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# Greece's Revolt **Against Austerity**

LOS ANGELES TIMES (Jan. 27): Greek voters collectively shouted, "We're mad as hell!" last weekend, sweeping into power a radical left-wing party that campaigned against austerity. The election didn't improve the country's fiscal health; the government is so deep in debt, it could very well default if international lenders refuse to renew their long-running bailout. But the results reminded the rest of the world that democracies have trouble sustaining painful reforms when they're imposed from outside, regardless of how necessary they may be. And Greece may just be the first of Europe's debtor nations to revolt. If the European Union wants to keep the Eurozone intact, and it should, it needs to leaven its demands for austerity with more efforts to help struggling economies grow.

Greece was particularly ill-prepared for the subprime mortgage meltdown that pushed much of the developed world into recession. Hobbled by excessive public payrolls, widespread tax evasion and corruption, the government couldn't stop its debt from spiraling out of control. With bondholders reluctantly agreeing to forgive some of Greece's debt, the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund approved an increasingly large bailout for the country in exchange for sharp cuts in public spending, layoffs from government agencies and higher taxes. Voters threw out two governing coalitions in protest, but with establishment parties still in control, lawmakers stayed the austere course from 2009 through 2014 in the face of growing joblessness and a contracting economy.

Last weekend, voters demanded yet another change, awarding nearly half the seats in the Greek parliament to the left-wing Syriza Party. Its leader, Alexis Tsipras, quickly formed a new government with a small group of lawmakers from a right-wing party that also campaigned against the strictures of the latest bailout. On the plus side, the new government inherits a vastly improved budget with no deficit. On the minus side, the country is still drowning in debt — it owes almost twice as much as the country produces annually - and unable to borrow more from private lenders at an affordable interest rate. Meanwhile, more than 1 in 4 working-age Greeks are unemployed. That's why the country badly needs European authorities and the IMF to extend the bailout, which is due to expire at the end of next month, even as it chafes at the terms.

European leaders said Monday that they expect Greece to live up to the bargain if it wants the bailout to continue. They don't have much room to maneuver, considering that any concession made to Greece would probably be demanded by every other bailed-out country in the Eurozone. But if the new Greek government decides it would be better to drop the Euro than to continue the cutbacks, it could blaze a trail for other struggling countries to follow, potentially fracturing the European Union. As important as the structural reforms may be to Greece's future, so is a growing economy that puts more Greeks back to work. As voters demonstrated, if they don't feel the love in a tough-love regimen, they won't stick to it.

## 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 Thursday, Jan. 29, the 29th day of 2015. There are 336 days left in the Today's Highlight in History: On

won a sixth title at the European Figure Skating Championships. Five years ago: sharp face-to-face confrontation, Presi-dent Barack Obama chastised Republican lawmakers during a GOP event in Baltimore for opposing him on taxes, health care and the economic stimulus, while they accused him in turn of brush-ing off their ideas and driving up the national debt. A jury in Wichita, Kansas, swiftly convicted abortion opponent Scott Roeder of murder in the shooting death of Dr. George Tiller, one of the only doctors to offer late-term abortions in the U.S. Haitian authorities detained 10 U.S. Baptist missionaries who were transporting 33 children to a Dominican Republic orphanage, though as it turned out, most of the children had living parents; all of the Americans were later released. One year ago: The state of Missouri executed Herbert Smulls for the 1991 slaying of jeweler Stephen Honickman in suburban St. Louis. Today's Birthdays: Writer-composer-lyricist Leslie Bricusse is 84. Feminist author Germaine Greer is 76. Actress Katharine Ross is 75. Feminist author Robin Morgan is 74. Actor Tom Selleck is 70. Rhythm-and-blues singer Bettye LaVette is 69. Actor Marc Singer is 67. Actress Ann Jillian is 65. Rock musician Louie Perez (Los Lobos) is 62. Rhythmand-blues/funk singer Charlie Wilson is 62. Talk show host Oprah Winfrey is 61. Actor Terry Kinney (TV: "Black Box"; "Oz") is 61. Country singer Irlene Mandrell is 59. Actress Diane Delano is 58. Actress Judy Norton Taylor (TV: "The Waltons") is 57. Rock musician Johnny Spampinato is 56. Olympic gold-medal diver Greg Lou-ganis is 55. Rock musician David Baynton-Power (James) is 54. Rock musician Eddie Jackson (Queensrvche) is 54. Actor Nicholas Turturro is 53. Rock singer-musician Roddy Frame (Aztec Camera) is 51. Actor-director Edward Burns is 47. Actress Heather Graham is 45. U.S. Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., is 45. Actor Sharif Atkins is 40. Actress Sara Gilbert is 40. Actor Justin Hartley is 38. Actor Sam Jaeger is 38. Actor Andrew Keegan is 36. Actor Ja-Son James Richter is 35. Blues musician Jonny Lang is 34. Pop-rock singer Adam Lambert (TV: "American Ido!") is 33. Thought for Today: "Love is an irre-sistible desire to be irresistibly desired." — Robert Frost, American poet (born 1874, died this date in 1963).

