



# Obama’s No Patsy Now

BY KATHLEEN PARKER

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WASHINGTON — My inner Pollyanna was basking in blissfulness, rolling in the hay of righteous rhetoric, backstroking through the sunny sibilance of aspiration. Drunk, apparently, on alliteration.

It was a perfect day. Cold but not freezing. Crowded but not crushing. A diverse people celebrating yet another historic day in the nation's capital.

In one poignant moment, he paused while re-entering the Capitol and turned for a last look at his kingdom and subjects: “I want to take a look one more time,” said President Barack Obama. “I’m not going to see this again.”

OK, fine, he’s not king and voters are not subjects. At least not yet. But it must have felt that way, especially having just delivered an inaugural address that informed the nation that changes are about to change, royally.

Bipartisanship brunches notwithstanding, there was no hint in Obama’s words that he was interested in chatting up his political opposition over common ground. When he turned to bid farewell to a memory, he might as well have been bidding farewell to his former self-the conciliatory politician who once declared that there is no red America nor a blue America.

“Sayonara, suckers. You’ll never see that guy again.” Obama may have entered the presidency hoping to bring an end to partisanship, but he entertains no such fantasies now. As he once told a handful of reporters on Air Force One, “I’m no patsy.”

Confident and experienced in his second term, Obama has become fully himself. Which is not to say that I disagree with everything or even most of what he said — at least thematically. Who isn’t for justice, equality, love, climate stability and peace in our time? Sign me up.

Confession: With speeches as with movies, I’m not much of an instant critic. I don’t watch a movie; I enter it. I want to lose myself, to feel what the actor feels, to experience the world as he does. I check my snark at the door.

Thus, Pollyanna saw the inauguration this way: Obama, the first black president entering a second term on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, seized the moment and left perfect storms whimpering in envy. Expansive in his vision of a



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United States, bound by common purpose and the belief that all men and women are created equal, he reiterated the Great American Truth: That every man and women has an inalienable right to pursue happiness and prosperity on a level playing field, equal in all ways under all laws.

Sing it! *Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord. ... His truth is marching on!*

Then he said: “We have always understood that when times change, so must we; that fidelity to our founding principles requires new responses to new challenges; that preserving our individual freedoms ultimately requires collective action.”

Yes, yes, yes! I’ll have what he’s having. I’ll go sleeveless in winter and cut my bangs! Of course we change when necessary. And of course we have to work to keep those truths ... truthful.

Then along comes little Miss Monday Morning, who always begins her sentences with, “Yes, but.” What does this mean, substantively? Ah:

“The commitments we make to each other through Medicare, and Medicaid, and Social Security — these things do not sap our initiative; they strengthen us. They do not make us a nation of takers; they free us to take the risks that make this country great.”

Loose translation: Entitlement reform will not be topping the president’s second-term agenda. What it means beyond this is any palm reader’s guess.

We understand that we’re not a nation of takers (as Paul Ryan once regrettably put it), but how entitlement programs that far exceed our ability to pay for them “free us to take the risks that make this country great” is gobbledygook of the first order. It reeks of caffeine and the smug satisfaction familiar to all writers, who, upon crafting a sentence that is full of sound and fury signifying nothing, ignore the editor’s imperative: Delete, delete, delete. Or as I prefer to put it, kill your little darlings.

What it all really means, of course, is that Barack Obama has been liberated by a second term, free to take risks that he hopes will make his legacy great. This is *his* moment, *his* emancipation proclamation, *his* hinge point of history — and there’s no looking back now.

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## Point Of View

# Bill Bolsters News Media’s Ability To Cover High School Activities

BY DAVID BORDEWYK

South Dakota Newspaper Association

High school football games under Friday night lights and basketball gyms jam-packed with fans are as much a part of South Dakota as coffee-shop talk about the weather and crops. High school sports and other inter-scholastic activities such as drama and music events fuel intense civic pride in our communities and schools.

The feats and accomplishments of students on the field of competition or the performance stage are celebrated by an entire community of family, friends and school fans.

The hometown newspaper is there as well, chronicling the games and school activities. Covering local school sports and school activities such as plays and concerts are a big part of what goes into the local newspaper. The community expects it and a good newspaper meets that expectation.

Technology today has allowed newspapers to expand the tools they use to cover high school sports and events. Newspapers are going beyond the traditional stories and photos printed in the paper to innovations such as broadcasting football or basketball games over the internet and updating readers through social media tools. Readers have come to expect that type of expanded coverage and newspapers of all sizes in South Dakota are delivering on those expectations.

All good, right? Yes, except that some schools are now putting restrictions and limitations on how the local news media can cover their school sporting events and activities.

In Pierre, an exclusive contract between the school and a local radio station prohibits a competing local radio station or the local newspaper from broadcasting Pierre school athletic events. However, the restrictions don’t apply to any out-of-town news media outlets.

