

Nebraska State Legislature

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COMMITTEES

Agriculture
Business and Labor
Judiciary
Executive Board
Reference

September 27, 2019

Governor Pete Ricketts
State Capitol Building
Lincoln, NE 68509

RE: OPEN LETTER REGARDING, INTER ALIA, VIOLATION OF YOUR GUBERNATORIAL OATH OF OFFICE AND REPUDIATION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S OFFICIAL DOCTRINE RELATIVE TO THE DEATH PENALTY AS ENUNCIATED BY POPE FRANCIS

Dear Governor Ricketts,

This Open Letter is lengthy, episodic, detailed and heavily documented by media reports and scriptural references due to your reputation as a "man of faith."

Because this Letter also implicates relevant conduct by some of your family members, insofar as such conduct was reported by the media and evidences a tell-tale pattern of problematic behavior -- it is susceptible of alternative captions: "ALL IN THE FAMILY" - "IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR" - "IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY" - "LIKE FATHER LIKE SON" - "THE NUT DOESN'T FALL FAR FROM THE TREE" - "A CHIP OFF THE OLD BLOCK".

The "OOPS FACTOR" shall come into play. From the Random House Dictionary:

oops (ŏops, ȯops), *interj.* (used to express mild dismay, chagrin, surprise, etc., as at one's own mistake, a clumsy act, or social blunder.) [1925-30; orig. uncert.]

The "OOPS FACTOR" -- express or implied -- is the standard "RICKETTS RATIONALIZATION" when "caught with the goods." I shall include examples. The "OOPS FACTOR" should be copyrighted under the "RICKETTS FAMILY" name.

The gravamen of this Letter implicates respect/disrespect for the law; personal and professional integrity; the higher duty of an elected official; and moral rectitude.

Because scofflaws seize upon the least "justification" for their wrongdoing in order to escape the consequences of misdeeds, I have formulated a principle:

If one would land a slippery Fish,
One must employ a net of finest mesh.

Hence this Letter, of necessity, must be detail-rich.

Where to begin? There are so many moving parts involved. By way of analogy -- were I tasked to reach into a barrel of countless writhing, interlaced venomous vipers, I'd be hard pressed to know in advance whether I'd latch onto the head or the tail of one of the creatures.

AS ONE SOWS. . .

Given your penchant for attacking others on the basis of often hasty, flawed, vindictive misjudgments, you bring yourself within the purview of the following scriptural admonitions which you -- being a "man of faith" -- readily should grasp:

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 7

JUDGE not, that ye be not judged.
2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.
3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

GALATIANS

CHAPTER 6

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

HOSEA, 8

7 For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind.

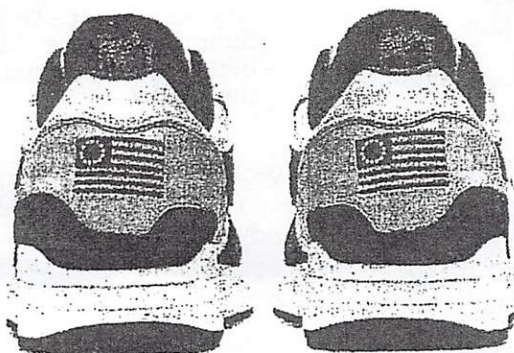
Metaphorically speaking, this Open Letter constitutes that "whirlwind" in store for those who sow the "wind" via pernicious judgments.

Examples of your flawed judgments which will be elaborated upon herein:

(1) Shamelessly playing the "race" card to launch an attack upon me and those who supported overriding your veto of my death penalty abolition bill; (2) your attack upon UNL football players for "taking a knee" during playing of the Star Spangled Banner at football games, in exercise of their right to free speech pursuant to the First Amendment; (3) your misguided attack upon Nike (following the lead of the governor of Arizona; (4) your attack -- without having read it-- upon the book, "This Blessed Earth" and its author whom you snubbed, slighted and insulted based on ignorance and partisan pettiness; (5) disrespecting the Mayor of La Vista by attacking his restaurant tax proposal via social media after spurning invitations to meet and discuss the matter.

TRIGGERING INCIDENT

This Open Letter was triggered by a Lincoln Journal Star article regarding your involvement in the Nike "flag shoes" controversy, as well as your violation of the policy of the Capitol Environs Commission "that does not allow" the placement of that "flag hands" plus a second "hands" sculpture on the grounds in front of the Governor's Mansion which is State property. (Although factually distinguishable, this situation may be analogized to former State Senator Bill Kintner's misuse of a state issued computer -- which is discussed later.)



Nike said it chose not to release its Betsy Ross sneakers because it had an old version of the American flag. The move had the sneakers, which had already been shipped to retailers, selling for more than \$2,000 on resale sites.

Shoe company pulls patriotic shoe

LINCOLN JOURNAL STAR, 7/3/19

Ricketts weighs in on Nike controversy

PART I: YOUR IGNORANCE

Shoe company pulls patriotic shoe

JoANNE YOUNG
Lincoln Journal Star

Yet another social media storm blew in Tuesday over the United States flag, just in time for Independence Day.

And Gov. Pete Ricketts on Tuesday wrote himself into the controversy, this one over whether Nike should have yanked a newly issued pair of U.S.A.-themed sneakers with a Betsy Ross flag on the back of each shoe.

The company chose not to release the Air Max 1 Quick Strike Fourth of July because it featured an old version of the American flag, Nike spokeswoman Sandra Carreon-John said in a statement. The flag has a circle of stars repre-



Ricketts

senting the 13 colonies.

The Wall Street Journal reported the decision was made after NFL star and social activist Colin Kaepernick, who is a Nike spokesperson, told the company it shouldn't sell a shoe with a symbol that he and others consider offensive.

Ricketts tweeted: Our flag is the symbol of our country's freedom, which Americans across the country will proudly celebrate this week on #IndependenceDay. Nike's decision not only disrespects our flag, but also the free enterprise system that made their brand great.

He said he stood with Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey, who withdrew state financial incentives from Nike.

Ducey tweeted this at 4 a.m.: Nike has made its decision, and now we're making ours. I've ordered the Arizona Commerce Authority to withdraw all financial incentive dollars under their discretion that the State was providing for the company to locate here.

And later Ducey said: Arizona's economy is doing just fine without Nike. We don't need to suck up to companies that consciously denigrate our nation's history.

Ducey said pulling the sneaker was a shameful retreat for the company, ap-

parently bowing to the current onslaught of political correctness and historical revisionism.

It shouldn't take a controversy over a shoe for our kids to know who Betsy Ross is, he tweeted. A founding mother. Her story should be taught in all American schools. In the meantime, it's worth Googling her.

Ricketts responded: I stand with Governor Doug Ducey, and agree that the history of our founding, including Betsy Ross, should be taught in all our schools.

You and Governor Ducey are the "heavies" in this melodrama which (borrowing from Shakespeare) could be titled "Much Ado about Nothing." Both of you are off the beam with your respective screeds against Nike. Apropos are two verses:

ST. MATTHEW, 15

14 Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

ST. LUKE, 6

39 And he spake a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?

Ducey is the "leader," you the "follower." And as foretold by Jesus, you both fell into the "ditch" of ignorance. Your relationship to him, by analogy, is like that between Svengali and the lady Trilby who was subject to his control. While I'm at it, let me provide terms that fittingly describe your opinion "shadowing" or "echoing" that of Ducey:

Sven-ga-li (sven gä'lē, sfen-), *n.* a person who completely dominates another, usually with selfish or sinister motives. [1940-45; after the evil hypnotist of the same name in the novel *Trilby* (1894) by George Du Maurier]

tag-a-long (tag'ə lōng', -long'), *n.* a person or thing that follows the lead or initiative of another.

Twee-dle-dum and Twee-dle-dee (twēd'l dum' ən twēd'l dē'), two persons or things nominally different but practically the same; a nearly identical pair. [1715-25; humorous coinage, appar. first applied as nicknames to Giovanni Bononcini and Handel, with reference to their musical rivalry; see TWEEDLE]

I resisted the almost overpowering urge to label Ducey and you "Tweedledum and Tweedledummer."

Obviously neither of you is conversant with the relevant provisions of the U. S. Code pertaining to "respect for the flag." Permit me to improve your education on the subject, and you will see that the shoes should not have been put on the market in the first place. (The Conservatives' financial Bible, The Wall Street Journal missed the point, too.) However, once on the market, they ought to have been recalled; and the both of you -- if you were going to enter the fray -- ought to have led the hue and cry for their expeditious removal -- if your true intent was to prevent "disrespect for the flag," et cetera.

I promised documentation. "The promise being made must be kept;" Abraham Lincoln remarking on his promise of freedom to black men who fought for the Union -- as thousands did -- under the flag that became the hallmark of the Ku Klux Klan and other virulently racist groups that employed lynchings, bombings and burnings against unoffending black people.

UNITED STATES CODE

TITLE 4—FLAG AND SEAL, SEAT OF GOVERNMENT, AND THE STATES

CHAPTER 1—THE FLAG

The flag of the United States for the purpose of this chapter shall be defined according to sections 1 and 2 of this title and Executive Order 10834 issued pursuant thereto.

§ 1. Flag; stripes and stars on

The flag of the United States shall be thirteen horizontal stripes, alternate red and white; and the union of the flag shall be forty-eight stars, white in a blue field.

§ 2. Same; additional stars

On the admission of a new State into the Union one star shall be added to the union of the flag; and such addition shall take effect on the fourth day of July then next succeeding such admission.

§ 8. Respect for flag

(b) The flag should never touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, the floor, water, or merchandise.

(c) The flag should never be carried flat or horizontally, but always aloft and free.

(d) The flag should never be used as wearing apparel, bedding, or drapery.

(i) The flag should never be used for advertising purposes in any manner whatsoever. It should not be embroidered on such articles as cushions or handkerchiefs and the like, printed or otherwise impressed on paper napkins or boxes or anything that is designed for temporary use and discard.

(j) No part of the flag should ever be used as a costume or athletic uniform.

Currently, I am drafting letters to the National Football League (NFL) and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) regarding the improper use of the flag -- "no part of [which] should ever be used" as patches on players' uniforms or the attire of referees, or as stickers on players' helmets which often come into contact with the ground. In your "patriotic zeal," did this aspect of the "flag controversy" never occur to you?

PART II: YOUR LAWLESSNESS

LINCOLN JOURNAL STAR, 7/3/19

Ricketts and first lady Susanne Shore in recent weeks signed on as patrons of a Serving Hands sculpture that was placed in front of the governor's mansion.

That's in spite of a Capitol Environs Commission policy that does not allow such sculptures on public property. The sculpture, in the patriotic/American theme, has the appearance of a waving flag.

What led you to "step over the line" and violate the Commission's policy, knowing that no approval for the placements had been given? The explanation apparently lies in your being "patrons" of the organization behind the "hands" project that is a Christian nonprofit called Campus Life.

Background on the organization is provided by the following excerpts:

'Spider-Man' hands still in the news

The offense taken and confusion surrounding a 6-foot-tall "Spider-Man" sculpture on display near the Lincoln Children's



RILEY
JOHNSON

Zoo has added titles to Matt Schulte's job description.

Not only is he executive director of Campus Life, a Christian nonprofit, he told the City

Council on Monday. But he's also now a purveyor of public art and "Protector of Spider-Man."

Earlier this month, a woman wrote the mayor's office demanding the red-and-black sculpture be removed because she believed it signified devil horns and was anti-Christian.

There are 50 sculptures across the city as part of the series. They'll be auctioned in October to raise money for Campus Life projects.

"Just about the only thing we lacked was a late-night comedy joke," Schulte said.

Subsequently, the woman who initially took offense wrote Schulte and said she'd realized she was mistaken and that she hoped the attention her initial letter spawned would benefit Campus Life, he said.

Having attacked Nike's business decision (for the wrong reason) you invite scrutiny, analysis, evaluation and ultimately condemnation of your own words and conduct (and drags into the overall fray, conduct of various members of your family which establishes a "family pattern" of problematic behaviors, when it comes to "respecting and playing by the rules").

As you should know, the Capitol Environs Commission is a creature of statute (Nebraska State Capitol Environs Act, sections 90-301 to 90-309). Ironically, the Commission was formed under the auspices of the Nebraska Capitol Commission, of which "the Governor shall serve as chairperson:

81-1108.32 Nebraska Capitol Commission; creation; members; appointment; expenses.

The Nebraska Capitol Commission is hereby created. The commission shall consist of the Governor, the Speaker of the Legislature, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the dean of the College of Architecture at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the Director of the Nebraska State Historical Society, and three other residents of Nebraska appointed by the Governor. One appointive member shall be appointed from each congressional district. The terms of the appointive members shall be staggered so that one term expires on March 1, 1994, one term expires on March 1, 1995, and one term expires on March 1, 1996. As the terms of the appointive members expire, the Governor shall, on or before March 1 of each year, appoint or reappoint a member of the commission for a term of three years to succeed the member whose term expires. Any member appointed after March 1 shall serve for the remaining portion of the three-year term.

The Governor shall serve as the chairperson of the Nebraska Capitol Commission, the Speaker of the Legislature shall serve as the vice-chairperson of the commission, and the State Capitol Administrator or his or her representative shall serve as the nonvoting secretary of the commission.

§ 90-306. Governor; appoint board or commission members.

The Governor may appoint members to a board or commission which is formed by the city of Lincoln or the county of Lancaster or both governmental bodies to protect and improve the Nebraska State Capitol environs.

HISTORY:

Laws 1988, LB 962, § 2.

§ 90-307. Nebraska State Capitol Environs Commission; decision or action; appeal.

Any decision or action of the Nebraska State Capitol Environs Commission may be appealed to the city council of the city of Lincoln by filing an appeal with the city clerk within thirty days of the date of the commission's action, except that governmental units may opt to appeal actions of the commission to the Department of Administrative Services by so indicating at the time of filing the appeal with the city clerk.

CONSTITUTIONAL ROLE OF THE GOVERNOR

Your cardinal duty is set forth explicitly in the Nebraska Constitution:

Art. IV,

§ 6. Supreme executive power.

The supreme executive power shall be vested in the Governor, who shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed and the affairs of the state efficiently and economically administered.

The Governor is mandated to "take care that the laws be faithfully executed" -- not ignored or evaded. The word "the" preceding the word "laws" is the same as "all" because the law is the law is the law, and no exceptions.

Violation of that explicit mandate places you in violation, also, of your Oath of Office which is set forth in the Nebraska Constitution:

Art. XV, § 1

§ 1. Official oath; refusal; disqualification.

Executive and judicial officers and members of the legislature, before they enter upon their official duties shall take and subscribe the following oath, or affirmation. "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the constitution of the United States, and the constitution of the State of Nebraska, and will faithfully discharge the duties of according to the best of my ability, and that at the election at which I was chosen to fill said office, I have not improperly influenced in any way the vote of any elector, and have not accepted, nor will I accept or receive, directly or indirectly, any money or other

valuable thing from any corporation, company or person, or any promise of office, for any official act or influence (for any vote I may give or withhold on any bill, resolution, or appropriation)." Any such officer or member of the legislature who shall refuse to take the oath herein prescribed, shall forfeit his office, and any person who shall be convicted of having sworn falsely to, or of violating his said oath shall forfeit his office, and thereafter be disqualified from holding any office of profit or trust in this state unless he shall have been restored to civil rights.

