

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.

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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
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**SUBSCRIPTION
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CARRIER DELIVERY
1-month.....\$12.09
3 months.....\$36.27
6 months.....\$72.53
1-year.....\$133.09

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OPINION

Why Trump Hasn't Gone 'Too Far'

Donald Trump has gone too far ... again.
Of course, the final word of that sentence is the only one that really matters. It indicates that Trump's penchant for uttering preposterous, incendiary things that would doom any other candidate has not hurt him much at all. In fact, it's only helped him build a fired-up, ticked-off constituency.

His latest foray into the Twilight Zone occurred Monday when the bellicose billionaire and Republican presidential frontrunner called for barring Muslim immigrants from entering the United States until "we can" figure out what is going on." This comes in the wake of last week's mass shooting in California by two Muslims — one of whom was an immigrant — who appear to have been "radicalized" by jihadist philosophy. The slaughter has been branded a terrorist attack and has further heightened anti-Muslim tensions across the country.

The establishment reaction to Trump's proposal was much like its reaction to other Trump offerings. The White House, the Democratic presidential candidates and Trump's own GOP rivals vigorously condemned it. But his supporters mostly loved it, and while we have yet to gauge the full fallout of this latest utterance, past experience suggests it will only boost his popularity. He is, yet again, what everyone is talking about right now, which is clearly part of his campaign strategy.

(To be fair, his statement on Muslims wasn't wholly surprising or entirely original. Two weeks ago, fellow GOP candidates Jeb Bush and Ted Cruz were declaring that the U.S. should admit only "Christian" refugees, which would seem to be a roundabout way of getting at the same thing. And on Tuesday, candidate Rand Paul noted he has previously proposed halting immigration from the Middle East in general, due to the dangers in that area.)

These days, Trump is called a lot of names — the list is long and harsh, and in some cases unprintable here — but he's not stupid.

What he's calling for with Muslim immigrants is impractical and perhaps illegal. That whole First Amendment thing about freedom of religion inconveniently stands in the way.

But Trump is really playing to people's deepest fears. He's giving loud voice to their anxieties, which at the moment are tethered to Muslims, terrorism and whatever faceless things may be lurking in the seemingly safe corners of our society. His solutions are usually vague but they're as direct as a sledgehammer, especially compared to the agonizingly complicated, cautious realm of international diplomacy. That directness makes good sense to some people. His ideas are also often unrealistic, ugly, mean-spirited and antithetical to the soul of this country, but they effectively prey on fear and harvest supporters.

Meanwhile, the rest of us roll our eyes and declare that he's "gone too far."

Again.
The truth is, Trump isn't going "too far" at all if enough people are right there with him, propping up his scorched-earth presidential quest and buying his mantra that he'll "make America great again," apparently by stripping away some of the most basic ideas that made this nation great in the first place.

As long as his angry base fuels him and has his back, Trump will continue to pound at boundaries while he panders for support. At the moment, fear, frustration, paranoia and belligerence seem to be his most effective allies.

kmh

ABOUT THIS PAGE

The View page provides a forum for open discussion of issues and interests affecting our readers. Initialed editorials represent the opinion of the writer, but not necessarily that of the PRESS & DAKOTAN. Bynlined columns represent the view of the author. We welcome letters on current topics. Questions regarding the Views page should be directed to Kelly Hertz at kelly.hertz@yankton.net/.

IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, Dec. 9, the 343rd day of 2015. There are 22 days left in the year.

Today's Highlights in History: On Dec. 9, 1965, Nikolai V. Podgorny replaced Anastas I. Mikoyan as chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, a job he would hold for almost 12 years. "A Charlie Brown Christmas," the first animated TV special featuring characters from the "Peanuts" comic strip by Charles M. Schulz, was first broadcast on CBS. The James Bond film "Thunderball," starring Sean Connery, had its world premiere in Tokyo.

On this date: In 1608, English poet John Milton was born in London.

In 1854, Alfred, Lord Tennyson's famous poem, "The Charge of the Light Brigade," was published in England.

