

THE PRESS & DAKOTAN

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OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

Global Warming Agenda: Bad Policy

LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL (Oct. 1): If you think coming upticks in fuel taxes and water rates are alarming, then you won't want the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to have its way with your power bill.

The panel, overseen by the United Nations, on Friday released a report that says "it is extremely likely that human influence has been the dominant cause of the observed warming since the mid-20th century." This is the IPCC's fifth assessment report, and with the previous four, anyone who dares challenge its conclusions is castigated as a "denier."

But pesky climate change skeptics persist. Last month, The Associated Press reports, the United States and several European governments tried to persuade the panel's climate scientists to downplay or even delete evidence of the lack of global warming over the past 15 years, despite rapidly rising global greenhouse gas levels over that same period.

Why would those governments go to such measures? Because such information doesn't fit the narrative the climate change lobby and their media allies have sold for more than two decades.

What the IPCC report — and the alarmism coming from the developed world — is really all about is killing off fossil fuel use despite its affordability and reliability. And as alarmist in chief Al Gore has proved, it's also about the ever-encroaching thought police. Last week, the former vice president said, "There needs to be a political price for climate (change) denial." News flash: The First Amendment protects the free speech rights of Americans, especially political speech. Mr. Gore's rhetoric shows climate change is less about science and more about politics; he's saying global warming is a political cause.

And it already has brought great change to the United States. Carbon dioxide emissions — considered the key cause of global warming — are declining domestically. ...

Green energy already is driving power bills ever higher, thanks to government subsidies and mandates. Let the global market set the price of natural resources. Let the free market determine which fuels produce our electricity. The global warming agenda is bad policy based on false premises, and the sooner elected officials stop bowing to climate change, the better off we'll be.

SPEAK UP!

■ Share your thoughts with us. Write to the **PRESS & DAKOTAN** on a topic of the day or in response to an editorial or story. Write us at: Letters, 319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078, drop off at 319 Walnut in Yankton, fax to 665-1721 or email to views@yankton.net.

ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Oct. 3, the 276th day of 2013. There are 89 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Oct. 3, 1990, West Germany and East Germany ended 45 years of postwar division, declaring the creation of a reunified country.

On this date: In 1226, St. Francis of Assisi, founder of the Franciscan order, died; he was canonized in 1228. In 1789, President George Washington declared Nov. 26, 1789, a day of Thanksgiving to express gratitude for the creation of the United States of America.

In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the last Thursday in November Thanksgiving Day.

In 1929, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes formally changed its name to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

In 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the Office of Economic Stabilization.

In 1951, the New York Giants captured the National League pennant by a score of 5-4 as Bobby Thomson hit a three-run homer off the Brooklyn Dodgers' Ralph Branca in the "shot heard 'round the world."

In 1961, "The Dick Van Dyke Show," also starring Mary Tyler Moore, made its debut on CBS.

In 1962, astronaut Wally Schirra blasted off from Cape Canaveral aboard the Sigma 7 on a nine-hour flight.

In 1970, the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) was established under the Department of Commerce.

In 1991, Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton entered the race for the Democratic presidential nomination.

In 1995, the jury in the O.J. Simpson murder trial found the former football star not guilty of the 1994 slayings of his former wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and Ronald Goldman (however, Simpson was later found liable in a civil trial).

In 2002, five people were shot to death in the Washington, D.C. area within a 14-hour period, beginning the hunt for the "Belway Sniper." (In all, ten people were killed; mastermind John Allen Muhammad and teenage accomplice Lee Boyd Malvo were later caught.)

Ten years ago: A tiger attacked magician Roy Horn of duo "Siegfried & Roy" during a performance in Las Vegas, leaving the superstar illusionist in critical condition on his 59th birthday. Illustrator and children's book au-

thor William Steig died in Boston at age 95.

Five years ago: Amid dire warnings of economic disaster, a reluctant Congress abruptly reversed course and approved a historic \$700 billion government bailout of the battered financial industry; President George W. Bush swiftly signed it. Thirteen years to the day after O.J. Simpson was acquitted of murdering his ex-wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and her friend, Ronald Goldman, the former football star was found guilty of robbing two sports-memorabilia dealers at gunpoint in a Las Vegas hotel room. (Simpson was later sentenced to nine to 33 years in prison.)

One year ago: An aggressive Mitt Romney sparred with President Barack Obama on the economy and domestic issues in their first campaign debate. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton promised a full and transparent probe of the attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya, that killed the U.S. ambassador to Libya and three other Americans.

