

'The AFL-CIO Program Is the Biggest' in America *Workers' Forced Dues and Fees Bankroll Massive Political Army*

On the evening of August 7 at Soldier Field Stadium in Chicago, AFL-CIO czar John Sweeney presided over what he unabashedly referred to as a "job interview" with seven candidates seeking the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination.

U.S. Sens. Hillary Clinton (N.Y.) and Barack Obama (Ill.) and former Sen. John Edwards (N.C.), as well as all the other candidates who submitted to the nationally televised "interview," were plainly aware of the fact that they needed to impress Mr. Sweeney to have a chance of "getting the job."

As the AFL-CIO Executive Council gleefully noted when it met at the Windy City's posh Drake Hotel the following day, the candidates at the forum unanimously endorsed the top item on Big Labor's legislative agenda, the "Card-Check" Forced-Unionism Bill.

This legislation (H.R.800 and S.1041 in the current Congress) sailed through the House on March 1 and received the votes of a majority of senators, but was stalled by a Right to Work extended debate, on June 27.

It would rewrite federal labor law concerning so-called "card checks" to make it even easier for Big Labor to obtain "exclusive" (monopoly) bargaining control over employees at workplaces nationwide.

Like other forced-unionism power grabs on the union bosses' agenda, the card-check bill isn't popular with rank-and-file Democrats, let alone with American citizens on the whole.

Candidates Pledge Allegiance To Unpopular Agenda Because Of Union Electoral Clout

A nationwide scientific poll conducted in December 2006 by veteran pollster Del Ali and his firm Research 2000 found that 62% of Democrats nationwide agree that employees "who do not want to be represented" by the union in their company unit should "have the right to bargain for themselves."

Nearly two-thirds of Democrats thus reject union monopoly bargaining in principle.

But their party's pro-forced unionism politicians are willing not only to defend union bosses' current monopoly-bargaining privileges, but also to support card-check legislation that would make it even easier for Big Labor to secure

monopoly-bargaining power over workers.

Why are Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama and co. so eager to swear their fealty to an unpopular scheme like the card-check bill?

Last month AFL-CIO Political Director Karen Ackerman succinctly answered this question: "The AFL-CIO program is the biggest political program in the country." This was no idle boast.

Federal and state laws forcing employees to pay union dues or fees as a condition of employment make it possible for the AFL-CIO, its affiliates, and other unions to spend \$4.2 billion a year, or \$16 million per working day, on salaries, benefits, and other compensation for union officers and staff members.

In non-election years, union professionals fill their days infiltrating businesses in every state, stirring up hate-the-boss strife among workers.

But during election season, this army is transformed into a full-time political operation. Union officials drop the work for which they are purportedly paid in order to beat the drum for Big Labor-endorsed candidates.

They run phone banks and get-out-the-vote drives, prepare campaign mailings, and walk precincts.

No other type of non-profit organization

has sufficient staff to make "in-kind" contributions to political candidates of anywhere near this magnitude.

And business certainly has no parallel political army, since profit-minded shareholders rarely if ever are willing to release their managers from normal business for months on end so that they can politick full time.

State and National Right To Work Laws Can Stop Big Labor's Worst Abuses

"Union bosses are diverting a huge share of the forced-dues assessments they collect from workers into troops for their political army, which consumes roughly a billion dollars every federal election campaign cycle," said National Right to Work Committee President Mark Mix.

"The Committee is determined to end this abuse of employees.

"That's why our officers and members are pushing for the enactment of more state Right to Work laws, leading toward passage of a national Right to Work law.

"A national Right to Work law would terminate the union bosses' forced-dues privileges at the federal level. In itself, that would end most of the worst political abuses of the Big Labor colossus." 📧



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Big Labor's government-granted forced-dues privileges are the principal reason why all the 2008 presidential

hopefuls appearing at Chicago's Soldier Field last month kowtowed to AFL-CIO czar John Sweeney.