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OPINION Gun Violence Worthy Of Shame

From the June 13 Milwaukee Journal Sentinel: We should be ashamed of the shooting after shooting on our streets and in our schools. We should be ashamed that Congress sits on its hands and does nothing to curb the slaughter.

That was how President Barack Obama characterized the issue of gun violence in a discussion with Tumblr founder David Karp the other day, and the president got it exactly right.

Eighteen months ago, 20 children were murdered in a grade school in Connecticut - and nothing was done to expand background checks or limit weapons clips. Since then, there have been 74 shootings at schools — the latest last week in Oregon left two dead and one wounded — and still nothing is done. And that's just schools; that doesn't count the shootings in theaters, temples, churches and incidents such as the recent Las Vegas spree that left two police officers, a Walmart customer and the two shooters dead.

And now, with the defeat of the No. 2 Republican in the House, Eric Cantor, the chances of anything getting done are even slimmer. Cantor, a Virginia Republican, who some critics said was too soft on defending gun rights as well as immigration reform, lost in a stunning upset to a tea party candidate in a GOP primary Tuesday. His defeat likely will both embolden the tea party wing of the Republican Party and make any remaining establishment Republicans more cautious. That means little action on issues such as gun control and immigration reform.

The country has to do some soul-searching on this. This is becoming the norm," Obama said Tuesday. "Our levels of gun violence are off the charts. There's no advanced developed country on Earth that would put up with this.'

Yes, mental health is an issue related to violence, and we have to find better ways of dealing with it. But other countries have people with mental illnesses and don't have shootings on this scale. As Obama said, "The United States does not have a monop-oly on crazy people." Yet "we're the only developed country" that repeatedly has such terrible acts. "There's no place else like this,' the president said.

This does not mean the end of the Second Amendment. We can respect gun and hunter rights and still curb gun violence. Australia has done it. Other countries have done it.

It's fear of the political clout of the National Rifle Association and gun manufacturers that is the biggest factor in Congress' failure to act. Obama also noted that although polls show that a majority of Americans support steps to control guns, they don't feel passionately enough about it to punish lawmakers who disagree. Until that happens, sadly, not that much is going to change.

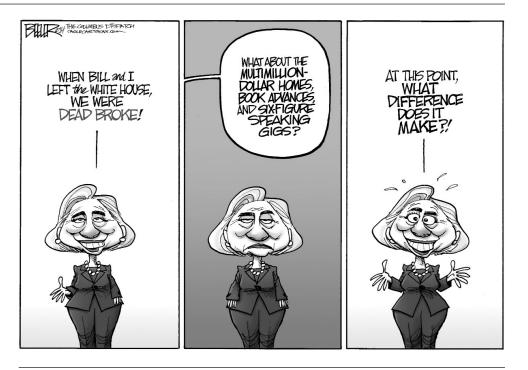
Obama called the failure to achieve reasonable gun restrictions the biggest frustration of his presidency. It should be the biggest frustration for all Americans. Voters need to not only support tighter gun control; they need to get angry with politicians who refuse to act. And then punish them at the polls.

ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press Today is Tuesday, June 17, the 168th day of 2014. There are 197 days

left in the year. Today's Highlight in History: On June 17, 1789, during the French Revolution, the Third Estate declared itself a national assembly, and underto trame a constitution gathering gave rise to the political terms "left wing" and "right wing," with deputies representing commoners sitting to the left of the assembly presi-dent, and nobles sitting to the right.) On this date: In 1397, the Treaty of Kalmar was signed, creating a union between the kingdoms of Sweden, Denmark and Norway. In 1775, the Revolutionary War Battle of Bunker Hill resulted in a costly victory for the British, who suffered heavy losses. In 1885, the Statue of Liberty arfriend, Ronald Goldman. (Simpson was later acquitted in a criminal trial, but held liable in a civil trial.)

Ten years ago: A bipartisan report found that officials, blindsided by terrorists and beset by poor communications, were so slow to react on Sept. 11, 2001, that the last of four hiicked planes had crashed by the time Vice President Dick Cheney ordered hostile aircraft shot down. President George W. Bush disputed the Sept. 11 commission's finding that Saddam Hussein had no strong ties to al-Qaida. A sport utility vehicle packed with artillery shells slammed into a crowd waiting to volunteer for the Iraqi military, killing 35 people. **Five years ago:** President Barack Obama extended some benefits to same-sex partners of federal employees. Nevada Sen. John Ensign re-signed from the GOP leadership a day after admitting an affair with a former campaign staffer. John Houghtaling, the inventor of the Magic Fingers Vibrating Bed for hotels, died in Fort Pierce, Florida, at age 92. One year ago: A G-8 summit of wealthy nations opened in Enniskillen, Northern Ireland, under a cloud, with Russian President Vladimir Putin defiantly rejecting calls from the U.S. Britain and France to halt his political and military support for Syrian leader Bashar Assad's regime. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled 7-2 that states can't demand proof of citizenship from people registering to vote in federal elections unless they get federal or court approval to do so. Today's Birthdays: Actor Peter Lupus is 82. Actor William Lucking is 73. Singer Barry Manilow is 71. Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich is 71. Comedian Joe Piscopo is 63. Actor Mark Linn-Baker is 60. Actor Jon Gries is 57. Movie producer-director-writer Bobby Farrelly is 56. Actor Thomas Haden Church is 53. Actor Greg Kinnear is 51. Actress Kami Cotler (TV: "The Waltons") is 49. Olympic gold-medal speed skater Dan Jansen is 49. Actor Jason Patric is 48. Rhythm-and-blues singer Kevin Thornton is 45. Actor-comedian Will Forte is 44. Latin pop singer Paulina Rubio is 43. Tennis player Venus Williams is 34. Actor-rapper Herculeez (AKA Jamal Mixon) is 31. Rapper Kendrick Lamar is 27. Actor Damani Roberts is 18.