In Sioux Falls, the public school district sought to specifically prohibit the local newspaper from broadcasting high school football and basketball games on the Internet.



Bordewyk

Elsewhere, newspaper photographers are being unreasonably restricted on how they can cover high school competitions. Reporters are limited on how they can use social media such as Twitter and Facebook to report live from a high school game.

Schools offer a variety of reasons for these restrictions. Mostly, it boils down to money. Schools are looking to make additional revenue from the performances of students on the field by placing

restrictions on how the local news media may cover these events.

Incredible as it may sound, there is a real trend toward more monetization of high school sports.

That is why we are working for passage of a bill in this legislative session that would prohibit schools from unreasonably restricting the ability of local news media to do their job. Senate Bill 119 would not prohibit schools from generating revenue through certain contracts with media, so long as those contracts do not restrict other media from being able to do their job.

SB119 is not about creating any special or new privilege for news media in South Dakota. It only tries to ensure the news media in South Dakota can do what they have always done when it comes to reporting about high school sports and activities.

Fans and supporters of high school sports and activities expect the local news media to be there, creating a chronology and scrapbook of memories and achievements through their stories, photos and other media.

Urge your legislators to support Senate Bill 119. Let’s make sure the hometown news media can continue to do their job and live up to the expectations of their readers and viewers. Nothing more, nothing less.

Bordewyk is the president of the South Dakota Newspaper Association.

meals to friends and guests.

Laura, who has scheduled in groups since our beginning, has just informed us that we have three Thursdays open in 2013. So we need three more groups to join us. It takes only a few good people to come together and we can make it work. Want to put your faith into action? Call Laura Brown at 665-7199. She will guide you on your way.

We seldom stick with our New Year’s resolutions. But the decision to share your time, talent and resources to help others is not easily forgotten and most rewarding. So please don’t hesitate, come join us at the Banquet to meet our guests and make new friends.

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## OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

# The President And His Second Term

EVANSVILLE (Ill.) COURIER & PRESS (Jan. 18): The commentators waiting for President Barack Obama to take the White House podium Jan. 21 made much of this being the last news conference of his first term, implying that it could be almost a valedictory look back over the past four years.

Fortunately, Obama was anything but reflective. He moved quickly and almost combatively to seize the high ground in the coming debate over raising the debt limit, currently \$16.4 billion, on how much Uncle Sam can borrow.

The debt ceiling, which the country is expected to reach by early March, is the first of three economic hurdles Obama faces this spring. It is also the most important. ...

GOP Tea Party-movement followers in the House broke with the leadership last year to force a near-default. Although no bills went unpaid, this resulted in an international downgrade in America’s credit rating.

Not this time, said Obama: “The full faith and credit of the United States of America is not a bargaining chip. And they” — the House Republican hard-liners — “better decide quickly, because time is running short.”

In short order after that, Obama and Congress must deal with an automatic, across-the-board slash of more than \$1 billion in government spending. The dramatic meat-ax approach was an unsuccessful attempt to galvanize lawmakers into attacking the deficit problem. The deficit is still there, and we’re still stuck with the automatic cuts.

Congress then must pass a spending bill to keep the government running after the temporary spending measure enacted last fall expires, again risking a government shutdown and economic setback. ...

It could be a good year, Obama said, “if only politics don’t get in the way.” It’s a variation of an old Washington expression about unrealistic hopes: If we had some ham, we could have ham, and eggs if we had some eggs.

## Lance Armstrong’s Confession

THE GAZETTE, Colorado Springs, Colo. (Jan. 20): Public confessions of despicable behavior are all the rage among the rich and famous. Tell the camera tales of drug abuse and alcoholism, preferably with tearful eyes, and all related behavior shall be forgiven.

Cyclist Lance Armstrong upped the ante when he confessed to Oprah Winfrey his life as a fraud, liar, cheat and bully who has ruined the lives of others around him.

Hey, Armstrong: Owning up to it — especially without a hint of remorse — doesn’t make it OK. You remain a fraudulent, cheating liar who bullied your friends.

Armstrong’s confession competed for attention with the bizarre saga of Notre Dame football star Manti Te’o, who told the sad tale of losing his girlfriend to leukemia even though the girlfriend never lived.

Arnold Schwarzenegger and Tiger Woods cheated on their wives. Penn State’s Jerry Sandusky sexually assaulted numerous boys. Lindsay Lohan stole jewelry, fell out of her sundress on stage and drove drunk.

Google “celebrity scandals” and an endless array of stories appear. Famous people are human. Often, though not always, a fall from grace has the amazing ability to revive a stagnating career.

Poor behavior of the rich and famous, coupled with the NFL’s unmerciful rejection of Tim Tebow — a successful young quarterback with a talent for flaunting ostensibly good behavior — creates a dilemma for parents. ...

