

## **The Death of the Automobile Industry**

It was love at first sight.

When Gene's father had pulled into the driveway, blowing the horn and revving the engine of the brand-spanking-new, shiny 1953 Corvette, Gene had experienced a revelation. The young, thirteen year old Gene had never realized before the definition of 'beauty'. The convertible Corvette, white with red wheels and red interior and glistening in the sunlight was truly a beautiful thing.

And, then, when Gene's father had opened the drivers door and yelled, "C'mon, kiddo, you're gonna learn how to drive!"

It was as if all the angels in heaven had begun singing.

Gene steered the car as his father worked the gas, brake, and gear shifter and for an hour and many miles Gene had been the happiest kid in the whole world. Gene sat on his fathers lap and followed his father's instructions carefully, "A little right – now a little left. Keep us in the middle of the lane. Don't look down, look straight ahead, just like when you ride your bicycle. We're gonna make a right turn, get ready. That's right, you're doing good, kiddo. You got it now."

It was Christmas and his birthday all mixed together that day. Gene was wrapped in the love, joy and happiness of this wonderful experience with his father, who was the biggest and bestest man in the whole wide world to Gene.

Later, when they pulled into the driveway, back home, Gene's mother was standing on the front porch waving at them. His father revved the powerful engine and shut off the car and they climbed out laughing and smiling. His mother joined them in the yard. Gene's father opened the car hood and showed them the powerful Blue Flame 150 horsepower engine that had propelled them down the road. Gene was astounded by the engine; this display of mechanical ingenuity and perfection. His mother raved over all the new and exciting features of the Corvette and while his mother and father held each other close and danced to an old blues song that his father sang in his low voice, Gene turned cartwheels in the yard.

He went back to the car and stood reverently before it. He caressed the shiny fiberglass body: Fiberglass! Who could of thought

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of such a wonderful thing? Gene sat in the driver's seat of the Corvette with the steering wheel in his hands. He looked at the craftsmanship and was awed. Gene had never imagined that there was something so beautiful in the whole wide world.

And, he had driven it, all over town! In all of Gene's thirteen years it was the happiest day of his life and he knew, from that moment on, that cars, especially Corvettes, would be his life.

For the next three years Gene and his father would go for drives, and while Gene matured and grew taller and could reach the pedals his father had gradually turned over the driving responsibilities to his son. Gene learned the rules of the road and perfected his motoring skills, until the magic day arrived, in 1959 and Gene got his legal driving license – behind the wheel of that 1953 Corvette.

During the course of those preceding three years, Gene's father had taught him how to change the oil, tune up the car, set the timing and all the other routine maintenance care the powerful car required. They had also dropped the engine and transmission and completely rebuilt them after Gene had repeatedly asked, "But, how does it work?"

So, by the time Gene got his driver's license, when he turned sixteen, he had enough knowledge and skills to get a part-time job in town at the local garage as a mechanic.

One morning, soon after Gene turned eighteen and had graduated from high school, his father said to him, "Come on, son, we got some business to take care of."

They went out to the yard and Gene's father had all the soap, buckets, sponges and towels laid out in the grass next to the Corvette, in preparation to wash and wax it.

Gene had over the years, every weekend, lovingly washed the car and now he told his father, "Hey, dad, I'll do this, you go sit and relax."

"No", said his father, shaking his head, "We'll do it together. After we're done we're going to drive to the dealership and get a new car. Today I say goodbye to the Corvette."

Gene was astonished. He couldn't believe what he was hearing. He tried to get his father to explain, but his father would only shake his head, his face grim as he spread the soap and water on the Corvette,

When they finished Gene's father said, "Son, I'm going to drive today. This is my last drive in this car."

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Gene sat in the passenger's seat and pleaded with his father to explain why he was selling the Corvette but his father wouldn't speak.

Shortly, they arrived at the dealership and Gene followed his father inside. Gene turned to look back at the Corvette as it shined in the sunlight and he fought to keep the unmanly tears from pouring from his eyes.

They entered the showroom of the dealership and the owner, Mr. Jefferson strode briskly up to Gene's father with a set of keys in his hand. Mr. Jefferson was an older man, tall and skinny, dressed in a stylish suit. Mr. Jefferson greeted Gene's father, saying, "It just came in yesterday and it's fully gassed, ready to go. Are you sure you don't want to give me your old one in trade? The '53 is a classic, I could sell it today."

"No", said Gene's father, "I've got other plans for the '53". And then he turned and handed the keys to Gene and with a wink and a smile he said, "Take care of it, son. It's all yours."

Gene stood in the middle of his showroom, fifty-one years later: it was the year 2009, and remembered that day in 1958 like it had happened just yesterday.

That sunny day, fifty-one years earlier, when his father had bought the new 1958 Corvette with the Honduras Maroon paint job and white convertible top, and had given the 1953 white Corvette to Gene, was a day that lived in the sunshine of his memory ever since.

