

# THE PRESS & DAKOTAN

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**OPINION | OUR VIEW**

## Syria: Many Options, All Of Them Bad

The truest words spoken in Washington last week amid the debate over the possibility of U.S. airstrikes in Syria came from those lawmakers, military analysts and pundits who pointed out that there are no good options in the Syria situation.

Those words may not seem particularly helpful, but they spell out precisely the predicament that the U.S. and the world face with Syria.

Consider the choices: If the U.S. launches an attack on the forces of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, who has been accused of using chemical weapons on his own people, this nation could become entangled in a messy civil war in which neither side could truly be said to have an ideological kinship with the United States.

Let the matter go, and a ruthless dictator is emboldened, as might other despots in other corners of the world.

If we offer assistance to the rebels, as some have long advocated, this nation would be lending aid to forces that, historically, would likely align against this country in the broader battle against terror. One estimate encountered last week suggested that up to 20 percent of the rebel forces are affiliated with al-Qaida.

If the Obama administration attacks Syria, against the wishes of Congress and the tide of public opinion that has grown very weary after nearly 12 years of war, it risks alienating itself from the electorate and having itself cast in the same light that Barack Obama campaigned against in 2008.

If the Obama administration fails to sway lawmakers and the public to approve of the attack and thus does not act, it loses credibility on the international stage — and of course, a tyrant who apparently used chemical weapons gets off scot-free.

If Congress fails to approve the use of force in this situation, it undercuts the executive branch (provided the president accedes to congressional wishes) and thus could hamstring U.S. influence abroad.

If Congress approves the use of force, it could be held accountable by an electorate that has no desire for another war — even a limited one in scope, if that is what happens. It could have a dramatic impact on future elections.

If the U.S. doesn't act because it is weary of war, does it set a reckless precedent that we will one day regret when it's too late to change course?

If the U.S. acts despite the weariness of war, are we spreading ourselves too thin yet again?

Overall, this should have been an issue for the United Nations, but it once again faced political mechanizations that render it incapable of operating forcefully. The U.S. should not be the policeman to the world, to be sure, but the U.N. apparently has no real will to follow through on this mission.

Syria is not a direct threat to U.S. security — at least today. But the proliferation of chemical weapons must be checked, in some form. Perhaps a global effort to remove chemical weapons from this theater of conflict through diplomatic and economic means might be the best course, or it might be meaningless at this point.

We have to admire, to an extent, those people who see an easy, obvious answer in all this. They must sleep well at night with the sure knowledge of the best course of action.

But really, they are deluding themselves. Using force has consequences.

So does refraining from the use of force. There really are no good options in Syria today. And doing nothing probably is as bad and as fatal as any other. This is a crisis no one can duck.

kmh

**ON THIS DATE**

**By The Associated Press**

Today is Tuesday, Sept. 10, the 253rd day of 2013. There are 112 days left in the year.

**Today's Highlight in History:** On September 10, 1813, an American naval force commanded by Oliver H. Perry defeated the British in the Battle of Lake Erie during the War of 1812. (Afterward, Perry sent out the message, "We have met the enemy and they are ours.")

**On this date:** In 1608, John Smith was elected president of the Jamestown colony council in Virginia.

In 1846, Elias Howe received a patent for his sewing machine.

In 1912, the jungle character Tarzan made his debut as "Tarzan of the Apes" by Edgar Rice Burroughs was first published in The All-Story magazine.

In 1919, New York City welcomed home Gen. John J. Pershing and 25,000 soldiers who'd served in the U.S. First Division during World War I.

In 1939, Canada declared war on Germany.

In 1945, Vidkun Quisling was sentenced to death in Norway for collaborating with the Nazis (he was executed by firing squad in October 1945).

In 1962, the U.S. Supreme Court ordered the University of Mississippi to admit James Meredith, a black student.

In 1963, twenty black students entered Alabama public schools following a standoff between federal authorities and Gov. George C. Wallace.

In 1979, four Puerto Rican nationalists imprisoned for a 1954 attack on the U.S. House of Representatives and a 1950 attempt on the life of President Harry S. Truman were freed from prison after being granted clemency by President Jimmy Carter.

In 1983, John Vorster, prime minister of white-ruled South Africa from 1966 to 1978, died in Cape Town at age 67.

In 1987, Pope John Paul II arrived in Miami, where he was welcomed by President and Mrs. Reagan as he began a 10-day tour of the United States.

In 1993, "The X-Files" premiered on Fox Television.

**Ten years ago:** Swedish Foreign Minister Anna Lindh, 46, was stabbed in a Stockholm department store; she died the next day. (Mijailo Mijailovic was later convicted of murdering Lindh and was sentenced to life in prison.) The first video image of Osama bin Laden in nearly two years was broadcast on Al-Jazeera TV. Israel bombed the home of a Hamas leader, killing his eldest son and a

bodyguard in retaliation for two suicide bombings.

