

## **A Few minutes with the Boss**

*By: Joseph Andalina*

### **Resistance Spreads**

As many of you know from my writings, it has been suggested by multiple venues and by yours truly to resist concessions or opening up your contract to take a pay cut.

Some may think that we accept cops being laid off in lieu of givebacks. That opinion is restricted to only those on the on the very bottom of the seniority list. But we do agree it is a tough call as we don't want to see any cops lose their jobs. Most MAP chapters and others in other unions or associations also see the wisdom of not accepting or buying into concessions to avoid layoffs. It is tough to be sure, but unless your towns desire to lay you off runs deeply into your department and cuts are many, you must fight the urge to open up your contract.

Opening up your "bible" will only see more of the same in the future when management knows that you're scared and believe that your contract concessions can "buy" them out of their rampant spending screw ups. They are the devils—not the union or the chapter officers, who see the big picture.

Fighting to get you pay, benefits, and a wage that is kind to your pension is tough. Now with one fell swoop, your employer wants to take it away from you because they managed poorly and see us as a way to mend their political careers.

And if you don't? They play to your duty to the public, your oaths, and that you, too, must suffer in this bad economy. No, they just forget that on any given shift, you are being cussed out, spat upon, assaulted, shot, and sometimes murdered in the performance of your duty. They care not one whit about you when they put you on the street after making massive cuts in manpower or deployment. It's not your safety they fear, it's the public and being politically correct about not reducing services while you work shorthanded.

Yeah, the economy has tanked, but we still keep our part of the bargain and fight to keep the line between law, order, and chaos secure. We abide by our contract commitments even when the pay is not up to par.

Case in point, just to show that local police groups are buying into the concept not to take concessions—White Plains, NY, laid off 12 officers and nine firefighters when the local association refused to open their contracts. The police association response to the demand to open up their contract? They said, "We can't do that. So now our guys are done, and if you include the jobs already unfilled, the city is 22 cops in the hole." To this union man, the cuts to the White Plains, NY police department sure appears retaliatory to me. Don't open your contract then suffer layoffs.

Twelve police officer layoffs is not small potatoes. It takes guts to just say no and you have to take off your hats to these police officers for not simply caving into concessions. The reality is that while we push for no concessions, all we want to do is protect your contract, your pension, and prevent the fact that every time management wants debt relief, they look to your contract and threaten layoffs if concessions are not made.

The ultimate choice is yours and we want to make that clear. We do not look down at you if you do make concessions, just think it through and know what you're getting into and losing if you choose to concede. At some point management has to own up to their mistakes, live with their commitments, and not put the anvil on the cops' shoulders.

We have heard over and over how employers will not break up contracts for other vendors for mundane services like fireworks, fests, jubilees, and other PR events that enhance their image.

No, they want the buck to start and stop with their employees and they use "the brotherhood" card to get their way.

So know that you are not alone. Someday the economy will rise and when it does, those of you who did not take concessions will still have your wages, benefits, and pensions intact. For those of you who did open your contracts, we hope that either MAP, your other unions, or local associations will be able to get some of your concessions back in future negotiations. But it won't be easy and it's not a given. It could take years to get back what you give up.

Vita é bella

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