

# Gadfly continues his “conversation” with LVGNA

The Bethlehem Gadfly | Lehigh Valley Good Neighbors Alliance, Police | November 16, 2020

 *Latest in a series of posts about the Bethlehem Police* 

## **The Coffee Cup brochure**

*“[LVGNA’s] ‘Coffee Cup’ brochure is a classic of its kind! It is a work of high art in the genre of rabid partisan politics. Gadfly cannot help but recognize the skill of its construction. The brochure will be effective. And Council has no ready means to combat its message.”*

*The Gadfly, November 12*

ref: **Putting the Heat on City Council (1)**

ref: **Putting the Heat on City Council (2)**

ref: **Community Engagement Initiative resolution approved July 7**

ref: **Has Council succumbed to the heat?**

ref: **Looking closely at the LVGNA position**

ref: **Gadfly has a “conversation” with LVGNA**

Gadfly has called the “Coffee Cup” brochure by the Lehigh Valley Good Neighbors Alliance a classic of its genre. What does he mean by that? Let’s break the brochure down and identify several of its textbook tactical

stylistic elements, the better to appreciate the skill with which it is constructed to achieve its goal:

**Sensationalism:** beginning with grim reapers strikes the proper apocalyptic note, for we know civilization will crumble if the police department does its business in a different way.

**Caricature:** the dangling puppet image is a great way to cloud remembrance of such service by the senior-in-tenure councilman as his two terms as council president and his initiation of programs like the Climate Action Plan and Northside 2027.

**Innuendo:** “Councilman J. William Reynolds wants to be mayor” slyly takes a laudable ambition based on a significant record of public service and taints it with a suggestion of self-serving whorishness by a man who will do anything to get power.

**Trivializing:** “Olga’s Ultimatum” and “Willie’s World” sound respectively like a chapter in a 4th grade reader and a section of an amusement park.

**Delightful nonsense:** a sentence like “Councilman Waldron confused about where the truth begins and his career ends” is a meaningless non-sequitor, but it is pure music, pure poetry and will mesmerize the audience.

**Cannodading use of capital letters:** a very simple and basic device that can always be counted on to pulverize any contrary opinion without the bother of convincing argument.

**Branding:** the brand “CANCEL CULTURE,” for instance, is a convenient short-hand that saves a lot of time and avoids having to explain that the former police chief performed, perhaps innocently, a

bonehead act in a period of exquisite national sensitivity about law enforcement and race, an act that objectively compromised his front-line leadership of a law enforcement department that he and others touted as one of the best in the state, an act that caused him to be disciplined (not fired) in appropriately harsh words by his usually mild-mannered boss, a boss who is his friend and who defended his appointment to the position of Chief seven years ago, an act which the Chief never adequately explained or apologized for before deciding to retire. Branding is so handy.

**Loaded language:** though the Cold War is so old news, a word like “Marxist” is still a knock-out punch. If someone says they are going to monitor your conversations, call them Marxist! It doesn’t matter if there is no connection. If you call defunding the police Marxist, no one will ask for an explanation how or why. The word is magic.

**Fear-mongering:** nothing bonds an audience to you more than revealing a danger they weren’t aware of. It is even more effective if you can make them feel that you and only you are the source of help dealing with that danger.

**Intimidation:** don’t waste time arguing your point, mobilize supporters, draw up a petition, make the polling place not the debate hall the focus of your activity. Make Council feel your eyes, your hot breath on them. Make them feel prey.

**Anonymity:** use of blank terms like “us” and “concerned citizens” helps avoid having to bother with the personal, time-consuming, and work-distracting nastiness that comes with this level of politics.

There, that should give you an idea of why Gadfly tips his hat to and marvels at the entrance of the “Coffee Cup” brochure by the Lehigh Valley Good Neighbors Alliance into Bethlehem’s serious deliberations as

part of our national reckoning with race in the wake of the murder of George Floyd.

*to be continued . . .*

**The Bethlehem Gadfly**