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Union Racketeering on the Rise

New report from the Department of Labor shows an increase in detection and prosecution of union corruption.

WASHINGTON-- The Department of Labor (DOL)'s Office of Inspector General's (OIG) labor racketeering initiative recently released its semiannual report containing figures on rates of investigations, prosecutions, convictions, indictments and monetary recoveries. This report demonstrates increased numbers across the board when compared to a report released only six months ago, an indication of the massive corruption still underlying American organized labor.

The report sheds new light on areas of union corruption, indicating that there is a dramatic increase in the number of organized crime connections detected within labor unions. The report warns of a rise of the Eastern Block and Asian crime syndicates becoming involved in unions through violence and deception. These same tactics are then used on union members themselves for purposes of exploitation and abuse.

“Labor unions have always been breeding grounds for corruption and exploitation,” said Grover Norquist, President of ATR. **“This new report simply reinforces something we have all known for a very long time. Unions use and take advantage of workers for the personal benefit of the union officials. We have all seen this time and time again, and it is encouraging to see that the Department of Labor is finally taking a stand.”**

The Bush Administration has dedicated itself to eliminating corruption within labor unions. The measures they have taken, such as the labor racketeering initiative and increasing the OIG's budget over the past two years, are the steps leading America in the right direction. Within the report, Gordon Heddell, DOL's inspector general, warns that there are reports of criminal corruption involving “high ranking national union officials.”

“Is this what hard-working Americans are paying union dues for? Detecting and prosecuting those who would try to terrorize and exploit America's workers through coercion and deception is something that the Department of Labor must continue to do without fail,” stated Norquist. **“America must not abandon its workforce to the mercy of the criminal element. Scandal after scandal forces us to recognize the level of union corruption that exists. How many more workers must be bullied and exploited before America puts a stop to such despicable behavior?”**

Americans for Tax Reform is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all federal and state tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview please contact Jonathan Collegio at (202) 785-0266 or by email at jcollegio@atr.org.

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