

OPINION

THE HUTCHINSON NEWS

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EDITORIAL

Deserving better

GOP doesn't look like the party of Eisenhower, Dole any longer

Grand Old Party, please come back. The Republican Party has been gone too long, and look what happened when party traditionalists gave up control to the people currently running the state.

What we're seeing now certainly isn't the GOP Kansas held in highest esteem. Neither Dwight Eisenhower nor Bob Dole would make the cut in today's party of Sam Brownback and Kris Kobach.

Eisenhower, who has an airport in Wichita named after him, sent troops into Little Rock, Arkansas, to enforce federally mandated desegregation of schools and signed the civil rights bills of 1957 and 1960, protecting the rights of African-Americans at the polls.

Dole, for whom the Center for Politics and a Center for Human Development at the University of Kansas is named, worked with Democrats over the years to pass important bipartisan bills such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Led by Kobach, the new Republicans in Kansas passed laws that limit voting participation by requiring a driver's license or other form of ID and proof of citizenship, which adversely affect minorities and poor people. Given their way, they also would support public money for private schools, which would further segregate education.

Eisenhower and his party created the interstate highway system and NASA, making it easier for people to get from place to place and expand their knowledge of science.

Led by Brownback and the Legislature he controls, the current crop of Republicans made such a mess of the budget they have to rob from the highway fund to pay for necessities such as schools.

Dole twice served as Senate majority leader and during his decades in Congress helped broker negotiations and compromise with Democrats, including such landmark legislation as the Americans with Disabilities Act. Eisenhower wanted a Republican Party that was more moderate and in tune with most Americans.

The Republicans of the tea party work with no one of opposing views, and, what's worse, they're proud of it.

It's not just Kansas that's the matter, either. On the national level, it's no longer the party of Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush. The new Republicans embrace philosophies that are out of touch with most Americans. All you have to do is look to last week's debate of GOP presidential candidates, none of whom took on front-runner Donald Trump's outlandish statements about women or even tried to appeal to the growing segment of Latino voters.

Maybe that's why less than a third, 32 percent, of Americans say they have a favorable view of the current Republican Party, in a recent Pew Center poll. In that poll, only 29 percent said Republicans govern in a more "honest and ethical way," and only 31 percent said the party was "concerned with people like me." A majority, 51 percent, said the party was "more extreme in its position."

Extreme is the only way to describe the party of Brownback and Kobach. A vote for them is not a vote for the Republican Party of Dole or Eisenhower; people who leave legacies that make us want to name buildings after them, rather than tear apart our social fabric.

It's time for Republicans to reclaim the Grand Old Party.

Because Kansans, and the GOP, deserve better.



COLUMNISTS

The power of forgiveness

Community columnist



Jim Schinstock

I started following baseball in 1949, the year I learned to read. My first favorite team was the Brooklyn Dodgers, and they have been a nostalgic favorite ever since. Next week is the anniversary of one of the most memorable fights in the history of baseball. It is also a story of anger, bitterness, forgiveness and enduring friendship.

On Aug. 22, 1965, the Los Angeles Dodgers faced the San Francisco Giants in Candlestick Park in a stretch run for the National League pennant. The teams had been bitter rivals since their early days when they were crosstown rivals in New York City. The game featured both teams' aces, the Giants' Juan Marichal and the Dodgers' Sandy Koufax (still the greatest lefty to put on cleats, in my opinion).

The pivotal event occurred in the third inning. The Giants' Marichal had brushed back two Dodger hitters, prompting the umpire to warn both benches that the next intentional brushback pitch would result in an ejection. Everyone in the ballpark knew that the Dodgers would try to get even. Dodgers catcher Johnny Roseboro didn't want his pitcher Koufax to be ejected, so he volunteered his services. With Marichal at the plate, Roseboro dropped Koufax's pitch, then picked it up and nicked Marichal's ear when he threw it back to his pitcher. Words were exchanged, and Marichal used his bat to hit Roseboro on the head, opening a two-inch bloody gash over Roseboro's left eye. Both benches erupted and a 14-minute melee followed. Both Marichal and Roseboro left the game, one ejected, the

men cried.

And so began a beautiful friendship. The men saw each other frequently, and their families spent time together. But then Roseboro's health declined. He developed heart trouble, then a stroke, then cancer. He was hospitalized more than 50 times in 14 years. Johnny Roseboro died on Aug. 16, 2002, almost 37 years to the day after the infamous fight.

At Roseboro's memorial service, Juan Marichal stepped to the microphone to eulogize his friend. "I'm sorry," he said, "I wish I could've pulled back those 10 seconds." He continued: "Johnny's forgiving me was one of the best things that happened in my life. ... It takes special people to forgive."

Then Marichal, the Hall of Fame pitcher who would be forever linked to Johnny Roseboro, concluded, "I wish I could have had John Roseboro as my catcher."

This is a story about baseball and, more generally, a story about life. Specifically, this is a story about gut-wrenching anger, soul-draining guilt and the healing and transformative power of forgiveness. One of the perks of my Catholic faith is the lightness in my soul I feel after going to confession and having my sins forgiven. That experience, coupled with other times when I have been forgiven, reminds me of how freeing and liberating being reconciled feels. If being forgiven takes such a weight off my soul, then how much more must I be willing to forgive those who offend me?

Jim Schinstock is a retired Hutchinson Community College philosophy instructor. Email: schinj@yahoo.com.

WESTERN FRONT

Taxpayers, be aware

On Page A6 in the Aug. 8 Hutchinson News, it is reported that USD 308 is said to be contemplating purchasing a \$20,000-plus portable press box for the baseball and soccer field.

Wait a minute! When will the taxpayers wake up?

When "a couple years ago" a new metal building at that location cost 50 percent more than its original estimate of \$400,000 or \$600,000. Now they are contemplating spending an additional \$20,580 for a portable press box.

Is our education system presently hurting for money to educate our children?

I was employed by USD 308 for 15 years, and I observed waste then and still observe it now. I have had several conversations with existing USD 308 staff members. It seems to never end.

How have we gotten along without this press box all these years until now?

Let the administrators think of ways to educate students academically instead of more and more frills at the taxpayers' expense.

The frills that have gone into much of the bonds that have been passed by the taxpayers who have no idea how much "fluff" has been put into these bonds. These details are not made known to the taxpayers.

Taxpayers around the state should demand to know all the details that are in these projects before they vote on them.

Most would be shocked.

JERRY WILCOX
Hutchinson

Protect US citizens

The first time I became aware of the devastating effects of criminal activity perpetrated against American citizens by illegal aliens came shortly after I graduated from the Emergency Medical Technician program at Wichita State University.

I was working as a volunteer with the Sedgwick County EMS reserve when the unit I was stationed with responded to a multi-car accident. When we arrived at the scene, several automobiles where overturned and the smell of gasoline permeated the air.

Wichita Fire Department personnel worked skillfully to stabilize the scene and extract an elderly couple who had been pinned in their vehicle. I participated in CPR on one of the victims, but unfortunately both citizens died as a result of the injuries they sustained.

I found out later the accident was caused by an illegal alien who had stolen a car and then attempted to evade the police in a high-speed chase.

I never learned the fate of the perpetrator of this crime, but I often wonder how many times a day innocent Americans are victimized at the hands of "illegals" who have no right to be in the United States.

I wish our president and supporters of the sanctuary city concept cared as much about the lives of innocent Americans as they do increasing their voter base.

GREGORY H. BONTRAGER
Hutchinson

Help Trump marginalize himself

WASHINGTON – In the first Republican debate, the klieg light that Donald Trump always carries around with him revealed four or five presidential candidates who, under the right circumstances, could beat Hillary Clinton. (Trump was not among them.) But there was also a moment that could predict the defeat of the GOP in 2016.

