

THE PRESS & DAKOTAN

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OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

The Nobel Prize: A Beacon Of Hope

THE KHALEEJ TIMES, Dubai (Oct. 8): Americans James Rothman and Randy Schekman along with German-born researcher Thomas Suedhof have won this year's Nobel Prize in medicine, a feat that indicates the US still retains its edge in some areas imperative for human development worldwide.

The trio received the prestigious award for solving "the mystery of how the cell organizes its transport system". The collaboration will enhance the understanding of how molecules move around cells in small packages called vesicles. As Jan-Inge Henter, professor of clinical child oncology at the Karolinska Institute, explained at the news conference that followed the announcing of the award: "These beautiful discoveries have importance for the understanding of the human body and obviously implications for diseases in various organs such as the nervous system, diabetes and immune disorders."

The human body has billions of nerve cells and how they communicate with one another is a mystery that is being unraveled down the ages by scientists, giving civilization more potent tools to fight diseases that still remain dreaded. Since the immune system is also regulated by the vesicular transport mechanism, this year's award-winning discoveries could one day lead to medicines to cure AIDS.

The Nobel awards remain a beacon of hope, despite the controversies over some, like US President Barack Obama receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 2009 and in 1973 Henry Kissinger, national security adviser and architect of the Richard Nixon administration's policies in Vietnam. However, the humane researchers' work, whose fruits would be shared by all humanity, goes a long way in eradicating such injustice.

THE VIEWS PAGE

■ The **PRESS & DAKOTAN** Views page provides a forum for open discussion of issues and interests affecting our readers. Initialed editorials represent the opinion of the writer, but not necessarily that of the **PRESS & DAKOTAN**. Bylined columns represent the view of the author. We welcome letters to the editor on current topics. Questions regarding the Views page should be directed to Kelly Hertz at views@yankton.net.

ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Oct. 10, the 283rd day of 2013. There are 82 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Oct. 10, 1962, President John F. Kennedy, responding to the thalidomide birth defects crisis, signed an amendment to the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act requiring pharmaceutical companies to prove that their products were safe and effective prior to marketing.

On this date: In 1845, the U.S. Naval Academy was established in Annapolis, Md.

In 1911, Chinese revolutionaries launched an uprising which led to the collapse of the Qing (or Manchu) Dynasty and the establishment of the Republic of China. California voters approved Proposition 4, giving women the right to vote, and Proposition 7, which established the initiative process for proposing and enacting new laws.

In 1913, the Panama Canal was effectively completed as President Woodrow Wilson sent a signal from the White House by telegraph, setting off explosives that destroyed a section of the Gamboa dike.

In 1935, the George Gershwin opera "Porgy and Bess," featuring an all-black cast, opened on Broadway; it ran for 124 performances.

In 1938, Nazi Germany completed its annexation of Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland.

In 1943, Chiang Kai-shek took the oath of office as president of China.

In 1957, President Dwight D. Eisenhower apologized to the finance minister of Ghana, Komla Agbeli Gbedemah, after the official was refused seating in a Howard Johnson's restaurant near Dover, Del.

In 1967, the Outer Space Treaty, prohibiting the placing of weapons of mass destruction on the moon or elsewhere in space, entered into force.

In 1970, Quebec Labor Minister Pierre Laporte was kidnapped by the Quebec Liberation Front, a militant separatist group. (Laporte's body was found a week later.) Fiji became independent after nearly a century of British rule.

In 1973, Vice President Spiro T. Agnew, accused of accepting bribes, pleaded no contest to one count of federal income tax evasion, and resigned his office.

In 1982, Father Maximilian Kolbe, who died in the Auschwitz Nazi concentration camp, was canonized by Pope John Paul II.

In 1985, U.S. fighter jets forced an Egyptian plane carrying the hijackers of the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro to land in Italy, where the gunmen were taken into custody.

Ten years ago: Iranian writer and

activist Shirin Ebadi won the Nobel Peace Prize. Conservative commentator Rush Limbaugh announced during his syndicated radio show that he was addicted to painkillers and was checking into a rehab center.

Five years ago: Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson announced the government had decided to go forward with a plan to buy a part ownership in a broad array of American banks in response to the financial meltdown. Connecticut's Supreme Court ruled that gay couples had the right to marry, making the state the third behind Massachusetts and California to legalize such unions. An Alaska legislative committee released a report saying Gov. Sarah Palin had violated state ethics laws and abused her power by trying to have her former brother-in-law fired as a state trooper. Finland's ex-president Martti Ahtisaari received the Nobel Peace Prize.

One year ago: President Barack Obama conceded he did poorly the previous week in his first debate with Republican rival Mitt Romney, telling ABC he "had a bad night." Romney barnstormed battleground state Ohio and released a new commercial pledging not to raise taxes. The remains of 10-year-old Jessica Ridgeway were found in a park five days after the suburban Denver fifth-grader disappeared while walking to school. (A 17-year-old boy who lived a mile away was later charged with killing and dismembering her.) Football star-turned-actor Alex Karras died at age 77.

