

# 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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## **Crooked New York Teamster Boss Embarrasses Big Labor Apologists**

The Big Labor-funded, Washington, D.C.-based Center for American Progress (CAP) recently issued a tendentious report that tries with all its might to downplay the significance of rampant union embezzlement and other union corruption in America today.

The author of the report, Scott Lilly, and other CAP propagandists admit that union officials and paid union staffers are far more likely to be convicted of embezzlement than are other employees. However, in a dexterous, albeit far-fetched, twist, CAP insists that the reason union corruption is so common is that most union locals don't rake in enough money in workers' forced dues and fees to "support the kind of financial management and control used in most larger organizations."

CAP blindly assumes that union officials and staffers who don't steal from the employees they purport to "represent" are eager to see the crooks in their midst brought to justice. They routinely fail to do so only because, supposedly, they don't have enough forced-dues money to ferret the bad guys out. But hardly more than a week after Lilly's report was issued, a high-profile Big Apple Teamster corruption case illustrated for the public why CAP's bid to explain away the pervasiveness of union corruption doesn't hold water.

On December 18, federal prosecutors arrested Anthony Rumore, president of Teamster Local 812 in New York City and Joint Council 16 of the international Teamsters. From 1988 until 2004, the entire period during which he reigned over Local 812, Rumore allegedly extorted personal services from the union's officers, business agents and staff. For example:

\* \* \* For two weeks during the early nineties, Rumore, according to the indictment, directed a number of employees on the forced union dues-funded union payroll to spend two weeks installing a new roof, skylight and deck on his home in Pennsylvania.

\* \* \* From 1992 to 1995, Rumore is accused of directing a union employee to mow the lawn and clean the gutters at his Pennsylvania home.

\* \* \* In 2000, employees were allegedly made to wait at Rumore's daughter's apartment for the delivery of a wall unit and then install it. The following year, he reportedly ordered union staffers to move his daughter's furniture to a new apartment and had one staffer chauffeur his family to a wedding in Baltimore while another followed in a car filled with the female Rumores' gowns.

Given the large number of witnesses who are evidently ready to testify against him, it is highly doubtful that lawyers representing Rumore, who has pleaded not guilty, will deny he abused his authority in the way the indictment describes. Rather, they are likely to claim his actions, as reprehensible as they were, were technically legal.

Such a defense might help Rumore stay out of prison, but it doesn't do anything for Big Labor apologists like CAP.

For a decade and a half, many union organizers and other union staffers, his fellow union officers, and rank-and-file union members all evidently knew from personal experience that Rumore was grossly abusing his forced dues-funded payroll for his personal benefit. And yet, from 1988 until 2003, when internal union charges finally were filed against Rumore, all of the union insiders who knew he was crooked were either too intimidated or too indifferent to act.

The Rumore case and many other similar union corruption cases give the lie to CAP's starry-eyed claim that the public can count on union officials who aren't personally stealing from the union rank-and-file to hold Big Labor embezzlers accountable once they catch them in the act. Rumore's alleged misdeeds were all committed out in the open, but, for 15 years, the only reaction of the Teamster union hierarchy was to honor him by choosing him to head the 25,000-member Joint Council 16.

The genuine way to deter union-boss embezzlement, or at least ensure it doesn't go on, year after year, without being punished, is to reduce the coercive privileges of the Anthony Rumores over ordinary unionized workers. A National Right to Work law prohibiting compulsory union dues and fees would empower workers to cut off their financial support for a union as soon as they see their money being wasted by a corrupt union boss. And that would really give Teamster and other union bosses a motive to get more serious about policing corruption within their ranks.

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