



Winning And Losing

BY LEONARD PITTS JR.
Tribune Media Services

One guy was among the greatest losers in the history of politics, the other, one of the biggest winners in all of sports.

They were unlike men who shared little except recent headlines. But there was, in that brief juxtaposition, an object lesson for those who cared to see it.

The loser — George McGovern — made headlines by dying at age 90. He is famous for having been on the rump end of one of the most thorough election shellackings in history, cobbling together a measly 17 electoral votes in 1972 to Richard Nixon's 520. But there was more to him than that epic loss.

McGovern, a decorated World War II fighter pilot before he became a Democratic senator from South Dakota, was an icon of liberal idealism long before both liberalism and idealism fell out of fashion. He famously came out against the Vietnam War when people were being called traitors and communist sympathizers for so doing. Both in the Senate and after voters turned him out in 1980, he was a champion for humanitarian causes, sought to end hunger, expand civil rights, decriminalize marijuana.

Yet, though he took controversial stances and paid for it politically, McGovern is remembered today as a man of uncommon decency and principle, a man who was true to himself. When he died, former GOP Sen. Robert Dole saluted him, writing in the *Washington Post* of how McGovern attended the funeral of Pat Nixon, wife of the man who handed him that bruising defeat. Asked why he would want to be there, McGovern replied, "You can't keep on campaigning forever." The remark, wrote Dole, was typical of his former political foe, "a true gentleman who was one of the finest public servants I had the privilege to know."

If you've got to be a loser, there are worse ways to be remembered.

And that brings us to the winner — Lance Armstrong — who made headlines by cheating, allegedly. Armstrong, seven-time winner of the Tour de France,



Leonard PITTS

has been dogged by allegations of doping for years. His steadfast defense has been that he never failed a drug test. But a few days ago, the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency issued a damning report describing Armstrong as the ringleader of "the most sophisticated, professionalized and successful doping program that sport has ever seen."

The report, said to be based on sworn testimony from 26 people, including 11 former teammates, depicts him as threatening anyone who might rat him out and pressing other cyclists to join him in using banned substances.

And that was the final straw. Armstrong was formally stripped of his titles, banned for life and dropped as a pitchman by Nike. He also stepped down from the cancer charity Livestrong.

Remember, once upon a time, when our parents told us, "It doesn't matter whether you win or lose. It's how you play the game?" But the spirit of the nation, the spirit of the age, is probably better summed up in the motto embraced by Al Davis, late owner of the Oakland Raiders: "Just win, baby."

There is nothing wrong with competing hard, with wanting to win or with sacrificing to get there. Except when the thing you sacrifice is your own humanity.

So one hopes the object lesson here is not lost on us, that it is taken to heart — not simply by athletes using banned substances, but by "journalists" committing plagiarism, by kids scamming their way through school, by politicians who stand on both sides of every issue, by the whole inauthentic, cut-and-paste culture wherein appearance browbeats reality and cheating is so ubiquitous that, as a student caught up in a cheating scandal once put it, "it's almost not wrong."

There is something to be said for simply being who and what you say you are. In juxtaposing these two lives, these two fates, we learn that our parents were right, once upon a time. Better you lose with integrity than win seven times without.

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Talking Heads For Obama?

BY BILL O'REILLY
Creators Syndicate

It is widely perceived that the national television news industry skews left and in some cases actively supports liberal political candidates. While that is debatable on a case-by-case basis, the evidence is overwhelming that the folks who deliver the news to the nation are sympathetic to liberal causes, and that obviously favors President Obama during this election cycle.

Let's run it down:

- "NBC Nightly News" anchor Brian Williams interned for the Carter administration early in his career. He has no registered political affiliation, and I can find no political donations he has made. However, he has denigrated conservatives on late-night TV.
- ABC News anchor Diane Sawyer once worked for Richard Nixon. She has no political affiliation and no donations on the record. She is perceived to be a social liberal but downplays any partisanship on television.
- "CBS Evening News" anchor Scott Pelley is not affiliated with any party and has given no donations. He plays it straight on TV.
- Anderson Cooper hosts a primetime program on CNN. In 2004, he was a registered Democrat. No political donations have been made in his name. He has openly criticized the Tea Party on a number of occasions and is perceived to be liberal.
- Piers Morgan is also a CNN primetime host. A British subject, he is openly liberal on the air and earlier this month wrote an opinion article for London's Daily Mail newspaper in which he called Mitt Romney all kinds of names.



Bill O'REILLY

- Charlie Rose co-hosts "CBS This Morning" and was a registered Democrat early in his career. He is widely considered sympathetic to the left but has asked tough questions of liberal politicians on occasion.
- George Stephanopoulos co-hosts ABC's "Good Morning America" and is a registered Democrat who worked as an adviser to President Clinton. Stephanopoulos downplays his political affiliation on the air.

