

# LEHIGH VALLEY COMMON SENSE HERALD

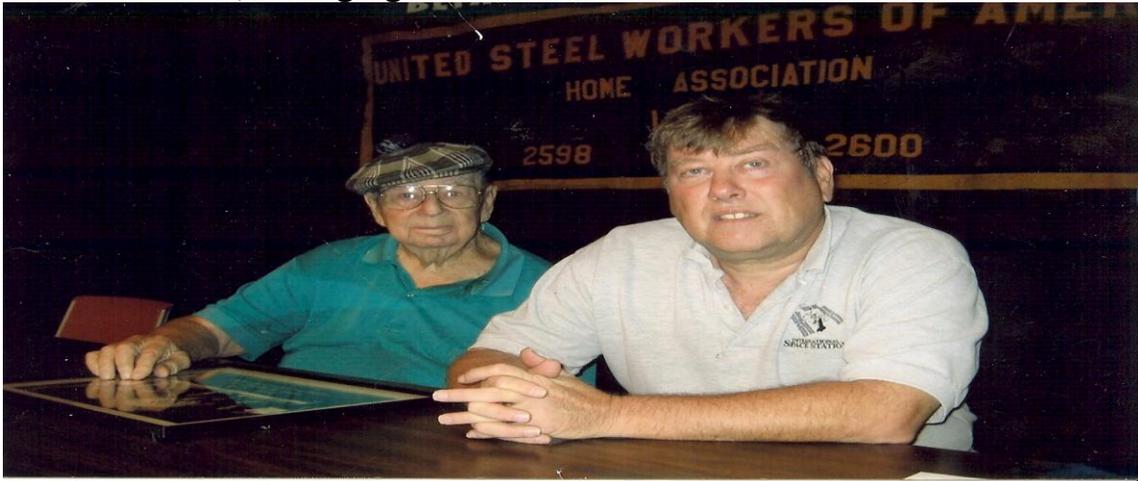
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### COMMON SENSE HERALD COMBUSTION STEAMSPECTIVE REPORT

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Old Courthouse  
Allentown PA, USA

A Steelworker Remembers

By Dennis L. Pearson

It was June 1965, the Pearson family was gathered at (the former) Walp's Restaurant in Allentown to celebrate my graduation from Dieruff High School. In attendance was my father Kenneth, mother Christine, sister Beverly, paternal grandfather Elmer Pearson, step grandmother Zilpah, paternal great-aunt Pearl Buss, paternal aunt Dorothy Moyer and her husband Frederick, and maternal grandmother Emma Kohler. It was a nice send off to a new phase in my life. In September 1965 I would enroll at Kutztown State College (Kutztown University.).

Living near Dieruff High School, which had been opened September 1959, my family became accustomed to the procession of graduating seniors marching from west to east along E. Washington Street from the school's auditorium to the school's gymnasium. Those were the days of two processional marches. The first, held on a Sunday was a religious service. The second, held during mid-week was a diploma awarding ceremony.

Inasmuch as I was a member of the school band, I did not take part in this procession of cap and gowned seniors. Neither did I walk on stage to receive a diploma. That honor was reserved for Class President Donna LeGerda who accepted the Louis E. Dieruff High School Diploma for the entire class. The rest of us later received our Diplomas individually in the school cafeteria when we turned in our cap and gown.

Sometime later, due to U.S. Supreme Court decisions on school prayer, the religious ceremony for graduating seniors was discontinued. Even later, the diploma awarding ceremony was transferred to Stabler Arena on the campus of Lehigh University. Consequently, the annual processions of cap and gowned seniors which my family and the surrounding community came to enjoy as an award for putting up with unpredictable teenage behavior during the school year was transferred out of the neighborhood.

( But starting in 2015 the diploma awarding ceremony for both Dieruff High School and William Allen High Scholl would be transferred to the new PPL Center in Downtown Allentown. )

A few days after the family gathering, I accepted employment at the Bethlehem Steel Corporation for the summer. It was my fate to be assigned to the #2 Machine Shop. At the time the #2 Machine Shop was the longest and biggest machine shop in the United States if not the world. I was in awe of the immensity of the shop. The multi-storied red brick, steel support,

and fogged window building seemed to be over a mile in length (actually only 1,770 ft.). After an orientation session with the shop's superintendent and a guided tour of the shop given by the shop's safety man, a frail man wearing a white helmet with a green cross on, I was introduced to the area foreman who quickly handed me a push broom and set me off on patrol of the shop's yellow bordered walking lane which ran the length of the shop. Wearing a bright yellow helmet with the rookie identifier marker of a red criss-crossing stripe on top, safety glasses and safety gloves, I diligently attacked intruding metal chips, oil and grime. Occasionally my patrol would be interrupted to assist the operator of a big overhead crane and the ground-based machinist in the precarious placement and removal of unmachined and machined material. I can testify that some of these pieces were really huge. Within a few weeks I was assigned to the tool crib. My job was to provide the shop's incentive paid machinists with the required blueprint and tool. If I recall correctly, the job paid \$2.50 per hour as compared with my \$15.96 price tag at shutdown in 1998. I put much of my summer earnings in the bank to defray the cost of my college tuition and board. I never applied for or received a student loan for my education at Kutztown State College.

I had no car in those days, so on day shift I shared a ride with my father who worked at the steel's Construction Warehouse. But my schedule was complicated by a rotation from day shift to night shift to middle shift and back again to day shift to start over the cycle. Thus, on many occasions my father would drive me to work for night shift and head back home. In the morning he would return with the car and park it at a pre-arranged location for my pick-up. I would use the vehicle to drive home and would pick up my father at the Construction Warehouse at the end of day shift.

So it went the summers of 1965, 1966, and 1967. For a brief time in 1967 I was also assigned to # 8 Machine Shop in addition to #2 shop. In 1968, I was assigned to the Bridge Shop where I had the opportunity to finish off the shop's Bridge Works with black paint.

During the years of my summer employment at # 2 Machine Shop, an increasing number of Americans were being sent to Vietnam, and this was reflected in what was primarily machined in the #2 shop. I had to fill many requests from machinists for blueprints relating to big naval and land artillery pieces and guns. In later years, # 2 Machine Shop would obtain orders for shafts for power plants and rods for the U.S. Navy Nuclear

Program. But that is now in the past as # 2 Machine Shop is only a shell of what it was. In 1997 it was mainly used for repair work, and BethForge explored the option to discontinue that function. The business plan for BethForge was to expand the size of # 8 Machine Shop and rename it # 1 Machine Shop. Critics say that #1 Machine Shop is too small and not designed well. They say that BethForge should have kept #2 Machine Shop as its primary unit. They say that #2 Machine Shop is more able to handle big and small machined materials and has more storage space. But that is all academic now. Number 2 Machine Shop is not part of the business plan for BethForge's new owners. BethForge was one of three manufacturing subsidiaries set up at the Bethlehem Plant about 1990. It manufactured forged items for machining as electric generators. In the fall of 1997, BethForge was sold off to the Lehigh Heavy Forge Corporation, a company that is part of the West Homestead Engineering and Machinery Company (WHEMCO) group of companies. WHEMCO is a division of the Park Corporation, a Cleveland-based company that owns and operates numerous manufacturing facilities that serve the automotive, steel, petrochemical, heat-treating and other heavy industries.

(It now being 2015, Lehigh Heavy Forge has vastly improved the outward appearance of its facility next to the Sands Bethlehem Resort Casino; .and its heavy forges and machine shop operations have produced a profit for its parent company primarily due to the fact that it is the only defense plant on the east coast of the United States... Yes indeed Number 2 Machine Shop is no more but the legacy of Number 2 Machine lives in the operation of Lehigh Heavy Forge's Number 1 Machine Shop.).

When I graduated from Kutztown State College in May 1969, I never suspected that I would ever work again at the Bethlehem Steel Company. My career goal was to become a teacher. That is why I accepted employment with the City of Allentown as a park instructor in the summer of 1969. What should have been a happy and relaxing summer turned sour as I found it impossible to find a teaching position. Career wise I was in limbo for four years. There was no Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) program for me to help me gain suitable employment. I did receive per diem employment as a substitute teacher from time to time, but the money earned in that endeavor wouldn't have paid the rent if I had to pay the rent. During that period, my parents were my greatest supporters.

As it happened, in April of 1973 I found myself talking to the Assistant Superintendent of the Steam, Water and Air Department about a job the Bethlehem Steel Employment Office offered me. This time the employment offer was of a regular nature not seasonal. Once again provided the bright yellow helmet with the criss-cross red stripes of a rookie, I was handed a broom. Within a few days, I found that I had not entered paradise but descended into the fiery depths of hell. Lucky was I that I never got burned by the hot water, steam and fiery ashes that came out of the backside of Boiler House # 5's coal-fired boilers. To be honest, I never sweated so much when I emptied three coal cars in 100 degree Fahrenheit weather. (But to my amazement this workload at # 5 Boiler House paled to what Old-Timers faced in an era before I arrived. Imagine emptying 12 coal cars in all types of weather.)

(In addition to my father the following family members have worked at the Bethlehem Steel through the years: My paternal grandfather, Elmer Pearson, worked as a machinist at the East Lehigh Plant located on Applebutter Road; my Sister, Beverly (Pearson) Folk, worked for a time in a office at the Homer Research Lab before transferring to a Bethlehem Steel Sales Office in Philadelphia after marrying her husband Steven; my paternal great aunt Pearl (Bindewald) Buss worked in the Bethlehem Plant during World War II; and finally, my paternal aunt Dorothy (Pearson) Moyer also had served in a steel office as well.

In late June 1998 # 2 Boiler House became the last Bethlehem Steel - Bethlehem Plant production facility to close. Upon its shutdown I had served twenty-five plus years in the Steam, Water, Air and Power Department of the Bethlehem Steel Company, mostly in # 2 Boiler House -- # 2 Feedwater Pumphouse. In that time I never had to walk a picket line and was only laid off two months in 1976 when the coal-fired boilers of #1 House and #5 House were discontinued. My father was less lucky. He endured a 116-day strike in 1959. As I am a son of a retired steelworker and a fourth-generation steelworker at that, I am indeed aware of the economic impact that the 116-day strike had on the day-to-day finances of my parents. The United Steelworkers of America Union strike fund provided some cash and some groceries for striking steelworkers. Nevertheless, the time arrived when my father found it necessary to take odd jobs to supplement the income of my mother who worked in an Allentown glove mill on Hanover Avenue . One job was as a traveling route salesman for a Coffee Company; another job was as a groundskeeper for a minor league

ball club in Allentown, the Allentown Cardinals. The Allentown Cardinals soon to be succeeded by the Allentown Red Sox played their games in Breadon Field, a ballpark once located at the intersection of Grape Street and MacArthur Road in Whitehall Township. The ballpark, later renamed Max Hess Stadium later gave way to a shopping center known as the Lehigh Valley Mall.

For twenty-five plus years I have worked in an integrated steel mill that traditionally has made quality steel from raw products rather than scrap, and used this freshly made steel to produce a quality-finished product for shipment to the customer.

In future years, I will remember the following about the Bethlehem Plant:

Etched in my mind will be the image of mountains of raw material nearby the new Minsi Trail Bridge;

Etched in my mind will be image of an elevated ore car taking ore to the Blast Furnace;

Etched in my mind will be image of the steel towers of the Blast Furnace with fire shooting out its stacks to consume excess blast furnace gas, a by-product of the steel-making process;

Etched in my mind will be the image of blast gas highways leading into the Boiler House for consumption in the Boilers;

Etched in my mind will be image of the inner parts of these highways, which I had to sometimes enter to clean;

Etched in my mind will be the image of the giant ladle in the Basic Oxygen Furnace. As a substitute teacher in the Bethlehem School District I had charge of a class, which visited the BOF in operation;

Etched in my mind will be the image of a red hot I - beam sliding down the line of one of "old Bessy's" many beam making rolling mills;

Etched in my mind will be the betrayal by the Bethlehem Steel Board of Directors of its former flagship plant. Members of the Tri-locals 2598, 2599 and 2600 had made concessions to management in exchange for

modernization of Bethlehem's former flagship plant. But management failed to live up to its end of the bargain.

Some years ago I wrote a poem while listening to the shrill whines of the air compressors at the Spring Pit Compressor Station adjacent to # 2 Machine Shop.

Let me share this poem with you:

Where are we going? What directions do we give?  
The meanings of life are so myriad.  
Fortunes are amassed and fortunes are lost,  
People are scurrying about.  
Look for the divine to see the holy word.  
Understand the love we often just observe.  
Nothing matters except from above.  
The eternal is more important than the temporal.  
Some people live to be hundred years old.  
Other people die before they are even born.  
Some people are dead or forgotten while they remain alive.  
While other people live on in our memories while they lay cold.  
Where are we going? That's for us individually to decide!  
Will or actions be constructive or lead to an eventual decline?  
Fortunes are amassed and fortunes are lost.  
People are still seen scurrying about.

The year 1995 brought historic changes for the Lehigh Valley. The Bethlehem Structural Products Corporation, a subsidiary of Bethlehem Steel Corporation, planned the closing of certain facilities of the Bethlehem Structural Products Corporation later that year. The chief benefactors of these closings would be the Sparrows Point and Burns Harbor Division of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation along with Pennsylvania Steel Technologies operating in Steelton, Pennsylvania.

