

# THE GREAT EMANCIPATOR MEETS A GREAT PREVARICATOR

In Doris Kearns Goodwin's new book about Abraham Lincoln, she calls the 16th President a "towering political genius." There was another side to Lincoln that Goodwin does not emphasize: He was a strong advocate of workers' rights. In 1861 he wrote: "Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration."

Goodwin apparently thinks that capital (or, as we call it these days, Big Business) deserves the upper hand. As a well-paid member of the board of directors of Northwest Airlines, who also commands from \$25,000 to \$40,000 per speaking engagement, she shares responsibility for the company's ruthless campaign to get rid of its union mechanics. Northwest forced the mechanics to go on strike in August by demanding a 25% cut in pay, and the elimination of 53% of its 4,400 union members' jobs through subcontracting. Northwest now seeks to permanently replace the strikers with underqualified, non-union technicians. This shows a shocking lack of concern for the safety of passengers. The government is now investigating reports of serious maintenance problems at Northwest.

What is an author and TV pundit like Goodwin, who appears to know little about the airline business, doing on Northwest's board? Presumably, she arrived in 1997 to lend an air of respectability, two years after winning a Pulitzer Prize. Yet she turned out to be an embarrassment. In 2002, Goodwin admit-



ted that numerous passages in one of her books were lifted from the works of others. Instead of apologizing, she blamed her research assistants.

This didn't go over very well. Invitations for speaking engagements were cancelled, and she was banished from PBS's "NewsHour with Jim Lehrer" and forced to resign from the Pulitzer board. There were calls for her ouster from Harvard University's Board of Overseers. Northwest's website and its 2005 proxy statement filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission state that she is "currently a member of the Harvard Uni-

versity Board of Overseers." But according to Harvard University, Doris Kearns Goodwin left the board in 2002.

Goodwin is hoping her new book will rehabilitate her reputation, which was shattered by the plagiarism scandal. If Goodwin really wants to embrace honesty and integrity, she should disavow Northwest's union-busting policies and resign from the company's board.

Let Goodwin know you don't like her union-busting activities. Send a message to her website at: <http://doriskearnsgoodwin.com/contact.php>

**AIRCRAFT MECHANICS FRATERNAL ASSOCIATION**  
**Campaign to Protect Airline Safety & Jobs**

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# NORTHWEST EXECUTIVES GET THE GOLD. EMPLOYEES, PASSENGERS AND TAXPAYERS GET THE GRIEF! THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG HERE!

## Northwest's Unreasonable Demands

"As the mechanics march on the picket line, the company's other unions are also being targeted by a company that's demanding big concessions from everyone – except top executives...Northwest is making offers the union must refuse...there's no room for conversation. It's the company's way, or else."

*"Flight Attendants Feeling Heat, Too,"  
by Doug Grow, Star Tribune, 8/30/05*

## Our strike is not about higher wages and benefits.

We offered to take a 16% pay cut and to contribute an additional 20% each month to offset medical benefits costs. We were willing to give up significant work rules we have fought hard to win since the 1960s. But it wasn't enough for the company.

Northwest initially insisted on a 25% pay cut and getting rid of more than half of our mechanics, in addition to the massive layoffs of recent years that resulted in thousands of AMFA members losing their jobs. Northwest then came back and demanded a 29% pay cut and a 77% cut in jobs through outsourcing to nonunion, low-wage outfits to increase profits and executive compensation.

## How Safe is Northwest?

"The letter to [FAA Administrator] Ms. Blakey, made available by the senator's office [Sen. Mark Dayton, D-MN] and reported by the Detroit Free Press and Minneapolis Star Tribune, alleged that about 470 FAA inspector reports on Northwest's maintenance operations for roughly 11 days after the strike began weren't entered into an electronic database, 'which would have triggered a risk assessment.' The letter said that 58% to 90% of the inspector reports cited defects, compared with a defect rate of 3% to 5% for Northwest prior to the strike. According to the letter, a 9% defect rate would trigger an internal FAA alert...The Inspector General's Office has been critical generally about the FAA's maintenance oversight of airlines."

*"Regulators Probe Allegations  
of Lax Northwest Maintenance,"  
by Susan Carey, Wall Street Journal, 9/6/05*

## Airlines' Outsourcing Undermines Your Safety

### Mechanic Employed by Airline MUST HAVE:

- 1. Federal FAA License
- 2. 10-Year FBI Security Background Check
- 3. Drug and Alcohol Testing

### Mechanic Employed by Foreign Outsourced Facility:

- 1. Not Required
- 2. Not Required
- 3. Not Required

### Mechanic Employed by Domestic Outsourced Facility:

- 1. Not Required
- 2. Not Required
- 3. Drug and Alcohol Testing Required

**The result? Since the strike began, many Northwest planes have had trouble due to incompetent and lax maintenance personnel and oversight.**

For example, on Oct. 3, a jetliner aborted its takeoff from Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport when flames and parts blew out of its right engine. Elsewhere, mechanics failed to notice a dead bird in an engine of a jet about to leave Memphis; an inspector at JFK Airport in New York watched mechanics and managers "incorrectly inspect and incorrectly repair an engine blade tip, a critical rotating component;" and a manager in Minneapolis told the FAA there was no reason a jet from Amsterdam could not continue to Honolulu even though a broken lavatory duct spilled human waste into the electrical equipment bay.

**SUPPORT AMFA'S  
Campaign to Protect  
Airline Safety & Jobs!**

## Looting of Northwest Assets and Employees' Pensions

"The looting of airline workers' pension funds is but one example of how the assets of the major airlines have been squandered over the last several decades to enrich the airline bosses and big investors...The top personnel of the airline industry are chosen – and highly compensated – not because of their ability to manage complex organizations or to lay out a long-term corporate strategy. Instead, a definite social type has risen to the top, whose only qualifications are its acuity for slashing tens of thousands of jobs and guaranteeing the quickest and largest payoffs to Wall Street."



[www.famousplagiarists.com](http://www.famousplagiarists.com)

**Doris Kearns  
Goodwin**  
Director,  
Northwest Airlines

*"Northwest and Delta Executives  
to Make Millions from Bankruptcies,"  
by Jerry Isaacs, Airline Pilots Central*

**Prior to fomenting the strike and filing for bankruptcy** – making Northwest stock nearly worthless – Northwest Chair Gary Wilson dumped more than \$21 million worth of the airline's stock between mid-May and August. "...two Minneapolis attorneys told the Star Tribune...that Wilson's 'stock sales merit scrutiny and raise proprietary questions.'" In 2003-2004, five Northwest Airlines executives (not including Gary Wilson) raked in more than \$25 million, plus generous benefits and contributions to multiple pension plans.

To add insult to injury, Northwest is asking the bankruptcy court to approve millions of dollars in bonuses to a handful of executives who are already receiving lavish pay and pensions that are held in bankruptcy-proof trusts, while thousands of workers are being laid off through outsourcing. The company is demanding massive concessions from the remaining employees, shortchanging retirees on their pensions and turning the company's multibillion-dollar pension liability over to the government and the taxpayers.