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OPINION

Talking Education: A Broader Audience

A forum held in Yankton last week to discuss education funding in South Dakota was familiar in its theme and depressing in its documentation and detail as to why said funding seems to lag behind most of the rest of the country.

But as we pointed out last Friday, one of the most noticeable features of the forum is that the crowd was light and a huge majority of those in attendance were from the school system in some capacity.

And that is one of the biggest problems the issue of education funding in this state faces.

Joy Smolnisky of the South Dakota Budget and Policy Institute (SDBPI) presented a detailed dissection of South Dakota's funding issues for schools and, particularly, for teacher pay during the forum, held at the Technical Education Center. You know the general storyline: South Dakota's teachers rank last in the nation in pay, and that school districts around the state are beset by financial problems, which stem in part from a cut in state education funding a few years ago that established a new, lower bar for what now passes as normal.

Part of the forum took dead aim at the argument that pay here is low because South Dakota is an inexpensive place to live. Smolnisky noted that while the average South Dakota nonfarm wage is 88 percent of the regional average (referring to every state that borders on South Dakota), the average teacher wage is 76 percent of the regional average. This infers that, in some cases, teaching can't even compete with other job fields, let alone other states, for quality educators. Smolnisky also noted that South Dakota spends 25 percent less on a K-12 student than the regional average.

She made other statistical points that were troubling to anyone who has an interest in the future of this community and state.

But the people who heard this information were the choir members, so to speak. They were people who came into the meeting knowing full well what the problem is. After all, they've been living with it and coping with it for years.

The rest of us weren't there to listen, to absorb the information and to see just how much of a hole our education funding is in.

That is a problem, but it also points to what must be the real objective in this discussion.

Mention education funding and teacher pay to the general public, and the response is often tied to an abhorrence of higher taxes. Some might even suggest that, if teachers are unhappy with their pay, they should go elsewhere or switch fields. Not everyone says that, but some do — and one might suspect that some of these people end up being elected to serve in Pierre in some capacity.

But these are the people that need to be engaged in this conversation. It's one thing for such forums to inform educators of their plight, but it's quite another to bring the broader spectrum into the conversation, airing out the problems and seeking reasonable solutions.

To be sure, it was not the intent of the organizers of last week's forum to preach to that aforementioned choir — it just worked out that way.

Until the proponents of this issue can figure out how to engage the rest of the electorate in this conversation, little headway will ever be made — and more depressing presentations will lie in a future marred by a cycle of budgetary sameness and a narrow-minded mentality.

kmh

ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, Oct. 14, the 287th day of 2014. There are 78 days left in the year.

Today's Highlights in History: On Oct. 14, 1964, civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. was named winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. Soviet leader Nikita S. Khrushchev was toppled from power, he was succeeded by Leonid Brezhnev as first secretary and by Alexei Kosygin as premier. Inventor Robert Moog presented his prototype electronic music synthesizer to a meeting of the Audio Engineering Society in New York.

On this date: In 1066, Normans under William the Conqueror defeated the English at the Battle of Hastings.

In 1586, Mary, Queen of Scots, went on trial in England, accused of committing treason against Queen Elizabeth I. (Mary was beheaded in February 1587.)

In 1890, Dwight D. Eisenhower, 34th president of the United States, was born in Denison, Texas.

In 1908, the E.M. Forster novel "A Room With a View" was first published by Edward Arnold of London.

In 1912, former President Theodore Roosevelt, campaigning for the White House as the Progressive ("Bull Moose") candidate, went ahead with a speech in Milwaukee after being shot in the chest by New York saloonkeeper John Schrank, declaring, "It takes more than one bullet to kill a bull moose."

In 1939, a German U-boat torpedoed and sank the HMS Royal Oak, a British battleship anchored at Scapa Flow in Scotland's Orkney Islands; 833 of the more than 1,200 men aboard were killed.

In 1944, German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel committed suicide rather than face trial and certain execution for allegedly conspiring against Adolf Hitler.

In 1947, Air Force test pilot Charles E. ("Chuck") Yeager broke the sound barrier as he flew the experimental Bell X-1 (later X-1) rocket plane over Muroc Dry Lake in California.

In 1960, Democratic presidential candidate John F. Kennedy suggested the idea of a Peace Corps while addressing an audience of students at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

In 1977, singer Bing Crosby died outside Madrid, Spain, at age 74.

In 1987, a 58-hour drama began in Midland, Texas, as 18-month-old Jessica McClure slid 22 feet down an abandoned well at a private day care center; she was rescued on Oct. 16.

