

O P I N I O N

Editorial...

Trump did the right thing

President Trump did the right thing in striking an airbase in Syria in response to the Assad regime's chemical weapons attack on its own civilian population in Idlib Province.

President Obama should have rained tomahawks down on the Assad regime's assets when Assad flagrantly crossed the president's firmly-stated "red line" in a far worse Sarin attack in 2013. We must keep the use of chemical weapons stuffed in the *verboten* box, otherwise it will become normalized in that laboratory of hell once known as Syria, and we'll see more use there and elsewhere.

Barrel bombs, starvation and exile are horrible in themselves for the beleaguered Syrian population, caught between a brutal regime on one hand and murderous Islamic fundamentalist nihilists on the other. But chemical and biological weapons have, since World War I, been rightly regarded as a special category of horror. The world cannot afford to become desensitized to their deployment.

It seems doubtful that the strike is tied to a coherent Syria policy (to the extent that such a thing is possible). The musings of Eric Trump

to a British newspaper indicate that it was in part influenced by Trump's daughter Ivanka being upset at the horrible images of hideously dying Syrian children. And surely there was some political calculation that a military strike would take some pressure off a floundering administration and boost approval ratings, as flexing muscle always does. It can't hurt Trump right now to be seen in opposition to Putin's aims and desires.

It is pointless to address the rank hypocrisy of Republicans who did everything they could to prevent Obama from acting in 2013, now praising Trump's strength and decisiveness. Rank hypocrisy is, after all, the coin of the realm in the Imperial City.

We can kick at the gigantic expense of the "message" Trump sent and question the effectiveness of the strike itself, which appears to be less bang than you might expect for \$83 million, but ultimately, and regardless of any other calculus, it is a good thing — a necessary thing — to put consequences on the use of chemical weapons.

Jim Cornelius, News Editor

A better idea for insuring health

By Paula Surmann
Guest Columnist

A great idea is floating around Central Oregon: Why not join with California and Washington in a West Coast universal healthcare system? It's time for healthcare to be treated as a human right, not a luxury. After all, we aren't living in a Third World country but in the greatest nation on earth.

All of us would receive services that fight the biggest causes of disease and death. Universal healthcare also protects us from the bankruptcy and poverty that can result from huge medical bills. We currently risk using up our life savings, selling our homes, or borrowing money. Our futures are destroyed, and maybe our children's futures, too.

How could our states afford to pay for this? We'd pay our premiums to an agency running our West Coast plan. It would cost each of us less because we wouldn't be compensating a CEO or stockholders. We would negotiate drug prices and medical services with the power of three states and millions of people. Even if we ended up paying more taxes, it would cost us less overall. I'm 64 and paying \$860 monthly for insurance that doesn't even cover an eye exam.

In other countries, universal healthcare systems — also called single-payer plans — cost less per person and take a smaller portion of the nation's assets while covering all their citizens. People who can afford it may still go to a private doctor. In the U.S., we lead the world in healthcare innovation and practice, but rank 36th in average lifespan.

Government agencies pay employees a good wage, but not the millions insurance companies pay their CEOs. Who else would lose something? Lobbyists, lawyers, stockholders, drug and medical equipment companies, some hospitals and doctors. Wouldn't lower pay discourage people from entering the medical field? Some people want a career in medicine because of the high salaries; but most want

an interesting career, to help suffering people, and make a good wage. Wouldn't less competition stifle medical innovation? Again, most people enter medical research because the work is interesting, helps suffering people, and pays well. It's the corporate brass and large stockholders who make the big bucks.

We've all heard about the long waiting times that people in other countries experience under universal healthcare. But at least all of us would be covered, with no one left behind to suffer. Plus, we are capable of solving the problems that other countries experience. We can take the best ideas from other nations, let our brightest people create an American healthcare plan, and enjoy the results. In fact, America has already implemented a single-payer, universal healthcare plan — MEDICARE.

Starting in 1912, 33 countries have converted to universal healthcare. Are millions of people wrong, or is it time for healthcare to be treated as a human right, not a luxury, even in the U.S.?

One huge advantage to having a universal healthcare system is that people who have always wanted to start their own businesses would feel free to try. Currently, many of us are afraid to leave an employer who covers even part of our healthcare costs because prices are unbelievably high. People with children are even more terrified of quitting a job. Who would have thought that universal healthcare would foster capitalism?

Another advantage is that we would all feel more secure about our health. People who feel more secure are happier, healthier, more productive, better parents and coworkers, more capable of handling emergencies, etc. Our health is basic; everything else in life builds upon a healthy body and mind.

If you'd like to work on great ideas like this, please join Indivisible Sisters Oregon at <https://www.meetup.com/Indivisible-Sisters-Oregon/>.

Opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the writer and are not necessarily shared by the Editor or The Nugget Newspaper.



Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Rain likely 49/31	Showers likely 47/28	Chance snow/rain 45/24	Mostly Sunny 52/29	Slt. Chance Showers 52/30	Chance Showers 53/na

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