

'Tell Tara You're Going to Be a Little Late'

Union Thugs Allegedly Used DMV Data to Plan Attacks on Victims

A new federal indictment charging a dozen union officials and union militants in western New York with extortion and racketeering furnishes clear evidence of how, all too often, Big Labor plans and executes violence and vandalism in order to secure forced-unionism privileges.

The eight-count indictment was issued on the afternoon of April 8, hours after federal and state law enforcement agents had arrested Mark Kirsch, president of the Buffalo-based Local 17 of the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE/AFL-CIO) and 11 of his henchmen.

According to the indictment, as summarized by the AP, union agents "caused more than \$1 million in damage to more than 40 pieces of heavy machinery by pouring sand and grinding compound into the oil systems, breaking windows, destroying tires and cutting fuel lines."

Big Labor Violence Has 'Deprived Western New York Of Vibrant Economic Growth'

The vandalism, threats and violence went on for years and systematically targeted independent construction companies and employees who wished to remain union-free.

Union officials first secured an account with the New York Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), putatively so that they could ensure Local 17-owned vehicles "were properly registered and inspected."

But Local 17 bosses or their agents allegedly used the account, time and again, to run potential victims' license plates through the DMV database to obtain names and addresses of workers and their spouses.

Union agents then exploited this information to intimidate independent workers and employers into submission.

For example, charged the indictment, in July 2005 union organizer James Minter advised a worker entering a work site, "Tell Tara you're going to be a little late tonight," referring to the worker's wife.

Another union organizer, Carl Larson, allegedly admitted that tire slashings, stabbings, and beatings were all Local 17 "organizing" tactics.



Employees and owners of small construction firms in Buffalo have long felt like they were living in a James



Cagney movie, with IUOE union bosses playing both the Cagney and the Edward G. Robinson roles.

When a business owner asked him what the "positives" were of recognizing a union whose agents had stabbed him in the neck and slashed his tires, Mr. Larson reportedly replied: "The positives are that the negatives you are complaining about would go away."

Of course, such Big Labor thuggery ultimately victimizes far more people than just the employees and businesses who are directly targeted.

Union boss-orchestrated violence has "deprived western New York of vibrant economic growth" by frightening away all kinds of job-creating businesses, charged Buffalo FBI Special Agent-in-Charge Laurie Burnett.

Indicted Union Officials' Lawyer Suggests His Clients Deserve 'Medals!'

After vandalism and harassment persuaded managers of a project at Ralph Wilson Stadium in Orchard Park, N.Y., to remove a nonunion contractor from the site, Local 17 President Kirsch, now on "unpaid leave" while he awaits trial, allegedly said, with satisfaction: "We did what we had to do."

Local 17 union lawyer Mark Furlong smugly suggests that Mr. Kirsch and his henchmen each deserve "a medal" for their success in corralling workers into unions over the years.

"It's not so surprising that many union bosses like Mark Kirsch think they're above the law," commented Mark Mix, president of the National Right to Work Committee.

"In all 50 states, including Right to Work states, federal labor policy grants them the unique, monopolistic privilege to 'represent' employees who don't wish to join the union as well as those who do in contract negotiations with the employer.

"Having wielded their monopoly-bargaining privilege for decades, union bosses now take it for granted.

"And they think, if under federal law they have monopoly power to negotiate the terms and conditions of employment for union nonmembers, why shouldn't they also have the power to tell employees of nonunion firms what do?

"And why shouldn't they be allowed to get rough if employees of nonunion firms don't obey?

"I'm relieved that, in recent years, federal and state prosecutors in western New York have finally begun to crack down on Big Labor violence and try to bring to justice the rogue hierarchies of unions like IUOE Local 17.

"But the long-term remedy for Big Labor lawlessness is to take away union bosses' federal monopoly-bargaining and forced-dues privileges. And that's a job that Congress is obliged to do." 🗣️