HIGHER STANDARD

When dealing with elected officials, the term "higher standard" is axiomatic and attaches upon the assumption of office. Regarding the nature of that duty-standard, the Top Court explicated the law by adopting the language formulated by the New Jersey Court. Substitute the word "Governor" for Attorney General, for the standard is applicable to all "public officers":

IN THE NEBRASKA SUPREME COURT

STATE v. DOUGLAS

225

Cite as 217 Neb. 199

We believe that the Attorney General had the duty of serving the public with undivided loyalty, uninfluenced in his official actions by any private interest or motive whatsoever. As stated by Chief Justice Vanderbilt of the Supreme Court of New Jersey, in *Driscoll v. Burlington-Bristol Bridge Co.*, 8 N.J. 433, 474-76, 86 A.2d 201, 221-22 (1952):

They [public officers] stand in a fiduciary relationship to the people whom they have been elected or appointed to serve. . . . As fiduciaries and trustees of the public weal they are under an inescapable obligation to serve the public with the highest fidelity. In discharging the duties of their office they are required to display such intelligence and skill as they are capable of, to be diligent and conscientious, to exercise their discretion not arbitrarily but reasonably, and above all to display good faith, honesty and integrity. . . . They must be impervious to corrupting influences and they must transact their business frankly and openly in the light of public scrutiny so that the public may know and be able to judge them and their work fairly. . . .

These obligations are not mere theoretical concepts or idealistic abstractions of no practical force and effect; they are obligations imposed by the common law on public officers and assumed by them as a matter of law upon their entering public office.

Your actions are to be "uninfluenced by any private interest whatsoever" which would include or embrace being a "patron" of a Christian organization.

Inarguably, the assertion or employment of the power of your Office to place those sculptures on State property without proper permission or approval was impelled by the fact that both you and your wife are "patrons," as noted. In addition to violation of the Commission policy, your action breaches the line between church and state.

The "higher standard" principle is as deeply embedded in the Scriptures as in civil law:

ST. LUKE, 12

47 And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

48 But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

By analogy, the "many stripes" provision in the Constitution is set forth in the following provision:

§ 5. Impeachment.

A civil officer of this state shall be liable to impeachment for any misdemeanor in office or for any misdemeanor in pursuit of such office.

Where, in an impeachment proceeding, the act of official delinquency consists of the violation of some positive provision of the constitution or statute, which is denounced as a crime or misdemeanor, or where it is a mere neglect of duty, willfully done, with a corrupt intention, or

where the negligence is so gross, and the disregard of duty so flagrant, as to warrant the inference that it was willful and corrupt, it is a misdemeanor in office. State v. Hastings, 37 Neb. 96, 55 N.W. 774 (1893).

THE RULE OF LAW

Governor, every person in this country must obey the law.

Black's Law Dictionary

rule of law. (18c) 1. A substantive legal principle. 2. The supremacy of regular as opposed to arbitrary power <citizens must respect the rule of law>. — Also termed supremacy of law. 3. The doctrine that every person is subject to the ordinary law within the jurisdiction <all persons within the United States are within the American rule of law>.

Observed one of America's better known presidents (face adorns Mt. Rushmore):

Theodore Roosevelt

1858-1919

No man is above the law and no man is below it; nor do we ask any man's permission when we require him to obey it. Obedience to the law is demanded as a right; not asked as a favor.

Third Annual Message [December 7, 1903]

I presume you will concede that even the Governor of the State of Nebraska is obliged to conform to "the rule of law" just as he must adhere to a "higher standard" of conduct. I maintain that your violation of the Commission's policy (while not a "criminal" act) flies in the face of that binding principle. After all, Governor, you're neither the King of England:

Sir William Blackstone

1723-1780

That the king can do no wrong is a necessary and fundamental principle of the English constitution.

Commentaries, III, 17

nor the "Sun King" of France:

Louis XIV

1638-1715

I am the state.

Attributed remark before the parliament in 1651

John Selden

1584-1654

Ignorance of the law excuses no man; not that all men know the law, but because 'tis an excuse every man will plead, and no man can tell how to refute him.

Table Talk. Law

ATTACK MODE

Striving mightily to "remake" yourself in the image of Donald Trump (for what reason I don't know, unless you're suffering from a deep sense of insecurity or personal inadequacy) you've taken to issuing blanket, all-inclusive accusations and attacks (a la Trump), without supporting evidence. Take your recent all-out parroting of Trumpian "socialism screeds against "the Democrats":

'Socialism' a weapon in 2020

Socialism clearly has emerged as the sword that Republicans have decided to deploy in targeting Democrats in Nebraska in advance of the 2020 election.

"They want to see radical, socialist ideas

Mon. LINCOLN JOURNAL STAR, 8/26/19, A5
implemented at every . . .



**DON
WALTON**

level of gov-
ernment,"
Gov. Pete
Ricketts
warned in a
recent mes-
sage sent to
Lancaster
County Re-
publicans.

"Demo-
crats seek to replace Sens.
Mike Hilgers and Suzanne

Geist with liberals who
will fight against tax cuts,
responsible budgets and
pro-life legislation in the
Legislature," the email
message stated.

"They want to re-
place Congressman Jeff
Fortenberry with a far-
left progressive who will
vote to impeach President
Trump."

Let's now go back to the future for your silly pledge to "grow a [legislative]
coalition" against me:

LEXINGTON CLIPPER-HERALD

(Excerpt)

Orr, Barrett stump for Ricketts in Lexington

Kevin Zelaya C-H staff writer | Posted: Saturday, May 10, 2014 5:00 am

LEXINGTON, Neb. — If local voters need a seal of approval, they got two on Thursday afternoon in the form of former Nebraska Gov. Kay Orr and former Nebraska Congressman Bill Barrett, who both endorsed Republican Generational Candidate Pete Ricketts.

Both former public servants were on hand at the Lexington Grand Generation Center Thursday as Ricketts sought to seal some local votes before the Tuesday Primary.

During a question and answer session with residents after his talk, Ricketts said if elected he would not allow the tactics of Omaha Sen. Ernie Chambers hijack the agenda of the Legislature.

"Ernie is a smart man but he is one man. You have to have a coalition to set the Legislative agenda. I want to grow that coalition so we don't get tied up talking about mountain lions," Ricketts said.

In your opinion, were you successful in that endeavor?

Having manifested personal animus toward me in the past, your underhanded tactic in the following example is par for the course. However, when you brazenly played the "race" card in order to to lodge your false accusation of my "sending a message to criminals" about being "soft on crime," you roped in 29 other legislators -- and embraced the Pope, Nebraska Bishops, the Catholic Church.

Not too shabby a cohort to be associated with, wouldn't you agree?

My contemporaneous response was tailored to the seriousness and solemnity of the matter at hand and was deemed by other lewgislators to have "taken the high road":

OMAHA WORLD-HERALD 5/27/15

The governor used the veto signing to make another appeal to lawmakers he hopes to flip on the repeal bill.

"This is a matter of public safety," he said. "It's also a matter of making sure our prosecutors have the tools they need to be able to put these dangerous, hardened criminals behind bars."

Several times Tuesday, the governor linked supporters of repeal with Omaha Sen. Ernie Chambers, who introduced LB 268 and has worked for decades to abolish capital punishment.

"A vote with Sen. Chambers to repeal the death penalty ... sends the message to criminals that Nebraska will be soft on crime," Ricketts said.

Chambers said Tuesday he believes senators who supported his bill through three rounds of debate did so as a matter of principle.

LINCOLN JOURNAL STAR 5/27/15

Chambers said supporters of repeal will not be voting "with" him, as Ricketts suggested several times Tuesday.

"They're voting on the basis of their conscience. ... They're voting with the conservative movement around the country. They're voting with Pope Francis and the Catholic church, and with their colleagues who are the same party and persuasion," he said.

Most of those senators have cast their votes -- based on conscience -- three times, he said.

"This is a shining moment for the Legislature," Chambers said. "We can take this state out of that period of darkness and bring it into the light of civilization and humane justice."

The following examples require little, if any, commentary.

OMAHA WORLD-HERALD, 7/30/19 1A

Ricketts says restaurant tax would be 'bad' for La Vista

Via Twitter, he urges council to reject 1.5% tax; mayor asks: 'Is that how we communicate now?'

By REECE RISTAU
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Gov. Pete Ricketts on Monday attacked a proposed 1.5% restaurant tax in La Vista, using Twitter to urge the City Council to reject the measure, calling it "bad for families and business!"

"The strength of the economy and existing revenue growth — not new taxes — should fund city hall," Ricketts wrote in one of two tweets on the tax.

The proposed restaurant tax, which would apply to many food and drink establishments, could generate up to \$700,000 annually, according to La Vista.

La Vista Mayor Doug Kindig said he was disappointed that Ricketts expressed his dissent on social media rather than in a one-on-one phone call.

"Is that how we communicate in this state now with our elected leaders?" Kindig asked.

Kindig said he has invited the governor multiple times to come to La Vista to study the city's bud-

See La Vista; Page 2

Continued from Page 1

get, which Kindig said would give Ricketts greater insight into how local municipalities manage growth.

Those meetings were not accepted, Kindig said.

"I thought we had a good enough relationship that he would at least call me and ask me about it," Kindig said.

Obviously aspiring to be a TRUMP CLONE, "PETER-THE -TWEETER" took to Twitter and "dissed" the Mayor by refusing to extend Professional Courtesy. WHAT A GUY!

Omaha World-Herald
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2019
SECTION B

COUNCIL VOTES 'YES'

La Vista restaurant tax adds a few coins to cost of a meal

By REECE RISTAU

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Come October, a night out in La Vista will cost a few more quarters and dimes than usual.

The La Vista City Council has approved a 1.5% restaurant tax.

The occupation tax, which will apply to restaurants and drinking establishments, passed Tuesday without much fanfare. One man spoke against the ordinance after it had passed; none of the city's eight council members commented before voting.

La Vista Mayor Doug Kindig has said the tax — projected to one day generate \$700,000 — will help the city continue to grow while still providing a full slate of services to

citizens.

The city's main corridor, 84th Street, is currently getting a major face-lift, including the development of City Centre. The 34-acre, \$235 million mixed-use complex between Park View Boulevard and Giles Road will feature restaurants, bars, retail, housing and office space.

Kindig has pointed to other developments — like Southport, where Cabela's is located — as examples of the kind of investments the city has made over the years. Those types of big, splashy projects, Kindig has said, require some taxpayer money upfront before the city begins to see property and sales tax benefits.

See La Vista: Page 2

ODE TO A TWEETER

The Council's Response to PETER-THE-TWEETER?

Man! You've got to love it!

Brushing him off like a pesky 'skeeter:

"TAKE YOUR TWEET AND SHOVE IT!"

La Vista Ricketts spoke against 1.5% tax

Continued from Page 1

"I don't like raising taxes," Kindig said during a City Council meeting last month, "but what I do like to do is to be able to set our city up with a diversified tax base for the next generation."

The tax, which goes into effect Oct. 1, will add 75 cents to a \$50 meal.

The few people who spoke against the tax when it was introduced last month included the owner of Mama's Pizza in La Vista, who said restaurant taxes can hurt a business's ability to control prices, and a woman who expressed concern about cost increases for those with less income.

The tax also got the attention of Gov. Pete Ricketts, who spoke against the measure on social media and in an interview with The World-Herald.

The ordinance that passed Tuesday included an amendment that will allow businesses to withhold 2% of the tax to cover "administrative costs and expenses" — namely the transaction fees associated with credit and debit cards.

That amendment was included at the request of a Nebraska restaurant group, which alerted La Vista officials to the fact that other cities' restaurant taxes include a similar provision.

Omaha and Ralston also have restaurant taxes, respectively set at 2% and 2.5%.

La Vista's tax passed 7-1, with Councilman Mike Crawford voting no.

Sun. WORLD-HERALD, 1/13/19 1A

Grace: Book presents Nebraska farmers as real people, not caricatures

*Ricketts' snub
creates run on
'Blessed Earth,'
unites readers*



Erin
Grace

COLUMNIST

At the end of his unintentionally controversial book about a Nebraska farm family, Ted Genoways thanks his supporters. Following a long tradition, the author of "This Blessed Earth" thanks his wife, photojournalist Mary Anne Andrei, for the idea to chronicle the ups and downs of a Nebraska farm family.

Genoways thanks the Hammond family for allowing interlopers into their lives for a full year, beginning with the fall harvest in 2014, at their east-central Nebraska farm.

Continued from Page 1

But Genoways might need to add to his acknowledgments one more name: Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts. For in refusing to promote a book, our governor wound up promoting it. That's how it goes with forbidden fruit.

After Monday's dust-up in which Ricketts backed out of a public proclamation and ceremony for the "One Book One Nebraska" selection for 2019, sales went through the roof. (The award-winning book is Iowa's selection, too.)

In the long tradition of book disses, Ricketts said Monday that he hadn't read the 240-page book. While he didn't tell anyone NOT to read the book, he characterized it as "divisive," the work of an activist out of touch with regular Nebraskans.

In fact, Genoways has deep Nebraska roots and lives in Lincoln. His other bona fides include:

Academic. Genoways holds a doctorate in English, authored two books of poetry and a biography on Walt Whitman, and edited the Virginia Quarterly Review, the literary publication of the University of Virginia.

Journalistic. Genoways is a contributing editor at Mother Jones, The New Republic and Pacific Standard. He has won numerous writing honors and awards.

Genoways presents a very Steinbeckian story: Americans struggling heroically against forces outside their control. Genoways presents the Hammonds as real people, not rural caricatures.

Genoways spent some of last week on Twitter poking at Ricketts, and noting his campaign donations to Republican hardliner Rep. Steve King of Iowa. He said he doesn't see himself as an activist or as an outsider. Nor did he set out to do anything divisive in writing a book that he hopes gives voice to people who are relatively invisible to the rest of us and have to live with the rules established by politicians and corporations.

"To the extent that I have an activist streak," he said, "that streak is that I want to hear from people who aren't heard."


Thanks to Ricketts' un-blessing of "This Blessed Earth," readers across Nebraska appear to be listening. Eagerly.

“Everyone who eats in America should read this.”
—Ruth Reichl, *New York Times*
best-selling author of *My Kitchen Year*

THIS BLESSSED EARTH

A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF AN
AMERICAN FAMILY FARM

UPDATED WITH A NEW EPILOGUE



Omaha
Public
Library
Open Your World

Compliments of
Omaha Public
Library

TED GENOWAYS

I shall not waste much comment on your glaring display of juvenile petulance, pettiness, ignorance and anti-intellectualism. Not having read the book which you, nevertheless, harshly criticized and whose contents you, therefore, misconstrued and misrepresented -- and whose author you mischaracterized, denigrated and insulted -- places you well outside the ambit of intelligent discussion.