Vine Deloria, Jr. in Custer Died for your Sins gave this assessment of the Indian experience:

"When people remember how weak and helpless the United States once was, how much it needed the good graces of the tribes for its very existence, how the tribes shepherded the ignorant colonists through drought and blizzard, kept them alive, helped them grow --- they burn with

resentment at the treatment they have since received from the United States Government. It is as if a man had invited a helpless person to his home, fed and clothed him until he was strong and able to care for himself, only to have the person he had nursed wreak incredible havoc on the entire household, And all this destruction in the name of help, It is too much to bear." (1)

The workforce of the Bethlehem Structural Products Corporation now can understand the plight of the American Indian. We too have made "treaties" or contracts with our employers. Yet in recent times, our employers have become determined to backtrack from their obligations. As this was written in 1997, the removal operation is in an advanced stage and many of us have been shipped off or will be shipped off to the reservations by the year 2000. The rest of us will have to find good paying jobs in a hurry or become dependent on the good graces of the government. In the process, some of us will be called a group of lazy, dirty former steelworkers loafing the day away at the agency.

As stated in the Summary Proposed Agreement between United Steelworkers of America at Bethlehem, Pa. and Bethlehem Steel Corporation (Including its subsidiaries Bethlehem Structural Products Corporation, BethForge Corporation, and Bethlehem Roll Corporation) --- May 1993:

"For two years running, your USW Negotiating Committee has worked to secure a future for the Bethlehem operations. In almost constant bargaining, we have aimed at one thing: economic survival for you, your family, and our community.

As you know, Bethlehem Steel has declared its readiness to modernize in Bethlehem. If, and only if, the three divisions of the plant are placed into separate wholly owned subsidiaries: one covering the Structural Products facilities; another the BethForge operation; and the third the Bethlehem Roll Corporation, a partner in the CENTEC partnership. For months, Bethlehem has proposed a complete and total separation of these divisions as possible.

Your negotiating Committee has strived to obtain the badly needed commitment to modernization, but at the same time preserve a measure of the unity familiar to us." (2)

But this "badly needed commitment to modernize" was denied a year later when the commitment was unilaterally withdrawn by the Corporation. The dream of the United Steelworkers of America Union in Bethlehem to achieve some type of equal partnership with the Corporation was brutally betrayed.

In September 1997, all that was left of the Bethlehem Steel in the Lehigh Valley was the Coke Works and a Boiler House support operation. On September 23, 1997 Bethlehem Steel Corporation had announced that it had completed the sale of its BethForge and CENTEC businesses to two companies that are part of the West Homestead Engineering and Machinery Company (WHEMCO) group of companies. The sale was finalized upon the completion of a labor agreement between the United Steelworkers of America and WHEMCO.

Lehigh Heavy Forge Corporation had purchased BethForge, and CR Acquisition had purchased CENTEC. Both companies took immediate ownership of the former Bethlehem Steel businesses

CENTEC, founded in 1990, had become a leading supplier of high-quality, centrifugally cast iron rolls to the metalworking industry in North America. CR Acquisition will continue CENTEC's technical relationship with Forcast International of France. CENTEC employs 125 people.

Bethlehem Steel's production of forged products began in the 1880s when the corporation supplied armor steel plate for naval vessels that previously had been made of wood. Since then, Bethlehem Steel, through its BethForge subsidiary, has been producing a wide range of forged products at forging and machining facilities in Bethlehem. Since early 1996, BethForge has been using steel ingots produced at Bethlehem Steel's Pennsylvania Steel Technologies (PST) business unit in Steelton, Pa. BethForge employs 450 people. (3a)

In 1997, every indication was that changes would come to my life eventually. I could only speculate whether the continuum of time would have me continue residence in the Lehigh Valley, or setting up residence on the shores of Lake Michigan in Indiana, Lake Ontario in New York, or

Chesapeake Bay in Maryland, or somewhere else. After the June 1998 shutdown, I entered a new phase of my life, a new beginning. The foundation of that new phase of life has been mixed with the ingredients from every person I ever met and every experience I endured good or bad. Somewhere out there is a yellow helmet with criss-crossing red stripes on top, but I will not wear those criss-crossing stripes for long.

The closing of the Bethlehem Plant began in 1995. Curtis "Hank" Barnette, the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Bethlehem Steel, mentioned four principal objectives in his report Bethlehem Steel in the Lehigh Valley 1995.

During this year of transition and for the next several years, these objectives are:

1. To continue Corporate Headquarters, Service and Research, and appropriate business divisions. All business divisions must be profitable or have an achievable plan that will cause them to be profitable;
2. To make transition from steelmaking --- taking the necessary steps to strengthen the Corporation by exiting from unprofitable steelmaking and heavy beam production and relying on the high-quality steelmaking capability of Pennsylvania Steel Technologies to supply both the Bethlehem Structural Products Corporation and BethForge;
3. To provide education, training and outplacement of affected employees. Two highly respected companies have been retained to help displaced employees continue their career elsewhere or prepare for retirement. A local joint committee of management and union leaders selected Performance Group Advocates, which has extensive steel industry outplacement experience, to coordinate activities for represented employees. Millard Consulting Service is providing similar services to non-represented employees.
4. To redevelop the Corporation's southside properties through a public-private partnership by making the land between the Minsi Trail and Fahy Bridges in Bethlehem available for redevelopment. The Corporation has retained internationally recognized consultants, such as the EDAW (Enterprise Development Corporation), to conduct a land use and marketing feasibility study for the best uses for the 160 acres that will

become available in the next few years. Brandenburg Industrial Services has also been retained to facilitate, through site clearance, the modernization of the Combination Mill as well as the removal of structures no longer needed once the transition from steelmaking, heavy beam and foundry products is complete.

Since then, the Bethlehem Steel Corporation has sent the notice required under the labor agreement to the United Steelworkers of America stating that it intends to permanently close the Structural operations effective on or about April 10, 1997. G.F. Paolini, President of the Bethlehem Structural Products Corporation, informed employees of the Bethlehem Operations, January 9, 1997, that the Company would begin the orderly exit from the Structural product business immediately. BethForge and CENTEC will operate beyond the end of the first quarter of 1997 to complete customer orders currently in progress. The Coke Ovens will continue to operate. To quote G.F. Paolini:

" For employee benefit purposes, Bethlehem has decided, whether these businesses are sold or not, that all affected employees will be treated as if these operations are permanently shut down. This is the same manner in which employees affected by the 1995 transition from steelmaking were treated. This means that affected employees of Bethlehem Structural Products, BethForge and CENTEC may be eligible for offers of suitable long-term employment or shutdown benefits such as Rule-of-65 or 70/80 pensions, severance allowance, and extended health and life insurance coverage for certain specified periods."

Bethlehem Structural Products Corporation President Timothy Lewis wrote the following letter to Bethlehem Structural Products in November 1995 as the end neared for hot metal production at the Plant. I was a recipient of the video he speaks of in the letter. There is much history in the video. But seeing the faces of employees, many of whom are about to lose their jobs is very sad.

To quote Lewis:

This month ends nearly 140 years of hot metal production at our Bethlehem plant. During those years, the men and women of our plant were the foundation of Bethlehem's and America's growth through high-quality products delivered on time -- with pride.

Pride, innovation and hard work are what kept us in the forefront of the nation's structural steel producers for many decades. We used our available technology to the best of our capabilities, and added our special services to keep our customers successful and coming back for more.

Even during the difficult recent years, we maintained our pride in our work and in each other to meet the challenges head on and to the best of our ability.

As the era of fully integrated steelmaking comes to an end, many of us will go on to new lives. As a memento of the pride we all had in our work, in our facility and in each other, enclosed is a video on Bethlehem Structural Products Corporation and its people --- the soul of our business. We hope you and your family will enjoy it.

To those of you who will be leaving Bethlehem Steel's employ, our best wishes go with you for a successful future or long and health retirement. To those of you remaining with the ongoing operations, we look forward to working with you to help our new business be successful.

Thanks for your efforts to go Above and Beyond. Good luck and God Speed."

In late 1997, I remained one of the few, proud and brave Bethlehem Steel Employees who still earned a living at Bethlehem Steel's Bethlehem Plant. Given past reports of the shutdown of the Basic Oxygen Furnace (BOF), the Blast Furnace, the Grey Mill, the Combination Mill, and the sale of BethForge and CENTEC, many people I had contact with in the outside world acted surprised when I told them that I remained on active status at the Bethlehem Plant.

The truth is, the Steam, Air, Water & Power Department, which I worked for, although downsized, would remain operating as long as the Coke Works needed a facility to receive its Coke Gas by-product. In other words, our prime mission was to burn off the Coke Gas by-product and convert its energy into steam and electricity. Number 2 Boiler House used one boiler and two generators to accomplish this purpose. When we no longer performed this function or when the Coke Works found an alternative cost effective facility to send its by-product, total shutdown of the #2 Boiler House and the related Coke Works Steam Generating System would occur.

This is not to say that there have not been any staffing reductions in our department at that time. The truth is there has, In fact, the work station that I have worked most regularly since 1979 (#2 Feed Pump Room) has been idled by new technology promoted by Nalco and U.S. Filter. But luckily, I remained an active employee, moving on to another position in the department.

In the twenty-five plus years that I have been employed by the Bethlehem Steel and its subsidiary Bethlehem Structural Products Corporation, within my department the following positions (all which I was qualified to work) have disappeared or been combined with other positions: Ashman --- # 5 House, Boiler Cleaner, Oiler --- # 2 House, Oiler --- Saucon River Pump House, Engineer Saucon River Pump House, Pumpman -- # 2 Feed Pump Room, Pumpman -- # 3 Feed Pump Room, Engineer - Spring Pit Compression Station, Stoker Tender --- # 1 House, Trapman --- Saucon and Lehigh Divisions , and Engineer - Merchant Mill Compressor Station.

The Bethlehem plant will be reborn. The Bethlehem Steel Corporation and the Smithsonian Institution signed a memorandum of understanding February 28, 1997 that could lead to the long-term lending of hundreds of the Smithsonian Institution's industrial artifacts to a new, not-for-profit museum corporation, the National Museum of Industrial History, to be located on the grounds of the Bethlehem Steel's Bethlehem Plant.

"This is the first formal step toward the possible establishment of a museum of American industry history here Bethlehem. The museum would be independent, but would have an affiliation with the Smithsonian and rely upon it as the major source of industrial artifacts," said Curtis "Hank" Barnette, Bethlehem Steel's Chairman and chief executive officer.

Mr. Barnette explained that, following the successful completion of a feasibility study, another agreement would detail the specifics of such a museum including the relationship with the Smithsonian, artifacts to be loaned to the museum, facilities to house the objects, staffing and funding. "We expect to make a final decision within a year. Bethlehem Steel would make available property, land and buildings to the museum and support its activities," he said.

This agreement between the Smithsonian Institution and Bethlehem Steel is alleged to be the first in the Smithsonian's nationwide program to share

its collections across America. At a news conference held February 28, 1997 in Washington, D.C., Smithsonian Secretary I. Michael Heyman Said:

"This understanding between the Smithsonian and Bethlehem Steel is the first of many such cooperative arrangements. The long-term loans of objects will allow the Smithsonian to fulfill its goal of becoming a truly national institution. The Smithsonian holds more than 140 million objects in trust for the American people. I want them to see these treasures where they live, not just in our museums."

The proposed museum at Bethlehem Works would initially occupy 160,000 square feet in three buildings where Bethlehem Steel produced alloy and tool steels. Mr. Barnette said at a news conference February 28, 1997 that the site is part of the Bethlehem Steel's local plant that made the steel that "helped build, defend and transport America in the last century and for virtually all of this century."

He noted that this new venture represents opportunity, historical significance and cooperation in a public-private partnership. The Steel leader said, "It is an opportunity to demonstrate that the horizon of change need not limit our vision of what the future can be."

Earlier in 1996, Bethlehem Steel sold its first major structure on the site --- its former plant office building -- to Lehigh University for the relocation and expansion of the University's SMART DISCOVERY CENTER. In late 1996, Enterprise Development Corporation was retained by Bethlehem to development a master plan for the property and to help attract investors. Enterprise Development, founded by the late James Rouse and now chaired by Robert F. Barron, Jr. has extensive experience in redeveloping urban and former industrial sites.

At a gathering of dignitaries for the occasion of the announcement of a proposed steel museum February 28, 1997, Bethlehem Steel's chairman pointed to three key developments --- Governor (Tom) Ridge's brownfields initiative in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the rezoning of the Bethlehem Works site by Bethlehem City Council and Secretary Heyman's wish to share the Smithsonian collections with cities and towns across the country --- as pivotal to the advancement of the museum. (3b)

Brownfields legislation encourages buyers and sellers to consider industrial sites for new ventures. "It is possible that this effort will help set a national

example of what can be done to similar industrial sites in a true public-private partnership by responsible corporations under appropriate environmental laws," Mr. Barnette also said.