Gene, driving the 1953 Corvette and his father driving his new 1958 Corvette had left the dealership that day and drove over to the river where they parked on the riverbank and watched the sunset. Gene and his father were not only father and son, they were best friends.

Now, fifty-one years had passed and Gene was sixty-nine years old. Over the course of the previous decades, Gene had been successful in the automobile business. He had progressed from grease-monkey to mechanic, to shop foreman to dealership service manager, to partner in the same dealership, to accomplished salesman, to executive, to dealership owner.

He had kept his childhood promise to himself to, "make cars his life".

His own dealership, Gene's GM, had been for many years the most successful in the nation. His dealings with the customers: his honesty; His 'Best Prices', and his Customer Service had earned him a Five-Star Industry Rating over the years, and now he stood, alone, in the middle of his showroom, surrounded by new, shiny cars and

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contemplated the act of turning out the lights, for the last time, walking out the door, locking it behind him and then giving the keys to the Government Automobile Task Force representative waiting outside.

The Federal Government of the United States of America had decreed that the Big Three: General Motors, Ford and Chrysler would be better operated as GOE's, that is, Government Owned Entities, and had confiscated all the plants, machinery, equipment and facilities of the companies, and they would now be run by the bureaucracy of the Automobile Task Force.

Genes's GM, the dealership he had built from hard-work, good business practices and elbow grease was just one of thousands across the country that had been appropriated by the Automobile Task Force.

Gene, like the rest of the nation's dealerships, had previously benefited from the industry financial program of the "Floor Plan" whereby they took possession of vehicles at a nominal cost from the manufacturers and when they sold them, then paid the balance owed to the manufacturers after they had deducted their dealer's cost from the sale price.

This was a system that had worked well for the manufacturers, dealers and consumers for a century. But now, the Automobile Task Force had calculated a new way of doing business that was described in their 7,500 page publication that was entitled, CHANGING THE WAY AMERICANS BUILD AND BUY CARS, that no one had been able to understand or decipher.

This new manual, that outlined the new way of doing business, had been drafted by the committee comprising the newly formed Automobile Task Force and the new Automobile Task Force Czar had been instrumental in its compilation. The Federal Government was busily assuring America that this new system would work and that the Czar knew best, even if the new Automobile Task Force Czar had never been involved in the automobile business.

Gene and all the other dealership owners, backed by the entire automotive industry and Americans from sea to shining sea, had attempted to get the Federal government to legalize the cultivation of Industrial Hemp, and begin to full-scale production of Commercial Algae so the vehicles the Big Three manufactured could be built with diesel engines, powered by Home-Grown Biodiesel.

The supporters of these renewable sources of alternative fuels had been threatened with arrest, imprisonment and Martial Law if

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they didn't cease their agitation. The Automobile Task Force Czar was insisting on sticking with the internal combustion engine powered by petroleum-based gasoline, and the Czar was busily promoting and promising America a hydrogen powered engine; which would be available to the consumer in ten more years or, "it might take a little longer", the Czar said.

There seemed to be some slight problems taking the science-fiction concept of hydrogen engines from the drawing board to practical application. However, the Automobile Task Force Czar was determined to make it work, no matter how many hundreds of billions of tax-payer money it cost.

Now, Gene stood in the showroom, remembering all the good days and the hard days. He remembered all the people who had been gainfully and happily employed there who were now required to submit new applications to the Automobile Task Force to regain their jobs. Also, all the other employees of the Big Three had given up their Union rights, as a prerequisite of the Automobile Task Force making the companies GOE's, and they too had to reapply for their jobs and in the process had lost their retirement and other benefits.

Gene remembered all of the customers who had returned time after time over the years to continue their business relationship with his dealership. He remembered that those customers had become his friends. He remembered the good times and the hard times of the previous economic booms and busts, but tried to concentrate on remembering the good times.

Gene took a final walk through the rooms of the dealership and he thought of the first day his father had come to visit, after Gene had become the owner and licensed dealer. His father had been older then, retired, and he was delighted, telling him, "This is wonderful son; I know you're going to be a success. This is right up your alley. It's a big responsibility but you're up to it. Just remember one thing, take care of it, Gene. It's all yours."

Gene moved slowly from room to room and down each hallway, turning off the lights as he went. He ended up at the front door and turned to look once more at the now darkened showroom, the light from the setting sun glistening off the shiny inventory of the new cars.

He opened the door, exited and locked it behind him. Turning he saw the bureaucrat from the Automobile Task Force who had stood and waited impatiently while the old man took a last walk down memory lane.

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Gene handed him the keys to the front door and told him, "Take good care of it, young man. It's all yours."