The Rez of the Story The Sundance Journey

BY VINCE TWO EAGLES

Hau Mitakuepi (Greetings My Relatives), Here is part three of four recounting Fred Zephier Junior's account of how the Sun Dance was restored to the Ihanktowan Dakota

people (Yankton Sioux Tribe) by his father's actions. In 1976, Fred Zephier Senior, whose Indian name was Black Spotted Horse, brought back the ancient practice of dancing in the sun. So Fred Junior continues:

"Grandpa Zephier translated for the old Indians who struggled to understand the English language. He helped them understand the concept of land ownership [land ownership] was a foreign concept to Dakotah people]. Those old Indians would ask him to go with them to the Yankton Agency because they couldn't understand the English language.

"In the winter of 1972, Dad and I went hunting along Seven Mile Creek. We parked the car at Marty Dam and walked on the old road that paralleled the creek on its west side all the way up to Earl Kenyon's old home stead. Earl worked as a farm hand for Marty Mission.

"Marty Mission in those days had a Catholic boarding school for Indian children. The Catholic Church at that time owned a lot of land along Seven Mile Creek and built up the home stead for its farm hands. The reason it is called Seven Mile Creek is that it flows from its headwaters for seven miles, give or take a mile, before it emptied into the Missouri River. Seven Miles Creek's headwaters are three miles north of Earl Kenyon's house and just south east of James Antelope's house. The creek flows in a south westerly direction through a beautiful valley lined with tree covered hills on both sides of the creek. The creek was dammed up when the Government's Work Project Administration program built Marty Dam in 1938. All that was left of the homestead, when Dad and I were there in 1972, was a shell of the farm house. Down through the years, Marty Mission sold most of the cattle

and the farm house was abandoned. "The homestead itself was built up on eight condition. When we walked closer to the house Dad said, "This is where old Earl Kenvon used to live." Then he said. "He [Earl] used to work for Marty Mission. He used to take care of their cattle. I think he's dead now.'

"I stood for a while and as I looked at the tree covered hills north, east and to the west. I felt a kind of peace or maybe it was more a sense of security. I thought the surrounding hills provided a safe haven from the elements and a place where one could run around naked, if one wanted to and no one would see. I could only imagine what Earl Kenyon thought about this place. It was quiet and the road leading into the place didn't look like it was well traveled.

"I do not know, to this day, what possessed me to tell Dad what I

thought of the place. I said, "Dad, I know you're tired of living in the housing, you should buy this place. This would be a good place for you and Mom to build a log cabin or maybe even have a Sundance here.

"Dad's brothers Edward and Adelbert, and his nieces and nephews, decided to sell his mother's land — which became heir ship land after she died. Although Dad didn't want to sell her land, it didn't matter that he was the only dissenting vote because the majority of the other family members out numbered him. The money they got from the sale of her land, he used to buy the old Kenyon homestead. After he bought the old homestead in early 1974, Marty Mission returned the land along Seven Mile Creek back to the Yankton Sioux Tribe and the school reverted back to the Tribe as well. The Catholic Church didn't have the money to keep the school open or to pay the taxes on its land holdings.

"Dad often talked about wanting to see a Sundance. I think the motivating factor for him was seeing the scars on his grandfather's chest. It had been nearly 90 years since the Sundance was banned by the United States Government in 1898. By the winter of 1976, the talk around the Rez was the return of the Sun-

To be continued next week with the final

part in this rendition of how the Sundance

came back to the Yankton Sioux people.



Vince **TWO EAGLES**

Sally Whiting Jo Ann Wiebelhaus Brenda Willcuts Jackie Williams

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rived in New York Harbor aboard the French ship Isere. In 1928, Amelia Earhart embarked

on a trans-Atlantic flight from Newfoundland to Wales with pilots Wilmer Stultz and Louis Gordon, becoming the first woman to make the trip as a passenger. In 1930, President Herbert Hoover

signed the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act, which boosted U.S. tariffs to historically high levels, prompting foreign retaliation.

In 1944, the Republic of Iceland was established.

In 1953, U.S. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas stayed the execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, originally set for the next day, the couple's 14th wedding anniversary. (They were put to death

June 19.) In 1961, Soviet ballet dancer Rudolf Nureyev defected to the West

while his troupe was in Paris. In 1972, President Richard M. Nixon's eventual downfall began with the arrest of five burglars inside Democratic national headquarters in Washington, D.C.'s Watergate complex.

