

The Press & Dakotan

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OPINION

So, Just When Is The Right Time?

Unfortunately, it's the same-old, same-old when it comes to gun violence in America. Another day, another dark chapter in the ongoing narrative and another excuse not to talk about it.

This time, the latest entry in this tale comes from Louisiana, where last Thursday, a man got up in a movie theater, pulled out a gun and methodically began firing at the crowd. Two people were killed and nine others were injured before the gunman, identified by police as John Russel Houser, took his own life.

You know the story, because we've been down this road too often, and we have buried too many in the process. The numbers vary and the dates change, but the theme goes on and on.

What followed in its wake was politically predictable: When asked about gun control policies and how a man who, it is reported, had mental issues somehow was able to acquire a gun, Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal declared that this wasn't the time to talk about such issues. Families are grieving, he said, thus this wasn't the proper moment to engage in such a discussion.

"There will be an absolute appropriate time for us to talk about policies and politics," he said, "and I'm sure that folks will want to score political points of this tragedy, as they've tried to do on previous tragedies."

This comes from a governor who is currently running for president and will no doubt herald his staunch Second Amendment support as a selling point.

We've heard this too many times after too many similar tragedies. It was a persistent mantra in the wake of the Newtown massacre in Connecticut almost three years ago, because, amid all those dead children, the last thing pro-gun lawmakers wanted to talk about was gun control.

And so Jindal echoed a familiar response, shoving the issue off until the issue fades from the public radar while other headlines lure our attentions — until the next shooting.

So, when do we take talk about this?

When is the appropriate time to talk about the next people to die? And there will be more victims, without question.

What these politicians are really saying, it seems, is that there is never a time to talk about it, as far as they are concerned. Meanwhile, people keep dying. According to the FBI, "active shooter" events — defined as an incident in which "an individual (is) actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area" have jumped from 6.4 incidents per year between 2000-2007 to 16.4 incidents a year since.

It's also no secret that gun control issues in general are not widely popular in the U.S. That's understandable, given how the issue is portrayed in such absolute, freedom-or-tyranny terms. But given the issues standing in the polls, why not talk about it? Why not discuss it?

After all, there is a problem, as the FBI stats indicate. And the deaths pile up.

So, when do we decide to deal with this?

When do we decide to find some solutions?

Why do we wait for politicians, determined to wait in silence for the controversy to fade away?

What can be done?

By pushing off the debate and announcing that "now is not the time" for such discussions, we've come up with the answer to every one of those questions.

kmh

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 Tuesday, July 28, the 209th day of 2015. There are 156 days left in the year.

Today's Highlights in History:

On July 28, 1945, a U.S. Army bomber crashed into the 79th floor of New York's Empire State Building, killing 14 people. The U.S. Senate ratified the United Nations Charter by a vote of 89-2.

On this date: In 1540, King Henry VIII's chief minister, Thomas Cromwell, was executed, the same day Henry married his fifth wife, Catherine Howard.

In 1655, French dramatist and novelist Cyrano de Bergerac, the inspiration for a play by Edmond Rostand, died in Paris at age 36.

In 1794, Maximilien Robespierre, a leading figure of the French Revolution, was sent to the guillotine.

In 1821, Peru declared its independence from Spain.

In 1914, World War I began as Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.

In 1915, more than 300 American sailors and Marines arrived in Haiti to restore order following the killing of Haitian President Vilbrun Guillaume Sam by rebels, beginning a 19-year U.S. occupation.

In 1932, federal troops forcibly dispersed the so-called "Bonus Army" of World War I veterans who had gathered in Washington to demand payments they weren't scheduled to receive until 1945.

In 1959, in preparation for statehood, Hawaiians voted to send the first Chinese-American, Republican Hiram L. Fong, to the U.S. Senate and the first Japanese-American, Democrat Daniel K. Inouye, to the U.S. House of Representatives.

In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson announced he was increasing the number of American troops in South Vietnam from 75,000 to 125,000 "almost immediately."

In 1976, an earthquake devastated northern China, killing at least 242,000 people, according to an official estimate.

In 1984, the Los Angeles Summer Olympics opened.

In 1995, a jury in Union, South Carolina, rejected the death penalty for Susan Smith, sentencing her to life in prison for drowning her two young sons (Smith will be eligible for parole in 2024).

Ten years ago: NASA said space shuttle Discovery had escaped any serious damage from a potentially deadly piece of foam that broke off from the fuel tank during liftoff and looked safe to fly home in a week. The Irish Republican Army renounced the use of violence against

British rule in Northern Ireland and said it would disarm. Lightning struck a group of Boy Scouts taking shelter from a storm in Sequoia National Park in California, killing an assistant troop leader and a teenage Scout.

