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OPINION OTHER VIEWS

Prison Education Is A Good Investment

MCCOOK DAILY GAZETTE (Dec. 4): Education is not the final answer for all of our problems, but it is definitely one piece of the puzzle.
Prisons have their share of well-educated inmates, but educational opportunities should be a good investment for convicts who are truly trying to turn their lives around.

Advocacy group Nebraska Appleseed is trying to make that point, releasing a report Wednesday urging the state to increase funding for the corrections department's vocational and life skills training program.

Of the 5,348 inmates in Nebraska's correctional system, nearly 2,100 do not have a high school degree. And, according to the report, the Lincoln prison has a waiting list of 80 inmates for educational classes, with about 30 in correctional centers in Omaha and Lincoln.

While some may balk at "rewarding" inmates with a free education, better programming makes sense for Nebraska. More than 90 percent of Nebraska inmates will return to society, and our state already has a low unemployment rate as it is — we need the workers.

Appleseed recommends better use of federal funding to finance education programs, eliminating waiting lists for Adult Basic Education and GED classes, expanding college offerings for males and making them available for female inmates.

Not that the state hasn't been trying, the report did commend the department of corrections for reviving the vocational program.

And, a corrections department official said a partnership is being launched with York College to provide more courses for female inmates, as well as making computers available for inmates without risking security.

Education has been a traditional emphasis at McCook's Work Ethic Camp, and McCook Community College has initiated efforts like the Center for Applied Science and Technology — CAST — welding training, with potential for more.

Education isn't the final answer for Nebraska's overcrowded prison system, but it is certainly a better investment than sending the same people to prison over and over again.

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. Bylined 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 Monday, Dec. 14, the 348th day of 2015. There are 17 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Dec. 14, 1799, the first president of the United States, George Washington, died at his Mount Vernon, Virginia, home at age 67.

On this date: In 1819, Alabama joined the Union as the 22nd state. In 1911, Norwegian explorer and his team became the first men to reach the South Pole, beating out a British expedition led by Robert F. Scott.

In 1918, "Il Trittico," a trio of one-act operas by Giacomo Puccini, premiered at New York's Metropolitan Opera House. (The third opera, "Gianni Schicchi," featured the aria "O Mio Babbino Caro," which was an immediate hit.)

In 1939, the Soviet Union was expelled from the League of Nations for invading Finland.

In 1946, the United Nations General Assembly voted to establish the U.N.'s headquarters in New York.

In 1964, the U.S. Supreme Court, in Heart of Atlanta Motel v. United States, ruled that Congress was within its authority to enforce the Civil Rights Act of 1964 against racial discrimination by private businesses (in this case, a motel that refused to cater to blacks).

In 1972, Apollo 17 astronauts Harrison Schmitt and Eugene Cernan concluded their third and final moonwalk and blasted off for their rendezvous with the command module.

In 1975, six South Moluccan extremists surrendered after holding 23 hostages for 12 days on a train near the Dutch town of Bailein (BY-Lhn).

In 1981, Israel annexed the Golan Heights, which it had seized from Syria in 1967.

In 1985, Wilma Mankiller became the first woman to lead a major American Indian tribe as she took office as principal chief of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. Former New York Yankee outfielder Roger Maris, who'd hit 61 home runs during the 1961 season, died in Houston at age 51.

In 1995, Presidents Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia, Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia and Franjo Tudjman of Croatia signed the Bosnian peace treaty in Paris.

In 2012, a gunman with a semi-automatic rifle killed 20 first-graders and six educators at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, then committed suicide as police arrived; 20-year-old Adam Lanza had fatally shot

his mother at their home before carrying out the attack on the school.

Ten years ago: President George W. Bush defended his decision to wage the Iraq war, even as he acknowledged that "much of the intelligence turned out to be wrong." The House voted 251-174 to renew the U.S. Patriot Act. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad escalated his anti-Israeli rhetoric, calling the Holocaust a "myth" used by Europeans to create a Jewish state in the heart of the Islamic world.

Five years ago: The White House insisted the implementation of President Barack Obama's landmark health care law would not be affected by a negative federal court ruling, and the Justice Department said it would appeal. Gunman Clay A. Duke fired at school board members in Panama City, Florida, but hit no one before fatally shooting himself. Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi scraped through two parliamentary votes of no confidence.

One year ago: A last-minute deal salvaged U.N. climate talks in Lima, Peru, from collapse. Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (shin-zoh ah-bay) scored a decisive election victory and promised to push efforts to revitalize the world's third largest economy. Politician, TV personality and onetime Miss America Bess Myerson died in Santa Monica, California, at age 90.