**Five years ago:** The world's largest particle collider passed its first major tests by firing two beams of protons in opposite directions around a 17-mile (27-kilometer) ring under the Franco-Swiss border. Frank Mundus, the legendary shark fisherman said to have inspired the character of Quint in "Jaws," died in Honolulu at age 82.

**One year ago:** An airstrike killed al-Qaida's No. 2 leader in Yemen along with six others traveling with him in a breakthrough for U.S.-backed efforts to cripple the terror network's operations in the impoverished Arab nation. Chicago teachers walked off the job in what would become a seven-day strike, idling nearly 400,000 students in one of the nation's third-largest school district. Andy Murray became the first British man since 1936 to capture a Grand Slam title, beating defending champion Novak Djokovic, 7-6, 7-5, 2-6, 3-6, 6-2 to win the U.S. Open in five grueling sets.

**Today's Birthdays:** World Golf Hall of Famer Arnold Palmer is 84. Actor Philip Baker Hall is 82. Actor Greg Mullavey is 80. Country singer Tommy Overstreet is 76. Jazz vibraphonist Roy Ayers is 73. Singer Danny Hutton (Three Dog Night) is 71. Singer Jose Feliciano is 68. Actor Tom Ligon is 68. Actress Judy Geeson is 65. Former Canadian first lady Margaret Trudeau is 65. Political commentator Bill O'Reilly is 64. Rock musician Joe Perry (Aerosmith) is 63. Actress Amy Irving is 60. Country singer Rosie Flores is 57. Actress Kate Burton is 56. Movie director Chris Columbus is 55. Actor Colin Firth is 53. Rock singer-musician David Lowery (Cracker) is 53. Actor Sean O'Bryan is 50. Actor Raymond Cruz is 49. Retired MLB All-Star pitcher Randy Johnson is 50. Rock musician Robin Goodridge (Bush) is 48. Rock musician Stevie D. (Buckcherry) is 47. Rock singer-musician Miles Zuniga (Fastball) is 47. Actress Nina Repeta is 46. Rapper Big Daddy Kane is 45. Movie director Guy Ritchie is 45. Contemporary Christian singer Sara Groves is 41. Actor Ryan Phillippe is 39. Actor Kyle Bornheimer is 38. Rock musician Mikey Way (My Chemical Romance) is 33. Olympic bronze medal figure skater Timothy Goebel is 33. Rock musician Matthew Followill (Kings of Leon) is 29. Singer Ashley Monroe (Pistol Annies) is 27. Singer Sanjaya Malakar ("American Idol") is 24. Actor Chandler Massie is 23. Actress Hannah Hodson is 22.

**Thought for Today:** "History is the great dust-heap ... a pageant and not a philosophy." — Augustine Birrell, English author and statesman (1850-1933).

**FROM THE BIBLE**

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability. 1 Corinthians 10:13. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis



**The Rez of the Story**

## A Religion Of Despair

BY VINCE TWO EAGLES

Hau Mitakuepi (Greetings My Relatives), Last week I began George Eagle Elk's version of Sitting Bulls last day as told to Richard Erdoes. I knew who George Eagle Elk was because he conducted the Sun Dance at Seven Mile Creek Sun Dance grounds in 1977, the same year I sun danced there. It is the same year my son Seneca was born. Seneca is now 36 years old and has four children of his own. Where do the years go, right? It seems like yesterday I was changing my son's diapers and today there stands before me a tall, strong, young gentleman no longer caught up in his Superman cape that he wore day and night. His grandmother had to wait for him to fall asleep before she could take it off long enough to throw it in the wash — he being never the wiser.

Anyway, here is part two of Sitting Bull's last struggle for freedom as promised last week:

"Immediately one of the police chiefs shot him through the body, and an all-out fight to the death began. It is always said that a fight between Indians and whites is one thing, but when Sioux fights Sioux, watch out! The police tried to act like whites, but once the fight started, they became Indian warriors again. And among Sitting Bull's friends were some of the bravest warriors, who had fought in many famous battles. When it was over, fifteen people lay dead or dying in the snow, among them Sitting Bull, Chase-the-Bear and two police chiefs.

"When the white horse heard the shooting, it thought it was back in the circus during the Wild West Show. It began dancing and prancing, sitting on its haunches and raising up its front legs, jumping around, bowing, curtsying, doing all the tricks it had been taught. In this way it honored its dead master in the only way it knew. All who saw it said that the horse was possessed, wakan, [wakan means holy or literally mysterious] in the spirit way, because it was unhurt even though it had danced through a hail of bullets. The white horse kept dancing for a while after the fight was over and the bloody scene was silent. Thus Tatanka Iyotanka, the great Sitting Bull, and his favorite white horse became part of the legend of our



Vince TWO EAGLES

people." — George Eagle Elk.

