

Obama's Trade Allies Hail House Vote

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House dramatically rescued President Barack Obama's trade agenda from near oblivion Thursday, and supporters urged the Senate to finish the job and give him a signature achievement in his final years in office.

The turnaround gave a much-needed lift to a president recently rebuffed by his own party after years of fighting Republicans.

In one of the strangest twists of his presidency, most fellow Democrats oppose Obama on trade, forcing him to rely heavily on Republicans to ease the path for possibly far-reaching trade accords in Asia and elsewhere.

The president needs comparatively small numbers of Democrats in both chambers. His supporters were encouraged by Thursday's events.

The same 28 House Democrats who previously backed Obama's bid for "fast track" negotiating authority held firm, despite withering criticism from unions and liberal groups. Under that authority, a president can negotiate liberalized trade deals that Congress can only approve or reject, not change.

Balcony Collapse Causes More Concern

BERKELEY, Calif. (AP) — An estimated 6,500 people have been rushed to emergency rooms with injuries from collapsing balconies, while 29 — including six college students in Berkeley this week — have been killed since 2003.

One reason, experts say, is balconies are particularly vulnerable to dry rot.

"It's all about creating a safe structure that has endurance, that has a reasonable life expectancy," said David Helfant, who identified potential flaws in design and construction after an unofficial inspection of the Berkeley balcony that collapsed.

"When I see something like that in a town I work and live in, it's extremely depressing, it's upsetting," he said.

A Consumer Product Safety Commission analysis for The Associated Press estimated that 4,600 emergency room visits were associated with deck collapses in the past decade and another 1,900 with porch failures.

Danger Of Self-Driving Cars Revealed

LOS ANGELES (AP) — California state officials released reports Thursday detailing six accidents that involved self-driving car prototypes, reversing a policy that shielded details of how the next-generation technology is performing during testing on public roads.

The disclosure came after The Associated Press argued to the Department of Motor Vehicles that the agency was improperly withholding the information.

According to the reports, most of the cars were in self-driving mode when the accidents happened, and the other driver caused the accident. None of the crashes was serious enough to cause injuries, either to the person the state requires to sit behind the wheel or people in the other cars.

The DMV's refusal to release the reports bothered critics, who said the public should know how the cars of the future were faring today.

"The more transparent the government is about self-driving vehicle accidents, the more credibility the government will have when it comes time to decide — yes or no — on whether to OK the sale and licensing of self-driving cars," said Peter Scheer, executive director of the First Amendment Coalition.

Islamic State Group Creates Fear

ESKI MOSUL, Iraq (AP) — Inside the Islamic State's realm, the paper testifying that you have "repented" from your heretical past must be carried at all times. Many people laminate it just to be safe. It can mean the difference between life and death.

Bilal Abdullah learned that not long after the extremists took over his Iraqi village, Eski Mosul, a year ago. As he walked down the street, an Islamic State fighter in a pickup truck asked directions to a local mosque. When Abdullah didn't recognize the mosque's name, the fighter became suspicious.

"He told me my faith is weak and asked, 'Do you pray?'" Abdullah recalled. Then the fighter asked to see his "repentance card." Abdullah had been a policeman until the IS takeover, and policemen and soldiers are required to have one. So are many other former government loyalists or employees — even former English teachers, since they once taught a "forbidden" language and tailors of women's clothes because they once designed styles deemed un-Islamic.

Abdullah had left his card at home. Terrified, he sent his son running to get it.

"They are brutal people," he told The Associated Press. "They can consider you an infidel for the simplest thing."

Beach Near Oil Spill To Reopen

GOLETA, Calif. (AP) — A state beach closed last month after a crude oil spill near Santa Barbara, California, will reopen next week.

The California Department of Parks and Recreation said Thursday that El Capitan State Beach will be reopen its gates on June 26.

The beach is about 3 miles east of the site where a pipeline ruptured May 19, releasing up to 101,000 gallons of oil. About 21,000 gallons flowed into the Pacific Ocean, creating a 9-mile slick on the water.

Refugio State Beach, which is adjacent to the pipeline break, will remain closed until at least July 9.

Operator Plains All American Pipeline has declined to discuss the cause of the break while it's being investigated by federal regulators.

Nearly 300 dead birds and marine mammals have been recovered in the area.

Ex-Priest Sentenced In Sex Abuse Case

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — A former Roman Catholic priest has been sentenced to 11 years in prison for taking a teenage boy on a cruise ship vacation with the intent to engage in illegal sexual conduct.

The U.S. Attorney's Office on the U.S. Caribbean island says expelled priest Israel Berrios was sentenced Thursday. He pleaded guilty in August 2014.

Prosecutors accused Berrios of giving the 15-year-old boy money, a computer and a camera and taking him on a four-day cruise to the Bahamas with his mother's permission in July 2008. The victim, now a young adult, was apparently an altar boy at the time.