Speaking at the same February 28, 1997 ceremonies, Pennsylvania's Governor Tom Ridge said, " In just 18 months, Pennsylvania's nationally acclaimed Land Recycling Program has reclaimed 64 sites --- returning them to productivity while meeting today's environmental standards. And in the coming months, I expect Bethlehem Steel will be added to that list of successes."

The Rezoning by Bethlehem City Council of Bethlehem Steel's Bethlehem complex from heavy industrial to an industrial redevelopment district, said Mr. Barnette, "was another significant action that said in this community there is a strong desire to find a way to make things work in the overall public interest."

Upon taking over the Smithsonian in September 1994, Secretary Heyman started to consider the sharing of Smithsonian collections outside of Washington, D.C. This ignited Bethlehem's interest in the industrial museum concept.

Mr. Barnette concluded, "As a good corporate citizen, we will continue to pursue with vigor this and other activities for this site in the months and years ahead. There will be much more, for we are only at the beginning of what is a very promising public-private partnership."

Of course this beginning, insures the virtual end of Bethlehem's relationship with its employees in the Bethlehem area. Hank "Curtis" Barnette has presided over the process that will turn a vibrant steel mill into a museum.

Discover Pittsburgh is a Study Tour of the Smithsonian; it offers an early morning tour of the dramatic "hot end" of the Edgar Thompson Steel mill. A feature that a Discover Bethlehem Study Tour run by the Smithsonian cannot offer. That is because, the once mighty Blast Furnace and Basic Oxygen Furnaces, the "Hot End" of the Bethlehem Operations have been brought low. It is doubtful that any Museum established on Bethlehem Steel property would receive sufficient funding to rehabilitate and operate life-size working models of the processes that occurred here. But if it can, more power to it.

When I served as substitute teacher in the Bethlehem Area School District, I escorted Nitschmen Junior High Students on the tour of the Basic Oxygen Furnace. The students were able to see hot purified steel pour from the ladle. It was a wonderful educational experience for the students. Also, it was a very interesting situation for me for I was also an employee of the Bethlehem Steel.

Concerning the establishment of a museum on Bethlehem Steel property, it is understandable that some workers would feel betrayed by the establishment of a museum. After all, they are still in shock by the prospect of losing their jobs. The comment of one of these employees, a union official being, was typical "I hate to be hung out there on a wall and stuffed like some dead animal while I'm still alive." The Union Official said the comment at a Union Meeting within a few days of the ceremonies announcing the plan.

However, I believe it is proper that the work of the men and women engaged in making steel be accorded its honor in history. Still. I am saddened that this history book of Bethlehem Steel Operations in Bethlehem won't be lengthened by the addition of any new pages and chapters. What is left at the Bethlehem Plant after the closing of the Combination Mill and other Structural Products Division Operations will be nothing but a footnote. And this footnote will mention that freightcars carrying coal under the banner of either Hudson & Lehigh, Conrail, CSXT, or Norfolk Southern will carry their mined resource to Bethlehem's Coke Works operations for unloading and processing, and will stay long enough to await pick up of the finished product, Coke., for shipment to Bethlehem's far flung customers. In the process, Coke Gas, a by-product of Coke making, will be piped to Bethlehem's Steam, Air, Water and Power operations for consumption. My continued employment at the Bethlehem Operations depended on this pipeline. And of course, my employers seek to prune off as many employees from this operation as possible. Already in 1997, I was asked to take a voluntary lay off. But at this time in history, I would leave my department under the Rule-of-65, and subject myself to possible transfer to the Coke Works proper, Steelton, Lackawanna or Sparrows Point. At the moment Sparrows point, an ISO (International Standards Organization) 9000 operation, is in need of hired hands. To be honest, I would prefer to leave my department under the terms of Rule-of-80.

For those unfamiliar with these terms, a voluntary lay-off is the acceptance by older employees of retirement before an operating division is shutdown, and would assure them of full pension benefits. I did not wish to accept this status because I was not certain at the time it was made that I would qualify for an annual cash bonus available for older employees. Shutdown pensions at the Bethlehem Steel were dependent upon a combination of chronological age plus years of service. The rule-of-80 would apply to persons whose total age plus years of service would equal 80. For example - 50 years old plus 30 years of service or 60 years old and 20 years of service). The rule-of-65 would apply to persons who total age and years of service above 20 years would equal 65. (For example 45 years old and 20 years of service).

At that time, becoming an inactive employee of the Boiler House would only guarantee me a period of unemployment followed in an year by an order to transfer to another Bethlehem Steel facility. An order that would not allow me to pursue my long-term career objective of entering full time the education field.

In regard to my job status, for months, construction work proceeded to turn the former #3 Feed Water Pump Room, a moth-balled lime dependent hot process water treatment system, into a state of the art cool water Reverse Osmosis Brine Treatment System. Such conversion would replace #2 Feedwater Pump Room as the major treatment facility for # 2 Boiler House.

# 3 Feedwater Pump Room, a semi-automatic air operated hydraulic valve system was built in the early to mid 1970's to augment the capacity of #2 Feedwater Pumproom. A long-standing problem of #3 Feedwater Pumproom being that the semi-automatic valve system tended to stick thus frustrating the backwash process of filters and zeolites, as well as the regeneration process of the zeolites. For those uninitiated, a zeolite is an ionized plastic resin used in water softening. This was not a problem connected with the operation of #2 Feed Pump Room as all valves had to be turned by the operator.

Returning to what I said earlier in this article, it was my lot to work in #2 Feed Pump Room either regularly or occasionally since 1979. My tenure in the Steam, Air , Water & Power Department started in 1973. I was familiar with the operations of #3 Feed Pump Room for I had worked there also attacking the hydraulic valves with a wrench when they didn't work and

keeping certain valves manually closed until panel board indication was given that the hydraulic valves had worked as planned. Indeed I hated it when the Panel board showed that a certain valve should have responded to the solenoid signal, but failed to do so,

When #3 Feed Pump Room was in its heyday, #2 Boiler operated three boilers.

The raw water needs of #2 Feed Pump Room were supplied by two tanks whose prime source of water came from the Lehigh River; and, the water needs of #3 Feed Water Pump Room were met by one tank whose prime source of water was also the Lehigh River. When the tank supplying #3 Feed Pump Room was tied into the network supplying #2 Feed Pump Room, in the late 1980's the #3 Feed Pump Room was mothballed. #2 Feed Pump Room had enough capacity in its use of three raw water tanks to supply the water needs of the three high pressure boilers.

When downsizing commenced at the Bethlehem Plant, a proportional reduction in operational capacity occurred in #2 Boiler House. Operations going from the use of three boilers on a daily basis to the use of two boilers and finally to the use of one boiler.

The end for #2 Feed Pump Room occurred in April 1997 when the new Reverse Osmosis was put into service for a shake-down run. Problems related to the conversion of a raw water tank from a beginning of the process raw water supply to an end of process holding tank kept #2 Feed Pump Room in line as a back-up system until problems were cleared through the end of May 1997. Although I had participated in the interim transformation of #2 Feed Pump Room from main treated water supplier to a back-up processor when the Reverse Osmosis shakedown run had started, I was not there for its ultimate demise. #2 Feed Pump Room was shut down for good when I was on vacation in the last week of May. When I returned from vacation the third week of June, #2 Feed Pump Room was all quiet. Its pumps silent and its once valuable water filters and zeolites out of service.

Apparently in its last day, there was a lime spill as the #1 lime feeder holding tank was filled to the overflow with lime and spilled out covering the cement floor below when its door was opened for inspection. No more will I

get my working clothes and shoes soiled by lime. No longer will I look like the white knight.

Returning from vacation to find #2 Feed Pump Room completely shutdown and the telephone and computer removed, I felt that I was a man without a position. Yes, I could go and work at the Lehigh River Pump House whose work area also included the Saucon River Pump House and a Air Compression station in # 2 Boiler House. But with the shutdown of the combination mill earlier in the year and the introduction of the Reverse Osmosis System which used Bethlehem City water rather than Lehigh River water, the load on the River pumping system was reduced greatly and its long-term status unsure. The chief mission of the River Pumping System these days is to provide cooling water for the generators operating in # 1 and #2 Boiler Houses.

The other alternative would be the Operator Helper post in #2 Boiler House. A position I broke in on many years ago but never worked a full week on, or even a full day. Indeed I had the seniority, but to work the job I needed a refresher. And this became an adventure as some demanded that I be retested and office politics had its way. I took the retest under protest citing the fact that no one in the department ever had to be retested once they passed a previous test for a position. I passed the test and some of my detractors who would have benefited from my failure to pass the test were now disappointed.

In late 1997, I needed approximately six months in order to enter the period in which I can creep into the rule of 80 and not be SLTE'd. In truth, if I didn't get these six months and did get SLTE'd, I would be peeved.... However, on the bright side I could console myself by viewing Baltimore Orioles, Toronto Blue Jay or Penn State games on a regular or occasional basis. As it turned out, the June 1998 Shutdown of the boiler house turned out to be my savior for I was able to roll into the rule-of-80 and be in a position to receive my shutdown pension in the fall of 2000. Unfortunately, a few of my Boiler House buddies were not so lucky. They received the letter from the company directing them to report to Sparrow's Point near Baltimore Maryland for assignment. They had received an offer of suitable long term employment, which is what SLTE'd means.

Lucky was I that the Boiler House's closure did not coincide with the late March 1998 closure of the Coke Works. That would have meant that I

would have received my letter of transfer in late 1998 and early 2000 as well. Fortunately, for me, the Boiler House survived a few additional months to provide steam service and water service to the Lehigh Heavy Forge operation until their newly installed package boiler would be ready to go on line. When that happened, the one remaining boiler house boiler would be allowed to go dark, effectively ending Bethlehem Steel operational status in Bethlehem and the Lehigh Valley.

(1) Vine Deloria, Jr. Custer Died For Your Sins, University of Oklahoma Press: Norman and London, 1989, p. 35

(2) Summary Proposed Agreement between United Steelworkers of America at Bethlehem, Pa. and Bethlehem Steel Corporation ( Including its subsidiaries Bethlehem Structural Products Corporation, BethForge Corporation, and Bethlehem Roll Corporation) --- May 1993, p. 1:

(3) Bethlehem Steel New Releases

a. September 23, 1997 - Bethlehem Steel sells two businesses to Whemco

b. February 28, 1997 - Bethlehem signs memorandum with Smithsonian to allow long-term lending of artifacts

February 28, 1997 - Bethlehem signs memorandum with Smithsonian to allow long-term lending of artifacts



## **Solar Power Satellite Presentation Wins Science Fair**

**by Dennis L Pearson**

Earl Bennett, the President of NSS-PASA and myself served as Special Judges for NSS-PASA at the George Washington Carver Science Fair in Philadelphia Pa in awarding the James Chestak Award to a student in the Elementary Division of the Science Fair. James Chestak was a former President of the Philadelphia L5 Society which was a precursor to NSS-PASA..

After looking over all entries we decided to talk to three entries about their projects.

We talked first to an entrant who tested out what type of wheel shape would speed fastest down a ramp. The plastic resin wheels actually manufactured through a 3D Printer.

Next we talked to an entrant that conceived of a satellite system which would make data on the salinity of sea water.

And finally we talked to an entrant who sought to determine at what temperature a solar panel operated most efficiently.

That study concluded that at cooler temperatures the solar panels operated more efficiently so it is imperative to cool these panels down perhaps with water to prevent these panels from coming too hot.

As it happened, this third entrant was our winner of the James Chestak Award. The student was a Sixth Grader who was in his last year of eligibility to enter a Project in the Elementary Division of the George Washington Carver Science Fair. This student showed great poise in discussing his project with us and other special judges who expressed an interest to question him about his project. Earl Bennett and myself were impressed that this student presented calculations of Power Voltage which included calculations of Voltage, Watts and resistance.

Both Earl and myself remarked to the 2 kids that attempted to discuss an area of Solar Energy in their projects that they almost stumbled into something that was really current and up to date

Prime example, the purpose of the International SunSat Design Competition is to move space solar power out of the research labs and onto the public agenda. This is being done by virtual story-telling and networking on a global basis, explaining what space solar power is and how and why it will become the ultimate renewable energy resource for Planet Earth. This two-year competition links global scientific communities with university-based (and other) digital media labs for the purposes of advancing knowledge of space-based solar power satellites (SunSats) and illustrating their many Earth-energy applications. The 2013-2015 Competition was managed by the Ohio University GRID Lab under sponsorship of the National Space Society and the Society of Satellite Professionals International.

The First Place Winner – taking home a \$10,000 prize – was the HelioAstra team from Rajiv Gandhi University, India. Their design featured a laser-based satellite powering a saltwater desalination project. Akhil Raj Kumar Kalapala and Krishna Bhavana Sivaraju were in Los Angeles at the International Space Development Conference being held there to receive the award;



On March 14, 2014 a Moon based working group was begun at NASA/AMES at Moffett Federal Airfield in California to develop a cost-effective plan for establishing and operating a NASA Moon Settlement which was within 10% of the total NASA Budget. In March of 2014 Joe Bland of the Sacramento L5 Society (SL5S), a mentor of Akhil and Krishna, suggested to Michael Abramson , a member of SL%S and the NASA/ AMES Working group, that group examine the possibility of powering a Moon base through the lunar night with a similar laser as the one suggested by the HelioAstra Team and locate it at LaGrange Point 1.

