

Congress Winks at Corrupt Union Bosses

Cuts Funding For Federal Agency Charged With Auditing Union Books

Crooked union officials and union officials who tolerate corruption in their midst scored a significant victory December 26 when President Bush reluctantly signed into law H.R.2764, the so-called "Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008."

While it is otherwise loaded up with pork-barrel spending favored by an array of special-interest groups, especially Big Labor, H.R.2764 cuts by 21% the White House's requested Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 budget for the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Labor Management Standards (OLMS).

The OLMS's FY 2006 budget of \$46.3 million (0.4% of all Labor Department discretionary spending) enabled its staff to audit annually only 4.6% of unions that are required to file federal disclosure forms.

But the union-label majorities in today's U.S. House and Senate who voted to reject the Bush Administration's proposed increase and even slash OLMS funding below its previous level apparently believe that union bosses shouldn't have to face even a one in 22 chance of getting audited each year.

Congress Cynically Depicts Foes of Labor Racketeering As Anti-'Working Man'

During last summer's House floor debate over OLMS funding, Rhode Island Democrat Pat Kennedy, son of Ted and zealous follower of the family tradition of



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The cynicism of today's Big Labor Congress might even have shocked acid-penned journalist H.L. Mencken.

carrying water for Big Labor, sneeringly referred to American citizens who are concerned about rampant union corruption as "anti-union" and "anti-worker."

National Right to Work Committee Vice President Matthew Leen commented:

"Many years ago, newspaperman H.L. Mencken coined a 'syllogism' to lampoon the loony logic corrupt union officials use to divert attention from their misdeeds.

"If you are against labor racketeers, then you are against the working man," mockingly wrote the Baltimore *Sun* columnist.

"Unfortunately, today's Big Labor politicians on Capitol Hill not only see no irony in this 'syllogism,' they actually want to extend it to cover union embezzlement and fraud as well as racketeering!

"Even the acid-penned Sage of Baltimore might not know what to make of Pat Kennedy and his cohorts."

Right to Work Laws Are Most Effective Rx For Ills of Union Corruption

"The fact is, even a recent anti-OLMS screed published by the Big Labor-funded Center for American Progress admits that union officials and paid union staffers are roughly twice as likely to be convicted of embezzlement as are other employees," Mr. Leen pointed out.

"But the Center for American Progress assumes, without giving any remotely plausible reason, that the number of convictions of union professionals for embezzlement and other corruption is less than half the total reported by the OLMS.

"If you don't make this phony assumption, it turns out that union professionals are at least four times as likely to be convicted of embezzlement as the typical wage or salary earner.

"And that's just the union crooks who are caught and convicted. Because public officials scrutinize the books of businesses and charities carefully, while paying relatively little attention to union financial records, most crooked union bosses are likely never exposed.

"The OLMS deserves credit for at least trying to crack down on union corruption; Congress deserves disdain for undercutting this agency. And the Bush Administration's decision to knuckle under to an irresponsible Congress by signing H.R.2764 into law is especially disappointing.

"But even if its budget were increased substantially, the OLMS would almost certainly never be able to ferret out the majority of corrupt union officials.

"To strike a truly formidable blow against union corruption, Congress needs to abolish the federal authorization for forced union dues and fees.

"Along with union monopoly bargaining, forced dues and fees are the principal sources of the scourge of union corruption."

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