Rage against what is being done in the shadows

I suspect that Louis Brandlei’s words would be none too happy about how the county government has treated Dundalk this week.

“Sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants,” he wrote a century ago in Other People’s Money And How the Bankers Use It.

Like many a great quote, it is more familiar in paraphrased form: “Sunlight is the best disinfectant.”

Brandlei, who by then had gained a reputation as “the People’s Lawyer” and who would go on to become one of our greatest Supreme Court justices, was writing specifically about the salutary effects of publicity on the big banks that dominated the economy and the government at the time (my, how things haven’t changed!), but it is clear that he more broadly meant that openness and scrutiny are the most effective ways to prevent and/or remedy corruption and incompetence in our nation’s public and private institutions.

We are consistently reminded of the decisions great and small that are made in the shadows:

There’s the Obama Administration’s disturbing prosecutorial crackdown on whistleblowers, and an expanding drone war program that remains officially unacknowledged even as we become more aware of its disturbing consequences.

Here in Maryland, we’ve just been treated to the spectacle of our state’s (publicly-funded) flagship university switchingathletic conferences at consideration of front row (on the vague promise of riches to come) without a moment of public debate.

And what did I find when I arrived at the Eagle office on Tuesday morning, ready to lay out the paper and write this column on an entirely different topic?

A public meeting held by the public school system the night before, promoted as addressing some vague “future of local schools” matters, ended up delivering the news that one local school would be closed and two others slated for major restructuring.

And then…

A press release from the Baltimore County government announcing that the North Point Government Center, which houses Police Precinct 12 as well as a variety of government offices and programs, will be put up for sale, with the North Point precinct moving to the soon-to-close Eastwood Elementary School site.

Note, by the way, that as our Nicole Rodman reports in her article on Page 1, deputy school superintendent Kevin Hobbs told attendees at Monday night’s meeting that no decisions had been made regarding the future of the Eastwood building; the Tuesday morning press release makes it clear that Hobbs’ statement was untrue.

[Unless you think that’s unimportant, you might think about it.]

Because no one asked. Even County Councilman John Olszewski Sr.’s office claims to have been in the dark until the final stages of the matter.

Some very important decisions affecting our community were made without us knowing that they were even being discussed. There was no public input, no solicitation of opinions or ideas, and no warning.

Not a word to us, or even to our elected representatives.

The whole thing may well work out beautifully, and democracy, process matters every bit as much as policy.

The deal was made in secret, the numbers were never publicly crunched, and the fans were left out in the cold,” he said in a Monday press release.

“(Legislation and the Attorney General’s opinion will compel the process to begin anew with transparency.)

This is the second time in recent months that McDonough and I — though we regularly clash on matters of policy — have agreed that it matters how decisions are made.

Because in a free and democratic society, process matters every bit as much as policy.

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35th Year Practicing Law
William R. Bacon, Jr.
WORKERS’ COMP AUTO ACCIDENTS

DENTISTRY BY CHOICE!
By Dr. Emma Galvam, D.D.S. & Dr. Grant C. Cylus, D.D.S.

IMPLANT ADVANTAGES
If you are considering whether a dental implant is worth the increased cost over a bridge or dentures, consider the advantages that implants have over the other two tooth-replacement procedures. In-office wisdom may reveal the following advantages:

- The implant serves as a natural tooth root.
- No weakening of the jawbone (which happens when a bridge is put over a natural tooth). The bone loses density over time and may result in bone loss.
- Implants can be inserted even if there is not enough bone to support a traditional bridge.

P.S. After a dental implant has been set in place, it is covered with a crown approximately six to twelve weeks later.

www.dundalkdentistry.com

Pharmacy
F-FACTS
Presented by
Dr. Mark Lichtman

CALCICUM PREVENTS GUM DISEASE
Calcium not only plays an important role in preserving the health of bones and teeth, but it also helps prevent gum disease.

Adults with the highest calcium intakes have significantly lower rates of periodontal disease, which is a leading cause of tooth loss. An analysis of government data on calcium consumption and periodontal disease indicators in nearly 13,000 U.S. adults shows that men and women with calcium intakes below 500 milligrams were almost twice as likely to have periodontal disease (the loss of attachment of the gums from the teeth). The associations between calcium intake and gum disease was particularly evident for people in their 20s and 30s. This finding should lead us all to take calcium supplements, as needed.

