



Constitution as relevant today as 235 years ago

An essay in *Time* magazine asks if our 235-year-old Constitution is relevant today.

There's nothing new in the question; it's been asked off and on for more than 200 years.

The framers of the Constitution, so the questioning logic goes, knew nothing of airplanes, telecommunications, cell phones, modern medicine. The list is endless.

A century ago, the telegraph. You get the picture.

Of course, times have changed. The Constitution, in great measure, has not. Oh, it's been amended — we banned, then restored the liquor trade, granted civil rights to all, limited presidents to two terms, but never specified "equal rights" for women.

Overall, the changes have been relatively minor.

Changes in technology don't outmode a system of government. The Constitution sets out an elegant solution to the need for a national government while protecting both the citizens and the individual states that joined to form the Union from that government's power.

If not the Constitution, with its republican system and its balance among three co-equal branches of government, how should we be governed?

By some socialist, liberal dictatorship where those who know best tell the rest of us how to live? Oh, that system has been tried, hasn't it?

By instant electronic democracy? Government by Facebook? Sounds dangerous, unstable.

The Founding Fathers may have known little of railroads, steamships or the telephone. They did know the value of the printing press, essentially the Internet of their day, and they knew human nature.

They had fought to free the colonies from oppression by those across the sea who knew best, and understood the dangers of govern-

ment granted excessive power. They gave us the framework of a system that could endure many dangers, but they left out the most precious part — our rights.

That omission was soon corrected by the addition of the first 10 Amendments, what we know as the Bill of Rights. And there, with a little tinkering, they gave us the most nearly perfect system of government known to man.

Today we look at the federal government and see that it's bloated, cumbersome, slow-moving, hard to deal with and still harder to change. Perhaps the problem isn't with the Constitution. Perhaps it's with the way it's interpreted and abused.

The framers never intended the government to be a tool for granting favors to big business interests or to social groups. They created a limited government, with limited powers and three branches to watch one another.

Time has, perhaps, corrupted that vision. It allowed the government to grow large, and at times, in its clumsy way, oppressive. Some say the system is no longer responsive to our needs. If that's the problem, though, it can be corrected.

But the framework, the framework is as brilliant today as it was 200 years ago.

A new Constitution for the Internet era?

Can you imagine? If Congress wrote it today, instead of the spare and simple document we have, it'd run to thousands of pages, replete with earmarks for the politicians and tax breaks for corporations.

The First Amendment might be 45 pages, rather than 45 words, and mention each and every group that might claim a right or two.

Let's not take the chance. Let's keep the Constitution and dump those who want to subvert it.

— Steve Haynes



News From the Past

60 years ago - 1951

Construction bids for the first phase of development of public recreation areas at Bonny Dam Reservoir are being received.

The new Lions Club of St. Francis will receive its Charter of the International Associations of Lion Clubs from District Governor, C.W. McKee of Hays tonight at the grade school gym.

Six Cheyenne County men have been called by the Selective Service Board to report for physical exams. Included are Leonard John Kamla, Ned Dewayne Felzien, Leon Arden Brethower, Dale Warren Adams, Robert John McClain and Clifford C. Fischel.

Heavy rain storm floods Lawn Ridge area to K-27. Reports say at least 6 inches fell in a short time. There was a high wind and hail which helped caused an undetermined amount of damage to wheat and field crops.

John C. Schlender of Moun-

dridge arrived in the county last week to take up his duties as the new Cheyenne County agent.

30 years ago - 1981

Seventeen Northwest Kansas banks met at Riverside to discuss problems connected with the continued use of counter checks and the possibility of eliminating their use in the future. Many of the representatives want to do away with the counter checks and the St. Francis banks have set a tentative date of Sept. 1, 1981, for the termination of their use.

Steve Douthit was installed as the new president of the St. Francis Jaycees in a meeting held at Riverside Recreation. Randy Zweggard is the outgoing president.

The FFA Parent and Member Banquet was held April 23. Ben Leibbrandt, who has been the FFA advisor for the past 15 years announced his retirement at the end of the school term. Alice Isernhagen, who has been preparing the meals for the FFA banquet for 15 years was presented this

year's Honorary Chapter Farmer Degree. Jerry White will be the new president for the 1981-82 school year.

