

COMMENTARY



We the People

By David Adler, The Alturas Institute

To Defuse the Presidency, Revive Congress and Checks and Balances

The overwhelming, mushrooming growth of presidential power in both foreign and domestic affairs, marked by executive aggrandizement and legislative abdication, leaves students of the Constitution begging for a spirited revival of checks and balances, of the sort envisioned by delegates to the Constitutional Convention. In the Framers’ view, the way to contain the presidency and protect against the rise of a knave or a despot, was to hedge and trim its authority at every turn and further restrain the exercise of its powers through constitutional checks wielded by Congress and the judiciary. The Convention’s strict enumeration of executive powers in Article II, a stylistic approach urged by James Madison to “confine and define” the Office of the Presidency, met the moment. Reinforced by checks and balances, then a novelty in the evolution of constitutionalism, and the founding generation’s repudiation of usurpation of power, born of its own dreadful experience under the yoke of British tyranny, the prospects for a limited presidency seemed attainable.

What the Framers could not have anticipated was the decline of Congress. In Federalist No. 51, Madison had observed that, in a republic, “the legislature necessar-

ily predominates.” Rather than creating three co-equal branches, the Framers endowed Congress, not the president, with the most important powers. Indeed, Congress was given primacy. The authority to make laws, ensure their execution in accordance with legislative aims, the powers of oversight and investigation, taxing and spending and, indeed, the lion’s share of authority in foreign affairs and national security, stamped Congress as the nation’s “first branch of government.” The principal limits on the powers of Congress were to be found in the authorization of the presidential veto and judicial review of the constitutionality of national laws. But the power of removal of both the executive and the judiciary was entrusted to Congress. Neither branch was granted the power to remove members of Congress. The executive and the judicial departments, as Madison noted, were executors of the laws of Congress. They might exercise a negative over the legislative authority, but neither was a substitute for it.

Congress was entrusted with the power of impeachment, the ultimate means of protecting the republic from an errant president. Madison’s remarks in the Convention about the dangers of the presidency-subversion of

the republic, usurpation and instigator of revolts-- as the principal source of tyranny, necessitated the creation of a power for Congress that could prevail in an existential clash with the executive. The Convention’s rationale for vesting the impeachment authority in Congress reflected its confidence in the incentive of members--grounded in their oath of office and political instincts--to defend their constitutional powers from executive acts of usurpation.

Madison placed his faith in the nature of men who sought public office, not in their virtue or goodness, but in their ambition. In Federalist No. 51, he wrote that the “great security against a gradual concentration of the general powers in the same department, consists in giving to those who administer each department the necessary constitutional means and personal motives to resist encroachments of others.” He added, in words that have become immortal: “Ambition must be made to counteract ambition. The interest of the man must be connected with the constitutional rights of the place.”

Hannah Arendt, an eminent philosopher in the post war world, and author of “The

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A Country Kind of Faith

By Lucas Wagner

Preparing for Easter

Easter is quickly approaching, and with it comes the opportunity to ponder the meaning of the cross and the resurrection. This past Sunday we studied Mark 8:27-9:13. In these verses we see that Jesus went to great lengths to start preparing the disciples for the reality of the not-so-distant crucifixion. The disciples were shocked to hear that these events would take place, and the reaction was one of outrage and disbelief. If you think about it, not much has changed over time. The message of the cross still invokes outrage and disbelief in people to this day.

We all know that Jesus suffered and died on the cross, but this scripture contains another nugget of truth we seldom consider. If you look at Mark 8:34-38, you will quickly realize that the shame and suffering that Jesus experienced was not his cross alone. The unpopular truth is that anyone who follows Jesus also has a cross to bear. History and life experience tell us that Christians have suffered much for the name of Jesus over the past 2,000 years since the crucifixion and resurrection. You need to know that signing up for the Christian life means that you will experience suffering as well. This is hard for us to grapple with, most times, but it is the truth.

If we backtrack to the beginning of this scripture, we see that once again, Jesus is alone with his disciples on the road to Caesarea Philippi. Jesus uses this solitude as an opportunity to have a one-on-one discussion with the disciples. Jesus wants to know how the crowds perceive him. Who do they think he is? More importantly, who do the disciples think that Jesus is? This is still the question that people ask today. Was Jesus just a good moral teacher, or was he truly the Son of God? Being bold as he often was, Peter stepped forward to give an answer. In verse 29: “Peter an-

swered and said to Him, ‘You are the Christ.’” In verse 30, Jesus acknowledges that Peter is correct.

In the next section, Jesus begins to tell about what will happen next. Verses 31-33 say: “And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And He was stating the matter plainly. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him. But turning around and seeing His disciples, He rebuked Peter and said, ‘Get behind Me, Satan; for you are not setting your mind on God’s interests, but man’s.” It’s sobering to realize that I can proclaim Jesus as Lord with a bold voice one minute but then be a mouthpiece for Satan the next. The exchange between Jesus and Peter teaches me that Christians are not infallible, and even someone who believes the gospel can be influenced by Satan.

In the following verses, Jesus talks about the suffering that his followers will face in this life. Verses 34-38 say: “And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, ‘If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? For what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.” Easter is upon us. I pray we can learn not only what it meant for Jesus to take up his cross, but what it means for us to take up ours as well. Amen.

