

Machinist Union Lawyers Defend Thuggery, Theft

Local IAM Bosses Arrested For Philadelphia Airport Hotel Assault

On May 22, police issued warrants for the arrests of Robert Boland, president of International Association of Machinists (IAM/AFL-CIO) union Local Lodge 1776 in Philadelphia, Anthony Armidio, the local's assistant general chairman, and Vincent Cerasso, international union representative.

Warrants were also issued for 19 other IAM union militants in connection with an assault this winter at the Philadelphia Airport Marriott Hotel.

According to the arrest warrants, on February 8, three men identifying themselves as machinist union officers warned five organizers for the Transport Workers Union of America (TWU/AFL-CIO) to leave the hotel and the city.

The two unions were competing to secure monopoly-bargaining privileges over employees of the merged U.S. Airways-America West airline.

Before the TWU organizers could flee, police charge, roughly 25 union thugs rushed into the room they had rented and began throwing chairs, glasses, tables, and punches.

All five TWU organizers were injured, and two had to be put in an ambulance and hospitalized due to serious eye injuries.

While the beatings continued, IAM thugs allegedly stole the TWU organizers' files.

Union Hierarchy Insists Thugs Were Pursuing 'Legitimate Union Objectives'

Incredibly, the IAM union hierarchy in Washington, D.C., has refused to distance itself from the brutal tactics of the Philadelphia local's officers and militants and the international officer who colluded with them.

Instead, IAM spokesmen and lawyers have suggested that Lodge 1776 officers' intent was merely to "campaign on behalf of their . . . labor organization"!

"To ordinary Americans, the idea that you can explain away conspiracy, terroristic threats, assaults and thefts by alluding to the accused criminals' 'noble' goals is just loony," noted Mark Mix, president of the National Right to Work Committee.

"But to Big Labor bosses like IAM President Tom Buffenbarger and his lieutenants, the 'forced-unionism ends justify the means' approach makes perfect sense.



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International Association of Machinists czar Tom Buffenbarger and other IAM officers have stubbornly defended local

IAM bosses who face charges for conspiracy, terroristic threats, assault, and theft.

"And unfortunately, the U.S. Supreme Court effectively agreed with union officials who rationalize violence in its controversial 5-4 *Enmons* decision of 1973.

"Flabbergasting many legal scholars, the High Court found that union violence for so-called "legitimate objectives" is shielded from prosecution under federal anti-extortion law.

"Of course, the usual victims of union militants and union officers who commit or foment extortionate violence are employees, business owners, or clients of a struck business — not organizers of another union.

"But with an estimated \$6.6 million a year in forced-dues collections at stake in the recent battle over U.S. Airways-America West baggage handlers and fleet-service workers, it's not surprising to see Tom Buffenbarger and company applying *Enmons* logic to the Airport Marriott attack."

Freedom From Union Violence Act Would Close Lethal Loophole

Mr. Mix continued: "The fact is, union bosses who resort to extortionate threats and violence deserve to be held to the same standard as anyone else who does the same."

To promote equal justice under the law, the Committee and its members are

now working to build congressional support for the Freedom from Union Violence Act (S.618 and H.R.239).

Introduced, respectively, by Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.) and Congressman Joe Wilson (R-S.C.), S.618 and H.R.239 would close *Enmons*' lethal loophole and make it far less difficult to bring to justice union thugs like those who assaulted the five TWU organizers.

"This year, the Committee is fighting for recorded floor votes in the Senate and the House on the Freedom from Union Violence measures, which now have a total of 30 Capitol Hill sponsors," noted Mr. Mix.

In a recent letter urging members of Congress who have not yet cosponsored S.618 or H.R.239 to do so now, Mr. Mix acknowledged that, because of the enormous power of Big Labor's forced dues-funded lobbying machine, passage of this legislation this year would be an uphill battle.

"However," wrote Mr. Mix, "the union bosses do not have public opinion on their side on this issue.

"Once every senator and congressman has gone on the record, those who have sided with union thugs against law-abiding citizens will feel the heat from constituents who are outraged by their votes.

"And that will pave the way for passage of legislation closing the 'lethal loophole' within the next few years." 📞