

Main Presidential Opponent and Web Developer Charged For Creating Campaign Website For Nominee

By Monti Rose

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Crane apprentice who developed website threatened with being thrown out of union for not shutting down presidential nominee's website by Gary O' Neill, current President

When Monti Rose mentioned that he was going to run for President of the Operating Engineers Union Local 793, the crane operators/heavy machine operators union of Ontario, many people were very pleased with the move. A former union organizer with proven results, Mr. Rose had a lot of people fired up about his nomination. One of these people was young cancer survivor and crane apprentice, Doug Styles Jr.

Doug Styles Jr. is well known in the union because his father Doug Sr. has been a crane operator with the union for years, and after a lengthy winning battle with a rare form of cancer, he undertook his own crane apprenticeship with the union. In his pre-union life, Styles had partnered with his friend to run a spam-fighting company and developed websites for other companies. He offered to use this knowledge to help Mr. Rose put together a website for his presidential campaign. Before developing the website, Mr. Styles had thoroughly read through his copy of the union Constitution, which mentioned nothing regarding campaign websites.

Close to election time, after the website timeforchange793.org had been live for months, Mr. Styles received a threatening phone call from the current business manager of the union, Michael Gallagher. He was told that he had to take down the website immediately as it was in violation of a "website resolution" which stated that all campaign websites must be password protected. This was the first time that Mr. Styles had heard of such a resolution, and he informed Mr. Gallagher that he did not have the right to simply take down the website, as the site he had developed had been paid for by Mr. Rose.

Gary O'Neill, the current president of the union whom Mr. Rose hopes to unseat in the August election, sent Mr. Styles a letter shortly thereafter announcing his intention to press charges. Mr. O'Neill has become well known in the Ontario media lately due to court charges against him for the "Working Families" Liberal campaign fiasco. The letter contained the first copy of the "Website Resolution", created by the International Union in 2007. This copy was never printed in any Canadian union publication. The resolution stated that campaign websites must have password protection, without stating clearly how it was to be implemented. The union website did not have this password protection on its website, which is peppered with campaign-style slogans about the current administration. This was simply a blatant measure to get a competitor "shut down".

Mr. Styles told Mr. Rose that he would need to hire another developer to maintain the website, as he didn't wish to continue "stirring the pot" at the union. This did not sway the union and officials made repeated phone calls to Mr. Styles' co-workers, father and home. Mr. Styles repeated again that shutting down someone else's website would be illegal under Canadian law. When the website wasn't taken down, the union proceeded with charges against both Doug Styles, Jr. and the presidential nominee, Monti Rose, under all articles of the union Constitution with no specific details. Copies of all letters and other materials will be made available to the media upon request.

The charges go to trial September 17, 2008, well after the election. If Mr. Rose wins, obviously the charges will be dismissed. If not, both he and Mr. Styles will face being ejected from the union based on a fair and

even election campaign.

For the union to act in this manner against a presidential hopeful and an innocent apprentice just trying to help him out is further evidence of the corrupt nature of the current administration, and what lengths they are willing to go to in order to retain their position of power. Current union members who have learned of this behaviour find it disconcerting, and hopefully they will affect change in the coming Local 793 elections.

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