



Freedom To Live In Fear

BY LEONARD PITTS JR.
Tribune Media Services

“Everybody got a pistol. This must really please the NRA” — from “Gun” by Gil Scott-Heron
So maybe the NRA is about to get its wish.
Here we are, a little over three weeks after the massacre at an elementary school in Newtown, Conn., a little over two weeks after the National Rifle Association said there should henceforth be armed guards at every school, and at least one school system, Marlboro Township in New Jersey, is taking its advice. Under a 90-day pilot program in partnership with local police, students who returned to school last week found their campuses patrolled by armed officers.
But here’s the thing. If this is truly a good idea — “The only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun,” said NRA CEO Wayne LaPierre in a news conference — then why stop there? After all, it is not just our schools that are being shot up. So let us follow this advice to its logical end.
Consider:
Four firefighters in upstate New York were shot, two of them killed, on Christmas Eve when they responded to a call and were ambushed by a man with a semiautomatic rifle. So we should have armed guards on all our fire trucks.
Two customers were killed two days before Christmas when armed men opened fire with semiautomatic handguns inside a grocery store in Delray Beach, Fla. So we should have armed guards at all our grocery stores.
Two people were killed and one injured on Dec. 11 by a gunman who started shooting at a shopping mall near Portland, Ore. So we should have armed guards at all our shopping malls.
Two people were killed and two others injured Nov. 6 when an employee started shooting inside a chicken processing plant in Fresno, Calif. So we should have armed guards at all our chicken processing plants.
One man was killed and five others wounded in a shooting at a New Year’s Eve party in a private residence in Lakewood, Calif. So we should have armed guards at all our private residences.



Leonard
PITTS

One man was killed, a pregnant woman and her unborn child wounded, in a Dec. 9 drive-by shooting on a street corner in Miami. So we should have armed guards on every street corner.
That list, by the way, represents only a random sampling of recent shootings, most so run of the mill, so plain vanilla ordinary, they didn’t even make news outside their local areas, which should give you an idea how common gunfire in this country is. According to the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, nearly 98,000 of us are shot each year, a figure that includes law enforcement activity. That’s nearly 268 a day, 11 every hour.
By the reasoning of the NRA, you do not address that sad state of affairs by crafting laws that strive to balance the rights of responsible gun owners with the need to block the irresponsible, the dangerous, the criminal minded, the unhinged, from access to these WMDs. No, by the NRA’s reasoning, the solution to too many guns is more guns still.
The organization frames this as a defense of freedom. To which the best rejoinder is provided by Gil Scott-Heron in the song quoted above: “Freedom to be afraid is all you won.”
It is a trenchant observation. Just the other day, two seventh-graders in Tillamook, Ore. found a handgun, with a round in the chamber and the safety off, on the floor in a movie theater. It had apparently slipped out of the holster of one Gary Warren Quackenbush, 61, who said he felt the need for protection as he watched “The Hobbit.”
Quackenbush reportedly feared someone might shoot up the place — as happened in Aurora, Colo., last July during a Batman movie. So add movie theaters to the list of places we should have armed guards. We are a people shot through with fear, a nation under the gun.
And one wonders how much more of this “freedom” we can take.

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Happy Holidays, Saudi Arabia

BY BILL O'REILLY
Creators Syndicate

With Christmas now in the rearview mirror, it is perplexing that some far-left bloggers are still bemoaning the fact that *Newsweek* magazine proclaimed that folks who respect the traditions of the Christmas holiday “won” the battle against secular progressives who want to diminish the birth of Jesus in the public square.
Because of that ongoing angst, and because I am still in the Christmas spirit, I offer some travel tips to the anti-Christmas crew in preparation for this December. If you don’t like Christmas, book your trip now.
North Korea: According to reporting by ForeignPolicy.com, that feisty little country does not permit the celebration of Christmas, and anyone caught worshipping Jesus can be tortured or executed. Sounds like Rhode Island. Right now, there are about 70,000 Christians in North Korean labor camps decking the halls with rocks and concrete 10 hours a day.
The North Korean leader, Kim Jong-un, even threatened “unexpected consequences” if the South Korean government allowed lights on trees within view of the border. Kim calls that a provocation and a mean form of “psychological warfare.”
Saudi Arabia: All non-Muslim religious activities are banned in public, so unless Santa puts a prayer rug in his sleigh and heads directly for Mecca, he is persona non grata in this nation. The Saudis even have a religious police force that runs around checking to see who has been naughty and nice in the Islamic context.
According to ForeignPolicy, several dozen Christmas trees imported from Holland were seized by Saudi authorities, hacked to pieces and sent back to the