In 1911, an explosion inside the Cross Mountain coal mine near Briceville, Tennessee, killed 84 workers. (Five were rescued.)

In 1935, the Downtown Athletic Club of New York honored college football player Jay Benvenger of the University of Chicago with the DAC Trophy, which later became known as the Heisman Trophy.

In 1940, British troops opened their first major offensive in North Africa during World War II.

In 1958, the anti-communist John Birch Society was formed in Indianapolis.

In 1962, the Petrified Forest in Arizona was designated a national park.

In 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed a \$2.3 billion seasonal loan-authorization that officials of New York City and State said would prevent a city default.

In 1984, the 5-day-old hijacking of a Kuwaiti jetliner that claimed the lives of two Americans ended as Iranian security men seized control of the plane, which was parked at Tehran airport.

In 1987, the first Palestinian intefadeh, or uprising, began as riots broke out in Gaza and spread to the West Bank, triggering a strong Israeli response.

In 1992, Britain's Prince Charles and Princess Diana announced their separation. (The couple's divorce became final Aug. 28, 1996.)

In 1995, Congressman Kweisi Mfume was chosen to become the new head of the NAACP.

Ten years ago: President George W. Bush, addressing a political fundraiser in Minnesota, said the United States would wage an unrelenting battle in Iraq to protect Americans at home. A congressional report said the federal government's medical response to Hurricane Katrina was bungled by a lack of supplies and poor communication.

Five years ago: In Britain's worst political violence in years, student protesters rained sticks and rocks on riot police, vandalized government buildings and attacked a car carrying Prince Charles and his wife, Camilla, after lawmakers ap-

proved a controversial hike in university tuition fees. Actor Wesley Snipes began serving a three-year sentence at a federal prison in Pennsylvania for failure to file income tax returns. Florida's Clemency Board pardoned Jim Morrison for indecent exposure and profanity charges stemming from a Doors concert in 1969. John du Pont, the chemical fortune heir who killed Olympic gold medal wrestler David Schultz in 1996, died in prison at age 72.

One year ago: U.S. Senate investigators concluded the United States had brutalized scores of terror suspects with interrogation tactics that turned secret CIA prisons into chambers of suffering and did nothing to make Americans safer after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. Britain's Prince William and his wife, Kate, paid a solemn, rain-drenched visit to the National Sept. 11 Memorial and Museum as they wrapped up their first visit to New York. Mary Ann Mobley Collins, 77, a former Miss America and actress, died in Beverly Hills, California.