In 1994, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to PLO leader Yasser Arafat, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres. Kidnapped Israeli soldier Nachshon Waxman was killed when

Israeli commandos raided the West Bank hideout of Islamic militants. Nobel Prize-winning writer Naguib Mahfouz was stabbed several times on a Cairo street; Muslim militants were blamed in the attack.

Ten years ago: The Treasury Department announced that the federal deficit had surged to a then-record \$413 billion in fiscal 2004. A suicide bomber killed six people, including four Americans, in the U.S.-guarded "Green Zone" of Baghdad.

Five years ago: The Unification Church held the largest mass wedding in a decade, with some 40,000 people participating in dozens of cities around the world. NASCAR founder Bill France Sr. headlined the five inductees into the first Hall of Fame class; Richard Petty, Dale Earnhardt, Bill France Jr. and Junior Johnson were the others. Actress Collin Wilcox-Paxton, who'd played Mayella Ewell in the movie classic "To Kill a Mockingbird," died in Highlands, North Carolina, at age 74. Pro wrestler Lou Albano, 76, died in Westchester County, New York.

One year ago: Americans Eugene Fama and Lars Peter Hansen of the University of Chicago and Robert Shiller of Yale University were named recipients of the Nobel prize in economics. The Los Angeles Dodgers won their first game of the NL championship series, beating the St. Louis Cardinals 3-0 in Game 3.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Roger Moore is 87. Classical pianist Gary Graffman is 86. Movie director Carroll Ballard is 77. Former White House counsel John W. Dean III is 76. Country singer Melba Montgomery is 77. Fashion designer Ralph Lauren is 75. Singer Sir Cliff Richard is 74. Actor Udo Kier is 70. Singer-musician Justin Hayward (The Moody Blues) is 68. Actor Harry Anderson is 62. Actor Greg Evigan is 61. TV personality Arleen Sorkin is 59. World Golf Hall of Famer Beth Daniel is 58. Singer-musician Thomas Dolby is 56. Actress Lori Petty is 51. MLB manager Joe Girardi is 50. Actor Steve Coogan is 49. Singer Karyn White is 49. Actor Edward Kerr is 48. Actor Jon Seda is 44. Country musician Doug Virden is 44. Country singer Natalie Maines (The Dixie Chicks) is 40. Actress-singer Shaznay Lewis (All Saints) is 39. Singer Usher is 36. TV personality Stacy Keibler is 35. Actor Ben Whishaw is 34. Actor Jordan Brower is 33. Director Benh Zeitlin is 32. Actress Skyler Shaye is 28. Actor-comedian Jay Pharoah (TV: "Saturday Night Live") is 27.

Thought for Today: "Almost anybody can learn to think or believe or know, but not a single human being can be taught to feel." — E.E. Cummings, American poet (born this date in 1894, died 1962).

FROM THE BIBLE

[Jesus], though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, of taking the form of a servant. *Philippians 2:6-7.* Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

AMBER ALERT

MISSING TODDLER



NAME: KIM JONG UN
HEIGHT: 4' NOTHING
WEIGHT: 250LBS (OR SO)

ALSO ANSWERS TO "DEAR LEADER"
"CHUBBY" "DINNER'S READY!"

IF FOUND, CALL CNN



The Rez Of The Story

'Origins' Of The Species

BY VINCE TWO EAGLES

Hau Mitakuepi (Greetings My Relatives), All nations and peoples have their own unique ideas about how we came to be here as humankind. I came across this little piece, co-authored by Richard Erdoes and Alfonso Ortiz, about how different and yet the same, in some respects, how these ideas are in Indian Country.



Vince TWO EAGLES

Richard Erdoes is a journalist, editor, illustrator and author. He created illustrations for *National Geographic* and *Life Magazine*. He is the author of several books, among which include "John Fire Lame Deer" and "Spotted Stones."

Alfonzo Ortiz is a Native American cultural anthropologist who, together with Erdoes, penned the following: "The world did not always exist as we know it today, and the myths which describe its creation are associated with (and as varied as) those about the rise of culture. The primordial environment is for almost all tribes a watery one, from which different beings bring up mud to make the earth. In Southwestern tales, four or five worlds of different colors or elements are stacked one on top of the other, and the people climb up reed or stalk through a hole in the ceiling of one dying world into the next, newborn one. People in the Northwest tell of descending through a hole in the sky (associated with the smoke hole of a tipi) to emerge into the present world. Countless characters enter into the action — true gods and spirits; monsters and dragons; elks, bears, eagles and other birds. Even the trickster Coyote tries his hand as creation.

