

# YANKTON DAILY PRESS & DAKOTAN

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## Letter: Staying In Place

- **Robert F. Lyons, Kennebunkport, Maine**

As the COVID-19 cases in South Dakota continue to rise, Gov. Kristi Noem extended her order for senior citizens and those who are medically at risk in Minnehaha and Lincoln counties to stay home in place. She has not issued an order for all citizens to shelter in place. One would think that the daughter of a rancher would know it is better to shut the barn door before the horse gets out.

The governor may have been distracted to fully address this prairie pandemic by the behavior of Republican Senate Majority Leader and President Pro Tempore who became too intoxicated to lead the Senate's final session.

During the nine-hour Senate investigation of this episode, Sen. Craig Kennedy, D-Yankton, was unsuccessful in his efforts to bring about a vote to censure the two Republican leaders.

The Senate majority's gentle admonishment of their inebriated colleagues evokes recollection of classic political doublespeak articulated by Judge Noah S. "Soggy" Sweat Jr., state representative in Mississippi.

In his notable speech in 1952, Rep. Sweat said. "I will take a stand on any issue at any time, regardless of how fraught with controversy it might be. ... If when you say whiskey you mean the devil's brew...that dethrones reason, destroys the home, creates misery and poverty, yea, literally takes the bread from the mouths of little children....certainly I am against it."

He concluded: "But; If when you say whiskey you mean the oil of conversation, the philosophic wine, the ale that is consumed when good fellows get together that puts a song in their hearts and laughter on their lips ... the sale of which pours into our treasuries untold millions of dollars, which are used to provide tender care for our crippled little children, our blind, our deaf, our dumb, our pitiful and aged and infirm; to build highways and hospitals and schools, then certainly I am for it. This is my stand. I will not retreat from it. I will not compromise."

Gov. Noem should issue another executive order for all members of the state Legislature to stay in place while in session under penalty of disbarment or arrest.