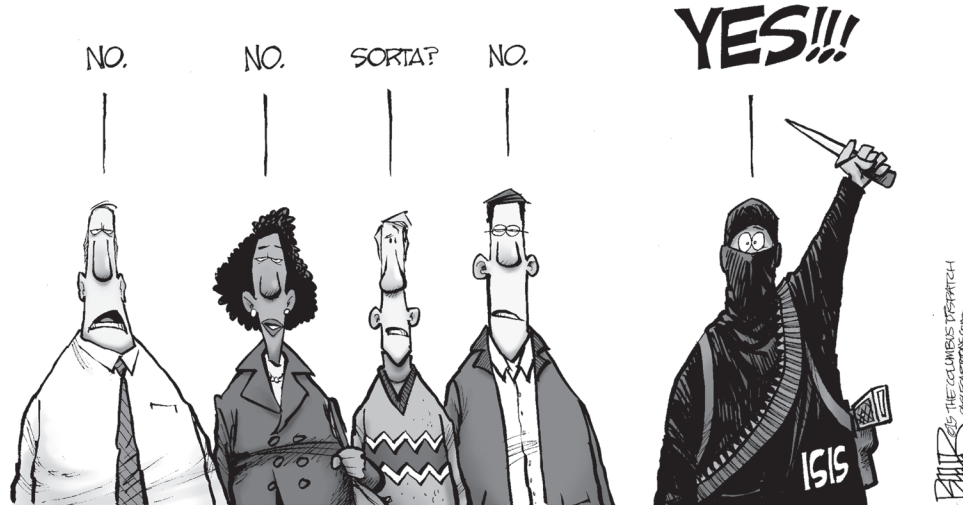
Today's Birthdays: Actor Kirk Douglas is 99. Actor-writer Buck Henry is 85. Actress Dame Judi Dench is 81. Actor Beau Bridges is 74. Jazz singer-musician Dan Hicks is 74. Football Hall-of-Famer Dick Butkus is 73. Comedian-songwriter Neil Innes is 71. Actor Michael Nouri is 70. Former Sen. Thomas Daschle, D-S.D., is 68. World Golf Hall of Famer Tom Kite is 66. Singer Joan Armatrading is 65. Actor Michael Dorn is 63. Actor John Malkovich is 62. Country singer Sylvia is 59. Singer Donny Osmond is 58. Rock musician Nick Seymour (Crowded House) is 57. Comedian Mario Cantone is 56. Actor David Anthony Higgins is 54. Actor Joe Lando is 54. Actress Felicity Huffman is 53. Crown Princess Masako of Japan is 52. Country musician Jerry Hughes (Yankee Heep) is 50. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., is 49. Rock singer-musician Thomas Flowers (Oleander) is 48. Rock musician Brian Bell (Weezer) is 47. Rock singer-musician Jakob Dylan (Wallflowers) is 46. Country musician Brian Hayes (Cole Deggs and the Lonesome) is 46. Actress Allison Smith is 46. Songwriter and former "American Idol" judge Kara DioGuardi is 45. Country singer David Kersh is 45. Actress Reiko Aylesworth is 43. Rock musician Tre Cool (Green Day) is 43. Rapper Canibus is 41. Actor Kevin Daniels (TV: "Sirens") is 39. Actor/writer/director Mark Duplass is 39. Rock musician Eric Zamora (Save Ferris) is 39. Rock singer Imogen Heap is 38. Actor Jesse Metcalfe is 37. Actor Simon Helberg is 35. Actress Jolene Purdy is 32. Actor Joshua Sasse is 28. Olympic gold and silver medal gymnast McKayla Maroney is 20.

Thought for Today: "The real question is not whether machines think but whether men do. The mystery which surrounds a thinking machine already surrounds a thinking man." — B.F. Skinner, American behaviorist (1904-1990).

FROM THE BIBLE

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ... Let your light shine before others. Matthew 5:14, 16. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.

Were you REASSURED by OBAMA'S ADDRESS on TERRORISM?



Robert B. Reich

What To Do About Disloyal Corporations

BY ROBERT B. REICH
Tribune Content Agency

Just like that, Pfizer has decided it's no longer American. It plans to link up with Ireland's Allergan and move its corporate headquarters from New York to Ireland.

That way it will pay less in taxes. Ireland's tax rate is less than half that of the United States. Ian Read, Pfizer's chief executive, told the Wall Street Journal the higher tax rate in the United States caused Pfizer to compete "with one hand tied behind our back."

Read said he'd tried to lobby Congress to reduce the corporate tax rate (now 35 percent) but failed, so Pfizer is leaving.

Such corporate desertions from the United States (technically called "tax inversions") will cost the rest of us taxpayers some \$19.5 billion over the next decade, estimates Congress's Joint Committee on Taxation. Which is fueling demands from Republicans to lower the corporate tax rate. Donald Trump wants it to be 15 percent. Mike Huckabee and Ted Cruz want to eliminate the corporate tax altogether. (How this would save the Treasury more money than further corporate tax inversions is unclear.)

Rather than lower corporate tax rates, an easier fix would be to take away the benefits of corporate citizenship from any company that deserts America.

One big benefit is the U.S. patent system that grants companies like Pfizer longer patent protection and easier ways to extend it than most other advanced economies.

In 2013, Pfizer raked in nearly \$4 billion on sales of the Prevnar 13 vaccine, which prevents diseases caused by pneumococcal bacteria, from ear infections to pneumonia. Pfizer is the only manufacturer of Prevnar 13.

