

The Press & Dakotan

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OPINION

Homeless Issue Never Goes Away

What exactly does it say when Yankton's Homeless Shelter saw record occupancy last year? That's a curious question, besides the fact that it digs into the reasons why there are people in this community who do not, technically, have a place to live.

Homeless Shelter president Jon Cooke told the *Press & Dakotan* earlier this week that the shelter last year helped more than 175 individuals who accounted for more than 2,000 shelter nights. He said it was a record for the facility.

So, what does that say? First and foremost, it says that the Homeless Shelter is still a vital and needed service in this community. While the concept of homelessness in Yankton may not look at all like it does in a metropolitan setting — conjuring stock images of bedraggled people sleeping under highway overpasses or in abandoned buildings — the problem does in fact exist. And as long as the problem is here, the Homeless Shelter must be here, too, to lend a hand and provide a roof over some heads, if even on a temporary basis.

Cooke offered a couple of theories about why the Yankton numbers are so high.

One of the interesting possibilities he suggested is the notion that the homeless numbers are up because of the lack of affordable housing in the community. That should ring a familiar bell, for housing has become a particularly pressing issue in this town. If the lack of housing is indeed causing some people to turn to a homeless shelter for help, that says a lot — and it certainly bolsters the case currently being made by city officials that the lack of housing is hurting this community.

Cooke also noted that Yankton's shelter is one of the few in the region that is not faith-based, which may actually draw homeless families here for help.

Whatever the reasons, the shelter is still doing big business. However, its financial situation is clouded. It receives funds from the city and county governments, as well as the United Way, but this money usually doesn't even cover half of the costs that the shelter faces each year.

This is a pity, because the shelter is designed to be a means to an end. As Cooke noted, "Ultimately, our goal is to have (people) out of the (homeless shelter), employed and in a house or an apartment as soon as they can. They can't just stay there and not be working or actively looking for a job."

Thus, this is another service the shelter provides. The shelter needs and deserves the support of the community because, like it or not, it is an essential part of Yankton. Homelessness is sometimes invisible, but it's quite real — and growing. The success and the need for the Homeless Shelter makes that plain.

kmh

P&D LETTER POLICY

The **PRESS & DAKOTAN** invites its readers to write letters to the editor. We ask that a few simple guidelines be followed:

- Please limit letters to 300 words or less. Letters should deal with a single subject, be of general interest and state a specific point of view. Letters are edited with brevity, clarity and newspaper style in mind.
- In the sense of fairness and professionalism, the **PRESS & DAKOTAN** will accept no letters attacking private individuals or businesses.
- Specific individuals or entities addressed in letters may be given the opportunity to read the letter prior to publication and be allowed to answer the letter in the same issue.
- Only signed letters with writer's full name, address and daytime phone number for verification will be accepted. Please mail to: Letters, 319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078, drop off at 319 Walnut in Yankton, fax to 665-1721 or email us at kelly.hertz@yankton.net/.

IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press
Today is Wednesday, Jan. 7, the seventh day of 2015. There are 358 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Jan. 7, 1927, commercial transatlantic telephone service was inaugurated between New York and London.

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, America held its first presidential election as voters chose electors who, a month later, selected George Washington to be the nation's first chief executive.

In 1800, the 13th president of the United States, Millard Fillmore, was born in Summerhill, New York.

In 1894, one of the earliest motion picture experiments took place at the Thomas Edison studio in West Orange, New Jersey, as Fred Ott was filmed taking a pinch of snuff and sneezing.

In 1904, the Marconi International Marine Communication Company of London announced that the telegraphed letters "COD" would serve as a maritime distress call (it was later replaced with "SOS").

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 1955, singer Marian Anderson made her debut with the Metropolitan Opera in New York, in Verdi's "Un Ballo in Maschera." The opening of the Canadian Parliament in Ottawa was televised for the first time.

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 1999, for the second time in history, an impeached American president went on trial before the Senate. President Bill Clinton faced charges of perjury and obstruction of justice; he was acquitted.

Ten years ago: A military jury at Fort Hood, Texas, acquitted Army Sgt. 1st Class Tracy Perkins of involuntary manslaughter in the alleged drowning of an

Iraqi civilian, but convicted him of assault in the Jan. 2004 incident. (Perkins was sentenced to six months in prison.) Rosemary Kennedy, the oldest sister of President John F. Kennedy and the inspiration for the Special Olympics, died at a Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, hospital at age 86. Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston announced they were separating after 4 1/2 years of marriage.

Five years ago: A worker for a transformer-making company in St. Louis showed up at the plant and opened fire, killing three people and wounding five before killing himself. Thousands of Egyptian Christians went on a rampage after six members of their community were gunned down as they left midnight Mass for Coptic Christians in the southern Egyptian town of Nag Hamadi. No. 1 Alabama held on for a 37-21 win over No. 2 Texas in the BCS championship played in Pasadena, California.