The Scriptures pose a question then provide a response which fits you and your ill-conceived foolery:

JOB, 38

2 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

PROVERBS, 26

4 Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.

Sat. OMAHA WORLD-HERALD, 1/12/19 6B

Author Ricketts called 'out of touch' criticizes governor's ties to King

By ROSEANN MORING
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Rep. Steve King, R-Iowa, is once again coming under fire, this time for questioning whether "white nationalism" is a bad thing, and a Nebraska author wants to tie Gov. Pete Ricketts to the controversial congressman.

Ricketts made campaign donations to King as recently as 2016.

And Ted Genoways — the author of a book about a family farmer that Ricketts criticized as divisive — noted on Twitter that in Federal Election Commission filings, Ricketts is listed as a self-employed farmer.

"The governor says that I'm out of touch with the people of Nebraska," Genoways wrote. "Certainly, he doesn't mean to imply that the people of Nebraska agree with a Congressman who sees no

problem with advocating for white supremacy."

Genoways and Ricketts have sparred since Ricketts declined to issue a gubernatorial proclamation for Genoways' book, the Nebraska Center for the Book's annual "One Book One Nebraska" selection.

Ricketts called Genoways a "political activist" that really seemed to be out of touch."

Genoways has written articles critical of the proposed Fremont Costco chicken processing plant, among other things. And the family featured in his book opposes the Keystone XL pipeline, which Ricketts supports.

Representatives for King did not immediately return emails.

Campaigns — not donors — are generally responsible for submitting accurate information to the FEC. A Ricketts spokesman pointed that out and said the governor does not claim to be a farmer.

The spokesman also said Ricketts had nothing to add to a statement from November, when Ricketts defended his support of King, saying through a spokesman that he disagrees with some things King has said but that "he believes northwestern Iowans deserve a conservative voice in Congress who will continue fighting for tax relief, a vibrant economy, and strong family values."

King's latest flap is over comments he made to the New York Times.

"White nationalist, white supremacist, Western civilization — how did that language become offensive?" King said to the New York Times in an article published Thursday. "Why did I sit in classes teaching me about the merits of our history and our civilization?"

King responded Friday: "Today, the New York Times is suggesting that I am an advocate for white nationalism and white supremacy.

I want to make one thing abundantly clear; I reject those labels and the evil ideology that they define. Further, I condemn anyone that supports this evil and bigoted ideology which saw in its ultimate expression the systematic murder of 6 million innocent Jewish lives."

Still, the Times article led several leading Republicans to disavow him.

"When people with opinions similar to King's open their mouths, they damage not only the Republican Party and the conservative brand but also our nation as a whole," Sen. Tim Scott, R-S.C., wrote in an op-ed in the Washington Post.

"Some in our party wonder why Republicans are constantly accused of racism — it is because of our silence when things like this are said." **RICKETTS**

King has already gained a 2020 primary challenger in his northwest Iowa district: State Sen. Randy Feenstra, who pledged to not embarrass the state.

oops!

OMAHA WORLD-HERALD, 1/11/19

King defends controversial views

By EUGENE SCOTT
THE WASHINGTON POST

Throughout his congressional career, Rep. Steve King, R-Iowa, has made headlines for his comments on white supremacy.

After Esquire's Charlie Pierce highlighted a lack of diversity at the 2016 Republican National Convention, King questioned whether people of color had made significant contributions to society. "This 'old white people' business does get a little tired, Charlie," he said. "I'd ask you to go back through history and figure out, where are these contributions that have been made by these other categories of people that you're talking about, where did any other subgroup of people contribute more to civilization?"

In an August interview with a far-right Austrian website, he asked, "What does this diversity bring that we don't already have? Mexican food. Chinese food." he said. "Those things, well, that's fine, but what does it bring that we don't have that is worth the price?"

This week, he's at it again.

In a New York Times piece on how King shaped Trump's immigration politics, the lawmaker once again defended his position on white supremacy by asking a series of rhetorical questions.

"At the same time, he said, he supports immigrants who enter the country legally and fully assimilate because what matters more than race is 'the culture of America' based on values brought to the United States by whites from Europe."

"White nationalist, white supremacist, Western civilization — how did that language become offensive?" Mr. King said. "Why did I sit in classes teaching me about the merits of our history and our civilization?"

Members of King's own party have criticized his comments and ideas. King's worldview is losing ground with Americans who find individuals who sympathize with white nationalism the exact opposite of what makes America great.

OOPS!

OMAHA WORLD-HERALD, 3/11/19

IOWA CONGRESSMAN

16/

Republicans
slam King for
what they call
racist remarks

Rep. Steve King of Iowa was quoted in the New York Times as saying, "White nationalist, white supremacist, Western civilization — how did that language become offensive?"

The comment drew a denunciation from a member of House Republican leadership. Wyoming Rep. Liz Cheney, the No. 3 Republican, said King's remarks were "abhorrent and racist and should have no place in our national discourse."

Another Republican, Rep. Justin Amash of Michigan, tweeted, "This is an embrace of racism, and it has no place in Congress or anywhere."

Just ahead of last year's midterm elections, the chairman of the House GOP's campaign arm issued an extraordinary public denunciation of him.

"Congressman Steve King's recent comments, actions, and retweets are completely inappropriate," tweeted Ohio Rep. Steve Stivers, then the chairman of the National Republican Campaign Committee. "We must stand up against white supremacy and hate in all forms, and I strongly condemn this behavior."

Omaha World-Herald, 1/19/19

Iowans grapple
with impact of
King's latest
comments

CQ-ROLL CALL

WASHINGTON — Top Republicans in Washington — including Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Rep. Liz Cheney, of Wyoming, the No. 3 House Republican — have condemned Rep. Steve King's remarks about white supremacy or have even asked him to resign.



Residents of Sioux City, Fort Dodge, Ames and other cities in the northwestern portion of the state have expressed mixed feelings about the impact of King's recent comments and their fallout in Washington.

"They're overreacting, magnifying it 100 times what it should be," Bill Crook of Ogden, Iowa, told KCCI in Des Moines, referring to Republican leaders who have stripped King of his committee assignments and voted to rebuke him for the comments he made to the New York Times editorial board.

For the first time since 1899, Iowa will not have a representative from the House on the Agriculture Committee.

King's comments did not reflect a particular shift in his behavior.

The congressman has made headlines in recent years for retweeting and meeting with far-right groups with ties to Nazis. He consistently decries what he sees as the demise of white America as the U.S. becomes more diverse.

"Western civilization is on the decline," King said at a meeting last year with a handful of reporters and activists, including a member of a far-right group in Austria that was founded by a former Nazi SS officer.

The congressman's top donors have remained silent since the comments.

Of the roughly 20 individual Iowans who contributed the maximum amount to King's campaign last election cycle, none commented or could be reached for comment by WHO-TV in Iowa last week.

Some of King's constituents — along with the editorial boards of the Des Moines Register and the Sioux City Journal — have called on him to resign. Others have said they hope he is somehow removed from office.

Lawmakers from both parties on Capitol Hill — including King himself — voted for a resolution on Tuesday condemning white nationalism and white supremacy. The resolution was intended as a rebuttal to King's comments.

The congressman said he has "carefully studied every word" in the resolution of disapproval and agrees with the substance. "I want to ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, let's vote for this resolution," he said.

Setting the tone for the rest of his Republican colleagues in Washington, McConnell said in a statement Tuesday that King's comments on white supremacy and white nationalism "are unwelcome and unworthy of his elected position."

"If he doesn't understand why 'white supremacy' is offensive, he should find another line of work," McConnell said.

Cheney and other Republicans in the House echoed McConnell's rebuke.

In March 2008, King made remarks about Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama's middle name, Hussein, saying that if Obama were elected, "radical Islamists, the al-Qaida, the radical Islamists and their supporters, will be dancing in the streets in greater numbers than they did on Sept. 11."

In a House floor speech in June 2010, King defended racial profiling as an important component of law enforcement, saying, "If you can't profile someone, you can't use those common sense indicators that are before your very eyes."

Tue. World-Herald, 8/15/19

ABORTION DEBATE

Rep. King
stuns with
remarks on
rape, incest

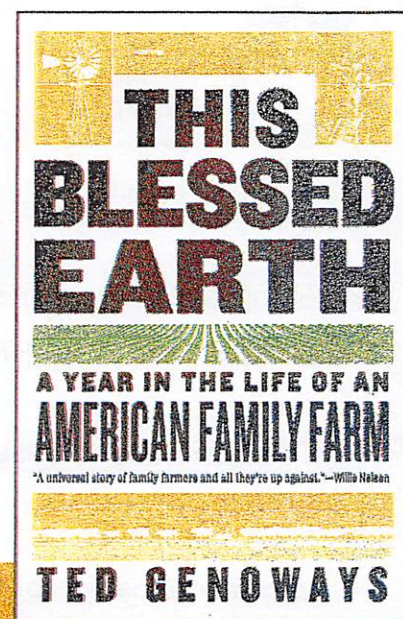
The congressman's latest comments at an Iowa event prompt another round of outrage.

WASHINGTON — Rep. Steve King, R-Iowa, faced fresh, bipartisan condemnation Wednesday over his choice of words.

King's latest comments came during a gathering in Urbandale, Iowa, according to the Des Moines Register.

"What if we went back through all the family trees and just pulled out anyone who was a product of rape or incest? Would there be any population of the world left if we did that?"

2019 OMAHA READS



Join us in reading this year's book selection and mark your calendar for these special book-related programs and discussions.

Registration is required at omahalibrary.org.

Book Discussions

Wed | Sept 18 | 7-8 PM

Millard Branch | 13214 Westwood Ln.

Wed | Oct 9 | 7-8 PM

Milton R. Abrahams Branch | 5111 N. 90th St.

Farming, Natural Resources & You: A Panel Discussion

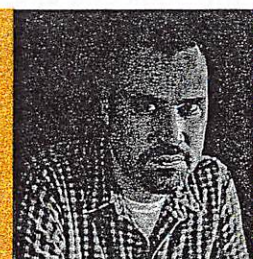
Sun | Sept 22 | 4-5 PM

W. Dale Clark Main Library | Phipps Gallery | 1st Floor

Ted Genoways Author Visit | Sun | Oct 13 | 3-5 PM

Genoways will discuss "This Blessed Earth" and sign books following a Q&A session with the audience. Books will be available for purchase from The Bookworm.

The Durham Museum | 801 S. 10th St. | Stanley & Dorothy Truhlsen Lecture Hall



Ted Genoways © Marry Anne Andrei

Nebraska's Agricultural History: Water

Tues | Oct 15 | 7-8 PM | Benson Branch | 6015 Binney St.



Jody Lamp will enlighten and entertain with important and little known stories about the role of water in the development of western Nebraska, the digging of our irrigation ditches and canals, and our state's unique governance by local Natural Resource District boards. Her book, "A History of Nebraska Agriculture: A Life Worth Living," will be available for purchase.

Humanities Nebraska (HN) provides major funding for this program. The NHC receives support from the Nebraska Cultural Endowment, the Nebraska State Legislature and the National Endowment for the Humanities.



215 S. 15th Street | Omaha, NE 68102
T: 402.444.4800 | F: 402.444.4504

TO: Media; OPL Staff, Trustees, Foundation, Friends; Mayor's Office

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – August 12, 2019

Community chooses “This Blessed Earth” by Ted Genoways as the 2019 Omaha Reads selection

Each year, Omaha Public Library (OPL) encourages the community to vote for and read one book as a way to promote literacy and inspire discussion among Omaha and Douglas County residents. The selection is celebrated with book talks and other related programming.

“This Blessed Earth” follows the Hammond family as they navigate the ever-changing landscape of modern farming, exploring how one family struggles to preserve a fifth-generation family operation in the face of shifting trade policies, encroaching pipelines, climate change, and more.

“This year’s Omaha Reads selection is especially impactful because it is also the 2019 ‘One Book One Nebraska’ and ‘All Iowa Reads’ selection, providing our community with even more opportunities to discuss the book and explore its different themes,” said OPL Executive Director Laura Marlane.

Get involved with Omaha Reads by checking out the book at your local branch, participating in a program, and discussing the book with friends, family and neighbors. All programs are free to attend, but registration is required. Learn more about each program at omahalibrary.org/omaha-reads.

- **Wednesday, Sept. 18, 7-8 p.m.:** Book Discussion at **Millard Branch**, 13214 Westwood Ln., 402-444-4848. Join fellow community members for a discussion of this year’s Omaha Reads title.
- **Sunday, Sept. 22, 4-5 p.m.:** Farming, Natural Resources & You: A Panel Discussion at **W. Dale Clark Main Library**, 215 S. 15th St., 402-444-4800. Join Omaha Public Library and local experts to discuss topics from this year’s Omaha Reads selection.

-more-

"MAN OF FAITH" -- OR A "FAITHLESS MAN"?

LEXINGTON CLIPPER-HERALD

(Excerpt)

Orr, Barrett stump for Ricketts in Lexington

Kevin Zelaya C-H staff writer | Posted: Saturday, May 10, 2014 5:00 am

LEXINGTON, Neb. — If local voters need a seal of approval, they got two on Thursday afternoon in the form of former Nebraska Gov. Kay Orr and former Nebraska Congressman Bill Barrett, who both endorsed Republican Generational Candidate Pete Ricketts.

Both former public servants were on hand at the Lexington Grand Generation Center Thursday as Ricketts sought to seal some local votes before the Tuesday Primary.

Orr said she was confident Ricketts would make a great governor if elected.

"He's smart, well-prepared to be the next governor. He's trustworthy, a man of integrity, a man of faith," Orr said.

Former Governor Kay Orr introduced you as a man of "faith," so from the outset of your foray into partisan politics, you were trading on your purported status as a man of "faith."

When political hay was to be harvested from such a designation, your purported "faith" was trotted out and shamelessly exploited for political gain.

However, when adhering to your purported "faith" became politically inconvenient -- as in the death penalty issue fueled by the edict of Pope Francis that the death penalty is strictly forbidden in all cases whatsoever, you hedged then dropped that sham "faith" like a hot potato and assumed the well-known livery of the classic political hypocrite whose "faith" could be donned and doffed like a hat.

As a matter of fact, consider what was uttered by two Catholic women (one, a nun) during the run-up to the judicial execution of Carey Dean Moore by experimental lethal injection. Excerpts from two articles are quite revelatory:

OMAHA WORLD-HERALD, 8/14/18

LINCOLN JOURNAL STAR, 8/9/18

Ricketts said he wasn't bothered by the protests or the communication appealing to his faith, saying he swore an oath to uphold the constitution and laws of Nebraska.

One of the women who delivered the Catholic Democrats' letter, Marylyn Felion, a death penalty opponent from Omaha, said Ricketts is violating an oath he took as a member of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre to pledge "absolute fidelity to the pope."

"He has hidden behind Catholic teaching as long as it served his purpose ... now, no more," Felion said.

Two weeks ago, after Pope Francis announced the change in the Catholic Church's stance on capital punishment, the governor said that while he respected the pope's perspective, the death penalty remained the "will of the people and the law of the state."

