

In addition, six ex officio members were appointed representing other political and business elements of the community who would serve as advisors to the council.

In the first days of the new year of 1965, the mood of the community was a mixture. A few Salinans appeared to be ready to panic, others were apparently turning aggressive, and the majority were in a wait-and-see frame of mind. The development council was preparing itself for the promised visit of Washington officials later in the month, fully realizing that Salina was facing a bootstrap operation. Above all, the new council in its formative meetings, foresaw months of work and the need for large measures of patience, fortitude, and wisdom. Whether the base closing was to be a disaster or an opportunity would depend in large measure upon an inventive, determined, and intelligent persistence of Salina businessmen and officials as well as upon the cooperation of the Department of Defense and other governmental agencies.

On January 13, 1965, a team of Washington officials, including representatives of DOD, GSA, DHEW, SBA, and Agriculture, began a series of day and night meetings that was to last for 2 full days. The Washington delegation was bolstered by a wide variety of regional representatives of Federal agencies, State officials, and envoys from the Washington offices of the Kansas Senators and Representatives. Don Bradford set the theme of the meetings when he reminded the press that the delegation was at Salina at the invitation of Salina's leadership:

We will sit down with these men and make an assessment of Schilling, and we will discuss possible recovery programs. We will enlist the aid of any or all Federal agencies to help bring new payrolls to Salina. We already have heard some good thinking from Salina leaders and we expect great results from our talks.

DEAR SAL: Here's hoping for the best.

Yours,

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Salina had been promised active Federal assistance in adjusting to the loss of Schilling. The community had been told that redtape would be cut, sound advice given, advantages proffered, equipment donated, and that assistance would be offered to find new people and new payrolls to replenish those that would be lost. To many citizens these promises only mean nothing more than talk. The cynical element professed no faith in miracles or fairy godmothers, and cast suspicion on the professed desires on the part of Federal departments to help the community.

In the full meetings, and in the smaller meetings with special groups, the Federal delegation counseled over 150 invited Salinans in a wide variety of special interests and authorities. Groups interested in the municipal airport, education, highways, hospital and medical programs, housing, industrial development, parks and recreation, small business, urban renewal, public utilities, and vocational-technical education discussed the roles that might be played by the base in solving their respective needs and desires. Many of our questions remained unanswered but it was agreed that a number of worthwhile ideas and suggestions had been explored in detail.

As a climax to the visit by Washington officialdom, a report on the dialog between the community and Washington was scheduled for an evening meeting at the senior high school auditorium. All Salinans,