

The Press & Dakotan

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Yankton Media, Inc., 319 Walnut St., Yankton, SD 57078

CONTACT US

PHONE:

(605) 665-7811
(800) 743-2968

NEWS FAX:
(605) 665-1721

ADVERTISING FAX:
(605) 665-0288

WEBSITE:

www.yankton.net

SUBSCRIPTIONS/

CIRCULATION

Extension 104

mike.hrycko@yankton.net

CLASSIFIED ADS

Extension 108

tera.schmidt@yankton.net

NEWS DEPT.

Extension 114

news@yankton.net

SPORTS DEPT.

Extension 106

sports@yankton.net

ADVERTISING DEPT.

Extension 122

sales@yankton.net

BUSINESS OFFICE

Extension 119

ar@yankton.net

NEW MEDIA:

Extension 136

beth.rye@yankton.net

COMPOSING DEPT.

Extension 129

kathy.larson@yankton.net

MANAGERS

Gary L. Wood

Publisher

Michelle Schievelbein

Advertising Director

Tonya Schild

Business Manager

Michael Hrycko

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Classified Manager

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James D. Cimburek

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OPINION OTHER VIEWS

Cruz Can Obstruct, But Can He Lead?

THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS (March 24): Even before his first day in the Senate, it was evident that Ted Cruz had his eyes on a bigger stage. Yesterday, that stage came into full view when Texas' junior senator announced he would seek the GOP nomination for president in 2016.

Most of the country knows Cruz as the freshman senator who waged a 21-hour quasifilibuster in 2013 to blast the Affordable Care

Act, including a recitation of the Dr. Seuss classic *Green Eggs and Ham*. That stunt led to an ill-advised government shutdown and drew the ire of fellow Republicans who said Cruz relished dishing out criticism without offering viable solutions.

While not a surprise, Cruz's candidacy looks to be pivotal for the GOP. He represents the tea party wing of a Republican Party that needs to attract more moderates and uncommitted voters to win national elections. By his own admission and actions, Cruz has no time for either — not a positive sign from someone who wishes to occupy the Oval Office. His bombastic style is wearing thin.

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During this campaign, Cruz must do more than pander to the farthest-right reaches of the Republican Party on hot-button issues such as immigration, health care and federal spending. The nation has too many critical issues on the table, and as a presidential candidate, he has a responsibility to propose concrete solutions even if it means reaching across the political aisle. Continuing obstructionist paths might excite primary voters, but it won't benefit the nation or the conservative cause.

Beyond the issues are the optics: There is a certain irony in the timing of his pursuit, which roughly parallels that of the current occupant of the White House. Cruz has been in the Senate the same amount of time that Barack Obama served before running for president, is about the same age Obama was when he first sought the presidency and has a limited resume.

Still, Cruz is not someone to be underestimated. In spring 2012, he was just a former state solicitor general, another name in a crowded field of Republicans seeking to succeed U.S. Sen. Kay

Bailey Hutchison. Cruz did just well enough to force a runoff against party favorite David Dewhurst — then trounced him in Round 2.

Cruz's candidacy in the 2016 race will define a boundary for the GOP's right flank. He has argued that the GOP has lost elections because it hasn't been bold and aggressive enough. This run certainly will test that theory.

Most of all, though, Cruz needs to acknowledge that angry opposition is a poor substitute for prudent leadership.

IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, March 26, the 85th day of 2015. There are 280 days left in the year.

Today's Highlights in History: On March 26, 1945, during World War II, Iwo Jima was fully secured by U.S. forces following a final, desperate attack by Japanese soldiers. Former British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, 82, died in Ty Newydd, Llanystumdwy, Wales.

On this date: In 1812, an earthquake devastated Caracas, Venezuela, causing an estimated 26,000 deaths, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

In 1827, composer Ludwig van Beethoven died in Vienna.

In 1874, poet Robert Frost was born in San Francisco.

In 1892, poet Walt Whitman died in Camden, New Jersey.

In 1917, the Seattle Metropolitans became the first U.S. team to win the Stanley Cup as they defeated the Montreal Canadiens.

In 1934, Britain enacted a Road Traffic Act reimposing a 30 mile-per-hour speed limit in "built-up areas" and requiring driving tests for new motorists.