Sister Mary Kay Meagher, one of the women who delivered the Catholic Democrats' letter, said the governor's stance hurts the church and makes followers seem hypocritical.

The twin matters of "faith" and oaths were broached. You violated your "faith" and elevated an oath to the State above your faith-based oath.

OOPS!



SOLILOQUY ON HYPOCRISY

Governor, the facts suggest
Your "faith" is à la carte;
You've more hair upon your head
Than "faith" within your heart.

NEW YORK TIMES, 8/4/18 A1

Pope's Opposition Won't Stop An Execution Set in Nebraska

Mr. Ricketts, scion of the TD Ameritrade family fortune and an owner of the Chicago Cubs, has made the death penalty a signature issue as he seeks a second term as governor. In the past, he has repeatedly said that capital punishment deters violent crime. He contributed \$300,000 to help with a petition drive that led to the restoration of the death penalty by voters.

oops! Mr. Ricketts declined requests to be interviewed for this story, but in an interview in The Omaha World-Herald in 2015, the governor said that his position in favor

of executions was in keeping with the tenets of his faith.

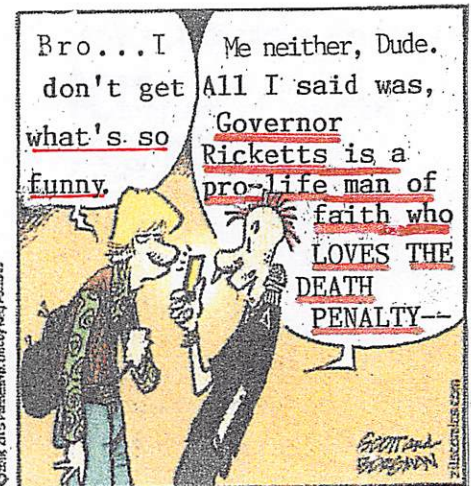
"The Catholic Church does not preclude the use of the death penalty under certain circumstances: That guilt is determined and the crime is heinous. Also, protecting society," the newspaper quoted him as saying. "As I've thought about this and meditated on it and prayed on it and researched it, I've determined it's an important tool."

JOSHUA, 24

15 . . . choose you
this day whom ye will serve.

Zits

OMAHA WORLD-HERALD 1/19/18



("BORROWED")
by C. C.

Never give a sucker an even break.

So obsessed with the death penalty and so rabid in your quest for the means to carry out an execution, that you were duped, bamboozled, snookered and "taken" by a shady drug dealer in India that you gave away \$54,000 of taxpayers' money for services never rendered and goods never delivered. So much for your "business acumen" and "conservative" expenditure of tax dollars.

Sunday, November 1, 2015 | Lincoln Journal Star

OPINION

ONLINE @JournalStar.com/opinion

E3

O O P S I

Fool me twice ...

"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

When Pete Ricketts, who served as chief operating officer for AmeriTrade, moved into the governor's office in January, he brought high expectations that his business acumen would benefit the state in multiple ways.

So why on earth is state government doing business with someone like Chris Harris?

OUR VIEW

The state of Nebraska sent Harris a check for \$54,000 in payment for vials of sodium thiopental, which the state intended to use to carry out executions of convicts on death row.

Not surprisingly, the drug has never been delivered. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has said repeatedly that sodium thiopental for injection into humans is an unapproved drug that cannot be imported legally.

But somehow Harris convinced state officials that he could overcome that barrier.

That's where the story turns into a head-scratcher.

This isn't the first time that Harris has talked Nebraska into a transaction that went awry.

As reported in the Journal Star earlier this month, the website BuzzFeed sent reporter Tasneem Nashrulla to Kolkata, West Bengal, India, to find Harris.

Nashrulla never did catch up with Harris, but she did

find the landlord at the address that Harris gave for his manufacturing and distribution business. BuzzFeed reported that Harris lived there with his second wife, and left owing seven month's rent in 2013.

Harris' resume includes stints working in call centers, but no pharmaceutical background. The U.S. office in Salt Lake City where he claimed his company, Harris Pharma, made drugs is one of "61 standardized, ready-to-use work spaces," BuzzFeed reported. A spokesperson for the rental company said no drugs are manufactured there, and that Harris hardly ever visits the office.

To put it bluntly, Harris doesn't have much credibility. In 2012, Nebraska state officials were forced by the FDA to return a supply of sodium thiopental that Harris had sold them. It turned out Harris had been given the drug as a free sample.

It must be difficult to find reputable salesmen for the drug. Arizona once tried to buy sodium thiopental from a company called Dream Pharma, which BBC News said operated out of the back room at a driving school in London.

The last time Nebraska officials tried to buy sodium thiopental from Harris, the editorial board said that the state's efforts to obtain the drug had turned into a ghoul-ish crusade. Now that Nebraska has been left holding the bag again, we'll add another adjective — foolish.

Omaha World-Herald, 3/5/16

O O P S I

Indian drug broker to Nebraska: No refund, but let's stay friendly

By JOE DUGGAN
WORLD-HERALD BUREAU

LINCOLN — No death penalty drugs, no refund, but hopefully, no hard feelings.

That was the gist of a recent letter from Indian drug broker Chris Harris in response to Nebraska's demand for a refund of \$26,700 that it paid for a substance that was never delivered. The Nebraska Department of Correctional Services released the letters Friday.

Prison Director Scott Frakes wrote in a Jan. 6 letter that

Harris broke the terms of his agreement to ship 1,000 vials of sodium thiopental to Nebraska for use in executions. Gov. Pete Ricketts authorized the purchase last year during the heat of a legislative debate on repealing capital punishment.

"Please provide full reimbursement immediately in hopes that this matter may be resolved amicably and without the necessity of further proceedings," Frakes wrote.

Harris, whose previous

dealings with the state came under suspicion, replied Jan. 28 by deflecting the blame on his customer. Nebraska officials couldn't get the drug imported because of a ban on sodium thiopental by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

"I'm sorry to state that refund of the payment is not possible as there has been no fault of my company," Harris wrote.

Then, in a stroke that was either incredibly tone deaf or bold, Harris concluded with: "Hope this issue does not spoil the relationship between our organizations and we are able to do business in the future."

Instead, officials with the exchange of letters did not address an additional \$27,700 that the state paid Harris for pancuronium bromide, the second of three drugs in Nebraska's lethal injection protocol.

("There's a sucker born every minute." P.T. Barnum)

Malcolm X declared that history is the subject best able to reward our study. I want to go back a ways to discover how you arrived at your current stance vis à vis the Catholic Church's banning use of the death penalty.

SUNDAY LINCOLN JOURNAL STAR 7/12/15

Some Catholics find wiggle room on death penalty

Catholics Ricketts, Murante break ranks with Nebraska bishops.

Catholic politicians who support the death penalty in Nebraska say the church does not prohibit its use. Unlike with some of its more steadfast rules, such as forbidding abortion, there is latitude for so-called prudential judgment in capital punishment.

Ricketts began pondering the death penalty 10 years ago during his run for the U.S. Senate. He studied theologians, philosophers and scholars: St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, John Henry Newman, St. Thomas More, concluding that

government had the right to protect itself with use of the death penalty.



"The Catholic Church does not preclude the use of the death penalty under certain circumstances: That guilt is determined and the crime is heinous.

Also, protecting society. As I've thought about this and meditated on it and prayed on it and researched it, I've determined it's an important tool."

You mentioned studying St. Thomas More. Any "approval" he may have given the death penalty prior to the Church's recent total ban, he would not give such "approval" today. His record speaks for itself.

Although he held high government office (Chancellor) and was King Henry III's intellectual courtier, he chucked it all aside rather than betray his Faith. He resigned as Chancellor and refused to acknowledge Henry III as head of the Church of England, for to do so would have been a repudiation of papal supremacy.

Ultimately, he was put on trial, convicted and sentenced to "the traitor's death" -- drawn, hanged and quartered, but the King changed it to beheading.

To save his life, he only needed to do as you have done: place "duty" to the State above duty to his Faith. At the place of execution, More addressed the witnesses and onlookers, proclaiming that he was "dying in the faith and for the faith of the Catholic Church, as the King's good servant and God's first."

More showed you the way, Governor; but you obviously are no Thomas More. You are more akin to your namesake, Peter -- not Peter "The Rock", but Peter Rabbit.

Governor, had you understood what you read when you "studied" St. Thomas More, then you'd know he'd not support the death penalty were he alive today.

Governor, you evidently have a problem with men whose title is "Pope" or whose name is "Pope."

You have repudiated the edict of Pope Francis and the advice of Alexander Pope when you were "studying" about St. Thomas More:

Alexander Pope

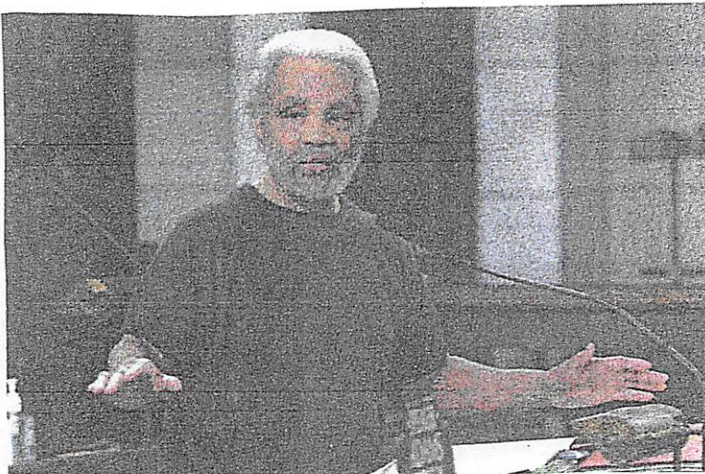
1688–1744

An Essay on Criticism [1711]

A little learning is a dangerous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring;
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again.

"FELLOW-TRAVELER"

FORMER STATE SENATOR BILL KINTNER



Ernie Chambers' Epic Takedown of Bill Kintner - 2015

Philip Montag

1K views

I alluded to this matter at the bottom of page 2, acknowledging that the two cases are factually distinguishable.

A year prior to the media expose of former State Senator Bill Kintner's "Cyber Sex-capade" using a state-issued computer, you had knowledge of the incident but remained mum because you not only wanted to be able to count on his vote in the Legislature, you carted him around the state employing him as a stick with which to flail publicly, "non-platform" Republican senators who had the gall to not comply, to the letter, with your dictates and commands.

Only after media disclosures did you kick the guttersnipe OFF the Ricketts bus and throw him UNDER that bus.

My strident, months-long unrelenting attacks and demands that he resign -- joined with his continuing moral tone-deafness and stupidity -- resulted ultimately in his ignoble resignation from the Legislature.

ARBITRARY ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS

DEATH PENALTY VS. MEDICAID EXPANSION

Your cynical, politically motivated picking and choosing which laws to enforce and which to frustrate is a violation of your constitutionally mandated duty to see that all laws are faithfully enforced; concomitantly, your Oath of Office is violated.

You and your father, Joe Ricketts, combined to spend a half-million dollars to bankroll the successful ballot effort reinstating the death penalty after the Legislature overrode your veto of its abolition bill. Then you led the successful effort to procure a speedy execution by lethal injection.

Citizens launched a successful petition effort to put the question of medicaid expansion on the ballot for a vote of the people. The measure was passed and became law. You and your administration all you can, not only to impede (actually, to prevent) implementation but impose onerous, burdensome conditions on recipients that will all but nullify the expressed intent/goal of the successful ballot measure. (See enclosed testimony of OTOC opposing the nefarious machinations of you and your administration.)

Why, on the one hand, are you deliberately, with malice aforethought, foot-dragging on implementing (faithfully enforcing) a law that will enhance the availability of medical care for the "working poor" and actually save lives -- after moving with the (metaphorically speaking) speed of light to bring back the death penalty and expeditiously carry out Nebraska's first execution in decades?

Once again the Scriptures provide a succinct answer that pierces the heart of the matter:

ROMANS, 3

15 Their feet are swift to shed blood.

LINCOLN JOURNAL STAR, 8/9/18

Ricketts said he wasn't bothered by the protests or the communication appealing to his faith, saying he swore an oath to uphold the constitution and laws of Nebraska.

ST. MATTHEW, 12

37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

OOPS!



Omaha Together One Community



Testimony in Opposition to the Proposed Section 1115 Waiver to Implement Expanded Medicaid in Nebraska September 20, 2019

Omaha Together One Community (OTOC) is a coalition of more than 25 congregations and other community organizations that work together for the common good. OTOC wants the actions of government to create structures that enable all people to achieve a good life. Our members strive to implement the ethic of "Care for your neighbor as yourself." We want to see that ethic also acted out in our government institutions. The proposed waiver for expanding Medicaid ignores this ethic and the common good of the citizens of the state in the following ways:

1. It fails to expand Medicaid expeditiously and in the least costly manner. Thereby, it sentences to death approximately 500 people per year who urgently need care*, while shifting the costs of late and ineffective emergency room care to Nebraskans who currently pay for health insurance.

2. OTOC leaders with medical administration experience are unanimous in their conclusion that the waiver provision that recipients re-apply for benefits every six months is impossible to manage. This plan is designed to fail in a spectacular mess, and fail with financial costs and embarrassment for the state and/or the unknowing private contractor that will be expected to administer the waiver.

3. This waiver proposal reduces benefits for current Medicaid recipients which is not what the voters or the Unicameral approved. It also places Nebraska hospitals at increased financial risk for continued high rates of unreimbursed care.

4. This benefits package that requires people to engage in certain activities, including work requirements, is a violation of Sec. 2, #4 of the law. It is logical to assume that it will take another layer of government, or government contractors, to keep track of that data. It is safe to assume that Nebraska taxpayers will pay that bill.

5. Postponing implementation through this waiver ensures that the State of Nebraska will not receive \$460 million in federal matching funds for this year. (A violation of Sec. 2, #3 of the law.) Nebraska is losing this money while the Unicameral's Revenue Committee struggles to find a way to get income for state-wide needs, to relieve pressure on local property taxes.

In sum, this waiver is wasting lives, time, and money by planning to implement a complicated, inefficient plan that is completely optional, and was never authorized by Nebraska voters. By so doing, Nebraska is loudly proclaiming to low income working people, ages 19-64, living the American dream on less than \$17,000 a year, "Take your energy, dreams, innate talents and skills, and initiative to another state. You are not wanted here!"

Nebraska should be swiftly and efficiently implementing Medicaid Expansion as instructed by the voters. Instead, at the governor's direction, it is hurting individual Nebraskans by deferring care. Again, for the seventh time, the financial well-being of the state is threatened by preventing the return of Nebraskan's federal tax dollars to the state. By these actions the governor is failing to carry out his constitutional duties. Instead, he demonstrates his disdain for Nebraska voters, the rule of law, and the Unicameral.

Enough is enough. Implement Initiative 427 as passed by the voters.

