



Hypocrisy in our Democracy The Attack on the Civil Service Worker is an Attack on the Middle Class

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These are the same hard working civil service workers that wake up early in the morning and provide crucial services for our county. Your police, Probation, Correction, Sheriffs, DPW Workers, Firemen and countless others. All these professionals are highly trained and carry out their duties in a professional manner; some without raises since 2006 and yet they perform to the highest of standards, all the while believing that their hard work will pay off with gratification from county government.

What thanks do they get? Westchester Legislators passing a healthcare bill that non union employee will contribute up to 20% of their salaries. Right now, this only affects approximately 600 county workers. Union leaders made a grave mistake by staying silent on this legislation. This will be the blue print for future negotiations for the rest of the county unionized work force. With a majority of unions working under expired labor contracts, any monetary raise will be erased by healthcare contributions.

County management and elected officials continued to fatten their pockets while labor unions were forced to wait some two to four years for labor contracts. For the county employees going this long without a raise, this is money we will never get back and for the younger employees, they will never catch up to the rising cost of living.

With the constant barrage of the assumptions that these dedicated civil service workers are the cause of our financial woes and that the way to strike a balance is off the backs of hard working county workers. Even White Plains city government has distributed pink slips to dedicated Police and Firemen while asking unions to give back. Most can't even afford to purchase a home in

the city and county where they serve; we say to you: Do not expect to remain in office or be elected if you do not truly embrace accountability and balance at all levels.

The financial crisis in this county has affected everyone. For the last 12 years, county government has swelled. This swelling has been mostly at the top and frivolous spending of those in appointed positions and elected officials has become outrageous. Common sense dictates that cost cutting start at the top.

Westchester County has become no better than Corporate America, no different than any fortune 500 company with profit as it's bottom line: cut from the bottom while management is over staffed, paper clip job titles, and some with no working knowledge of how their departments are run and by whom. All the while keeping their eyes on the rank and file, while over staffed management goes untouched and unaffected. So the change that the common people voted for has become the same bureaucracy and financial chaos created by the status quo. Labor union bosses should be outraged at the assumptions of the media and out of touch financial specialists' that its labors fault for the financial condition of the county. The members



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should demand a fair and balanced story.

We have seen the private sector attempt to dictate policy over the public sector in Westchester County. It has been said that the Westchester Business Association called on County Executive Astorino to address the salaries of hard working county laborers so the business tax

base can be lowered. If Mr. Astorino tries to answer that call on the backs of county laborers, it will be a grave mistake.

The Astorino administration should remember their historical landslide victory. It didn't happen by just republicans voting. It was the majority of county workers, Westchester's middle class, their families and friends that stepped up on voting day and elected him in office with hope for a change for the better. It is incumbent upon Mr. Astorino to create a substantial wage and benefits package that reflects good jobs and the ability to have a middle-class life style in Westchester County or his first four years will be his last.

Democrats will fair no better in upcoming elections. The biggest threat, of course, is apathy from a Democratic constituency that has a history of mobilizing for elections in Westchester. The last major election was the all time

lowest turnout for Westchester County. A low electoral turn out spells a nightmare for any incumbent, especially Democrats.

It's time for the labor unions' of Westchester to truly stand up and become proactive instead of reactive. Where are the constant voices of our labor union presidents? Why do they wait until legislation is passed to rally the members? The legislator's chambers should be packed every meeting. They have been muffled and confused because they enjoyed the crumbs from the Andy Spano era. Now they have to really work in the position they have been voted to represent.

Labor unions will not be able to go to their membership and say lets vote for this one or that one again. The membership will respond; what have they done for us? And union leaders will look blank faced.

If labor unions presidents don't step out of the box, truly address labor issues and hold elected officials accountable on local, state and federal governmental levels, they would have failed its members and the greater public in holding elected officials to true democracy and exposed the hypocrites that pose as representatives of the people in our democracy.

The National Black Police Association has been in existence since 1972 nationally with chartered organizations in the United Kingdom, Canada and Bermuda. The principal concerns of the National Black Police Association are the promotion of justice, fairness, and effectiveness in law enforcement issues and the effect of those issues upon the total community.

In Unity and Peace

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