**Lagrange points**, are the five positions in an orbital configuration where a small object affected only by gravity can maintain a stable orbital configuration with respect to two larger objects (such as a satellite with respect to the Sun and Earth). The Lagrange points mark positions where the combined gravitational pull of the two large masses provides precisely the centripetal force required to orbit with them.

The five Lagrange points are labeled and defined as follows:

The  $L_1$  point lies on the line defined by the two large masses  $M_1$  and  $M_2$ , and between them. It is the most intuitively understood of the Lagrangian points: the one where the gravitational attraction of  $M_2$  partially cancels  $M_1$ 's gravitational attraction.

**Example:** An object that orbits the Sun more closely than Earth would normally have a shorter orbital period than Earth, but that ignores the effect of Earth's own gravitational pull. If the object is directly between Earth and the Sun, then Earth's gravity weakens the Sun's pull on the object, and therefore increases the orbital period of the object. The closer to Earth the object is, the greater this effect is. At the  $L_1$  point, the orbital period of the object becomes exactly equal to Earth's orbital period.  $L_1$  is about 1.5 million kilometers from Earth.<sup>[1]</sup>

The  $L_2$  point lies on the line through the two large masses, beyond the smaller of the two. Here, the gravitational forces of the two large masses balance the centrifugal effect on a body at  $L_2$ .

**Example:** On the opposite side of Earth from the Sun, the orbital period of an object would normally be greater than that of Earth. The extra pull of Earth's gravity decreases the orbital period of the object, and at the  $L_2$  point that orbital period becomes equal to Earth's.

The  $L_3$  point lies on the line defined by the two large masses, beyond the larger of the two.

**Example:**  $L_3$  in the Sun–Earth system exists on the opposite side of the Sun, a little outside Earth's orbit but slightly closer to the Sun than Earth is. (This apparent contradiction is because the Sun is also affected by Earth's gravity, and so orbits around the two bodies' barycenter, which is, however, well inside the body of the Sun.) At the  $L_3$  point, the combined pull of Earth and Sun again causes the object to orbit with the same period as Earth.

Gravitational accelerations at  $L_4$

The  $L_4$  and  $L_5$  points lie at the third corners of the two equilateral triangles in the plane of orbit whose common base is the line between the centers of the two masses, such that the point lies behind ( $L_5$ ) or ahead ( $L_4$ ) of the smaller mass with regard to its orbit around the larger mass.

The triangular points ( $L_4$  and  $L_5$ ) are stable equilibria, provided that the ratio of  $M_1/M_2$  is greater than 24.96. This is the case for the Sun–Earth system, the Sun–Jupiter system, and, by a smaller margin, the Earth–Moon system. When a body at these points is perturbed, it moves away from the point,

but the factor opposite of that which is increased or decreased by the perturbation (either gravity or angular momentum-induced speed) will also increase or decrease, bending the object's path into a stable, kidney-bean-shaped orbit around the point (as seen in the corotating frame of reference).

In contrast to  $L_4$  and  $L_5$ , where stable equilibrium exists, the points  $L_1$ ,  $L_2$ , and  $L_3$  are positions of unstable equilibrium. Any object orbiting at one of  $L_1$ - $L_3$  will tend to fall out of orbit; it is therefore rare to find natural objects there, and spacecraft inhabiting these areas must employ station keeping in order to maintain their position.

It was later discovered that that this use of  $L_1$  had been proposed by others , including Charles Radley , President of the Oregon  $L_5$  Society. In the 1890's NASA began studying the use of solar-powered Lasers for use in space, and that from 1991 to 1993 , NASA had funded a Project called SELENE (Space Laser ENERGY) , which studied the use of a Laser to supply power to a lunar base. And in 2009 , NASA studied the use of space based solar powered lasers to provide power through the Lunar Night.

.Bland thought that a satellite could be placed at LaGrange Point 1 to receive a constant flow of solar rays from the sun and then transmit this energy by laser to a receiving station located somewhere on the Moon which would then convert these transmissions into electricity and other utilitarian purposes..Bear in mind these energy resources are really needed because the lunar day comprises 28 Earth days ... So in this nighttime/daytime cycle there are 14 days of sunlight and 14 days of darkness. The point being, these transmissions would definitely help these settlements in these nighttime periods and in fact are completely necessary to save lives.

In Los Angeles I as National Chapter Assembly Chair had the privilege of working with and speaking with Joe Bland at our Chapter's Committee table and he introduced me to Akhil Raj Kumar Kalapala and Krishna Bhavana Sivaraju.

The Elementary Division of the George Washington Carver Science Fair which serves schools in Philadelphia and Delaware Counties of Pennsylvania was held at Drexel University's Museum of Natural History.

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## COMMON SENSE HERALD MEMORIES REPORT

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KUR (Kutztown University Radio) celebrated its 10th anniversary of its rebirth on February 22, 2015. on the campus of Kutztown University in the Borough of Kutztown PA. It being a Saturday the campus seemed almost empty as I walked from my on street-parking space through the parking lot of a rather new Administrative Offices, looking south I saw the renamed Andre Reed Stadium, and North I saw the College Bell, then proceeded through an underpass on the south side of Old Main before reaching another underpass and proceeding up stairway to the Georgian Dining Room in which I once ate in during the 1st year of my residency in the Kutztown Dorms at least.

When I walked through the doors of Georgian Hall there was music, food, the offers of tours of the campus, conversation and memories despite the inconvenience of snow... During this conversation I met some of the current Radio staff and they asked me whether I wanted to be videotaped concerning some of my experiences with station. I was not shy, I said yes. I noted that when WKSC was initially established in the late 60's I was on board to help set the station up ... I remember going to the storage space on the top of the iconic Old Main Building to retrieve materials for the station which was housed in the old student activity building on campus later renamed the White Building after a long time dean of Rothermel Hall a building I was housed in during my first two years on campus before residing in Dietrick Hall in my Junior Hall before going off-campus one semester before my professional semester. Old Main served as Offices for the Administration, Class rooms and housing for Women students. So we

had to go above the Women Dorms to retrieve this material crossing a so-called DMZ Area. Now the grass lined Parkway which separated the Male and Female dorms became known as the DMZ as students are not allowed to cross it after a certain hour. In those days women had strict dress codes on campus. One of these requirements was that women had to wear full length coats even in spring and fall. The Dean of Women at the time wanted her girls to be ladies.

With the station I remember broadcasting via coaxial cable tied into the Dorms the first few Kutztown State College Basketball games by delayed transmission ... The procedure being to audio tape the basketball games by tape recorder then broadcast the game at another time. But the decision was made to broadcast the games in real time so I recruited John Salonvonchick from Catasauqua a former member of the Basketball team to handle these duties...I spent three years as one of the Managers of the Kutztown State College and received a golden bear gold sports jacket at the end of the third year plus pay from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.. Unfortunately, when I grew out of the jacket it went to some cloth drive. Being manager of the basketball it gave me the opportunity to practice with the team when certain members of the team got in grade trouble ... Therefore I had the opportunity to play against George Krell , the All-State H.S. Basketball from Tamaqua... He got mad at me when I was able to score against him from the outside perimeter and I actually played him tough defensively for such a small guy in height I was. And I had fun being a beater at rebound practice ... As a beater I was allowed to foul at will teaching the player the ability to work through the pressure. From Coach Evans I learned how use a good basketball pick (and found it was a good self-defense mechanism against those bent on mischief) and learned coaching strategy... And I used this experience ( although being essentially the stat man for the Kutztown team ) to coach basketball teams for the former East Side Rams Athletic Association in the Allentown Recreation Knee High Basketball League ... I had some really good basketball players like Tom Stellar, John Stein, Dan Kendra and former Allentown Police Chief Joe Hanna . Getting back to the radio thing I remember interviewing the late LaSalle Explorer and American Baseball League Player Tom Golla who spoke at a Sports banquet at Kutztown and writing up the report of Martin Luther King's death in real time for those at the mike at the time ... The experiences served me well when I began doing Legacy interviews of former steelworkers for the Steelworkers Archives. And lastly I say because I produced a Journal of Anthropology called the Lehigh Valley Common

Sense Herald regularly for many years I became a member of the Society of Professional Journalists. And in this capacity And in this capacity received a press pass for the visit of former President George Herbert Walker Bush's visit to Dieruff High school in the late 80's. Otherwise despite being a community leader I would not have gotten in as school officials seemed to give the regular passes to others such as elected officials, businessmen and citizens favored by these official. I was not one of the favored one then as now and that is a bunch of bull., I think the Morning Call reporters of that time and the then management of the Morning Call didn't like that I got a press pass and held it against me since

Especially since the Lehigh Valley Common Sense Herald which was written by Gordon Sharp, Harry Forker, Kenneth Haas and myself oft times critiqued their reporting of issues. And of Course, Joe daddona and his office staff didn't like the fact that in 1983 I brought a sleeping bag to his office to remind the Mayor about his campaign promise in regard to the then existing sewerage related odor problem in Allentown and the Lehigh in Allentown and the Lehigh Valley Region. The too, Daddona did not appreciate it that when he wanted to use HUD money for low-income housing next to the Dieruff High School Sand Pit practice field our neighborhood the East Allentown Neighborhood 27 the precursor to the East Allentown Rittersville Neighborhood Association which constitutes the merger of the old CNO Neighborhood designated areas of 27, 28, 29, 32 and 25 together went directly to HUD and President Reagan to present our concerns and put our voice in favor of Senior Citizen housing ... The end result was that HUD sent me the 1st news that these units would become senior citizen units rather than low-income. Now this made Joe Daddona and Karl Kercher angry with Kercher telling the press that heads will roll because of this and that my intervention would help me politically in elections thereafter. From my standpoint in history it has not as these same politicians worked hard to keep me from political power although they had to tolerate me on the neighborhood level. In 2015 I am one of the few individuals who could circulate petitions of nomination for the Allentown School Board, Allentown City Council and Lehigh County Commissioner and know what I am talking about when speaking about issues that affect these three bodies...But unless someone else agrees to get all the required signatures for me I won't be a candidate.



## Venturing into the unknown future ---A future that may or may not come --- Road to Hope, Change or Disappointment

by Dennis L. Pearson

(Compiled from 2008 to 2014)

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### Part 6

When Obama ran for president the first time, urban poverty was a major policy focus for his campaign. Senator Obama gave speeches on the issue, his campaign Web site had a dedicated poverty section with a variety of policy proposals, and in his platform, he committed his administration to “eradicating poverty,” pledging that “working together, we can cut poverty in half within 10 years.” But the official poverty rate has continued to rise under Obama

*A Census Bureau report in September 2012 revealed that nearly 46.2 million people (one out of six Americans) live in poverty in President Barack Obama's economy*

*The data presented here are from the Current Population Survey (CPS), 2013 Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC), the source of official poverty estimates. The CPS ASEC is a sample survey of approximately 100,000 household nationwide. The data reflect conditions in calendar year 2012.*

- In 2012, the official poverty rate was 15.0 percent. There were 46.5 million people in poverty.

- For the second consecutive year, neither the official poverty rate nor the number of people in poverty at the national level were statistically different from the previous year's estimates.
- The 2012 poverty rate was 2.5 percentage points higher than in 2007, the year before the most recent recession.
- In 2012, the poverty rate for people living in the West was statistically lower than the 2011 estimate.
- For most groups, the number of people in poverty did not show a statistically significant change. However, between 2011 and 2012, the number of people in poverty did increase for people aged 65 and older, people living in the South, and people living outside metropolitan statistical areas.
- The poverty rate in 2012 for children under age 18 was 21.8 percent. The poverty rate for people aged 18 to 64 was 13.7 percent, while the rate for people aged 65 and older was 9.1 percent. None of these poverty rates were statistically different from their 2011 estimates.<sup>1</sup>

**Footnotes: Since unrelated individuals under 15 are excluded from the poverty universe, there are 468,000 fewer children in the poverty universe than in the total civilian noninstitutionalized population**

**Rebecca M. Blank, the acting United States commerce secretary, spun the numbers in a statement by saying, "if President Obama not taken swift and aggressive action to grow our economy and create jobs, today's report would have shown much higher poverty rates, lower incomes and a greater share of the population without health insurance."**

**U.S. Census Bureau statistics say that, "the gap between rich and poor Americans grew in 2011 as the poverty rate remained at almost a two-decade high," while 25.7 million women live in poverty, which is another record high.**

**Statistically, 16.3% of women lived in poverty, which was also the highest rate in 17 years, and the number of families living in poverty had increased to 9.5 million, another record high.**

**Presidential Candidate Dennis Kennethsson looked at these statistics and said: "Now that is a political record I would be proud to run on - Not."**

**Replied Gordon Gordonsson: "Don't get excited Dennis. Obama to these people remains their champion. Of course, these same people might express disappointment in what their man accomplished economically for them, But at crunch time they like Loretta Lynn will stick with their man. They believe the message that Obama should not be blamed for this economy even though he had almost four years to improve the situation.**

**As it was in the last quarter before the election, Obama's poor economy had shrunk the country's middle class to an all-time low, even though Obama framed himself as the candidate who could best help the middle class**

