

SETTING THE COURSE

This periodical has been established to present the membership of the C.O.B.A. with a more objective view of issues pertaining to them and the department.

In order to do this, it is essential that all sides of an issue be presented for evaluation, and we intend to present the other side.

It is not our intention to create conflict among our members or to undermine the efforts of the C.O.B.A. Executive Board; however, we will address ourselves to those issues that may generate controversy, where different points of view can be taken, but we will do so objectively and criticize constructively.

It is our objective to promote cohesion and solidarity, by offering **New Directions**.

LOCAL 832

For some time, members of the C.O.B.A. have withdrawn from the organization and have sought membership in Local 832. We realize that Local 832's reputation as a labor organization is highly regarded, that it is a competent, well organized and extremely functional union. However, it cannot represent you in collective bargaining with the City of New York. The only bargaining vehicle we have as correction officers that the city will recognize is the C.O.B.A.

Although we think highly of Local 832 and readily acknowledge its accomplishments, we must realize it is counterproductive to expend energies in an organization that can produce only limited results and to disassociate ourselves from the organization which we have elected to represent our interest.

We concur the C.O.B.A. has many areas of discontentment, but rather than turn to other sources for relief, we should address ourselves to these areas in a constructive manner. We therefore ask that you reconsider your position and rejoin the C.O.B.A. and assist us in demanding that those who have been delegated with the responsibility of representing us do the job for which they were elected.

FIREARMS QUALIFICATION (GIVEAWAY?)

Due to a lack of understanding, a distortion of facts and the encouragement of the C.O.B.A., we have successfully bargained away one of our most sacred rights as law enforcement officers: firearms training and qualification on management's time. The City of New York had asked us to relinquish one of the work rules of our contract in order to comply with budgetary mandates due to the "financial crisis"; however, they did not dictate what work rules we should surrender. This was left to our discretion. The C.O.B.A. found it necessary to propose firearms qualification time as a compromise for our members to vote on, offering no other item as an alternative.

As we are all aware, the 18 days that we received in our last contract will be relinquished to the city. If I was President of the C.O.B.A., and if it was the consensus of the Executive Board that we should waive this work rule, I would have also suggested the following alternatives: Alternative (A)—I would have suggested that we relinquish one of the eighteen days.

Alternative (B)—I would have suggested that we be allowed to utilize our personal leave day in lieu of qualifying on our own time (Pass Day or Accommodating Tours), without compensation.

Alternative (C)—I would have suggested for consideration by the membership that we be allowed to utilize a time due or vacation day, and/or Veteran Day.

This was a highly prized concession that management won. Let me illustrate:

(1) Previously, when Officer Jones was scheduled for firearms qualification, management had to replace him on the work schedule, thereby not having his services for that particular day. Consequently, management had to reassign Officer Smith to replace Officer Jones. This procedure resulted in reassigning personnel to fill post assignments which were opened due to officers detailed to the firing range, in many cases ordering overtime or reshuffling of personnel.

Now that Officer Jones has to qualify on his own time, management is no longer burdened with the responsibility of replacing him on the work schedule, thereby having additional personnel to utilize, in addition to the monetary savings.

You were given the right, not privilege, to carry a firearm, by the State of New York, through the State Legislature because of the nature of your vocation as law enforcement officers, thereby being job related, so why were you willing to qualify on your own time? Even though we were willing to waive compensation for firearm qualification, we also should have been permitted to elect one of the existing alternatives which I mentioned above, which would not have cost the city any additional money and would still have complied with economies due to the financial crisis.