Five years ago: U.S. District Judge Susan Bolton put most of Arizona's toughest-in-the-nation immigration law on hold just hours before it was to take effect. (In September 2012, Bolton ruled that police could enforce the so-called "show me your papers" provision of the law.) Air-blue Flight 202, a Pakistani Airbus A321, crashed into the hills overlooking Islamabad, killing all 152 people aboard.

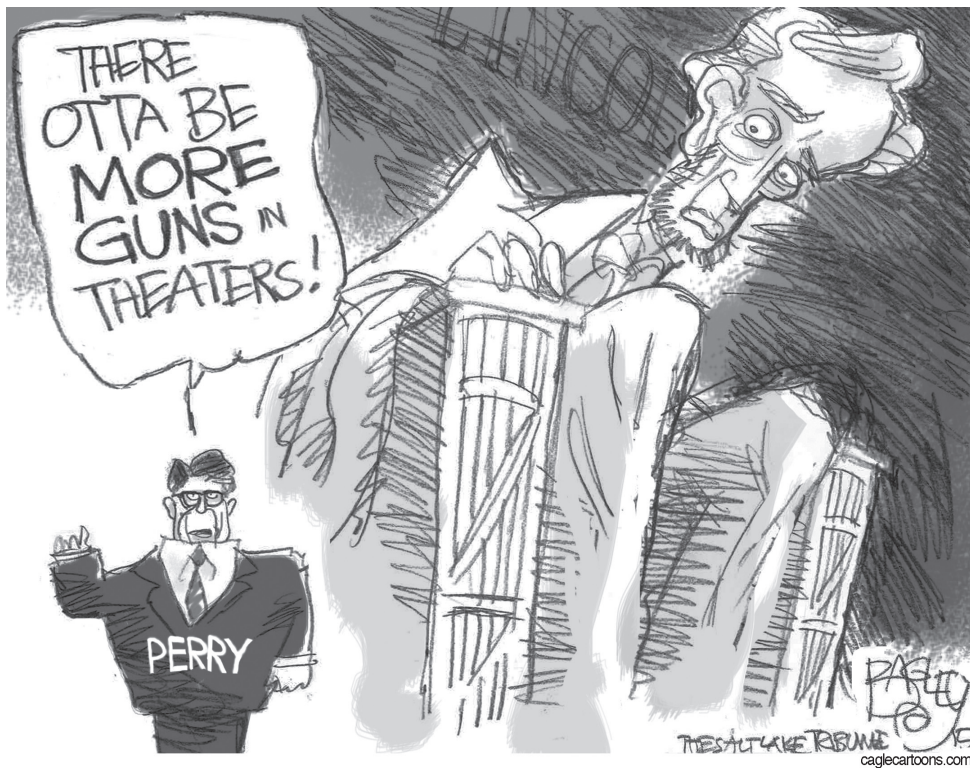
One year ago: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told Israelis to be ready for a "prolonged" conflict with Hamas in Gaza as both sides held out for bigger gains and a cease-fire in the three-week conflict remained elusive. Theodore "Dutch" VanKirk, 93, the last surviving member of the Enola Gay crew that dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, died in Stone Mountain, Georgia. Actor James Shigeta, 85, who played the lead in the 1961 movie musical "Flower Drum Song" and appeared in other movies and TV shows, died in Beverly Hills, California.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Dorey Hickman is 84. Ballet dancer-choreographer Jacques d'Amboise is 81. Musical conductor Riccardo Muti is 74. Former Senator and NBA Hall of Famer Bill Bradley is 72. "Garfield" creator Jim Davis is 70. Singer Jonathan Edwards is 69. Actress Linda Kelsey is 69. TV producer Dick Ebersol is 68. Actress Sally Struthers is 68. Actress Georgia Engel is 67. Rock musician Simon Kirke (Bad Company) is 66. Rock musician Steve Morse (Deep Purple) is 61. CBS anchorman Scott Perry is 58. Alt-country-rock musician Marc Perlman is 54. Actor Michael Hayden is 52. Actress Lori Loughlin is 51. Jazz musician-producer Delfeayo Marsalis is 50. Former hockey player turned general manager Garth Snow is 46. Actress Elizabeth Berkley is 43. Singer Afroman is 41. Country musician Todd Anderson (Heartland) is 40. Rock singer Jacoby Shaddix (Papa Roach) is 39. Country singer Carly Goodwin is 34. Actor Dustin Milligan is 30. Actor Nolan Gerard Funk is 29. Rapper Soujia Boy is 25. Pop/rock singer Cher Lloyd (TV: "The X Factor") is 22.

