

Forced-Unionism Abuses Exposed

The facts Big Labor bosses would rather you didn't hear about.

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Compulsory unionism breeds corruption. In each issue of "Exposed," the National Right to Work Committee will highlight yet another example of union-boss abuse spawned and perpetuated by Big Labor's government-granted privilege to force workers to pay union dues, or be fired.

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Teamster PR Chief Says New England Rank-and-File 'Are Not Affected' By Union Bigwigs' Embezzlement From Their Health-Benefit Fund

The ongoing campaign by Teamster General President Jim Hoffa and his lieutenants to convince the Bush Administration to withdraw federal oversight of their 1.4 million-member union suffered a blow late last month when the head of one of the Teamsters' largest locals pleaded guilty to embezzling from a health-benefit fund and procuring roughly \$100,000 in kickbacks from an employer.

George Cashman, president of Teamster Local 25 in Boston and the Hoffa-appointed director of the international Teamsters' port division, admitted to federal prosecutors that he had fabricated work hours for 19 cronies, including John "Mick" Murray, a convicted burglar and associate of fugitive gangster James "Whitey" Bulger, so that they could illegally receive health-care benefits.

Local 25 Vice President William Carnes also pleaded guilty to four counts of fraud on related charges. Mr. Cashman separately admitted to colluding with a trucking-firm owner to extort \$100,000 from Cardinal Health, an Ohio pharmaceutical-distribution company.

Mr. Cashman agreed to settle a lawsuit against Cardinal, supposedly filed on behalf of Teamster members, for far less than the original claim in exchange for kickbacks to businessman Thomas DiSilva and himself.

In exchange for making the guilty pleas, Mr. Cashman is expected to serve only a two-to-three year prison sentence and will not be prosecuted on most of the 179 federal counts filed against him last year.

Other charges were related to extortion by Local 25 bosses of Hollywood producers filming movies in New England.

Local 25 bosses reportedly used threats of work delays and cost overruns to force the producers of many 1990's films shot in Massachusetts to hire as "drivers" seven convicted bank robbers, all implicated in the 1994 slaying of two armored car guards.

And published reports allege that in the summer of 2000 Local 25 "transportation coordinator" James P. Flynn ordered the murder of truck driver Susan Christy of Foxboro, Mass., who was working on the set of an MGM movie, because she had refused to give up her snack-truck concession to a Flynn crony.

Mr. Cashman reportedly learned about the plan and nixed the murder out of concern regarding the already-ongoing federal investigation. Instead, Mr. Cashman reportedly agreed to have a Teamster thug "send Christy a message."

For daring to defy a Teamster boss, Ms. Christy allegedly was "dragged around by her hair, thrown against her truck, and slapped upside the head."

As the *Boston Herald* credibly charged in an editorial last year, Mr. Cashman "and the thugs he allowed to operate in Local 25 just about killed any hope of movie-making in [Massachusetts]." Hundreds, if not thousands, of good jobs have been lost as many Hollywood producers opted to shoot their films in another state or abroad rather than be forced to staff their crews with Big Labor-favored thugs like "Mick" Murray.

Therefore, it took an enormous amount of gall for top international Teamster spokesman Bret Caldwell to claim, in response to Mr. Cashman's and Mr. Carnes' guilty pleas, that: "The workers are not affected by this."

Mr. Caldwell's cavalier response, published in the *Boston Globe* April 26, to the now-established fact that the top two bosses of a union local that is supposed to "represent" roughly 9000 workers are embezzlers and extortionists speaks volumes about Jim Hoffa's alleged "clean-up" of Teamster corruption across the country.

Mr. Caldwell went on to call the guilty pleas an "unfortunate situation." "Now it's time for us to move on and continue representing our members," he concluded. Judging by his words, Mr. Caldwell has no problem at all with how Mr. Cashman and Mr. Carnes were "representing" Local 25 members until late last month!

If Jim Hoffa's top spokesman is unable even to feign outrage about felonies committed by a union boss whom Mr. Hoffa handpicked to hold office in the international union, then why is the Bush Administration openly considering ending federal oversight of the Teamsters?

Enactment of a National Right to Work law repealing federally imposed forced union dues and "fees" would empower honest rank-and-file members and ultimately facilitate genuine reform in the Teamsters. But until such a measure is enacted, politicians should at least have the decency to recognize that countless workers are still being victimized by Teamster corruption and violence.