Bill
O'REILLY

Netherlands. So there. No Christmas for you!
Cuba: Fidel Castro banned the holiday in 1969 saying Cubans were needed to harvest sugar cane on December 25, and don’t even think about Christmas dinner. That ban lasted three decades until the Pope told Comrade Fidel to knock it off. Most Cubans are Catholic and didn’t really appreciate the government calling Santa a symbol of “consumerism” and “mental colonization.” When asked what exactly the “colonization” deal meant, Santa replied: “Ho, ho, ho.”
Today the Communist government does not decorate buildings (there is little private property in Cuba) but does allow Cubans to put up Christmas stuff inside. However, the Cuban air force is likely to fire on any reindeer intruding on the country’s air space.
Cuba, Saudi Arabia and North Korea give American secular progressives three good options by which to avoid Christmas in 2013. Also, there are no public displays of yuletide in Antarctica because there are no buildings. The country of Mali does not have much Christmas stuff going on, but watch out for al-Qaida. Finally, Bikini Island in the Pacific remains largely uninhabited, so there’s not much about Jesus on display.
Finally, I hope there is calm this year, especially in December. As Yoko Ono is fond of saying, let’s give peace a chance (and, by extension, drop the whining about Christmas).
If you can’t do that, Fidel and Kim will be happy to see you.
Veteran TV news anchor Bill O'Reilly is host of the Fox News show “The O'Reilly Factor” and author of the book “Pinheads and Patriots: Where You Stand in the Age of Obama.”

ports from 75, 50 and 25 years ago, select brief accounts of what was happening back then, and share them with current readers, have a knack for choosing interesting, important and (often) instructive tidbits.
I read, enjoy and often clip. Many thanks from these “Frequent Filers.”

THE PRESS & DAKOTAN

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OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

Ideas For Making 2013 A Success

ARGUS LEADER, Sioux Falls (Dec. 31): Welcome 2013!
What’s ahead for the people of the Sioux Falls area and all South Dakotans. It’s a whole new year for hopes and challenges, dreams and dilemmas. When this year closes in 365 days, we hope we all are better for the experiences it brings.
Since we’re in the news business, we won’t pretend to make New Year’s predictions, but we like to make New Year’s suggestions.
Let’s look at local and state suggestions in a broad sense.
In Sioux Falls, we like to be progressive, which is maybe part of the passion behind the urge to bring snowgates to more neighborhoods and states faster. People who have seen them, generally like them. As a city, we’ve added them to our wish list. The public is scheduled to vote on the issue in 2014, yet some would like it earlier. Let’s just make sure we have good data — a measure of how much money and time they take — and then do what’s best.
The same could be said for a new indoor aquatics facility. People don’t like ideas forced upon them but, if given honest, unbiased information, we usually can come to a reasonable agreement. So let’s listen to each other.
We can’t go without offering some suggestions on the new convention center, which promises to be a beautiful facility. Advice for the city: Do not in any way go over budget and try to hide it. It’s all about trust when future issues come up.
Our state thrives in part for its variety and certainly the independence of its people. We enter 2013 as a state with a nice budget surplus, and true to South Dakota style we aren’t likely to blow it on something fun and frivolous.
We understand that no one wants lawmakers and the governor to go crazy with spending, nor do they want our leaders to hide it in a mattress for a big rainy day. But we suggest that it is well past the time when we should be seriously addressing teacher salaries and other budget items that got shut down when times were tough and cuts were made.
Let’s pay our fair share back to the people of South Dakota by appropriately funding those programs with our collective South Dakota money.
In all cases, keeping citizens informed and engaged ends up being good for everyone. We would urge that open dialogue continue in our county, city, school and state governments and that officials at each level be as open and transparent as possible as the tackle whatever comes before them in this new year.

THE VIEWS PAGE

The **PRESS & DAKOTAN** Views 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 to the editor on current topics. Questions regarding the Views page should be directed to Kelly Hertz at views@yankton.net.

