



THE PRESS & DAKOTAN

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OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

NRA Delivers An Unhinged Response

SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS, (Dec. 23): The ideas spouted by National Rifle Association chief Wayne LaPierre in his disturbing statement Friday morning were so bizarre, so unhinged from reality, that the organization's leadership cannot be considered serious participants in the national discussion over gun rights.

An armed guard, possibly a volunteer, in every school? Where do we even begin?

This idea is an insult to Americans hoping the NRA would keep its promise to offer a "meaningful" contribution to the conversation in the wake of the slaughter of 27 people in Newtown.

"The only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun," LaPierre said. We have 300 million guns in this country. If what LaPierre said were true, and more guns equaled less danger, there would be no gun violence in this country. Nancy Lanza was armed to the teeth, and her own weapons were used to murder her.

Both Columbine and Virginia Tech had armed guards — as many as a third of public secondary schools already do, though not necessarily for the purpose of stopping gun violence — and they did no good. We'd have to have 10, or 50 — heck, why not 100? — officers in each school to make a difference. And we know it can be difficult for even a well-trained police officer to shoot and kill an armed suspect. Often, innocent bystanders are hurt; in August, nine people were hit by crossfire when New York police tried to stop a gunman outside the Empire State Building.

LaPierre said we arm Secret Service agents and soldiers, so why not guards in every school, too? The man apparently has no understanding of the difference between a war zone and a school filled with young children and dedicated to teaching them how to live productively in the world.

And maybe that's the point. Maybe he genuinely believes the real problem is that the country is a war zone, and too few Americans share that world view. Maybe school uniforms should include bulletproof vests, and we ought to add target shooting to our standardized testing regime, too.

We bet that the vast majority of Americans don't see things that way, and never will. They don't want their children to live in a world ruled by fear and military-grade weaponry.

If it wasn't clear already, Friday's speech made the point extraordinarily well: The NRA is not interested in protecting Americans from gun violence; it has dictated gun policy in this nation for decades, and look at the results. The NRA is, first and foremost, dedicated to selling guns. Everything this wretched group's leaders say must be viewed through that lens.

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The Rez Of The Story

Prayers For Newtown

BY VINCE TWO EAGLES

Hau Mitakuyepi (Greetings My Relatives),
The former president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, once said, "Safety and security don't just happen, they are the result of collective consensus and public investment. We owe our children, the most vulnerable citizens in our society, a life free of violence and fear."

Newtown, Conn.'s, Sandy Hook Elementary School lost 20 students and six teachers in one swift act of unspeakable carnage on Dec. 14, 2012. What is hard for anyone to completely comprehend is the slaughter of these small children in such a manner. And of course, all the issues surrounding the possible contribution of violent video games, lack of adequate gun control, identifying individuals with mental illness and the like, have suddenly filled the media with the never-ending debate among pundits who analyze and subsequently comment on every related topic imaginable.

Every day, the news reports have been focused on post-election fall-out for both political parties and the looming so-called "fiscal cliff." The mass murder of those small children and their teachers has, understandably, temporarily derailed our national focus on these other issues and has turned our attention to deal not only with the grief issues of Newtown but also of the entire nation. We need to support these grieving parents and surviving family members of the teachers who gave their lives heroically protecting the children left in their charge.

The times are calling us to be more vigilant about how we can ensure, as much as possible, the security of our educational systems. If it means more budget considerations by our tribal, state and federal governments to our school budgets, then so be it — school security is a priority. Clearly, this great tragedy must serve as a wake-up call for parents, law enforcement, lawmakers, the helping professionals and community members to come together and work out solutions to

the challenges we now face. Let's not wait for another slaughter to take place; we're better than that.

I know I speak for many in Indian country when I say that we extend our strong-felt prayers that call for the much needed comfort and healing of those closest to the great tragedy in Newtown.

On a personal level, I wish to share the words of Henri Nouwen, the Dutch writer, who once wrote: "When we honestly ask ourselves which person in our lives means the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving advice, solutions or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a warm and tender hand. The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in our hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing, not curing, not healing, and face with us the reality of our powerlessness, that is a friend who cares."

Let's all be a real friend to these folks in Connecticut. In our Dakotah culture, we carry the weight of our loss for one whole year. During this time, we are reminded to keep in good relationship with all things. It is not a time to be taking up drinking as a means to cope with our loss. It is not a time to be involved in gossiping about our neighbors or relatives, to be gambling excessively or to take up a myriad of other bad habits and disagreeable ways. We honor the one or ones who make their journey to the other world in this way. We want to carry on the best of ourselves for the rest of our lives. We want to draw close as a family and reflect on the importance of maintaining that family so that we see each other through the good times and the bad.

Helen Keller once said, "Walking with a friend in the dark is better than walking alone in the light." *Hechetu-ado!* (And so it is!)

