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## Time to end unions' forced funding of political causes

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I was very surprised to read the comments of Ken Georgetti of the Canadian Labour Congress and Darrel Wong of the United Steelworkers attacking Conservative MP Pierre Poilievre's comments about the decision by a public sector union to endorse the separatist Parti Quebecois in the Quebec election and the subsequent threats by the union bosses against the political career of Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan.

It is shocking to me that any union leaders in British Columbia would come to the defence of the Public Service Alliance's decision to support a party that wants to break up the country. I don't think average union members anywhere in Canada, but especially here in B.C., would support such an endorsement.

Shouldn't average union members have a say in the political activities that their union decides to support? What about the 290,000 hard-working Canadians who are forced to pay union dues, even though they aren't members of the union? Shouldn't they also get to know how their money is being spent? Poilievre is right to bring these concerns forward. Why should average union members, and non-members who have to pay union dues, be forced to fund the fringe political causes of union bosses?

The idea that Canadians can be forced to pay for causes they do not necessarily support through their union dues is fundamentally unfair. It is encouraging that Poilievre is concerned about this ongoing infringement upon the freedom and rights of Canadian workers.

As for Wong's political threats against Duncan, I find it very troubling that union bosses feel they can start threatening elected members of Parliament and cabinet ministers to do what they want or else. I may be wrong, but I suspect Wong and other union bosses haven't been campaigning for the federal Conservatives before now. In fact, the United Steelworkers were one of the unions the NDP just admitted receiving illegal donations from and to which they had to return \$80,000.

Union bosses continually brag about how great unions are and all the great things they do for workers. If that is true, why does big labour fear giving working Canadians a choice to join and pay union dues?

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