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TODAY IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press
Today is Monday, Jan. 7, the seventh day of 2013. There are 358 days left in the year.
Today’s Highlight in History: On Jan. 7, 1973, sniper Mark Essex laid siege at a Howard Johnson’s Motor Lodge in downtown New Orleans for about 10 hours, killing seven people before he himself was slain by sharpshooters.
On this date: In 1610, astronomer Galileo Galilei began observing three of Jupiter’s moons (he spotted a fourth moon almost a week later).
In 1789, the first U.S. presidential election was held. Americans voted for electors who, a month later, chose George Washington to be the nation’s first president.
In 1800, the 13th president of the United States, Millard Fillmore, was born in Summerhill, N.Y.
In 1894, one of the earliest motion picture experiments took place at the Thomas Edison studio in West Orange, N.J., as Fred Ott was filmed taking a pinch of snuff and sneezing.
In 1927, commercial transatlantic telephone service was inaugurated between New York and London.
In 1942, the Japanese siege of Bataan began during World War II. (The fall of Bataan three months later was followed by the notorious Death March.)
In 1949, George C. Marshall resigned as U.S. Secretary of State; President Harry S. Truman chose Dean Acheson to succeed him.
In 1953, President Harry S. Truman announced in his State of the Union message to Congress that the United States had developed a hydrogen bomb.
In 1963, the U.S. Post Office raised the cost of a first-class stamp from 4 to 5 cents.
In 1979, Vietnamese forces captured the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh, overthrowing the Khmer Rouge government.
In 1989, Emperor Hirohito of Japan died in Tokyo at age 87; he was succeeded by his son, Crown Prince Akihito.
In 2006, Jill Carroll, a freelance journalist for The Christian Science Monitor, was kidnapped and her translator shot dead in Baghdad. (Carroll was freed almost three months later.)
Ten years ago: President George W. Bush unveiled his \$674 billion economic expansion plan. Police in London announced they had found traces of the deadly poison ricin (RY'-sin) in a north London apartment and arrested six men in connection with the virulent toxin that had been linked to al-Qaida terrorists and Iraq.

Five years ago: The Pentagon reported an Iranian fleet of high-speed boats charged at and threatened to blow up a three-ship U.S. Navy convoy passing near Iranian waters, then vanished as the American ship commanders were preparing to open fire. In Baghdad, the head of a key U.S.-backed Sunni group was killed in a double suicide bombing that claimed at least 11 other lives. Second-ranked LSU defeated No. 1 Ohio State, 38-24, in the BCS championship game played in New Orleans. Philip Agee, a renegade CIA agent whose naming of operatives led to a law against exposing spies, died in Cuba at age 72.
One year ago: Three days before the New Hampshire primary, Mitt Romney brushed aside rivals’ criticism in the opening round of a weekend debate double-header that left his Republican presidential campaign challengers squabbling among themselves and unable to knock the front-runner off stride. Record-shattering Drew Brees threw for 466 yards and three touchdowns, and the New Orleans Saints poured it on in the second half for a 45-28 NFC wild-card victory over the Detroit Lions.
Today’s Birthdays: Author William Peter Blatty is 85. Country singer Jack Greene is 83. Pop musician Paul Revere is 75. Magazine publisher Jann Wenner is 67. Singer Kenny Loggins is 65. Singer-songwriter Marshall Chapman is 64. Latin pop singer Juan Gabriel is 63. Actress Erin Gray is 63. Actor Sammo Hung is 61. Actor David Caruso is 57. Talk show host Katie Couric is 56. Country singer David Lee Murphy is 54. Rock musician Kathy Valentine (The Go-Go’s) is 54. Actor David Marciano is 53. Sen. John Thune, R-S.D., is 52. Actress Hallie Todd is 51. Actor Nicolas Cage is 49. Singer-songwriter John Ondrasik (Five for Fighting) is 48. Actor Doug E. Doug is 43. Actor Kevin Rahm is 42. Actor Jeremy Renner is 42. Country singer-musician John Rich is 39. Actor Dustin Diamond is 36. Actress Lauren Cohan (TV: “The Walking Dead”) is 31. Actor Robert Ri’chard is 30. Actress Lindsay Fonseca is 26. Actor Liam Aiken is 23. Actress Camryn Grimes is 23. Actor Max Morrow is 22.
Thought for Today: “I do not believe that sheer suffering teaches. If suffering alone taught, all the world would be wise. To suffering must be added mourning, understanding, patience, love, openness and the willingness to remain vulnerable.” — Anne Morrow Lindbergh, American author (1906-2001).

FROM THE BIBLE

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth! Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into His presence with singing! Psalm 100:1-2. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

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