

# THE PRESS & DAKOTAN

THE DAKOTAS' OLDEST NEWSPAPER | FOUNDED 1861

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## Published Daily Monday-Saturday

Periodicals postage  
paid at Yankton,  
South Dakota, under  
the act of March 3,  
1979.

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

Postmaster: Send  
address changes to  
Yankton Daily Press  
& Dakotian, 319 Wal-  
nut, Yankton, SD  
57078.

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## MEMBERSHIPS

The Yankton Daily  
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ated Press, the Inland  
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the local news printed  
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1-month . . . . \$12.09  
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## OPINION

# Back To Iraq: Our Never-Ending War?

As, to borrow what long ago became an overused play on words, America really does seem to be between Iraq and a hard place.

And we're learning that there is no sure way of completely extracting ourselves from the war we ignited in Iraq 11 years ago.

Last week, President Barack Obama announced that the U.S. would be launching airstrikes on the Islamic State group — known as ISIS — that has unleashed a ghastly reign of terror across parts of Iraq and Syria, and has become the newest rogue element to destabilize the tenuous (and, really, mostly nonexistent) stability of the Middle East region.

Besides using airstrikes and drone attacks to soften up ISIS forces, the U.S. and other nations are pledging humanitarian aid to refugees, includes at least 50,000 Yazidis trapped on a mountain.

So, despite the U.S. pulling out its combat troops in 2011, we find ourselves embroiled in hostilities there again — or still, if you wish to connect all the dots.

Soberingly, Obama noted Saturday, "I don't think we're going to solve this problem in weeks. This is going to be a long-term project."

Iraq is once again our problem.

In fact, it has never stopped being our problem, even after we left three years ago.

When we marched into Iraq in 2003 and took out Saddam Hussein, we created a dangerous vacuum in that part of the world. When democracy was finally introduced, we genuinely believed that Iraq would finally grow into a self-sufficient nation that could both govern and defend itself.

What we've witnessed instead was the installation of corrupt regime under Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, a Shiite who promptly refused to do what we had advised (and probably plead for) him to do: to establish an inclusive government that would also represent all of the nation's interests. Instead, al-Maliki began excluding Sunnis from key positions and even reportedly conducted systematic persecution.

Enter into this the Islamic State group, an organization so violent and extreme that even al-Qaida, from which ISIS sprang, wanted nothing to do with it. Its murderous, absolutist dogma has led to the mass slaughter of non-Sunnis Muslims, Christians and anyone else who came across their path. Well-funded and well-armed, ISIS began carving up Iraq and Syria to establish its own state.

Meanwhile, the Iraqi army virtually melted in the face of ISIS forces, leading to huge gains by the organization.

We must now return to a country from which we left in 2011 on poor terms. As Obama recounted Saturday, the U.S. left Iraq three years ago in large part because we were no longer wanted there. The Baghdad government refused to sign a security pact that would have protected U.S. troops from prosecution, and a large segment of the Iraqi population wanted us gone. Had we stayed anyway, we would have been seen as — and in fact would have become — occupiers.

Perhaps the lack of a U.S. presence in Iraq these last three years led to the ISIS crisis in the fact that we didn't have on-the-ground intelligence, as some critics have stated. But again, we were no longer wanted there, and forcing our presence would have likely led to civil unrest of another kind.

Or perhaps it was the creation of the vacuum 11 years ago that has truly created this upheaval. There is no doubt that Saddam was a murderous tyrant, but he kept his nation under iron-fisted control. That control is gone, and whatever was left in Iraq has failed to show the will to lead.

And so we are back in Iraq, fighting again (albeit without troops on the ground, at least so far) in a war we no longer want, in a land where we have sacrificed so much already. But there is no walking away, no matter how much we wish to do so.

kmh

## ON THIS DATE

### By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, August 12, the 224th day of 2014. There are 141 days left in the year.

**Today's Highlight in History:** On August 12, 1939, the classic MGM movie musical "The Wizard of Oz," starring Judy Garland, had its world premiere at the Strand Theater in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, three days before opening in Hollywood. (Oconomowoc was apparently chosen to test the film's appeal to Middle Americans.)

