

Eugene Lorton  
1869-1949

# Opinion

"Publish and set up a standard; publish and conceal not." Jeremiah 50:2

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## EDITORIALS

# The real numbers

World's involvement in airline exaggerated

"A lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is still putting on its shoes."

— Mark Twain

Mark Twain's wisdom suggests that a lie told about the World Publishing Co.'s interest in the ill-fated Great Plains Airline will be repeated so much by shrill voices in Tulsa that the truth could be lost.

First, the lie: The City Council's investigator, paid \$40,000 so far to amass public records, used out-of-date documents to claim the World holds 51 percent equity in the bankrupt airline.

The fact: The final list of stockholders, published elsewhere in the World Saturday, shows that the World owned 3 percent of the airline stock.

Investigator Wilson Busby answered a carefully planted question by District 2 Councilor Chris Medlock at a council meeting Thursday night. It was designed to put World Publishing Co. in a bad light, as if investment in a business venture was wrong.

Both men knew they were citing an early list of stockholders that painted a false picture. The World indeed contributed \$100,000 and provided free advertising over three years to help the airline. That was done early, before many other stockholders came aboard. That credited the World a big part of the early support for the airline.

By the reasoning of Busby and the council, the person who put up the first dollar would have at that precise moment held a 100 percent equity.

But forget the figures. What was the motive of the World's owners in the Great Plains debacle?

It was to help economic development of the city of Tulsa by providing coast-to-coast airline service. The lack of such service has hurt the city's economic development since the major

airlines adopted the "hub" concept.

The Tulsa Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, a majority of business and industry leaders here and the state of Oklahoma joined the effort.

As everyone knows by now, the tragedy of Sept. 11, 2001, decimated airline travel and doomed Great Plains.

In short, it was a business deal that went sour, one that profited no one. Everyone, including the World, lost their investments. No one from the World had a say in management of Great Plains nor did the World have a seat on the airline's board.

The Tulsa Airport Authority and its sister authorities cooperated mightily to help Great Plains. Two governors pushed the idea; the Oklahoma Legislature overwhelmingly endorsed help with tax credits.

All the efforts weren't enough; Great Plains failed. Now the City Council, including two members who voted for the Great Plains procedure, is crying foul.

Public relations firms and lobbyists who donated their time in return for stock are being pilloried; the World's owners are castigated for leading a community effort to bring better airline service to Tulsa.

If Great Plains had succeeded, the critics say, the original investors would have gotten big returns on their original investment.

But that depends on how successful the airline became. Frankly, no one expected it to do much more than provide service to Tulsa while breaking even. That was optimistic, it turns out.

Tulsans will hear a lot more lies and propaganda about Great Plains and the general airport operation.

We suggest our readers and the citizens of Tulsa look at *all* the facts.

A plane leased by the defunct Great Plains Airline at Tulsa International Airport.

MICHAEL WYKE/  
Tulsa World file



## Danger zone

Officer acts prudently in shooting

The untimely death of any citizen, law-abiding or otherwise, is tragic. Somebody somewhere will grieve the death of Darryl Keith Shaw, 47, who was shot once in the head this week by Tulsa Police Officer Charlie Hardaway.

Hardaway was forced to take action after Shaw failed to heed police warnings to drop a knife during an attack on girlfriend Pam Hobby, 44, on the 11th Street Bridge west of Riverside Drive.

Hardaway was placed on routine administrative leave with pay pending an investigation of the shooting. That investigation on Friday cleared Hardaway, who acted decisively and prudently in a life-or-death situation. Had he hesitated, Hobby surely would be dead as well.

Hobby told officers that she believed Shaw was within seconds of slitting her throat. He had beaten her and stabbed her repeatedly with a buck-style knife. When police arrived he

was on top of her plunging the knife into her.

In an interview, Hobby said that the couple had been together two years, were homeless and had been drinking Tuesday night but that she did not know what prompted the attack.

"What keeps running through my mind is that he was about to slash my throat. It just gives me the creeps," Hobby said, adding that Shaw, an ex-convict, had threatened to throw her off the bridge. "He was just not being himself."

It is Hobby's last statement that we question. Shaw was a man with a violent history. He had convictions for cocaine distribution, possession of contraband while an inmate in a correctional institution and, most significant, a conviction for assault and battery with a deadly weapon.

Not many citizens end up in a situation like that of Pam Hobby. But most who do might only hope that somebody like Charlie Hardaway isn't too far away.

BillDay The Commercial Appeal  
By (United Tulsa-Synopsis)



## LETTERS

### Republicans' world

The same poll takers who predicted a Kerry win told us the key issue was "values." They were wrong. If the voters were concerned about values, they would never have embraced today's Republican Party. Republican values are money and power, but most voters don't know that.

Brad Carson was wrong; Oklahoma is not worth fighting for. Unfortunately, we're all in the same boat, so I'll have to help keep us afloat until the Democrats get their act together and clean up Bush's mess. It's sort of like looking after half-witted brothers and sisters. You can't help loving them in spite of their limitations and the trouble they cause.

Seriously, folks, don't make me fight alone. Democrats must recruit America's best thinkers and prepare a plan for governing and a vision for the 21st century. America prospered as no other nation under Democratic leadership 50 years ago when it brought us out of another Republican depression into America's Golden Age. I was there and saw it. Today's voters have been so pampered and petted as a result of those Democratic policies they just can't understand the danger we are in.