Today's Birthdays: Former Illinois Sen. Adlai Stevenson III is 83. Actor Peter Coyote is 72. Entertainer Ben Vereen is 67. Singer John Prine is 67. Actor Charles Dance is 67. Rock singer-musician Cyril Neville (The Neville Brothers) is 65. Actress Jessica Harper is 64. Author Nora Roberts (aka "J.D. Robb") is 63. Singer-musician Midge Ure is 60. Rock singer David Lee Roth is 59. Actor J. Eddie Peck is 55. Country singer Tanya Tucker is 55. Actress Julia Sweeney is 54. Actor Bradley Whitford is 54. Musician Martin Kemp is 52. Rock musician Jim Glennie (James) is 50. Actress Rebecca Pidgeon is 48. Rock musician Mike Malinin (Goo Goo Dolls) is 46. NFL quarterback Brett Favre is 44. Actress Joelle Carter is 44. Actress Wendi McLendon-Covey is 44. Actor/TV host Mario Lopez is 40. Race driver Dale Earnhardt Jr. is 39. Actress Jodi Lyn O'Keefe is 35. Singer Mya is 34. Actor Dan Stevens (TV: ex-"Downton Abbey") is 31. Singer Cherie is 29. Actress Aimee Teegarden is 24.

Thought for Today: "I have a strong moral sense — by my standards." — Rex Stout, American writer (1886-1975).

FROM THE BIBLE

In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world. John 16:33. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

YOUR LETTERS

Poppies For Sale

Dot Blaha, Yankton

Friday and Saturday, Oct. 11-12, members of Ernest Bowyer Post 791 Ladies Auxiliary to Veterans of Foreign Wars will be out and about soliciting donations for Buddy Poppies.

Since 1922, the Buddy Poppy has been an integral part of the VFW community. As VFW's official memorial flower, the Poppy represents the blood shed by American service members. It reiterates that VFW will not forget their sacrifices.

Today, disabled veterans assemble poppies and VFW pays them for their work. In most cases, this extra money

provides additional income for the worker to pay for the little luxuries that make hospital life more tolerable.

Poppies are also important because all proceeds from their distribution are used for veteran's welfare or for the well being of veterans dependents and orphans.

Many wars have come and gone since that first "War to end all Wars."

Conflict is a difficult thing. Our hearts naturally long for peace. It's just part of our God-given design. And yet, things are rarely at peace, and it is the sad irony that war does not bring lasting peace. Still, we have benefited from

both obvious and behind the scenes service provided by the sacrifices of members of our military, our veterans, and their families.

I am reminded of an inscription somewhere on a Veterans Memorial: "For those who fought for it, freedom has a flavor the protected will never know."

Show your thanks for the men and women who have sought to restore hope and to protect the possibilities for freedom for the future. Make a contribution to the VFW Buddy Poppy Program and remember to wear your Buddy Poppy proudly.



America Held Hostage

BY LEONARD PITTS JR.

Tribune Content Agency

Welcome to America Held Hostage.

The reference is not just to the ongoing government shutdown that theoretically could be — but in all likelihood won't be — over by the time you read this. Rather, it is also to the intransigence and extremism of the Republican Party, a brand of government-by-crisis political tuggery that made this confrontation inevitable.

And not just the Republican Party but more specifically, that collection of cranks and outliers within the party so addled by hatred of the president, so crippled by the mental disorder known as Obama Dementia, that they are incapable of rationality and reason. They are the right wing of the right wing, a walking id so fully divorced from reality that even many of their fellow conservatives are wary — and weary — of them. And these are the people who are running the show.

God bless us, every one.

This latest in a series of manufactured crises centers on the Affordable Care Act, President Obama's landmark health-care reform. It may be a good law, may be a bad law, may be (and probably is) a good law with some flaws, but one thing is certain: it is a law. Duly passed by Congress, duly signed by a duly elected president, it has survived no less than 41 votes by congressional Republicans to weaken or repeal it — not to mention a showdown in the Supreme Court. No law in modern memory has been more thoroughly or energetically challenged.

Having failed epically and repeatedly to kill it, these right-wing Ahab's now embark upon an extortionate new tack that, even for them, is astonishing in its disingenuous gall. They have blocked passage of a routine resolution to fund the government unless the health-care act is defunded. Then they condemn the president because he won't "negotiate" with them.

It's as if a Little League team lost a big game on a critical call. They complain to the ump's, they



Leonard
PITTS

look at the instant replay, they file an appeal with the league, but the call still stands. So they take the ball and go home and say they will not play again until the other team agrees to "negotiate."

What a crock. In that scenario as in this one, there is nothing to talk about. The problem isn't the fairness of the process, but the inability of losers to accept the loss. Once upon a time, a parent might have addressed the problem of children behaving like brats through the vigorous application of leather to the region of the gluteus maximus. Once upon a time, a voter might have addressed the problem of politicians behaving like brats in much the same way.

But the ability to spank legislators is largely lost. The reason in a word: gerrymandering — voting district lines drawn to insulate legislators from voters with contrary viewpoints. Lawmakers choose their own voters, are answerable only to

those true believers who already agree with them. It is a system guaranteed to reward extremism and make punishing it nearly impossible.

