

VIEWPOINT

People should be 'PEAD' off

"Presidential Emergency Action Documents (PEADs) are TOP SECRET executive orders, proclamations, and messages to Congress that are prepared in anticipation of a range of emergency scenarios."



DAVID BEVERLY SR.

Brennan Center for Justice

recently had the pleasure of spending an evening at our local County Council meeting.

I say "pleasure" — because quite frankly, it really was a joy to see our local government serve out their purpose. From the larger-scope decisions regarding the redistricting of our county, to the minutia of deciding on the contract to provide county EMS with better and less expensive uniforms — I watched the process of how decisions that affect all of us in Chester County, are made. Whether we agree with such decisions or not, someone must make the decisions. It seems to me that local government — and the democratically selected leaders of our local REPUBLIC (representative leaders) — is the best method in all of history, that mankind has ever devised.

As corny as it may sound, I was very proud of our local leaders as I watched. I was also privileged to see an award given to one of our Sheriff Deputies — John Trey Hunter. Watch the video at <https://fb.watch/bsPNanIsN5/> forward to about four minutes in.

We all gave a much-deserved standing ovation, but I could not help but think that many more should have been there, standing with us, for a man who truly did risk his life for the public safety.

So many of us are apt to sit idly and complain about our local leadership — and yet do absolutely nothing about it but complain. I'll admit, I've also done the same. But it is local government — government CLOSE TO THE PEOPLE

and consisted of the same people — where we can affect change, when desired — when it's needful — When it might be required.

The preamble to our South Carolina Constitution reads: "We, the people of the State of South Carolina, in Convention assembled,

grateful to God for our liberties, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the preservation and perpetuation of the same"

As a Christian — I greatly appreciate that the founders had enough insight to be "grateful to God for our liberties" — How can we have the liberty of the practice of free religion — without a government that protects personal liberties? It's not the government's job to tell us what religion to practice — nor is it any man's — but the function of government is to preserve and perpetuate our personal liberties, given by God.

"Where the Spirit of the LORD is, there is liberty (freedom)" 2ND Corinthians 3:17

Article 1 of our South Carolina state Constitution reads: "All political power is vested in and derived from the people only, therefore, they have the right at all times to modify their form of government."

All governmental power is derived from the people only. And the people have the right to modify their form of government. When I mention this in conversation, a common reaction is that "I am being radical" — Some don't seem to realize, that it is THE LAW, not a matter of opinion. A common belief seems to be, "the government said so — so therefore we have to capitulate" — not understanding that YOU, by law, are the governing authority. Sounds like a radical idea — doesn't it?

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Shortfall in pension plan demands lawmakers' attention

BY RICHARD ECKSTROM
S.C. COMPTROLLER

It definitely doesn't get the attention it deserves, but it's among the most severe financial problems facing South Carolina today: The state retiree pension plan is underfunded by a whopping \$25 billion. That means, as things currently stand, the state is obligated to eventually pay out \$25 billion more in pension benefits than the plan will have on hand to make

those payments.

Twenty-five billion dollars is a whole lot of money — nearly two and one-half times the state's general operating budget — and there are no painless options for making up a shortfall of this size.

Elsewhere in the country, years of neglecting pension plan shortfalls has necessitated drastic steps: Sharp cuts in services, steep tax hikes, defaults on benefit payments to retirees, or any combination of these. A

city in Illinois laid off 40 police officers and firefighters. A school board in Colorado shuttered an elementary school. A school board in Oregon shortened the school year by five days and laid off employees. Property taxes shot up 35% in one city, and they increased \$298 annually in another.

These examples should be a wake-up call to state lawmakers.

SEE PLAN/PAGE A8

The pepper my friends, is blowing in the wind

Whenever I write about instances (and there are a disturbingly high number) of me hurting myself, people really seem to enjoy it. Whether it is busting my hands open while trying to cut down a tree, burning myself on a hot grill or ingesting the world's hottest hot sauce, I always get lots of people telling me that my misfortune (and stupidity) gives them a good laugh. I frequently suffer for my craft and for your amusement, including this past weekend.



