

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 Dakotan established June 6, 1861. Yankton Daily Press and Dakotan established April 26, 1875.
Postmaster: Send address changes to Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan, 319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078.

MEMBERSHIPS
The Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan is a member of the Associated 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.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES*
(Payable in advance)
CARRIER DELIVERY
1-month.....\$12.09
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6 months.....\$72.53
1-year.....\$133.09
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(where available)
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OPINION

Climate Conference Seeks A Solution

As this is being written, there is optimistic talk that a deal can be struck at the United Nations climate conference in Paris, which began Sunday.

Oddly enough, part of the reason for the optimism is terrorism.

According to a BBC report, many observers believe that the recent terror attacks in Paris have bolstered the prospect of reaching a deal limiting carbon emissions. There are scheduled to be more heads of state in attendance — at press time, 147 — than there were in the Copenhagen conference in 2009, which fell apart spectacularly; they will be there as an “expression of solidarity” with the French, who are still reeling and responding from the attacks.

So, that is at least one positive note that heads into this conference, known as COP21.

There is also the fact that a broad opinion is forming in the international community that something must be done to address the issue. Some nations are already feeling the impact of climate change with rising sea levels. And predictions of what could come, if even considered in moderation, are truly bleak. (For instance, it’s believed that climate change could ultimately displace at least 200 million people, which would create a long-term refugee issue unlike anything ever faced by mankind.)

Thus, there is a real momentum heading into COP21. But there are also numerous differences present and hard decisions looming, which is an even bigger reason for the lack of needed progress.

One major difference is the issue of placing a limit on carbon emissions, which may already be penciled in as one of the potential failures of the conference. This notion, proposed by scientists, would put a cap on total greenhouse gases produced in the future because there is a limited amount of carbon that the atmosphere can still absorb. But the topic is not scheduled to be a major point of discussion at COP21, in part because it’s a political tough sell, especially in the U.S.

But it goes beyond politics. As the *New York Times* pointed out: “Wrestling with a (carbon) budget would, for instance, throw into stark relief the global inequities at the heart of the climate crisis. And it would underscore just how big the problem really is, how costly the delay in tackling it has been and how inadequate the plans being discussed in Paris are for limiting the risks.”

Such a budget would also mean that there would be carbon-based energy sources — that includes oil and coal — that would have to be left in the ground and unused. You can already hear the economic cries of protest over that prospect.

There are myriad differences of opinion on this issue, even among those people and experts who agree that climate change is a pressing matter that must be addressed now. But these different opinions all happen to live on the same planet — and one broad solution must eventually be embraced.

Paris is not the final answer on this issue by any means. But it can be a step forward if enough common ground can be found for a foundation. And that’s what the world will be watching for during the next two weeks.

kmh

ONLINE OPINION

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

LATEST RESULTS:

Do you think individuals on the U.S. terrorist watch list should be prohibited from purchasing firearms?
Yes.....94%
No.....4%
Not sure.....2%
TOTAL VOTES CAST.....371

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:

Do you think it's a mistake to leave U.S. troops in Afghanistan?
To cast your vote in the PRESS & DAKOTAN'S Internet poll, log on to our website at www.yankton.net.

IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press
Today is Tuesday, Dec. 1, the 335th day of 2015. There are 30 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Dec. 1, 1955, Rosa Parks, a black seamstress, was arrested after refusing to give up her seat to a white man on a Montgomery, Alabama, city bus; the incident sparked a year-long boycott of the buses by blacks.

On this date: In 1824, the presidential election was turned over to the U.S. House of Representatives when a deadlock developed between John Quincy Adams, Andrew Jackson, William H. Crawford and Henry Clay. Adams ended up the winner.

In 1860, the Charles Dickens novel “Great Expectations” was first published in weekly serial form.

In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln sent his Second Annual Message to Congress, in which he called for the abolition of slavery, and went on to say, “Fellow citizens, we cannot escape history. We of this Congress and this administration will be remembered in spite of ourselves.”

In 1921, the Navy flew the first non-rigid dirigible to use helium; the C-7 traveled from Hampton Roads, Virginia, to Washington, D.C.

In 1934, Soviet communist official Sergei M. Kirov, an associate of Josef Stalin, was assassinated in Leningrad, resulting in a massive purge.

In 1941, Japan's Emperor Hirohito approved waging war against the United States, Britain and the Netherlands after his government rejected U.S. demands contained in the Hull Note.

In 1942, nationwide gasoline rationing went into effect in the United States.

In 1965, an airlift of refugees from Cuba to the United States began in which thousands of Cubans were allowed to leave their homeland.

In 1969, the U.S. government held its first draft lottery since World War II.

In 1973, David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first prime minister, died in Tel Aviv at age 87.

In 1989, Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev met with Pope John Paul II at the Vatican.

