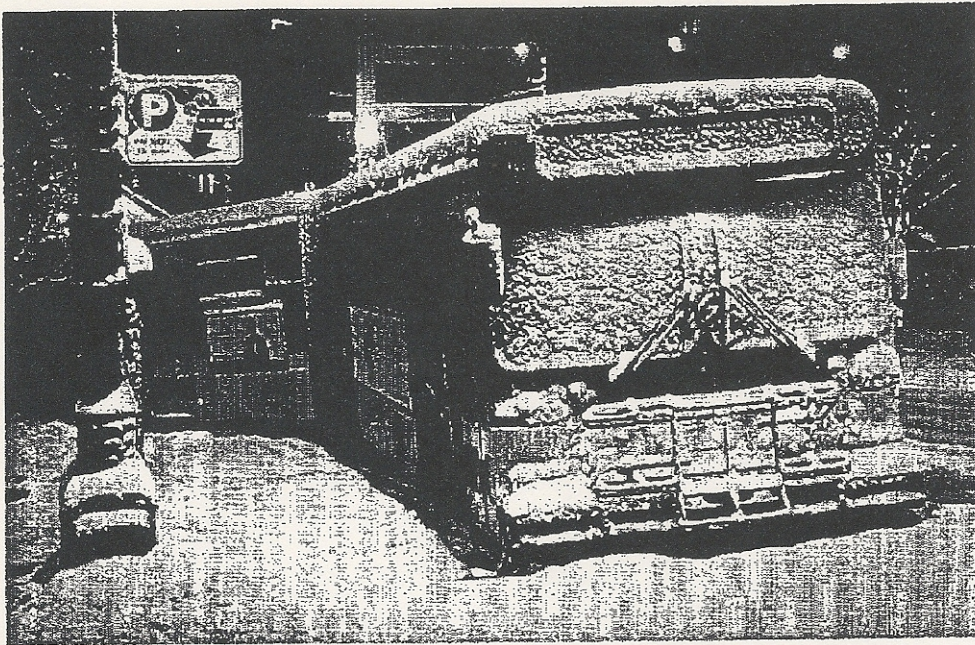




Union Snow Job Just Glimpse of Coming Blizzard

by Bret Jacobson

The New York Post is reporting that unionized public employees were encouraged to slow the process of digging out of the recent snowstorm to demonstrate their labor leverage in hopes of grabbing more taxpayer largess.



Think that's shocking? Just wait til taxpayers finally start paying attention to the power public employees have over local, state, and federal budgets. California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and former San Francisco mayor Willie Brown have already warned that 80 cents of every state dollar goes to public employee pay and benefits. Other states face similar figures. Shocking figures have shown public employee pensions twice as high in New York compared to their private-sector counterparts. Heck, even 60 Minutes is starting to take notice.

With all the political payoffs, scandals, and bailouts, the issue seems as mundane as the figures are mind-boggling, but the bill for lavish public employee pay is coming due in the form of a pension tsunami — or, if you prefer, a blizzard that will have union bosses calling for a bailout.

All told, billions of dollars have been promised and in many cases are constitutionally guaranteed to retirees. But not all of those promises are realistic, and yet union bosses continue to push for higher pay and more benefits. It's as if they forget that their members are Americans, too. The decisions are going to be difficult — especially for politicians who were elected by public employee union bosses who are the

nation's heaviest political hitters.

It doesn't take a weatherman to see the coming blizzard. But it will take political courage — seemingly in such short supply — to start digging out of this mess. This is one of the key fights of 2011 and 2012, so keep your eye on it.

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