Other countries wouldn't allow their patent systems to justify such huge charges. Neither should we — especially when Pfizer stops being an American company.

The U.S. government also protects the assets of American corporations all over the world.

In the early 2000s, after a Chinese company replicated Pfizer's formula for Viagra, the U.S. trade representative put China on a "priority watch list" and charged China with "inadequate enforcement" against such piracy. Soon thereafter the Chinese backed down. Now, China is one of Pfizer's major sources of revenue.

But when Pfizer is no longer American, the United States should stop protecting its foreign assets.

Nor should Pfizer reap the benefits when the United States goes to bat for American corporations in trade deals.

In the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the

upcoming deal with the European Union, the interests of American pharmaceutical companies like Pfizer — gaining more patent protection abroad, limiting foreign release of drug data, and preventing other governments from controlling drug prices — have been central points of contention. And Pfizer has been one of the biggest beneficiaries. From now on, it shouldn't be.

U.S. pharmaceutical companies rake in billions of dollars a year because Medicare isn't allowed to use its huge bargaining power to get lower drug prices. But a non-American company like Pfizer shouldn't get any of this windfall. From now on, Medicare should squeeze every penny it can out of Pfizer.

American drug companies also get a free ride off of basic research done by the National Institutes of Health. Last year, the NIH began a collaboration with Pfizer's Centers for Therapeutic Innovation, subsidizing Pfizer's appropriation of early scientific discoveries for new medications. In the future, Pfizer shouldn't qualify for this subsidy, either.

Finally, non-American corporations face restrictions on what they can donate to U.S. candidates for public office, and how they can lobby the U.S. government. Yet Pfizer has been among America's biggest campaign donors and lobbyists.

In 2014, it gave \$2,217,066 to candidates, according to OpenSecrets.org. (By contrast, its major competitor, Johnson & Johnson, spent \$755,000.) And Pfizer spent \$9,493,000 on lobbyists. So far in the 2016 election cycle, it's been one of the top 10 corporate donors.

Pfizer's political generosity has paid off — preventing Congress from attaching a prescription drug benefit to Medicare, or from making it easier for generics to enter the market, or from using Medicare's bargaining power to reduce drug prices.

And the company has donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to the candidacies of state attorneys general in order to get favorable settlements in cases brought against it.

But by deserting America, Pfizer relinquishes its right to influence American politics.

If Pfizer or any other American corporation wants to leave America to avoid U.S. taxes, that's their business. But they should no longer get any of the benefits of American citizenship — because they've stopped paying for them.

Former U.S. Secretary of Labor Robert Reich is Chancellor's Professor of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley and Senior Fellow at the Blum Center for Developing Economies. His new book, "Saving Capitalism: For the Many, Not the Few," is now in bookstores. His film "Inequality for All" is now available on iTunes and Amazon streaming

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It's Time For A Little Sunlight

Douglas Sall, Yankton

South Dakota state government has been experiencing a couple of rough patches the past few years regarding public integrity and openness which, unfortunately, resulted in deaths not only to the parties involved.

Recently, the Center of Public Integrity released a study entitled "States Flunk at Integrity." The rankings, along with letter grades, were based on answers to 245 questions, items researched by experienced state government reporters like Bob Mercer. Eleven states received failing grades, South Dakota among them. According to the Center, 13 different categories were examined, varying from public access to information to campaign

finance and ethics enforcement. Making matters worse, the study found that "newspaper coverage of statehouses is shrinking, with fulltime statehouse staff suffering a 35 percent drop between 2003 and 2014 [according to the Pew Research Center]." Thus, it's concluded that "with fewer prying eyes snooping into their business, perhaps it's not surprise that state officials regularly engage in such dubious business."

Thank goodness that we, here in South Dakota, don't have to deal with the likes of a New Mexico legislator, a guy who defended a statute that the state Legislature passed declaring lawmakers' emails exempt from the open records laws. As he said, "I think it's up to me to decide if YOU can have my record." WOW.

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