

A Few minutes with the Boss

By: Joseph Andalina

Don't give up what it took us almost 30 years to get!

In a recent article in the Herald News, Naperville School District #203 states about the recent Laborer's and Operating 150 strike ... (the work stoppage) could be "potentially devastating if it causes major delays" regarding re-construction of Naperville Central High School.

The spokesperson also adds "they're jeopardizing the future of young people here, particularly the graduating seniors." I'm assuming he is talking about the unions and the people who recently went on strike.

Later in the same article, the Communications Director for the Operating Engineers said that he understood the school district's frustrations. (Nice of him to have those feelings!) He added "Our members never want to go on strike... a strike is not good for anybody." I want y'all to read and remember what he said next, because it really applies to those of you in law enforcement unions also.

He stated "But when contractors are trying to use the economic downturn to take away what we spent 30 years negotiating and fighting for, we can't have that, either."

Yes, my kind of thinking. As a matter of fact, those of you who keep up with our Rap Sheet and website have read where I have been saying that for a long, long time. From my writing, posts, discussions, e-mails, and our MAP policy not to concede to mid-term contract talks where your employer wants to open up your contract so you can cheerfully give up wages and benefits, I have preached this very fact. And I have preached it over and over again.

It has taken years for us in police labor to get you the wages and benefits that you deserve. Pensions are different. A horse of a different color, as it comes to you legislatively. What the legislators "giveth you" they now want to "taketh away."

Whoever is at fault with this bumper economy is irrelevant. It doesn't matter, but mayors and politicians are all jumping on the bandwagon to make you the bad guy. So in a similar vein, they are crying like Naperville School District 203.

They care not that the economic gains that we fought for for so long could be taken away. Better that than they lose an election. Don't blame themselves for "irrational exuberance" in spending and management. Just take from the cops to fix their current budget crisis and then look to the legislators to muck up your pensions for future fixes to their budgets.

So don't forget what the private sector unions are saying. Not so fast—wait a second—oh, no, you don't—we are not giving up our hard earned cash without a fight. No pay, we strike. And the other unions won't cross the picket lines, either.

The construction sites and the bosses at the businesses and schools sweat. We don't have strikes in policing, and that can be a good thing until you are knocked to your knees. When that happens, we have binding arbitration, so use it. Win or lose, it's what we have.

The tactics to achieve our goals are different, but it's the same goal. A decent rate of pay, good benefits, and a way to enjoy your retirement for dealing with so much evil and strife for 25-30 years.

Vita é bella

ps: As of this date, the construction unions and the school district have settled their dispute, even though the union is still on strike. The workers have gone back on the job after a separate agreement between them and the school district. The school promises to use only union labor for all future construction and probably agreed to resolve some differences for the union as pertains to the wages and benefits payable to the worker while at this site.

A strike can be a good thing.

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