

'Card-Check' Survivor Tells His Story

A 'Nasty, Ugly, Three-Year, Million-Dollar War I Did Not Ask For'

Every year, hundreds and hundreds of small and medium-sized businesses become the targets of Big Labor bosses whose goal is to seize "exclusive" bargaining privileges over front-line employees through a so-called "card check."

In a "card check," just like in other types of union organizing drives, the bosses of a union can acquire monopoly power to negotiate with the employer over the pay, benefits, and working conditions of all the business's front-line employees, including those who oppose unionization and refuse to join.

What makes "card checks" different is that union bosses acquire such monopoly power solely through the collection of signed "union authorization cards."

Consequently, individual workers under the peering eyes of union organizers may be intimidated into signing not just themselves, but all of their nonunion fellow employees, over to union-boss control.

However, as stacked as current law is in favor of Big Labor's forced-unionism power, employers nevertheless retain the right to stand up for their independent employees against union-boss intimidation tactics.

And one of these principled employers, Hoosier David Bego, has just written and published an eye-opening book about the steep price he and his family have paid over the past three years as a result of their decision to stand up for all of their employees' freedom to opt against unionization if they so choose.

'My Sense of Right and Wrong Would Not Allow Me' to Acquiesce to a 'Card Check'

In May 1989, Mr. Bego used \$30,000 he and his wife had saved to found Executive Management Services (EMS).

Today this commercial cleaning and facility maintenance business has nearly 5000 employees in 33 states. Mr. Bego's wife and two of their children, as well as his brother-in-law and other loyal staffers, help him run the business.

Mr. Bego takes justifiable pride in furnishing his rank-and-file employees with pay well above the average for the work they do in the job market where they do it, as well as health-care and

vacation benefit packages far superior to those of their unionized competitors.

The record also shows EMS employees work in a safe and respectful environment and have many opportunities for advancement in a growing company.

None of this matters to Andy Stern, czar of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), or his lieutenants.

In September 2006, SEIU rep Dennis Dingow presented Mr. Bego with an ultimatum: Either sign a so-called "neutrality agreement," which of course authorized unionization via "card check" only as well as an array of other special privileges for the SEIU brass, or expect to get hit hard.

Mr. Bego knew from studying SEIU contracts that they wouldn't cost him a dime in higher employee compensation; caving in would actually lower EMS's compensation costs!

But he also knew a "neutrality" deal with the SEIU would hurt his employees materially and curtail their freedom, and that would be bad for the company in the long term. "My sense of right and wrong," he recalls, "would not allow me" to sign.

Because he refused to go along with a "card check" scheme more than three years ago, and never budged from that


position, Mr. Bego, along with his family, his employees, his business, and their customers, were subjected to a relentless SEIU campaign of vilification and harassment.

Copies of David Bego's Book Available Through the Right to Work Committee

Finally, in November 2007, EMS was able to launch a counterattack by filing 33 separate unfair labor practice charges against SEIU kingpins with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

In April 2008, the Indianapolis regional office of the NLRB filed a complaint based on those charges. A month later, SEIU bosses cut a deal in which they agreed to stop picketing EMS and pressuring customers to drop their contracts.

However, SEIU lawyers continue even now to pursue a separate NLRB case designed to bring EMS to its knees. The battle is far from over.

David Bego's new book about the "nasty, ugly, three-year, million-dollar war I did not ask for" is entitled *The Devil at My Doorstep*. To obtain a copy, call (1-800-325-7892) or e-mail (Members@NRTW.org) the National Right to Committee. 



David Bego, his family, his business, and their customers were attacked by Service Employees International Union (SEIU)

kingpins because he refused to deny his employees the freedom to resist unionization.