Thought for Today: "Beware of monotony; it's the mother of all the deadly sins." — Edith Wharton, American author (1862-1937).

FROM THE BIBLE

Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey. Matthew 21:5. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.



The Rez Of The Story

Poverty: 'The Worst Form Of Violence'

BY VINCE TWO EAGLES

Hau Mitakuepi,

"Poverty is the worst form of violence."

Those words were uttered by the great thinker Mahatma Gandhi from India who was assassinated on Jan. 30, 1948, while on his way to address a prayer meeting according to the free encyclopedia online called Wikipedia.

Dr. Donna M. Beegle, author of "See Poverty ... Be The Difference," tells us:

"The systemic barriers that people in poverty face often manifest themselves in a deep lack of self esteem and a strongly ingrained sense of despair. Faced with what they perceive as impregnable barriers, people in poverty find no one to blame for their failures but themselves. Even if they verbally blame others, to try to save face, they keep internalizing the poverty."

"The predominance of misconceptions, stereotypes, and punitive structures, combined with the harshness of their daily struggles for survival and the elusiveness of any kind of success, create experiences for people in poverty that often lead them to internalize the blame for their poverty situation. This blame creates internal barriers that lower their self-esteem, extinguish their dreams, and further limit their abilities to succeed. This in turn greatly affects their expectations for the future and impedes their hopes to lead a fulfilling and successful life."

"People who live in poverty in the United States have experiences that teach them they are not as good as other people and that they somehow deserve what has happened to them. Because we do not teach about structural causes of poverty, people in poverty often think of themselves as somehow deficient and less worthy than others who live in more affluent circumstances (Freire, 1970). Growing up in poverty meant that they were often ostracized for their appearance and shamed into believing that if they were born into poverty they had done something to get there. As a result, a natural reaction of people in poverty is to hide their poverty experiences and develop a tough exterior. Shame and poverty go hand in hand."

"Many of the shaming messages come from the interaction of people in poverty with those who are not familiar with their life experiences. Helping professionals, for example, often fail to



Vince
TWO EAGLES

show the people they serve that they are talented, creative, and worthwhile and that they are just as smart and motivated as middle-class people. They also fail to project the belief that middle-class are not better human beings, but rather they are people who have simply received better opportunities and support.

"Another source of these messages is people who tend to blame the characters of people in poverty when something goes wrong, but blame the situation when the same thing happens to them. Attribution theory assumes that people try to determine why people do what they do. A person seeking to understand why another person did something may attribute one or more motives to that person's behavior."

"Attribution theory explains that people tend to attribute causes for behavior to the situation (or to factors outside themselves) when they understand and empathize with the circumstances of a situation. Alternately, a lack of understanding, typically leads a person to place the cause of the misbehavior on the other person (or to their personality and other internal traits). For example, someone may say, 'I got a ticket for speeding, but it was a speed trap.' But when they hear of another person receiving a speeding ticket, they may say, 'She is a speeder.' Another example is someone saying, 'I was going through a rough time and started drinking too much. I put my family through a lot and needed help.' But when describing another person's problem with alcohol, that same person might say, 'He is an alcoholic and does not really care about his family.'"

"Middle-class and wealthy people understand their own circumstances and attribute the causes of their behavior to the situation. However, they tend to attribute the behavior of people in poverty to the personalities of the people rather than the situation. Blaming someone's personality degrades the person and leaves no hope. It is not helpful since most people see personality as an essential, unchangeable quality. Attributing cause to a situation allows the option of identifying solutions to a problem through changing the situation."

It is up to all of us, poor and otherwise, to reach out for understanding and pass it on.

And now you know the rez of the story.
Doksha (later) ...

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dignity For All

Chris Svarstad, Yankton

In response to the United States Supreme Court ruling legalizing marriage nationwide, this is a great step forward to equality. Now there's probably several far-right fringe Republicans and retrograde religious groups throwing fit. Well, they lost the battle and they can take their tantrums elsewhere. We no longer live in time where these people live as second-class citizens; we live in time where all are free to marry, to love and to live without fear. On June 26, Republican bigotry and hate was shattered. With a swift ruling, Justice Kennedy wrote his opinion emphasizing dignity for all — not just for some.