Are you taking calcium supplements? We urge you to keep your health history current with allergies, additional medications and health conditions. Stop by and we will answer any related questions. Call us today. We truly care about your well-being.

We are highly trained and skilled health care professionals who perform various roles to ensure optimal health outcomes. We specialize in hard to find prescriptions and can compound medicines for you. We can provide you with homeopathy, herbs, vitamins, and aromatherapy. We are proud to be open every day of the week.

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P.S. Gums that are red or swollen, or bleed easily, are among the first signs of gum disease.

DRUG CITY PHARMACY
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Talk of the Town
by Steve Matrazzo

Rage against what is being done in the shadows

The whole thing may well work out beautifully, and in a free and democratic society, process matters every bit as much as policy. It’s not just about a favorable result, but about openness, transparency, public participation — and the confidence that we’re not being shafted, because we know what’s being done in our name.

When the poet Dylan Thomas urged us to “rage, rage against the dying of the light,” he wasn’t talking politics, but, were he here today, he and Brandlei might join me in calling this a time to rage against what is being done in the shadows.

Let me take a moment to give a kudos — yes, it’s a singular noun; look it up — to 7th District state Del. Pat McDonough; he and I have butted heads before, and likely will again, but I congratulate him for raising holy hell over the move of the University of Maryland to the Big Ten.

And — apart from the fiscal issues involved — his objections have focused largely on matters of process, and he is pursuing both legislative remedies and an opinion from state Attorney General Douglas Gansler on the applicability of the state’s open meetings law.

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I’ve defended the publication of leaked information, the use of anonymous sources, the reporting of unwelcome news and the asking of unwelcome questions.

And I’ve been willing to criticize my profession as well, for everything from mindless stenography to sloppy reporting. And, I’ve being human, I’ve even had to take it on the chin and own up to occasional shortcomings a few times myself.

So it was that I was asked — by more than one person, in fact — for my take on CNN reporter Candy Crowley’s performance as moderator of the Oct. 16 presidential debate.

You know the moment; GOP challenger Mitt Romney had been criticizing President Obama on the matter of the deadly attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghaz, Libya. He alleged that the administration had taken two weeks to acknowledge the attack as terrorism.

Obama responded, “The day after the attack, governor, I stood in the Rose Garden and I told the American people and the world that we are going to find out exactly what happened. That this was an act of terror.”

Romney, apparently thinking he had caught Obama in a lie, pressed his case, until Crowley stepped in to note that the president had, in fact, spoken those words the day after the attack.

It took about five seconds for Romney supporters to cry foul, accusing Crowley of being biased and of improperly injecting herself into the debate.

Never mind that Romney was factually wrong (and that by noting the facts, Crowley was actually giving him a fair chance to backtrack before he got into deeper trouble). Crowley, the critics said, was there only to ask the difficult questions and let the candidates know when they had exceeded their allotted time. Her job, they said, was to be “impartial.”

I suspect that some who asked for my opinion of Crowley, and expected me to call her unprofessional, were sorely disappointed. They shouldn’t have been. Not only do I think she’s a bawcock, but I think she’s a bawcock, and I think those words the day after the attack.

They shouldn’t have been. Not only do I think she’s a bawcock, but I think those words the day after the attack.

But the relevant exchange occurred roughly between the 34:00 and 37:00 marks, with my specific act of imputing at about 36:20.

Referring to the then-current controversy over contraception coverage requirements for employees working for religious institutions in non-religious jobs, state Sen. Nancy Jacobs, the eventual GOP nominee, had answered a question about abortion by saying, “To try and force a Catholic hospital into performing abortions is wrong.”

I suspect that there was no proposal to force Catholic hospitals to perform abortions.

And I said so.

Because it’s my job.

Journalists are not simply stenographers or tape recorders, taking the words that come out of the mouths of politicians (and others) and passing them along without evaluation or context, leaving people to sort truth from falsehood on their own.

In fact, the highest obligation of a journalist is — or at least should be — to facts. And when falsehoods come from the mouths of the mighty — whenever they may be — any journalist worthy of the name has not just the right but the obligation to say so.

There’s a lot of high-minded talk about journalism as a profession in the service of the public, but how well do we serve the people if we withhold unpleasant facts (like the growing troubles at the Sparrows Point steel mill we reported all year before it finally closed), or if we decline to ask uncomfortable questions (like Crowley’s own CNN did in making public the security concerns expressed in Ambassador Chris Stevens’ journal prior to the Benghazi attack) or if we don’t tell them the difference between fact and fiction?

