

A Few Minutes with the Boss

Rich man, poor man, union man

By: Joseph Andalina

In a recent article in the *Illinois Issues* magazine, they report union membership, while down 27.3 percent from three decades earlier, is now at 15-something percent, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

What was interesting was that the Illinois Economic Policy Institute, speaking about the large increase gap between the rich and the poor stated “the measureable reasons for the gap...is the decline of union membership.” “Being part of a union means a premium on wages of between 10 and 17 percent.”

They why, one may ask, would so many in government and these “think tanks” and civic groups desire to see unions die? More for big businesses and the founders and owners? To create more low paying jobs? That must be it.

Put more folks to work doing boring, menial life-sucking jobs so the rich get richer. Maybe if you have that job that crushes your eyeballs, union membership would at least bring you a wage while you take that menial, life-sucking job.

We need unions. They especially help the poor and middle class. It is desirable to be educated as that encourages entrepreneurship. But if the cost of college soars to near 30 percent over inflation, that is just a pipe dream for many, and the key to some success is to get employed in a job that allows you to partake in the American Dream.

The whole thing is a mess. Too much inequality and inefficiency, and too much demonization of the public sector where not jobs but careers are made.

Notice all your politicians never talk about careers, just jobs. But you can't have either jobs or careers for the most part without unions looking out for your back.

Yes, there is bad in everything, but our system of bargaining and protecting your rights will prevent you, for the most part, from being one of Illinois' poor.

One last thing – taxes can kill your hopes and dreams in this state also, but sometimes it's the only mechanism that makes a government run, especially if you're a public employee.