

The Press & Dakotan

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OPINION

Now TransCanada Wants To Wait, Too

So now it appears that two are willing to play the stalling game with the Keystone XL pipeline.

The new player is the potential builder of the pipeline itself, TransCanada, which on Monday asked the Obama administration to suspend its interminable review of the project, citing Nebraska's own ongoing review of the proposed pipeline.

As such, the suspension, if approved, could well delay any final decision on the controversial project until after the 2016 presidential election.

Thus, it's not just President Obama who is pushing this decision back further and further, beyond all logical time constraints. In the process, the pipeline project has become an overblown piece of ideological symbolism.

The pipeline would run from Alberta to the American Gulf Coast, transporting 800,000 barrels of petroleum from the Canadian oil sands through the center of this country, including across South Dakota and Nebraska.

The real point of contention is the source of this petroleum. The process needed in extracting the Alberta oil emits approximately 17 percent more greenhouse gases than the process needed to extract conventional oil.

However, a State Department review that the pipeline would have little environmental impact because that oil was being extracted and burned anyway. It's also been determined that the economic impact of the project has been greatly overstated.

No matter. The lines have long been drawn – to the point of being entrenched – and the project has been spinning its wheels for years.

In the process, the dynamics have changed somewhat. The plunge in oil prices has now made the project less an economic windfall that it would have been when originally proposed. Whether that's a factor in TransCanada's current thinking is unknown.

Rather, some environmentalists believe TransCanada's efforts to suspend the process are nothing more than the company's effort to delay what many believe will be Obama's ultimate rejection of the pipeline. There has been little indication that this president would support the project, and there's every reason to believe he will reject it — perhaps ahead of the United Nations climate conference in a few weeks. The president is hoping to broker a new deal to address climate change, and scuttling Keystone would be a high-profile tool toward that end.

For its part, TransCanada on Tuesday denied any political motivations in its request.

In this overly long process, Obama has faced considerable criticism for his delays, and those barbs have been fair: This has consumed far too much time and has every appearance of being politically calculated.

But now, TransCanada seems content to play this waiting game, too.

Once again, the issue is left in limbo, to the detriment and frustration of all sides in this overlong, overheated debate.

kmh

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IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, Nov. 4, the 308th day of 2015. There are 57 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Nov. 4, 1955, Baseball Hall of Fame pitcher Cy Young died in Newcomerstown, Ohio, at age 88.

On this date: In 1884, Democrat Grover Cleveland was elected to his first term as president, defeating Republican James G. Blaine.

In 1922, the entrance to King Tutankhamen's tomb was discovered in Egypt.

In 1924, President Calvin Coolidge, who'd succeeded the late President Warren G. Harding, was elected to a full term of office; Nellie T. Ross of Wyoming was elected the nation's first female governor to serve out the remaining term of her late husband, William B. Ross.

In 1939, the United States modified its neutrality stance in World War II, allowing "cash and carry" purchases of arms by belligerents, a policy favoring Britain and France.

In 1942, during World War II, Axis forces retreated from El Alamein in North Africa in a major victory for British forces commanded by Lt. Gen. Bernard Montgomery.

In 1952, Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower was elected president, defeating Democrat Adlai Stevenson. The highly secretive National Security Agency came into existence.

In 1964, comedian Lenny Bruce was convicted by a three-judge panel in New York of obscenity charges stemming from his performances at the Cafe Au Go Go in Greenwich Village. (Bruce received a posthumous pardon in 2003 from New York Gov. George Pataki.)

In 1979, the Iran hostage crisis began as militants stormed the United States Embassy in Tehran, seizing its occupants; for some of them, it was the start of 444 days of captivity.

In 1980, Republican Ronald Reagan won the White House as he defeated President Jimmy Carter by a strong margin.

In 1991, Ronald Reagan opened his presidential library in Simi Valley, California: in attendance were President George H.W. Bush and former Presidents Jimmy Carter, Gerald R. Ford and Richard Nixon — the first-ever gathering of five past and present U.S. chief executives.

In 1995, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated by a right-wing Israeli minutes after attending a festive peace rally. Retired professor Morris Schwartz of "Tuesdays with Morrie" fame died in Newton, Massachusetts, at age 78.

In 2008, Democrat Barack Obama was elected the first black president of the

United States, defeating Republican John McCain.

Ten years ago: Violent anti-U.S. protests broke out in Mar Del Plata, Argentina, where President George W. Bush was promoting free trade at the Summit of the Americas. Jewish Defense League activist Earl Krugel, imprisoned for his role in a bomb plot, died after being assaulted in a federal prison in Phoenix; he was 62. Actress Sheree North, 73, died in Los Angeles.