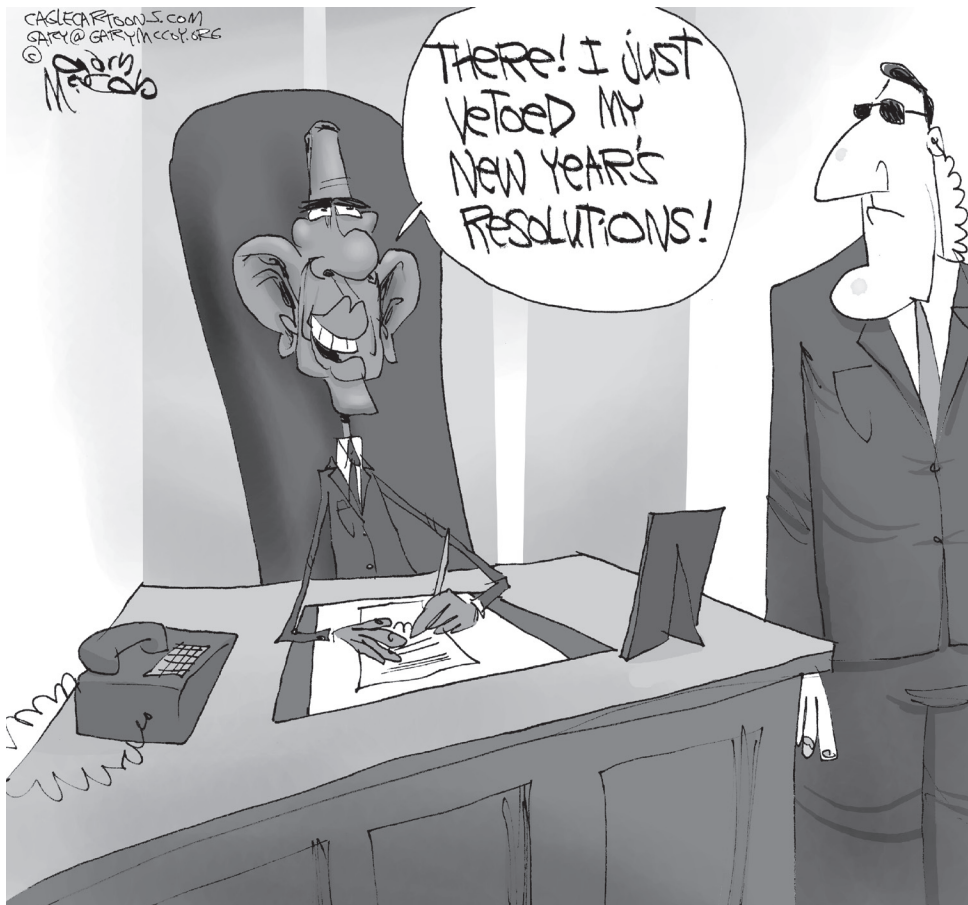
One year ago: Brutal polar air that made the Midwest shiver over the past few days spread to the East and the Deep South, shattering records that in some cases had stood for more than a century. A U.S. Air Force Pave Hawk helicopter crashed in a coastal area of eastern England during a training mission, killing all four crew members aboard.

Today's Birthdays: Author William Peter Blatty is 87. Magazine publisher Jann Wenner is 69. Singer Kenny Loggins is 67. Singer-songwriter Marshall Chapman is 66. Latin pop singer Juan Gabriel is 65. Actress Erin Gray is 65. Actor Sammo Hung is 63. Actor David Caruso is 59. Talk show host Katie Couric is 58. Country singer David Lee Murphy is 56. Rook musician Kathy Valentine is 56. Actor David Marciano is 55. Sen. John Thune, R-S.D., is 54. Actress Halle Todd is 53. Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., is 51. Actor Nicolas Cage is 51. Singer-songwriter John Ondrasik (Five for Fighting) is 50. Actor Doug E. Doug is 45. Actor Kevin Rahm is 44. Actor Jeremy Renner is 44. Country singer-musician John Rich is 41. Actor Dustin Diamond is 38. Singer/rapper Aloe Blacc is 36. Actress Lauren Cohan is 33. Actor Brett Dalton (TV: "Marvel's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.") is 32. Actor Robert Fichard is 32. Actress Lyndy Fonseca is 28. Actor Liam Aiken is 25. Actress Camryn Grimes is 25. Actor Max Morrow is 24. Actor Marcus Scribner (TV: "black-ish") is 15.

Thought for Today: "Nothing in science has any value to society if it is not communicated, and scientists are beginning to learn their social obligations." — Anne Roe Simpson, American psychologist (1904-1991).

FROM THE BIBLE

Now the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firmly on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan, and all Israel was passing over on dry ground until all the nation finished passing over the Jordan. *Joshua 3:17.* Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.