In today's Republican world, debts never come due. It is moral to kill 50,000 innocent women and children in Iraq. The only sin worth noticing is homosexuality and corrupt international corporations are Supermen coming to save us and give us good jobs.

As a native Oklahoman, I've noticed when bull-headed Okies start hurting enough they are much easier to reason with. Democrats must be ready when that time comes — if we still care!

Fred Gibson, Tahlequah

### Read Daniel

Concerning the release of the new movie about Alexander the Great later this month:

I would like to invite Tulsa World readers to do an in-depth study of the book of Daniel in the Bible. In chapter 8, 200 years in advance, Daniel's vision and God-given interpretation, tells in detail of the rise of Greece and Alexander.

It predicts his advance on Persia, his early death at the height of his power and the division of his kingdom following.

The prophecies in Daniel lay out all the great world empires from Babylon until the establishment of the everlasting kingdom of Christ on Earth. It is worth everyone's time to look into these incredible prophecies of the word of God.

R. Raymond Lyle, Jr., Bartlesville

### Bin Laden's point

The Nov. 3 caller to the Tulsa World might be the only person in the civilized world who feels that Osama bin Laden's demands to avoid another terrorist attack are reasonable. What the caller proposes to accept is called blackmail.

Letters should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, Tulsa World, Box 1770, Tulsa, Okla., 74102, or send e-mail to letters@tulsaworld.com.

# GOP living in the Gilded Age (again)

WASHINGTON — "And I want to say to you bluntly: You live today with the most corrupt congressional leadership we have seen in the United States in the 20th century. You have to go back to the Gilded Age of the 1870s and 1880s to have anything comparable (to) that we've lived through."

Gosh, those Democrats must be really bitter about this year's elections to say stuff like that. Isn't it time to put aside partisan invective?

But however appropriate that ringing indictment may seem to the moment, it did not issue from any Democrat this week. The words were spoken in February 1992 by a House Republican named Newt Gingrich. Gingrich was then building the momentum that led to the historic Republican takeover of Congress two years later. The GOP modestly called what it was up to a "revolution."

As the old rock song taught us: Meet the new boss, same as the old boss.

What's surprising is how shameless House Republicans were on Wednesday



E.J.  
DIONNE JR.

in casting aside their 11-year-old rule requiring a member of their leadership to step aside temporarily if he or she came under indictment.

The repeal might be called the Tom DeLay Protection Act of 2004. DeLay, the House Majority Leader, is under investigation by Ronnie Earle, the district attorney in Texas' Travis County. Earle, who is a Democrat, is investigating charges that corporate money was used illegally to help Republicans win Texas legislative races in 2002. GOP victories that year paved the way for changes in the state's congressional district lines that helped Republicans win additional seats in Texas this year, solidifying their hold on power.

Earle has already obtained indictments

against three of DeLay's political associates. The Hammer, as DeLay is known, must be worried.

Recall how Republicans dismissed any and all who charged that the investigations of President Bill Clinton by special prosecutor Ken Starr were politically motivated. Ah, but those were investigations of a shady Democrat by a distinguished Republican. When a Democrat is investigating a Republican, it can only be about politics. Is that clear?

Rep. Henry Bonilla, the Texas Republican who sponsored the resolution to protect DeLay, said it was designed to protect against "crackpot" prosecutors whose indictments might get in the way of the ability of House Republicans to choose their own leaders. Can't let a little thing like an indictment get in the way of the sovereignty of House Republicans, can we?

"Attorneys tell me you can be indicted for just about anything in this country," said Bonilla. Remember the old days during the Clinton impeachment when Re-

publicans went on and on about the importance of "the rule of law?" Oh well.

DeLay's response to the whole thing came, almost word for word, from Clinton's old talking points. "We must stop the politics of personal destruction," Clinton said in December 1998 after the House impeachment vote that DeLay had rammed through. On Wednesday, DeLay said that Democrats "announced years ago that they were going to engage in the politics of personal destruction and had me as a target." Maybe it's time for Bill and Tom to sit down at that big new library in Little Rock for a friendly drink.

About the only defense Republicans can make for repealing their rule on indicted leaders is that the original motivation for passing it in 1993 was blatantly political. Republicans were trying to make hay over an investigation of House Ways and Means Chairman Dan Rostenkowski, an Illinois Democrat who was later convicted. If politics was behind the rule in the first place, why not be political now that the rule is inconvenient? Isn't this a

case of admirable consistency?

Some Republicans, at least, remember what they stood for 10 years ago. "We took a strong stand in 1994 to make clear the Republican Conference would live by a higher standard than our Democratic colleagues," Rep. Chris Shays, a Connecticut Republican, said in a statement. Shays also told reporters: "We won election in '94 because we were going to be different and what I continue to see is a slow but very consistent erosion in what made us different."

Shays reminds us that when he and Gingrich were in the opposition, they gave voice to many who worried about the dangers of an entrenched majority that came to assume it had a right to power and could do whatever was necessary to keep it. Gingrich's line about the Gilded Age just may have come 12 years too early. You don't have to be a crackpot to believe that the Gilded Age is now.

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