

OPINION

DAILY JOURNAL

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"The Daily Journal is dedicated to community service, to defense of individual rights and to providing those checks upon government which no constitution can ensure."

SCOTT ALEXANDER
founding editor, 1963

Opinion roundup

EDITOR'S NOTE — Today the Daily Journal presents a sampling of editorials from around the state and nation:

Attention, Democrats: Stop fighting ID law

Palladium-Item, Richmond

The Washington Post called Indiana's new voter identification law the toughest in the nation.

Indiana Democrats, who joined forces with the American Civil Liberties Union to challenge the new law in court, predicted it would create turmoil and deny many people their right to vote. Some of the party's more strident voices even drew upon the old South's Jim Crow laws in attempting to raise division and fear.

Recently, the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, in a 2-1 ruling, offered a voice of reason amid the shrill noise. The court, in upholding Indiana's 2005 law that requires state voters to show photo identification at the polls, said the law has the potential to do more good than harm.

Further, the court found that the plaintiffs had failed to produce any evidence that the new law had deprived even one voter his or her right to cast a ballot.

Voting is not a tough task to undertake in this country, even in the state which supposedly has the toughest voter identification requirements. But past evidence of vote fraud, in the absence of stricter ID laws, is plentiful.

Honest elections are not the province or platform of one party above another. Indiana Democrats would do well to get off this silly challenge bandwagon before they risk leading voters to conclude otherwise.

Parties must reach middle ground on Iraq war

Benton County (Ark.) Daily Record

No matter what differences of opinion flare up in regard to the war in Iraq — between Democrats and Republicans, between our government and the Iraqi government, between the Bush administration and foreign heads of state — the people caught squarely in the middle of each and every debate are, as they have been all along, the men and women of the U.S. military.

President Bush encouraged us, in promoting his new approach, to join him in supporting the troops. Meanwhile Dems, while debating the president every inch of the way, will assure us that they, too, have the troops' best interests in mind.

We basically believe both parties, just as we believe that the vast majority of Americans support our men and women in uniform. Another thing we believe: Americans are able to distinguish between supporting our troops and supporting this war. They know that one can see this conflict as a mistake and still support our troops as strongly as those who see the conflict the way the president professes to see it, as essential to national security.

From this point forward, we'd like to see Democrats and Republicans alike set the talk aside and show support for our troops by managing this conflict responsibly. That means treating it like a war instead of a hot-button political issue. And that will mean finding common ground.

Car-seat safety tests don't provide reassurance

Tampa (Fla.) Tribune

Anyone who buckles an infant into a car seat should be aware of a recent study from Consumer Reports showing most of those seats fail in higher-speed car crashes. The car seat manufacturers are disputing these findings, and the solution to these conflicting opinions is new government tests.

The respected magazine tested rear-facing infant car seats in 35 mph frontal crashes and 38 mph side crashes. Those are the speeds at which the government tests cars for crash safety. The conflict is that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration tests infant seats only in 30 mph crashes.

The Consumer Reports test found that in the higher-speed crashes, seven of 12 car seats failed.

One of the toughest things a new parent has to do is to buy the right car seat and install it properly. The traffic safety administration needs to move swiftly and perform its own review of infant seat safety standards at higher crash speeds and give parents the guidance they need.

Winfrey picks noble cause in girls school

The Philadelphia Inquirer

About 150 girls in South Africa must feel as though they are on another planet right now, compared with the lives they had led.

These seventh- and eighth-graders were chosen to be the inaugural class of students at the new Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls in a small town not far from the capital of Johannesburg.

Call it Planet Oprah.

This is no ordinary private, boarding school, by most anyone's standards.

Its 22-acre campus includes not only classrooms equipped with state-of-the-art technology but also a yoga studio, a beauty salon and two theaters, Newsweek magazine reported.

The South African academy is a dream of Winfrey's that she made come true with about \$40 million of her own money.

