

POLITICS | SEN. TOM O'MARA

Made in America (but especially New York)

Late last year I read a headline in the *New York Times* that asked, "Does America Need Manufacturing?"

For anyone who grew up anywhere in the Southern Tier during the region's manufacturing heyday — whose fathers and grandfathers made a decent living in those factories — the answer to that question is heartfelt and immediate: you better believe it.

Which is why we're seeing it from inside the White House. We're hearing it from presidential candidates crisscrossing the nation. We're reading it in best-selling books. It strikes me that there's a common refrain slowly but surely taking hold across America: let's manufacture it, again, in the USA. If it continues, and I hope (and believe) it will, it bodes well for New York state and, even more specifically, for our region as a whole.

Following a decade defined by "outsourcing," when some of the nation's largest companies,

according to one *Wall Street Journal* report early last year, cut their America-based employment by 2.9 million workers and hired 2.4 million workers overseas, there's a new idea moving to the forefront: insourcing. Bring jobs back home to America. Invest in the United States and create work for our

nation's workers. According to recent Labor Department statistics, manufacturing is a bright spot in this regard, having added 334,000 jobs over the past two years.

Mind you, at the moment it's a small, small blip on the economic recovery radar, but if it signals the possible start of something bigger, then we need to be asking if we're doing enough to encourage it. Or, more to the point, what can we do to turn insourcing from just the hint of a trend to a full-blown economic phenomenon?

There's nothing easy here. It involves difficult economic realities tangled up in the complexity of the global economy, so it's not like flipping a switch to turn it around. But it's a key question that's going to get a lot of attention this election season, and rightly so. It poses many fundamental questions for the nation's future. It also means we better be ready here in New York state to attract and seize every new manufacturing opportunity that comes our way, as well as reclaim old manufacturing strongholds. After all, according to the Organization for International Investment, New York State ranks 3rd in the nation in the number of jobs at U.S. subsidiaries of global companies. In other words, a foundation for private-sector manufacturing growth's in place here.

Across the Southern Tier, from Binghamton straight on out to Buffalo, many of us can recall this proud tradition of manufacturing. While that pride's still on display here, it's also been a pride, in far too many places, that's fallen on devastatingly hard times. The story of upstate New York manufacturing in modern times has too often been about lost jobs, abandoned factories, and declining communities. We all can remember when so many manufacturing industries were providing good jobs, meaningful work, and a source of economic security and sense of well-being for so many working families.

So we need to ask in New York, as the nation finally starts to zero in on bringing manufacturing jobs back home, is there still a place for manufacturing and what are we doing to make it happen and to make it here again?

There's no shortage of good ideas and strong recommendations. The Southern Tier and Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Councils each put forth comprehensive blueprints last fall — and each one contained a strong manufacturing component (you can read these plans at www.nyworks.ny.gov). Upstate NY manufacturing advocates like the Manufacturing Research Institute (www.mrins.org), the research arm of the Manufacturers Association of Central New York (MACNY), and the Business Council of New York's Public Policy Institute (www.ppins.org) have rallied to the cause.

For New York government, it's about providing the right incentives, creating a manufacturing-friendly regulatory and tax environment, paying attention to workforce development, education and training, and much more.

MACNY President Randy Wolken summed it up best in an op-ed in the *Syracuse Post-Standard* last week.

"If we want good-paying, middle-class jobs, we need the support of policymakers to create environments where these jobs thrive. We need to lower the costs of production — and that does not mean wages," Wolken wrote, going on to cite the high cost of doing business, and the overriding need for educational systems more in tune with the demands of the modern economy, providing high-tech retraining for workers, and enhanced broadband and transportation infrastructures. "As a community and nation, we need to value manufacturing and its middle-class jobs more than other places they can locate. When we do so, we will again see the return of many good-paying, advanced manufacturing jobs right here in the United States of America."

Maybe most of all it's about believing that manufacturing here at home is not a lost cause, not by any measure. It can be renewed and thrive once more if we never again give up on it, and if we keep rolling up our sleeves to work at it.

■ Sen. Tom O'Mara is a Republican from Big Flats.

ARTIST'S VIEW



COMMENTARY | FORMER SEN. ALAN SIMPSON, R-WYO.

U.S., U.N. need each other

Jan. 12 marked the second anniversary of the horrific earthquake that ripped Haiti apart. While we quite properly remembered the unthinkable loss of Haitian lives that day, less well remembered were the deaths that same day of more than 100 U.N. officials in the collapse of the building that housed the headquarters of the U.N. mission in Haiti.

They were there in an effort to help the process of nation building in Haiti and to assist with humanitarian relief efforts there. Their deaths remind us that the United Nations and its staff members serve in many difficult places working on the most difficult issues. Their efforts serve us all.

