

By TPATH Contributor
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January 15, 2014 ~TPATH~ The airwaves, blogs, and newspapers have been filled with Bridgetgate, the label given to the questionable political activities of Governor Christie. Highlights of the story being reported are as follows:

Governor Christie struck a deal with Democrat mayors that Christie would clear the path for Democrat senate candidate, Cory Booker, if in return the Democrat mayors would endorse Christie in his re-election campaign for the Governorship of NJ.

Mayor Sokolich of Fort Lee refused to endorse Christie and received gangland-style payback in return in the form of closing three of the four Fort Lee lanes feeding into the George Washington Bridge, creating traffic problems that most of the country cannot begin to envision.

It was revealed that Christie's Deputy Chief of Staff, Bridget Anne Kelly, sent emails to David Wildstein, former Director of Interstate Projects for the NY/NJ Port Authority (the organization that manages the transportation arteries being discussed). These emails clearly indicated that the closure of the three lanes in Fort Lee were political payback against Mayor Sokolich.

Christie took swift and decisive action against Bridget Ann Kelly and fired her, claiming he knew nothing about this retaliatory action.

Wildstein (a boyhood friend of Christie) quietly resigned, as did Bill Baroni, former Deputy Executive Director of the Port Authority of NY and NJ.

Wildstein provided the emails with heavily redacted areas.

One un-redacted email dated September 6, 2013, stated that Christie approved a \$60,000 traffic study to assist the township in getting certified by Sustainable NJ. (Note: 1. Sustainable NJ is the NJ cover for Agenda 21 initiatives; and 2. Apparently the Fort Lee Mayor knew nothing about this.)

Since Christie fired his Chief of Staff, that has become the focus of the story. However, there are many questions that have not been answered and issues that should be addressed concerning the alleged abuse of power and the alleged deal. For instance:

**Did Christie strike a deal with the Democrat mayors that gave NJ
(and the rest of the country) another liberal senator?**

Since we all have to live with the votes cast in the U.S. Senate, that question should be of primary importance to the country as a whole. Two other questions should be of concern to NJ residents:

Did Christie collude with the Democrats for political gain, which resulted in spending \$10,000,000 of NJ taxpayer's money on a special election and \$60,000 on a traffic study, as well as giving all of us another liberal senator?

If you believe that may be the case, then you should be asking if Christie's self-proclaimed ability to work with both sides of the aisle is really more a testament to his back room deal mentality that equating to nothing more than a "you scratch my back; I'll scratch yours" mode of operation?

Before attempting to answer those questions, please consider some of the following:

Christie eliminated the spring Boards of Education elections throughout the state and consolidated them with the general elections in November. He claimed this would increase voter turnout for the Boards of Ed. and

save NJ millions in the process.

Senator Frank Lautenberg died and Christie had the opportunity to appoint a Republican to fill Lautenberg's term, which has been done by other Governors and is a perfectly acceptable action.

Christie temporarily appointed a liberal Republican to fill the seat until an election could be held - which Christie scheduled for a Wednesday instead of a Tuesday in October - three weeks prior to the general election and less than two months after the primaries for the senate election.

Why would Christie, who consolidated school board elections with general elections to save NJ money schedule a special election to fill the vacated Senate seat, which he had every right to fill by appointment?

By scheduling a special election do you think Christie avoided the throngs of Democrats that would get out the vote for the popular Cory Booker and possibly threaten his own election? If you think that is not feasible given Christie's popularity in NJ, read the statistics quoted below in the next to the last paragraph.

Do you think this special election benefited Booker and/or Christie and hurt the Republican candidate, Steve Lonegan? Before answering this question also consider that according to Mayor Lonegan, he did not receive donations made to the Republican Party for his campaign.

If you think Christie would intentionally pave the way for a liberal senator, you must ask what else he would be willing to give away for his personal political gain.

Lastly, do you think the \$60,000 traffic study that Christie approved under the auspices of Sustainable NJ was a cover for political retribution?

To be sure, there is much that needs to be investigated regarding Bridgegate but it is highly unlikely that we will ever know the truth. Unfortunately, as is the case with other government scandals, obstruction of justice has become a non-issue as alleged conspirators have learned to plead the 5th to avoid incriminating themselves or those they may be protecting.

Additionally, NJ's self-proclaimed "popular" Governor knows how to play the publicity game better than most. Case in point, he has everyone believing that his overwhelming election landslide equates to huge support for his governorship in NJ. However, the real facts are less spectacular than his spin-miesters would have you believe. According to the NJ Division of Elections, only 39.6% of NJ voters turned out for the November elections - the lowest turnout in NJ history. The fact that Christie received 60.3% of that 39.6% percent is somewhat underwhelming. Mathematically, Christie's landslide equated to 23.76% of all NJ registered voters. Yet, he has the entire nation believing that he is NJ's Great Republican Hope and has the support of an unprecedented percentage of NJ voters - the great majority of whom did not turn out to vote for him. The low voter turnout says something else. Should Christie manage to run for President in 2016, NJ's Great Republican Hope may indeed fare worse than Mitt Romney, as his questionable appointments and backroom deals will resonate with true Conservatives nationwide.

Bridgegate may never be resolved to the satisfaction of NJ residents but it may only be a glimpse into the future of what the nation could expect should they elect another charismatic bully to occupy the White House - regardless of how they may protest the label. Hopefully we will wise up and start looking at what politicians do rather than what they say. In Christie's case, I suggest we start looking at his love fest on the beaches of NJ with a certain Democrat ideologue after Hurricane Sandy. As far as I'm concerned, that's not working across the aisle; that's giving away the farm.

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