Berrios previously served as director of a Catholic school in the mountain town of Aibonito and as a priest in the diocese of Caguas, south of the U.S. island's capital.

Russian Leader Could Hold Early Vote

MOSCOW (AP) — Vladimir Putin's long-time ally has suggested the Russian president could order an early vote to win a mandate for much-needed economic reforms.

Russia's economy, hit by Western sanctions and its own dependence on oil prices, has entered a recession, dropping 2.2 percent in the first quarter of year.

Alexei Kudrin, Russia's finance minister from 2000-11 and the man who invited Putin in for a job in the presidential administration in the late 1990s, suggested Thursday that Putin hold an early election in order to "win the mandate" for economic reforms.

Speaking to The Associated Press, Kudrin said he had not discussed the idea with Putin. Still he insisted the move is necessary, because of a "dire need of serious measures to restore the economy."



John Tecklenburg hugs J. Denise Cromwell outside the Morris Brown AME Church after police cleared the church for safety reasons during a prayer vigil for the deadly attack on historic Emanuel AME Church on Thursday, June 18, 2015, in Charleston, S.C.

Suspect Caught In Killing Of 9 In Historic Black Church

BY JEFFREY COLLINS
AND RUSS BYNUM

Associated Press

CHARLESTON, S.C. — A white man who joined a prayer meeting inside a historic black church and then fatally shot nine people was captured without resistance Thursday after an all-night manhunt, Charleston's police chief said.

Dylann Storm Roof, 21, spent nearly an hour inside the church Wednesday night before killing six women and three men, including the pastor, Chief Greg Mullen said. A citizen spotted his car in Shelby, North Carolina, nearly four hours away.

The chief wouldn't discuss a motive. Charleston Mayor Joseph P. Riley Jr. called it "pure, pure concentrated evil." Stunned community leaders and politicians condemned the attack on The Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, and Attorney General Loretta Lynch said the Justice Department has begun a hate crime investigation.

President Barack Obama, who personally knew the slain pastor, state Sen. Clementa Pinckney, said these shootings have to stop.

Pinckney, 41, was a married father of two who spent 19 years in the South Carolina legislature. He became the youngest member of the House when he was first elected as a Democrat at 23.

"He had a core not many of us have," said Sen. Vincent Sheheen, who sat beside Pinckney in the Senate. "I think of the irony that the most gentle of the 46 of us — the best of the 46 of us in this chamber — is the one who lost his life."

The other victims were identified as Cynthia Hurd, 54; Tywanza Sanders, 26; the Rev. Sharonda Singleton, 45; Myra Thompson, 59; Ethel Lance, 70; Susie Jackson, 87; the Rev. Daniel Simmons Sr., 74; and DePayne Doctor, 49.

The shootings took out the heart of a community — civic leaders including three pastors, a regional library manager, a college enrollment counselor, and a high school track coach — and left the historic church with just one living minister.

"Immediately, my heart started to sink, because I knew that this was going to mean a forever impact on many, many people," Charleston County Coroner Rae Wooten said.

Wooten said autopsies would be conducted over the next several days and did not have specific information on how many times the victims were

shot or the locations of their injuries.

Roof waived extradition from North Carolina Thursday and was taken to a waiting police car wearing a bulletproof vest, with shackles on his feet and his hands cuffed behind his back. Roof also waived his right to counsel, meaning he will either represent himself or hire his own lawyer.

Roof's childhood friend, Joseph Meek Jr., alerted the FBI after recognizing him in a surveillance camera image. They recognized the stained sweatshirt he had been wearing while playing Xbox videogames in their home.

"I don't know what was going through his head," said Meek's mother, Kimberly Konzny. "He was a really sweet kid. He was quiet. He only had a few friends."

But Roof had been to jail: court records show a pending felony drug case and a past misdemeanor trespassing charge. And he proudly displayed the flags of defeated white-ruled regimes, posing with a Confederate flags plate on his car and wearing a jacket with stitched-on flag patches from Rhodesia, which is now black-led Zimbabwe, and apartheid-era South Africa.

Meek said they had been best friends in middle school, then lost touch for years until Roof reappeared a few weeks ago.

"All the sudden out of the blue, he started talking about race. He started talking about Trayvon Martin," Meek told The Associated Press Thursday after he was questioned by authorities.

"He said blacks were taking over the world. Someone needed to do something about it for the white race. He said he wanted segregation between whites and blacks. I said, 'that's not the way it should be.' But he kept talking about it."

Roof wasn't known to the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Alabama, and it's not clear whether he had any connection to the 16 white supremacist organizations operating in South Carolina, but he appears to be a "disaffected white supremacist," based on his Facebook page, said the center's president, Richard Cohen.

Charleston authorities put out photos of the suspect from the church's surveillance camera early Thursday. Later that morning, authorities west of Charlotte, North Carolina, got a report of a sighting of the suspect's car headed west, said Jeff Ledford, the police chief in Shelby, North Carolina. Officers pulled over the driver and

arrested Roof just before 11 a.m., about 14 hours after the attack.