*UNMC Center of Health Policy 2012, New England Journal of Medicine 2012 & Annals of Internal Medicine 2017.
<http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2635326/relationship-health-insurance-mortality-lackinsurance-deadly> Cited in:
<http://www.unmc.edu/publichealth/chp/research/lb546.pdf>

I've alluded to "members of your family", suggesting a sort of "family pattern" of "problematic behavior." It's time to deal with that. This page is like an old fashioned movie marquee that gives notice of what will be showing inside. The following definition is from the Random House Dictionary of the English language:

fam·i·ly (fam'ə lē, fam'lē), *n.*, *pl.* **-lies**, *adj.* —*n.* **1.**
parents and their children, considered as a group,
whether dwelling together or not.

"IT'S ALL IN THE FAMILY"

"IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY"

"IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR"

WORD PLAY

What's in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet.

That's from Shakespeare in "Romeo And Juliet," and the name in this instance is RICKETTS -- and very little about it bespeaks "sweetness." However, sometimes by happenstance or design, a "family name" signals the character or moral bent of those who bear it.

In grade school, we were taught that in order to form the past tense of certain words: "Change the 'y' to 'i' and add 'ed.'" For example, "carry/carried."

By way of analogy, take the name RICKETTS. In view of the moral bent of you and some of your family members (to be discussed), illumination is provided by changing the "i" to "a" and dropping one "t". The result is "RACKETTS". Applying that term advisedly, your Daddy and Brother have a penchant for "tax" maneuverings, and you brazenly engage in *scofflaw-ness." This is the basis for my use of the three "family" phrases above.

To continue. The letters "L-A-X" designate the Los Angeles Airport. The word "lax" describes your family's approach toward legal, professional and personal rectitude -- "fly around", i.e., "skirt, circumvent, escape, avoid" the requirements of such rectitude. The words, actions and activities to which I refer are matters of public record. Don't take umbrage at the messenger.

Waxing a bit more esoteric: drop one 't' from RICKETTS" and the result is "rickets;"

rick·ets (rik'its), *n.* *Pathol.* a disease of childhood, characterized by softening of the bones as a result of inadequate intake of vitamin D and insufficient exposure to sunlight, also associated with impaired calcium and phosphorus metabolism. [1635-45; orig. uncert.]

From that definition (Random House Dictionary) for my purpose, I extract the words "softening of the bones" and apply them analogously to the bones found in

the backbone or spine and take the imagery further to implicate "moral backbone. Based on my preceding comments, is it clear that I am alluding to spinelessness or a lack of firmness in the Ricketts Family's moral backbone?

STARTING WITH YOU, GOVERNOR

Appropriately, I shall commence with an "OOPS FACTOR" situation. The excerpts portray you, in effect, saying, "Oops, I didn't know...." Then your condemnatory remarks are on target, as noted by the director of the Anti-Defamation League:

LINCOLN JOURNAL STAR, 3/12/19

Student regrets online remarks

Ricketts condemns ex-staffer's racist, anti-Semitic posts

CHRIS DUNKER
Lincoln Journal Star

A former staff member for Gov. Pete Ricketts' re-election campaign said he regretted posting thousands of comments to an online chatroom, including many that contained racial and homophobic slurs and anti-Semitic rhetoric.

Bennett Bressman was identified as the person behind the username "bress222" in a chatroom dedicated to fans of YouTube personality Nick Fuentes, who took part in the August 2017 Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, that left a protester dead.

"Yes, that was my profile," said Bressman, 22, in a phone interview Monday morning. "I'm not denying it. I understand how they look really bad and are really bad on their face. I regret what I said."

More than 3,400 posts made by Bressman were collected by Unicorn Riot, a nonprofit media

Ricketts on Monday condemned Bressman's statements, saying he was unaware his campaign field director harbored those views and was "shocked and horrified" to learn of them.

"I unequivocally denounce his hate-filled views towards Jewish people, LGBT people, African-Americans, journalists, women, and others," Ricketts said in a statement, adding he was particularly concerned about the anti-Semitic statements Bressman made online.

"Anti-Semitism has no place in society no matter where it hides," he said.

OMAHA WORLD-HERALD, 3/12/19

By PAUL HAMMEL
AND MARTHA STODDARD
WORLD-HERALD BUREAU

LINCOLN — For the second time in a month, Nebraska's Republican governor issued a statement condemning racist comments made by someone associated with him.

On Monday, Gov. Pete Ricketts said he was "shocked and horrified" by anti-Jewish, homophobic and racist posts attributed to Ben-

nett Bressman, a former campaign worker.

More than 3,000 posts by Bressman were made public Sunday night by an anti-fascist website. The posts were made on a private chat room operated by a white nationalist.

"I had no idea he harbored these feelings. He never expressed these views to me," Ricketts said. "I condemn these statements and this hateful world view, which do not reflect my beliefs or the beliefs of Nebraskans."

The director of the Anti-Defamation League-Plains States chapter, Mary-Beth Muskin, said she appreciated Ricketts' prompt condemnation of the "deeply disturbing" posts but said the situation points to the need for better vetting of campaign workers.

Ricketts is 'horrified' by ex-campaign staffer's posts

7-month employee posted 3,000 racist, anti-Semitic and anti-gay comments

Because I intend to deal with your father's foray into racist postings, I did not include the World-Herald's mention of it, in the excerpt. Although you were forceful in condemning the student's postings, declaring yourself "shocked and horrified," and that you "unequivocally denounce his hate-filled views" toward various groups.

Good show! But I am compelled to question your sincerity to the point of rejecting it, as being hypocritical. While being "horrified" at the young person

who has acknowledged the inappropriateness of what he did, while at the same time, you not only supported an old, unreconstructed, dyed-in-the-wool racist by contributing cash toward his reelection, you attempted -- while defending your support for him -- to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.

I'm referring to Congressman Steve King who has a long, well publicized -- and almost universally condemned HISTORY OF RACIST remarks. Some of his more egregious examples are documented herein, so I shall simply offer a few headlines following the World-Herald excerpt. Query: How do you square your reference to his purported "fighting for. . . strong family values" when he lauds rape and incest as being essential to the preservation of humanity? Strange bed-fellows!

OMAHA WORLD-HERALD, 1/12/19

Author Ricketts called 'out of touch' criticizes governor's ties to King

Rep. Steve King, R-Iowa, is once again coming under fire, this time for questioning whether "white nationalism" is a bad thing, and a Nebraska author wants to tie Gov. Pete Ricketts to the controversial congressman.

Ricketts made campaign donations to King as recently as 2016.

"The governor says that I'm out of touch with the peo-

ple of Nebraska," Genoways wrote. "Certainly, he doesn't mean to imply that the people of Nebraska agree with a Congressman who sees no problem with advocating for white supremacy."

The spokesman also said Ricketts had nothing to add to a statement from November, when Ricketts defended his support of King, saying

through a spokesman that he disagrees with some things King has said but that "he believes northwestern Iowans deserve a conservative voice in Congress who will continue fighting for tax relief, a vibrant economy, and strong family values."

GOP finally responding to King

Republican has track record of making insensitive remarks

Republicans slam King for what they call racist remarks

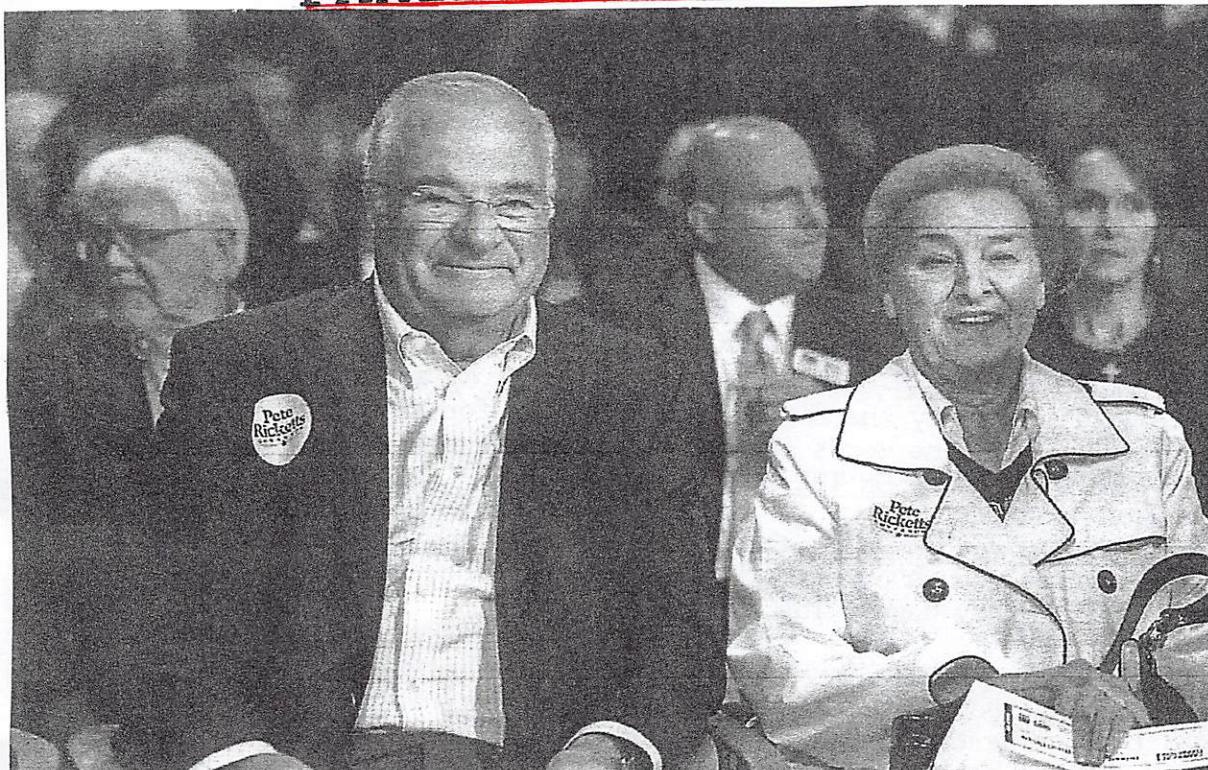
King defends controversial views

ABORTION DEBATE

Rep. King stuns with remarks on rape, incest

The congressman's latest comments at an Iowa event prompt another round of outrage

King: Iowa congressman says humanity might not exist if not for rape and incest



Marlene Ricketts (right) once help fund the effort to keep Donald Trump from office. Now, she and her family have become some of the president's supporters. | Nati Harnik/AP Photo

POLITICO GOP megadonors pour money into Trump campaign

8/11/2019

2 PETER. 2

22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

Omaha World-Herald, 7/18/19



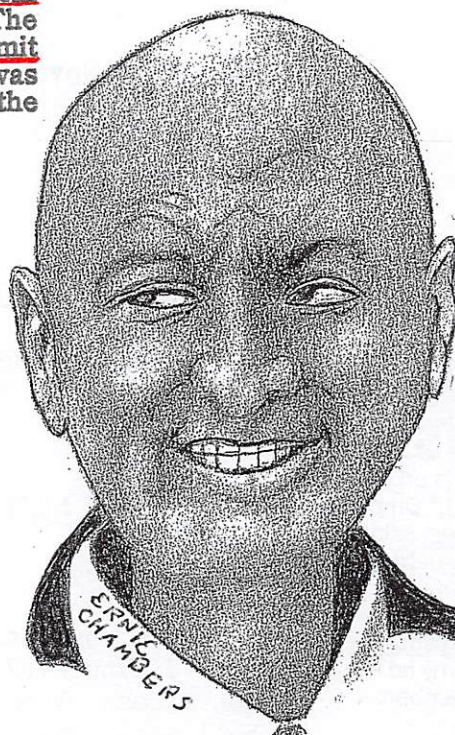
Todd Ricketts

Cubs' Todd Ricketts faces property tax hike, bill for back taxes

THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Chicago Cubs co-owner Todd Ricketts' designer home is worth more than twice as much as previously thought — and that could more than double his property tax bill next year and trigger a tab of at least \$60,000 in back taxes and interest.

And when Ricketts' attorney had a chance to tell officials about the new home during a 2013 tax appeal, he filed paperwork based on the old home instead of the new one.



GOVERNOR PETER RICKETTS

ST. LUKE, 22

34 And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

Pope rules out death penalty
Ricketts: Execution will move forward

MOVING TO THE DISTAFF SIDE

distaff \ " \ adj : of or relating to a
woman : FEMALE

WEBSTER'S THIRD NEW INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY

When MARLENE RICKETTS boldly opposed Donald Trump's nomination, she was editorially lionized by the Lincoln Journal Star for standing up to him, et cetera. Then, in the words of the Gelbert and Shevelove musical comedy: "A Funny Thing Happened ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM."

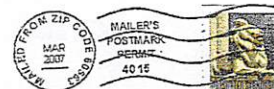
Trump fired a verbal salvo across the Ricketts bow in the form of a pointed, ominous though cryptic warning/threat: "They [Ricketts Family] better be careful, they have a lot to hide."

Ultimately, The Family reversed course like a jet-propelled crawdad, was brought to heel, poured hundreds of thousand dollars into Trump's campaign and changed their tune from: "I'LL BE GLAD WHEN YOU'RE DEAD, YOU RASCAL YOU!" to "I LOVE YOU TRULY!" What an All-American Family!

An Open Letter I sent to Trump on 11/3/16 is relevant. Pertinent portions:

Nebraska State Legislature

DONALD J. TRUMP
230 PARK AVENUE
10TH FLOOR
NEW YORK, NY 10169



SENATOR ERNIE CHAMBERS

District 11
3116 North 24th Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68110

Legislative Address:
State Capitol
PO Box 94604
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4604
(402) 471-2612



November 3, 2016

Ernest W Chambers

3116 N 24th St

Omaha NE 68110-1915

E.C.

Lincoln Journal star
2/18/16, A2



"Donald Trump is an undercover Democrat," Omaha Sen. Ernie Chambers said during Wednesday debate. He called the Republican presidential candidate a bomb planted to destroy the GOP. "And that's why he has so much fun," Chambers said.

Mr. Donald J. Trump
Trump Tower
725 5th Avenue
New York, NY 10022

(OVER-NIGHTED)



RE: OPEN LETTER

Dear Donnie,

I hope you don't mind my using the "diminutive/familiar." I do not expect my name to ring a bell with you, but as you can see from the items attached to this page, we "go back a ways."

Not as far back as you and young "Bush-on-the-bus," but far back enough.

Please be my personal guest to hear my real story on Trump wealth creation from my son, Donald Trump, Jr., and also be trained by "4" self-made multi-millionaire experts. Donald Trump, Jr. will share with you our family's most successful wealth creating secrets and strategies. As my special VIP guest, I have enclosed two (2) VIP personal guest tickets and you will receive a special gift; a complimentary edition of "TRUMP—Think Like A Billionaire" at the conference. The suggested tuition fee of \$149 is waived for you.

At this once in a lifetime financial conference you will learn how to:
1. Find income producing properties the Trump way. 2. Slash capital gains tax to "0" when you sell real estate, stocks, or your business. 3. Lower your current tax bill up to 31%. 4. Negotiate the Trump way. 5. Protect 100% of your personal assets from all lawsuits, liens, levies, bankruptcy, or even a divorce. 6. Get government approved investments guaranteeing 9.6% to 32% return. 7. Learn the Trump way to cash in on the new trillion dollar booming foreclosure opportunity in 2007.

