

The Press & Dakotan

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OPINION OTHER VIEWS

Our Union Really Needs Unity

THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER (Jan. 21): In an era of increasingly grotesque wealth concentration and stubborn wage stagnation, shifting the federal tax burden from the middle toward the highest incomes shouldn't be as controversial as it is. Nevertheless, the proposal President Barack Obama put forward in his State of the Union address Tuesday, which would raise taxes on investments by hundreds of billions of dollars to fund credits for families of more modest means, is the Democratic counterpoint to endless Republican attempts to repeal the Affordable Care Act: an appeal to popular and partisan sentiment that will go nowhere in the current political environment.

Bearing the scars of past attempts to bargain with Republicans, and having presided over the grueling path to an economic recovery that has finally gained momentum, Obama was certainly entitled to stake out the territory he hopes his party will stand for going into the next presidential election. But this State of the Union address was delivered to the most hostile Congress of his tenure, with Republicans in full control for the first time. If the last two years of Obama's presidency are to be more than a prelude to the next administration — and let's hold out fervent, if not desperate, hope that they will be — the president and Congress will have to do more than reiterate their favorite partisan attachments.

Some aspects of Obama's stated priorities in his "fourth quarter" could appeal to both teams. More tax credits and funding for child care, higher education and two-earner families should have broad resonance, especially as income inequality and stagnation have become a more bipartisan concern. Obama's stated support for more free-trade agreements and an authorization of use of force against Islamic State extremists also hold appeal for the party opposite.

To have any chance of advancing his legislative agenda amid divided government, Obama will have to make true concessions. The Keystone XL pipeline is one obvious opportunity, being not nearly as world-shaking as its enemies or friends have suggested. Completing the project simply isn't going to make or break global climate change or Canadian tar-sands exploitation. The president ought to unclog the project in exchange for Republican movement on one of his initiatives.

Obama previously proposed corporate-tax reductions, a concession that could be the basis for a larger tax-reform deal. Both the president and Republican leaders have expressed support for such a negotiation.

Of course, the dominant theme on both sides — and the safest prediction — is polarization. But any substantial improvement of the government's collective state is unlikely without a degree of union.

OUR 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 Thursday, Jan. 22, the 22nd day of 2015. There are 343 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Jan. 22, 1901, Britain's Queen Victoria died at age 81 after a reign of 63 years; she was succeeded by her eldest son, Edward VII.

On this date: In 1498, during his third voyage to the Western Hemisphere, Christopher Columbus arrived at the present-day Caribbean island of St. Vincent.

In 1908, Katie Mulcahey became the first — and only — woman to run afoul of New York City's just-passed ban on women smoking in public establishments. (Declaring, "No man shall dictate to me," Mulcahey served a night in jail after refusing to pay a \$5 fine; the law, which did not specify any fines, ended up being vetoed by Mayor George B. McClellan Jr.)

In 1917, President Woodrow Wilson pleaded for an end to war in Europe, calling for "peace without victory." (By April, however, America also was at war.)

In 1922, Pope Benedict XV died; he was succeeded by Pius XI.

In 1938, Thornton Wilder's play "Our Town" was performed publicly for the first time in Princeton, New Jersey.

In 1944, during World War II, Allied forces began landing at Anzio, Italy.

In 1957, suspected "Mad Bomber" George P. Metesky was arrested in Waterbury, Connecticut. (He was later found mentally ill and committed until 1973; he died in 1994.)

In 1968, "Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In" premiered on NBC-TV.

In 1970, the first regularly scheduled commercial flight of the Boeing 747 began in New York and ended in London some 6 1/2 hours later.

In 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court, in its Roe v. Wade decision, legalized abortions using a trimester approach. Former President Lyndon B. Johnson died at his Texas ranch at age 64.

In 1984, the Los Angeles Raiders defeated the Washington Redskins 38-9 to win Super Bowl XVIII (18) at Tampa Stadium in Florida; the CBS-TV broadcast featured Apple Computer's famous "1984" commercial introducing the Macintosh computer.

In 1995, Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy died at the Kennedy compound at Hyannis Port, Massachusetts, at age 104.