15 years ago - 1991

Cheyenne County has a new county executive director at the Farm Service Agency office. Angie Bock arrived last week and will be taking the place of Kevin Ochs, who was the previous director.

Repairs to the courthouse, including roof and air conditioning, were among the business items discussed by the Cheyenne County Commissioners. There has been recent deterioration of the roof of the courthouse. Within a week's time, the roofing material had pulled away from the walls of the courthouse because of the extremely cold temperatures.

Senior Bill Gabel, Kansas four-time state champion, competed in the National High School Wrestling Tournament in Pittsburgh, Pa., with 626 other senior state champions.

Casey's Comments

By Casey McCormick



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Looking at most people in the public eye doesn't always leave the best taste in one's mouth. Whether it is the movie actress bouncing in-and-out of rehab or the star professional athlete who is demanding more money or the crooked politician, they don't reflect a very positive image.

Last week, former First Lady, Betty Ford, died at the age of 93. She lived a very full life. At one point she even danced under the direction of Martha Graham.

But she did not have a perfect

life by any means. Gerald Ford was president from 1974 to 1977. At that time, Mrs. Ford kept hidden from most that she was fighting a long-running battle with alcoholism and prescription drugs.

With the help of her family, she overcame her addiction. But rather than using her weakness in a selfish way, she devoted time and energy to help others. The Betty Ford Center was established in the early 1980s.

She also brought breast cancer to the forefront of American thought after her own maste-

ctomy in 1974. In a later interview Mrs. Ford said that when other women have this operation, it doesn't make the headlines. But when it happened to the wife of the president, women realized it could happen to them.

"I'm sure I saved at least one person, maybe more."

That sort of character seems unusually unusual these days.

Honor Roll

New and renewed Herald subscriptions: Ilene O'Leary, St. Francis; Lee Roy Neitzel, St. Francis; Fred Waters, McDonald; Kay Manion, Logan; Goodland Public Library, Goodland; Charlie Nipps, St. Francis; Ervin Rogers St. Francis; Jana LaBarge, St. Francis; Florece Peacock, St. Francis; Walter Douthit, St. Francis; Justin McAtee, Fruita, Colo.; Merlyn Sherlock, St. Francis; Janette Pledger, San Diego, Calif.,

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GOD SAYS ...Know ye not that friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. James 4:4

The Saint Francis Herald (USPS 475-960) A Century of Service to Cheyenne County. P.O. Box 1050, St. Francis, Kan. 67756-1050. Published each Thursday by Haynes Publishing Co., 310 W. Washington, St. Francis, Kan. 67756-1050. Entered as periodicals matter at the post office at St. Francis, Kan. 67756-1050, and at additional offices. Official newspaper of Cheyenne County. Member of the Kansas Press Association, National Newspaper Association, Colorado Press Association and Inland Press Association. Subscriptions: One year \$38 (tax included) in Cheyenne and adjacent counties; \$42 (tax included) elsewhere in Kansas; \$48 elsewhere in the U.S. Foreign subscriptions, \$28 extra per year (except APO/FPO). POSTMASTER: Send change of address to Box 1050, St. Francis, Kan. 67756-1050.

Posturing among those elected

Letter to the Editor:

Well, it's about his debt ceiling deal, and other stuff. We are seeing a lot of posturing among our elected employees in Washington.

"No tax increase," "no reduction in SS" ad nauseum. In the end, the debt ceiling will be raised, OFFSET by nebulous spending cuts, created largely by smoke and mirrors, which will take place over several decades when most of these flacks will be retired on bloated pensions or still swilling at the Public trough.

I wonder why the Federal Public sector can't do what everyone

Letter to the Editor

else has been forced to do? To Wit: Across the board salary and benefit cuts. Mandated furlough days for ALL Federal employees. Elimination of Junkets and, in the extreme, no more free bottled water.

How about elimination of whole agencies that serve no purpose?

In this day and age, do we need, for example, a Bureau of Indian Affairs? Most elected tribal council members are degreed, smart people. You can't convince me that a Government Agency can run their business better than they.

How about the Department of Commerce? We can all think of a couple more.

Unemployment? Let's start by kicking out about 6 million illegals, and making their jobs available to legals. Go a step further and make people in those geographical areas who are drawing public funds, go to work. OOPS! Forgot about the self esteem thing....

What ever happened to common sense, American pride, work ethic?

Chuck Kribs, Bird City

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