

VALLEY VOICES

Where do we go from here?

7/24/2016

By Joseph W. Brady

— Editor's Note: This is the final installment of a three-part series of op-ed articles on the Victor Valley.

I began this series by asking myself if our Valley was going to become Chernobyl or Yalta. One, an event generally viewed as a success, the other as a disaster; both manmade. Chernobyl involved the unintentional release of substantial amounts of radioactivity into the atmosphere. Yalta was an intentional meeting of heads of government from the United States and Europe to discuss Europe's post World War II reorganization and is viewed as a crucial turning point in the Cold War. The key here is the intent and the long range ramifications of both.

Yalta leaders met in 1945 with the intent of keeping the peace and rebuilding their countries. They each had an agenda and yet, somehow, they managed to ratify agreements and create a declaration which said in part that there would be governments established that "were responsive to the will of the people." That concept sounds surprisingly like that of our Founding Fathers and yet right now it seems our Valley leaders are more interested in personal agendas than the will of the people who elected them.

Chernobyl was never supposed to happen and yet it did; the unintentional result of something manmade.

It was an obvious disaster when it happened, but the importance here is that it is still a disaster 30 years later. Scientists predict that the "longer lived" isotopes will continue to cause damage for an unknown period of time into the future.

That's the thing about a disaster, sometimes the effects are short-lived, and sometimes they have ramifications that last for decades. A 30-kilometer (18+ miles) evacuation zone around that community exists to this day.

Just as Chernobyl is an epic disaster, the failure of our local elected officials to work together could have disastrous results for our communities. The choices they make today have both short- and long-term effects, the magnitude of which we may never know.

A farce is something that is so bad that it is seen as ridiculous. Pivotal decisions must be made for our future and yet because local leaders cannot get along, those decisions

are not being made. On the surface things may look OK between Valley leaders but their actions speak louder than their words.

When their relationships are so poor as to become the focus, then our system of local government becomes a farce.

Edmund Burke, the philosophical founder of modern conservatism said, “When bad men combine, the good must associate; else they will fall, one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle.”

Outside influences are at work against us. They are larger, better organized and aim to defeat us or prevent our success so they can have more of our economic pie. Developers do not want to invest in communities that have political instability.

Employers do not want to site their businesses or build their factories in areas with political instability. As a Trustee of Victor Valley College, I know what it is like to make gut-wrenching decisions that can upset friends and colleagues, but that is what leadership is about. Our Valley is comprised of more than five separate communities.

Implementing anything takes longer, especially if each community has their own interests at heart. As I mentioned before, this area has a multitude of problems. These problems will never be resolved unless our local leaders can act together and truly become leaders.

John C. Maxwell said, “Good leaders must communicate vision clearly, creatively, and continually. However, the vision doesn’t come alive until the leader models it.” For the future of our Valley, please join me in asking all of our local leaders to unite, to set aside their personal differences; lead our community and model a prosperous vision for our collective future.

—Joseph W. Brady is president of The Bradco Companies, a commercial brokerage firm serving the entire High Desert region, and a Trustee at the Victor Valley Community College District. Holly Noel is an Apple Valley resident who assisted him in writing this and two previous articles.