In 1958, the U.S. Army launched America's third successful satellite, Explorer 3.

In 1964, the musical play "Funny Girl," starring Barbra Streisand as Fanny Brice, opened on Broadway.

In 1979, a peace treaty was signed by Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and witnessed by President Jimmy Carter at the White House.

In 1982, groundbreaking ceremonies took place in Washington D.C., for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

In 1990, "Driving Miss Daisy" won the Academy Award for best picture; its star, Jessica Tandy, was named best actress. Daniel Day-Lewis won best actor for "My Left Foot" while Oliver Stone was honored as best director for "Born on the Fourth of July." Designer Halston died in San Francisco at age 57.

In 1997, the bodies of 39 members of the Heaven's Gate techno-religious cult who'd committed suicide were found inside a rented mansion in Rancho Santa Fe, California.

Ten years ago: German Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger stood in for Pope John Paul II during the Easter Vigil Mass at the Vatican. (Ratzinger later succeeded John Paul, becoming Pope Benedict XVI.) Former British Prime Minister James Callaghan died one day before his 93rd birthday in East Sussex, England.

Five years ago: The U.S. and Russia sealed the first major nuclear weapons treaty in nearly two decades, agreeing to slash the former Cold War rivals' warhead arsenals by nearly one-third. A South Korean warship exploded and sank near a disputed maritime border with North Korea, killing 46 sailors. (South Korea blamed North Korea, which denied involvement.) A truck collided with a van on I-65 in Kentucky, killing 10 Mennonites in the van and the truck driver. NBA player Gilbert Arenas was sentenced to 30 days in a halfway house for bringing guns into the Washington Wizards locker room.

One year ago: Osama bin Laden's son-in-law, Sulaiman Abu Ghaith, was convicted in New York for his role as al-Qaida's fiery chief spokesman after 9/11. (He was later sentenced to life in prison.) In a ruling that stunned the college sports industry, a federal agency said that football players at Northwestern University could create the nation's first union of college athletes. (Northwestern has urged the National Labor Relations Board to overturn the regional ruling.)

Today's Birthdays: Comedian Bob Elliott is 92. Conductor-composer Pierre Boulez is 90. Retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor is 85. Actor Alan Arkin is 81. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas is 80. House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi is 75. Actor James Caan is 75. Author Erica Jong is 73. Journalist Bob Woodward is 72. Singer Diana Ross is 71. Actor Johnny Crawford is 69. Rock singer Steven Tyler (Aerosmith) is 67. Singer and TV personality Vicki Lawrence is 66. Actor Ernest Thomas is 66. Comedian Martin Short is 65. Country singer Ronnie McDowell is 65. Rock musician Monte Yoho is 63. Radio talk show host Curtis Sliwa is 61. Country singer Dean Dillon is 60. Country singer Charly McClain is 59. TV personality Leeza Gibbons is 58. Actress Elia English is 56. Actress Jennifer Grey is 55. College and Pro Football Hall of Famer Marcus Allen is 55. Actor Billy Warlock is 54. Actor Eric Alan Kramer is 53. Basketball Hall of Famer John Stockton is 53. Actor Michael Imperioli is 49. Rock musician James Iha is 47. Country singer Kenny Chesney is 47. Actress Leslie Mann is 43. Actor T.R. Knight is 42. Rapper Juvenile is 40. Actress Amy Smart is 39. Actress Bianca Kajlich is 38. Actress Keira Knightley is 30. Rapper J-Kwon is 29. Actress Carly Chaikin is 25.

Thought for Today: "Make voyages. Attempt them. There's nothing else." — Tennessee Williams, American playwright (1911-1983).