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If we do nothing more than dutifully record the words and deeds of the powerful, we consign the public we claim to serve to Matthew Arnold’s darkling plain, swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight, where ignorant armies clash by night.

Do we ever err? Of course we do. I’ve willingly taken my lumps in my years with The Eagle, and while it’s never pleasant, I’ve done so willingly, and publicly, right on this page.

If anything, I think a journalist’s claim to credibility requires the willingness to admit fault. But there was no fault to admit in my exchange with Sen. Jacobs.

“Unwelcome facts are still facts, and that’s a fact,” a very bright fellow wrote in this paper not long ago.

So, to the question I’ve been repeatedly asked: “What do you think of Candy Crowley?”

I think she’s a bawcock, and a heart of gold ... of fist most valiant.

I kiss her dirty shoe, and from heart-string, I love the lovely bully.

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### Pharmacy

**FACTS**

**Presented by Dr. Mark Lichtman**

**GETTING ENOUGH D?**

While much attention has been paid to protecting skin from the sun’s rays, there is a downside to wearing sunscreen and staying out of the sun. Because sunlight stimulates the skin to synthesize vitamin D, insufficient exposure to sunlight can lead to a vitamin-D deficiency. Older adults, in particular, who do not get enough vitamin D either from their diets or sun synthesis may be at increased risk for weakened bones, worsening osteoarthritis, even an increased risk of cancer. People who are not getting enough vitamin D either from sunshine or their diets are encouraged to take supplements of about 400 IU per day during their 50s and 60s and 600 to 800 IU during their 70s and 80s.

Our knowledgeable staff of well trained and caring pharmacists can discuss any of your health related issues. We invite you to stop by and discuss with us in person any issues that you may have. Or, you can call us on the phone. We specialize in hard to find prescriptions and can compound medicines for you. We can provide you with homopathy, herbs, vitamins, and aromatherapy. We are proud to be open every day of the week: Mon-Fri 8am-10:30pm, Sat 8:30am-10:30pm, Sun 9am-9pm.

P.S. Recent evidence suggests that insufficient vitamin D levels may be far more prevalent than once believed.

### Talk of the Town

#### Speaking up for the facts is a journalist’s job

by Steve Matrazzo

In a bawlcock, and a heart of gold ... Of fist most valiant. I kiss his dirty shoe, and from heart-string, I love the lovely bully.

Shakespeare, Henry V

I’ve often had to defend the practice of journalism — both my own and that of my colleagues, here at The Eagle and elsewhere — in this space, in other forums and one-on-one conversation.

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The danger of disappearing industry – and workers

Once there were 18,000, 20,000. Eventually, there were 2,000. Now, it seems, there are none.

The dying decline and now, apparent demise — of the Sparrows Point steel mill is undeniably a blow to this community. It is striking at the core of its identity, its history and its prosperity. The Port of Baltimore will itself once provided 30,000 workers with reliable, good-paying manufacturing jobs, and thousands more prospered by extension.

No more. The withering of the lever — or death — began slowly in the 1970s and snowballed over time, until Bethlehem Steel passed into history, leaving successive owners to try to salvage the plant for the few thousand remaining employees.

And now, despite the best efforts of all concerned — ownership and management, political leaders, and workers — it seems we have seen the immediate end of the Port.

As much of a tragedy as that is locally, it is also illustrative of larger trends in the U.S. economy, trends that threaten the broad prosperity of our people, the stability of our society, and even our national security.

“Short-term gains that have been too long apparent, and yet too long ignored.”

Shrinking middle class

We are losing broad prosperity because we are abandoning the economic model that created it.

A report last week from Pew Research generated widespread attention for its demonstration that both the incomes and net worth of the U.S. middle class have fallen significantly over the last decade — what the report called “the lost decade.”

Between 2001 and 2010, inflation-adjusted household incomes in the middle class fell from $72,856 to $59,487, and corresponding net worth figures dropped from $129,582 to $95,150.

This trend has continued even as the stock market has bounced back to and beyond — its level before the 2008 crash, and U.S. Gross Domestic Product has returned to its pre-crisis levels.

The reason is that the benefits of that growth are concentrated at the top, with the wealthiest 5 percent of Americans reaping the lion’s share of the gains.

This represents a reversal of the trend during the period of this country’s greatest and most widespread prosperity — the 1950s and 1960s.