The talk-show queen wanted to find academically talented girls who lived in disadvantaged circumstances and give them an education and leadership training. She plans to expand this school and open others.

Winfrey picked a good cause.



BUSH



WINFREY



YOUR

VIEWS & COMMENTARY

Edinburgh superintendent feeling very super

To the editor:

I am extremely disappointed in the article "Feeling Not So Super" published in the Daily Journal after an interview regarding my resignation as superintendent of the Edinburgh Community School Corp.

The interview focused on the many positive things about the Edinburgh community and the school corporation. In fact, I agreed to the interview to take advantage of the opportunity of highlighting the positives. During the interview, I repeated that I wanted to be very clear that I was leaving solely because of significant events in my personal life and for no other reason.

I told her that I was also using the annual report this year as a promotional brochure for the school corporation. Why then, would I speak of the school corporation and the community in a negative light with the intention of having it published in the Journal?

The following represents 95 percent of the interview. I spoke of my pride in Edinburgh and its residents who are hard-working, caring, and decent people. I spoke of the quiet, safe, and pleasant environment in our town. I spoke about the professional culture within our schools, about our outstanding administrators, about the weekly professional development time that our teachers put in to analyze student assessment data, implement appropriate and engaging instruction, and learn to use new technologies.

I showed the reporter our Action Plan Poster created as a visual to keep our strategies for achieving the Corporation Mission in front of us. I talked about components of the plan including full-day kindergarten; 40 Developmental Assets, a character development program designed to involve the entire community; the Classroom Walk



WRITE A

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The Daily Journal invites readers to submit letters, opinion columns and e-mail comments for the opinion page.

GUIDELINES

- Letters published must contain the writer's name and city or town.
- Letters sent to the Daily Journal must be signed and must include a daytime telephone number for verification to be considered for publication.
- Letters should be kept as brief as possible.
- Make sure the e-mail letter includes the writer's name, mailing address, telephone number and e-mail address for verification.

- Opinion columns for the community forum section of the editorial page also will be considered for publication. The article should be kept to a reasonable length and should include the writer's name, address and telephone number for verification.

- Because of space and legal considerations, the Daily Journal reserves the right to edit any letters or articles and to limit comments.

WHERE TO SEND THE LETTER

Mail	E-mail	Fax
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Through program in which principals visit to observe and encourage effective instruction; the Parent Connect Web program that communicates with parents; and on, and on, and on.

The reporter chose to write the majority of her article based upon my answer to her question, "What did you fail to accomplish that you wish you had?" I should have left that question unanswered. Of course I wish I had been able to raise student achievement as represented by ISTEP+/GQE scores. Of course I wish I had been able to improve the success of our athletic programs.

I spoke with the reporter about the challenges that some, not all, of our families and students face. Of course these are causes of frustration, not only for me, but for practically every superintendent in the state. I do feel frustrated, because I know every Edinburgh

student has the same potential for success as the many that have already achieved it. This frustration will not be unique to Edinburgh. I will always feel it when programs under my leadership are not working for all students.

Another question the reporter asked was, "What's the biggest issue that your successor will address?" I spoke about our declining enrollment and the impact that could potentially have. I want the community to know we are nowhere near the point of consolidation, and there has been no discussion with surrounding school leaders on this topic.

I did explain that meeting the requirements of Advanced Placement and dual-credit courses will continue to become more difficult with a smaller high school enrollment, and a long-term impact, if enrollment continues to

drop, could be the necessity to consolidate with surrounding schools.

The Daily Journal wrote that I would not likely accept another position as a superintendent (I added unless it was an excellent match). She follows with the quote, "My ideal job is one where I can feel productive, feel I am making a difference."

Serving as superintendent of the Edinburgh Community School Corp. has been an ideal job for the past four years and eight months because I have been productive and I have made a difference. In fact, I said that I believe Edinburgh is exactly where I was supposed to be for these five years, and that is why it has been such a wonderful and rewarding experience.