FROM THE BIBLE

[John] looked at Jesus as He walked by and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" John 1:36. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Birthday Success

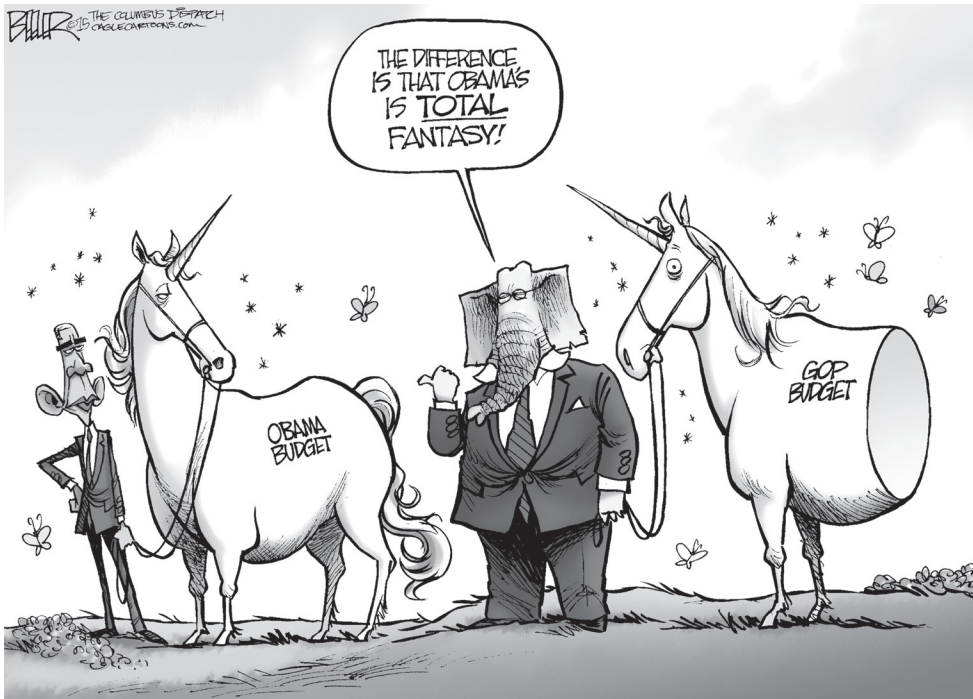
Susan Shrader, Tabor

Legion Commander

Chartered in 1919, the Tabor American Legion Post No. 183 celebrated another birthday. It was a great success with food prepared by the Tabor Auxiliary. They know how to create a meal with Pork loin, dumplings, ring bologna, Jello salad — and who doesn't love chocolate cake with ice cream for dessert?

Leonard Cimpr and Ivan Vitek celebrated 70 years, while Edward Sykora and Alfred Souhrada celebrated 60 years with the Tabor Post.

Czech Days Parade is just around the corner so send in your parade entries to the Tabor Legion. Find us on line at www.taborczechdays.com. Go to FORMS > 2015 Big Parade Entry Form. All instructions included on the form.



Writer's Block

Has America Lost Its 'Brotherhood'?

BY WILLIAM KERR

For the Press & Dakotan

There is a strange phenomenon which goes on in my brain from time to time in most days. A song will come to mind and play out in my mind. It can happen when I am just passing into sleep, or any time I am not concentrating mentally, like reading or trying to solve a problem mentally. The same song often returns several times per day and lasts for up to three days sometimes.

The other day, the song "America" started coming up and playing in my brain.

*"Oh beautiful for spacious skies,
for amber waves of grain,
for purple mountain majesties,
above the fruited plain, America,
America, God shed his grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood,
from sea to shining sea."*

And I got to thinking: That seems to be exactly what is happening that is causing our country's slide back toward where our forefathers felt they were in Europe — nobles and peasants, with 1 percent owning most everything — when they decided to leave and start a new country based heavily on brotherhood, freedom and fairness.

By the 1920s, we had slipped back toward that nobles and peasants thing again. In 1932 we elected Franklin Roosevelt and a Democratic Congress on the slogan of "A New Deal." And it was a New Deal with a minimum wage you could live on, labor laws giving unions the power to deal with the owners on an even keel, a retirement plan for everyone (Social Security) that my parents lived on from age 65, a progressive income tax, help for the poor and many other programs which together leveled the playing field so that everyone who was willing to work and cooperate with each other could have a decent life. Those were the golden years of our country.

But in President Reagan's time, Congress began giving the rich income tax reductions and taking Social Security Trust Fund money to make up for the lost tax revenue.

Then they began reducing legally required minimum wage increases, and Social Security payments and COLAs to obtain more money to balance budgets and give more income tax



William KERR

reductions to the rich. So far there is no legislated plan to correct these thefts (about \$2.6 trillion just from the trust fund).