Numerous statistical measures show that the richest Americans held a smaller percentage of national wealth, and took in a smaller percentage of national income, than they do today.

In fact, today’s numbers most closely resemble those of the late 1920s, just before the economic collapse that started the Great Depression, with the top one percent of earners taking in 21 percent of all income, and the wealthiest one percent holding 35 percent of the net assets.

We’ve been sold

Why is this happening? It’s largely because we have sold a package of myths that demonize workers’ rights and government action, steering ever more of the corporate and investment decision-making power to the private sector and promoting a strategy of corporate tax cuts, while sacrificing social programs.

Moreover, corporate tax relief has a recent history of failure as a job-creation tactic. In 2004, the federal government enacted a “reinvestment tax holiday,” sparing companies from paying taxes on money they had been stashing overseas.

According to a Harvard/ MIT study, 92 percent of the nearly $300 billion repatriated under the program went not to capital investment but to shareholders. The Congressional Research Service reported similar findings today.

In fact, Hewlett-Packard, the computer company, brought in $14.5 billion under the plan, then cut 14,000 U.S. jobs almost immediately.

Deregulation of markets has been not just ineffective but disastrous. The repeal of the Glass-Stegall banking regulation law, for instance, was one of the factors that led directly to the 2008 crash and the associated mortgage crisis, and the deregulation that allowed massive consolidation through mergers left us holding the bag when the miscreants were labeled “too big to fail.”

The unregulated creation of new and unlicensed financial instruments has created a financial market less geared toward productive capitalism than toward sheer profits.

And free trade agreements have removed any incentive for companies and investors to put their cash to work specifically in the U.S., given that they can move it almost freely anywhere in the world.

Unions have been the whipping boy for U.S. industrial decline for decades. If wages were those greedy, corrupt unions and their lazy workers, the story goes, we would more be competitive, because we wouldn’t be paying the monies on frivolous labor costs.

Of course, that vision doesn’t address the fact that during the prosperity of the 1950s, 32 percent of American workers belonged to a union. That number has dropped to just 7 percent. So where is the competitiveness? What's the secret of job creation?

And then there’s the federal budget. We are told that our “blunted” federal budget, with its “massive” spending on entitlements running from assistance to the poor to Social Security, Medicare and unemployment benefits, has become too big to pay for and has burdened the debt and must be pared down.

In fact, a Center for Budget and Policy Priorities report compiled that two actions in the last decade the wealth-favoring Bush tax cuts (remember that pretty $300 check?) and the multi-trillion-dollar wars in Iraq and Afghanistan — account for half of the projected $20 trillion national debt expenditure.

Continued on page 4

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Dentistry by Choice!
by Dr. Emma Galvan, D.D.S. & Dr. Grant F. Clylus, D.D.S.
A NEW USE FOR BOTOX?
Botox began as a treatment for eye twitching and later progressed into a treatment for wrinkles and migraines. Now this muscle-inhibiting toxin is being touted as a treatment for “bruxism,” or tooth grinding. The nocturnal habit is often attributed to anxiety and stress, treatment of which may reduce or alleviate bruxism. If the habit continues, the grinding can wear away tooth enamel and even result in tooth fractures. However, using Botox to treat bruxism is not recommended. It has not been approved by the FDA for this purpose and may not even work. If it does work, the effect is transient. It is better to stick with a custom-made night guard that is proven to prevent bruxism’s corrosive effects.

Clenching teeth often occurs during sleep, most people are unaware that they grind their teeth. Usually a dull, constant headache or sore jaw is a symptom of bruxism. If you suspect you may be grinding your teeth, talk to your dentist. He or she can examine your mouth and jaw for signs of bruxism, as well as make a custom-made night guard for you. To make an appointment, call 410-284-1414. Our office is conveniently located at 3001 Sollers Point Road.

P.S. Dental guards may take a little getting used to, but they are effective, last for years, and do not cause complications.
TALK: The danger of disappearing industry – and workers

continued from page 2

pected for 2019. But the burden of cutting spending falls on us.
In the case of Social Security, for instance, we are told that working people may have to work longer, pay more and accept reduced benefits when we finally do retire. A similar scenario is spun for Medicare.

What they don’t want to talk about is the fact that FICA taxes, which finance Social Security and Medicare, are assessed on only the first $110,100 of income, which means that even those who have multi-million-dollar incomes don’t pay a penny on anything they make over that amount.