was fired after an on-court dispute

with Sally Anthony, co-owner of the Nash-ville Rhythm of the ABA. Irina Slutskaya



## Writer's Block A Minimal Recovery

**BY WILLIAM KERR** For the Press & Dakotan

Our country has been in recovery (really? well, technically, anyway) from the "Great Recession" since June 2009. In January 2009 employment was down 600,000.

Then in the jobs report in November, employ-ment was only up by 214,000 since

then. That's why for many of us citizens it doesn't seem like the recession is really over yet. Only a third of the jobs lost have been returned after almost 5 1/2 ears of recovery. You can certainly be excused for not realizing that the recession has been over for so long, especially if you are one of the many millions who are still suffering hardship. There are a number of reasons for the difference.

The first one is the difference in numbers of those living in pov-

erty. During the comparison group of previous recoveries the poverty rate decreased by an average of 0.7 percent while in this current recovery the poverty rate increased by 0.2 percent, according to Christian E. Weller of the Center for American Progress (reported in the Cleveland Plain Dealer, as are most statistics below).

Another comparison is using median inflation-adjusted household income. Our current figure from 2013 is \$51,939. That is the lowest level that indicator has been since 1995! In 2007 it was \$56,436. How about them apples?

Some of that has to do with a lot of companies reprising at least one of the Robber Barons' tactics during the Industrial Revolution, of using the same number of employees to produce more product for the same pay and keeping most of the additional profits for themselves. In the current instance it is even worse by not rehiring when business picks up and pushing those who survived the layoffs to accomplish what was accomplished by full employment! Again, with no increase in pay!

Productivity rate is another comparison that makes this recovery look poor by comparison to the others. In the other recoveries, productivity rose an average of 13.4 percent, while in our current recovery it has so far in 5 and 1/2 years only risen 6.5 percent, well below half of that

were 94 percent larger in June of 2014 than they were in June of 2009. ... Despite this, corporations have been reluctant to raise workers wages or create more jobs.

Another feature of this recovery is that some groups of us citizens are being hurt more than others mainly through discrimination. "In October the overall unemployment rate was 5.8

percent. For whites it was 4.8 percent. Hispanics had a 6.8 percent unemployment rate. For African Americans it was 10.9 percent and 18.6 percent for teenagers. The unemployment rate for African Americans has been about double that of the overall rate for decades, according to Sheila Wright, executive director Cleveland NAACP.

Another figure that has been bothering some experts recently has been the number of job cuts that are continuing. For example, in October, we lost an additional 51,183 jobs! And that's not even the highest monthly loss! In May, the loss was 52,961! And, there were two other months during

this recovery when the figure was more than 50,000!