## White House questions viability of GM, Chrysler

By PHILIP ELLIOTT, Associated Press Writer Philip Elliott, Associated Press Writer  
[http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20090330/ap\\_on\\_go\\_pr\\_wh/obama\\_autos](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20090330/ap_on_go_pr_wh/obama_autos)

WASHINGTON – President Barack Obama asserted unprecedented government control over the auto industry Monday, bluntly rejecting turnaround plans by General Motors Corp. and Chrysler LLC, demanding fresh concessions for long-term federal aid and raising the possibility of quick bankruptcy for either ailing auto giant. He raised the possibility Monday of controlled bankruptcy for one or both of the beleaguered auto giants. ...the extent to which the government is now dictating terms to two of the country's iconic corporations, ...In an extraordinary move, the administration forced the departure of Rick Wagoner as CEO of General Motors over the weekend, and implicit in Obama's remarks was that the government holds the ability to pull the plug on that company or Chrysler. ... GM and Chrysler employ about 140,000 workers in the U.S. In February, GM said it intended to cut 47,000 jobs around the globe, or almost 20 percent of its work force, close hundreds of dealerships ...

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## **UPDATE**

### The Continuing Saga

Wednesday, April 1 (April Fools Day), 2009

Wow! A lot can happen in a couple days in the Global Economy and the preview of the New World Order. I was recently asked if I thought that things would get better before they got worse, or vice versa, and my answer to that question was, "Don't you read the newspaper?"

In today's paper was this headline:  
**Gm's new CEO open to bankruptcy**  
USA Today, by Sharon Silke Carty, page 1B

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'General Motors CEO Frederick "Fritz" Henderson said...More plants could close. Dealers could shut down faster than expected. More jobs could be lost... Henderson laid out what he called a "significantly more aggressive" restructuring plan. Henderson said the new plan would go "**deeper, harder and faster**"...eliminating 47,000 jobs worldwide this year and shedding 20,000 in the U.S. by 2012...'

**DEEPER – HARDER – FASTER**

That sounds like the title of some grungy, XXX-Rated flic doesn't it? Well, guess what? It is, and it's the classic, Oscar winning, blue-ribbon winning X-Rated flic of all time.

Let's step into the Top-Secret offices of the Chief Financial Officer and examine some of the tawdry files associated with the bookkeeping of this big-screen production.

Now, please bear with me and please understand that I'm not one of those Harvard or Yale MBA's that perform their financial magic at AIG or a Wall Street brokerage firm, and I'm not a banker or anything like that; but, I do keep up with the news and I do have a spreadsheet program that I'm pretty good at, if I say so myself. So let's do some simple mathematics.

About six months ago, the Bush administration slipped some bailout dough to the bankers, investment firms and insurance conglomerates, in the amount of \$700 Billion dollars. Since Obama has been in office, about two months, those honest, hard-working, but misunderstood corporate insiders have received about \$300 Billion **more** dollars. And please remember; these are the jokers who produce **no** real products, only pie-in-the-sky Ponzi schemes that have resulted in the current economic catastrophe.

That totals about a TRILLION bucks. Seriously, a TRILLION DOLLARS OF TAXPAYER MONEY. (pennies left off for clarity)

\$700,000,000,000 billion
+ \$300,000,000,000 billion
= <b>\$1,000,000,000,000 TRILLION</b>

I'd like to make two comments about the above: Firstly, to put that sum of money in perspective, suppose you won the lottery and the payoff was to be \$1,000,000 (one million) per year until you received the total.

**IT WOULD TAKE ONE-MILLION YEARS TO GET ALL YOUR WINNINGS!**

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That's right – one million times one million equals one TRILLION.

Did it take the bankers, stock brokers and insurance geniuses a million years to get their tax-payer funded **TRILLION** dollars? No, it took about six months.

The second point is this: The auto industry actually produces a real product and employs Americans in the production of those products.

Now, let's compare how the two entities have been treated by Congress, the President(s) and the Federal bureaucracy. On the one hand, we have an industry that actually makes real products and who employ Americans in the manufacturing process.

On the other hand, we have a bunch of jokers who make nothing, contribute nothing and who, in fact, have destroyed the economy and the American Dream.

The ones who actually make something, the auto industry, are being Nationalized by the Feds, made to grovel for a piddling hand-out (compared to what the others got) and who are being forced into bankruptcy.

The jokers who make nothing, contribute nothing and who with their Ponzi schemes have destroyed the economy get hugs, kisses and a larger allowance.

Excuse me, like I mentioned above I'm no math genius but, **THAT DON'T ADD UP.**

Also in today's newspaper are the tawdry details of the G-20 meetings in Europe where the Plot-i-ti-cian witch doctors are sharpening their pencils so they can calculate how to copy and paste this mess on a Global scale.

So, while America sits and breathlessly awaits the next diagnosis and verdict of the Plot-i-ti-cian witch doctors the XXX-Rated movie, "**DEEPER – HARDER – FASTER**" continues.

Hello? Anybody home?

Do the math yourself, and see if it doesn't make you: **MADDER n HELL.** Wanna fix this mess? Please see

  
<http://www.howlinwolfstudio.com/RobbingHood.pdf>