Today's Birthdays: Singer-actress Abbe Lane is 84. Actor Hal Williams is 81. Actress-singer Jane Birkin is 69. Actress Patty Duke is 69. Pop singer Joyce Vincent-Wilson (Tony Orlando and Dawn) is 69. Entertainment executive Michael Ovitz is 69. Actress Dee Wallace is 67. Rhythm-and-blues singer Ronnie McNair (The Four Tops) is 66. Rock musician Cliff Williams (AC/DC) is 66. Actor-comedian T.K. Carter is 59. Rock singer-musician Mike Scott (The Waterboys) is 57. Singer-musician Peter "Spider" Stacy (The Pogues) is 57. Actress Cynthia Gibb is 52. Actor Archie Kao is 46. Actress Natasha McElhone is 46. Actress-comedian Michaela Watkins is 44. Actress-comedian Miranda Hart (TV, "Call the Midwife") is 43. Rhythm-and-blues singer Brian Dyalruple (Soul For Real) is 40. Actress KaDee Strickland is 40. Actress Tammy Blanchard is 39. Actress Sophie Monk is 36. Actress Vanessa Hudgens is 27. Rock/R&B singer Tori Kelly is 23.

Thought for Today: "The trouble with our times is that the future is not what it used to be." — Paul Valery, French philosopher (1871-1945).

FROM THE BIBLE

Jesus answered, "The most important [commandment] is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul ... and with all your strength.'" Mark 12:29-30. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Reply To Reagan

Edward Gleich, Yankton
This is a reply to Michael Reagan column, "Winners, Losers and Leaders" (Press & Dakotan, Nov. 23).

Mr. Reagan states that President Obama was not doing enough! First point, in order to declare war, he must be approved by Congress! Second, the "Islamic State" is not a country, so we cannot bomb them like we could Berlin in World War II! The problems go way back.

President Carter inherited the "Iran" situation from presidents Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon! The Shah of Iran was guilty of many human rights violations. When he and his family were in power, they promised that the "U.S.A." would have cheap oil as long as they were in charge!

In 1990 Saddam Hussein was in power in Iraq. He had many human rights violations! Then he

invaded Kuwait and we told him to get out! (The first Gulf War.) With the help of our allies, we got him out. But when he got out, our good president George H.W. Bush left him in power. In the 1940s when we took out Germany, we did not leave them in power! We occupied the country until they got things straight.

So after 9-11, we found out where the bad guys were and we went after them! We started chasing Bin Laden and the Taliban! Then President George W. Bush changed direction and went back to Iraq, letting the bad guy gets away again. We went after Saddam Hussein, after we had him once!

Getting back to Michael Reagan saying President Obama was not doing enough: Let's see, with his intelligence and Special Forces, capture Bin Laden, after he was let him go!

The problem is, too many leaders were left in power for "cheaper" oil, which led to cowardice and loss of life.



Capitol Notebook

Medicaid Expansion Vs. Obama Hatred

BY BOB MERCER
State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — It doesn't take much pawing to unearth this truth in South Dakota. Many Republican elected officials don't like President Barack Obama.

Overcoming that hate is the challenge facing Gov. Dennis Daugaard this winter.

The Republican has looked during his five years in office for ways to better use state government's revenue.

One situation he hasn't been able to correct deals with the federal Indian Health Service. The federal agency is supposed to provide healthcare for American Indian people.

But state government for years has been forced to help pay for services provided to them outside the federal Indian Health Service system.

For the most recent year, those services cost \$139 million. State government paid \$69 million. Daugaard wants the federal government to pay all of it.

Republicans in the Legislature cheer Daugaard for that effort. Where he finds deep dissension is the bargain he might have to make.

The governor would expand eligibility for Medicaid services, to cover an estimated 45,000 to 55,000 lower-income working adults, whose households scrape at the edge of poverty.

He could pay for Medicaid expansion — by 2021, state government's share would be \$57 million — if the Obama administration agrees to pay the full cost of American Indian healthcare.

That means tying South Dakota deeply into Obamacare. There might be no move more precarious for a Republican right now in South Dakota politics.

Our three Republicans in Congress vote time after time, trying to knock President Obama down, especially on Obamacare, and issue news releases about doing so.

Our state's Republican attorney general

repeatedly has joined lawsuits in other states challenging the president.

They've sued on Obamacare several times. They're fighting new regulations on water and air and firearms.

They tried but lost on same-sex marriage, where even the president was later than expected in getting to the wedding.

For years, Daugaard too declined to support Medicaid expansion.

He used the word "hate" in his budget speech on Tuesday to describe his feelings about people who get deeper into government assistance but don't work.

