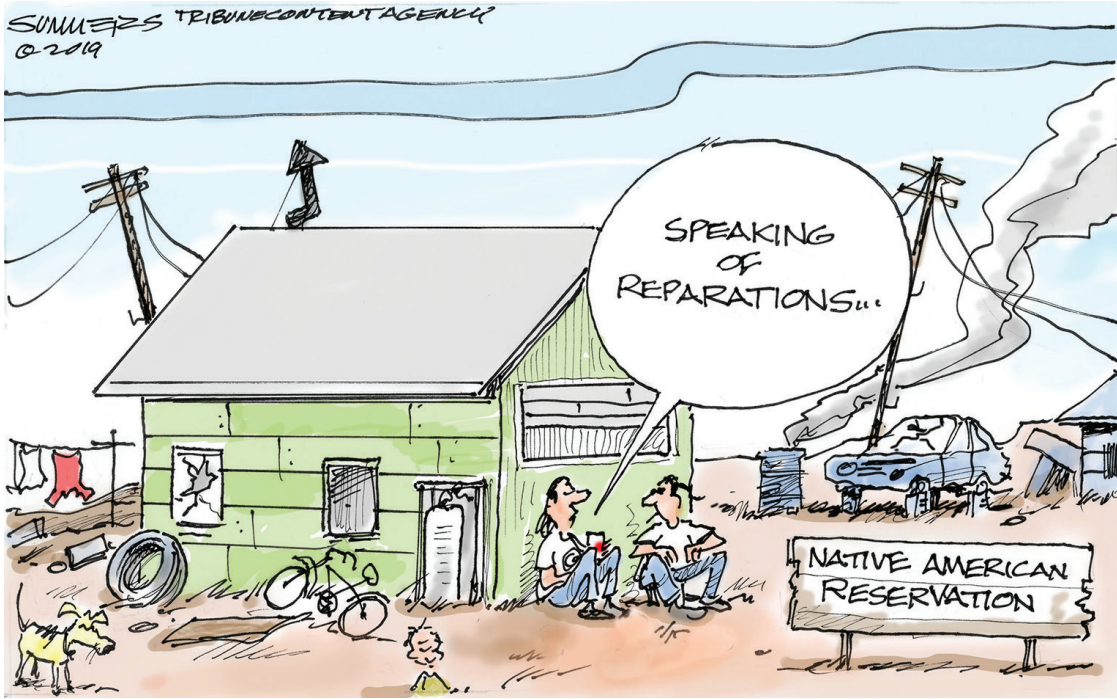


O P I N I O N



Letters to the Editor...

The Nugget welcomes contributions from its readers, which must include the writer's name, address and phone number. Letters to the Editor is an open forum for the community and contains unsolicited opinions not necessarily shared by the Editor. The Nugget reserves the right to edit, omit, respond or ask for a response to letters submitted to the Editor. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned. The deadline for all letters is noon Monday.

To the Editor:

(A letter to Oregon's congressional delegation):

I listened this morning to a report on NPR's Weekend Edition to an interview with a law professor from Willamette University where she shared the atrocious conditions she and a team of investigators found when inspecting facilities housing migrant children. Her name is Warren Binford. She has been doing this type of inspecting for over 20 years and described what she found as the worst conditions seen over all of those years. They visited facilities in Santa Teresa, New Mexico and Clint, Texas.

She spoke of the dangerous, unsanitary, worse-than-prison-like conditions where the children had little chance to shower, were provided no soap and allowed to brush their teeth only every 10 days! In addition they were housed in a metal warehouse that had no windows, slept on concrete floors, lacked nutritious food, slept, ate and toileted in the same area with other children who were sick and/or had lice, and were granted little time

out-of-doors. At the time of the interview there were 350 children, with 100 of them young.

How horribly inhumane! And this is happening in the United States! As a parent, grandparent, early childhood professional, parent education professional, and U.S. citizen I could not believe what I was hearing!

In this day and age we all know the destruction of young lives who live with trauma. No matter the race or ethnicity of any child, we need to value them as our future. Who does our government think will be raising these children? Who will pick up the pieces when they are older and hell-bent on retaliating for how they had been treated? Is our purpose to create enemies, because that is exactly what we are doing! Every day this continues creates memories, memories not in the children's or our country's, let alone their families, best interest!