Ten years ago: The Iraqi government pledged to do everything in its power to protect voters from insurgent attacks during upcoming elections, as militants announced they'd killed 15 captive Iraqi National Guardsmen for cooperating with the

Americans. Friends and family bade farewell to ten people killed when a mudslide damaged more than two dozen homes in La Conchita, California. President Richard Nixon's former secretary, Rose Mary Woods, died in Alliance, Ohio, at age 87. "Besam Mucho" songwriter Consuelo Velazquez died in Mexico; she was believed to have been 88.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama tried to revive his battered agenda and rally Democrats with a renewed emphasis on jobs during a town hall meeting in Elyria, Ohio. The "Hope for Haiti Now" telethon raised over \$66 million. Conan O'Brien ended his brief tenure on "The Tonight Show" after accepting a \$45 million buyout from NBC to leave the show he'd long dreamed of hosting after only seven months. Actress Jean Simmons, 80, died in Santa Monica, California. Actor James Mitchell, 89, died in Los Angeles.

One year ago: The White House Council on Women and Girls released a report on rape at college campuses, saying 1 in 5 female students were assaulted while only 1 in 8 student victims reported it. Edgar Tamayo, a Mexican national, was put to death in Texas for killing Houston police officer Guy Gaddis despite pleas and diplomatic pressure from Mexico and the U.S. State Department to halt the execution. Israel said it had foiled an "advanced" al-Qaida plan to carry out a suicide bombing on the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv and bomb other targets.

Today's Birthdays: Former Sen. Birch Bayh, D-Ind., is 87. Actress Piper Laurie is 83. Actor Seymour Cassel is 80. Author Joseph Wambaugh is 78. Actor John Hurt is 75. Singer Steve Perry is 66. Country singer-musician Teddy Gentry (Alabama) is 63. Movie director Jim Jarmusch is 62. Hockey Hall-of-Famer Mike Bossy is 58. Actress Linda Blair is 56. Actress Diane Lane is 50. Actor-rapper DJ Jazzy Jeff is 50. Country singer Regina Nicks (Regina Fegina) is 50. Celebrity chef Guy Fieri (TV: "Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives") is 47. Actress Olivia d'Abo is 46. Rhythm-and-blues singer Marc Gay (Shai) is 46. Actress Katie Finneran (TV: "The Michael J. Fox Show") is 44. Actor Gabriel Macht is 43. Actor Balzhazar Getty is 40. Actor Christopher Kennedy Masterson is 35. Pop singer Willa Ford is 34. Actress Beverley (cg) Mitchell is 34. Rock singer-musician Ben Moody is 34. Actor Kevin Sheridan is 33. Actress-singer Phoebe Strole (TV: "Glee") is 32. Actress Sami Gayle (TV: "Blue Bloods") is 19.

Thought for Today: "Children need models rather than critics." — Joseph Joubert, French moralist (1754-1824).

FROM THE BIBLE

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations. Matthew 28:19.
Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.



Writer's Block

The Long Flight

BY LISA HARE
For the Press & Dakotan

My favorite uncle lies dying in a VA hospital in California. He was able to eat at Thanksgiving time, but shortly after that the devil's fist we call cancer started tightening its grip. The doctors are saying it's a matter of days now and my uncle tells us, as he has all along, "Don't come. There's nothing to be done." So we wait, digesting this request, this command, like we've just been cheated at cards but we don't want to leave the table.

My dad is two years older than my uncle although they've been as twins all their lives. He prays fervidly the only way he knows how: Alone in the silent cathedrals of mountain forests, in chapels of roaring river canyons, and more recently, the sanctuary of his ice shack in the middle of a frozen lake.

For several months, I've watched an elderly man walk his fuzzy little brown and black dog by our front parlor window each morning. Then last week while coming into town, I witnessed the same dog meet his ill-fated demise beneath the giant tires of a shiny new truck. The driver stopped and got out, briefly surmising the situation, which was quite obvious amid the widening pool of blood and the impossibly huge pile of innards spilling out in the street like greasy sausages. As I drove by in the opposite lane, the driver climbed back into his truck and roared off. I looked at the

mangled mass of what moments ago had been a beloved pet, and as bad as I felt for the dog, I felt worse for the man left behind, perfectly intact.

That's really what makes death so difficult to contend with — getting our grip on that gaping void that remains in their absence.

Figuring out how to store emptiness. But life goes on, as it must. Every day we work and sleep and romp in striking proximity to death. It is perhaps the most unsettling reality of our human experience, but one we all share. Our cradles set to rock in the shadows of our coffins.

This morning, I walked in the early morning light and the sunrise set the skiff of clouds beyond the church steeple aglow in a way that made something catch in my chest. I heard my uncle's voice and I was lifted to a place beyond grief, where realization lives of how fortunate we are to have people (and pets) in our life to whom it is so difficult to say goodbye.