The reporter followed the preceding quote with this statement. "That hasn't always happened at Edinburgh." I'm not sure if I said "at Edinburgh," or "as superintendent," but that statement was made in context of discussion of the uncertainty of my future plans.

I explained that I'm not sure I want to be a superintendent again because I often feel very removed from the teaching and learning environment. I meant that I have not felt as productive in making a difference in teaching and learning in the role of superintendent as I might in the role of a school principal.

The interpretations and subsequent article did exactly the opposite of my intention. It portrayed the community, the school corporation and my experience here as negative. That is the furthest thing from the truth. I wish I had simply sent my letter to the Journal and declined the interview.

Rebecca Sager
Edinburgh

EDITOR'S NOTE: Sager's resignation letter appeared on the front page of Thursday's Daily Journal.

Young Americans can't relate to rampant inflation

The death of a former president is still a pretty big deal in this country.

We can probably still thank our first president, one of the most beloved men in the country in his time, for the reverence and respect we still hold for those who have sat in the Oval Office.

But as the media pundits remark on the political decisions and world events that helped define the Ford administration, I am struck by a retrospective of a different type.

There is now a generation of adult Americans who have never lived in an era of high inflation.

If you told them that they should buy something today, because the price might go up tomorrow, they would probably laugh, for their experience is just the opposite.

They are waiting to buy items like flat-screen TVs and new fangled cell phones because they expect the prices to go down, and they are usually right.

They have never seen a newspaper story in August announcing how much higher the prices on Fords and Chevrolets will be for the new model year, or a report on the outcome of the latest wage agreement in the steel industry.

They have never seen interest



Patrick Barkey

rates of 5 percent or 6 percent paid on savings accounts, if they even know what a savings account is.

President Ford is rightly credited with bringing a sense of normalcy back to a country rocked by unprecedented events, but what seemed normal in 1974 is less familiar today, at least as far as the economy is concerned.

One of his first acts was to kick off a public anti-inflation campaign, dubbed Whip Inflation Now, in what proved to be a fruitless effort to get Americans to voluntarily slow down their spending to defuse an inflationary spiral that showed no signs of abating.

The president asked for a wartime-like sacrifice, which wasn't entirely inappropriate, as the legacy of 1960s Vietnam War spending, added to ambitious expansions in federal

entitlements, was at the root of the problem.

Yet 1974 was a year that the economy sank into recession at the same time as consumer prices went up by 10.3 percent. It also kicked off a period of malaise that did not end until then Fed Chairman Paul Volker got inflation under control in the early 1980s.

The point of this reminiscence is not to tarnish our recently departed president's reputation. Ford inherited a failed fiscal and monetary policy regime and passed it on to his successor, just as his predecessor had done to him.

Rather it is to remind a population more removed from inflationary experiences why economists and policymakers work so hard to avoid another one.

There has been a remarkable moderation in inflation since that time, throughout the industrialized world, both due to policy and happenstance.

In 1998, consumer prices edged up in the U.S. economy by an imperceptible 0.8 percent, and economists began to discuss the risks of disinflation in discussions of economic policy. Not coincidentally, the average span of time between recessions in the U.S. economy, periods of

uninterrupted economic growth, has grown to almost nine years, while the postwar average expansion prior to the mid-1980s lasted just over three and a half years.

Why the big turnaround? Better management of the economy by the Federal Reserve, and by central banks in other countries, is part of the answer. The intensified competition brought about by foreign trade, which both holds prices in check and spurs productivity-enhancing investment, is another.

But ultimately the answer lies within all of us.

That's because inflation can be driven by inflationary expectations as much as anything.

If we all rush to buy goods in the morning because we expect them to cost more at midday, our collective actions will ensure that result.

Those expectations are minimal today, thankfully.

But given their destructive impact, we can't worry enough about keeping them at bay in the future.

Patrick Barkey is director of economic and policy studies at Ball State University's Miller School of Business. Send comments to letters@thejournalnet.com.