Five years ago: Australian airline Qantas grounded all six of its Airbus A380 superjumbo jets after one of them blew out an engine over Indonesia; the plane made a safe emergency return to Singapore with 469 people aboard. An AeroCaribbean ATR 72 crashed in a mountainous area of Cuba, killing all 68 people on board. Hall of Fame baseball team manager Sparky Anderson died in Thousand Oaks, California, at age 76.

One year ago: Riding a powerful wave of voter discontent, resurgent Republicans captured control of the Senate and tightened their grip on the House during the 2014 elections. A Russian member of the Taliban made his first appearance in a federal court in Richmond, Virginia, marking the first time a military detainee from Afghanistan had been brought to the U.S. for trial. (In August 2015, a federal jury convicted Irek Hamidullin of planning and leading a Taliban attack on U.S. forces in Afghanistan.) Actor Richard Schaal, 86, died in Woodland Hills, California. S. Donald Stookey, 99, the inventor of CorningWare, died in Rochester, New York.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Doris Roberts is 85. Actress Loretta Swit is 78. Rhythm-and-blues singer Harry Elston (Friends of Distinction) is 77. Blues singer Delbert McClinton is 75. Former first lady Laura Bush is 69. Actress Ivonne Coll (TV: "Jane the Virgin") is 68. Actress Markie Post is 65. Rock singer-musician Chris Difford (Squeeze) is 61. Country singer Kim Forester (The Forester Sisters) is 55. Actress-comedian Kathy Griffin is 55. Actor Ralph Macchio is 54. "Survivor" host Jeff Probst is 54. Actor Matthew McConaughey is 46. Rapper-producer Sean "Puffy" Combs is 46. Talk show host Bethenny Frankel is 45. Actor Anthony Ruivivar is 45. Soul/jazz singer Gregory Porter is 44. Rhythm-and-blues singer Shawn Rivera (Az Yet) is 44. Celebrity chef Curtis Stone is 40. Actress Heather Tom is 40. Rhythm-and-blues/gospel singer George Huff is 35. Actress Emme Rylan is 35. Actress Gillian Zinser is 30.

Thought for Today: "A boy becomes an adult three years before his parents think he does, and about two years after he thinks he does." — Gen. Lewis B. Hershey, Selective Service director (1893-1977).

FROM THE BIBLE

One's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.
Luke 12:15. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.



Robert B. Reich

The Rigging Of The American Market

BY ROBERT B. REICH

Tribune Content Agency

Much of the national debate about widening inequality focuses on whether or how much to tax the rich and redistribute their income downward.

But this debate ignores the upward redistributions going on every day, from the rest of us to the rich. These redistributions are hidden inside the market.

The only way to stop them is to prevent big corporations and Wall Street banks from rigging the market.

For example, Americans pay more for pharmaceuticals than do the citizens of any other developed nation. That's partly because it's perfectly legal in the U.S. (but not in most other nations) for the makers of branded drugs to pay the makers of generic drugs to delay introducing cheaper unbranded equivalents after patents on the brands have expired.

This costs you and me an estimated \$3.5 billion a year – a hidden upward redistribution of our incomes to Pfizer, Merck, and other big proprietary drug companies, their executives, and major shareholders.

We also pay more for Internet service than do the inhabitants of any other developed nation. The average cable bill in the United States rose 5 percent in 2012 (the latest year available), nearly triple the rate of inflation.

Why? Because about 80 percent of us have no choice of Internet service provider, which allows providers to charge us more.

Internet service here costs three and a half times more than it does in France, for example, where the typical customer can choose between seven providers.

And U.S. cable companies are intent on keeping their monopoly.

It's another hidden upward distribution – from us to Comcast, Verizon or another giant cable company, its executives and major shareholders.

Likewise, the interest we pay on home mortgages or college loans is higher than it would be if the big banks that now dominate the financial industry had to work harder to get our business.

As recently as 2000, America's five largest banks held 25 percent of all U.S. banking assets. Now they hold 44 percent – which gives them a lock on many such loans.

If we can't repay, forget using bankruptcy. Donald Trump can go bankrupt four times and walk away from his debts, but the bankruptcy code doesn't allow homeowners or graduates to reorganize unmanageable debts.

So beleaguered homeowners and graduates don't have any bargaining leverage with creditors – exactly what the financial industry wants.

The net result: another hidden upward redistribution – this one from us to the big banks, their executives and major shareholders.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

'A Job Well Done'

Diane Hall, Sioux Falls

Project Coordinator, SD EMS for Children

Congratulations to the Yankton Ambulance Service. They are the 2015 2nd place EMS Week Award winner!

Every year your Yankton Emergency Medical Responders make a tremendous impact on your community. The EMS Award is given as a thank you from the Office of Highway

P&D 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.

DESTINY: "Our republic and its press will rise or fall together."

— Joseph Pulitzer