Today's Birthdays: Basketball Hall of Famer Marques O. Haynes is 87. Composer Steve Reich is 77. Rock and roll star Chubby Checker is 72. Actor Alan Rachins is 71. Sen. Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., is 70. Magician Roy Horn is 69. Singer Lindsey Buckingham is 64. Jazz musician Ronnie Laws is 63. Blues singer Keb' Mo' is 62. Former astronaut Kathryn Sullivan is 62. Baseball Hall of Famer Dave Winfield is 62. Baseball Hall of Famer Dennis Eckersley is 59. Civil rights activist Rev. Al Sharpton is 59. Actor Hart Bochner is 57. Actor Peter Frechette is 57. Golfer Fred Couples is 54. Actor-comedian Greg Proops is 54. Actor Jack Wagner is 54. Rock musician Tommy Lee is 51. Actor Clive Owen is 49. Actress Janel Moloney is 44. Singer Gwen Stefani (No Doubt) is 44. Pop singer Kevin Richardson is 42. Rock singer G. Love is 41. Actress Keiko Agena is 40. Actress Neve Campbell is 40. Singer India.Arie is 38. Rapper Talib Kweli is 38. Actress Alanna Ubach is 38. Actor Seann William Scott is 37. Actress Shannyn Sossamon is 35. Rock musician Josh Klinghoffer (Red Hot Chili Peppers) is 34. Actor Seth Gabel is 32. Rock musician Mark King (Hinder) is 31. Actor Erik Von Detten is 31. Singer-musician Cherrill Green (Edens Edge) is 30. Actress Tessa Thompson is 30. Actress-singer Ashlee Simpson is 29.

Thought for Today: "The worst disease in the world is the plague of vengeance." — Dr. Karl Menninger, American psychiatrist (1893-1990).

FROM THE BIBLE

He must increase, but I must decrease. John 3:30. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

YOUR LETTERS

Poor Decision

Lara Bryan, Yankton

Thumbs down to the heartlessness of continuing the garage sale on West City Limit Drive when a tragedy that affected many lives had occurred there the previous day. Insensitive, unsympathetic with no compassion for the victims and their family. The habitual garage sales at this location on a busy road where your view is impeded due to it being on a hill makes it unsafe for everyone, drivers and shoppers.

EDITOR'S NOTE: According to the Press & Dakotan's Classified Advertis-

ing Department, the sales site in question was holding a public sale (in accordance with SDSL 44-14-3) on storage units that were in default. Once the legal notice is published, the sale's dates and times are firm.

A Great Audience

Marilyn Kratz, Yankton

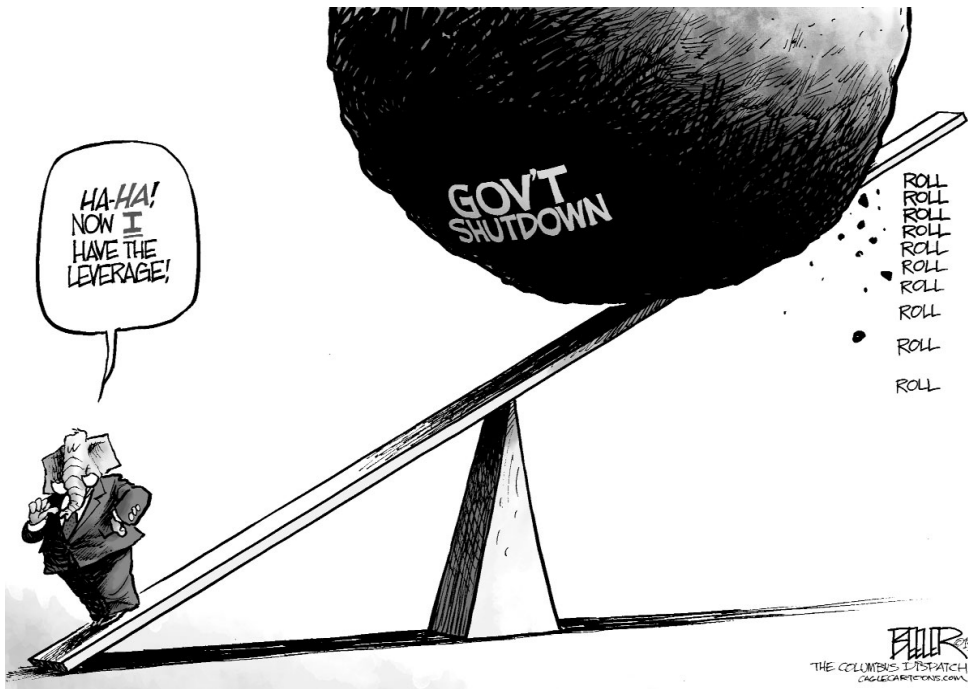
Yankton Middle School teacher, Mrs. Janine Broscha, invited me to present sessions about writing to the sixth grade as part of special activities for Homecoming Day. I was impressed with the politeness of the students. They asked intelligent questions and

listened attentively to my readings. I came away with a positive feeling about our Yankton School System, its teachers and students. It made me proud to have been a part of that system in the past, and it assured me our schools continue to provide an excellent education to the children in our community. Thanks, Middle School Sixth Graders and teachers, for an enjoyable experience.

Connecting

Yankton Homeless Coalition

Tuesday, Sept. 24, marked the inaugural Project Connect. This event was



Pierre Report

Don't Blame Taxpayers For School Funding Woes

BY STATE REP. BERNIE HUNHOFF

D-District 18 (Yankton)

Congratulations to the *Press & Dakotan* for adding longtime Pierre journalist Bob Mercer's commentaries. He is widely respected at the state capitol.