"As the days dwindle down to a precious few", it is time for me as your self-appointed "Ambassador-without-Portfolio" (AWOP) to write this letter.

In keeping with the so-called "October Surprise" craze, exacerbated by the "Comey Fiasco," I am contributing my own version of a November SURPRISE!!! -- which is this Open Letter to you.

Mirroring the extraordinarily unique nature and style of your campaigning, the format of this letter is, by turns, "stream-of-consciousness," episodic, herky-jerky, helter-skelter and even "a little bit jumbled and jivey."

Understandably, you may wonder why in the world would a man who is an unapologetic supporter of Hillary Clinton be, simultaneously, the self-appointed AWOP of her opponent? Here's why. In view of the fact that I want her to be President, I wanted her to have an opponent whom she could beat and, thereby, waltz, polka, rumba, samba -- or otherwise, dance her way into the White House.

Don't bail out yet.

OPEN LETTER
Page 8

Let me touch on something that is very much worthy of note. The story can be told mostly by way of newspaper articles.

"Creating Wealth the Trump Way!"

Turn this special invitation over to see the location, date, and time of the event. Call now to accept this invitation at (800) 748-5254. Seating is limited.

Be there! Just one new idea can make you rich.


Donald Trump

Real Estate Billionaire

See Back for Location and Date of the Omaha 2007 Creating Wealth Summit.



America's #1 Billionaire's Real Estate Guru
DONALD TRUMP

P.S. At the Omaha 2007 Creating Wealth Summit you will learn what others have paid over \$20,000 to learn. Please RSVP soon as this event will be sold out.

April 5th will be the day you make money the Trump way.

OMAHA, NE
Doubletree Hotel and Executive Meeting Center
Omaha Downtown
1616 Dodge Street
Omaha, NE 68102
Thursday
April 5, 2007
8:00 am to 5:30 pm

DONALD J. TRUMP
Invites You to Learn the Trump Family's Most Successful Wealth Creation Secret from His Son

Seating Is Limited!
Call 1-800-748-5254 to confirm right now.
Donald Trump Jr.

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Provided by Donald Trump

OOOPS!

32/

The first article is dated February 22, 2016 (Omaha World-Herald) and says in pertinent part:

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OMAHA.COM/2016

Trump says Ricketts family is 'against me'

By ROBYNN TYSVER
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Donald Trump took aim at the "Ricketts family" Monday after it was disclosed that Marlene Ricketts — the wife of Joe Ricketts — was behind an anti-Trump super PAC that pummeled Trump via direct mail pieces in Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina.

Trump issued a veiled threat against the family on his famous Twitter account, accusing them of "secretly" spending money against his presidential bid.

For the record, Ricketts' donation was publicly disclosed

over the weekend by the Federal Election Commission.

Trump's tweet: "I hear the Ricketts family, who own the Chicago Cubs, are secretly spending \$'s against me. They better be careful, they have a lot to hide!"

Marlene Ricketts fired back through a spokesman, saying Trump was too "unpredictable" to be president.

"Marlene Ricketts shares the disappointment of many Trump supporters who believe that our leaders in Washington have failed us, and also believes our next President must be a principled leader. In her view, Donald Trump has not been a

consistent conservative and therefore would be unpredictable as our party leader," said Brian Baker, an adviser to the Ricketts family.

Marlene Ricketts gave \$3 million to a super PAC known as "Our Principles PAC." It was created in January with the help of Katie Packer, a former aide to Mitt Romney in his 2012 presidential campaign.

Ricketts is married to Joe Ricketts, the founder of TD Ameritrade, a successful online trading company. She and Joe are the parents of Pete Ricketts, the governor of Nebraska.

You made them falter
And brought them "to heel;"
Then at your Altar,
You forced them to kneel.

Being rich and accustomed to having their way, the Ricketts family failed to take time to find out who they were messin' with. The article contains the warning you issued.

It reminds me of a situation where the housekeeper of an Archbishop was of the opinion that skeletons are found in every family's closet. To test her theory, she wrote with lipstick on the mirror used by the A.B. when he shaved each morning: "I know your secret!" Before an hour elapsed, he disappeared and was never seen or heard from again. I don't know whether or not you "had the goods" on the Ricketts Clan -- but look what appeared in the World-Herald September 21, 2016.

Ricketts: Family to donate to pro-Trump effort

JOE RICKETTS' STANCE UNTIL NOW

"DONALD TRUMP ISN'T FIT FOR THE MOST IMPORTANT JOB IN THE WORLD."

"IF YOU BELIEVE AMERICA DESERVES BETTER ... VOTE AGAINST DONALD TRUMP."

"DONALD TRUMP'S TOO RECKLESS AND DANGEROUS TO BE PRESIDENT."

JOE RICKETTS NOW

"PROUD TO SUPPORT TRUMP AND PENCE AND OTHER REPUBLICAN LEADERS WHO WILL PUSH FOR CONSERVATIVE POLICY SOLUTIONS."

Brian Baker, a spokesman for Ending Spending Action Fund, Marlene and Joe Ricketts' political committee

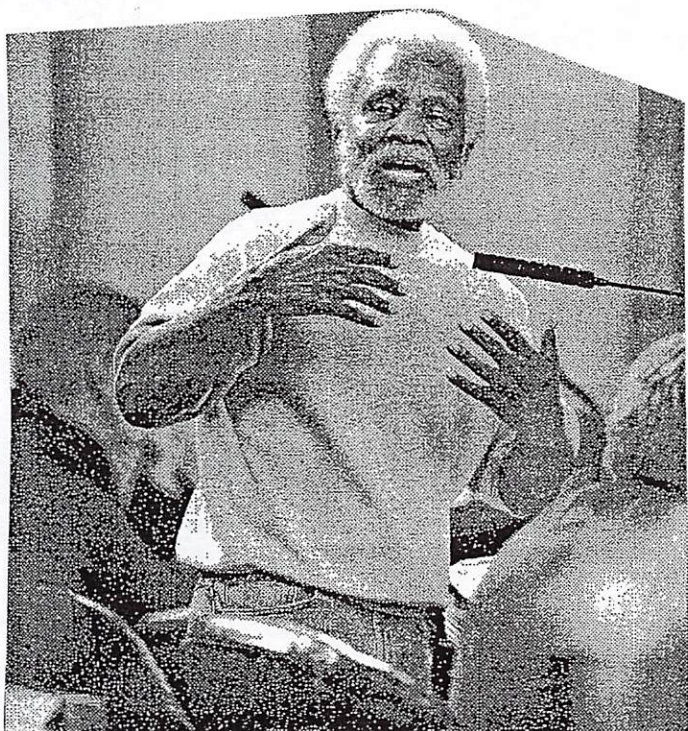
RICKETTS' MONEY
NOW BACKS TRUMP

OPEN LETTER
Page 9

Very praise-worthy. One of the baddest members of the dinosaur family was the Tyrannosaurus Rex (King of the clan) -- known as T-Rex. After the way you kicked the Ricketts family's (pardon the expression) rump, they probably refer to you, among themselves as "T-Rump".

Considering that you made any number of political bigshots (and hotshots) turn around, a little "Ode to T-Rump" is in order. (Rickettses, Paul Ryan, Cruz, Rubio, Newt Gingrich, Christie, et al. are examples.)

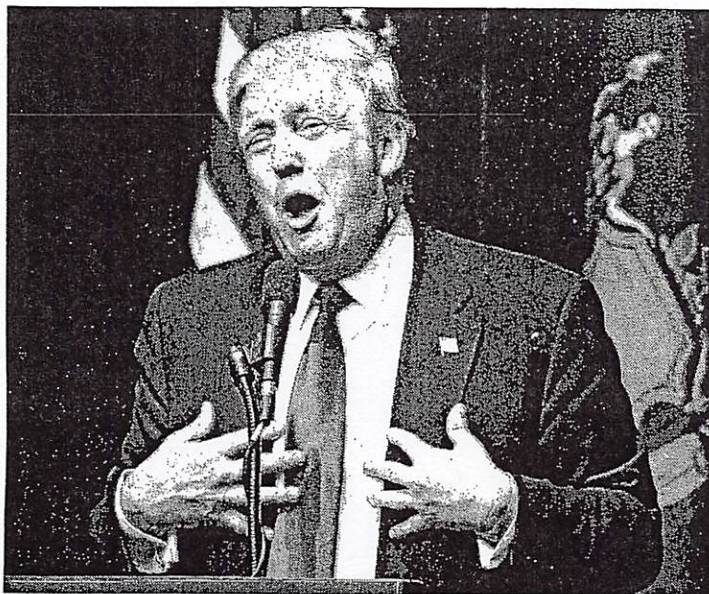
You made them falter
And brought them "to heel;"
Then at your Altar,
You forced them to kneel.



ERIC GREGORY/Journal Star

Sen. Ernie Chambers makes a point during debate on the floor of the legislature in February. Chambers is seen as the master of the filibuster in the Legislature.

Trump made a big campaign change



The Associated Press

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump speaks during a campaign rally Wednesday in Bethpage, N.Y.

DID THE "CHANGE" CONSIST OF STEALING MY GESTURE...?

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3116 N 24th Str
OMAHA NE 68111-1915

PHONE: **402 453 5378**

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 (Friday 11/04/2016 12:00 PM)
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 (EK020622619US)

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DATE & TIME

STATUS OF ITEM

LOCATION

November 4, 2016 ,
11:50 amDelivered, To Mail
Room

NEW YORK, NY 10022

Your item has been delivered to the mail room at 11:50 am on November 4, 2016 in NEW YORK, NY 10022. Waiver of signature was exercised at time of delivery.

November 4, 2016 ,
11:03 am

Available for Pickup

NEW YORK, NY 10022

November 4, 2016 ,
10:41 am

Arrived at Post Office

NEW YORK, NY 10022

November 4, 2016 ,
9:31 amArrived at USPS
Destination Facility

NEW YORK, NY 10199

November 3, 2016 ,
8:12 pm

Departed USPS Facility

OMAHA, NE 68108

November 3, 2016 ,
7:45 pmArrived at USPS Origin
Facility

OMAHA, NE 68108

November 3, 2016 ,
7:05 pm

Departed USPS Facility

LINCOLN, NE 68501

November 3, 2016 ,
6:04 pmArrived at USPS Origin
Facility

LINCOLN, NE 68501

November 3, 2016 ,
5:43 pm

Acceptance

LINCOLN, NE 68501

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Tracking (or receipt) number

Manage Incoming Packages

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Thur. Worled-Herald, July 18, 2019 2A

SUNDAY, JULY 28, 2019 • PAGE 6B

Omaha World-Herald

THE PUBLIC PULSE

Sense of entitlement

F. Scott Fitzgerald once wrote "the very rich ... are different from you and me." To which Ernest Hemingway later responded, "Yes, they have more money." Hemingway could easily have added that some also have an unblushing sense of entitlement.

As reported by the Chicago Tribune ("Cubs co-owner Todd Ricketts faces big property tax hike, even bigger bill for back taxes on designer home," July 19 World-Herald), Todd Ricketts, co-owner of the Chicago Cubs and finance chairman of the Republican National Committee, has been underpaying the Cook County (Ill.) Assessor's Office for almost a decade.

Ricketts tore down a house and built a much larger one that is now assessed at \$1.96 million. Yet he continued to pay a tax rate on the value of the smaller, demolished house. The most recent assessment had been \$828,000. Cook County has apparently been shorted about \$20,000 a year for more than a decade.

One would think Ricketts could find those dollars somewhere. His attorney had a chance to set the record straight in 2013 during a tax appeal process but didn't.

The Ricketts family recently "secured an \$8.5 million county historic renovation property tax break for its rehab of Wrigley Field. The project also is in line to receive more than \$100 million in federal tax credits."

To many Americans it must seem that the richest of the rich have everything. Not everything, though. Honesty and integrity cannot be bought. But really, they are not that hard to possess.

Rick Behrens, Omaha

Cubs' Todd Ricketts faces property tax hike, bill for back taxes

THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Chicago Cubs co-owner Todd Ricketts' designer home is worth more than twice as much as previously thought — and that could more than double his property tax bill next year and trigger a tab of at least \$60,000 in back taxes and interest.



Todd Ricketts

That bottom line emerged Tuesday as the Cook County Assessor's Office completed its reassessment of Ricketts' property in the suburb of Wilmette

after a Chicago Tribune story revealed that the Republican National Committee finance chairman had been paying taxes as if the older, smaller house he'd torn down more than a decade ago was still there.

The error lingered for so long because the assessor's office said it never received notice the new home had been built and failed to detect the discrepancy during subsequent assessments. And when Ricketts' attorney had a chance to tell officials about the new home during a 2013 tax appeal, he filed paperwork based on the old home instead of the new one.

Ricketts is a member of a billionaire family that secured an \$8.5 million county historic renovation property tax break for its rehab of Wrigley Field. That project also is in line to receive more than \$100 million in federal tax credits.

Ricketts is one of four siblings on the Cubs board of directors. His brother Tom is board chairman.

His brother Pete is also governor of Nebraska.

Here's how the numbers break down on Todd Ricketts' home: It had been assessed this year at \$828,000, but is now valued at \$1.96 million after the assessor's office visited the property.

The higher the assessment, the higher the property tax bill. And because the assessment is more than twice as high, the tax bill will be as well. Ricketts' tax bill was \$22,819 this year.

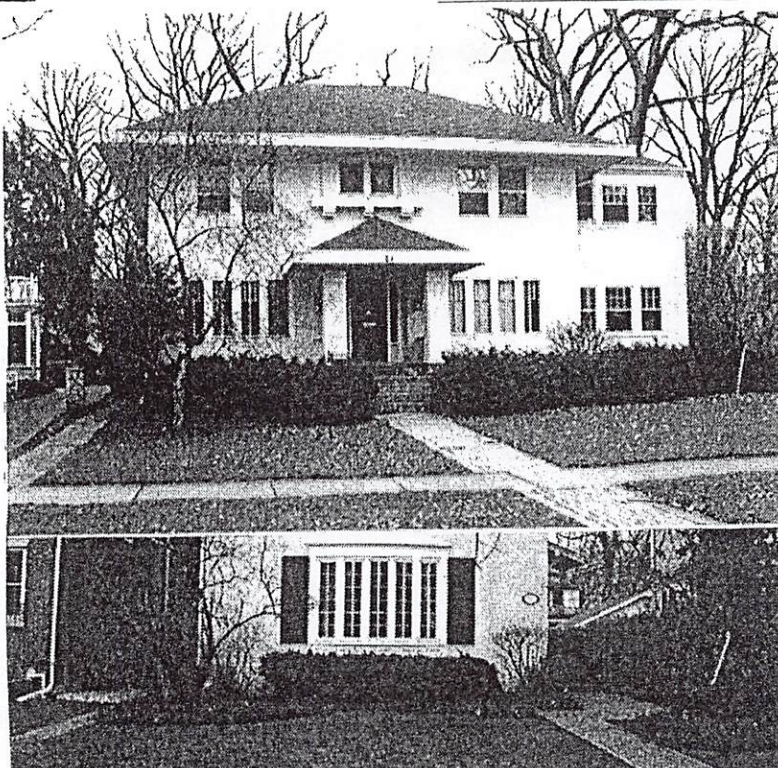
The back taxes are a little more complicated. The county treasurer will calculate how much Ricketts owes in back taxes. Based on preliminary numbers from the assessor and Ricketts' property tax bills, he'll owe an average of \$20,000 a year. State law allows the assessor to collect three years of back taxes, putting Ricketts' total at around \$60,000.