**On this date:** In 1813, Austria declared war on France.

In 1867, President Andrew Johnson sparked a move to impeach him as he defied Congress by suspending Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton.

In 1898, fighting in the Spanish-American War came to an end.

In 1902, International Harvester Co. was formed by a merger of McCormick Harvesting Machine Co., Deering Harvester Co. and several other manufacturers.

In 1912, comedy producer Mack Sennett founded the Keystone Pictures Studio in Edendale, Calif.

In 1914, Britain and France declared war on Austria-Hungary.

In 1937, President Franklin D. Roosevelt nominated Hugo Black to the U.S. Supreme Court.

In 1944, during World War II, Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., eldest son of Joseph and Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, was killed with his co-pilot when their explosives-laden Navy plane blew up over England.

In 1953, the Soviet Union conducted a secret test of its first hydrogen bomb.

In 1960, the first balloon communications satellite — the Echo 1 — was launched by the United States from Cape Canaveral.

In 1962, one day after launching Andrian Nikolayev into orbit, the Soviet Union also sent up cosmonaut Pavel Popovich; both men landed safely August 15.

In 1964, author Ian Fleming, 56, the creator of James Bond, died in Canterbury, Kent, England.

In 1978, Pope Paul VI, who had died August 6 at age 80, was buried in St. Peter's Basilica.

In 1985, the world's worst single-aircraft disaster occurred as a crippled Japan Air Lines Boeing 747 on a domestic flight crashed into a mountain, killing 520 people. (Four people survived.)

In 1988, the controversial movie "The Last Temptation of Christ," directed by Martin Scorsese, opened in nine cities despite objections by some who felt the film was sacrilegious.

In 1994, in baseball's eighth work stoppage since 1972, players went on strike rather than allow team owners

to limit their salaries. (The strike ended in April 1995.) Woodstock '94 opened in Saugerties, New York.

In 2003, Liberia's leading rebel movement agreed to lift its siege of the capital and vital port, allowing food to flow to hundreds of thousands of hungry people.

Ten years ago: In a stunning declaration, New Jersey Gov. James E. McGreevey announced his resignation and acknowledged that he'd had an extramarital affair with another man. The California Supreme Court voided nearly 4,000 same-sex marriages sanctioned in San Francisco between February 12 and March 11, 2004.

**Five years ago:** Sen. Arien Specter, D-Pa., heard a fresh chorus of taunts from opponents of health care reform at Penn State University; Specter said they were "not necessarily representative of America" but should be heard. Ehsanul Islam Sad-equee, a 23-year-old Georgia man, was convicted of aiding terrorist groups by sending videotapes of U.S. landmarks overseas and plotting to support "violent jihad" after a federal jury in Atlanta rejected his arguments that it was empty talk. (Sad-equee was sentenced to 17 years in prison.) Guitar virtuoso Les Paul died in White Plains, New York, at 94.

**One year ago:** James "Whitey" Bulger, the feared Boston mob boss who became one of the nation's most-wanted fugitives, was convicted in a string of 11 killings and dozens of other gangland crimes, many of them committed while he was said to be an FBI informant. (Bulger is now serving a life sentence in federal prison.)

**Today's Birthdays:** Former Sen. Dale Bumpers, D-Ark., is 89. Actor George Hamilton is 75. Actress Dana Ivey is 73. Actress Jennifer Warren is 73. Rock singer-musician Mark Knopfler (Dire Straits) is 65. Actor Jim Beaver is 64. Singer Kid Creole is 64. Jazz musician Pat Metheny is 60. Actor Sam J. Jones is 60. Actor Bruce Greenwood is 58. Country singer Danny Shirley is 58. Pop musician Roy Hay (Culture Club) is 53. Rapper Sir Mix-A-Lot is 51. Actor Peter Krause is 49. Actor Brent Sexton is 47. International Tennis Hall of Famer Pete Sampras is 43. Actor-comedian Michael Ian Black is 43. Actress Yvette Nicole Brown is 43. Actress Rebecca Gayheart is 43. Actor Casey Affleck is 39. Rock musician Bill Uechi (Save Ferris) is 39. Actress Maggie Lawson is 34. Actress Dominique Swain is 34. Actress Imani Hakim is 21.

**Thought for Today:** "If you would be a real seeker after truth, it is necessary that at least once in your life you doubt, as far as possible, all things." — Rene Descartes, French philosopher (1596-1650).

## FROM THE BIBLE

And He was teaching them and saying to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a den of robbers." Mark 11:17. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis



## The Rez Of The Story

# Where We Go From Here

BY VINCE TWO EAGLES

Hau Mitakuepi (Greetings My Relatives), As promised, here is part two of two in the interest of historical transparency and furthering the understanding that is needed between Indian and non-Indian people here in South Dakota and beyond.

To continue quoting Struck By The Ree:

"When Burleigh brought the goods the first time, he put the goods on the bank of the river; and there was one bale of fine goods with them, and Burleigh said the goods belonged to the Indians; and one of my young men came and told me about the bale of fine goods, and I went and examined it, and it was fine goods, and would have made fine breech-clouts; but we receive none of it, and [I] don't know what became of it. This was the second year Burleigh was there ...

"A steambot arrived with our goods, and the goods were put out; Burleigh said they were our goods, and they were marked for us; there were five boxes. There were some officers and soldiers there. The boxes remained there on the bank until the next day. At night somebody scratched the marks off and put on other marks. ... I think the way the white man treated us is worse than the wolves do. We have a way in the winter of putting our dead up on scaffolds up from the ground, but the soldiers cut down the scaffolds and cut off the hair of the dead, and if they had good teeth they pulled them out, and some of them cut off the heads of the dead and carried them away. ...

"Another time when General Sully came up he passed through the middle of our field, turned all his cattle and stock into our corn and destroyed the whole of it. ... The soldiers set fire to the prairie and burnt up four of our lodges and all there was in them, and three horses ...

"The soldiers are very drunken and come to our place — they have arms and guns; they run after our women and fire into our houses and lodges: one soldier came along and wanted one of our young men to drink, but he would not, and turned to go away, and the soldier shot at him. Before the sol-



Vince  
TWO EAGLES

diers came along we had good health; but once the soldiers came along they got to my squaws and want to sleep with them, and the squaws being hungry will sleep with them in order to get something to eat, and will get a bad disease, and then the squaws turn to their husbands and give them the bad disease ...

"I think if you come up to our agency you will laugh in the first place, and then be mad to see our storehouse in the same building with the trader's store. I want the store moved away a mile, so that it won't be so handy to our goods; I want you to have this changed. I hope my grandfather will see that the store is moved away from my warehouse, because the trader's store is under the floor where my goods are stored. I sometimes have bad dreams; I feel that there may be crack that my goods may fall through."

In 1858 we, (the Ihanktowan Dakota) the Yankton Sioux Tribe, were undeniably

compelled, illegally to enter into a treaty with the U.S. government that ceded most of eastern South Dakota. The treaty immediately opened up that territory for white settlement. The treaty also set aside 400,000 acres for the exclusive use of the Yankton people creating what is now commonly known as the Yankton Sioux Reservation.

Earlier, the Yankton Sioux people were party to the 1851 Ft. Laramie Treaty and was signed by Smutty Bear on behalf of the Tribe. Smutty Bear opposed the 1858 Yankton Treaty because he thought it would only bring more whites into our territory and therefore invite further aggression by non-Indian settlers and the U.S. military. It has been said that Struck By The Ree only signed the 1858 Treaty because he thought any resistance would be futile. The 1858 Treaty is considered by many Yankton people to be illegal because it was obtained under duress.

So where do we go from here? How can we who live in 2014 be able to stand up to the changes forced upon us? We totally understand that there is no way to change history but we can do something about what we do now to make things better.

And now you know the rez of the story.  
Doksha (Later) ...

## Leonard Pitts

# The So-Called 'War On Whites'

BY LEONARD PITTS JR.

Tribune Content Agency

At this point, you really have to wonder: Is it still news when a Republican says something asinine?

On the off chance it is, let us spend a few moments pondering the strange case of Alabama Rep. Mo Brooks, who said last week that the Democratic Party is waging a "War on Whites."