"The Creation myth of the Iroquois, reflected in those of many other cultures, combines several of these elements. The daughter of the Sky Chief is pushed down through a hole in the sky into a world that is covered with water, but she is saved from drowning by water fowls, who convince the great

turtle below to harbor her. Toad dives for mud and makes the earth on the back of the great turtle. ...

"The twins who combine both good and evil recur across the continent. Among the Yuma, it is Kokomah, the all-father, who is good, while his blind brother, the subterranean Bakothal, personifies evil. The twins can also be two girls, or brother and sister. Manabozho, White Rabbit, is the creation hero of the Great Lakes region; he is also one of a set of twins who are both animal and human, his brother being Wolf.

"In the California region, the culture hero may find himself floating in a boat in the chaos of the primeval water. He sends himself to dive down to the bottom for a dab of mud and creates the present world from that. He also creates another character, frequently Coyote, who in turn makes man from wood or clay and gives him life. ...

"In the North Pacific and the plateau east of the Rockies to the Cascades, various heroes act through a similar cycle of events. ...

"In the Southwest, creation myths are closely related to a complex ceremonialism that distinguishes these tribes from those of the rest of North America. ...

"Common themes and images of creation are widespread across North America, for myths migrate as freely as people. The theme of primeval water covering a not-yet-created earth is perhaps the most prevalent, found in every area except that of the Eskimo, while the Southwest lacks the episode of a diving creature fashioning the earth from mud."

As a human community of global consequence, the more we recognize and accept that we are a diverse world the better our chances of living happy lives will be.

And now you know the rez of the story. Doksha (later) ...

Leonard Pitts Jr.

Upholding The Right To Protest

BY LEONARD PITTS JR.

Tribune Content Agency

Last week, a federal judge told us what we already knew.

Namey, that police in Ferguson, Missouri, violated the rights of protesters demonstrating against the shooting death of Michael Brown. U.S. District Judge Catherine Perry struck down an ad hoc rule under which cops had said people could not stand still while peacefully protesting. Some were told they couldn't stop walking for more than five seconds; others that they had to walk faster.

Again: These were not rioters. These were citizens seeking "peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances," as the First Amendment gives them the right to do. So Perry's ruling is welcome, but not particularly surprising. The no-stop dictate was so flagrantly wrong as to make any other decision unthinkable.

Still, one's sense of righteous vindication is tempered by the fact that police felt free to try this absurd stratagem in the first place — and by the fact that this was hardly the only recent example of police using the Constitution for Kleenex.

Ferguson, let us not forget, is also the town where reporters were tear gassed and jailed and photographers ordered to stop taking pictures, which seems a pretty straightforward abridgment of the Constitution's guarantee of freedom of the press. Meanwhile, a new ACLU report makes Boston Police the latest — but hardly the only — department empirically shown to engage in racially biased policing, which would violate the Fourteenth Amendment's promise of "equal protection of the laws." And a recent Washington Post series illustrated how civil asset forfeiture laws allow police to search your vehicle, seize any cash they find and keep it, without even charging you with a crime, until or unless you prove to their satisfaction that you came by the money legally.

Goodbye, Fourth Amendment protection against "unreasonable searches and seizures." Farewell, Fourteenth Amendment stricture against seizure of property "without due process of law."

YOUR LETTERS

Support Appreciated

Muriel Pratt, Lesterville

Mayor of Lesterville

I would like to personally thank everyone who helped our community with the recent water ban.

Thanks to the Emergency Management Team — from getting us bottled water to portable showers. What an amazing team. Thanks to the Lesterville Fire Department and the Yankton Fire Department: Your quick response, efficiency and willingness to help out with whatever was needed is greatly appreciated. Because of everyone's support, things went smoothly.

Also to all Lesterville residents, I thank you for our patience, understanding and cooperation during this difficult situation.

Thank you to those who donated water to the town.

I appreciate everyone's hard work, long hours and support you all have shown. THANK YOU!

Online Opinion

The results of the most recent Internet poll on the *Press & Dakotan's* Web site are as follows:

LATEST RESULTS:

Who do you most support in the District 18 State House race?

Jay Williams	.29%
Terry Winter	.28%
Mike Stevens	.23%
Jean Hunhoff	.13%
Not sure	.7%
TOTAL VOTES CAST	456

The Press & Dakotan Internet poll is not a scientific survey and reflects the opinions only of those who choose to participate. The results should not be construed as an accurate representation or scientific measurement of public opinion.

CURRENT QUESTION:

Who do you support in the Yankton County Commission race for the two-year term?

To vote in the *Press & Dakotan's* Internet poll, log on to our website at www.yankton.net.

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