

THE PRESS & DAKOTAN

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OPINION

Politics Trumps Immigration Issue

President Barack Obama's decision to delay possible executive action on some form of immigration reform lays bare what our legislative process has come to in this country. It's the latest example of politics prevailing over pressing need. His explanation notwithstanding, Obama's delay has blatant political calculations. A possible executive order could grant amnesty to up to 5 million illegal aliens and could be enacted now. But the president has instead bowed to pressure from some Democrats who fear that the executive order could enrage conservatives and create even more problems for the party ahead of what could be a troubling midterm election, which historically yields poor results for the party in control of the White House.

Earlier this summer, Obama promised in a Rose Garden ceremony to take action, and he fired broadsides at what he condemned as Republican obstructionists working to undo any meaningful reform on this long-troubling issue.

But now, the promise is gone, at least until after the election. Many Hispanic groups are furious, many Democrats profess disappointment and many Republicans are cynical. As well they all should be.

But this is also a symptom of the bitter political divisiveness in this country, which has caused many lawmakers to embrace the political calculus and dismiss the public good.

The immigration issue is not a new matter, and the can has been kicked down the road for so long that the matter has become a permanent flashpoint in our political wars.

We aren't going to pretend that fixing the problems will be easy, because it clearly isn't. Politicians in both parties have struggled with immigration matters for years. President George W. Bush offered a promising immigration plan in 2007, but it never even came to a vote in the U.S. Senate.

And so the problem festers, because our lawmakers allow it to do so.

Finding the proper solution — resolving the differences between those who want to offer a path to citizenship and those who to aggressively deport illegals to varying degrees — will not be easy, in part because it means exhibiting the courage to make a stand. In D.C., that's generally two strikes right there.

If the president — as well as other lawmakers — aren't willing to address the issue at all, a fix will be impossible.

Obama once again has shown us what we've seen too much of from him through the years, as well as from too many lawmakers on Capitol Hill. The difference is that the president must be a leader, even when others refuse to lead. He did it on health care reform, but that now seems like an executive aberration.

Politics has triumphed again. And the American people lose as a result.

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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 support in the South Dakota governor's race?

Dennis Daugaard	51%
Susan Wismer	38%
Michael Myers	11%
TOTAL VOTES CAST	297

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 South Dakota U.S. House race?
To vote in the Press & Dakotan's Internet poll, log on to our website at www.yankton.net.

ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, September 9, the 252nd day of 2014. There are 113 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On September 9, 1776, the second Continental Congress made the term "United States" official, replacing "United Colonies."

On this date: In 1543, Mary Stuart was crowned Queen of Scots at Stirling Castle, nine months after she was born.

In 1850, California became the 31st state of the union.

In 1893, Frances Cleveland, wife of President Grover Cleveland, gave birth to a daughter, Esther, in the White House; it was the first time a president's child was born in the executive mansion.

In 1919, some 1,100 members of Boston's 1,500-man police force went on strike. (The strike was broken by Massachusetts Gov. Calvin Coolidge with replacement officers.)

In 1926, the National Broadcasting Co. (NBC) was incorporated by the Radio Corp. of America.

In 1932, the steamboat Observation exploded in New York's East River, killing 72 people.

In 1948, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) was declared.

In 1956, Elvis Presley made the first of three appearances on "The Ed Sullivan Show."

In 1971, prisoners seized control of the maximum-security Attica Correctional Facility near Buffalo, New York, beginning a siege that ended up claiming 43 lives.

In 1976, Communist Chinese leader Mao Zedong died in Beijing at age 82.

In 1986, Frank Reed, director of a private school in Lebanon, was taken hostage; he was released 44 months later.

In 1997, Sinn Fein, the IRA's political ally, formally renounced violence as it took its place in talks on Northern Ireland's future. Actor Burgess Meredith died in Malibu, California, at age 89.

Ten years ago: Secretary of State Colin Powell told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that abuses by government-supported Arab militias in Sudan qualified as genocide against the black African population in the Darfur region. A powerful car bomb exploded outside the Australian Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia, killing at least 9 people, including the bomber.

Five years ago: In a speech to a joint session of Congress, President Barack Obama summoned lawmakers to enact sweeping health care leg-

islation, declaring the "time for bickering is over." (In an extraordinary breach of congressional decorum, Rep. Joe Wilson, R-S.C., shouted "You lie!" when the president said illegal immigrants would not benefit from his proposals; Wilson ended up apologizing.) British commandos in Afghanistan freed New York Times reporter Stephen Farrell from Taliban captors, but one commando and a Times translator were killed. Fox announced that Ellen DeGeneres would be the fourth judge on "American Idol," replacing Paula Abdul. (DeGeneres was on "Idol" for one season; she was succeeded by Jennifer Lopez.)