And now we are hearing that a program passed by Congress and promoted by President Obama — nicknamed "Obamacare" by those hoping to tarnish our president's character; the first significant program to address the problem of 47 percent of our citizens living in poverty or near-poverty — is going to bankrupt our country.

To say that is not true is not enough. We have to take one more step and say why it is not and what positive changes it has already helped bring about to try to stop this slide back into "nobles and peasants" again. Under Obamacare:

1. Health care providers receive financial rewards for cutting costs and penalties for bad care. Between January 2012 and December 2013, there were 150,000 fewer readmissions of Medicare patients (an 8 percent decrease). For more see, the March 7, 2015, edition of *The Economist*.

2. Obamacare encourages the "bundling" of costs for each part of a total procedure instead of adding fees for each pill, bandage, test, X-ray, medication, etc., involved. There's one total price for a hip replacement, for example, instead of a grocery store-like list of fees. That encourages hospitals, clinics and physicians to haggle for lower drug prices, for example.

3. Before the insurance exchanges required by Obamacare, 41.3 million Americans lacked health insurance. This has fallen to 30 million (of whom 48 percent are still eligible for assistance).

4. In 2014 the amount spent on each beneficiary of Medicare dropped from \$12,000 in 2011 to \$11,200 in 2014. Falling Medicare spending could well be a result of physicians and hospitals working more efficiently under the pressure of more patients to treat under Obamacare.

5. The lower Medicare spending in hospitals alone last year was \$98 billion, some of which was due to Obamacare, making medicine thrifter.

So, those of you who buy the statement that Obamacare is going to bankrupt our country, where are your figures? And where do they come from?

NAACP's Fomenters Of Fear

BY MICHELLE MALKIN

Creators.com

They just can't help themselves — and their agenda-driven media enablers never, ever learn.

This week, the NAACP made national front-page headlines with a local press release demanding that the feds investigate the hanging death of a local man in Port Gibson, Miss. Derrick Johnson, president of the NAACP Mississippi State Conference, immediately invoked the specter of a "hate crime." In response, the Obama Justice Department flooded the zone with a whopping 30 federal agents.

News outlets grabbed the bait.

USA Today asked ominously: "Was it a lynching?" The discovery of ex-con Otis Byrd's body swinging from a tree by a bed sheet "brought back unpleasant memories of America's violent, racially charged past," the paper's video reporter asserted. Voice of America similarly intoned: "Mississippi hanging death raises lynching specter." The *Los Angeles Times* leaped into the fray with: "Why this story haunts the nation."

Whoa there, teeth-gnashing Nellies. Didn't we just recently witness the implosion of an NAACP-incited non-hate crime with the same exact narrative? Why, yes. Yes, we did.

As I reported in January, the group was here in my adopted hometown of Colorado Springs hyping a so-called "bombing" at the city's chapter office. Local, state and federal NAACP leaders, amplified by political and media sympathizers, claimed the alleged hate crime "remind(ed) me of another period" (Georgia Democratic Rep. John Lewis); "undermines years of progress" (Texas Democratic Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee); "harkens to bad old days" (MSNBC); and "evokes memories of civil rights strife" (*Time* magazine).

But the allegedly racist perpetrator of the "NAACP bombing" turned out to be a disgruntled client of a now-deceased tax accountant who once worked in the same office complex. The financially troubled suspect had unsuccessfully tried to contact the tax preparer for years to obtain past tax returns. But unbeknownst to the "bomber," who set off a pathetic improvised explosive device on the opposite side of the NAACP office, the accountant had been sent to prison for bilking other clients — and had passed away several years ago.



Michelle MALKIN

Confirming what only a few of us in the media dared to theorize out loud, race had absolutely nothing to do with the wildly inflated and cynically exploited incident in Colorado Springs. Zip, zero, nada.

None of this appears to have chastened the journalists who reflexively empower the NAACP agitators who reflexively cry racism. Just weeks after the not-NAACP bombing, here they are stoking fears of a probably-not-racist-not-lynching. Despite law enforcement reports that Byrd's hands were unbound, despite warnings from the local sheriff (who happens to be black) not to jump to conclusions, and despite the very real possibility that Byrd committed suicide, the papers and airwaves disseminated Blame Whitey and Blame Righty talking points without thinking twice.

The incident indeed