My uncle wants no funeral, just a cremation with a request to have his ashes scattered from an airplane over a particular area in the southwest. He was a pilot, himself, in the remote regions of Alaska, off the coast of New Orleans to oil rigs in the Gulf, Uruguay, for a time. Soon he'll lift off again, taking what, for those of us left with only a hole to hold, seems like an early departure.

But he always said he was happiest when flying.



Lisa HARE

The Rez Of The Story

A Look At General Assistance

BY VINCE TWO EAGLES

Hau Mitakuepi (Greetings My Relatives),
Recently I have been asked to talk about G.A. or General Assistance since a lot of non-Indians are curious about it as are Indian people as to its origins, eligibility, etc. Here, taken from "American Indians, American Justice" by Vine Deloria Jr. and Clifford M. Lytle, is the best explanation I could bring to you. If you need further information the Bureau of Indian Affairs can be contacted through their web site; (www.bureauofindianaffairs.gov).

"When Chief Justice John Marshall in the Cherokee Nation Cases referred to Indian nations as "domestic dependent nations," he was providing a preview of at least one Indian problem for years to come. Stripped of their land, their buffalo and salmon, and often their ability to govern themselves, Indian tribes became dependent upon the federal government in many ways. Food and clothing alone constituted the most fundamental of many of their needs. As described by one commentator: "Old, crippled, almost helpless Indians are required to come to the agency in all sorts of weather to get their supplies." On several reservations the survey staff saw poorly clad, old people, with feet soaked by long walks through snow and slush, huddled in the agency office waiting for the arrival of the superintendent or other officer who could give them an order for rations to keep them from actual starvation."

"The federal government was thus forced to embark on a program of providing some form of welfare programs for its Indian "wards." Unfortunately, the efforts of federal assistance agencies were not always as altruistic as they might have been. Food, clothing and other means of subsistence were often used as political tools by which to promote a particular governmental policy. While these efforts to control individuals may not have been as extreme as those of Lord Jeffrey Amherst, the British commander who suggested sending the Indians blankets infested with small pox (from which comes the old Amherst College song proclaiming the fact that he "placed a pox, in their sox, in the days of yore"), federal control over

these services was all too often political.

Indians living on reservations are eligible for a wide variety of federal social service programs designed specifically for Indians. Most of the specially designed Indian social services fall within the category of "general assistance" programs.

This usually means that one qualifies for benefits only if there is no other public assistance available.

Indian access to state social service programs, like the struggle for educational opportunities has met political resistance in most states. The old argument that Indians who do not pay taxes should not be eligible for services has been at the forefront of this state resistance. In 1954, a California court addressed itself to this overall question in *Acosta v. San Diego County*, 126 Cal. App. 2d 455, 272 P.2d 92 (1954). A group of needy Indians living on the Pala Indian Reservation applied for emergency relief from San Diego County. The state

denied them benefits on the grounds that Indians did not share in the tax burden and thus should not expect to partake in the benefits of state services. The California court disagreed with this contention and held that reservation Indians were entitled to the emergency relief benefits as were the non-Indians of the state."

Today GA is primarily referred to as subsistence funds given out bi-monthly. If one is eligible to receive these funds some BIA Agencies require participants to actively seek employment. This means that the one getting GA has to solicit signatures from local employment sites (i.e. private business, tribal programs, state programs, etc.).

Most Indian people would rather be working than to be on GA. It is demeaning to some while others see GA as the annuities promised by treaty. There is no question that GA fills in a large gap in subsistence help for families and their children however, there is no substitute for steady, gainful employment to find dignity and self-worth in one's life.

And now you know the rez of the story.
Doksha ...



Vince TWO EAGLES

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Big Money, Big Oil, Big Lie

Rick Weiland, Sioux Falls

There isn't a more egregious example of the stranglehold that 'big money' has on our Congress and elected officials than this effort to build the Keystone pipeline.

As I stated throughout my campaign for the United States Senate, this is all about greed — billions of dollars of it every year.

Fact is, there are no real jobs — 35 permanent jobs according to the GAO and another 1,800 temporary jobs for the entire project.

Fact is, Keystone XL is an export pipeline. Most of the oil is moving from the tar sands of

Canada to the state of Texas for export to China. We get very little of the oil, so where is the "energy security"? We are nothing more than a pass through, taking on the risk for no reward.

In fact, I cannot think of one reason to build this pipeline other than to placate "big oil" and their "big money."

When the threat of climate change has 99 percent of the scientists in the world seriously worried about the future of the planet, this greed is inexcusable and needs to be exposed and rejected. We should be transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable energy, not doubling down on Keystone.

DESTINY: "Our republic and its press will rise or fall together."

— Joseph Pulitzer

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