One year ago: Four days of vehicular gridlock began near the George Washington Bridge when two of three approach lanes from Fort Lee, New Jersey, were blocked off; the traffic jam was later blamed on loyalists to New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie over the refusal of Fort Lee Mayor Mark Sokolich to endorse Christie for re-election. (Christie has denied any prior knowledge of the lane closures.) Rafael Nadal won his 13th Grand Slam title and second at the U.S. Open by withstanding Novak Djokovic with a 6-2, 3-6, 6-4, 6-1 victory.

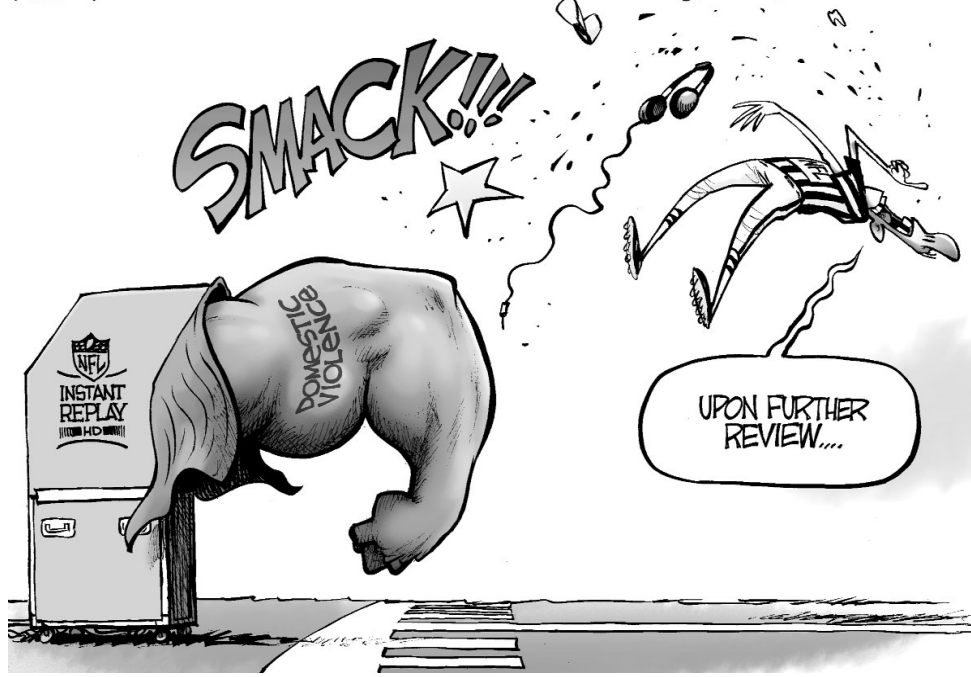
Today's Birthdays: Actress Sylvia Miles is 80. Actor Topol is 79. Rhythm-and-blues singer Luther Simmons is 72. Singer Inez Fox is 72. Singer Dee Dee Sharp is 69. Rock singer-musician Doug Ingle is 68. Country singer Freddy Weller is 67. College Football Hall of Famer and former NFL player Joe Theismann is 65. Rock musician John McFee (The Doobie Brothers) is 64. Actor Tom Wopat is 63. Actress Angela Cartwright is 62. Musician-producer Dave Stewart is 62. Actor Hugh Grant is 54. Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del., is 51. Actor-comedian Charles Esten (formerly Chip) is 49. Actress Constance Marie is 49. Actor David Benent is 48. Actor Adam Sandler is 48. Rock singer Paul Durham (Black Lab) is 46. Actress Julia Sawalha (TV: "Absolutely Fabulous") is 46. Model Rachel Hunter is 45. Actor Eric Stonestreet is 43. Actor Henry Thomas is 43. Actor Goran Visnjic is 42. Pop-jazz singer Michael Buble is 39. Country singer Joey Martin (Joey + Rory) is 39. Latin singer Maria Rita is 37. Actress Michelle Williams is 34. Actress Julie Gonzalo is 33. Country singer-songwriter Hunter Hayes is 23.

Thought for Today: "To be happy with a man you must understand him a lot and love him a little. To be happy with a woman you must love her a lot and not try to understand her at all." — Helen Rowland, American writer, journalist and humorist (1876-1950).

FROM THE BIBLE

[Bear] with one another in love. Ephesians 4:2. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

THE COLUMNISTS DISPATCH
© 2014 BY GARY L. WOOD



From The Publisher

About Political Letters

BY GARY L. WOOD
Yankton Press & Dakotan

As has become the norm during the "political" season, we are inundated with a flood of "letters to the editor" expressing support or dislike of one particular candidate or a particular issue. Many of these letters are all well-written, spelled correctly and use proper grammar, are positive without any vulgarity or other offensive language, unlike much of what we see today on the national political stage.