**Reflecting on the September statistics, " Mitt Romney press secretary Andrea Saul said in a statement. "Nearly 1 in 6 Americans are living in poverty, including a record number of women, and the middle class is struggling amid falling incomes, rising prices, and persistently high unemployment ...While this may be the best President Obama can do, it's not the best America can do," and Romney's "pro-growth agenda will revive our economy, spur job creation, lift families out of poverty, and create a better future for our country."**

**Perhaps what the Romney campaign had said here would have become reality had Mitt Romney been elected President. Yet we will never know because the Republican 2012 Candidate for President did not have a curtain call to take the Presidential Oath of Office January 21, 2012 - Obama had that honor**

**Pan Fessler in a November 6, 2013 Planet Money Report believes that here are some big problems with the way poverty is measured in the United States. So she was interested to see a U.S. Census report entitled Supplemental Measure of Poverty Remains Unchanged just released the same day based on the "supplemental poverty measure" —**

**Of interest, the Census Report reveals that the nation's poverty rate was 16.0 percent in 2012, unchanged from 2011,. Yet the 2012 rate was higher than the official measure of 15.0 percent. But of course, the official poverty rate in 2012 was also not significantly different from the corresponding rate in 2011 And of importance, unlike the official poverty rate, the supplemental poverty measure takes into account the impact of different benefits and necessary expenses on the resources available to families, as well as geographic differences in housing costs.**

**For example, the measure adds refundable tax credits (the Earned Income Tax Credit and the refundable portion of the child tax credit) to cash income, which reduces the supplemental poverty rate for all people by three percentage points (19.0 percent to 16.0 percent). For children, the supplemental poverty rate of 18.0 percent would rise to 24.7 percent if refundable tax credits were excluded.**

**The supplemental poverty measure deducts various necessary expenses from income; these include medical out-of-pocket expenses, income and payroll taxes, child care expenses and work-related expenses. These expenses reduce income available for necessary basic goods purchases including food, clothing, shelter and utilities (FCSU) and a small additional amount to allow for other needs. Deducting medical out-of-pocket expenses increases the supplemental poverty rate by 3.4 percentage points. Without accounting for medical out-of-pocket expenses, the number of people living below the poverty line would have been 39.2 million rather than the 49.7 million people classified as poor with the supplemental poverty measure.**

Without adding Social Security benefits to income, the supplemental poverty rate overall would have been 8.6 percentage points higher (or 24.5 percent rather than 16.0 percent). People 65 and older had a supplemental poverty rate of 14.8 percent, equating to 6.4 million. Excluding Social Security would leave the majority of this population (54.7 percent or 23.7 million) in poverty.

The supplemental poverty measure's poverty thresholds vary by geography, family size and whether a family pays a mortgage, rents or owns their home free and clear. For example, the 2012 thresholds for families with two adults and two children were around \$18,000 for homeowners without a mortgage living outside metropolitan areas in North Dakota, Kentucky, West Virginia, Alabama, Arkansas, South Dakota, Tennessee and Missouri, but around \$35,500 for homeowners with a mortgage in the San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, Calif., and San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, Calif., metro areas. The \$23,283 official poverty threshold for a family of four was the same no matter where a family lives.

These findings are contained in the Census Bureau's annual report, [The Research Supplemental Poverty Measure](#), released with support from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and describing research showing different ways of measuring poverty in the United States.

"The important contribution that the supplemental poverty measure provides is allowing us to gauge the effectiveness of tax credits and transfers in alleviating poverty," said Kathleen Short, a Census Bureau economist and the report's author. "We can also examine the effect of necessary expenses that families face, such as paying taxes or work-related and medical-out-of-pocket expenses

A few of the report's key findings according to Fessler:

- Almost 50 million people in the U.S. are poor using the supplemental measure, compared to the 47 million using the official measure
- Food stamps (formally known as SNAP) keep about five million people out of poverty, according to the supplemental measure
- Without Social Security more than half of all Americans 65 and over would be in poverty. (Both supplemental and traditional poverty measures include Social Security benefits.)
- Under the supplemental measure, which includes cost-of-living differences, poverty is much higher in expensive states like California and New York, and lower in places like Alabama and Kentucky
- The poverty rate for children goes down under the supplemental measure and it goes up for those 65 and older. That's because the supplemental measure includes the impact of out-of-pocket medical expenses (which are high for senior citizens) and of certain government benefits that go disproportionately to children

**Please Note - A Red herring comment is an English-language idiom that commonly refers to a type of logical fallacy in which a clue is intentionally or unintentionally misleading or distracting from the actual issue. It is also a literary device employed by writers that leads readers or characters towards a false conclusion, often used in mystery or detective fiction. But as we shall see, the Obama campaign effectively used the literary device to seal up his political dyke which was badly leaking.**

**During a private fundraiser in early 2012 Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney told a small group of wealthy contributors what he truly thought of all the voters who support President Barack Obama. Romney was not aware that someone in that gathering had videotaped his comments that evening and let it go viral later on .**

**David Corn a writer for the labor leaning Mother Jones magazine, implied that the GOP candidate showed his disdain for half of America. According to Corn , Romney dismissed these Americans as freeloaders who pay no taxes, who don't assume responsibility for their lives, and who think government should take care of them..**

**Too quote Romney: There are 47 percent of the people who will vote for the president no matter what. All right, there are 47 percent who are with him, who are dependent upon government, who believe that they are victims, who believe the government has a responsibility to care for them, who believe that they are entitled to health care, to food, to housing, to you-name-it. That that's an entitlement. And the government should give it to them. And they will vote for this president no matter what...These are people who pay no income tax.**

**Romney went on: "[M]y job is is not to worry about those people. I'll never convince them they should take personal responsibility and care for their lives."**

**In analysis , Jeremy Hobson in a Marketplace Morning Report relies on the research of Roberton Williams, senior fellow at the Tax Policy Center in Washington to judge the accuracy of Romney's comments**

**So as it is, roughly half of Americans pay no income tax And to put this statistic into perspective, that's down slightly from a few years ago, and some estimate it will fall below 40 percent by the end of the decade.**

**Of those people not paying income tax, about half of them are people with no taxable income -- low-income elderly and low-income working families.**

But the other half, Williams said, were people who benefited from tax preferences, like the child credit or the earned income tax credit.

The idea that they were paying no taxes whatsoever is somewhat misleading, though. According to Williams, about two-thirds pay payroll taxes (because they work), while most of them will also pay state income taxes or sales taxes.

"We all benefit from the tax preferences in the system," Williams says, "and the people who benefit most are the wealthiest Americans. Mitt Romney himself benefitted hugely from the 15 percent preferential rate on capital gains."

But we note that President Barack Obama waited until his final exchange in the 2nd debate he had with Romney to attack Mitt Romney's much-maligned comments at a fundraiser that 47 percent of Americans are "dependent on government" and see themselves as "victims."

At the presidential debate Mitt Romney had said: "I care about 100 percent of the American people. I want 100 percent of the American people to have a bright and prosperous future

In response, Obama replied that Romney was a good man who loved his family and cared about his faith. He then targeted Romney's 47 percent comment, which referred to the percentage of Americans not paying income tax. He had not mentioned the comment in the first debate.

"But I also believe that when he said behind closed doors that 47 percent of the country considered themselves victims, who refuse personal responsibility, think about who he was talking about," Obama said.

"Folks on Social Security who have worked all their lives. Veterans who have sacrificed for this country. Students who are out there trying to hopefully advance their own dreams, but also this country's dreams. Soldiers who are overseas fighting for us right now. People who are working hard every day, paying payroll tax, gas tax, but don't make enough income."

He went on, "And I want to fight for them and that's what I've been doing for the last four years. Because if they succeed, I believe the country succeeds. When my grandfather fought in World War II and he came back and got a GI Bill that allowed him to go to college, that wasn't a handout --that was something that advanced the entire country and I want to make sure that the next generation has those same opportunities. That's why I'm asking for your vote and that's why I'm asking for another four years."

And how was Obama perceived by the voters?

David Corn of Mother Jones spoke with voters across the country about their perceptions. Those people —the 5 to 6 or 7 percent that the Democratic Party has to bring onto their side—they all voted for Barack Obama in 2008. Corn makes the point that these votes, respond to the following question "Do you think Barack Obama is a failure?" overwhelmingly in the negative, . They still like him. But when you say, "Are you disappointed that his policies haven't worked?" they say yes. And because they voted for him, they don't want to be told that they were wrong, that he's a bad guy, that he did bad things, that he's corrupt. Those people that the Democratic Party has to get, they want to believe they did the right thing, but he just wasn't up to the task. They love the phrase that he's "over his head."

Back in 1999, when George W. Bush was running for the Republican nomination for president of the United States, he famously declared that he was "a Uniter, not a divider." Scott P. Richert, in his article President Obama: A Uniter, Not a Divider posted 2/17.2012 on about.com claims that eight years of his administration, alas, proved otherwise: Despite the incredible unity brought about in the first year of his first term by the terrorist attacks of September 11, the presidential election of 2004 was among the most divisive in the history of the United States.

And in regard to the 2008 election, Richert also claims that Illinois Sen. Barack Obama may not have adopted Bush's phrase, but he certainly attempted to present himself as "a uniter, not a divider." Yet Richert strongly argues that from the earliest days of his administration, President Obama overturned previous policies, especially on moral and life issues, that enjoyed broad popular support, from reversing the Bush administration's "compromise" on embryonic stem-cell research, to expanding federal funding for abortion and contraception, to announcing that his administration will no longer defend the Defense of Marriage Act

Despite the polarizing nature of these policies, Richert makes a case that President Obama has largely escaped sustained public criticism over any of them. But with the announcement of the imposition of the contraception mandate, timed to coincide with the 39th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, Richert contents that the President pressed his luck a bit too far. Even the "compromise" that he presented a few weeks later did not bring an end to the public outcry over this blatant attempt to impose the values of the Obama administration on religious organizations that declare the use of artificial contraception to be objectively immoral.

And yet, in the midst of the division that he has sowed, President Obama according to Richert has truly proved himself a "uniter," at least when it comes to one important group: the Catholic bishops of the United States.

As reported by Thomas Peters on February 16, "*Every single Roman Catholic bishop in the United States* had condemned in public the Obamacare HHS

mandate—all 180 bishops who led dioceses in the U.S. have spoken." And this was the *revised* mandate, which the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops had rightly seen as simply a shell game, designed to hide the fact religious institutions would ultimately still bear the costs of paying for artificial contraception for their employees.

To say that such a response from the Catholic bishops of the United States was unprecedented would be the understatement of the year. Not that long ago, before a certain generation of bishops began reaching retirement age and were gradually replaced by bishops appointed by John Paul II and Benedict XVI, you might not have found unanimity on all matters of Catholic doctrine, much less on a political threat to the religious freedom of the Catholic Church in the United States. Even at the height of the controversy over President Obama's commencement address at Notre Dame, a significant number of bishops sat on the sidelines.

No more. President Obama has finally pushed his agenda too far for even the most reticent of bishops to stay quiet. In the process, he's become a uniter, not a divider.

And that may prove to be the most important accomplishment of President Obama's first term. So important, in fact, that Richert began to think that President Obama would wind up a one-term President, even though, just a month ago, he was certain that he would win reelection.

Richert went on to say that time will ultimately tell if his assessment of the pending election results were correct or not. But he did note that the so-called "compromise" did change the nature of the public debate, returning some portion of those Catholics who had voted for Obama in 2008 to his fold. But as the Catholic bishops of the United States continued to explain the far-reaching nature of the Obama administration's assault on religious freedom, even some of those Catholics might come to understand that the "compromise" was no such thing.

And perhaps the next discussion of things involving Obama is not good for his carefully crafted image as a leader eager to build bridges between ethnic groups.

In a video obtained exclusively by The Daily Caller, then-presidential candidate Barack Obama told an audience of black ministers, including the Rev. Jeremiah Wright, that the U.S. government shortchanged Hurricane Katrina victims because of racism.

"The people down in New Orleans they don't care about as much!" Obama shouted in the video, which was shot in June of 2007 at Hampton University in Virginia. By contrast, survivors of Sept. 11 and Hurricane Andrew received generous amounts of aid, Obama explains. The reason? Unlike residents of majority-black New Orleans, the federal government considers those victims "part of the American family."

For nearly 40 minutes , using an accent he almost never adopts in public, Obama describes a racist, zero-sum society, in which the white majority profits by exploiting black America. The mostly black audience shouts in agreement. The effect seemed closer to an Al Sharpton rally than a conventional campaign event

Obama gave the speech in the middle of a hotly-contested presidential primary season, but his remarks escaped scrutiny. Reporters in the room missed or ignored his most controversial statements. In fact, Obama, who was not using a teleprompter, deviated from his script repeatedly and at length, ad libbing lines that he does not appear to have used before any other audience during his presidential run..

Obama begins his address with “a special shout out” to Jeremiah Wright, the Chicago pastor who nearly derailed Obama’s campaign months later when his sermons attacking Israel and America and accusing the U.S. government of “inventing the HIV virus as a means of genocide against people of color” became public. To the audience at Hampton, Obama described Wright as, “my pastor, the guy who puts up with me, counsels me, listens to my wife complain about me. He’s a friend and a great leader. Not just in Chicago, but all across the country.”