Can you blame anybody looking at those figures for fearing that something is rotten in our country? That something we are doing, or not doing needs immediate attention?

For the past two years, I have received advertising from a handful of investment advisors predicting a strong inflation in the near future. One even suggested that each family should put aside \$10,000 in cash to handle an "inflation spike" that might last a year. Some past spikes have lasted that long according to that predictor.

You may have noticed prices increasing recently between 30 percent and 35 percent on many items we buy routinely. At the same time, Congress has been resisting raising the minimum wage (it should be \$12.10 by law), which would immediately bring hundreds of millions of dollars into the economy and speed up our recovery. They do so to help retailers and manufacturer keep down their costs of doing business. All of those who are at or near the minimum wage would immediately spend that increase for just living costs and needs put off for lack of income. Producing more, transporting more and selling more would in turn require more workers bringing even more cash into the economy.



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Jeannine Economy Jordynne Hart Jeremy Hoeck Shauna Marlette Robert Nielsen Diana Smallwood Cathy Sudbeck Kristina Tunink Sally Whiting JoAnn Wiebelhaus Brenda Willcuts

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The Raven" was first published in the New York Evening Mirror. On this date: In 1820, Britain's King George III died at Windsor Castle.

In 1843, the 25th president of the United States, William McKinley, was born

in Niles, Ohio. In 1861, Kansas became the 34th

state of the Union. In 1919, the ratification of the 18th Amendment to the Constitution, which launched Prohibition, was certified by Act-

ing Secretary of State Frank L. Polk In 1936, the first inductees of baseball's Hall of Fame, including Ty Cobb and Babe Ruth, were named in Cooperstown,

New York. In 1956, editor-essayist H.L. Mencken, the "Sage of Baltimore," died at age 75.

In 1958, actors Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward were married in Las Vegas.

In 1964. Stanley Kubrick's nuclear war satire "Dr. Strangelove Or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb" premiered in New York, Toronto and London. The Winter Olympic Games opened in Innsbruck, Austria. Actor Alan Ladd. 50. died in Palm Springs. California.

In 1975, a bomb exploded inside the U.S. State Department in Washington, causing considerable damage, but injur-ing no one; the radical group Weather Underground claimed responsibility. In 1990, former Exxon Valdez skip-

per Joseph Hazelwood went on trial in Anchorage, Alaska, on charges stemming from the 1989 oil spill. (Hazelwood was acquitted of the major charges, and convicted of a misdemeanor.)

In 1995, the San Francisco 49ers became the first team in NFL history to win five Super Bowl titles, beating the San Diego Chargers, 49-26, in Super Bowl XXIX

In 1998, a bomb rocked an abortion clinic in Birmingham, Alabama, killing security guard Robert Sanderson and critically injuring nurse Emily Lyons. (The bomber, Eric Rudolph, was captured in May 2003 and is serving a life sentence.)

Ten years ago: Jetliners from China landed in rival Taiwan for the first time in 56 years. Serena Williams defeated Lindsav Davenport 2-6, 6-3, 6-0 in the Australian Open final. Ashley McElhiney, the first female coach of a men's pro basketball

## FROM THE BIBLE

He does not deal with us according to our sins. Psalm 103:10. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.

provided during previous recoveries.

"While many Americans are struggling, many corporations are doing well," Weller noted. When adjusted for inflation corporation profits

The Rez Of The Story **Contemplations On Justice** 

#### BY VINCE TWO EAGLES

Hau Mitakuepi (Greetings My Relatives). Ban Ki-moon, the current and eighth Secre-

tary General of the United Nations once said, "True security is based on people's welfare -- on a thriving economy, on strong public health and education programmes, and on fundamental respect for our common humanity. Development, peace, disarmament, reconciliation and justice are not separate from security; they help to underpin it."