Ricketts is still coming out ahead because his property was assessed as though his old home were still standing for nine years — not the three years he's being dinged for.

Sarah Garza Resnick, chief deputy assessor for new Assessor Fritz Kaegi, said nothing would prohibit a taxpayer like Ricketts from paying additional amounts for the years his property was under-assessed that are not covered by state law.

Ricketts spokesman Brian Baker issued a statement Tuesday.

"Mr. Ricketts maintained all along that he would work in good faith with the assessor's office to assist them as they corrected and updated his real estate assessment. While Mr. Ricketts has not seen the latest assessment report, he will continue to work with the assessor's office and will pay all the tax that is owed," Baker's statement reads.



NEW "BIG" HOUSE

OOOPS!

LITTLE "OLD" HOUSE

"YOUR SINS WILL FIND YOU OUT"

"HOLY-JOE" Ricketts, crusty old Hypocrite,
Failed to behave as he ought.
The unreconstructed Racist pled: "Sorry."
Of course -- "sorry" he had been CAUGHT.

OOPS!

Wed. WORLD-HERALD, February 6, 2019 1A

Joe Ricketts' racist emails

TD Ameritrade distances itself from its founder, who
apologizes for bigoted exchanges on Muslims, others

By MARTHA STODDARD
WORLD-HERALD BUREAU

Joe Ricketts, the billionaire
founder of TD Ameritrade and
a major Republican donor, has
become embroiled in a firestorm
over a series of emails containing
racist jokes and anti-Muslim conspiracy theories.

Joe Ricketts, 77, issued a statement
apologizing for the emails
after they were posted online
Monday.

"I deeply regret and apologize
for some of the exchanges I had in
my emails," Joe Ricketts said in a
statement on his website. "Some-

times I received emails that I
should have condemned. Other
times I've said things that don't
reflect my value system. I strongly
believe that bigoted ideas are
wrong." *

The emails, which were posted
on the website Splinter News,
include several expressing anti-Muslim sentiments. In one, Joe Ricketts said, "Muslims are naturally my (our) enemy." He asked his assistant to save another, which described a supposed Muslim plan for taking over the country. Others detailed conspiracy theories about former President Barack Obama's faith and life.



Joe Ricketts
Billionaire called
Muslims "my (our)
enemy" in one
email. Chains
contained racist
jokes, conspiracy
theories.

Some have racist content, including an April 2011 email in which Ricketts responded "great laugh" regarding a forwarded joke with a punchline that includes the word n—. He responded "I like this" to another forwarded message that complains about special days for certain groups, including Yom Hashoah, or Holocaust Remembrance Day, and Martin Luther King Day.

The email exchanges were from 2009 through 2013. The Splinter News story did not say how the emails were obtained.

In Chicago, a trio of Islamic groups held a press conference Tuesday to condemn the emails. Ahmed Rehab, executive director of the Chicago office of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, called them "alarming and highly disappointing." The chairman of the Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago, Irshad Khan, described them as "cruel and repugnant."

"Such discourse has no place in American society," he said.

Representatives of TD Ameritrade and the Cubs both sought to distance their organizations from Joe Ricketts.

Cubs' Chairman Tom Ricketts issued a statement saying his father's emails don't reflect the values of the Cubs and highlighting that his father isn't involved in the Cubs' operations.

Joe Ricketts helped his children buy the Chicago Cubs in 2009. He sold 34 million shares of TD Ameritrade to make the purchase.

"We are aware of the racially insensitive emails in my father's account that were published by an online media outlet. Let me be clear: The language and views expressed in those emails have no place in our society," Tom Ricketts said. "These emails do not reflect the culture we've worked so hard to build at the Chicago Cubs since 2009."

TD Ameritrade spokeswoman Becky Niya said Joe Ricketts stepped down as chief executive officer in 2001 and retired from the board in 2011.

"The exchanges disclosed yesterday reflect points of view that run counter to our values and what we stand for at TD Ameritrade: namely diversity, inclusion and compassion for each other," she said. "People matter — all people — and it's our diversity as a company, a country and a society that makes us strong."

Joe Ricketts lives near Jackson Hole, Wyoming; rather than in his native Nebraska, because Wyoming has no income tax. He has spent millions promoting conservative political candidates and

causes.

Four years ago, he donated \$100,000 to the successful effort to reinstate Nebraska's death penalty, which was also financially supported by Gov. Ricketts.

In 2016, he and his wife, Marlene, donated nearly \$6 million to Our Principles PAC, a group that fought against Donald Trump in several presidential primary states.

Trump famously responded on Twitter. "I hear the Ricketts family, who own the Chicago Cubs, are secretly spending \$'s against me. They better be careful, they have a lot to hide!"

Once Trump won the nomination, the couple threw their support behind him. A spokesman said they were "proud to support Trump and Pence and other Republican leaders who will push for conservative policy solutions."

The Rickettses are the principal donors behind the ESA Fund, formerly the Ending Spending Action Fund, which has poured millions into defeating and supporting congressional candidates. In 2014, the ESA Fund spent \$22 million, of which \$16 million was spent opposing Democratic candidates.

Joe Ricketts also established the Cloisters on the Platte, a multimillion-dollar religious retreat center south of Gretna that opened last year.

He founded other charities as well, including the Opportunity Education Foundation, the Ricketts Conservation Foundation and The Ricketts Art Foundation.

* ST. MATTHEW, 12

* 34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

Re: Racist remarks

"There's no way to go back and listen, but I can tell you this: That ideology never shows up in my head. I don't know how it could possibly come out of my mouth," said King in a speech on the House floor.



Congressman supported
by GOV. PETE RICKETTS

Bakery is 're-evaluating' ties to Joe Ricketts' retreat

Rotella's weighs whether to keep making bread that has benefited The Cloisters in light of racist emails

By REECE RISTAU
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

For nearly a year, Joe Ricketts has been selling loaves of bread to help fund his multimillion-dollar religious retreat near the Platte River.

The future of the bread is now in question after a series of racist emails tied to the TD Ameritrade founder came to light this week.

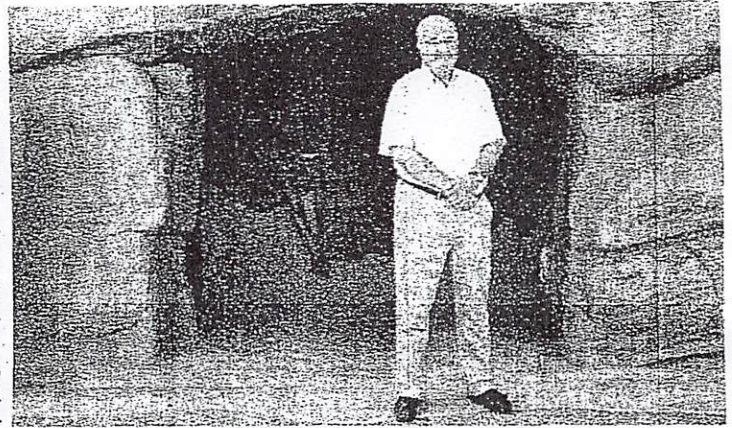
The bread, made by Rotella's Italian Bakery in La Vista, hit shelves in early 2018 to help pay

operating costs at The Cloisters on the Platte, a 931-acre retreat center off Nebraska Highway 31 and Fishery Road south of Gretna that opened last July.

Jim Rotella, vice president of sales for the bakery, said in an email that Rotella's "takes great pride in the diversity of our workforce and customer base."

"We believe everyone matters and value our role in helping feed and strengthen families and communities. In light of this week's

See Ricketts: Page 2



THE WORLD-HERALD

Joe Ricketts and one of the stations of the cross at his retreat near Gretna.

Ricketts:

Continued from Page 1

news, we are re-evaluating the future of the bread we make to benefit The Cloisters on the Platte retreat center," Rotella wrote in response to questions from The World-Herald.

A spokeswoman for Ricketts did not respond to multiple messages from the newspaper on Thursday.

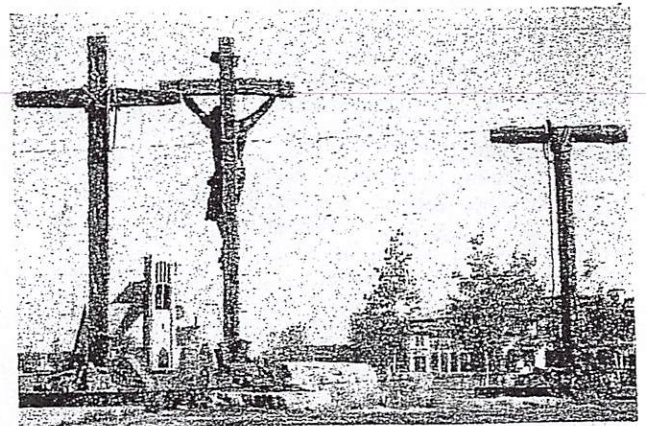
A message to The Cloisters on the Platte also was not returned.



The Cloisters on the Platte bread hit area grocery shelves in early 2018

ST. MARK, 7

6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath E-sai'as prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.



THE WORLD-HERALD

Joe Ricketts said last year that other products to benefit his multimillion-dollar retreat in Sarpy County were in the works.

SUPER PAC DONOR

Will emails affect clout wielded by Joe Ricketts?

one observer says money is the bottom line in politics

By ROSEANN MORING
AND JOSEPH MORTON.

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITERS

Billionaire Republican donor Joe Ricketts has battled the policies of former President Barack Obama. He helped reinstate Nebraska's death penalty. And he helped get his son elected governor.

All while donating millions of dollars to the causes.

But now that his reputation has been tarnished by his recently leaked racist emails, will his money become too toxic for skittish politicians to take?

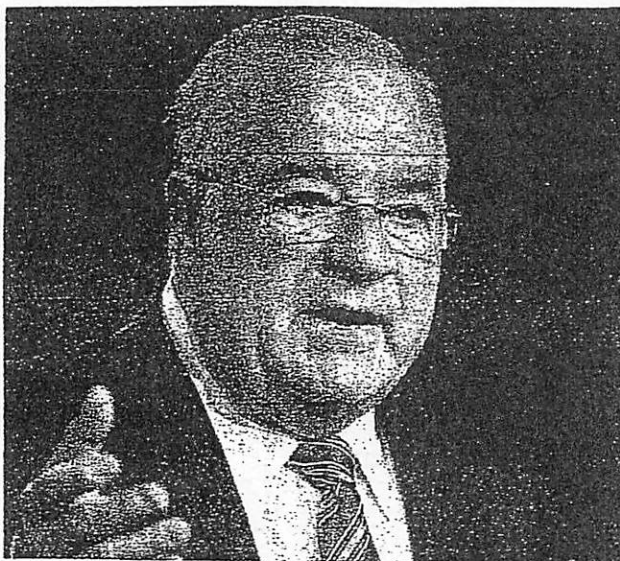
Don't be too sure, says political scientist Kevin Smith.

"The bottom line is, money is the mother's milk of politics," Smith said. "And if you have money to give away, usually there's someone to take it."

And Joe Ricketts, 77, certainly has political money to spend. He's one of the nation's top 11 donors to super PACs, putting him in the league of well-known donors such as casino magnate Sheldon Adelson and hedge fund founder George Soros.

The Washington Post reported in October that those top 11 donors have contributed \$1 billion since the 2010 inception of super PACs, political groups that can spend unlimited amounts of money to influence elections. The total amounted

See Ricketts: Page 2



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Joe Ricketts remains a major political player in his native Nebraska and is a top Republican political donor in the state.

Ricketts:

Continued from Page 1

to one-fifth of all PAC funds collected.

Ricketts' share during that eight years was \$38.4 million.

Joe Ricketts, who founded Omaha's TD Ameritrade and is the father of Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts, now lives in Wyoming, but he's still a major political player in his native Nebraska. He and his wife, Marlene, are among the top Republican donors in the state, backing both causes and candidates generously.

The family also owns the Chicago Cubs, and Joe Ricketts recently founded The Cloisters on the Platte, a silent religious retreat in Sarpy County that's supported by donations.

Last week, Splinter News posted leaked emails that have led to Joe Ricketts apologizing and several institutions, as well as Gov. Ricketts, trying to distance themselves.

Racism has long been an issue highlighted and exploited in politics.

Most fellow Republicans rebuked Rep. Steve King, R-Iowa, for his remarks on white supremacy. And right now, Virginia's political scene is being rocked by a series of scandals — two of which involve photos of top Democratic officials in blackface.

Smith, the chair of the political science department at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, said it remains to be seen whether the fallout from Ricketts' emails will diminish his political power.

He said candidates might be reluctant to accept a donation from Ricketts for fear that their political opponents will try to tie them to his statements.

But he said most voters will likely not link an ad paid for by Ricketts' political action committee to the donor.

Political OLIGARCH
Plenipotentiary,
Bigoted RACIST
Extraordinary.

"Super PACs that disclose their funders are just one way for donors to play the influence game," he said. "Wealthy donors can basically accomplish the same things through dark money groups that they can through super PACs — without either the donor or the candidate dealing with the same blowback from the

Joe Ricketts, as one of Nebraska's largest political donors, has supported many candidates. His PAC played a key role in now-Sen. Deb Fischer's surprise victory over two high-profile candidates in the 2012 Republican Senate primary with a \$250,000 ad buy just before the primary. In fact, all of Nebraska's all-GOP delegation has benefited from Ricketts' political largesse.

Smith, the professor, said it's hard to know until the 2020 election season ramps up whether this incident will lessen Ricketts' influence.

"What is safe to say is that it's certainly not going to increase Joe Ricketts' political clout," he said.

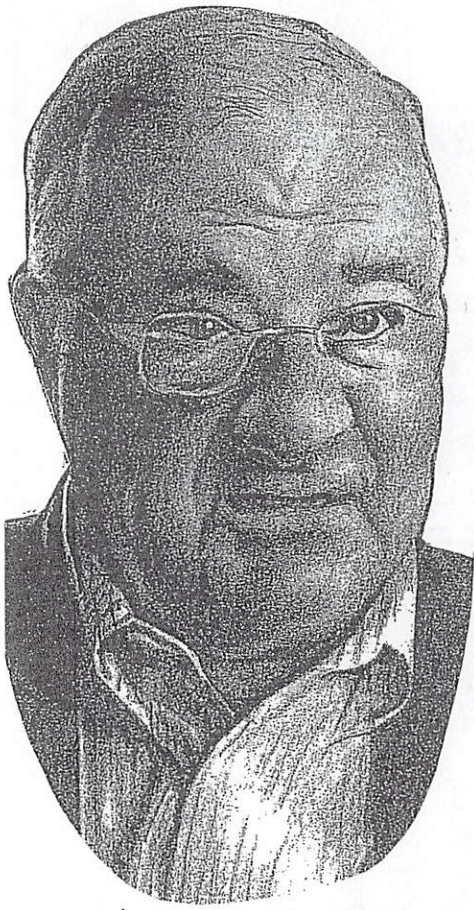
rsmoring@owh.com, 402-444-1084
twitter.com/roseannmoring

ISAIAH, 53

3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.

