



Government right to sue over AT&T merger plan

Should the government allow AT&T to gobble up T-Mobile, the American cell-phone subsidiary of the German telecommunications giant Deutsche Telekom?

In a word, no. The American phone goliath claims it needs T-Mobile's towers and frequencies to shore up its system, which it says could otherwise start to collapse as it runs out of "spectrum," or frequencies, in major cities.

No one believes the proposed megamerger will have smooth sailing. It faces opposition from the U.S. Justice Department and many states. The Federal Communications Commission, state regulators and other agencies will have a say.

So far, AT&T seems to be the only one behind the buyout. The telecom began life as Southwestern Bell as part of the old AT&T empire, then was SBC Corp. after the monopoly broke up. It finally bought the shell of its old parent and adopted the famous name. Along the way, SBC bought up Southern Bell, Alltel and other companies, becoming one of the biggest players in the phone and Internet business.

Today's AT&T may be as little loved as "Ma Bell" was in her day, a corporate giant without the soft veneer of the big old phone company. No one is lining up to support claims that the firm's cell phone system might strangle without T-Mobile's frequencies.

The deal would increase AT&T's share of the wireless market from 32 percent to 43 percent, reducing the number of nationwide carriers

from four to three, including another former "Baby Bell," Verizon, and Sprint, which grew from an independent phone company, Kansas City based United Telecom.

But T-Mobile is the last remaining low-cost national carrier. Eliminating the German firm from the market would likely have a major impact on wireless prices for everyone, experts say.

The guiding principle should be avoiding a situation where any business is so concentrated that its members are "too big to fail." Our economy can't stand any more such corporate giants.

And with 43 percent of the national cell phone market, AT&T would approach that status.

The Obama administration sued to block the merger in the first real test of its new antitrust policy. This newspaper has long stood for a more aggressive stance on antitrust, fearing the results of even more megamerger among firms in any industry.

Look where having bigger and bigger banks got us. Look at the bankrupt major airlines, which continue to merge. Look at the bankrupt automakers. The list goes on and on.

Government's role in business should be limited, but preventing monopoly domination of an industry certainly is a valid goal, both to protect the market and to protect us from big failures.

Word is the AT&T merger is in trouble. We hope that's true, for the sake of the economy and the sake of the consumer. Bigger is most often *not* better. — Steve Haynes



News From the Past

40 years ago - 1971

Everyone in the community is invited to attend a reception Sunday which will honor Dr. H.J.A. Peck for his 50 years of medical practice in St. Francis.

Mr. Sperry announces the hiring of the following new teachers for the 1971-72 school year: Mrs. Joyce Faulkender, kindergarten; Barbara Werner, first grade; Carolyn Fox, second grade; Ronald Daniels, high school speech and English; Janet Kahler, high school vocal music and Marla Burgstahler, instrumental music. The position of one of the sixth grade teachers is still unfilled. The high school coaching staff will have three

new faces: David Uhrlaub, head basketball; Kyle Mines, head wrestling and Lyle Dickason, assistant wrestling.

Fair entertainment includes a youth gymkhana on Thursday night, first session of the Cheyenne County Rodeo, Friday night; second rodeo performance, Saturday afternoon; and Saturday night the nationally famous Blackwood Family singers.

Penny Raile has been crowned Miss Northwest Kansas for 1972. She will be competing in the next Miss Kansas contest in Pratt.

50 years ago - 1961

The sale of Cochran's Hiway

Market to Mr. and Mrs. Fred Schultz, former St. Francis residents, was announced this week. Mr. and Mrs. Schultz will move back to St. Francis from Manchester, Iowa, this weekend and will take over the business. The store will be closed June 4 through June 7 for inventory and redecorating.

The Rev. D. Wayne Montgomery, pastor for the last three years at the First Methodist Church in Sedwick, has been named minister of the St. Francis Methodist Church by Bishop Eugene Slater. He succeeds the Rev. O. Ray Pomeroy who was recently transferred to Lincoln.

Social Security funds two wars

Letter to the Editor In reading the article about Congressman Tim Huelskamp and Senator Jerry Moran, I was wondering if they had any ideas of their own or just the Fox News Talking Points!!

President Obama is not the first President to have czars. Even Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush had czars. Did Congressman Huelskamp demand President Bush get rid of his czars?

Social Security does not add one dime to the deficit, Wage earners pay in to Social Security all their working years. Our Social Security money has been stolen by the government to fund two wars and tax cuts for the very rich. To make a big dent in the deficit our country needs to cut the military budget, end the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and bring our troops home.

Supply and demand create jobs not getting rid of regulations or lowering taxes on the very rich. Corporations won't add jobs if there is no demand for their product. Consumers who are unemployed or underemployed are not buying because they have no money to spend. Or country has lost most of its good paying manufacturing jobs and this has caused the middle class to shrink.

Cutting spending is not the solution to our problem. We need

Letters to the Editor

a viable middle class with good paying jobs. Our country was made strong by the middle class paying taxes, as the rich put their money in offshore tax havens to

keep from paying taxes and the poor have nothing to give.

Sincerely, Diana Brunswig-Bosso Arnold, Mo.

Community support needed for new school

Letter to the Editor

A community needs kids; kids need a good school.

The Idalia community prides itself in doing what's right for the kids by volunteering time, money and support to the school and its activities. A few examples of these projects include the gymnasium, baseball field, greenhouse, playground, preschool playground, as well as contributions to the improvement of the football field.

The BEST (Build Excellent Schools Today) grant offers us a way to make our money go further in providing school facilities. It will pay for 75 percent of the total project, while our community must only pay for 25 percent. These improvements will eventually need to be done and this grant

will save the Idalia community a substantial amount of money in the long run.

The old Idalia school building doesn't meet health and safety codes which have to be corrected to keep the school in compliance. The cost of up-dates alone would be more than the current bond proposal.

Yes, if BEST passes, our taxes will increase, but we will know that the money is staying here. Those dollars will build an efficient, well-constructed, "no frills" school, geared to needs of both teachers and students.

As a community, we need to join together to ensure the future of our school and community.

John P. Cure Michelle Cure Idalia, Colo.

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GOD SAYS Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man: so are children of the youth. Psalms 127:3, 4

Casey's Comments

By Casey McCormick

Ever noticed how some people think they are better than others?

We all do it. It probably all began in America when our forefathers left the "Old World" to come to a new country. Things had to have been pretty bad to risk your's, and your family's future in an unknown place. At least that is what I've heard about the Irish. Our relatives had to have been dirt poor in a dirt poor land. I can't imagine what it took to get the funds just to make the trip over by ship. In fact one of the earli-

est McCormicks stowed away on a sailing ship out of northern Ireland in the late 1700s. Once he got over he became an indentured servant in South Carolina.

Anyway, once they got here they were the lowest of the low. Of course nobody wants to be on the bottom, so they probably looked around and found others that appeared to be in worse shape. On the ladder of life people seem to need to have somebody on a lower rung.

The funny thing is, what really makes someone better? It can't be money. There are plenty of rich

folks around who behave pretty badly. Dollars can't buy class.

Is it in a last name? Problem with that is every family has a black sheep or two.

Maybe we are all the same. Perhaps what really matters is what we are carrying around inside of us. Could it be that no one is really better than anyone else?

Now that would be a difficult standard for all of us to live by.

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