"In 1890 the messianic ghost dance religion swept the Plains tribes. Originating with a vision of the Paiute prophet Wovoka, and heralded by such signs as a frightening eclipse of the sun, the ghost dance was a religion of despair. It gave hope to people who had been deprived of their ancient hunting grounds and were starving on the reservations. Ghost dancers performed a special round dance, holding hands and singing ghost dance songs. Their shirts, painted with the images of stars, the moon and sun, and magpies, were supposed to make them bulletproof. Dancers swooned and fell down in a trance. Afterwards they declared that they had been in a beautiful land teeming with buffalo, and that they had met their long-dead relatives. The ghost dance, so Wovoka said, would change the world back into what it was before the white man came." — "American Indian Myths and Legends."

The struggle for freedom continues in the minds of many Indian and Dakotah people: freedom to develop and maintain autonomous political ideals and the practice of self-governance — to be, even if only marginally, in control of one's own destiny through making independent decisions makes all the difference in developing healthy, socially viable communities. Being under the paternalistic eye of another government compromises one's personal integrity because of the dependency created by such a system. Indian Country calls that system the BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs) under the watchfulness of the U.S. Congress.

Dependency fosters and aggravates already existing conflict between the parties to the relationship. Sitting Bull tried to resist being forced upon a reservation system that still exists today. Sitting Bull also saw that there is both good and bad in such a political system. "Take what's good from the white man's road and leave that which is not so good," which is attributed to be a quote of Sitting Bull's.

Sitting Bull will always be regarded as true patriot of the Great Sioux Nation.

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

## Heading Back To School

BY BILL O'REILLY

Creators Syndicate

It used to be that most kids hated early September: those back-to-school ads all over the place and the dreaded specter of another long year sitting in front of Ms. Crabtree or whomever. Most baby boomers like me equated Labor Day with a trip to the dentist.

These days, many urchins actually like school. They look forward to getting up early, hopping on the bus and learning their buns off. How is this possible?

I think I know. Simply put, many American children want to get away from their parents, some of whom micromanage every move they make. These days, everything is set up for the kids. No longer do they have any freedom. It's play-date this, sporting activity that. Camp here, seminar there. Climb a tree? You could be arrested — and you might even get dirty!

So children experience more freedom at school than they do at home. In the hallways, they can relate to other kids and engage in actual conversations and horseplay without Mom hovering around. Also, the high-tech gizmos in many classrooms give kids some power over their academic performance. So school is cool and much more stimulating than home.

My high school experience was mainly tedious. I had to take Latin. Amo, amas, amat. I am bored; you are bored; he, she or it is bored (loose translation). Five days a week, I fought



Bill O'REILLY

slipping into a coma.

But when I got home, the fun began. My mother wanted me out of the house. The rule was be home by 6 and don't assault anyone. I ran wild. Tackle football without equipment, stickball in the street and competitive basketball on a cement court. It was nonstop action with no adults in sight. Why would anyone want to go to school?

Today, adults are swarming their kids like ants on Haagen-Dazs. The tykes are rarely unattended. Instead, they are shuttled from venue to venue in enormous SUVs driven by mothers holding a huge cup of Starbucks in one hand and a cellphone in the other. Leisure time is often contrived and full of pressure to win a black belt or master perfect ballet moves.

Wouldn't you rather be in school? The obsession with offspring is part of an overall narcissistic plague that has infected the USA. Children are now extensions of their parents' egos. They are scorecards. The parents win if their kids do well in whatever. The children feel this very personal pressure so much that school demands are almost a relief. So three cheers for the beginning of the school term. After a summer of smother, the urchins are finally free to express themselves in classrooms all across America. Amazing how things have changed.

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**

**Successful Riverboat Days**

**The 2013 Riverboat Days Board of Directors**  
We would like to thank everyone who had a part in making this year's festival such a success. We rely heavily on donations from businesses and local citizens as well as the numerous volunteers who help in so many different ways. For all those, who helped to get the park set-up, organized events, worked at a booth, or shared expertise and knowledge to help make everything go smoothly — Thank you!

We also want to thank all of our sponsors who either donated money, services and goods, materials or manpower.

Plans for 2014 are already under way and we look forward to another successful year!

**Online Opinion**

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

**LATEST RESULTS:**

**Should Congress give approval for the use of U.S. military force in Syria?**  
No . . . . . 81%  
Yes . . . . . 13%  
Not sure . . . . . 6%  
**TOTAL VOTES CAST . . . . . 359**

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:**

**Would you support your school district if it chose to train and arm its personnel?**  
To vote in the Press & Dakotan's Internet poll, log on to our Web site at www.yankton.net.