TRAVIS JENKINS

We have a pair of bird feeders (one in the front yard, one in the back) that are very popular draws. We like nature, we like watching birds and we sort of enjoy watching how they collaborate. The feeder in the back is small and can only accommodate a few birds at a time, but I swear sometimes birds in the feeder will drop food on the ground for their buddies to eat. The one in the front is considerably bigger, but there is a problem with that one. It is up on a wooden post (as opposed to the one in the back which hangs on a metal rod) and is in the middle of a bunch of trees. That means, it is easily accessible to squirrels. Now, I like squirrels and enjoy watching their manic antics. They are like sugared up rats, darting back and forth and jumping from tiny tree branch to tiny tree branch. They

will apparently empty out a bird feeder pretty quickly, though. I can believe that since we have squirrels around our house so big I could almost saddle them up and ride them around like petting zoo ponies. So, my wife buys bird feed that has red pepper mixed in it. At first I thought squirrels just had weenie palates that couldn't stand the heat or that maybe it would, you know, run through them very quickly. Apparently, the smell just repels them but the pepper doesn't bother the birds.

"The bird feeders are empty," my wife reminded me for the third or fourth day in-a-row. "Could you please go fill them up?" I think she thinks the birds will think we don't like them anymore if we don't keep the feeders full.

"Man, what is the problem with that Jenkins family? Man, you poop on their windshield one time and they cut your food off."

Whatever. I took the big pouch of bird feed, spiked with red pepper, and filled up the backyard feeder. Then I went around to the front. This was on Sunday, which happened to be a beautiful day. As I started pouring the food in, I just kind of stood there soaked in God's majesty. The air was warm, the sky was blue, our bushes and flowers were beginning to reveal their spring colors and a light breeze began blowing in my face. It was really nice...except that the light

breeze began to carry red pepper with it directly into my face.

"AHHHHHHHH!!!!!!!" is basically what I said as scalding hot red pepper blew in my eyes.

I realized (too late) in my haste, I did not have the little spout on the food pouch all the way down into the bird feeder. It was just above it, allowing Mother Nature to pepper spray me in my own front yard.

"AHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!!" I said again, perhaps enhanced by some terms not fit for print.

So my right eye felt like it was on fire, as did my forehead and cheek. Water was pouring out of my eye and my nose started running. So, like a big dumb goon, screaming all the while, I had to sort of feel my way to the front door...and it was locked. So I had to walk around to the back of the house to get inside where I continued to carry on like a big baby.

"What's wrong?" Ashley asked.

"I got pepper in my eyes," I yelled back as I shoved my face in the sink.

Luckily I had the good sense to wash my hands before starting to cup cold water to wash my eyes out with.

"Ooh, I did that one time and it really hurt," Ashley said before noting that my right eye was blood red.

No good deed goes unpunished, I guess. I guess some good did come of it, though. You, the dear reader, get to enjoy a good laugh at my expense. and the birds got fed.

You're welcome.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Opinions from a former judge

"I am a student of law whose age is 85. My first year of college was 68 years ago. One class I took was political science.

A half-page of my textbook essentially outlined a few steps to overturn a democracy:

- Divide the nation philosophically.
- Forment racial strife.
- Cause distrust of police authority.
- Swarm the nation's borders indiscriminately and unconstitutionally.
- Engender the military strength to weaken it.
- Overburden citizens with more unfair taxation.
- Encourage civil rioting and discourage accountability for all crime.

Control all balloting.
Control all media.

What was printed in 1954 as a possible diabolic nightmare has become an emerging reality. I hope that Americans will unite enough to pen a good finish, God willing. — Keith M. Alber, California."

The above was on Facebook in late February 2022 and somewhere else, maybe Google, on Dec. 8, 2021. His opinion was copied by 87-year-old native South Carolinian Weyland Burns Sr. and sent to several newspapers with the hope it will be reprinted.

Judge Alber's background can be found online. Looks like his textbook was prophetic.

Weyland Burns Sr.
Fort Lawn