Trans-Pacific Partnership Is A Looming Disaster

BY ROBERT B. REICH
Tribune Content Agency

Republicans, who now run Congress, say they want to cooperate with President Obama and point to the administration's Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP, as the model. The only problem is that the TPP would be a disaster.

If you haven't heard much about the TPP, that's part of the problem right there. It would be the largest trade deal in history — involving countries stretching from Chile to Japan, representing 792 million people and accounting for 40 percent of the world economy — yet it's been devised in secret.

Lobbyists from America's biggest corporations and Wall Street's biggest banks have been involved but not the American public. That's a recipe for fatter profits and bigger paychecks at the top, but not a good deal for most of us, or even for most of the rest of the world.

First, some background. We used to think about trade policy as a choice between "free trade" and "protectionism." Free trade meant opening our borders to products made elsewhere. Protectionism meant putting up tariffs and quotas to keep them out.

In the decades after World War II, America chose free trade. The idea was that each country would specialize in goods it produced best and at least cost. That way, living standards would rise here and abroad. New jobs would be created to take the place of jobs that were lost. And communism would be contained.

For three decades, free trade worked. It was a win-win-win. But in more recent decades the choice has become far more complicated and the payoff from trade agreements more skewed to those at the top.

Tariffs are already low. Negotiations now involve such things as intellectual property, financial regulations, labor laws and rules for health, safety and the environment.

It's no longer free trade versus protectionism. Big corporations and Wall Street want some of both.

They want more international protection when it comes to their intellectual property and other assets. So they've been seeking trade rules that secure and extend their patents, trademarks and copyrights abroad, and protect their global franchise agreements, securities and loans.

But they want less protection of consumers, workers, small investors and the environment, because these interfere with their profits. So they've been seeking trade rules that allow them to override these protections.

Not surprisingly for a deal that's been drafted mostly by corporate and Wall Street lobbyists, the TPP provides exactly this mix.

What's been leaked about it so far reveals,

for example, that the pharmaceutical industry gets stronger patent protections, delaying cheaper generic versions of drugs. That will be a good deal for Big Pharma but not necessarily for the inhabitants of developing nations who won't get certain life-saving drugs at a cost they can afford.

The TPP also gives global corporations an international tribunal of private attorneys, outside any nation's legal system, who can order compensation for any "unjust expropriation" of foreign assets.

Even better for global companies, the tribunal can order compensation for any lost profits found to result from a nation's regulations. Philip Morris is using a similar provision against Uruguay (the provision appears in a bilateral trade treaty between Uruguay and Switzerland), claiming that Uruguay's strong anti-smoking regulations unfairly diminish the company's profits.

Anyone believing the TPP is good for Americans, take note: The foreign subsidiaries of U.S.-based corporations could just as easily challenge any U.S. government regulation they claim unfairly diminishes their profits — say, a regulation protecting American consumers from unsafe products or unhealthy foods, investors from fraudulent securities or predatory lending, workers from unsafe working conditions, taxpayers from another bailout of Wall Street or the environment from toxic emissions.

The administration says the trade deal will boost U.S. exports in the fast-growing Pacific Basin, where the United States faces growing economic competition from China. The TPP is part of Obama's strategy to contain China's economic and strategic prowess.

Fine. But the deal will also allow American corporations to outsource even more jobs abroad.

In other words, the TPP is a Trojan horse in a global race to the bottom, giving big corporations and Wall Street banks a way to eliminate any and all laws and regulations that get in the way of their profits.

At a time when corporate profits are at record highs and the real median wage is lower than it's been in four decades, most Americans need protection — not from international trade but from the political power of large corporations and Wall Street.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership is the wrong remedy to the wrong problem. Any way you look at it, it's just plain wrong.

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 film, "Inequality for All," is now out on iTunes, DVD and On Demand.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Up Front On TIFs

John Magnuson, Yankton

How many of us have heard of TIF, or Tax Increment Financing? This is a taxation program available to local governments across the nation to improve slow developing or blighted communities by financing new business's with future property tax increases. The general idea is that a business may not afford to start on its own. This program helps because after the business is established, property taxes will increase and thereby pay for the initial investment. You can imagine neighboring properties increasing in value and even properties across town that look similar increasing also. Everyone benefits, right? The community gets a new business, local business makes money and the county gets a greater tax base because of increased taxes collected.

Well, apparently this program has some critics (like tax payers). Some believe its a back door method of finance and taxation when the public doesn't really know what's going on. Some say this is not a democratic way to raise our taxes. The Internet speaks about allegations of sweetheart deals based on political

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/.

connections. One can imagine a local politician with strong business ties being more concerned about business than public wishes. Also, there are better methods available that are less expensive to the taxpayer.

Nobody likes "stuff" done behind their backs. Since our county has newly elected commissioners, shouldn't they be up front with us about TIF? Some of us would rather have lower taxes than fund some new big deal down on Broadway. Does anyone else agree?

EMPOWERMENT: "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter." — Thomas Jefferson

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS: It's Your Right To Know!