

A Few minutes with the Boss

By: Joseph Andalina

Police Deaths

Looking at recent news reports about the rise of police deaths is disturbing to all of us within the law enforcement community.

So far in the month of January, it has resulted in 14 police officers being killed—10 by gunfire. In one 24-hour period, 11 officers were shot; four in one police department in Detroit. Most of the officers killed or wounded were not answering what you would describe as dangerous calls. They were simply doing routine jobs, and even in their own barns when the sickos of society opened up on our fellow brother and sister officers.

Last year, 162 officers were killed throughout the US; 59 of them by gunfire. Also, in 2010, four Chicago cops were gunned down by assassins. Ten officers total in Illinois lost their lives in the performance of their duty. The year before, among many officers' deaths, four were executed in Lakewood, Washington, while having coffee.

And the mayhem continues.

Some political ignoramuses who wonder about our jobs having risk potential that is not calculated into our pay benefit and pension packages ought to reconsider their outrageous comments. (Next issue of the **Rap Sheet Chief's Follies** will discuss exactly that.)

All you hear from politicians and pundits is that it's time to cut back on police officers. They make too much money—they don't deserve the "enormous" pension perks," and if they don't take pay cuts, wage freezes, furlough days, reduction on benefits, then numerous municipalities threaten and often do implement layoffs.

The gamble that politicians take is that the citizens won't miss the laid off cops. That there will be no crime. They spit out that the unions are at fault for the layoffs. Smart people, or shall I say anyone with any degree of common sense should see right through this malarkey. It is all just plain bull!

Pensions across the board are about 3% of total government spending. And I do know that the average pension for government workers across the board is about \$25,000. It's no where near for police officers what has been widely reported by the media.

Obviously it's higher in larger municipal cities, but it tends to be lower in general, rather than higher for most retired coppers and government workers. There is no question that the politicians, the chiefs, and those who are superintendents, directors, and the like make the big bucks. That's probably why they turn against the grunts so often now—to protest and hide *their* perks after years of being political kiss-asses.

But now this trash the cops thing is getting personal. Some reports I have seen indicate a conspiracy where cops are being targeted. Hard to not believe that there is some truth here when one sees officers shot in their vehicle, both personal and private, standing in their own driveways at home, having a cup of coffee, talking outside their department, and now inside their places of employment. It sure looks like assassinations. And some in the law enforcement community are looking at the cowardly administrators who never seem to stick up for the grunts. The purveyors of evil (politicians—who have cut manpower so drastically that they are putting us at risk) should reevaluate the propaganda they put out to lay off cops.

These are not just my opinions, but the analysis of others who have raised a valid point. Is the cutbacks, the amputation of street cops, the disrespect that cops are widely seeing in the media that constantly denigrate our profession, simply by innuendo when they report on the constant trash talk of politicians on a daily basis, causing a backlash against the police?

Is there some grit to this conspiratorial theory? I don't know if we have a problem like Sly Stallone had in the movie *Cobra* when he was accosted by about 30 serial killers on motorcycles, but something is darn wrong here. (By the way—it was a crappy movie.) But the seriousness of these rashes of police murders makes this old dinosaur wonder if political rhetoric is contributing to the assault on cops. We cops chuckle as the Democrats and Republicans squabble over civility. Walk in our shoes for a month and see how little civility the men and women in blue receive.

Liberals and conservatives, as you know, recently scorched one another on the shootings in Tuscan. While they now want more civil discourse and to sit with one another in Congress, maybe they should all demonstrate some civil discourse towards us—the ones who are on the front lines of chaos. As one political type said, police work and the risks attached to it does not factor into your pay package. And he really isn't alone with his opinion. They abound in local government.

Fourteen cops killed in January. Officers' names and states can be found at the Officer Down Memorial Page, Inc. It's enough to hang our heads down in sorrow if the drive to reduce police officers to save money has led to even one cop's death.

Stay safe.

Vita é Bella

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