Of interest, by the time Obama appeared at Hampton, Jeremiah Wright had become a political problem. Wright told The New York Times earlier that year that he would no longer be speaking on the campaign’s behalf because his rhetoric was considered too militant. And yet later in the Hampton speech Obama explicitly defended Wright from unnamed critics, a group he described as “they”: “They had stories about Trinity United Church of Christ, because we talked about black people in church: ‘Oh, that might be a separatist church,’” Obama said mockingly.

Unfortunately for Mitt Romney, the political arm of Planned Parenthood was not engaged in satire in announcing a new \$1.4 million ad campaign the last week of May 2012 aimed against Mitt Romney the presumptive Republican Candidate for President, its most ambitious foray into presidential politics for the women's health care organization.

Cecile Richards, president of Planned Parenthood Action Fund, said her organization "couldn't be prouder" to issue its endorsement of Mr. Obama as the contrast between the President and Mitt Romney couldn't be any starker.. And most importantly, the Planned Parenthood Action Fund was committed to ensuring that voters know how wrong Mitt Romney was for women

The Planned Parenthood Action Fund in its new ad campaign hit Romney for his views on women's health issues, calling them "out of touch" and "harmful."

The first ad of the campaign, called "Out of Touch," showed clips of Romney saying he wanted to "get rid of" Planned Parenthood and would like the Supreme Court to overturn *Roe v. Wade*.

Additionally, a female narrator condemned Romney for wanting to deny women the right to make their own medical decisions,

"In analysis, Gordon Gordonsson, a professional reporter by trade commented: " I suggest that the Planned Parenthood Action Fund wants to lead a certain part of the electorate to making a false conclusion. I want to know, Is there real evidence that Romney wanted to close the doors of Planned Parenthood.? All I see was a promise by Romney to work to defund the abortion giant at home and abroad. "

In response to Gordonsson's comments, Dennis Kennethsson made the following statement: "

In total, the Planned Parenthood Action Fund spent \$5.7 million dollars in the 2012 campaign, mostly in the swing states of Colorado and Virginia. President Obama had also been a staunch supporter of Planned Parenthood's nearly half billion dollars in annual taxpayer funding, while Romney had promised to work to defund the abortion giant as you said at home and abroad.

Clearly, Obama had been a stalwart apologist for the group, mentioning them favorably multiple times during one of the 2012 presidential debates and then perpetuated false claims that the group provided mammograms and other vital health services unrelated to abortion and contraception

Responded Gordonsson: "I suppose that Planned Parenthood is fearful that without federal monetary support it won't be able to raise the necessary capital to keep its operations running at current levels. That is why they are fearful of Romney becoming President? They believe that Romney might actually do what he promised to do. And to make things worse, they know that if Roe vs Wade was reversed, that would put in effect another road block to their operations.

Answered Kennethsson: "My friend, you hit the hammer on the nail. From experience, I know the reaction of colleagues of mine in a city-wide neighborhood coalition when the Allentown Mayor completely cut off this organization's community development block grant funding cold turkey. These people had no inclination to continue the organization without this funding. They were fearful that they could not raise enough money privately to meet their needs. Which means, they were totally addicted to this money. In the end most of these people, worked for the candidate or candidates that promised to keep them on the dole."

Replied Gordonsson: "If I recall, didn't this organization use federal funds to hire community coordinators whose main function was to promote citizen

participation and community dialogue through the development of local neighborhood groups.

Responded Kennethsson: "Yes, that is true ... And Ironically our President started his career doing exactly that same type of work

Joining in the conversation was a fellow traveler of Gordonsson and Kennethson, a man named Kenneth Haas.

Haas cited the following fact: from a New York Times article of August 12, 2012 written by Paul Tough:

" Roseland was a prosperous part of Chicago, home to thousands of blue-collar workers, most of them white, employed by the South Side's many steel and manufacturing plants. But the plants closed long ago, the white residents all moved away and Roseland has become one of the worst-off parts of the city by just about every measure you can think of: unemployment rate, dropout rate, murder rate or just the barren, empty feel of the streets."

Then Haas cited additional commentary from Tough:

If any American president might have been expected to focus his attention on Roseland and its problems, it would be Barack Obama. The neighborhood, as it happens, played a critical role in Obama's personal and political history. As a young community organizer, he worked in Roseland and at a nearby low-rise housing project called Altgeld Gardens for three years in the late 1980s; it was in these communities, Obama said in the speech announcing his presidential run, that he "received the best education I ever had." And when he finally left Roseland, for Harvard Law School and a political career, he did so, he said, to gain the knowledge and the resources that would allow him to eventually return and tackle the neighborhood's problems anew.

Responded Gordonsson: " I see that Tough delved into the big question that society must wrestle with every day — how do you help young people growing up in poverty to succeed? When I was a cub reporter that was a major focus of public debate in the United States.

Replied Kennethson: " Good question, how do you help young people escape from poverty? Let's see , during the Johnson administration, the place to be for smart, ambitious young people in Washington was the Office of Economic Opportunity, the command center for the War on Poverty, the reporter said.

**Commented Gordonsson: From what I read here there must have been a societal lull in the discussion of poverty in the years after Johnson for the reporter claims there was no robust public discussion of poverty in Washington until the 90's, and much of it centered on the issue of welfare reform. But where is that discussion today?**

**Interjected Haas: "I believe that Mr. Tough contends that poverty itself has not declined. And yet as a political issue, especially during this presidential campaign season, talk about poverty has receded almost to silence and has disappeared. It's the economy stupid but stupid is not talking.**

**Responded Gordonsson: Tough provides us with the following statistics. In 1966, at the height of the War on Poverty, the poverty rate was just under 15 percent of the population; in 2010, the most recent year for which data was available, it was 15.1 percent. And the child-poverty rate was 22 percent — substantially higher today than it was then.**

**Commented Dennis Kennethsson : Let us invite Mr. Paul Tough to come amongst us and tell the rest of the story. You I have this magical sleeping bag from an earlier adventure that would bring Mr. Tough to us pronto."**

**And before Kennethson could say anything else there was a flash of smoke and light and there stood amongst them was a New York Times reporter:**

**To Quote Mr. Tough:**

**If any American president might have been expected to focus his attention on Roseland and its problems, it would be Barack Obama. The neighborhood, as it happens, played a critical role in Obama's personal and political history. As a young community organizer, he worked in Roseland and at a nearby low-rise housing project called Altgeld Gardens for three years in the late 1980s; it was in these communities, Obama said in the speech announcing his presidential run, that he "received the best education I ever had." And when he finally left Roseland, for Harvard Law School and a political career, he did so, he said, to gain the knowledge and the resources that would allow him to eventually return and tackle the neighborhood's problems anew.**

**When Obama ran for president the first time, urban poverty was a major policy focus for his campaign. Senator Obama gave speeches on the issue, his**

**campaign Web site had a dedicated poverty section with a variety of policy proposals, and in his platform, he committed his administration to “eradicating poverty,” pledging that “working together, we can cut poverty in half within 10 years.” But the official poverty rate has continued to rise under Obama. In May, Bob Herbert, the former New York Times Op-Ed columnist, castigated the president in the online magazine The Grio for his failure to address publicly the “catastrophe” of children growing up in urban poverty. “Barack Obama can barely bring himself to say the word ‘poor,’ ” Herbert wrote.**

**The idea that Obama hasn’t done much for poor Americans is simply not true; by some measures, he has done more than any other recent president. But Herbert is right that Obama has stopped talking publicly about the subject. Obama hasn’t made a single speech devoted to poverty as president, and if you visit [barackobama.com](http://barackobama.com) these days, you would be hard-pressed to find any reference to the subject whatsoever. As a result, he is missing — so far, at least — an important opportunity to change and elevate the national conversation on poverty. What we know about poverty, and specifically about its effect on children, has shifted markedly in the last few decades. New ideas are emerging from the fields of economics, neuroscience and developmental psychology. Four years ago, Barack Obama was the one politician in Washington who seemed attuned to those ideas and most concerned about addressing them. And the intellectual journey that led him to these new ways of thinking about poverty started in Roseland**

**Dennis Kennethsson reflects: " Fifty years after President Johnson started a \$20 trillion taxpayer-funded war on poverty, the overall percentage of impoverished people in the U.S. has declined only slightly and the poor have lost ground under President Obama.**

**Interjected Gordonsson: "Aides to the President say that Mr. Obama didn’t plan to commemorate the anniversary of Johnson’s speech in 1964, which gave rise to Medicaid, Head Start and a broad range of other federal anti-poverty programs. The president’s only public event during that time was a plea for Congress to approve extended benefits for the long-term unemployed, which is another reminder of the persistent economic troubles during Mr. Obama’s five years in office.**

**And David Boyer of the Washington Times in the January 7, 2014 issue sums it up in this way: "Although the president often rails against inequality in America,**

his policies have had little impact overall on poverty. A record 47 million Americans receive food stamps, about 13 million more than when he took office.

The poverty rate has stood at 15 percent for three consecutive years, the first time that has happened since the mid-1960s. The poverty rate in 1965 was 17.3 percent; it was 12.5 percent in 2007, before the Great Recession.

About 50 million Americans live below the poverty line, which the federal government defined in 2012 as an annual income of \$23,492 for a family of four.

And with emphasis, Gordonsson states: Boyer has stated that In spite of the administration's best anti-poverty efforts, the government has reported that poverty by some measures has been worse under Mr. Obama than it was under President George W. Bush. The U.S. Census Bureau reported that 31.6 percent of Americans were in poverty for at least two months from 2009 to 2011, a 4.5 percentage point increase over the pre-recession period of 2005 to 2007.

Of the 37.6 million people who were poor at the beginning of 2009, 26.4 percent remained in poverty throughout the next 34 months, the report said. Another 12.6 million people escaped poverty during that

States Kennethsson: Yet Boyer maintains the president's advisers defend his policies by saying they rescued the nation from the deep recession in 2009, saved the auto industry and reduced the jobless rate to 7 percent from a high of 10 percent four years ago. And one of the President's top economic advisors say he has pulled as many as 9 million people out of poverty with policies such as extending the earned income tax credit for parents with three or more children and reducing the "marriage penalty. And as we speak the White House again is pushing for an increase in the federal minimum wage, this time advocating a Senate bill that would raise the hourly rate to \$10.10 from its current \$7.25. Obama's Top economic advisor asserts that this action would lift another 6.8 million workers out of poverty.

Interjects Gordonsson: "But will it "

So as it is, ,Dave Boyer maintains that Democrats in 2014 will be advocating issues such as unemployment benefits and the minimum wage especially hard this year as the class-warfare rhetoric heats up to frame the congressional midterm elections. House Republican leaders oppose increasing the minimum wage and want unemployment benefits to be paid with savings elsewhere in the budget . And Mr. Obama is still out there insisting that the benefits be extended without offsets. The President himself declaring that the widening gap between rich and poor as "the defining challenge of our time," and Democratic candidates are expected to pick up that theme on the campaign trail rather than debate deficits and the complications of Obamacare

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**COMMON SENSE HERALD GEOPOLITICAL REPORT**  
**THE QUEST FOR HEMISPHERIC SOLIDARITY**

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**By Dennis L. Pearson**  
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**PART I --- THE QUEST FOR HEMISPHERIC SOLIDARITY**

**Discussion 8**

**HENRY CLAY**

**A United States statesman. His genius for compromise won him the titles of "the Great Pacifier" and "the Great Compromiser" in the era proceeding the Civil War. He was also a master parliamentarian and an eloquent orator. Clay was an unsuccessful candidate for President three times. Later he remarked, "I would rather be right than President!" Clay was secretary of state under President John Quincy Adams. Twice he sat in the Kentucky legislature, the second time as its speaker. He served 11 years in the U.S. House of Representatives, most of the time as speaker, and 16 years in the U.S. Senate.**

**In politics, Clay was a spokesman for the border state Kentucky and the middle-of-the-road Whig party. He sought to reconcile differences between the North and South on**

slavery. Clay also represented the nationalist outlook of the young, expanding Middle West. In support of the region's territorial interests, he boldly urged war with Britain in 1812. Through his "American System" political platform, which called for protective tariffs for eastern manufacturers, federally finance internal improvements for the West, and a national bank, he sought to link the industrial east with the agrarian west.

### **Early Career**

Clay was born in Hanover County, Virginia. His father, a Baptist minister, died when Henry was barely four. Clay had little formal education but was able to study law under one of Virginia's most famous lawyers, George Wythe. At the age of 20, Clay was admitted to the bar. Soon after he moved to Kentucky. He became a successful criminal lawyer, and his reputation grew. In 1803 he was elected to the Kentucky legislature representing a district near Lexington, where he lived on a plantation called Ashland. He served from 1803 to 1806 and from 1807 to 1809. During 1806-7 and 1810-11, he filled out terms of two deceased Kentuckians in the U.S. Senate.

Clay was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1810 and soon was chosen its speaker. As the leader of the aggressive, Midwestern "War Hawks," Clay helped push President Madison into war with Great Britain in 1812. In 1814, Clay resigned from Congress after Madison chose him to be one of the American delegates to the peace conference. During this period Clay developed hostility toward Andrew Jackson, whom he viewed as a dangerous political rival and who he felt had slurred the honor of Kentucky troops by accusing them of cowardice at the Battle of New Orleans.

