

Lordstown

Nobody asked but ...

The now impoverished home county of my paternal ancestors experienced a moderate oil boom in the early decades of the 20th Century. Then the oil became uneconomical to extract — end of oil boom. Others of my forebears, in another county, got into the banking business. Then the money dried up (blamed on “The Great Depression), as did the bank. In both of these cases there was the operation of natural law. It is natural for a resource like oil to be finite. It is natural for humans to get finicky, to make a run on the bank.

Now our economy is faced with plant closures such as the automotive factory in Lordstown, OH. Again there is the evaporation of a resource, in this case the resource is opportunity. The automotive manufacturer believes that there is no longer an opportunity to make a profit and that the largest drag on profit is the Lordstown facility. POTUS intends to fly in the face of natural opportunity, by bullying the manufacturer into subsidizing jobs at a loss.

Many people left Wayne County when the oil was depleted, but a reasonable number stayed. Wayne County’s remaining individuals recalibrated. The residents of Casey County pretty much hunkered down for the duration of the depression, recalibrated. Lordstown will respond in the same way. Some will leave, following the car industry. Some will leave, following other opportunity. Some will stay, following other opportunity. New ones will arrive, seeking new opportunity. Recalibration.

— Kilgore Forelle