

Forced-Unionism Abuses Exposed

The facts Big Labor bosses would rather you didn't hear about.

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Compulsory unionism breeds corruption. In each issue of "Exposed," the National Right to Work Committee will highlight yet another example of union-boss abuse spawned and perpetuated by Big Labor's government-granted privilege to force workers to pay union dues, or be fired.

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Sorry, Harry Reid: Corraling TSA Employees Into a Union Won't Hinder Terrorists

On Christmas Day, Nigerian terrorist Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab boarded Northwest Airlines Flight 253 to Detroit from Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport, carrying undetected explosives.

Abdulmutallab, who subsequently confessed to being an al-Qaeda recruit, had enough explosives with him to bring down the plane and snuff out the lives of all 290 of its passengers and crew members. He failed only because brave and alert passengers stopped him as he was setting off the explosives shortly before the plane was scheduled to land.

Since the Christmas Day terrorist attack was narrowly averted, there has of course been an intense public debate about exactly what went wrong and how such systemic failures can be prevented in the future.

However, the notion that putting airport baggage screeners in Detroit and other cities across America under union monopoly control could have prevented Abdulmutallab from boarding a plane in Amsterdam has no place in a rational debate. No remotely sensible person would suggest that. But Big Labor U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) would.

On December 29, citizens across the country were wondering how Abdulmutallab got a visa and boarded Flight 253, with explosives on his person, after his own father had warned American authorities he could pose a terrorist risk.

Obviously seeking to exploit public concerns about this grave breach of national security, Reid targeted Sen. Jim DeMint (R-S.C.) and other pro-Right to Work senators for refusing in the just-concluded legislative session to rubber-stamp the appointment of Errol Southers, President Obama's Big Labor-endorsed pick to head the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), without even holding a debate first.

Only by giving Southers the green light with no more questions asked can the Senate give the American people “the peace of mind to know their government is doing everything possible to keep them safe,” ludicrously claimed Reid in a December 29 press release.

Top union bosses and Big Labor puppet politicians like Reid can’t wait to have Southers installed as TSA chief because, although he refuses to acknowledge it publicly, they are confident he will overturn the agency’s current policy of prohibiting union monopoly bargaining over federal airport screeners.

Handing officials of a single union monopoly power to negotiate over how airport screeners do their jobs would, as the respected Wall Street *Journal* editorial page has pointed out, “make it harder for the executive branch to hire, fire, train and reassign workers to best meet changing terrorist threats.”

In fact, politicians who support imposition of TSA union monopoly bargaining don’t even bother to deny that it will force the agency to abolish its current compensation system, which bases pay largely on employees’ performance.

Top union bosses and union-label politicians want to ensure that baggage screeners get automatic, identical pay raises based solely on how long they’ve been on the job, not how well and efficiently they protect air passengers’ safety.

Of course, the vast majority of Americans who understand what Harry Reid and company want don’t like the TSA scheme one bit. And that’s the real reason Reid is so angry with Jim DeMint and other pro-Right to Work senators for resisting the Southers nomination.

Big Labor politicians in Congress could foist a union monopoly on the TSA by approving pending legislation (H.R. 1881) that is explicitly designed to achieve that aim. Or Reid and the pro-forced unionism majority of senators could simply allow pro-Right to Work senators to have their say on the Senate floor about the Southers nomination, and then ram it through.

But neither of these scenarios appeals much to Reid, because they both require him to accept accountability for corralling TSA employees into a union, and he knows that’s not popular at all, either with his constituents in Right to Work Nevada, or with Americans as a whole.

So instead, he’s insisting that, for ill-defined reasons, the Senate must rush through the Southers nomination without any discussion almost immediately after the chamber reconvenes this month – or the terrorists will have won!

The fact is, for all its real and perceived flaws, the TSA bears no responsibility connected to the boarding of Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, and the atrocity he nearly perpetrated should not prompt the Senate to give a hasty rubber-stamp to the Southers nomination.

On the other hand, union monopoly bargaining at the TSA really would increase the risk of the agency’s failing to prevent terrorists from boarding planes at U.S. airports. And pro-Right to Work senators are absolutely correct to insist on holding a debate on this matter before Erroll Southers is put in charge of the TSA.

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