In 1990, British and French workers digging the Channel Tunnel between their countries finally met after knocking out a passage in a service tunnel.

Ten years ago: A roadside bomb killed 10 U.S. Marines near Fallujah, Iraq. South Africa's highest court ruled in favor of gay marriage. A jury in Sarasota, Florida, recommended the death sentence for Joseph Smith, the killer of 11-year-old

Charlie Brucia. A dog and its owner found the bodies of Sarah and Philip Gehring, two children who'd been fatally shot by their father and buried in rural Ohio. (Manuel Gehring had confessed to the slayings but strangled himself in prison before he could be tried.)

Five years ago: President Barack Obama's bipartisan deficit commission unveiled its recommendations including lower income taxes, fewer tax breaks and higher age for retirement benefits (however, the panel failed to advance the package to Congress two days later by a vote of 11 in favor, 7 against, falling short of the 14 votes needed). PGA players meeting in Orlando, Florida, voted to allow transgender players to compete on tour.

One year ago: President Barack Obama, after meeting with mayors, civil rights leaders and law enforcement officials at the White House, asked federal agencies for concrete recommendations to ensure the U.S. wasn't building a “militarized culture” within police departments.

Today's Birthdays: Former CIA director Stansfield Turner is 92. Singer Billy Paul is 80. Actor-director Woody Allen is 80. World Golf Hall of Famer Lee Trevino is 76. Singer Dianne Lennon (The Lennon Sisters) is 76. Country musician Casey Van Beek (The Tractors) is 73. Television producer David Salzman is 72. Rock singer-musician Eric Bloom (Blue Oyster Cult) is 71. Rock musician John Densmore (The Doors) is 71. Actress-singer Bette Midler is 70. Singer Gilbert O'Sullivan is 69. Former child actor Keith Thibodeaux (TV: “I Love Lucy”) is 65. Actor Treat Williams is 64. Country singer Kim Richey is 59. Actress Charlene Tilton is 57. Actress-model Carol Alt is 55. Actor Jeremy Northam is 54. Actress Katherine LaNasa is 49. Producer-director Andrew Adamson is 49. Actor Nestor Carbonell is 48. Actress Golden Brooks is 45. Actress-comedian Sarah Silverman is 45. Actor Ron Melendez is 43. Contemporary Christian singer Bart Millard is 43. Actor-writer-producer David Hornsby is 40. Singer Sarah Masen is 40. Rock musician Brad Delsion (Linkin Park) is 38. Actor Nate Torrence is 38. Rock/Christian music singer-songwriter Mat Kearney is 37. Rock musician Mika Fineo (Filter) is 34. Actor Charles Michael Davis is 31. R&B singer Janelle Monae is 30. Actress Ashley Monique Clark is 27. Actress Zoe Kravitz is 27. Pop singer Nico Sereba (Nico & Vinz) is 25. Actor Jackson Nicoll is 12.

Thought for Today: “I got a simple rule about everybody. If you don't treat me right, shame on you.” — Louis Armstrong, American jazz musician (1900-1971).

FROM THE BIBLE

[Elisha] said, “Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” 2 Kings 6:16. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.



The Rez Of The Story

The Boarding School Experience

BY VINCE TWO EAGLES

Hau Mitakuepi (greetings my relatives),
Over the next three weeks, I will be writing about one of the most important eras of our history as Native Peoples — the boarding school experience of many Native people. This story is important, because nothing else has impacted our lives decades later more than being forced to put our children in these schools during our most formative years. Telling this story, albeit an encore, will perhaps offer more clarity — after all, clarity equals understanding.

So here is part one of “The Boarding School Experience” taken in large part from the film, “Our Spirits Don't Speak English” from the “Circle of Life” series by Rich-Heape Films.

In a ceremony which acknowledged the 175th anniversary of the establishment of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in September of 2000, the following statements by Kevin Gover, Assistant Secretary Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, were put into the record:

“In March of 1824, President James Monroe established the Office of Indian Affairs in the Department of War. Its mission was to conduct the nation's business with regard to Indian Affairs. We have come together today to mark the first 175 years of the institution now known as the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

“It is appropriate that we do so in the first year of a new century and a new millennium, a time when our leaders are reflecting on what lies ahead and preparing for those challenges. Before looking ahead, though, this institution must first look back and reflect on what it has wrought and, by doing so, come to know that this is no occasion for celebration; rather it is time for reflection and contemplation, a time for sorrowful truths to be spoken, a time for contrition.