Interestingly enough, many appear to be produced on the same computer, on the same typewriter (for those of us old enough to know what a typewriter is), on the same paper, mailed in identical envelopes with identical return addresses on the envelope except for one key thing, the name of the sender. Our address on those sent via snail mail is always neatly typed with what appears to be the same typewriter or computer and spaced on the front of the envelope with identical positioning interesting.

Sadly, we believe these letters are part of an orchestrated campaign by the candidates being endorsed or those responsible for directing the campaigns. Many come from persons outside our circulation area. Because of the similarities, we have chosen not to run these letters. In every election cycle since my arrival in Yankton several years ago, starting with the heated 2004 statewide election, similar patterns have emerged. Many of these were reluctantly run and our paper ended up devoting a remarkable amount of space supporting a couple of candidates. In fact, it became our opinion that it was unfair and an abuse of the "letter to editor" privilege we freely offer to our readers.

In a direct-mail piece I received for an election campaign a few years ago, I noticed something very disturbing. There was specific "letter to the editor" content printed in this mail piece



Gary L. WOOD

encouraging those receiving it to write a letter in support of the candidate. It also very boldly stated that the candidate's campaign manager believed that this campaign's technique of using letters to the editor signed by different people, but prepared by the campaign, was basically a

means of garnering free advertising space. It stated, in effect, that "television and radio advertising had to be paid for (and please donate to support this effort) but we can get space for free in newspapers this way and spend the candidate's advertising dollars in the other media."

Wow! I must say, we wonder how we could be so stupid. Our livelihood and our ability to provide our readers with a newspaper are dependent upon paid advertising.

While we encourage legitimate letters to the editor on almost any subject, we've made a crucial decision that we believe will and should have an im-

act on this year's political season. Letters to the editor endorsing or criticizing political candidates or issues will no longer run for free. The authors will be contacted and offered the opportunity to use advertising space for their support or criticism of a candidate or an issue, just as they would have the opportunity to buy air time on radio here in Yankton and the surrounding region. These "letters" will be labeled "paid advertising." Of course, the writer may choose not to pay to have their advertising letter printed.

Sadly, the abuse by some of the candidate's and their campaign managers with our letters to the editor page has probably stifled some exchange of opinion, but we know of no other way to stop the abuse.

Thanks in advance for your understanding and feel free to contact me with any questions that may arise.

Gary L. Wood is owner and publisher of the Yankton Press & Dakotan.

Rez Of The Story

Life Away From The Rez

BY VINCE TWO EAGLES

Hau Mitakuepi (Greetings My Relatives),

Last week, in part one of two, we met Benie Bearskin from the Winnebago Nation who moved to Chicago in 1947 pursuant to the "Relocation Program" of the BIA. Here to continue his story about his experience he tells us:

"Four of our children were born here in the city, and yet, I think, they're orientated as American Indians. I made it a point to take them on my vacation trips in the summer, always to different reservations to get acquainted with the people of the tribe. We take photographs, we record the songs that are sung, we participate in dancing and compete for prizes ...

"I have five now. My wife is a full-blooded Winnebago, I met her on the Nebraska reservation."

"Oh, one time we had a little trouble with housing. In 1960 the work was kind of slack, there wasn't anything going on about that time. So I got together with three other boiler-makers, and we went up to Pierre, South Dakota, where the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers had this dam-construction project going on. While I was up there, the rents were raised where I had been living on the West Side. Well, my wife, with the help of the parish priest, found another apartment."

"But I was kind of worried about being eight hundred miles from home, so I jumped on a train and came back to help her make the move. We made the move, and it happened that weekend the American Indian Center was holding a show. So after we got everything moved, we all went down to the theater. And after the show, we all went to the Center and had coffee and a good visit with everyone."

"When we went back to the apartment on the West Side, the first thing we discovered that most of the windows were smashed. Well, I called the Chicago police. The police came out there, and we had a police car in front of the door for about two weeks, I guess."

"I still don't know who did it, because it was done at night. They evidently thought we were Mexicans. Well, when the police asked me about this, I said I was sorry to disappoint anybody. As much as I admire Mexicans, I'm not a Mexican. I'm an American Indian."

YOUR LETTERS

EDITOR'S NOTE: This letter was received prior to the institution of our new policy regarding letters to the editor.

Where Is Rounds?

Karen Dawson, Yankton
Where is Mike Rounds? Why isn't he participating in more debates? The other three Senate candidates have said that they want to hold more debates, but Mike Rounds says that his

schedule is FULL?
What on earth is more important than talking to the voters of South Dakota about the issues in this election? Why isn't that at the TOP of his list of priorities?

South Dakota needs to have a REAL discussion about who is the best person to represent us in the U.S. Senate. If Mike Rounds is too busy and will not participate in this discussion, voters need to look elsewhere.