**Clay was reelected to the House in 1815 and was again chosen speaker.**

**In 1820 Clay's talents as a compromiser were first demonstrated when he played a leading role in steering the Missouri Compromise through Congress. This law reduced tension between the North and the South over slavery.**

### **Political Battles**

**Clay returned to Kentucky in 1821, remaining there for two years. He was reelected to Congress in 1823 and again became speaker. In 1824 he ran for President and finished fourth. No candidate received a majority in the Electoral College, however, so the House of Representatives chose from the top three. Clay threw his support to John Quincy Adams, the second-highest man, who thereby won over Jackson, the original leader. Clay became Adam's secretary of state. Since Adams represented eastern financial interests, whose views were opposed to those of Clay's Midwesterners, Clay was accused of having made a traitorous deal. While secretary of state (1825-1829), Clay was a strong advocate of Pan-Americanism, the movement to foster cooperation among nations of the Western Hemisphere.**

**Jackson defeated Adams for Presidency in 1828, and in 1832 defeated Clay, who thus lost his second bid for the high office. In the meantime, Clay had been reelected to the Senate, in 1831.**

### **"The Great Compromiser"**

**In 1832 the South Carolina legislature voted to nullify a federal high tariff law originally sponsored by Clay. The state**

threatened to secede if President Jackson carried out his threat to enforce the law. Early in 1833 Clay piloted through Congress a compromise tariff act that smoothed over the crisis (Nullification).

Clay resigned from the Senate in 1842, deeply disappointed over the failure of President John Tyler, a Whig, to support his legislative program. In 1844, however, Clay received the Whig nomination for President. He was narrowly defeated by Democrat James K. Polk. The campaign issue was the annexation of Texas as a slave state. Clay took an ambiguous stand and thereby lost vital support from both slavery and anti-slavery factions.

Clay was returned to the Senate in 1849. Again he helped head off civil war, this time by proposing the measure that made up the Compromise of 1850. They included admitting California as a state, organizing territorial governments in lands won from Mexico, and granting the South a stringent fugitive-slave law. Speaking in the Senate, Clay pleaded for national unity. He denied that any state had the right to secede, and predicted "ferocious and bloody" civil war should it be tried. (Compromise of 1850; Fugitive Slave Laws).

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**COMMON SENSE HERALD LEHIGH VALLEY REPORT**

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**We Present The Truth, But You Do Not Comprehend**

By Dennis L. Pearson  
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## INSTALLMENT FOUR

Calvin Coolidge, a former United States President has stated:

“Of course we look to the past for inspiration, but inspiration is not enough. We must have action. Action can only come from ourselves; Society, government, the state, call it what you will, cannot act. Our only strength, our only salvation, lies in the individual. American institutions are built on that foundation. That is the meaning of self-government, the worth and the responsibility of the individual. In that America has put all her trust, if that fails, democracy fails, freedom is a delusion and slavery must prevail.”

In analysis, of course we look to the past to seek clues to the genesis of our perceived problems, but this search for the discovery of the genesis is not enough. We must act upon our discoveries to be of any usefulness in alleviating or otherwise resolving the gremlin-like social or physical legacies of the past.

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On August 20, 1970, Metcalf & Eddy was legally engaged by the Allentown Authority to render certain services (see Insert I) relative to the 1978-79 enlargement of the wastewater treatment plant at Kline’s Island, and pursuant to an agreement entered into December 22, 1969 between the City of Allentown and the Lehigh County Authority.

The Allentown Authority was requested to enter into the aforementioned agreement by resolution No. 23222 adopted by City Council on December 16, 1969.

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INSERT 1 – SERVICES OF METCALF & EDDY PURSUANT TO  
8/20/70 CONTRACT

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Feasibility Study

Make studies and submit a feasibility report including the following:

1. Estimated of the capacities of various trunk and intercepting sewers in the City and the effect the added flows will have on these sewers.
2. Preliminary estimates of the cost of constructing the waste treatment plant addition for alternative types of treatment.
3. The estimated cost of operating the enlarged facility.

Sewer Service Agreements

1. Consult with the City and Authority officials on the engineering and costs aspects of sewer service agreements between the Allentown Authority, the City, Lehigh County and other municipalities, which are expected to contribute flow to the plant.
2. Prepare such engineering data as may be required for these agreements.

Design Report

Upon submission of the feasibility report, and following agreement among all signatories of the sewer service agreements as to additional reserved capacity they will each require. Submit a report covering the following:

1. The necessary degree of treatment and the method of sewage treatment.
2. Revised estimates of the cost of constructing and operating the enlarged plant.
3. A detailed discussion and recommendation concerning the ultimate method of disposal of the filter sludge cake.

4. Preliminary design documents consisting of design criteria, drawings, and outline specifications for the recommended addition to the sewage treatment facilities.
5. Location plans and specifications for subsurface exploration.
6. Discussion of possible State and Federal Aid.
7. A recommend a program of construction

During this phase, engineer will also:

8. Furnish assistance in filling out the necessary application forms for State and Federal Aid.
9. Confer with appropriate State and Federal Officials to assure compliance with their requirements and with City and County officials for their approval.

#### Final Contract Drawings and Specifications

The engineer will:

1. Prepare contract drawings, specifications and other contract documents for the construction contract or contracts for required treatment facilities.
2. Prepare drawings in pencil on tracing cloth suitable for reproduction in accordance with Engineer's usual procedure.
3. Confer and cooperate with the Authority and City officials in order that the drawings and specifications will be in conformity with the needs of the Authority.
4. Furnish to the Authority engineering data for and assist in the preparation of the required documents so that the Authority may secure approval of such governmental authorities as have jurisdiction over design criteria applicable to the project.
5. Furnish six sets of prints of the drawing and six sets of the specifications and other contract documents without charge. Additional copies will be provided at cost plus 50 percent to cover overhead and handling. Provide a revised cost estimate for the project based on the completed drawings and specifications.

#### Services during Construction

After receipt of bids, the Engineer will:

1. Assist the Authority in securing and evaluating bids and furnish recommendations on the award of the construction contracts.
2. Provide consultation and advice on construction matters including periodic visits to the site to observe the progress and

quality of the executed work and to determine in general if work is proceeding in accordance with contract documents.

3. Review and either approve or reject shop drawings, diagrams, illustrations, catalog data, samples and schedules, the result of tests and inspections and other data which the contractor is required to submit for conformance with the design concept of the Project and compliance with the requirement of the contract documents.
4. Assemble maintenance and operation instructions, and parts lists, which the contractor submits in compliance with the contract documents.
5. Review and if appropriate approve progress and final estimates for payments to the contractors.
6. Upon completion of construction, furnish to the City the original contract drawing, which will be marked to show the works as, built.
7. In connection with field and acceptance tests of equipment and appurtenances, observe the tests of equipment and operating conditions, record test data, submit reports relative to the tests, and make final inspection of the work.
8. Prepare an operation and maintenance manual describing the purpose, functions, and controls for each process in the plant. The physical and laboratory controls, maintenance functions and staffing requirements necessary to operate the facility will be detailed. The manual is also to receive the approval of the Federal Water Pollution Control Administration.

#### Resident Representation

Upon the request of the Authority, the Engineer will furnish a resident representative and assistant as required who will:

1. Coordinate the establishment of the necessary lines and grades, which are to be furnished by the Authority to the construction contractor.
2. Visually inspect and approve or reject materials, equipment, and supplies delivered to the site of the work.
3. Observe the contractor's work with respect to quality, suitability and conformance with the contract requirements.
4. Keep records of construction and installation progress.
5. Prepare a set of marked points for use in marking record drawing.

6. Make measurements and computations for and prepare monthly and final payment estimates for work done by contractor.
7. Receive, process and handle shop drawings and the like, transmitting certain ones to the Engineer's home office for review in accordance with services under construction, section three.

#### Services During First Year of Operation

During the first year after the addition is placed in operation, the Engineer will:

1. Train and instruct plant personnel in plant operating procedures during initial plant start-up period.
2. Make periodic visits, correspond with, instruct and advise City personnel relative to plant operation and maintenance.

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Mother Theresa, the catholic nun who won the Nobel Prize for her thirty-five years work on the behalf of the poor and homeless in India has stated:

“Yesterday is gone, tomorrow is not yet here. We can only think of what faces us today.”

In 1979, it was difficult for Metcalf & Eddy to separate the present from the past. After all, as the consulting engineer by the City of Allentown through its Authority to oversee details relating to planning, design and construction for the enlargement of wastewater capacity at Kline's Island, city officials would conveniently rise above public criticism by putting

blame on Metcalf & Eddy whether Metcalf & Eddy was responsible or not. Consequently, Metcalf & Eddy found it necessary in its "Report to the City of Allentown On Request for Additional Funding to Eliminate Odors Emanating from the Wastewater Treatment Plant" of October 12, 1979 to explain the rationale behind decision-making that led to the 1978-79 completed construction activities at Kline's Island.

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The following is a Metcalf & Eddy statement in regard to Kline's Island enlargement planning decisions as found in its "Report":

"In 1971 during the planning stages of this project several alternative methods of treatment were studied. Some employing trickling filters and others employing the activated sludge process. In addition, Mr. Eugene N. Wetzel, of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources requested that we study the elimination of the existing rock media trickling filters and utilize a two stage activated sludge process. This was also studied. In Chapter 8 of our existing rock media trickling filters cost approximately \$12 million dollars. A similar alternative, which also utilized the existing rock media trickling filter, cost \$17 million dollars. The alternative, which eliminated the rock media trickling filter and employed a two-stage activated sludge process, was estimated to cost \$28 million. It was decided, at the time, that the lowest cost alternative should be selected. It was not the engineer's decision alone to select the lowest cost alternative. There were also other reasons to use a trickling filter over activated sludge. One major reason was that it is much simpler to operate and did not require a great degree of sophistication as far as operations is concerned. The operators were used to operating a trickling filter and there would be extensive training or new hiring required to operate additional trickling filters. In addition the plant had been hit with a series of chemical dumps, which killed some of the biomass on the rock media trickling filter. The trickling filter, however, because only the outer layer sluffed off, was able to recover. In addition, the EPA has a practice of only

funding the least cost alternative. If a municipality wishes to go with a higher cost alternative they must pick up the entire cost between the least costly alternative and the selected alternative. The city officials in Allentown, at the time, (1972) did not want the city to fund the additional \$5 million dollars all by itself.”

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Indeed, complaints from numerous individuals over an increasing territorial field in regard to the existence of malodorous conditions caused public relations problems for retired Air Force Colonel Frank Fischl shortly after he succeeded Joseph S. Daddona as Mayor of Allentown, Fischl, of course, did not have to look long to discover the genesis of the perceived problem. The fact is he inherited from the Daddona Administration a wastewater treatment expansion project whose design was not adequate to meet the impact of incremental BOD and Suspended Solids loading.

As a candidate for Mayor, Fischl said:

“ The problems at the Sewage Plant are a reflection of bad management, all the way from the Mayor to the Director of Operations to the Superintendent of Water Resources to the Superintendent of Waste Water. Mismanagement, inadequate supervision and lack of expertise in management rank the cause of the problem.”

As Mayor, Fischl brought in Bill Engle as Superintendent of Water Resources but kept Harry Bisco as Director of Operations.

Interestingly, Daddona in defeat had escaped immediate political responsibility for continuing problems at Kline’s Island. In fact, when he successfully ran for Mayor in 1981 against Bob Smith, Daddona acted publicly as if he had nothing to do with the Kline’s Island problem. But

being a candidate for city council in the 1981 democratic primary, I know different. I remember being warned privately by Daddona to drop the Kline's Island issue because it made me appear to be unneutral in the democratic primary. That is, my use of the issue made me appear that I supported Daddona's opponent Louis Hershman for Mayor.

The fixed reality being that Daddona feared that my pointed questioning of past decision-making in regard to water and sewer issues would be detrimental to his candidacy in the fall election; and also, that my position in the community would grow to the point that I would become a serious future challenger within the Democratic Party to his established political position in the community. Consequently, my City Council campaign perceived in this manner, Daddona and his political cohorts were determined to undermine any positive wide scale reaction to my campaign. Quietly Daddona's cohorts through their support to Barbara Irvine and Frank Palenchar, the eventual winners in the 1981 Democratic Party City Council Primary and successful candidates in the General Election of the same year.

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Despite the Daddona legacy the Fischl Administration could not afford to lay back and do nothing in regard to citizen concern about the quality of Allentown air. Accordingly, a meeting was held in Allentown, Pennsylvania on October 2, 1979 between the City of Allentown, representatives of EPA Region III, representatives from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources, and representatives of Metcalf & Eddy, a Delaware registered corporation with main offices in Boston, Massachusetts. The purpose of the said meeting was to discuss odor problems experience in the City of Allentown since the completion of the Plastic Media High-Rate Trickling Filter (PMTF) construction in September, 1978, Another purpose was to determine whether federal or state funds would be available to put covers on the PMTF's and other sources of odors that may be present.

The preliminary cost estimates to put covers on the four 100-foot diameter 32 foot high PMTF's to pull off the nocuous air, and scrub it

was 2.5 million dollars. The annual operating cost was estimated to be \$110,000.

Encouraged that state and federal funds would be available, Harry Bisco, Allentown's Director of Operations, submitted to George Parks, regional Sanitary Engineer, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources October 15, 1979 a formal request for additional funding for project number 420-831-01.

At the same time, Bisco asked permission from DER for the City to bypass the Plastic Media High-Rate Trickling Filters for the purpose of temporarily returning to the use of the original rock media, and renewed compliance to the N.P.D.E.S (National Pollution Discharge Elimination System) requirements for discharge until such time permanent solutions to the odor problem with the PMTF's could be realized.

But before Allentown would become recipient of additional state and federal dollars for project number 420-831-01, much data and information had to be provided to EPA authorities.

Accordingly we see Daniel E. Koplisch, Superintendent of Operations Kline's Island Wastewater Treatment Plant, October 19, 1979, responding in writing to inquiries of Ms. R. Sarah Compton, Director, Enforcement Division, U.S Environmental Protection Agency, Region III, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Koplisch conveyed to Compton:

1. "The influent to Allentown's Kline Island Plant POTW is septic. Laboratory results on effluent samples from Lehigh County Authority have shown that this material is septic in that it has no appreciable dissolved oxygen content and is odorous.
2. Laboratory personnel are in the process of determining other discharges whose effluent is septic at the time of

discharge. Information on discharges to the Lehigh County sewerage system is limited since the operation and maintenance of the County's system belongs to the Authority not to the City of Allentown.

3. Influent sewage to the plant is normally septic. The duration extends over a twenty-four (24) hour period, seven (7) days per week.
4. The City has passed and is implementing an amendment to its Industrial Waste Ordinance wherein dischargers of wastewater having concentration levels in excess of 300mg/L BOD<sub>5</sub> and 360 mg/l Suspended Solids are surcharged for that material. The City is also in the process of reactivating its legal suit against Lehigh County Authority with respect to the quality of effluent being discharged.
5. Presently we are considering several measures, which can be initiated to help eliminate septic conditions, but the plans have not been fully developed since the individual interceptor studies need to be completed.
6. As of this date, 99% of the construction has been completed. With the exception of certain aesthetical items, the construction will be complete within a month.
7. The Kline's Island plant is meeting final permit limitations.
8. Enclosed is a copy of Ordinance 12003 with amendments 12145 and 12345."

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As would be expected, there was some citizen response to the Metcalf & Eddy suggestion that the PMTF's be covered. An example was correspondence from David Cullen, Executive Director of the Allentown Community of Neighborhood Organizations, Inc., to Allentown Mayor Frank Fischl dated March 12, 1980 in which Cullen wrote:

"Indications are that the City is moving ahead to install these covers (on the PMTF's). The (CNO Environmental) Committee questions the wisdom of this and very definitely feels that more public input must be gotten before any money is expended. The

Committee feels that there is strong evidence indicating that the Plastic Media Trickling Filters are defective and that covers cannot correct this problem.”

In reply, Frank Fischl expressed the following questions and comment in a letter to Cullen dated March 17, 1980:

“Covers at Kline’s Island:

1. What problems does the (CNO Environmental Issue) Committee have with the installation of ‘covers’?
2. Is the Committee aware that we are talking about a total ‘odor control’ system? We are not simply talking about putting lids or ‘covers’ on the plastic media trickling filters.
3. Is the Committee aware that the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources has approved the concept of the odor control system and has agreed to provide the bulk of funds as a pass-through agency for the U.S Environmental Protection Agency?
4. Why – specifically – does the Committee feel that such an odor control system will not work?
5. Is the Committee saying that you would rather have odor problems in and around the vicinity of the treatment plant as opposed to the installation of odor control equipment?
6. Is the Committee aware that we are talking about at this point is the concept of the installation of odor control equipment? The specific design of the equipment and the type of equipment will be left to the engineering phase of this evaluation. Do you object to even entering into that kind of an evaluation?”

In any case, in December 1981, the Metcalf & Eddy odor relief recommendations were seconded by the Consulting Engineering firm of James M. Montgomery, Incorporated. JMM was hired by the County of Lehigh (August 1981) to conduct a feasibility study related to the Kline’s Island Plant. Generally speaking, JMM recommended that the towers be covered and the existing Intermediate Settling Tanks (that is, the Imhoff Tanks) be replaced.

Of interest, JMM believed that many of the other related odor problems might have been caused by the fact that the solids handling facilities appeared to be overloaded. In regard to the PMTF's, JMM said the original design loading was 48,300 lb. BOD/day. But baseline mass balance indicated that actual loading was 11.5% greater than design. Therefore, the originally projected BOD removal rate of 80 percent through the intermediate process might not be achievable, due in part, to increased loads. Additionally, the August 1981 Schaefer-Stroh loads would be 71% greater than anticipated in the original Metcalf & Eddy design. Then too, the PMTF's are designed at 48.3 lbs. BOD/1,000 cubic foot. Consequently, using JMM's mass balance and considering the fact that the City in 1981 was operating only two PMTF's for hydraulic loading reasons, the actual tower load was 107.8 lbs. BOD/1,000 C.F (54 lbs. BOD/1000 C.F for four towers). JMM also claims that the August 1981 projected Schaefer-Stroh's loadings would increase this amount to approximately 83 lbs. BOD/1,000 C.F for four towers or 165 lbs. BOD/1,000 C.F for two PMTF's under then existing 1981 operation.

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Importantly, for the historic record, we state that Allentown Mayor Joseph S. Daddona was incorrect in his Christmas Eve 1984 message to the Allentown City Council when he claimed credit for the initiation of planning activities for a multi-year odor reduction program. We have demonstrated in this installment that the process began prior to the second Daddona Administration. Hence, any attempt to say otherwise by Daddona shows an extreme memory flaw or an attempt to distort history. But then again, that is a malady that many politicians succumb to when they want to perpetuate power.

## **Lehigh County --- State of the County Speech 2/26/2015 by Tom Muller**

### **Reported by Dennis Pearson**

The Morning Call reported October 23, 2014 that the Lehigh County Commissioner Voting strictly along party lines, approved a 2015 budget Wednesday that cut taxes by \$1.25 million.

Muller's budget, as proposed, didn't raise taxes but did include a \$5.5 million deficit. Under that plan, the county would take in about \$105.5 million in property taxes and spend \$111 million. Property taxes, make up just a portion of the overall budget.

The gap was filled with money from the county's reserve fund.

Republicans sponsored amendments taking turns at reducing the deficit and the amount of reserves needed to balance the budget. Some reduced spending, while others found other pockets of reserves within county coffers.

And of the \$3.8 million in amendments, about \$1.37 million were spending cuts that will pay for the \$1.25 million tax cut and reduce the 2015 budget deficit. But if they're not ongoing cuts and only affect the 2015 budget, they may actually worsen the structural deficit.

Other amendments affected the other side of the ledger, as commissioners swapped funding sources but didn't eliminate spending.

Commissioners criss-crossed party lines in a marathon meeting two weeks earlier, when they approved 17 amendments cutting spending, but seven Republicans unanimously approved the final product Wednesday, while the board's two Democrats voted against it.

One can speculate that for County Executive Tom Muller last year's budget was not a pleasant experience.

But The big news from the speech was Muller's definite promise that there will not be a tax increase in Lehigh County in 2016 ... A promise Morning

Call writer Kevin Duffey Lehigh termed as an olive branch to local business But at the same time Duffey suggests that this promise didn't come without a jab to county commissioners, with whom Muller is often at loggerheads.

**Muller said board members could be misinterpreting his direct way in speaking on issues.**

**To quote Muller: "Directness is often confused with defiance; it doesn't necessarily sit well with everybody," ..And furthermore, "An olive branch can come back at you as sharp stick in the eye."**

While delivering the annual State of the County address during a breakfast gathering at Olympus Corporation in Center Valley, Muller credited the expertise of his administrative team and the local economy as the backbone behind his commitment to hold taxes to 3.75 mills.

The executive also making it clear that he does not approve the creation of the Cedarbrook Nursing Homes Advisory Team which the Commissioners created through their passage of Resolution NO. 2015-09 the same time they showed defiance to the County Executive by not approving 2 of his 4 Lehigh County Authority appointments.

Commissioner Supporters of Advisory team say that it is important to the citizens of Lehigh County that the County services needed to assist the most vulnerable and aged among them be periodically evaluated to assure that they are being provided in high quality and cost effective manner and in the most appropriate setting; and do further state that a substantial portion of the County's services provided to this population of citizens is provided through the County's operation of its Cedarbrook Nursing Homes.

Consequently, Commissioners say that the Home Rule Charter vests them with the power and authority to make provisions for any matters of County Government not otherwise provided for, including, but not restricted to, any matter involving health, safety and welfare; and do so further state that the Home Rule Charter in aid of its legislative powers and functions, is vested with the power and authority, inter alia, to cause studies to be made and, in connection therewith, to obtain professional and technical advice And so further states that its deliberations and decisions with respect to the operation of Cedarbrook Nursing Homes will be enhanced by the creation of the Cedar Brook Advisory Team.

Recent problems contributed to the competence of LW Consulting Inc. in managing Cedarbrook in an acceptable manner has put the Administration and the Commissioners on battle alert in yet another issue. LW Consulting Inc. whom has managed the county-owned Cedarbrook nursing home for more than a decade claiming it has been micromanaged and repeatedly second-guessed by Lehigh County commissioners, has decided to pull the plug on the arrangement when its contract ends June 30.

As it occurred, most county commissioners have been publicly critical of LW since October 2013, when the county had to come up with \$3.6 million to keep the nursing homes operating through the end of that year.

**According to the Morning Call, President and Chief Executive Officer Lisa Wilt wrote that the home's financial challenges are the result of inadequate funding and fragmented policy directives and pointed to the county's "political environment" as one of the factors contributing to the decision.**

**"Having commissioners continually looking over our shoulders and trying to micromanage the facility does not create an atmosphere where new ideas, a stable workforce and willingness to try new approaches to providing care appear to be welcomed," Wilt wrote.**

**She said the commissioners' second-guessing has led to mistrust, which has led to high staff turnover and "a general decline in meeting stated goals."**

**In noting that the commissioners seem unwilling to consider an investment in Cedarbrook, Wilt said efforts to improve the home have been "blocked by the philosophies" of the current board.**

**A philosophy I might add was telegraphed in the Spring of 2011 when some of Republican reform team in the primary speculated on the privatization of the Cedarbrook nursing homes. But thought the better of it when they conducted their successful General election campaigns**

**As far as membership on this Advisory Team, the Board insisting for the moment that members be qualified, non-political and free from any financial or familial relations that could create a conflict of interest for the**

appointee. It being understood that No Advisory Team Member may be a candidate for, or have run for, or have held a publicly elected office in the past 10 years.

Say when did I last run for publicly elective office? --- 2011 ... I think that piece of legislation disqualifies me if it is legal.

In regard to communications between the Executive and the Commissioners:

Muller stated that since January 2012 the Board has been 7 Republicans and 2 Democrats ... And generally since Home Rule began the Board has generally has a majority of Republicans which really didn't impact relations between the County Executive and the Commissioners. The first Democratic County Executive being Don Cunningham.

But when Republicans sought to get a veto proof majority that changed the equation.

Muller said that County Executive Don Cunningham to resolve outstanding issues had meeting between the leadership of the Board and the Administration that included both parties ... But this arrangement ended in 2012 as Cunningham noting that not much was being resolved and the arrangement was not revived by Hansell or Croslis ... Muller said he attempted to revive the pre 2012 arrangement conditions when he assumed office but it ended 2 months later for lack of legislative production or agreement.

After that Muller refused to include any Commissioners in meetings that spoke publicly that the Administration couldn't be trusted but offered other bipartisan options

Fact is, Muller says that he did not refuse to meet or communicate with commissioners ... And he stressed that any commissioner who asserted that ... Well that is not so... If someone wants to speak to Muller, Muller says the door is open

Muller says the economic Outlook of the Lehigh Valley and Lehigh Valley is very good and gave plenty of examples

But he says there are plenty of families still struggling with unemployment and uncomfortable level of family income, There is too much homelessness of children and veterans who fought for us in war; Schools must stick to austere budgets with certain mandates that force schools to sustain certain non-classroom programs. And much of the County's finances depend heavily upon pass through money from the state and federal government and declines in the level of these pass-on money presents financial challenges as well keeping up with pension payments when more and more County employees retirees .

Muller in a small way addressed the takeover of the Commissioners in assuming more of a labor negotiation role when he stressed that the County within the next year may face more arbitration hearings as well as labor negotiations.

What has Muller learned:

- 1) When he goes out to the public or municipal meetings he is not always greeted warmly.
- 2) With Northampton County Executive John Brown in the room, Muller said that the best way to get noticed is to get a consultants contract from John Brown.
- 3) On the local level people seek to have problems solved period ... They are not very ideological.
- 4) When you hold an open house to receive citizen input the phrase if you build it doesn't always apply ... You have to go out to the people and listen to what they are saying ... If you are talking you can't listen.
- 5) 92% is a important number ... This adds up to amount of people who may not be in your camp

