

have taken no steps to bar his company from doing work with the city. As of Tuesday, Black Hills Patrol has contracts to provide security at city parks, cemeteries and for the water reclamation department. Previously, it provided security for the library and Rapid Transit, the city bus service.

When a Journal reporter inquired whether the most recent arrest would affect the city's relationship with the company, the city said it would not prohibit Black Hills Patrol from seeking new contracts and that it was up to each department to determine whether to hire or retain the security firm.

The answer indicates the city is delegating a far too important task to departments that have little or no public safety expertise. In many cases, private security officers have the same responsibilities as police officers and the consequences of their actions can reverberate through an entire community.

In September 2015, a 21-year-old Black Hills Patrol officer shot a man after firing several rounds at him. Orrock said then the shooting victim was trying to hit his employee while driving a car. The case was investigated by the police department but no charges were filed.

In light of Orrock's conviction, one has to wonder how he runs his company and whether it provides adequate training and maintains the highest professional standards as its website claims. How much faith can the city have in a security company run by a man who told the Internal Revenue Service that his failure to pay taxes was his mother-in-law's fault? Why would the city have faith in a man who lost his license to practice law in South Dakota?

What message does this send to a community that is told there are consequences for breaking the law or violating a city ordinance? Is there a different set of rules for those who seek city contracts?

Mayor Allender is a public safety expert. The former Rapid City police chief needs to review the city's policies on awarding security contracts and develop a set of guidelines that includes extensive background checks to help ensure private security companies meet the highest standards before being considered to work here.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thune's cell bill usurps local control

As John Tsitrian rightly points out, Sen. John Thune appears to be paying back wireless industry donors by introducing S.19 — the Mobile Now Act. This bill takes away local zoning control and will allow Verizon and AT&T to place cell towers on any light or utility pole in our neighborhoods. One of these powerful microwave transmitters could be placed directly in front of your home and you will have no legal recourse because of this bill.

Meanwhile, our best science from the landmark \$25 million National Toxicology Program study shows that microwave radiation from cellular technology causes brain cancer in rats. The American Cancer Society has stated this study marks a "paradigm shift in our understanding of radiation and cancer risk." Sen. Thune's bill disregards science by exponentially increasing our exposure to this toxin.

This bill is completely

Letters to the editor

MAIL: Rapid City Journal, PO Box 450, Rapid City, SD 57709

PHONE: 394-8434

FAX: 394-8463

EMAIL: letters@rapidcityjournal.com

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unnecessary because healthy, secure and fast technology already exists and could be greatly enhanced through fiber optics and other wired infrastructure to our homes and businesses. Sen. Thune must look at this issue more deeply before making a short-sighted decision that will affect the health, internet security and property rights of our communities for decades to come.

Jeremy Johnson
Rapid City



GEORGE WILL

"The Vietnamese youth is quite sentimentally disposed toward his family, and Tet is a traditional time for intimate family gatherings. The Vietnamese PSY War (Psychological Warfare) people have recently written a highly sentimental Tet song which is recorded. The Vietnamese say it is a tear-jerker to the extent that they do not want it played to their troops during Tet for fear their desertion rate will skyrocket. This is one of the records we will play to the North Vietnamese soldiers in the Khe Sanh-Con Thien areas during Tet."

This surreal nugget is from Mark Bowden's magnificent

perhaps into dissolution, the communist forces that he was certain would concentrate on attacking U.S. forces based at Khe Sanh near the demilitarized zone:

few months earlier, Walt Rostow, Johnson's national security adviser, had told a Hue-bound reporter on "deep background" that the war was essentially already won because a crop called "IR8 rice" was going to stymie the communists' revolution with a green revolution. Rostow's theory was slain by this fact: The Vietnamese disliked IR8 rice.

The communists arriving in Hue immediately began advancing the revolution by purging "enemies of the people" in what quickly became an orgy of violent score-settling. While Westmoreland remained fixated on Khe Sanh — "Never," writes Bowden, "had a general so effectively willed away the facts" — secret U.S. planning group met in Okinawa the day after the offensive began to consider a plan code-named Fractured Jaw, involving tactical nuclear weapons.

Bowden's interviews, almost half a century on, with those who fought, on both sides, hav-

The hounds of moder-

Dropping my son off at high school soccer practice, I caught it. The first hint of autumn. Seems impossible. Our recent heat hasn't been sweltering, but it has produced a beaded brow or two. Yes, I'm certain of it, in an evening slant of light summer wearily exhaled.



DAVID ROOKS

warrior: listening to old Carpenters' songs as I wend my way through foreign lands. Or at least Arizona. I suppose it is not a bad thing to rediscover that, for a time at least, you can keep your own company.

Such an extended and mobile abandonment tends to summon reflection. I believe the greatest hidden fact about ourselves in modern life is how thoroughly suppressed we are from our own inner voice.

The one that offers honest assessment. The one capable of radical insight into who we still are, and what our hearts most

truly yearn for.

Strange that that should see a luxury.

For reasons of bad health, I have recently had to undertake near total upending of my usual miserable, dietary habits. My provider, a cheerful and capable man, betrayed no mirth when explained that I was on the cusp of the dire.

As Samuel Johnson once remarked about the knowledge one would be hanged the following morning: It concentrated my mind.

On the series of road trips I took, I considered how selfish my daily actions of many, many years had been. A few weeks improved, and greatly reduced eating saw, for me at least, a nearly unrecognizable phenomenon. Foods I had craved — and devoured — my whole life, produced a nausea at their scent. I won't run the list, but you know all the jingles of their commercials.

I had to wonder: were they even food.

A similar effect was produced by extended daily silences. Between Santa Fe and Roswell, N.M., I yielded to an odd tug and parked at a rest stop. After grabbing a nearby stick of dea-