His recent column (Sept. 30) on the crisis in education funding provided good historical context. We do have a school funding problem that threatens the very viability of our state.

However, many of us would disagree with Bob's conclusion in which he seems to blame South Dakota property taxpayers and voters for the crisis.

Bob noted that Gov. Janklow allowed for opt-outs of the property tax limitations in the 1990s. "The idea was voters would want their districts to excel and pay more," he wrote in the *Press and Dakotan*.

That's where I'd disagree with Bob Mercer's analysis. The crisis in K-12 school funding is not a result of lack of opt-outs. It happened because the formula wasn't followed for two years by the governor and the Legislature in 2010 and 2011. The school budgets were frozen one session and slashed 8.6 percent the next.

At the same time, the state cut programs that helped fund teacher certification, consolidation incentives, technology and curriculum training. When the federal government sent \$26 million to help the struggling schools, the state kept that money rather than disbursing it to the districts.

Annual increases in base funding only averaged 1.5 percent a year in the 16 years since the formula was implemented — even though state government revenues often increased from 5 to 7 percent during the same period. State aid to education's share has dropped from about 40 percent of the state's general fund budget to 30 percent in the last decade.

As Bob Mercer's commentary suggested, the lack of funding on the state level has created serious issues. Important programs have been cut and curtailed. Salaries for teachers are the lowest in the nation, and South Dakota is becoming less competitive every day. Class sizes have increased and superintendents say they are getting fewer and fewer applicants for openings.

Meanwhile, the state has been shifting costs to the local taxpayer by increasing the special

Point Of View

Weighing Skills And Education

BY MICHAEL WELCH

Yankton

I am writing in response to University of South Dakota President Jim Abbott's comments on the evicseration of the arts, published in a story in the Sept. 27 edition of the *Press & Dakotan*.

I am a graduate of USD with a Master's in Public Administration and one of my other degrees is in technical education.

"Skills are necessary, but in a world that is rapidly changing, how is it that a set of skills that you learn gives you the ability to change the world?" he said. He then added, "By and large, you get there by tracking avenues that make a difference, that solve problems. It's not by skills"

I agree that there is value in a liberal education, but there is also value in developing skills.

The evicseration of a liberal education is now driven by one of the primary rules of economics: cost versus value.

I can give you examples of recent USD grads with double majors who work in "professional" fields that make \$12 per hour and then someone with a two-year technical degree is making \$28 per hour.

The student attending a technical school will not graduate if they cannot demonstrate the required skills. In my dealings with students from three technical schools, the schools are also not allowing students to just hang out while they find themselves for 6 or 7 years to achieve a "four"-year degree.

Lately I am finding many traditional school graduates who stay in school because they cannot get a job, so two years later we now have



B. Hunhoff

education levy, expanding the use of capitol outlay funds and encouraging opt/outs.

Those are Band-aids, not remedies. They will lead to unequal education funding and quality among our school districts. That would be morally wrong and the courts wouldn't allow it to continue. Students from poor districts deserve a

quality education as much as students from property-rich districts.

That's clearly spelled out in our state constitution, which reads, "The stability of a republican form of government depending on the morality and intelligence of the people, it shall be the duty of the legislature to establish and maintain a general and uniform system of public schools ... and to adopt all suitable means to secure to the people the advantages and opportunities of education."

A grade school diploma was enough for most workers when our constitution was written in 1889. Public education is vastly more important today and yet we aren't following the constitution or common sense.

Where will the state find funding for increased spending? We have to stem the tide of rising Medicaid spending. We must be smarter about granting tax breaks and incentives to big corporations. And we have to ask ourselves whether it's smart to be building nearly \$1 billion in reserves and trust funds while our schools are scraping to pay the light bill. There's no single answer, but it's obvious to everyone in Pierre that the state's coffers have swelled at the same time that the schools have suffered.

But don't blame property taxpayers. They pay more than their fair share. South Dakotans generally have higher than average property taxes — especially working class couples and seniors on fixed incomes.

State government is piling up reserves and starting new programs for corporations while starving the schools and shifting that responsibility onto home owners.

The blame for South Dakota's school crisis lies with Pierre, not with you and your neighbors.



Welch

someone with a graduate degree and still no work skills. And you usually get an attitude of projected expectations and entitlement.

I am absolutely sure that the people who work for me in the power generation industry can in fact solve problems, and by advancing the sciences of renewable energy, they are

making a difference and bettering the world. Those technically trained individuals are smart enough to incorporate technology available today in keeping a 55-year-old power plant running so that our electronic world runs. Many on my team also have traditional college training and degrees.

Feel free to demean the technically trained individual the next time your HVAC doesn't work, the next time your car is in the shop, the next time your toilet overflows, the next time your power goes out, the next time you hit a deer ... the next time you need something done.

I would like to see the South Dakota Board of Regents place our technical schools under the advanced education plan as our universities are now placed. Then we would develop a training path where a technically trained individual could have credits that would transfer to traditional training paths if they later desired. Then our advanced academics would also never again underestimate the knowledge and skills that are required to "solve problems" and advance the world.

Welch works at Gavins Point Dam, Yankton