In 1987, Charles Glass, a journal-ist on leave from ABC News, was kidnapped in Lebanon. (Glass escaped his captors in August 1987.) In 1992, President George H.W.

Bush and Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed a breakthrough arms-reduction agreement.

In 1994, after leading police on a slow-speed chase on Southern Cali-fornia freeways, O.J. Simpson was arrested and charged with murder in the slayings of his ex-wife, Nicole, and her

FROM THE BIBLE

For because He Himself has suffered when tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted. Hebrews 2:18. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

YOUR LETTERS

Great Art Fest

Angela Larson, Yankton

A big thank you to the Yankton Area Arts for hosting the annual Kids Art Fest. This was a great event for kids of all ages. I took my 2-year old daughter, and she loved it! It was very well organized and of-

Thought for Today: "A consensus means that everyone agrees to say collectively what no one believes individually." — Abba I man (1915-2002). Abba Eban, Israeli states-

and craft activities for the kids. What a great opportunity to expose kids to art!

Also, thank you to all of the community organizations who participated in this event and helped make it so wonderful! Very much appreciated!

fered many different fun art

acres, which left room for a large garden and grazing for a few cattle. When Dad and I arrived at the homestead there was an old holding pen for cattle just to the east of the house and parts of what looked like old farm implements were strewn near the holding pen. The house was gutted, but the shell of the house, the roof and the chimney were still in good

Aging Has Its Downside

BY LEONARD PITTS JR.

Tribune Content Agency

I am standing at the front door, locked out of my own house. If this were a movie, it'd be raining. Thankfully, this isn't so it isn't. But the reality is embarrassing enough without any Hollywood embellishments.

You see, we have this digital lock. To open it, you input a numeric code. We bought it months ago and I've been using it without incident. But now, standing out here in the dark, I am, suddenly and for no apparent reason, stuck. After a moment, with more hope than confidence, I punch in some numbers.

Some wrong numbers. Instead of the lock disengaging, the keypad displays an intimidating red "x." I search my brain for the right numbers, but it's locked tighter than the door. I can't remember.

I find myself saying that a lot lately as I creep toward the 30th commemoration of my 30th birthday. Reminds me of an old expression: "Of all the things I've lost, I miss my mind the most." Don't know who said that. Maybe I once did but if so, I don't remember. Indeed, the list of things I don't remember is growing

There is, for instance, my employee ID number, necessary for filing expense reports and viewing pay stubs. (Yes, they pay me for this. I'm as surprised as you are.) But it's not just numbers. The other day, I was telling this guy about taking my granddaughter to the circus. I'm going on and on about this stuff I bought her that's fluffy and sugary and it comes in clouds of pink and blue and you eat too much and it makes you sick. Finally, mercifully, he says, "Cotton candy?" A few weeks ago, I have to ask a colleague what's that word for a person who receives money after the death of a family member. "Heir?" she says.

'Yeah," I say to her. "Duh," I say to myself.

Numbers and words are bad enough. But I also walk into rooms for reasons I can't recall, open browsers and can't remember why.

As the author of a novel ("Before I Forget") about a man with Alzheimer's disease, I regard this warily. But somewhere in my research for that book, I ran across a doctor — forget his

name — who said if you have the presence of mind to wonder if you have the disease, you don't have the disease. Alzheimer's is not about forgetting where you laid the keys. It's about forgetting what keys are for.

But if I don't have Alzheimer's disease, it seems apparent that I do have Oldtimer's disease, and an advanced case, at that. OD won't kill you, but it will frustrate you near about to death.

Thank goodness my mind is still a steel trap for the important stuff.

Sports? Magic Johnson is from Lansing, Mich., played his entire ca-reer for the L.A. Lakers, went to nine NBA Finals and won five.

Music? I can still nail Philippe Wynne's famous ad-lib from the end of "Mighty Love" — every grunt,

shout, stammer and howl. Literature? Amazing Spider-Man no. 44 was "Where Crawls the Lizard" by Stan Lee and John Romita.

None of which helps me open my front door.

I stand out there longer than I should, punching in wrong numbers. Finally, with a sigh, I call Marilyn, who's inside, and explain my predicament, trying not to sound as sheepish as I feel. My wife gives me the code without comment, a small kindness for which I am grateful.

My hair is gone, my knees are gone and now my memory is a memory. Life, it seems, is just a voyage into decrepitude. Or at least, so I am grumbling to myself until I read where George H.W. Bush just marked his birthday by jumping out of an airplane — and he's 90. Ninety! So maybe I should stop whining, and just write the lock code down. Because maybe what life really is is a thing to be seized, held tight and wrung dry every day that you have it.

I get that. No, seriously, I do. It's just that, of all the things I've lost, I miss my mind the most

(Wait ... did I say that already?)

Leonard Pitts is a columnist for The Miami Herald, 1 Herald Plaza, Miami, Fla., 33132. Readers may contact him via e-mail at lpitts@miamiherald.com.



Leonard PITTS Doksha (later) ...