

THE DAKOTAS' OLDEST NEWSPAPER | FOUNDED 1861

Yankton Media, Inc., 319 Walnut St., Yankton, SD 57078

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Periodicals postage paid at Yankton, South Dakota, under the act of March 3, Weekly Dakotian

established June 6, 1861 Yankton Daily Press and Dakotian established April 26, 1875.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan, 319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078.

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The Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan is a member of the Associ ated Press, the Inland Daily Press Association and the South Dakota Newspaper Association. The Associated Press is entitled exclusively to use of all the local news printed in this newspaper.

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CARRIER DELIVERY 1-month \$12.09 3 months \$36.27 6 months\$72.53 1-year\$133.09 MOTOR ROUTE (where available)

1 month \$14.51 3 months\$43.53 $6 \ months \ \dots.\$87.05$

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OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

What Is SD Beef **Program Promoting?**

CAPITAL JOURNAL, Pierre (July 26): We learn from an Associated Press report that the South Dakota Certified Beef program, launched eight years ago with mighty fanfare during the Rounds administration, has fallen short of its goal of helping producers in the state sell state-branded beef as a premium product for higher

It appears that although South Dakota produces several million head of livestock, only 16,386 cattle over the past eight years have been enrolled in the program.

Maybe the program still will catch hold in time, as former Gov. Mike Rounds believes it will.

But it's also possible that the program may not be quite done yet; maybe we ought to flop it back on the grill.

We're told the current requirements of the program say that to qualify as South Dakota Certified Beef, cattle have to be born in the state, carry electronic ear tags and be tracked every time they are sold. So far so good. But what about the additional requirement that before they are slaughtered, cattle in the program must be fed a high-starch diet of corn or other grain for at least 100 days?

Has anybody over there in the state government complex heard of grass-fed beef? Supposed to be lower in fat? Higher in Omega 3 fatty acids? Coveted by urban types who still crave their red meat but want to feel good about health benefits?

Maybe South Dakota Certified Beef should start another tier of the program for South Dakota Certified Grass-fed Beef. After all, this program is promoting South Dakota beef, is it not? Or were we mis-

There are opportunities in beef production for the producer who does things differently, and it's too bad if the state won't help those who go against the grain. This state program should stop penalizing grass, one of the big wheels that drive our agricultural economy.

ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press Today is Monday, Aug. 5, the 217th day of 2013. There are 148 days

Today's Highlight in History: On August 5, 1953, Operation Big Switch began as remaining prisoners taken during the Korean War were ex-

changed at Panmunjom.

On this date: In 1864, during the Civil War, Union Adm. David G. Farragut led his fleet to victory in the Battle of Mobile Bay, Ala.

In 1884, the cornerstone for the Statue of Liberty's pedestal was laid on Bedloe's Island in New York Har-In 1912, the Progressive Party, also known as the "Bull Moose Party,"

convened in Chicago. (The party was formed by former President Theodore Roosevelt following a split in the Republican Party.)
In 1921, a baseball game was broadcast for the first time as KDKA radio announcer Harold Arlin de-

scribed the action between the Pittsburgh Pirates and the Philadelphia Phillies from Forbes Field. (The Pirates won, 8-5.) In 1924, the comic strip "Little Or-

phan Annie" by Harold Gray made its In 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the National

with the National Labor Relations Board In 1936, Jesse Owens of the United States won the 200-meter

dash at the Berlin Olympics, collecting the third of his four gold medals. In 1953, the movie "From Here to Eternity" had its world premiere in

New York. In 1962, actress Marilyn Monroe, 36 was found dead in her Los Angeles home; her death was ruled a probable suicide from "acute barbiturate poisoning." South African anti-apartheid activist Nelson Mandela was arrested; it was the beginning of

27 years of imprisonment. In 1963, the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union signed a treaty in Moscow banning nuclear tests in the atmosphere, in space and under-

In 1969, the U.S. space probe Mariner 7 flew by Mars, sending back photographs and scientific data. In 1981, the federal government

pegan firing air traffic controllers who had gone out on strike. Ten years ago: Episcopal leaders in Minneapolis voted to approve the election of the Reverend V. Gene

Robinson, an openly gay clergyman, as bishop of the Diocese of New Hampshire. A car bombing at the Marriott hotel in Jakarta, Indonesia, killed

12 people.

Five years ago: President
George W. Bush arrived in South Korea to begin a three-country Asia tour. Seven firefighters and two pilots were killed when their helicopter crashed on takeoff while ferrying the crew members from fire lines in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest in Northern California. Jose Medellin, a Mexican-born condemned killer, was executed by the state of Texas for his part in the gang rape and murder of two teenage girls, Elizabeth Pena and

Jennifer Ertman, in 1993. One year ago: A gunman opened fire and killed six people at a Sikh temple near Milwaukee before he was killed in an exchange of gunfire with one of the first officers to respond. The robotic explorer Curiosity blazed through the pink skies of Mars, steering itself to a gentle landing inside a giant crater. Jamaica's Usain Bolt pulled away from the pack and crossed the finish line to claim consecutive gold medals in the marquee track and field event at the Summer Games in London. Britain's Andy Murray cruised past Roger Federer 6-2, 6-1, 6-4 in the men's tennis singles final. Serena and Venus Williams won the women's doubles title, beating Andrea Hlavackova and Lucie Hradecka of the Czech Republic 6-4, 6-4. McKayla Maroney took silver in the women's vault: Sandra Izbasa of Romania won

Today's Birthdays: Actor John Saxon is 77. College Football Hall of Famer and former NFL player Roman Gabriel is 73. Country songwriter Bobby Braddock is 73. Actress Loni Anderson is 68. Actress Erika Slezak is 67. Rock singer Rick Derringer is 66. Actress Holly Palance is 63. Singer Samantha Sang is 60. Actresssinger Maureen McCormick is 57. Rock musician Pat Smear is 54. Author David Baldacci is 53. Actress Tawney Kitaen is 52. Actress Janet McTeer is 52. Country musician Mark O'Connor is 52. Basketball Hall-of-Famer Patrick Ewing is 51. Actor Jonathan Silverman is 47. Country singer Terri Clark is 45. Former MLB player John Olerud is 45. Rock musician Eicca Toppinen (Apocalyptica) is 38. Actor Brendon Ryan Barrett is 27.

Thought for Today: "What worries i, masters you." — John Locke, you, masters you." English philosopher (1632-1704).

FROM THE BIBLE

Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness. Psalm 37:3. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

YOUR LETTERS

Questioning The Logic John P. Blackburn, Yankton

South Dakota's Department of Transportation has decided to widen Fourth Street/Highway 50 from Broadway to just east of Burleigh Street. It plans to narrow current traffic lanes and add a left-turn lane.

It will widen Fourth Street causing loss of the three foot buffer zone between the curb and the sidewalk. This puts sidewalks next to semi-truck traffic - within three feet of 30 mph traffic. This will create danger, inconvenience, snow piles on sidewalks and splashing of pedestrians. It will cut the lane size from twelve foot to eleven foot lanes and remove three feet of boulevard on each side.

Why? So SD DOT can put in left turn lanes on intersections. This will be done in the name of safety? However, under the DOT's plan, 18-wheelers will travel within 2-3 feet of pedestrian traffic. Most troubling, we pedestrians and children will face semi-trucks and cars travel-

ing within three feet from us. The DOT professes it doesn't

have enough money for projects. Yet, it will tear up Fourth Street. The existing three feet of boulevard on each side will be removed; the existing lanes will be narrowed to create five lanes instead of four; the curb will join the sidewalk, allowing no buffer zone protection for pedestrians. This is done in the name of

When you exit one of the buildings on Fourth Street, you will have to be very careful not to get hit. The suction caused by a passing semi-truck can also be a danger — one apparently unrecognized by the DOT. The snow and slop problems caused to pedestrians and businesses (including ours) fronting on Fourth Street will be a danger and a mess created by this plan.

The DOT should be comparing the danger it is creating rather than the small danger to a person turning left. How many left-turning collisions are there on Fourth Street?

SD DOT should cancel this project and spend its time, money and effort on a needed project.



The Art of Doing Nothing

Let's Do The Math

BY BILL O'REILLY

Creators Syndicate

As President Obama heads for a nice vacation at Martha's Vineyard, a place of wealth, I want him to work on a simple math calculation. One of the major themes of the president's administration is that there is a tremendous problem of "income inequality" in this nation that must be addressed.

Obama's solution is to redistribute income using seizure tactics. His plan is to have the federal government provide subsidies for those with low incomes by taking money from business and the affluent. The O'REILLY problem is that high taxation restrains economic expansion and inhibits the country from creating new avenues of wealth. If the affluent spend less and business invests less in expansion and development, wages for workers stagnate because there is heavy competition for jobs.

The president does not seem to understand that.

But the core problem of "income inequality" stems from failure to seize opportunity. If an American is insufficiently educated and does not develop useful skills, he or she will not be able to earn much money in the marketplace. And little is being done about that.

So here's the math deal, Mr. President. Right now, approximately 48 percent of American children living in female-headed households are poor. That's compared to a poverty rate of 11 percent for kids living in a marriedcouple situation.

The out-of-wedlock birth rate for African-Americans is close to 73 percent. For Hispanics, it's 53 percent; for whites, 29 percent. And sadly, most of these children are growing up without fathers in the home.

So where is the national campaign to discourage women from having babies out of wedlock? Is the Department of Education doing anything about that? The media? Any-

> named Murphy Brown (played by Candice Bergen) for having a baby outside of marriage. Quayle was mocked unmercifully by the elite media and the salon set.

Back in 1992, then Vice President

Dan Quayle derided a TV character

But Quayle was right. According to the U.S. Census, 34 percent of unwed mothers do not work, and that is driving abject poverty.

America offers the most people the best opportunity to pursue happiness. That's why millions of illegal immigrants have poured into the

country – most of them poor. They believe they have a shot at improving themselves economically.

But children living in poverty without fathers to guide them are at a strong disadvantage in our competitive society. Obama's solution is to throw as much money as he can into programs to help these kids. But that will never work.

The traditional American family has always been the foundation for success in America. But now it is being destroyed in some precincts. Welfare programs and public schooling will never overcome disadvantage on the home front. It is time for Obama to lead. The way to foster "income equality" is to encourage traditional upbringings and disci-

Just do the math, Mr. President.

Veteran TV news anchor Bill O'Reilly is host of the Fox News show "The O'Reilly Factor" and author of the book "Pinheads and Patriots: Where You Stand in the Age of Obama.'

A New Low For Fox 'News'

Leonard

BY LEONARD PITTS JR.

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No it was not the most excruciating thing ever seen on television. We've seen worse.

We've seen Roseanne singing the national anthem, Magic Johnson hosting a talk show and Paris Hilton, existing. But if it's not number one on that list of god-awful TV, author Reza Aslan's recent interview with Lauren Green of Fox "News" is surely in the top 10.

Google it if you haven't seen it. Or just ask some woman to rake her fingernails down a chalkboard for 10 minutes. Same difference.

Over and over again, speaking in **PITTS** the honeyed, patient tone you'd use to instruct a slow child, Aslan answers the question that has been put to him by reciting his bona fides. He is a historian. He is an expert on the New Testament. He is fluent in biblical Greek. He holds four degrees. He has spent 20 years researching the origins of Christianity. The study of religion is

his job. And over and over again, doing her best imitation of Mike Wallace pinning miscreants to the wall (if Mike Wallace had shilled for a company of right-wing propagandists playacting at journalism) Green keeps bringing him back to what she regards as the central issue: "You're a Muslim," she informs him, "so why did you write a book about the founder of Christianity?

The book in question is "Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth," a search for the historicity of the itinerant rabbi who founded the biggest religion on Earth. On that basis, you'd expect it to be controversial. Green, however, seems less vexed by the book's content than by its author's faith.

"Why would you be interested in the founder of Christianity?" she asks. And, "You're not just writing about a reli-

gion from a point of view of an observer.' And, "You've been on several programs and never disclosed that you're a Muslim." To which Aslan replies that his religion is disclosed on the second page of the book and in every media interview he's ever done. It goes on like that for 10 cringe-inducing

minutes. At some point, you find yourself drifting in a stupor of disbelief, amusing yourself by imagining how Green might have interviewed other authors in history: "John Steinbeck, you're from California.

Why did you write about people from Oklahoma?' Tom Wolfe, you're no astronaut.

Why did you write about astronauts? "Alexis de Tocqueville, you're a

Frenchman. Why did you write about the United States? That's the subtext of Green's interview, after all, the idea that one

must belong to a given tribe before one may write about that tribe. But of course, that's not quite what she's saying, is it? No, that stricture only applies if one is a Muslim. For all their professed abhorrence

of so-called "identity politics," it is for many conservatives an article of faith that if one's identity includes Islam, that fact trumps everything else: character, upbringing, beliefs, politics, or fluency in biblical Greek. Think Glenn Beck asking a Muslim congressman to prove he is not in league with America's enemies. Think Michele Bachmann accusing an aide to the secretary of state of terrorist ties.

You are your tribe. More to the point, you are the worst iteration of your tribe, the scapegoat for all our fears of your tribe.

So Fox's mugging of Aslan was an embarrassment, but hardly a surprise. The nation seems to have grown uncomfortably comfortable with the sort of "thinking" from which it proceeded.

The encounter drove Aslan's book to the top of the Amazon best sellers list, which is good news for him. But the better news is that he lives in a country where the right to follow any line of scholarship he wants is carved in stone, regardless of how he conceives God. There is a word for that:

Freedom. Lauren Green should look it up.

Leonard Pitts is a columnist for The Miami Herald, 1 Herald Plaza, Miami, Fla., 33132. Readers may contact him via e-mail at lpitts@miamiherald.com.

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