

“AS MUCH SENSE AS GIVING A FISH A BATH”

What would happen in the coming election if you sent your ballot back to the National Mediation Board with the following comment in on it: **“I wouldn’t vote for such an inept, blundering, dishonest organization as the afa for all the gold in Bill Gates’ mattress.”**

1. Your vote would not count for representation by the afa because you failed to indicate a preference for representation by the afa.
2. Your vote would not count for representation by the afa because you defaced it.
3. Your vote would not count for representation by the afa because it was not signed.
4. Your vote could count as a “yes” vote approving representation by the afa.

We hope you’re sitting down because the answer is “4.” That’s right. **Any ballot returned to the NMB in any shape whatsoever – including blank - can be recorded as a vote for representation by the afa.** That makes about as much sense as giving a fish a bath, but absurd as it may be, that’s what can happen. And that’s why we warn you, **do not to send your ballot back to the NMB. Period! That’s not depriving you of a vote – it is the only way for you to vote if you wish to remain union-free.**

If you simply can’t resist expressing your opinion of the afa on your ballot, go right ahead, but don’t send it to the NMB, send it to us (Vicious e-Truths, P.O. Box 19484, Houston, TX 77224). We’ll have a contest and award a \$100 prize (out of our own pocket) for the most interesting, inspiring, insightful, or humorous comment. Incidentally, we’ll accept entries on pieces of ballots if you wish to tear up your ballot beforehand, Unless it’s too outlandish, we’ll publish the winning entry in a subsequent issue of *Vicious e-Truths*.

Afa activists are already bellyaching that Delta is trying to convince F/As not to send in their ballot. They’re saying Delta is trying to deprive you of your right to vote. Of course they conveniently fail to mention that **not voting is exercising your right to vote.** The ballot will not contain a choice of the afa or “no union.” **The only options the ballot will provide are to vote for representation by the afa or to write in another representative. A vote for any representative is ultimately a vote for the afa because under the NMB’s election rules, if a majority of F/As vote for representation, then the union with the most votes wins and represents everybody. Consequently, the only way you can vote against the afa is by not sending in your ballot.** Contrary to afa spin, this will not deprive you of a choice, you will have a choice of tearing up your ballot, shredding it, slicing it, dicing it, broiling it, sautéing it, burning it, using it to line the bottom of a bird cage, using it to wrap garbage...

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October 7, 1998

The unions who represented F/As at Eastern, Braniff, and Pan Am contend that we have nothing to lose by hiring them. The afa puts it this way, *“What can we lose? NOTHING!”* Really? Let’s see.

It has taken an average of 30 months to negotiate initial contracts with airlines - Flagship Airlines & Simmons Airlines (13.5 months), Executive Airlines (14 months), Great Lakes Aviation (19 months), Ross Aviation (19 months), Suburban (21 months), Henson (22 months), Midway (24 months), Westair (30 months), Pennsylvania (30.5 months), American International Airways (31 months), Sun Country (33 months), ASA (33.5 months), CCAir (34 months), American Trans Air (39 months), ATA (40 months), Tower (52.5 months), and Horizon (57.5 months). These are comparatively tiny outfits. **It wouldn’t be at all surprising if it took three or four years for the afa to negotiate an agreement with Delta** so we probably wouldn’t see pay or benefit increases until 2002 or 2003 [now 2005 or 2006] - if we saw them at all. Nothing to lose???

[The afa does not have] a strike fund or the resources to compensate F/As even marginally during a strike. Consequently, if they call a strike or decide to support another union’s strike, they have to assess union members to finance it. Here’s what the afa constitution says about assessments, **“In no case shall a member’s obligation in fulfillment of this requirement exceed a monthly amount equal to twice her/his adjusted quarterly dues for the previous year.”** Isn’t that marvelous! The most we could be assessed is a mere \$274 per month! ... plus dues.

October 21, 1999

Both the twu and afa [the twu gave up so now it's just the afa] are trying to convince us that Delta has hired "union busters" who are employing vicious tactics to prevent us from joining a union... In its grossly misnamed "Straight Talk," the afa says, "Does Delta have such a hired gun on premises? Probably..." In other words, [the afa is] **using devious tactics to convince us that Delta is using devious tactics.** ...

Delta hasn't discharged anyone for union advocacy or both unions would be ecstatic and screaming about it! Neither has Delta resorted to any of the other devious "union busting" tactics they allege. **The unions know it and they must be terribly disappointed.** [Disappointed, but not discouraged. Two years later the afa is still trying to convince us that Delta is employing devious tactics].

James [Garza, formerly in charge of labor relations at the *Houston Chronicle* and one of our sources]: "The unions have two reasons for trying so hard to convince F/As that Delta is hiring vicious 'union busting' consultants. The first, of course, is to try to convince employees Delta can't be trusted. The scientific name for the second is "CYA." Delta employees have soundly rejected both unions' previous organizing efforts and **unions have to have someone to blame for their failures!**"

November 4, 1998

The law allows unions to promise anything, no matter how preposterous, because employees are assumed to know better than to believe them. Unfortunately, many don't. This is a tremendous advantage for unions and they take full advantage of it. Can anyone think of anything the unions haven't criticized and thereby at least implied that they could remedy? Whatever you want, whatever you need, vote for them and they'll get it for you. [This includes things they've never been able to obtain before like industry-leading compensation]. So much for fiction...

November 5, 1998:

Following, FYI, are things F/As have told us about unions (the **bold** is added):

- "I have experienced three strikes with former employers and I want to add that the **emotional grief is overwhelming** during such times...I lost six months pay while picketing and had to find part time work anywhere. **Now I can speak to a supervisor without having a union representative taking notes.** I can breathe easy for longer than three years at a time."
- "I am former Western and thus was forced into membership for ten years with the Association of Flight Attendants. I cannot tell you how much I came to loathe this group during that period as they **forced their agendas on an often unwilling flight attendant group** and used our dues consistently to gain back the jobs of employees fired by the company for justifiable reasons."
- "I have ... worked for two other airlines and the rail system and I can tell you from first hand experience that **a union is only out to take our money and do all they can it seems to bankrupt the company** that employs and pays all it's members...Things will not improve just because there is a union! If anything, **a union will only serve to split the workforce and further alienate us from management!**"

November 18, 1998

Card checks [to obtain representation] used to be fairly common, but over the years court decisions have drastically limited their use because **unions have so often obtained cards by fraud, threats, intimidation, deception and forgery.** [Sound familiar?].

When [the afa] tried to ensnare us three years ago, the top half of its authorizations said they were "simply a request that the government conduct an election to determine if you want AFA representation," and that "This card does not: Mean you are voting for the AFA...Make you an AFA member...Cost you anything...Obligate you in any way."

In *violent* contradiction, the bottom half of the card contained an unequivocal commitment to be represented by the afa - "I [name, company, base, home address] **desire to be represented by the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA), AFL-CIO, for purposes of collective bargaining...**" ... the card was perforated so that the top half, with its assurances could easily be torn off leaving this unequivocal commitment standing alone! [and, showing how devious the afa is, available for the afa to use to gain representation with a card check rather than an election].