Society must rethink how it chooses heroes. Stop confusing trophies, medals, fortune and fame with character. ... Good character isn’t accomplishment. It’s the way we treat the people around us.

## 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](mailto:views@yankton.net).

## TODAY IN HISTORY

### By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Jan. 24, the 24th day of 2013. There are 341 days left in the year.

**Today’s Highlight in History:** On Jan. 24, 2003, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security officially opened as its head, Tom Ridge, was sworn in. (Creation of the new Cabinet agency was the largest government reorganization in more than 50 years, a response to the Sept. 11 attacks and the threat of further terror.)

**On this date:** In 1813, the Royal Philharmonic Society was formed in London.

In 1848, James W. Marshall discovered a gold nugget at Sutter’s Mill in northern California, a discovery that led to the gold rush of ‘49.

In 1908, the Boy Scouts movement began in England under the aegis of Robert Baden-Powell.

In 1942, the Roberts Commission placed much of the blame for America’s lack of preparedness for Imperial Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor on Rear Adm. Husband E. Kimmel and Lt. Gen. Walter C. Short, the Navy and Army commanders.

In 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill concluded a wartime conference in Casablanca, Morocco.

In 1961, a U.S. Air Force B-52 crashed near Goldsboro, N.C., dropping its payload of two nuclear bombs, neither of which went off; three crew members were killed.

In 1963, a U.S. Air Force B-52 on a training mission crashed into Elephant Mountain in Maine after encountering turbulence and losing its vertical stabilizer; seven of the nine crew members were killed.

In 1965, Winston Churchill died in London at age 90.

In 1978, a nuclear-powered Soviet satellite, Cosmos 954, plunged through Earth’s atmosphere and disintegrated, scattering radioactive debris over parts of northern Canada.

In 1987, gunmen in Lebanon kidnapped educators Alann Steen, Jesse Turner, Robert Polhill and Mitheleshwar Singh. (All were eventually released.)

In 1989, confessed serial killer Theodore Bundy was executed in Florida’s electric chair.

In 1993, retired Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall died in Bethesda, Md., at age 84.

**Ten years ago:** Connecticut became the first state to take part in the U.S. government’s plan to inoculate a half million health care workers against smallpox. (Only four doctors agreed to be vaccinated the first day.)

**Five years ago:** Congressional leaders announced a deal with the White House on an economic stimulus package that would give most tax filers refunds of \$600 to \$1,200. French bank Societe Generale announced it had uncovered a 4.9 billion euro (\$7.14 billion) fraud by a single futures trader. Italian Premier Romano Prodi resigned after losing a Senate confidence motion.

**One year ago:** Declaring the American dream under siege, President Barack Obama used his State of the Union address to deliver a populist challenge to shrink the gap between rich and poor, promising to tax the wealthy more and help jobless Americans get work and hang onto their homes. Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney released his 2010 tax returns, showing that his annual income topped \$20 million and that he paid about \$3 million in federal income taxes.

**Today’s Birthdays:** Actor Jerry Maren (“The Wizard of Oz”) is 94. Actor Marvin Kaplan (“Top Cat”) is 86. Cajun musician Doug Kershaw is 77. Singer-songwriter Ray Stevens is 72. Singer-songwriter Neil Diamond is 74. Singer Aaron Neville is 72. Actor Michael Onkian is 67. Actor Daniel Auteuil is 63. Country singer-songwriter Becky Hobbs is 63. Comedian Yakov Smirnoff is 62. Bandleader-musician Jools Holland is 55. Actress Nastassja Kinski is 54. Rhythm-and-blues singer Theo Peoples is 52. Country musician Keech Rainwater (Lonestar) is 50. HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan is 47. Comedian Phil LaMarr is 46. Olympic gold medal gymnast Mary Lou Retton is 45. Rhythm-and-blues singer Sleepy Brown (Society of Soul) is 43. Actor Matthew Lillard is 43. Actress Merrilee McCommas is 42. Actor Ed Helms is 39. Actress Tatyana Ali is 34. Rock musician Mitchell Marlow (Filter) is 34. Actress Mischia Barton is 27.

**Thought for Today:** “All men wish to have truth on their side; but few to be on the side of truth.” — Richard Whately, British theologian (1787-1863).

## FROM THE BIBLE

*But all things should be done decently and in order. 1 Corinthians 14:40.*  
Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

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## YOUR LETTERS

### Helping The Banquet

Dagmar Hoxsie, Yankton

Out with the old and in with the new year — 2013. It has been a good year at the UCC Church’s Pilgrim Hall, where the Banquet continues its ministry. Each Thursday and the first and third Tuesdays our guests are treated to a well prepared meal and fellowship. The meal is free and all are welcome.

It takes about 72 groups to fill all those dates. Each group bringing 20-25 volunteers, making it about 1600 volunteers serving around 18,000 meals in 2012. Since the Banquet is into its 16th year, we served 270,000