Please, do something! Find a way to reunite them with their families or at least help them get to their sponsors. This cannot continue!

Edith Ann Jones

Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
T-storms 63/42	T-storms 63/41	Partly cloudy 67/42	Mostly sunny 72/45	Partly cloudy 75/47	Mostly sunny 78/49

The Nugget Newspaper, LLC

Website: www.nuggetnews.com

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Postmaster: Send address changes to

The Nugget Newspaper,

P.O. Box 698, Sisters, OR 97759.

Third Class Postage Paid at Sisters, Oregon.

Editor in Chief: Jim Cornelius

Production Manager: Leith Easterling

Graphic Design: Jess Draper

Community Marketing Partners:

Vicki Curlett & Patti Jo Beal

Classifieds & Circulation: Lisa May

Proofreader: Pete Rathbun

Owner: J. Louis Mullen



Jonah Goldberg

When Vice President Mike Pence was the governor of Indiana, he got along well with the mayor of South Bend, Pete Buttigieg, despite the fact that Buttigieg is a gay, liberal Democrat and Pence is a straight, socially conservative Republican.

Things changed. Pence became the vice president, and Buttigieg decided in April to run for the Democratic presidential nomination. Suddenly there was bad blood where there used to be mad love. Buttigieg insinuated that Pence had a problem with Buttigieg's sexual orientation and marriage to another man.

"If me being gay was a choice, it was a choice that was made far, far above my pay grade," Buttigieg said at an event for the LGBTQ Victory Fund. "And that's the thing I wish the Mike Pences of the world would understand — that if you've got a problem with who I am, your problem is not with me. Your quarrel, sir, is with my creator."

The controversy had a bit of a high school feel to it in that Pence initially objected (correctly) that Buttigieg was being unfair to him given that they had once gotten along swimmingly. But Pence played the victim card too.

"He said some things that are critical of my Christian faith and about me personally, and he knows better," Pence complained.

Buttigieg's dunking on Pence was great fun for the mainstream press. It was a neat and tidy morality tale pitting the forces of tolerance and equality against the forces of bigotry and oppression — Buttigieg the gay scholar veteran vs. Pence the would-be ruler of the Republic of Gilead (the fictional dystopia in "The Handmaid's Tale").

This is all old news, of course. But it seems newly relevant given that Buttigieg has a new problem with Christians who object to his lifestyle. But it's a very different problem.

During Buttigieg's recent appearance on NBC's "Meet the Press," host Chuck Todd read him a statement from the Rev. Rodric Reid, an African American pastor in Indianapolis.

"I guarantee," Reid had told the *Indianapolis Star*, that Buttigieg's marriage to another man "is going to be an obstacle ... That is really still a touchy subject, specifically and especially in the African American church."

Todd also noted that he'd talked to black congressmen who said Buttigieg's homosexuality could be a problem with segments of the African American vote.

Buttigieg's answers were respectful, thoughtful and hopeful that he could work it out with black Democratic voters.

But the question remains: Why don't those voters get called bigots?

It's a rhetorical question, of course. We know why. Attacking Pence and the people he supposedly represents is good for fundraising and votes in Democratic primaries. Calling religious black voters bigots for having the same misgivings that some religious white voters have is political suicide.

The way the media tends to handle culture-war controversies is deeply pernicious. As I write this, we're nearly a week into a debate about whether detention centers are "concentration camps." Wherever you come down on this semantic row, the fact is that the media would never have entertained this "debate" under Barack Obama. We know this because he had detention centers as well.

Similarly, some Democrats are attacking Joe Biden for having had collegial relationships with segregationist senators. That's fair game. But if this debate were going on in the GOP, the media coverage wouldn't be the riot of nuance we see before us. It would be simple and straightforward: Racist racists act racistly.

The GOP certainly has its race problems, and I feel no obligation to run to its defense.

But if you want to know why millions of Republicans no longer care when the media shouts "Racist!" or "Bigot!" ... just look at how they whisper "It's complicated" when talking about Democrats.

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