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



Vince
TWO EAGLES

Looking Through A Lens, Lightly

BY KATHLEEN PARKER

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WASHINGTON — In today's world of social media, where everyone's every little thing is on display, it is sometimes difficult to recall a time when exhibitionism wasn't ubiquitous and was, in fact, not admired.

Such are the inevitable thoughts upon perusing Kitty Kelley's lovely new book — yes, lovely — about John F. Kennedy as seen through the eyes, or more accurately, the lens of her friend, photojournalist Stanley Tretick.

Kelley, notorious for her unauthorized biographies of such luminaries as Jackie Kennedy Onassis, Frank Sinatra and more recently Oprah, narrates the book, which is essentially a photo album filled with about 200 images, including many iconic shots (John-John under his father's desk), as well as many never before seen. The narrative provides just enough fresh information to justify yet another book about JFK.

Kelley inherited the photos, as well as memos and keepsakes, that Tretick kept in a trunk and left to her upon his death in 1999. Tretick once told Kelley playfully that the trunk was filled with nude photos. Instead, she found a treasure trove.

Kelley's book is thus a story with many layers: Her own friendship with Tretick; his with the Kennedys; the Kennedys among themselves. Tretick's photographs and notes provide a wider angle through which to glimpse the president and first lady, about whom we already know so much.

Is there anything left to know about JFK?

A picture is worth a thousand words, we have heard a thousand times, but some tell more than others. And sometimes the picture not taken tells us even more.

These would include photos Kennedy specifically asked Tretick not to shoot. Not that Tretick always acquiesced but the relationship between the president and the photographer seems to have been one of mutual respect.

A photographer is perfectly positioned to reveal truths beyond the camera. He is essentially an authorized peeping Tom. Unlike the paparazzi who steals intimacy with a telescopic lens, the authorized photographer is invited to a most-intimate gathering.

Part of what one discovers, or rediscovers, about Kennedy upon reading Tretick's notes is that the man irrevocably associated with womanizing (thanks in part to Kelley's own expose in "Jackie Oh!") was in most other ways a class act — humble, authentic, dignified and un-

interested in being an object of adulation.

How refreshing and, these days, how rare.

In one memo Kelley fished from the trunk, he described Kennedy as "extremely polite, great sense of humor, quick as a rapier on the uptake, hard to top, cannot stand posing for pictures, expresses displeasure if he knows you caught him off guard in a photo that might not be to his liking ... absolutely rebels at any photo that shows him eating or drinking."

Kennedy also hated being photographed in hats because he felt corny and silly. Among more-contemporary politicians, President Obama seems to have harnessed this lesson better than most. Memorable in the annals of unfortunate headwear was, of course, then-Gov. Michael Dukakis, whose fate as a presidential candidate in 1988 may have been sealed by a photo of him wearing a military helmet and taking a spin in a tank.

Kennedy also objected to public displays of affection, which was commonly understood to be, well, common. Only people bereft of education and what used to be known as man-

ners displayed affection in public. Whose business are one's emotions, anyway? Ah. But they're everyone's today. We can hardly get through an hour without expressing to online "friends," otherwise known as virtual strangers, our every waking experience, from what food we've consumed to who we spotted across the restaurant.

No one understood the value of image better than Kennedy, who defeated Richard Nixon in 1960 by a mere 100,000 votes out of 68 million cast, in part because he was surprisingly telegenic compared to the sweat-soaked Nixon. Even so — and impressively in our age of photo-ops and endless spin — Kennedy wanted nothing captured on camera that wasn't real. If it didn't happen, he wouldn't pose and pretend that it had.

Again, refreshing and rare.

There's no telling how Kennedy would have navigated our 24/7 media world, in which everyone with a phone is a photographer, and respect for personal space is nonexistent. As we ponder these what-ifs, one is grateful that there was once a Camelot, if only in America's idea of itself, so beautifully captured by a remarkable photographer and given permanence by Kelley, who has a sweet side after all.

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Kathleen
PARKER

YOUR LETTERS

Thank You!

Nancy Trail, Yankton

The Yankton Swim Team hosted more than 200 swimmers and their coaches and families at the Summit Activities Center on Saturday, Dec. 15. It was a wonderful swim meet with lots of volunteers working to make it possible.

We would like to thank Walmart, HyVee and Yesterday's for their very generous donations! We would also like to thank the City of Yankton and the staff of the Summit Center for their dedication to Yankton Swim Team. A special Thank You to Roy Wilcox Insurance for supporting our kids as well. We have a very fun and dedicated group of swimmers and parents.

ONLINE OPINION

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

LATEST RESULTS:

Should South Dakota allow school personnel to carry firearms while in school?
Yes 49%
No 47%
Not sure 4%
TOTAL VOTES CAST 686

The Press & Dakotan 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:

Would you support legalizing marijuana for recreational use?