A gun was found in the car, Mullen said.

The shooting evoked painful memories of other attacks. Black churches were bombed in the 1960s when they served as organizing hubs for the Civil Rights movement, and burned by arsons across the South in the 1990s. Others survived shooting sprees.

This particular congregation, which formed in 1816, has its own grim history: A founder, Denmark Vesey, was hanged after trying to organize a slave revolt in 1822, and white landowners burned the church in revenge, leaving parishioners to worship underground until after the Civil War.

This shooting "should be a warning to us all that we do have a problem in our society," said state Rep. Wendell Gilliard, a Democrat whose district includes the church. "There's a race problem in our country. There's a gun problem in our country. We need to act on them quickly."

"Of all cities, in Charleston, to have a horrible hateful person go into the church and kill people there to pray and worship with each other is something that is beyond any comprehension and is not explained," Riley said. "We are going to put our arms around that church and that church family."

NAACP President and CEO Cornell William Brooks said "there is no greater coward than a criminal who enters a house of God and slaughters innocent people."

A few bouquets of flowers tied to a police barricade outside the church formed a small but growing memorial.

"Today I feel like it's 9-11 again," Bob Dyer, who works in the area, said after leaving an arrangement of yellow flowers wrapped in plastic. "I'm in shock."

The attack came two months after the fatal shooting of an unarmed black man, Walter Scott, by a white police officer in neighboring North Charleston, which increased racial tensions. The officer awaits trial for murder, and the shooting prompted South Carolina to pass a law, co-sponsored by Pinckney, to equip police statewide with body cameras.

Obama Says Church Shooting Shows Need For Reckoning On Guns

BY NANCY BENAC
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Giving voice to intense heartache, anger and sadness, President Barack Obama said Thursday the South Carolina church shooting that left nine people dead shows the need for a national reckoning on gun violence.

Obama said he has been called upon too often to mourn the deaths of innocents killed by those "who had no trouble getting their hands on a gun."

"Now is the time for mourning and for healing," the president said. "But let's be clear. At some point, we as a country will have to reckon with the fact that this type of mass violence does not happen in other advanced countries. It doesn't happen in other places with this kind of frequency. And it is in our power to do something about it."

And while Obama said

that because the shooting is under investigation, he was constrained from talking about details of the case, he added with clear frustration and anger, "I don't need to be constrained about the emotions that tragedies like this raise."



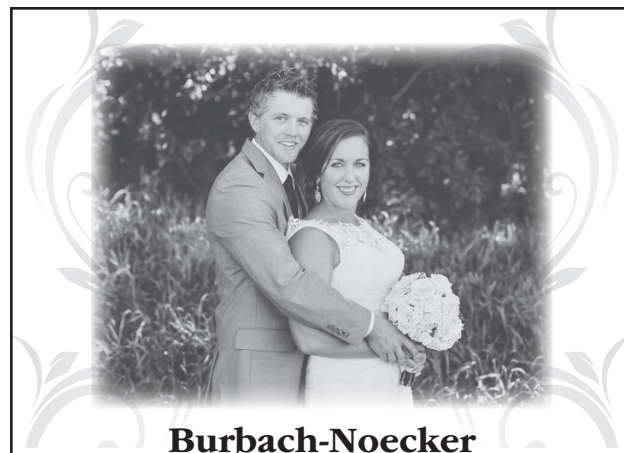
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MORNING COFFEE

WEEKDAYS 7:40AM

MONDAY THRU FRIDAY

Yankton's Home Team!



Burbach-Noecker

Katie Burbach and Michael Noecker were united in marriage September 6, 2014 at St. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Bow Valley, NE with Father Eric Olsen officiating. Parents of the couple are Chuck and Paula Burbach, Wynot, NE and Donovan and Carla Noecker, Hartington, NE. Katie is the granddaughter of Lucille Burbach, Yankton, SD the late Joe Burbach, Wynot, NE and the late Paul and Evelyn Johnson, Yankton. Michael is the grandson of Mary Lou Noecker, Hartington, NE, the late Lorin Noecker, Bow Valley, NE, and Ardycy and the late Evert Johnson, Laurel, NE.

Attendants for the bride were Emily White, Christina Noecker, Katie Koch, Angie Burbach, Lisa Noecker Becker and Jenna Van Heck Hegge. Attendants for the groom were Nate Noecker, Nick Lammers, Aaron Burbach, Jerod Hoensing, Robert McTaggart and Tyler Promes. Flower girls were Kaylee Noecker and Rebekah Burbach. Ring bearers were Judson Noecker and Joseph and Benjamin Burbach.

The bride is a graduate of the University of South Dakota with a degree in Finance. The groom is a graduate of Metropolitan Community College with a degree in Utility Line Technology. He is employed by MJ Electric as a Journeyman Lineman. The couple is currently residing in Joliet, IL.