

A Few Minutes with the Boss

By: Joe Andalina

Who you gonna call?

Yeah, that's the question. Who **are** you going to call when the governor and the legislators massacre your municipal pensions?

Better start thinking about it now because as I predicted in past scribblings here and in our MAP newsletter, it is coming. Word is, and it has been confirmed through sources, that consideration is to be given to changing your **local** retirement pensions in city, village, and county governments. The mayors and local politicians are pressuring the legislators to do for them what they did for the state.

That is to change the pension retirement system to mirror what the state will have as of June 1, 2014. Most of you know what that entails and if not, my next issue of the *Rap Sheet*, due out next month, discusses the principal facts on this new legislation. And believe me, you do not want this on the local level.

Apparently the mayors and local politicians think this is the answer to their prayers, as I believe many municipalities have deferred, delayed, or denied their pension payments, too—just like the state did. They are all in one big mess.

What's troubling is that the legislators, if they consider such legislation this year, are not willing to wait for the end result of the many lawsuits filed in opposition to the state's new rules. No, they want to get ahead of the game and will be getting pressure now from local governments to spoil retirements for local government workers now.

There is also going to be a move to eliminate collective bargaining, just as they did in Wisconsin. Whether or not that will be a reality, I don't know. It's hard to believe that Democrats would actually do this to labor, there is no doubt Republicans would, but Democrats have surprised labor in the past with their disloyalty to labor. We need to find some legislators of either party to assist working folks in our efforts to provide and care for the American worker, especially in the public sector. I know they are there and they all don't want to erode our rights. But it's going to take those "phone calls," emails, and letters to let them know that **you**, the public sector worker, cares about your own future and the future of labor and your colleagues.

So, make that call to make clear that changing your local retirement benefits and collective bargaining is not acceptable. And yes, they may deny this is coming. Your chiefs and politicians may tell you not to worry about it—but worry about it.

And will they do this dastardly stuff this year? Don't know; it is an election year. Might not happen but the consideration may be there. The fact is that even the press is jumping on this as we speak.

Our sources are as reliable as the next guy's, but it is better to be aware and be prepared. Be proactive. After all, it is your retirement and your labor future.

Stay safe, and *vita é Bella*.