To vote in the *Press & Dakotan's* Internet poll, log on to our website at www.yankton.net.

TODAY IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, Dec. 26, the 361st day of 2012. There are five days left in the year. The seven-day African-American holiday Kwanzaa begins today. This is Boxing Day.

Today's Highlight in History: On Dec. 26, 1972, the 33rd president of the United States, Harry S. Truman, died in Kansas City, Mo., at age 88.

On this date: In 1776, the British suffered a major defeat in the Battle of Trenton during the Revolutionary War.

In 1799, former President George Washington was eulogized by Col. Henry Lee as "first in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

In 1862, 38 Santee Sioux Indians were hanged in Mankato, Minn., for their roles in an uprising that had claimed the lives of hundreds of white settlers. The Civil War Battle of Chickasaw Bayou, resulting in a Confederate victory, began in Mississippi.

In 1908, Jack Johnson became the first African-American boxer to win the world heavyweight championship as he defeated Canadian Tommy Burns in Sydney, Australia.

In 1910, the London Palladium, Britain's famous variety theater, first opened.

In 1941, during World War II, Winston Churchill became the first British prime minister to address a joint meeting of the U.S. Congress.

In 1944, during the World War II Battle of the Bulge, the embattled U.S. 101st Airborne Division in Bastogne, Belgium, was relieved by units of the 4th Armored Division.

In 1966, Kwanzaa was first celebrated. In 1980, Iranian television footage was broadcast in the United States, showing a dozen of the American hostages sending messages to their families.

In 1996, 6-year-old beauty queen Jon-Benet Ramsey was found beaten and strangled in the basement of her family's home in Boulder, Colo. (To date, the slaying remains unsolved.)

In 2004, some 230,000 people, mostly in southern Asia, were killed by a tsunami triggered by the world's most powerful earthquake in 40 years beneath the Indian Ocean.

In 2006, former President Gerald R. Ford died in Rancho Mirage, Calif., at age 93.

Ten years ago: It was announced that West Virginia resident Jack Whittaker Jr. had won the \$314.9 million Powerball lottery jackpot, at that time a record prize. Israeli soldiers killed seven Palestinians in West Bank raids and reimposed a curfew

on Bethlehem after briefly withdrawing over Christmas.

Five years ago: Six people were found dead at a rural property east of Seattle; the property owners' daughter and her boyfriend were arrested. (Michele Anderson and Joseph McEnroe face capital murder charges in the shootings of three generations of Anderson's family.) Joe Dolan, one of Ireland's first pop music stars, died in suburban Dublin at age 68.

One year ago: Dr. Luis Bonilla, a heart surgeon from a Mayo Clinic in Florida flying across the northern corner of the state to retrieve a heart for transplant, was killed with two other people when their helicopter crashed. A missing 9-year-old Indiana girl, Aliahna Maroney-Lemmon, was found dead, and the family friend who'd been watching her was charged with murder. (Michael Plumadore, who confessed to fatally bludgeoning and dismembering Aliahna, was later sentenced to life in prison.) Drew Brees set the NFL record for yards passing in a season, breaking a mark that Dan Marino had held since 1984, and the New Orleans Saints clinched the NFC South title with a 45-16 victory over the Atlanta Falcons.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Donald Moffat is 82. Actor Carroll Spinney (Big Bird on TV's "Sesame Street") is 79. Rhythm-and-blues singer Abdul "Duke" Fakir (The Four Tops) is 77. Record producer Phil Spector is 73. "America's Most Wanted" host John Walsh is 67. Country musician Bob Carpenter (The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band) is 66. Baseball Hall of Fame catcher Carlton Fisk is 65. Retired MLB All-Star Chris Chambliss is 64. Baseball Hall of Famer Ozzie Smith is 58. Former Sen. Evan Bayh, D-Ind., is 57. Humorist David Sedaris is 56. Rock musician James Kottak (The Scorpions) is 50. Country musician Brian Westrum (Sons of the Desert) is 50. Rock musician Lars Ulrich (Metallica) is 49. Actress Nadia Dajani is 47. Rock musician J is 45. Country singer Audrey Wiggins is 45. Rock musician Peter Klett (Candlebox) is 43. Rock singer James Mercer (The Shins; Flake) is 42. Actor-Singer Jared Leto is 41. Rock singer Chris Daughtry is 33. Actress Beth Behrs (TV: "2 Broke Girls") is 27. Actress Eden Sher is 21. Actor Zach Mills is 17.

Thought for Today: "The people can never understand why the President does not 'em behave. Well all the President is, is a glorified public relations man who spends his time flattering, kissing and kicking people to get them to do what they are supposed to do anyway." — President Harry S. Truman (1884-1972).

FROM THE BIBLE

And the people believed; and when they heard that the LORD had visited the people of Israel and that He had seen their affliction, they bowed their heads and worshipped. Exodus 4:31. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis