in every way acquit her/himself as a loyal and devoted member of the International Union.”

If a union brother or sister is abused, taken advantage of, mistreated, harassed, or deprived in some way of his or her contractual rights by management, that fellow union member is in distress. Therefore, it is the “duty of each member to render aid” in such circumstances.

Sometimes “to render aid” means speaking up. Sometimes it entails informing a member what his or her contractual rights are and encouraging them to call out the committee person for consultation. (This is especially important with new hires and temps.) It may mean offering to act as a witness and to testify against the offensive supervisor. Sometimes it merely means moral support. It’s tough to confront the boss and not everyone feels comfortable taking that risk. A real union brother or sister stands by your side when you have to confront the boss. A real union brother or sister watches your back.

A snitch on the other hand is not a member in good standing. No one respects a snitch, not even the bosses, because they know a snitch cannot be trusted any more than a parasite.

A snitch operates under the assumption that by deflecting attention away from his or her own incompetent or miscreant behavior, he or she gains favor from the boss. A snitch has low self-esteem and seeks to enhance his or her value by degrading other workers. But authorities manipulate the snitch until he or she is no longer useful, then discard them, because they neither trust a snitch, like a snitch, nor respect a snitch.

Everyone despises a snitch. A snitch is a slimy, spineless, ignominious slug that survives by suctioning beneath the bottom of the barrel. In short, a snitch is ten rungs lower than a scab.

According to Article 31 of the UAW Constitution, a member who has “engaged in conduct unbecoming a member of the Union” may be brought up on charges. If the charges are proper, “it is mandatory that a trial be held.” The penalty is determined by the Trial Committee and may result in suspension or expulsion from the union.

According to Article 31, Section 12: “In the case of a workplace in which Union membership is a condition of employment, expulsion from membership shall require removal from the job.”

Let us be kind to the snitches in our midst. Each of us should take a snitch aside and tell them face to face what may happen should they cause a fellow union member to be discharged.

Consider it a duty, because sometimes a snitch is a union member in deep distress.

Stay Solid, Gregg Shotwell