When you cannot "throw the bums out" (congressional incumbents are re-elected at a dictatorship rate: 90 percent), the bums are free to be as splenetic as they want to be. There is no pressure to be a statesman. Indeed, statesmanship becomes a liability.

The system must be fixed. Districts should be drawn by judges or other nonpartisan entities along sensible geographic and demographic lines. No more of these crazy-shaped districts that look like Plastic Man eating spaghetti on a rollercoaster.

The stakes could hardly be higher. The full faith and credit of the United States are at risk. Yet the right wing of the right wing engages in petulance, pettiness and pique that would embarrass a 4 year old. They will have things their way — or they will shoot the hostage.

These people seem not to understand that elections have consequences. Unfortunately for this country, obstructionism does, too.

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Go 'Noles, Not Redskins

BY KATHLEEN PARKER

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WASHINGTON — As a fan of tradition, my knee-jerk reaction to the Redskins controversy — should the name be changed out of respect for offended Native Americans? — was, well, knee-jerk.

As in, good grief, must we change every word to please every offended group?

Moreover, as an alum of Florida State University (Go 'Noles!), whose mascot is the Seminole, I'm accustomed to thinking of the invocation of Native Americans as a compliment. The best athletes and the winning-est teams wish nothing more than to display the qualities we associate with Native Americans: fierce, brave and noble.

There's surely no insult intended by those cheering for Washington's Redskins. Finally, haven't we come far enough not to take everything so personally? Spoken like a true paleface.

My more-considered response is that, yes, we should — under certain circumstances — relinquish beloved tradition to the mature moment. This seems to be the sentiment of President Obama, who recently said that if he were the team owner, he would consider changing the name.

Understandable as it is for fans to resist changing the name of their team, loyalty to a name isn't really the point. The point is that "redskin," unlike the Native American-related names of other teams, refers to a physical characteristic. It is implicitly racial and through its usage has been explicitly racist. We needn't wander far into the maze of other offensive terms, many once considered humorous, that would be instantly unacceptable today.

Out of a respect for my own survival, I'll skip examples except as they pertain to my own skin. Since much of my kin hail from the land of sham-ricks and leprechauns, let's tweak Notre Dame's "Fighting Irish" to reflect a familiar stereotype — the "Drunken Irish."

Surely nothing in my childhood would suggest otherwise. We were ... spirited, often thanks to spirits of the liquid sort. And, truth be known, most Irish I know would laugh and buy another round, but you get the point. We don't, or shouldn't, gladly assign derogatory nicknames to identify our public institutions, and that includes teams that represent cities or other swaths of diverse human populations.

Even the "Drunken Irish" is a failed analogue since one is a cultural stereotype and Redskins is strictly racial.



Kathleen
PARKER

In our discussions of athletic teams, we also might consider that reducing a group of human beings to mascots is demeaning and insulting. Side-kicks acting as gimmicks is dehumanizing, as well as a vivid expression of objectification. Far less offensive to most are animals — cougars, panthers,

gators — and leprechauns in the case of Notre Dame. Some are even comical, such as the University of South Carolina's Fighting Gamecocks. You have a treat in store if you've never witnessed a stadium of gray-haired ladies alternately shouting across the field "Game!" "Cocks!"

Responding to Obama's remarks, Redskins attorney Lanny Davis, formerly of the Clinton administration, argued that the president was basing his opinion on incomplete data. He cited an Associated Press-Gfk poll conducted in April showing that four out of five Americans don't think the Redskins should change their name. He also noted that Obama hasn't found fault with Chicago's Blackhawks,

who are actually named after a chief, or other team names.

There's nothing inherently offensive about the name of a tribe or an individual. A racial or cultural identity isn't necessarily a slur.

This is the way the Seminole Tribe of Florida apparently saw it. When questions arose about the university's use of the name, Seminole leaders decided to embrace the honor intended and officially sanctioned it. In other words, they "own" it in the metaphorical sense.

Owning slurs is one way to neutralize offense. African-Americans co-opted the ugliest racist word and made it their own through musical lyrics and other media. Eve Ensler, author of "The Vagina Monologues," stole the hideousness of the c-word by having women shout it at the top of their lungs. Imagine a stadium of women screaming this word back and forth. You can't do that for long without laughing — and laughter is the mortal enemy of mean spirits.

We might wish for more lightheartedness from Native-Americans, but history sometimes makes humor difficult to summon. Jokes in any case are funniest when they are on oneself, not at the expense of others. As Native Americans consider their next moves, perhaps they should try to buy the Redskins from owner Dan Snyder, who says he'll never change the name. Then they could change the name themselves — or even better, own it.

Kathleen Parker's email address is kathleen.parker@washpost.com.

War Stories

Connie Nysveen Kendall, Yankton

Thanks to the *Press & Dakotan* for printing our World War II stories (in the Heritage Edition, Sept. 30).

At first, you only wanted a 45 word story and a picture. It was hard to follow, but my family did it. They were all pleased to see it in print.

My one brother Harold wrote on a post card and mailed it to my mother saying "how he hated to board that train" for active duty. He was drafted. I am sure there were many other young men that felt the same.