It has been said that the opposite of poverty is not prosperity, but justice. According to the well known Russian novelist, historian and critic of Soviet totalitarianism, "Justice is conscience, not a personal conscience but the conscience of the whole of humanity. Those who clearly recognize the voice of their own conscience usually recognize also the voice of justice." What would that voice speak here in South Dakota? What would the conscience of the whole of South Dakota compel us to think, feel, say or do? What would we be called upon to think about yesterday, and today - about the historical and present-day ill-treatment of South Dakota's indigenous people? Would we call upon the memories of our own mistreatment at the hands of others? Would we be thinking about reconciliation or revenge?

Would our conscience move us to feel anger, resentment, or possibly even fear toward those who have caused us suffering and harm? Maybe the ill-treatment was severe enough as to render us numb and ambiguous about what we feel. And maybe the these memories and feeling have been, inadvertently or otherwise, passed down to successive generations who now must bare the burden of their grandfather's and grandmother's mistakes and suffering.

Would we say that, "When we talk about

justice in America we're really talking about justice brought about by the people ..." as William Kunstler, the famous attorney, once said? Will we dismiss history as if to wave a magic wand and cast a magic spell over our collective struggle to grapple with our common issues? I for one sincerely hope not. We have been issued a challenge to be sure and while that challenge may be daunting at times, we cannot neglect our duty to address it squarely.

Thomas Biolsi, in his book entitled "Deadliest Enemie," has penned: "It seems a 'no brainer' these days that wherever one finds racial difference, one will also find racial inequality and racial struggle. It is now widely recognized that race and racial differences are constructed social facts instituted and reproduced in the pursuit of privilege and struggle against it. No one would be surprised to, for example, to learn that the legal statuses of 'Indian' and 'degree of Indian blood' have a long history of being used against Indian people for the purpose of transferring Indian resources into the hands of white people, or that Indian people have fought long and difficult battles to 'rearticulate' the meaning of these statuses in ways that are responsive to their interests.'

To simply recount historical trauma seems counter-productive at best, and perpetuates the darkness that has overcome both Native and non-Native people at worst. So what will we do? Can we participate in local conversations about taking action to further the cause of justice in our communities and across South Dakota? Can we do reconciliation and healing? Maybe we don't have a choice so I'll not say 'It's up to you!" It's in fact up to all of us to pick up and proudly carry forward the banner of justice everywhere it is needed. And now you know the rez of the story.

Ďoksha (later) ...

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Ike And Teddy

#### John Magnuson, Yankton

If you are a Democrat, do you ever think about switching parties? Its always good to consider your options.

When I was a child, Ike Eisenhower was President. He was the greatest because he seemed so positive about America's future. He really cared about the American people and helping the returning veterinarians. My father was a returning vet and he voted for Ike. That's why it was interesting to read the recent column by Robert Reich (Press & Dakotan, Jan. 21) who suggests that Republicans should adopt the

legacy of Dwight Eisenhower who was very different from Ronald Reagan.

It seems that Republicans today are too concerned about protecting big business and too little for Joe Citizen. They say low taxes and less regulation on big business will cause better incomes to trickle down to us all. They don't say how this will happen, but just be patient. Honestly, it doesn't seem to be working. We've been waiting for the trickle down since Reagan and what we have is more like trickle down cruelty. Why does South Dakota have the lowest wage rates of all fifty states (not only for teachers but for all of us)? The answer is obvious that our low wages have been kept down for the benefit of

business. Why is it that whenever a Republican opens their mouth, its always to suggest something because it will help business? What are we, chopped liver?

Well, all Americans love capitalism, don't we? But what about the Klepto Capitalism that is everywhere today? Why should we protect predatory business practices that move profits off shore, pay themselves huge bonuses and keep all the financial gains for the top 1 percent? Where's our share and why are we called socialists if we complain? Old-time presidents like lke and Teddy wouldn't put up with this. Why should we? Put up Republican candidates like lke or Teddy Roosevelt. They'd get my vote.

If you readers would send a copies of this article to our representatives, it might help Congress bring the minimum wage to its legal level.