Lifting that cap, economists unanimously agree, would immediately erase three quarters of the projected shortfall.

But no one wants to talk about that, or any of the other myths that have brought us to the point where we are witnessing the shrinkage of the robust consumer class that is the true driver of our economy.

Why? Because our leaders — of both parties rhetoric aside (Bill Clinton signed the Glass-Steagall repeal) — are beholden to, and scared of, the monied interests (think Koch brothers, Sheldon Adelson, et al.) whose cash drives campaigns.

Adelson and the Kochs are estimated to have already put a combined $1 billion into “super PACs” for this year’s elections.

And whether you know it or not, they’re just trying to influence politicians, they’re trying to influence you.

Take a look at the groups behind those “issue ads” you see on television, and you’ll see them trying to sell you the myths and get you to vote in their interest.

Back to Sweden

One year ago, this space featured a short mention of the economic differences between the U.S. and Sweden, focusing on different rates of union membership — 69 percent in Sweden, 12 percent in the U.S.

What else is true in Sweden?

Social spending as a percentage of their economy is far higher than ours, 27.3 percent to 16.2 percent.

The top marginal tax rate is 56.74 percent, while in the U.S. it is 35 percent.

The Swedish capital gains tax is 30 percent, twice the U.S. rate.

And income inequality, measured by the “Gini coefficient,” is half that of the U.S.; income is much more equally spread there.

A recipe for “socialist” economic disaster, right?

Sweden’s unemployment rate is 7.3 percent, as opposed to our 8.2 percent. Its rate of industrial growth is more than 60 percent higher than ours.

And its per capita GDP is $57,948, compared to $49,601 in the U.S.

If there is any doubt that the promise of unfettered, undirected capitalism is a myth, one need look no further than Sweden.

Plus, they make Volvo and Ericsson telephones.

Free, but unfair

The other great myth we were sold was that global free trade would drive prosperity for all.

Events at Sparrows Point put the lie to that.

If anything, free trade has created a race to the bottom in which production shifts to whatever country has the weakest regime of workers’ rights, safety and environmental regulations, the lowest wage scale — and often, the least benevolent government.

Steel from the Point put the lie to that.

For us, with a whole host of implications which we have really chosen to ignore,” he said.

Referring to the industrial capacity that allowed the U.S. to build massive quantities of ships and aircraft during World War II, he noted that “we don’t have such a capacity today. And it isn’t just heavy industry. Large components of our high-tech stuff — the vast majority are coming out of East Asia.

“We traded heavy industry for high-tech,” he noted, “but we don’t even have that anymore.”

The result, Faddis says, is a new danger for the U.S.

“Even for the most sensitive stuff, most of that is dependent on foreign sources — but there’s also the question of the trustworthiness of those sources. If you are supplying all those components, then you also have the ability to alter those components,” he noted.

Faddis noted that Russia is known to have used cyber attacks at least twice. China, too, is a concern, according to Faddis.

“Clearly, you’ve got guys who think like that, act like that and have a track record like that.”

A countervailing power in the forum

Simplistic and short-sighted thinking is turning our leaders’ attention away from the dangers created by their own policies — the long-term economic hazard of letting manufacturing and the jobs it provides wither away, the growth-inhibiting lack of a healthy consumer class, the social hazard presented by ever more people living in economic insecurity, and the national security hazard of relying on other nations to meet our strategic needs.

Those concerns are, in the current climate, subordinated to the profit motive of the corporate and investing classes.

And as long as there is no countervailing power in the national forum, those dangers will remain with us.

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August 30, 2012

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The Dundalk Eagle, Dundalk, MD
August 30, 2012

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“They hate our freedom” — simple, or simplistic?

Talk of the Town

They hate our freedom.

We are different .... it was American way of life .... attacked because the terrorizing bombs on their people.

Today, people through out the Arab and Islamic worlds are using U.S. support of Israel and dis ease of Muslims.

We have made ever ything possible to those who hold power.

At exhibitions of their recreating the history of Muslims.

They have a free nation – and its dictates, if they find offensive, and that s because of the freedom of others to s the right of a free nation – and its demands requires respecting their freedom of others to s the right of a free nation – and its demands requires respecting their freedom.
I got another one of those letters, this one stating, “I can’t figure out if you are Communist or socialist.” We’ve been over this before, but ... this time courtesy of Merriam-Webster (edited for space):

Socialism:
1. economic and political theories advocating collective or governmental ownership and administration of the means of production and distribution of wealth
2. a system of society or group living in which there is no private property (b) a system or condition of society in which the means of production are owned and controlled by the state.

