

THE NEXT TARGET IN THE WAR ON VOTING: HOFFA AND THE UNIONS

Last week, Ari Berman chronicled what he termed a war on voting.

All told, a dozen states have approved new obstacles to voting. Kansas and Alabama now require would-be voters to provide proof of citizenship before registering. Florida and Texas made it harder for groups like the League of Women Voters to register new voters. Maine repealed Election Day voter registration, which had been on the books since 1973. Five states – Florida, Georgia, Ohio, Tennessee and West Virginia – cut short their early voting periods. Florida and Iowa barred all ex-felons from the polls, disenfranchising thousands of previously eligible voters. And six states controlled by Republican governors and legislatures – Alabama, Kansas, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Wisconsin – will require voters to produce a government-issued ID before casting ballots. More than 10 percent of U.S. citizens lack such identification, and the numbers are even higher among constituencies that traditionally lean Democratic – including 18 percent of young voters and 25 percent of African-Americans.

Taken together, such measures could significantly dampen the Democratic turnout next year – perhaps enough to shift the outcome in favor of the GOP.

The war got a lot more explicit when a right winger argued that poor people shouldn't be allowed to vote.

Fox and the right wing's bloggers just added another front to the attack. On Labor Day, they doctored a Jimmy Hoffa Jr. speech to suggest his call for union members to vote amounted to a

call for violence against the Tea Party.

Right-wing bloggers misled by dishonest Fox News video editing are attacking Teamsters President James Hoffa, Jr. for supposedly urging violence against Tea Party activists during a Labor Day speech. Conservatives are also attacking President Obama, who appeared at the event, for “sanctioning violence against fellow Americans” by failing to denounce Hoffa. But fuller context included in other Fox segments makes clear that Hoffa wasn’t calling for violence but was actually urging the crowd to vote out Republican members of Congress.

During the segment that the bloggers have latched onto, Fox edited out the bolded portion of Hoffa’s comments:

HOFFA: Everybody here’s got to vote. If we go back and keep the eye on the prize, let’s take these son of a bitches out and give America back to America where we belong! Thank you very much!

In an initial report on Hoffa’s speech at 1 p.m. on Fox News, Ed Henry reported that Hoffa said that “we’ll remember in November who’s with the working people” and “said of the Tea Party and of Republicans, ‘let’s take these sons of bitches out.’”

Henry made clear during that segment that Hoffa’s comments were references to voting out Republican members of Congress, not to violence. And roughly 20 minutes later, he explained on Twitter that the “full quote” of the “take these son of a bitches out” comment is “Everybody here’s got to vote. If we go back & keep the eye on the prize, let’s take these sons of bitches out”:



@edhenryTV
Ed Henry

Full quote, Jimmy Hoffa Jr: "Everybody here's got to vote. If we go back & keep the eye on the prize, let's take these sons of bitches out"

I guess these folks have decided to use their weekend—which they have courtesy of unions—to spend inventing another attack on an organization serving working people. I'm just holding my breath for the line of Democrats who will—as they did with ACORN—condemn that organization based on a doctored video.