

New York Lawyer Richard Luthmann Arrested for Kidnapping

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Richard

Luthmann. Photo courtesy of the New York Post. [/caption]

Summary: Staten Island attorney Richard Luthmann has been arrested for fraud, kidnapping, and extortion.

The FBI arrested controversial New York lawyer Richard Luthmann and three alleged accomplices on Friday morning. According to the Acting Brooklyn U.S. Attorney Bridget Rohde, the attorney was acting more like a gangster than counsel.

Luthmann was arrested for 11-counts of fraud, kidnapping and extortion, according to the New York Post. George Padula III, Michael Beck and Stephen Cotogno were also arrested.

“As alleged, Richard Luthmann crossed the line from attorney to violent criminal and fraudster,” Rohde said.

The indictment alleges that Luthmann and his co-conspirators defrauded companies that wanted to buy recyclable scrap metal by shipping cheap material instead of the valuable scrap metal purchased.

Luthmann, an estates attorney at The Luthmann Law Firm, allegedly hired a co-conspirator to recruit Padula because his father and uncle had links to organized crime. Padula allegedly worked as the muscle to enforce their scheme.

According to the indictment, Luthmann created and registered bogus companies, and he even recruited one of his clients to run one. The client was blind and living on public assistance when Luthmann named him president of the Omni Metal Corporation. Rohde said that the client was “taken advantage of.”

Luthmann was also accused of luring an anonymous person into a trap. He told the person to come by his Staten Island law office to sign paperwork, and when he arrived, Padula and Beck appeared. Beck allegedly pulled a gun on the person and told him that he owed \$10,000--\$7,000 for a loan and \$3,000 in interest.

“Luthmann and his co-conspirators cheated scrap metal customers in order to make easy money for themselves, took advantage of a disabled man to conceal their fraud, and used gunpoint extortion to collect a purported debt,” Rohde said.

FBI Assistant Director in Charge William Sweeney said that it was shocking that a lawyer would commit such crimes, and he added that it was even worse than he involved his blind client.

“They are even accused of forcing a blind man to take part in their criminal attempt at profiting in business without working for it,” Sweeney said.

According to the New York Post, Luthmann had already garnered a bad reputation in the area after he challenged a rival lawyer to a Game of Thrones-style duel. He was also being investigated for allegedly creating a fake Facebook account so that he could pretend to be a local political candidate that was a rival to his friend.

Luthmann, Padula, 29, and Beck, 59 face life in prison if they are convicted. They were charged with kidnapping, extortionate collection of credit, brandishing a firearm, and conspiracy. Cotogno was charged with wire fraud conspiracy and faces 20 years in prison.

Below is a video of Luthmann discussing his desire to settle a case with trial by combat:

What do you think of Richard Luthmann? Let us know in the comments below.