“We must first reconcile ourselves to the fact that the works of this agency have at various times profoundly harmed the communities it was meant to serve. From the very beginning, the Office of Indian Affairs was an instrument by which the United States enforced its ambition against the Indian nations and Indian people who stood in its path. ... As the nation looked to the west for more land, this agency participated the ethnic cleansing that befell western tribes. War necessarily begets tragedy; the war for the West was no exception. Yet in these more enlightened times, it must be acknowledged that the deliberate spread of disease, the decimation of the mighty bison herds, the use of poison alcohol to destroy mind and body, the cowardly killing of women and children made for tragedy on a scale so ghastly that it cannot be dismissed as merely the inevitable consequence of the clash of competing ways of life.

“This agency and the good people in it failed in the mission to prevent the devastation. And so great nations of patriot warriors fell. We will never push aside the memory of unnecessary and violent death at places such as Sand Creek, the banks of the Washita River, and Wounded Knee.

“Nor did the consequences of war have to include the futile and destructive efforts to annihilate Indian cultures. After the devastation of tribal economies and the deliberate creation of tribal dependence on the services provided by this agency, this agency set out to destroy all things Indian.



Vince TWO EAGLES

“This agency forbade the speaking of Indian languages, prohibited the conduct of traditional religious activities, outlawed traditional government, and made Indian people ashamed of who they were. Worst of all, the Bureau of Indian Affairs committed these acts against children entrusted to its boarding schools, brutalizing them emotionally, psychologically, physically, and spiritually. Even in this era of self-determination, when the Bureau of Indian Affairs is at long last serving as an advocate for Indian people in an atmosphere of mutual respect, the legacy of these misdeeds haunts us. The trauma of shame, fear and anger has passed from one generation to the next, and manifests itself in the rampant alcoholism, drug abuse, and domestic violence that plague Indian country. Many of our people live lives of unrelenting tragedy as Indian families suffer the ruin of lives by alcoholism, suicides made of shame and despair, and violent death at the hands of one another. So many of the maladies suffered today in Indian country result from the failures of this agency. Poverty, ignorance, and disease have been the product of this agency's work.

“And so today I stand before you as the leader of an institution that in the past has committed acts so terrible that they infect, diminish, and destroy the lives of Indian people decades later, generations later. ... These wrongs must be acknowledged if the healing is to begin.

“... Never again will this agency stand silent when hate and violence are committed against Indians. Never again will we allow policy to proceed from the assumption that Indians possess less human genius than other races. Never again will we be complicit in the theft of property. Never again will we appoint false leaders who serve purposes other than those of the tribes. Never again will we allow unflattering and stereotypical images of Indian people to deface the halls of government or lead the American people to shallow and ignorant beliefs about Indians. Never again will we attack your religions, your languages your rituals, or any of your tribal ways. Never again will we seize your children, nor teach them to be ashamed of who they are. Never again.

“We cannot yet ask your forgiveness, not while the burdens of this agency's history weigh so heavily on tribal communities. What we do ask is that, together, we allow the healing to begin. As you return to your homes, and as you talk with your people, please tell them that the time of dying is at its end. Tell your children that the time of shame and fear is over. Tell your young men and women to replace their anger with hope and love for their people. Together, we must wipe the tears of seven generations. Together, we must allow our broken hearts to mend. Together, we will face a challenging world with confidence and trust. Together, let us resolve that when our future leaders gather to discuss the history of this institution, it will be time to celebrate the rebirth of joy, freedom, and progress for the Indian Nations. The Bureau of Indian Affairs was born in 1824 in a time of war on Indian people. May it live in the year 2000 and beyond as an instrument of their prosperity.”

Now that the table is set, so to speak, next week I will begin the journey of “The Boarding School Experience.”
Doksha (later) ...

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

When Will We Learn?

Harry Baltzer, Huron

Our Department of Defense (formerly called The War Department) recently awarded a \$55 billion contract to the military contractor Northrup Grummand to build a new generation attack aircraft (the LRS B) to become fully operational in 2025. It is supposed to be a “stealth” machine with the ability to be flown by remote control — like a drone.

Northrup Grummand's previous contract which was the B-2 bomber ended up costing \$1.5 billion each, and no doubt by the time the LRS-B rolls off the assembly line in 2025, with inevitable cost overruns, this machining will cost that much too.

Preliminary drawings of the sleek-looking airplane seem designed to evoke pride and I'm

sure the Air Force brass will be busting their buttons. And no doubt Navy admirals, from a sense of jealousy, will demand a similar new machine, built upon distinctive lines so they can bust their buttons as well.

In the meantime, we ordinary citizens will have to get along on skimpy education, Social Security and health-care budgets.

Our forte has been and will always be our military prowess, making it unnecessary to display humility or due deference to other nations' cultural differences. We, like the Russians, can display our military might at national celebrations like Memorial Day and the Fourth of July. Hence any “patriotic” American who takes exception to such displays of pride is made to feel like some kind of wimp.

“When Will We Ever Learn?”

ABOUT THIS PAGE

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