Yeah, he actually said that. You can look it up if you want.

Brooks was responding to radio talk show host Laura Ingraham, who had asked him to comment on a remark from *National Journal* columnist Ron Fournier to the effect that the GOP cannot continue to be competitive in national elections if it continues to alienate voters of color. This is a truth so self-evident as to have been adopted by the GOP itself in its "autopsy" report after the 2012 election.

Yet here is what Brooks said in response: "This is a part of the war on whites that is being launched by the Democratic Party. And the way in which they're launching this war is by claiming that whites hate everybody else. It's a part of the strategy that Barack Obama implemented in 2008, continued in 2012, where he divides us all on race, on sex, greed, envy, class warfare, all those kinds of things."

"A War on Whites." Yet it's President Obama who is guilty of racially inflammatory rhetoric? Brooks' words so alarmed Ingraham that she suggested his rhetoric was "a little out there." This woman belches fire on all things conservative; for her to suggest you've gone too far is like Charlie Sheen telling you to cut back on hookers and cigarettes.

But Brooks doubled down, repeating the claim in an interview with a website, AL.com: "What the Democrats are doing with their dividing America by race is they are waging a war on whites and I find that repugnant."

OK, so let's say the obvious first. There's something surreal and absurd about this lecture, coming as it does from a member of the party that invented the Southern strategy and birtherism and whose

voters were last seen standing at the border screaming at terrified Guatemalan kids.

But it's not the ridiculousness of Brooks' words that should be of greatest concern. You see, Fournier is right. If something does not arrest its present trajectory, the GOP seems destined to shrink into a regional party with appeal only to older white voters. It will be irrelevant in a nation where white voters will soon cease to be a majority — no group will be a majority — and appeals to racial and cultural resentments have less power to sway elections.

That should concern the GOP brain trust. It should concern us all. As a practical matter, this country has only two political parties; if one ceases to be competitive, we become a de facto single party system. That is not democracy. No ideology has a monopoly on good ideas. So America needs a healthy Republican Party.

Yet for every Rand Paul trying — albeit in a fumbling and deeply flawed manner — to reach constituencies the party has written off and driven off, or to engage on issues it has disregarded, there seem to be five Mo Brookses doubling down on the politics of resentment and fear.

His party needs to realize once and for all that that day is done. It is critical for the GOP to wean itself from the cowardly belief that simply to discuss race and culture, to acknowledge disparity in treatment and outcomes, to put forward ways of addressing those things, constitutes "playing the race card" or "race-baiting" or fighting a "war on whites."

That idea was always wrongheaded and dumb. Very soon it will become electorally untenable as well. So the GOP must learn to speak a language it has shunned to people it has ignored.

Because its biggest threat is not the Democratic Party but demographic reality. And right now, that reality is winning, hands down.

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](mailto:lpitts@miamiherald.com).

## YOUR LETTERS

### Greeting Tim Johnson

Bernie Hunhoff, Yankton

Tim Johnson has been watching over the greater Yankton-Vermillion area since he was first elected to the state Legislature in 1978. His responsibilities expanded dramatically as he became an 18-year United States senator, but he always kept close watch on home, and our area communities are better because of his work on his behalf.

Sen. Johnson is now serving the final few months of his political career, and now he's coming home to southeast South Dakota to say some goodbyes. He'll be at the Yankton Public Library at 4 p.m. today (Tuesday) for a short program. Please stop by to say hello if you can. I know he would appreciate seeing you.

### Online Opinion

The results of the most recent Internet poll on the *Press & Dakotan's* Web site are as follows:

#### LATEST RESULTS:

Do you support cutting the number of deer licenses in South Dakota in order to rebuild population numbers?  
Yes .....55%  
No .....38%  
Not sure .....7%  
TOTAL VOTES CAST .....294  
*The Press & Dakotan's* Internet poll is not a scientific survey and reflects the opinions only of those who choose to participate. The results should not be construed as an accurate representation or scientific measurement of public opinion.

#### CURRENT QUESTION:

Do you support renewing our military involvement in Iraq?

To vote in the *Press & Dakotan's* Internet poll, log on to our website at [www.yankton.net](http://www.yankton.net).