



Vindication at the Gym

May 23, 2024

Crime: functioning.

In July 2020, police in Bellmawr, New Jersey arrested Ian Smith and Frank Trumbetti, owners of Atilis Gym, for resisting tyranny. A few months earlier, they had defied lockdown orders imposed by the administration of Democratic Governor Phil Murphy by reopening their business.

Smith contended that the lockdown mandates were unconstitutional and especially harmed small businesses.

We all remember how certain “essential” businesses, often larger ones, were allowed to function in lockdown regimes that compelled smaller, “nonessential” operations to close. Some states enforced such mandates more vigorously than others.

The arrest was a major production, complete with handcuffs, as if the gym owners were finally-cornered mob bosses. The iansmithfitness Twitter account posted a [video](#) of the arrest, along with a message: “Welcome to America 2020, where feeding your family and standing up for your Constitutional rights is illegal.”

Murphy also seized the gym’s assets: \$165,000, “done in the middle of ongoing litigation defending ourself against these, our 80 charges, the revocation of our business license. . . . This was never about protection, it was always about control.”

Smith and Trumbetti have been fighting the injustice all these years. Apparently, New Jersey officials could not see their way to dropping their pseudo-case voluntarily and providing an apology, maybe even restitution.

Now, in May 2024, almost four years later, all charges and summonses [have been dismissed](#). But the gym has [not recovered](#) the \$269,000 in fines and court costs it’s had to pay out.

That’s a crime. And dysfunctional.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.