• Matt Lauer is the co-host of the "Today" show on NBC. He is not registered with a political party, and there are no political donations in his name. Widely considered to be socially liberal, Lauer is generally courteous to all points of view on the air.

The one thing all of the above news people have in common is that none of them is conservative. Also, I would be stunned if any of them votes for Mitt Romney.

So, how will that affect press coverage with the election around the corner? Well, the actual on-air reporting will likely be straight, but expect stories unfavorable to the president, such as Libya, to be downplayed. In addition, any gaffe the governor might make will definitely be highlighted.

As Walter Cronkite, a devoted liberal, once said: "And that's the way it is."

But it shouldn't be that way. There should be more balance among TV news anchors. That will never happen in this country, but such is life.

Veteran TV news anchor Bill O'Reilly is host of the Fox News show "The O'Reilly Factor" and author of the book "Pinheads and Patriots: Where You Stand in the Age of Obama."

YOUR LETTERS

Health Care Questions

Brian Engebretson, Yankton

To all who marched against Obamacare or anyone who doesn't want their health care dollar going to "ungodly service," you should know there are exclusions in the health care law for medical-sharing accounts. Medi-share is a Christian-based plan managed out of Florida and has been for years. They do not pay for abortions. I checked into them and other ways to cover health care for my company's plan was forced to change.

With premiums being only one factor of the health care provider, what plans pay when care is given is just as important. Companies seem to come up with more legally ways for not paying when services are used. A new term to me was "co-insurance." Medi-share has one of the best paying of all plans I investigated. Avera Sacred Heart Hospital is in Medi-shares network and is a faith-based hospital.

This by no means is meant as an advertisement for Medi-share it is just informing anyone who may be upset by Obamacare because of your faith that you have options and you can bring these options to the business that are religious based. I bet it's politics and you will do nothing.

McGovern Will Be Missed

Fred Bender, Yankton

In the fall of 1972, I cast my first ballots for candidates for political offices. The 26th Amendment had been ratified in 1971 and at the age of 19 years, I was eligible to vote. And I did. I don't recall who were candidates for national House and Senate seats (or if a Senate seat was open that year). I don't recall candidates for state and local offices. I do remember the candidates for president and that I voted for George McGovern.

I was embarrassed that he did not win in his home state, although age has taught me greater acceptance of things I cannot change. His candidacy did contribute to my orientation that I am an American first and a South Dakotan second, that what my country can do is greater than what my state can do by itself, that as Americans we are all in this together. I understand that to be very much what President Lincoln espoused.

Thank you, Mr. McGovern. I will miss you.

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OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

All Information Needed When Voting

ABERDEEN AMERICAN NEWS (Oct. 25): The secretary of state is charged with making sure the election process runs smoothly in the state.

On that count, Jason Gant failed in one significant way this cycle.

Gant did not put "pro" and "con" statements about measures on the statewide election ballot. Circuit Judge Mark Barnett said South Dakota law directs that the secretary of state shall perform that duty.

Sen. Stan Adelstein, R-Rapid City, sued the state for not including the "con" statement on the ballot for Constitutional Amendment P, which requires South Dakota's governor to propose a balanced budget.

Amendment P was one of four constitutional amendments that did not include a "con" statement. The "pro" statement for Amendment P was submitted by Gov. Dennis Daugaard.

Gant's defense was a line in state law that said statements from proponents and opponents should be included "if any can be identified."

In this case, Gant clearly didn't work very hard to identify the opponents.

Gant says he sent 51 letters to state officials, including some in the Legislature.

The secretary of state has done many things right during his tenure, including access to information on a website that is intuitive for anyone in the state to use.

A more thorough search should be made, including Gant's secretary of state website, for instance, soliciting "pro" and "con" statements — or, at the very least, using that to solicit likely parties.

More effort should be made during the legislative season to alert lawmakers that, if particular laws make it to vote on the ballot, that their opinions could be necessary and welcome.

Reaching out to party heads to find their own statements is also a simple but likely effective way to ID those statements.

Unfortunately, thousands in the state have already voted without the benefit of those con statements explained on their ballots.

Judge Barnett was wise to note, "The failure to get complete information out to the first 16,000 (voters) does not somehow negate the obligation to get this legislative-directed information, the other side of the coin, out to the rest of the voters."

He ruled that the pamphlets must be reprinted, so at least voters at this stage of the process, at least, are able to get a clear understanding of the pluses and minuses of an initiative.

Gant is tasked with making sure every candidate and ballot measure is on the ballot legally and fairly. By excluding these statements, voters are getting only part of the information necessary to make wise decisions when they are in the booth.

POLITICAL LETTERS

■ All political/letters to the editor to the **PRESS & DAKOTAN** that fall under the "paid" advertising policy will be charged \$25 for up to 200 words, plus 15 cents per additional words above 200. As with all political advertising these must be paid in advance.