Communism:
1. (a) a theory advocating elimination of private property (b) a system in which goods are owned in common and are available to all as needed.
2. (a) a totalitarian system of government in which a(n) authoritarian party controls state-owned means of production.

I do not, nor have I ever, advocated such ideological systems. Nor, for that matter, has any significant figure in modern American politics. So let’s drop the loaded — and ridiculously inaccurate — pejorative hyperbole, please, and start talking about our econom ic system like adults.

It’s especially disappointing that failing to blinding hypocrisy and underhanded free-market absolutism would be called “socialism” or “Communism” by anyone in Dundalk, and all the more so this week. It’s right there on the front page of this paper: RG Steel, even as it pursues bankruptcy protection and lays off thousands of workers, wants to dole out $20 million worth of bonuses to top executives.

We cling to the fantasy that the free market, unadulterated by the heavy hand of government or the dreaded evil unions, is the source of all bounty, the engine of prosperity for all.

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under the rules that exist ... [and they] are bound to pocket as much of their profits as they can, and to try to maximize those profits however they can ...”

And they do. Which explains not only the RG outrage, but the massive shift in manufacturing jobs away from the U.S.,banking and securities industry misdeeds that caused the crash of 2008 — and, lessons, unlearned, several recent multi-billion-dollar banking and investment scandals — the insistence on extending President Bush’s (supposedly temporary) tax cuts for the wealthy even as we face enormous deficits ...

It wasn’t always so. During the period between the end of World War II and the election of Ronald Reagan, while there were ideological disputes as to degree, there was general agreement that the forces of the free market, while good at producing wealth, needed guidance to assure that the society as a whole was the beneficiary, rather than the victim, of wealth creation. And there was general recognition of the role of unions as a counter to corporate power. Even Republicans courted union endorsements!

And in those years, the U.S. economy boomed. Investors and executives prospered, and workers got their taste of the pie.

Then came the 80s. Regulation was evil; unions were evil; anything that stood in the way of cut-throat capitalism was evil. Republicans led the way, but many Democrats followed. It was at Bill Clinton’s urging of the Glass-Steagall Act, which put the brakes on bank canneruencing during the Great Depression, was repealed, leaving the door open to the events of 2008.

Little has changed since. The George W. Bush years were golden for the financial elites, and, for all the rhetoric, President Obama has little done to change things. (Worse, the millions in campaign funds he’s getting from Wall Streeters.) Support for unions has been virtually abandoned. Both major parties are, images aside, essentially beholden to the forces of wealth.

The result would be déjà vu to Franklin Roosevelt, who said in 1936:

“Private enterprise, indeed, became too private. It became overregulated enterprise, not free enterprise.”

Today, in “the freest nation on earth,” the vast bulk of workers are sliding toward something like peonage: working hard but barely scraping by, utterly dependent on whatever goodwill their weakness to show, hoping not to be waylaid by illness or injury (since they live on the financial razor’s edge), and with few prospects for advancement (as college tuitions drift farther out of the reach of working families).

More FDR: “[D]emocracy is not safe if its business system does not provide employment and produce and distribute goods in such a way as to sustain an acceptable standard of living.”

Our liberty and prosperity are not under sustained erosion for three decades, thanks to the idea that anything preventing the corporate and investing classes from doing as they please is inherently evil — and “Communist.”

And the results of that belief have now come back to haunt us in the faces of 2,000 of our own neighbors — 2,000 of us. Are we done yet?

Opinions expressed are those of the writer and do not represent the opinion of The Dundalk Eagle or Kimbel Publications Inc. You can contact editor Steve Matrazzo via e-mail at editor@dundalkneagle.net.

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IS GUM DISEASE LINKED TO OBESITY?
According to analysis of data involving nearly 37,000 people in the Health Professionals Follow-Up Study, a potential link exists between obesity and gingivitis and periodontitis. The study involved men who did not have gum disease at the beginning of the study. Every two years, the men were asked to report their weight, hip and waist circumferences, and gum disease status. At the end of 16 years, a significant relationship was found between obesity and gum disease, even after accounting for variables such as smoking, activity level, etc. This study confirms a previous study that showed the same link. Researchers theorize that the worse the body’s insulin resistance (which is linked with obesity), the higher the prevalence of periodontal disease.

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By Steve Matrazzo

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