

# Union-Violence Measure Introduced in Senate

## *Alabama's Jeff Sessions Heeds Right to Work Members' Requests*

Heeding the requests of National Right to Work Committee officers and members, U.S. Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.) recently introduced a measure on Capitol Hill that would abolish Big Labor's special privilege to commit extortion and violence in pursuit of so-called "legitimate union objectives."

An article appearing in a recent Newsletter issue, mailed out nationwide in early March, urged Right to Work members to call Mr. Sessions and ask him to sponsor this legislation.

The senator responded quickly.

On March 14, he introduced the Freedom from Union Violence Act (S.618) in the Senate.

Previously, pro-Right to Work Congressman Joe Wilson (R-S.C.) had sponsored an identical bill (H.R.239) in the U.S. House of Representatives.

### **Baseball Bats, Clubs, Knives, An Ax, and a Sledgehammer**

Business rivals, gangsters, or anyone else who plans, commits or foments extortionate violence against the employees of a firm engaged in interstate commerce are normally subject to prosecution under the federal Hobbs Act.

But a legal loophole currently exempts union bosses and their agents from Hobbs prosecutions if they have a supposedly "legitimate" aim, such as corralling the employees into a union.

If S.618 or H.R.239 is enacted, power-hungry, win-at-any-cost Big Labor barons will no longer be able, without fear of federal prosecution, to resort to violence as a "bargaining tool."

One example of how union thugs exploit their "lethal loophole" under current law occurred last November in Hannibal, Ohio, a small city located along the Upper Ohio River.

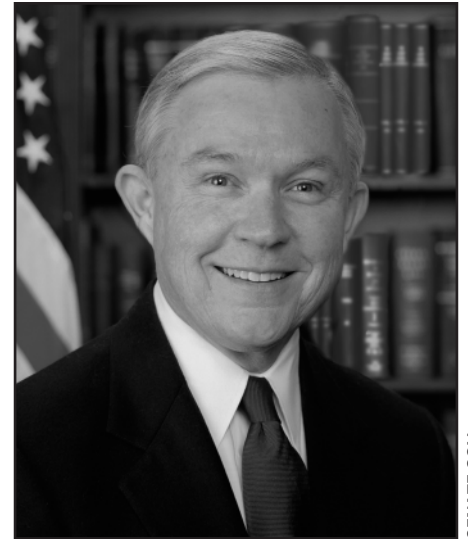
The Ormet Corp., a struggling aluminum maker, operates two facilities in Hannibal.

In late 2004, Ormet was seeking U.S. Bankruptcy Court approval to implement changes in its contract, covering employees at both plants, with the bosses of Local 5724 of the United Steelworkers of America union (USWA).

On November 26, after the USWA brass had called a strike, two vans attempted to deliver food, security personnel and a salaried worker into one



**Rep. Joe Wilson (left) and Sen. Jeff Sessions are the lead sponsors of the Freedom from Union Violence Act,**



**which would close the outrageous "legitimate union objectives" loophole in federal anti-extortion law.**

of the plants.

But a mob of "picketers" armed with an array of weapons, including baseball bats, wooden clubs, knives, an ax, and a sledgehammer, blocked the entrance.

According to the local sheriff's office, union militants resisted arrest and assaulted law enforcement officers who sought to clear the entrance after the two vans had turned and sped away.

The sheriff ultimately sought assistance from four surrounding counties and one police department in an attempt to calm the situation.

### **'Jeff Ward Lives Here. Go Tell Him How You Really Feel About the Union'**

Even when there is no strike, employees who anger Big Labor are at risk.

Recently, the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation put the home of its client Jeff Ward under 24-hour security after they had successfully challenged an illegal deal granting United Auto Workers (UAW) union officials monopoly-bargaining privileges at a bus factory in High Point, N.C.

The Foundation acted because menacing flyers had been circulated at the plant that listed Mr. Ward's phone number and directions to his home. The flyers read: "Jeff Ward lives here. Go tell him how you really feel about the union."

UAW bigwig Gary Casteel publicly attempted to justify the intimidation, even as he indicated the UAW wasn't responsible. Mr. Ward "put himself in the limelight," claimed Mr. Casteel.

Committee Vice President Matthew Leen commended Mr. Sessions and Mr. Wilson for working to remedy the chronic evil of union violence.

"For decades, efforts to bring the perpetrators and ringleaders of union violence to justice have been, with rare exceptions, stymied because of the Hobbs Act loophole," said Mr. Leen.

"The Freedom from Union Violence Act would at last close this loophole and hold union officials and their henchmen to the same standards as other citizens.

"The fact is, senators and congressmen have no plausible rationale for opposing S.618 and H.R.239."

Most Right to Work members who have received this month's Newsletter through the mail will find enclosed with it a letter regarding the Freedom from Union Violence Act and postcards they can use to request their elected officials to cosponsor it.

Mr. Leen urged members to sign and mail their postcards right away, and also to phone Senate Judiciary Chairman Arlen Specter (R-Pa., 202-224-4254) and House Judiciary Chairman Jim Sensenbrenner (R-Wisc., 202-225-5101) and ask them to hold prompt hearings on S.618 and H.R.239. 📞