

A Brief History of Saunders' "Lease" of Airplane N777AQ During a Recession

Part 7

Why Is There So Little Trust In Leaders?

We organize the history by documenting representations made by President Saunders and Provost Lyman in their report to a Faculty Senate meeting on [December 5, 2008](#) (page 2, para. 7). See Parts 1 through 6 which provide a context for Part 7 and the documents obtained from USM in a Mississippi Open Records request that are the sources of information concerning the plane and passenger usage, costs, lease agreements, etc.

Part 7 advances an idea that our leaders persist in the deception about their airplane.

At the Faculty Senate meeting on December 5, 2008, "The question of the relationship between the Foundation and E&G monies was raised. It was observed that the budget cut is the same as that of the total cost of the airplane (roughly \$1.8 million). Townspeople may not see the difference between the two budget offices and are confused and angry at our buying an airplane at the time of a budget cut.

What question is there about the "relationship between the Foundation and E&G monies"? Once the facts are in (See Parts 1-6), the idea of USM's Foundation paying for President Saunders airplane is absurd. Again, once the facts are in, and facts Saunders and Lyman were well aware at the time of the December 5, 2008 Faculty Senate meeting, a serious question is, *was Saunders and Lyman intentionally misleading everyone by even discussing that the Foundation would pay for the airplane?* As of December 5, 2008, who would pay—taxpayers and students—had already been agreed in the [terms and conditions of the lease](#) signed by President Saunders in November 2008 – more than a week before "[t]he Provost emphasized strongly that the deal is still in negotiation, and is not complete." To date, they persist in this deception.

Since we have to keep a sense of humor when our leaders are incompetent or corrupt, and we can't quickly remove them from office since there are comparable "leaders" overseeing their "accountability," here's the funny for today: What evidence would anyone have had that the "townspeople"—sounds like a reference to the inhabitants of a Frankenstein movie—would give a damn much less be confused and angry at President Saunders "buying an airplane at the time of a budget cut"?

However, there may be evidence that students who are paying increasing tuition and fees, staff who are about to lose their jobs, and faculty who have

been issued terminal contracts, are confused and angry – and Dr. Saunders' airplane is only the tip of an iceberg of waste.