No, I'm not talking about Sen. Ted Cruz heaping praise on Egyptian President Abdel Fatah al-Sissi – a military-backed ruler who jails journalists and has sentenced hundreds of opponents to death or life in prison – as a model in dealing with Islamism. And no, I am not talking about Sen. Rand Paul's smirk when New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie raised the memory of 9/11 victims and their families.

The single most important event of the campaign so far was Trump raising his hand and refusing to commit to the eventual GOP nominee. At that moment, Republicans saw a likely dystopia. Trump has gotten a hint of what it might be like to stand on the only stage sufficient to his self-image. He thinks that a Trump-branded White House might actually be possible. It is not a view held by any serious political observer. That doesn't matter. Some public figures – Harold Stassen, Eugene McCarthy – never recovered from the beatific vision, and spent the rest of their lives trying to recover it.

Trump will flame out. And since he is constitutionally incapable of accepting fault, he will blame the GOP for arson. As someone prone to conspiracy theories – on presidential birth records, vaccines and the scheming Mexican government



Michael Gerson

– Trump is probably gathering string to prove a plot against him involving Megyn Kelly, the GOP establishment and the American Gynecological and Obstetrical Association. So he is keeping his third-party options open.

Trump's actual performance in the debate demonstrated the real reason he will flame out. He called the other candidates "stupid" while failing to show mastery of a single policy issue. If you actually listen to him and try to follow his reasoning, the result is the intellectual version of a hangover.

Trump says that the campaign finance system is broken, which he knows because he took full advantage of it to buy politicians. So we are being told: You should elect me to protect you from people like me. The taking of graft, it seems, is deeply corrupt, while the giving of graft is just part of the game. The Trump syllogism: Every politician is bought by billionaires. Only billionaires can fund their own campaigns to avoid being bought. Therefore only billionaires can save us from billionaires.

Listen again: During the debate, he boasted of taking his investors – who are not "babies" but "killers" – for a ride, utilizing bankruptcy laws to his advantage, then divesting from Atlantic City before its economy crashed. This fits the image of the coldhearted, capitalist fat cat better than anything Matt Romney managed. Trump plays monopoly with other

people's money, then mocks them as suckers for trusting him.

I realize there is little upside in analyzing Trump's words. Those who support him are not looking for fancy language, or political correctness, or logical coherence, or human decency – all those establishment poses. They would rather have a candidate who accuses a woman of being hormonal, then repeats the charge that she is a "bimbo," then tries to cover up the whole mess with a clumsy deception.

In a parliamentary system, Trump might find his own party and win a few seats in the legislature (the Italians, after all, once elected a professionally active porn star to parliament). In America, the options are all or nothing. As a third-party candidate, Trump could easily tip a close election to Clinton. How do Republicans persuade him to choose nothing?

The best, maybe only, option is to ensure that his poll numbers deflate quickly, making it obvious that a lavish campaign for the Republican nomination and, later, the difficult task of getting on 50 ballots will end in humiliation. This will require establishment Republicans to stop playing political bank shots off his rise and make clear he has moved beyond the boundaries of serious and civil discourse. And it will require conservative populists to recognize that an alliance with Trump is effectively tying their movement to an anvil. (The Red State summit disinvention is a good start.)

It is better to risk a short-term backlash than a predictable, long-term political disaster. So Trump's inevitable self-marginalization must be given a push.

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JOIN THE DISCUSSION

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(1) Write a letter to the Western Front on any topic. Send it to The News at 300 W. Second Ave., Hutchinson, KS, 67504-0190; fax to (620) 662-4186 or email to westernfront@hutchnews.com.

Letters should be limited to 500 words. Poems, consumer complaints, business testimonials and group-written letters will not be accepted. Letters written in support of candidates and issues during election seasons should be limited to 150 words. Please sign your name and provide your address and a phone number so we may call to verify the letter. We strive to publish letters within one week of verification. There is a 30-day waiting period between submissions.

Western Front letters are subject to editing for space considerations and libel concerns. Letters that cite statistics or assert facts without providing information sources will not be published.

(2) Respond directly to a newspaper editorial by joining our online opinions blog. Go to www.hutchnews.com/editorialblogs.