Today's national security challenges are global in nature. Threats like terrorism, nuclear proliferation and pandemic disease respect no borders. America, the most generous country in the world, must play its part in countering these challenges but, particularly in these times of increased austerity, we must have partners who will join us in this effort.

First and foremost, we need a strong, efficient, well-run United Nations that can expand our global reach. A strong United Nations can help provide that global reach and influence required in responding effectively to these threats, and also in preventing them from becoming major crises.

A truly unique body, the United Nations offers us the ability to communicate and collaborate with nearly 200 countries, our fellow members, on a breadth of issues.

Sometimes, the messenger matters, and a messenger that represents the collective global commu-

nity stands a better chance of persuading people to take action than one from any particular country, even our own. Unfortunately, there are members of Congress who would have us cut our support for the United Nations.

They mock the United Nations because we sometimes disagree with our colleague member states on some highly contentious issues. They forget that the U.N. Charter, a remarkable document, is largely influenced by American values. They choose to pick on an easy target for scorn, and they do so without proposing any reasonable alternatives. That represents short-sighted and misdirected thinking.

Whether providing famine relief, staunching nuclear proliferation, creating arms embargoes, blocking the travel and financial support of rogue actors, establishing global standards to prevent money laundering, or curbing the spread of pandemics like Avian Flu, the United Nations' work enables the United States to reap real national security benefits that advance American interests and make us safer and stronger here at home.

The full range of U.N. agencies does the tough, thankless work frequently forgotten and left off the pages of our newspapers. Especially as we withdraw from Iraq and Afghanistan we need to remember that it will be international organizations like the United Nations that will pick up a significant amount of the slack on political, humanitarian and development processes.

Without question our U.S. contributions to the United Nations must be judicious and prudent: accountability, trans-

parency and effectiveness are essential for any organization, including the United Nations. At the same time, our ability to burden share with other nations helps defray costs, promote stability and enhance the impact of our resources. It is our greatest foreign policy "force multiplier."

Withholding U.S. funding weakens both our influence and support for our national priorities, while strengthening the hands of our adversaries.

The United Nations is an imperfect and sometimes very frustrating institution. I can sympathize with those who wish to lash out when the United Nations falls short of our expectations and aspirations for it. But I cannot agree that we should reduce our support for it.

By actively using all of the real foreign policy, national security and economic tools at our disposal, we help develop the international knowledge, capability and capacity required to help address challenges that, if left to fester, only eventually land on our doorstep. Many of those tools are provided through our membership in the United Nations.

Support for the United Nations is one of the most cost-effective ways for the United States to address global challenges and leverage our global leadership. The United Nations needs assertive, supportive American leadership; America needs a strong, effective United Nations.

■ Alan K. Simpson is a former Republican senator from Wyoming. He wrote this for Partnership for a Secure America, www.psaonline.org.

Painted Post water and eminent domain

I presume the Village of Painted Post will make a fortune if it sells a million gallons of water daily to companies that are hydrofracking.

The village is in deep financial trouble and the estimated \$2.6 million it could realize annually from such a sale looks like the discovery of gold.

Experts say that enough water will be left over to take care of the regular requirements of the populace and I hope that this is correct.

I still have a philosophical problem however with a project that aids and

abets a form of gas recovery that may not be right for the overall environment.

White

Painted

Post wants to get into commercial water sales, landowners in neighboring Pennsylvania are very upset about a 39-mile natural gas pipeline through that state's Endless Mountains.

The \$250 million pipeline is a project of Central New York Oil and Gas Company, LLC. That firm wants to use eminent domain to take private land for the 30-inch pipeline.

Landowners would be paid for the infringement and would not lose title to their property but for practical purposes might as well forget they had owned it.

Citizens claim Central New York Oil and Gas refused to negotiate in good faith on either monetary compensation or the pipeline's route.

The company asserts that it's trying to reach "a fair settlement" with the landowners involved and that it wants to be a good neighbor.

The matter is extremely complicated and will probably be tied up in court for a long time.

The situation has no direct impact on the project the Village of Painted Post is pushing. But if no new natural gas results from the fracking, this and other gas pipelines might never be needed.

Reader John Jenkins completely disagrees with my recent column on Joe Paterno.

"If you knew about a rape or had been told firsthand about it, would you have let it slide after seeing that the perpetrator was not prevented from further action?" he asked.

"Joe Paterno did and it speaks poorly of him as a good man, especially since he preached good behavior to his students/players," Jenkins wrote.

Sorry, John, but that wasn't what I was talking about. That column dealt with Joepa's treatment by the Penn State Board of Trustees.

I understand your point but I think their actions were equally indefensible.

■ Bob Rolfe, a retired *Leader* reporter/editor, can be reached by writing *The Leader*, PO Box 1017, Corning, NY 14830 or theinsider1@aol.com.

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