And then he spoke for the single parent who works to support three children and can't afford health insurance.

Compassionate conservatism became a discredited cliché under the presidency of Obama's predecessor, Republican George W. Bush.

But Daugaard might have found a situation where the slogan fits.

He wants Republican legislators to give him budget authority — \$373 million of federal spending and 55 more positions on the payroll — to accomplish the Medicaid expansion if he can get the Indian Health Service waiver.

Of course, our federal government doesn't have the money to fully pay for any of this, but doesn't restructure either. Congress doesn't budget very well.

With Republican majorities in both chambers of Congress, the opponents of Obama could be making changes that really take the fight to the president.

Instead they send him Obamacare repeals that he rejects.

Seldom can a governor find a solution that eluded his predecessors. But Gov. Dennis Daugaard might have done it.

That is, if Republican legislators are willing to let him accept what many see as a devil's bargain.

Immigration And Our Founding Fathers' Values

BY MICHELLE MALKIN
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President Obama claims that restricting immigration in order to protect national security is "offensive and contrary to American values." No-limits liberals have attacked common-sense proposals for heightened visa scrutiny, profiling or immigration slowdowns as "un-American."

America's Founding Fathers, I submit, would vehemently disagree.

Our founders, as I've reminded readers repeatedly over the years, asserted their concerns publicly and routinely about the effects of indiscriminate mass immigration. They made it clear that the purpose of allowing foreigners into our fledgling nation was not to recruit millions of new voters or to secure permanent ruling majorities for their political parties. It was to preserve, protect and enhance the republic they put their lives on the line to establish.

In a 1790 House debate on naturalization, James Madison opined: "It is no doubt very desirable that we should hold out as many inducements as possible for the worthy part of mankind to come and settle amongst us, and throw their fortunes into a common lot with ours. But why is this desirable?"

No, not because "diversity" is our greatest value. No, not because Big Business needed cheap labor. And no, Madison asserted, "Not merely to swell the catalogue of people. No, sir, it is to increase the wealth and strength of the community; and those who acquire the rights of citizenship, without adding to the strength or wealth of the community are not the people we are in want of."

Madison argued plainly that America should welcome the immigrant who could assimilate, but exclude the immigrant who could not readily "incorporate himself into our society."

George Washington, in a letter to John Adams, similarly emphasized that immigrants should be absorbed into American life so that "by an intermixture with our people, they, or their descendants, get assimilated to our customs, measures, laws: in a word soon become one people."

Alexander Hamilton, relevant as ever today, wrote in 1802: "The safety of a republic depends essentially on the energy of a common national sentiment; on a uniformity of principles and habits; on the exemption of the citizens from foreign bias and prejudice; and on that love of country which will almost invariably be found to be closely connected with birth, education and family."

Hamilton further warned that "The United

States have already felt the evils of incorporating a large number of foreigners into their national mass; by promoting in different classes different predilections in favor of particular foreign nations, and antipathies against others, it has served very much to divide the community and to distract our councils. It has been often likely to compromise the interests of our own country in favor of another."

He predicted, correctly, that "The permanent effect of such a policy will be, that in times of great public danger there will be always a numerous body of men, of whom there may be just grounds of distrust; the suspicion alone will weaken the strength of the nation, but their force may be actually employed in assisting an invader."

The survival of the American republic, Hamilton maintained, depends upon "the preservation of a national spirit and a national character." He asserted, "To admit foreigners indiscriminately to the rights of citizens the moment they put foot in our country would be nothing less than to admit the Grecian horse into the citadel of our liberty and sovereignty."

On Thursday, a bipartisan majority of U.S. senators on the Senate Judiciary Committee adopted a stunningly radical amendment by Sen. Pat Leahy, D-Vt., to undermine the national interest in favor of suicidal political correctness. The measure would prevent the federal government from ever taking religion into account in immigration and entrance decisions "as such action would be contrary to the fundamental principles on which this Nation was founded."

This pathway to a global right to migrate runs contrary to our founders' intentions as well as decades of established immigration law. As Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., pointed out in a scathing speech opposing the Leahy amendment: "It is well settled that applicants don't have the constitutional right or civil right to demand entry to the United States. ... As leaders, we are to seek the advancement of the Public Interest. While billions of immigrants may benefit by moving to this country, this nation state has only one responsibility. We must decide if such an admission complies with our law and serves our national interest."

Put simply, unrestricted open borders are unwise, unsafe and un-American. A country that doesn't value its own citizens and sovereignty first won't endure as a country for long.

Michelle Malkin is author of the new book "Who Built That: Awe-Inspiring Stories of American Tinkerpreneurs." Her email address is malkinblog@gmail.com.