

OUTLINE ON GLEASON HEARINGS

MONROE COUNTY

SEPTEMBER 17, 1974 - SEPTEMBER 18, 1974

Testimony from Monroe County was limited to only four contractors, a foreman and William Heller, district superintendent.

A. SELIG, ROBERT, JR. - Contractor

1. Selig testified that in early 1973 William Heller drove him to Selig's bank, gave him his paycheck and asked him to give Heller \$600.00 in cash or about 10% of his earnings for his winter work with PennDot. The figure was later reduced to \$300.00, which he gave to Heller.
2. Selig decided not to lease his equipment the following winter.

B. BRUSH, KENNETH - Contractor

1. Brush testified that in late 1971 his cider truck was ordered off the job by William Heller after he failed to give Heller the requested 5% donation.
2. Brush stated the practice of giving 1% goes back to the Leader and Lawrence Administrations, when he first started leasing. However, the voluntary aspect changed with the Shapp Administration and when Heller became county superintendent.

C. FOCKE, FRED B. - Contractor

1. Focke's testimony contrasted Selig's in that he stated he gave to both parties (under Republican Administration it was a customary 1% donation) and he always gave voluntarily.
2. Focke said Heller asked him for 5% donation in cash and added that if the request was discussed with anyone "I will deny it."
3. Focke refused the request and testified his work for the state declined sharply. He described the Democratic practices as "highway robbery."

D. KEIPER, DARWIN - Contractor

1. Keiper stated he paid Heller \$400 to \$450 (or about 10%) from his fees for the 1972-1973 winter. He decided also not to rent his equipment to PennDot after that season.

E. NEBEL, W. J. - Foreman

1. Nebel testified that in late 1972, Heller told him to credit a contractor with an extra half-hour for every 10 hours worked if the contractor made a 5% donation. The contractor refused.
2. He stated it was customary to give 1% under Republican Administrations.

F. HELLER, WILLIAM - Highway Superintendent of Monroe County

1. Heller denied all the allegation which were made against him. He said the charges may have resulted from a rift in County Democratic ranks and that one faction was trying to discredit him. Heller further stated: "...a dissident group exists within my own organization (PennDot) due to the fact that I demand a decent day's work for a decent day's pay. I feel I have been made a target by these groups."
2. Heller stated he never drove to the bank or asked Selig for \$600.00. An agrument took place in Heller's Office, where Selig demanded, as a Democratic committeemen, to have a front-end loader put on the job.
3. Heller indicated the Focke and Nebel, both Republicans, were working against him for political reasons. Concerning Brush, a Democrat, Heller stated he was a "loser in an election" and was among the party dissidents.
4. Heller stated that he solicited the lessors and other people for tickets, ads and contributions for the Democratic Party, "...But this was in no way a condition for their leases in any manner whatever."
5. Heller, 58, was rushed to Harrisburg Hospital after three hours of testifying before the committee. The questioning stopped abruptly around 1:30 p.m. when Arthur Kusic, Esq. his attorney, pleaded for a recess. Gleason examined Heller and excused him from any further testimony. Stephen Freind, special counsel, became irrate. When Gleason told him Heller was having a heart attack Freind responded: "I don't care" and complained about a "convenient coronary." Heller was listed in "unsatisfactory condition" but apparently did not suffer from a heart attack.