ISAIAH, 64
6...all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.

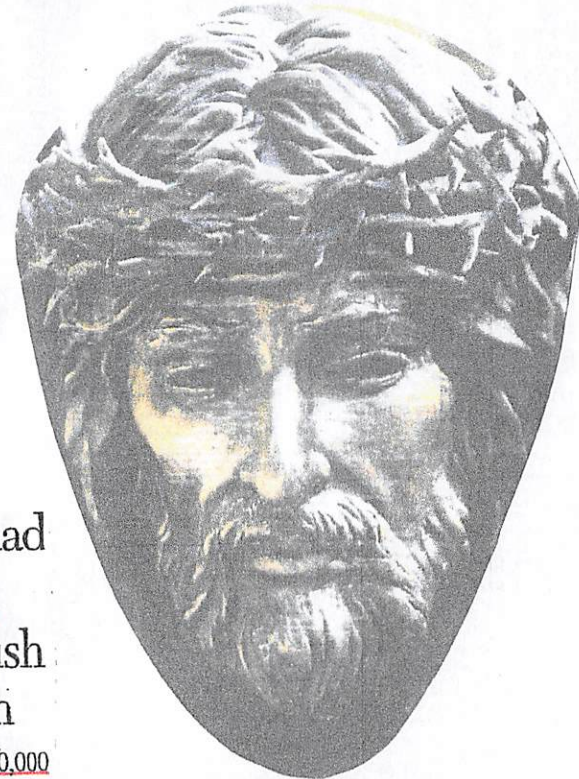
ST. MATTHEW, 19
24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.



A ROCK

Ricketts, dad give death penalty push some teeth

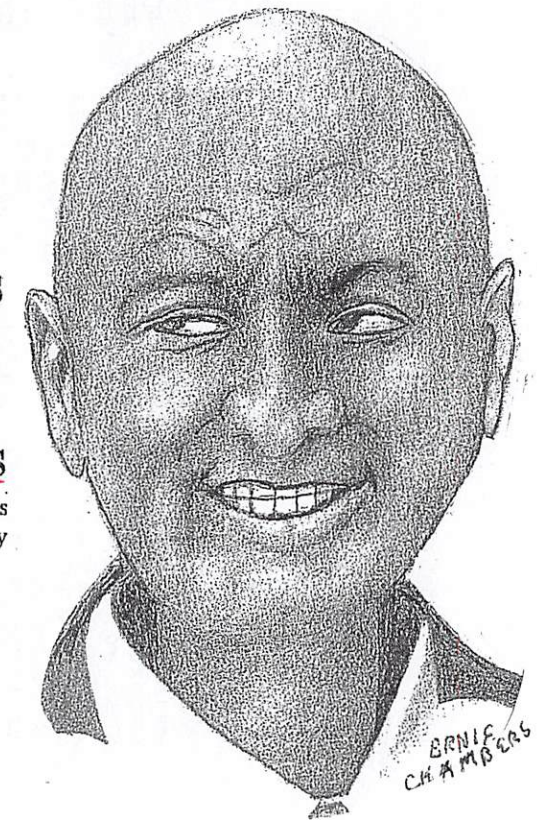
They hand over \$200,000 to group campaigning to put issue on ballot



BETWEEN

Ricketts gives another big boost to push for executions

Second \$100,000 means governor funding nearly third of petition drive

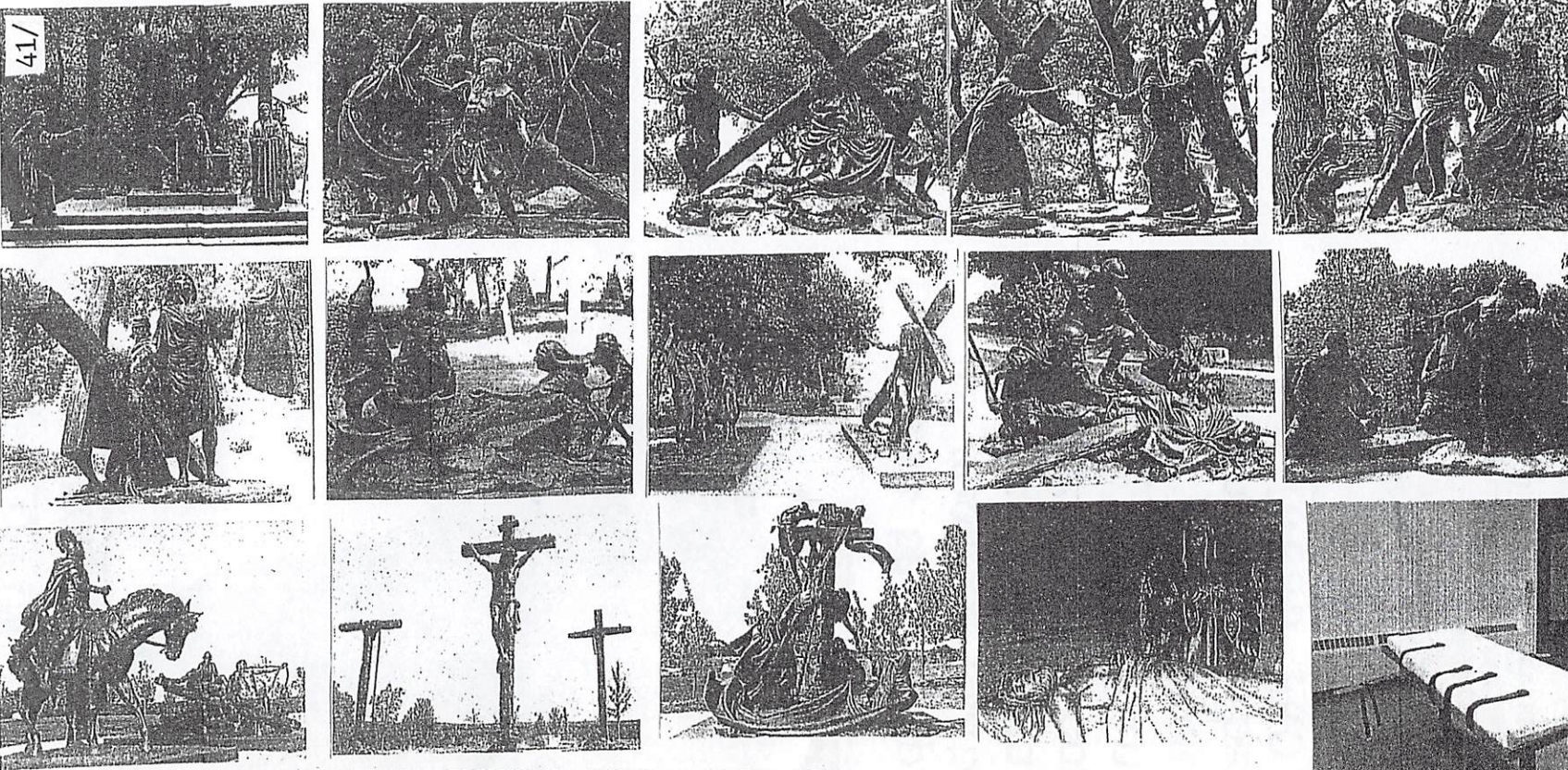


BERNIE CHAMBERS

AND A HARD PLACE

ST. LUKE, 6

46 ¶ And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?



OMAHA
WORLD-HERALD
7/22/18

Rest of
The
Story

LINCOLN JOURNAL STAR, 7/21/18

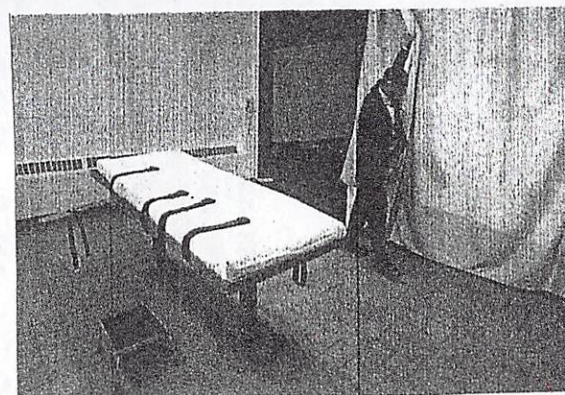
Cloisters on the Platte offers a 'spiritual oasis'

Among the hills and woods near Gretna, The Cloisters on the Platte covers 931 acres, and it's about to get busy.

More than 8,000 people have already expressed interest in attending one of its silent retreats, said billionaire Joe Ricketts, father of Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts.

ST. MARK, 7

6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath E-sai'as prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.



Ricketts, dad
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The New York Times

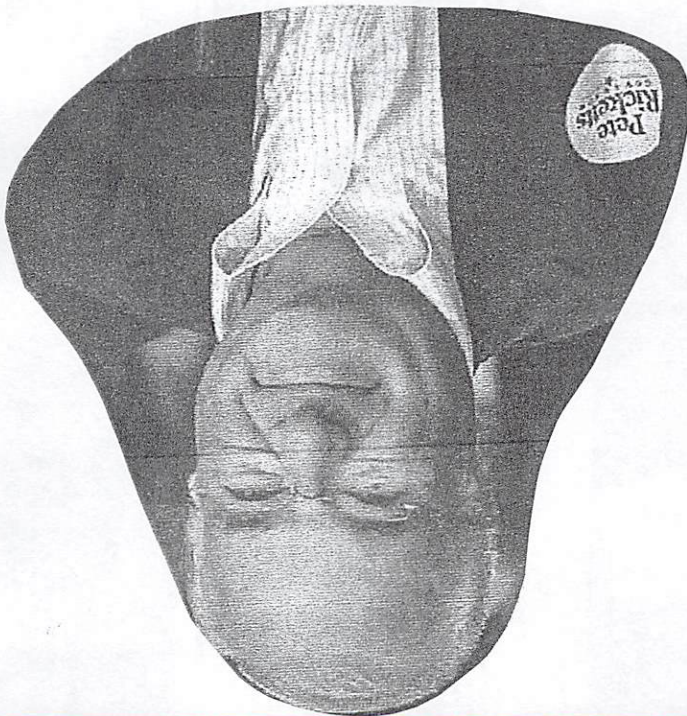
Pope's Death Penalty Stance Won't Stop
Execution, Nebraska's Catholic Governor
Says

COURTESY PHOTO

Joe Ricketts stands in front of The Cloisters on the Platte, a multimillion-dollar facility located near Gretna that offers silent retreats and a Stations of the Cross walk.

"STIFFING 'TIEFFING"

By JOE ("Grab-And-Go") RICKETTS



"GRAB-AND-GO" JOE

While taking up RESIDENCY
in another State to avoid
paying Nebraska taxes,
JOE RICKETTS contrived
to STIFF TIE in order to
grab \$ \$ \$ from Nebraska
Taxpayers to benefit his
BUSINESS PROJECT.

OMAHA WORLD-HERALD 2/26/15

The use of tax-increment financing to pay for road projects
near TD Ameritrade's headquarters near 108th and Dodge,
under construction above, is a particularly sore point for some
who question the development strategy.

WORLD-HERALD, February 6, 2019 1A

Joe Ricketts lives near Jack-
son Hole, Wyoming, rather than
in his native Nebraska, because
Wyoming has no income tax.

**TAX-INCREMENT
FINANCING BLIGHT
FIX OR SCHEME 'RUN
AMOK?**

Ernie Chambers

TIF has strayed from its intent, legislators say

BY PAUL HAMMEL • WORLD-HERALD BUREAU

Feb 25, 2015

LINCOLN — Two state senators say that Nebraskans would be paying millions less in local property taxes if the state tightened up the use of tax-increment financing, or TIF, by cities.

Jack Dunn of the Omaha-based advocacy group Policy Research & Innovation said Omaha is a good example of TIF "run amok." He cited the declaration of the Old Mill area of Omaha as "blighted" so that TIF funds could be used to deal with traffic problems caused by the TD Ameritrade project.

"It had nothing to do with improving a blighted area," Dunn said.

The use of tax-increment financing to pay for road projects near TD Ameritrade's headquarters near 108th and Dodge, under construction above, is a particularly sore point for some who question the development strategy.

WORLD-HERALD, February 6, 2019 1A

Joe Ricketts lives near Jackson Hole, Wyoming, rather than in his native Nebraska, because Wyoming has no income tax.

"GRAB-AND-GO" JOE

While taking up RESIDENCY in another State to avoid paying Nebraska taxes, JOE RICKETTS contrived to STIFF TIF in order to grab \$ \$ \$ from Nebraska Taxpayers to benefit his BUSINESS PROJECT.

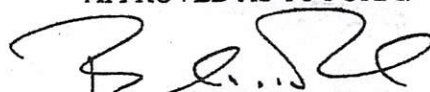
RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OMAHA:

WHEREAS, this Resolution seeks approval of TD Ameritrade HOTC Building Tax Increment Financing Redevelopment Project Plan which recommends the City's participation through the allocation of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) in an amount up to \$5,048,875.00 to offset the costs of roadway improvements in the commercial/office district areas, the construction of the pedestrian bridge and bicycle station or repair area comprise the sole use of TIF; total project cost estimates solely for the aforementioned roadway improvements, pedestrian bridge and bicycle station or repair are \$5,048,875.00; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OMAHA:

THAT, the attached TD Ameritrade HOTC Building Tax Increment Financing Redevelopment Project Plan is generally bound by 114th Street on the west to the west side of Lamp Park, Pacific Street on the south, West Dodge Road on the north and I-680 E on the east proposes the repaving and resurfacing of the street system in the commercial/office district areas, the construction of the pedestrian bridge and bicycle station or repair area all within the project plan area, all of which comprise the sole use of TIF; recommends the City's participation through the allocation of Tax Increment Financing in an amount up to \$5,048,875.00 to offset the costs of the roadway improvements in the commercial/office district areas, the pedestrian bridge and bicycle station or repair area all within the project plan area, and all of which comprise the sole use of TIF; containing a provision for the division of ad valorem taxes under Section 18-2147 through 18-2150, Revised Statutes of Nebraska, as recommended by the City Planning Department, be and hereby is approved.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

 6/19/12
ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY DATE

By Martha Stoddard / World-Herald Bureau

Feb 5, 2019 Updated 1 hr ago

TD Ameritrade founder Joe Ricketts expresses 'deep regret' for racist, anti-Muslim emails

Well, Governor, all things come to an end.

I've said enough and have "made the points" I set out to make. Time and events will determine whether I deem any additional action to be warranted.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ernie Chambers". The signature is fluid and extends to the right.

Ernie Chambers
State Senator

cc: Interested parties