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■ Since these ads are not from an actual candidate or campaign they do not need to follow the same disclaimer policy, HOWEVER, they do need to be signed (and verified) and the ads need to be marked as, **PAID ADVERTISEMENT**.

TODAY IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press

Today is Monday, Oct. 29, the 303rd day of 2012. There are 63 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Oct. 29, 1929, Wall Street crashed on "Black Tuesday," heralding the beginning of America's Great Depression.

On this date: In 1618, Sir Walter Raleigh, the English courtier, military adventurer and poet, was executed in London.

In 1787, the opera "Don Giovanni" by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart had its world premiere in Prague.

In 1901, President William McKinley's assassin, Leon Czolgosz (CHAWL'-gahsh), was electrocuted.

In 1923, the Republic of Turkey was proclaimed.

In 1940, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson drew the first number — 158 — in America's first peacetime military draft.

In 1956, during the Suez Canal crisis, Israel invaded Egypt's Sinai Peninsula. "The Huntley-Brinkley Report" premiered as NBC's nightly television newscast.

In 1960, a chartered plane carrying the California Polytechnic State University football team crashed on takeoff from Toledo, Ohio, killing 22 of the 48 people on board.

In 1966, the National Organization for Women was formally organized during a conference in Washington, D.C.

In 1967, Expo 67 in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, closed after six months.

In 1979, on the 50th anniversary of the great stock market crash, anti-nuclear protesters tried but failed to shut down the New York Stock Exchange.

In 1987, following the confirmation defeat of Robert H. Bork to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court, President Ronald Reagan announced his choice of Douglas H. Ginsburg, a nomination that fell apart over revelations of Ginsburg's previous marijuana use. Jazz great Woody Herman died in Los Angeles at age 74.

In 1998, Sen. John Glenn, at age 77, roared back into space aboard the shuttle Discovery, retracing the trail he'd blazed for America's astronauts 36 years earlier.

Ten years ago: A Minneapolis memorial service for the late Sen. Paul Wellstone turned into a virtual political rally as friends and relatives urged Minnesotans to honor his memory by putting a Democrat in his seat on Election Day.

Five years ago: A suicide bomber rode his bicycle into a crowd of police recruits in Baqouba, Iraq, killing some 30 people. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert announced he had prostate cancer, but would

continue to perform his duties. Authorities in Chad charged six French charity workers with kidnapping after they tried to put 103 children on a plane to France, claiming they were orphans from Sudan's conflict-ravaged Darfur region. (The charity workers were later convicted, jailed for several months, then pardoned.) A Moscow court sentenced Alexander Pichushkin, convicted of 48 murders, to life imprisonment, ending one of Russia's worst serial killer cases.

One year ago: A "white Halloween" storm with record-setting snowfalls brought down trees across the northeastern U.S., knocking out power to millions; 39 deaths were blamed on the weather. A grain elevator explosion in Atchison, Kan., killed six people. A Taliban suicide bomber rammed a vehicle loaded with explosives into an armored NATO bus on a busy thoroughfare in Kabul, killing 17 people, including a dozen Americans. Joe Paterno broke Eddie Robinson's record for victories by a Division I coach with No. 409 in Penn State's sloppy 10-7 win over Illinois. Jimmy Savile, 84, a veteran British broadcaster and famously eccentric culture figure, died in Leeds, England, two days before his birthday. (Since then, there have been allegations that Savile had molested dozens, possibly hundreds, of girls.)

Today's Birthdays: Bluegrass singer-musician Sonny Osborne (The Osborne Brothers) is 75. Country singer Lee Clayton is 70. Rock musician Denny Laine is 68. Singer Melba Moore is 67. Musician Peter Green is 66. Actor Richard Dreyfuss is 65. Actress Kate Jackson is 64. The president of Turkey, Abdullah Gul, is 62. Actor Dan Castellaneta ("The Simpsons") is 55. Country musician Steve Kellough (Wild Horses) is 55. Comic strip artist Tom Wilson ("Ziggy") is 55. Actress Finola Hughes is 53. Singer Randy Jackson is 51. Rock musician Peter Timmins (Cowboy Junkies) is 47. Actress Joely Fisher is 45. Rapper Paris is 45. Actor Rufus Sewell is 45. Actor Grayson McCouch is 44. Rock singer SA Martinez (311) is 43. Musician Toby Smith is 42. Actress Winona Ryder is 41. Actress Tracee Ellis Ross is 40. Actor Trevor Lissauer is 39. Actress Gabrielle Union is 39. Olympic gold medal bobsledder Vonneta Flowers is 39. Actress Milena Govich is 36. Actor Jon Abrahams is 35. Actor Brendan Fehr is 35. Actor Ben Foster is 32. Rock musician Chris Baio (Vampire Weekend) is 28. Actress India Eislely (TV: "The Secret Life of the American Teenager") is 19.

Thought for Today: "An old error is always more popular than a new truth." — German proverb.

FROM THE BIBLE

Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of His inheritance? Micah 7:18. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

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