Announcement from page 2

time. Ads and notices must meet the noon Friday deadline before the next issue to be included in the next paper. We go to press at noon Monday.

Material needs to be submitted in person, preferably in writing, by computer cards, or by email to gazette@westriv.com, by mail to McClusky Gazette at P.O. Box 619, McClusky, 58463, or by phone to McClusky Gazette at 701-363-2492.

Thank you for keeping our chain of information working by using the established protocols for submission of community information. Our readership continues to grow.

Announcements for free and open to the public events are free.

Thank you, personal announcements, sales of items or services, or promotion of

events which charge admission or are fundraising events are ads. Legals are paid, required reports and announcements to the public.

Publishers Auxiliary

We practice journalism, which is defined by a discipline of verification; we tell you how we know something, or we attribute it; we’re mainly about facts, not opinion. Social media is mainly about opinions and have little, if any, discipline or verification. Which should you trust?

Bits and Bridles 4-H Club

Bits and Bridles 4-H Club will provide a fundraising Knoephla supper at the local Vendor Show on April 13th. The group will start serving at 11 a.m. at the McClusky High School Gym location.

Church Announcements

Assembly of God Church, McClusky

Rev. Charles Springer
Christian Education Hour, 9:30 a.m.
Worship Service, 10:30 a.m.
Sunday youth SCYwalk: grades 7-12; 5-7 p.m.
Free food at 5 p.m.

McClusky Baptist Church

Pastor Lucas Wagner, interim pastor
Church: 363-2264
Sunday School at 10 a.m.
Morning Worship at 11 a.m.

First Baptist Church, Goodrich

Pastor Lucas Wagner, interim pastor
Office: 884-2528
Parsonage:
Morning Service at 9:30 a.m.
Sunday School at 10:40 a.m.

Martin Baptist Church

701-693-2844
Pastor Tim Houck
Winter Schedule (Dec-March)
Sunday School 10:00 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM
Summer Schedule (April - Nov)
Sunday School 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 10:30 AM

Community Church of God, Bowdon

Rev. Dale Peasley
Home: 547-3596
Church: 962-3681
Sunday School at 9 a.m.
Worship at 10 a.m.

First Baptist Church, Mercer

Pastor Paul Stout
Sunday School at 10 a.m.
Morning Worship at 11 a.m.
WMF, last Sunday of each month at 7 p.m.

Holy Family Parish, McClusky

Fr. Tom Graner
First and third Sundays of the month, 10:30 a.m.

Second and fourth Sundays of the month, 8 a.m.
Fifth Sunday of the month, 5 p.m. Saturday evening

St. Francis Xavier's Catholic Church

Fr. Tom Graner
605 1s St. w., PO Box 49
Anamoose, ND 58710-0049
Parish email: stfx@gondtc.com
Bulletin announcements: stfxbulletin@gondtc.com
Phone (701) 465-3780
Fax: (773) 496-3780

First and fifth Sunday of the month, 8 a.m.
Second Sunday of the month, 10:30
Third and fourth Sundays of the month, 5 p.m. Saturday evening
Confessions ½ hour before weekday
Masses and one hour before Sunday Mass.
Baptism: Call Parish for appointment
Marriage: Call 12 months before for appointment

St. Margaret Mary's Catholic Church

Fr. Tom Graner
605 Main St., PO Box 197
Drake, ND 58735-0197
Parish email: stfx@gondtc.com
Bulletin announcements: stfxbulletin@gondtc.com
Phone (701) 465-3284
Fax: (773) 496-3780
First and second Sundays of the month, 5 p.m. Saturday evening
Third Sunday of the month, 8 a.m.
Fourth and fifth Sundays of the month, 10:30 a.m.
Confessions ½ hour before Masses.
Baptism: Call Parish for appointment
Marriage: Call 12 months before for appointment

St. John's Lutheran Church (LCMS), McClusky

Rev. Matt Thompson
701-426-4877
Sunday Worship Service at 11:30 a.m.

St. Martin Lutheran Church Anamoose

Rev. Marschner
Worship at 9 a.m

Grace Lutheran Church, McClusky

402 4th Street W.
Sunday School & Fellowship at 10 a.m. Worship Service at 11 a.m.

Peace Lutheran Church, Goodrich

Office: 363-2267
Call for Times of worship

The United Methodist Church Chaseley

Rev. Warren Rhodes
363-2420
Worship at 8:45 a.m.
Sunday School and Coffee
Fellowship at 10 a.m.

Goodrich

Rev. Warren Rhodes
363-2420
Family Worship at 10 a.m.
Sunday School at 11 a.m.
Community Bible Study at 7 p.m.

McClusky

Rev. Warren Rhodes
363-2420
Fellowship Hour at 10 a.m.
Family Worship at 11:15 a.m.
Drake
465-3757
Sunday Worship at 8:30 a.m.
Martin
324-2720, 324-2445
Worship at 11:15 a.m.
4th Sunday Evening Worship at 8 p.m.

McClusky Seventh-day

Adventist Church
Saturday Sabbath School 10 a.m.
Worship Service 11 a.m.

Seventh-Day Adventist Church

Goodrich-Hurdsfield-Turtle Lake
Saturday Sabbath School 9:45 a.m.
Saturday Worship at 11 a.m.

This section sponsored by these community-minded business people who encourage you to attend and support the church of your choice.

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