

LETTERS

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under which deadly physical force is permitted at <https://www.oregonlaws.org/ors/161.239>.

So, why would our state representative vote against this bill unless he is completely out of touch with what has been happening in our country since the death of George Floyd? As evidence continues to mount that Black and brown people have been the targets of police brutality at significantly higher rates than can be explained by reasonable statistics — the fatality rate for Black Americans at the hands of police stands at 31 people per million of the population, while for white Americans is 13 per million (Statista Research Department. “Police Shootings: Rate by Ethnicity US 2015-2020) — it is long past time for all of us, including our elected officials, to face that reality and take steps to prevent more tragic deaths.

According to *The Washington Post* (July 16, 2020), even police departments themselves are banning chokeholds: 26 of the nation’s 65 largest police departments have already done so and more are expected to follow.

Representative Bonham continues to vote with the most conservative members of his party, even walking off the job rather than voting for legislation that a majority of his constituents want. Fortunately, in November, we can vote against Daniel Bonham.

Arlene Burns has demonstrated her leadership and ability to make wise decisions for the good of her community as Mosier’s mayor. I had the opportunity to meet Arlene during her recent visit to Sisters, she is conscientious, caring, and a great listener. She’ll be joining Indivisible Sisters for a meet the candidate event via Zoom on October 8 at 7 p.m. You can join using this link: <https://buff.ly/2Go3XO9>

I know I’ll be voting for Arlene this November for Representative of House District 59. She won’t let partisanship override common sense. ArleneBurns.com

Josh Berger



To the Editor:

After hearing reports that President Trump referred to the American Marines who died on the battlefields of France in World War I as “suckers” and “losers,” it caused me to reflect on my own feelings about the president and the men and women who have sacrificed their lives for our country.

Last year my wife and I had the opportunity to visit the Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall when it was on display in Tucson where we were living at the time. The memorial was on display on the grounds of a local casino. It is 3/5 of the size of the one in Washington D.C., made of granite, 375 feet long and 7.5’ tall. It contains the names of 58,320 American Soldiers who died in the war.

As my wife and I walked along the wall on a sunny day my wife eventually headed for a shady spot to sit as I continued my walk along the wall. A few minutes went by and I observed an elderly couple ahead of me. They were trailed by a younger woman and a guide carrying a ladder which she set down next to the wall. I approached the younger woman and engaged her in a brief conversation. She told me that they were looking for the name of her older brother and she had brought her mother and father to find their son’s name among the 58,320 who had died in the war. I stood back to watch as they searched for his name. Once they found it the elderly woman fumbled through her purse to locate a piece of paper and a pencil. Assisted by her husband she shakily climbed the ladder and began to make a rubbing of their son’s name. I returned to where my wife was resting and watched as they stood with their arms locked around one another staring silently at the wall.

The words of Pete Seeger’s song rattled through my brain as I wondered what they were thinking, “Where have all the flowers gone... and when will we ever learn,” as I looked at the thousands of names on the wall that seemed to stretch forever.

When I returned home, I looked up on the internet and located the name of their son and brother. There was a picture of him at his high school graduation. I’ve forgotten his name, but I will always remember the picture. He was a handsome boy with his hair neatly parted. His eyes portrayed both

innocence and hope. His lips suggested a smile which hinted a mischievous playfulness. I could imagine him teasing a younger sister as I had when I was his age. He had grown up in a small town in Illinois and played on the football team. He had evidently been drafted right out of high school and was only 19 when he died.

Now, as I look back on that day I wonder what his family would think about the president’s words.

I could cite other examples of the president’s callous words about our fallen soldiers. When La David Johnson died in Niger, Africa the president called his widow and, instead of consoling her, said that “her guy” (I guess he couldn’t remember his name) “knew what he was getting into.” Then, in 2017, when he accompanied his Chief of Staff, John Kelly, to visit the grave of Kelly’s son who had been killed in Afghanistan, he rudely said, “I don’t get it, what was in it for them.” In his runup to the election Trump attacked John McCain, “He was not a war hero. He was a war hero because he was captured. I like people who weren’t captured.” Then, within a few hours of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center all he could think of to say was to brag that one of his buildings was now the tallest one in downtown Manhattan. Later, he claimed that he was at ground zero on the day of the attack in an effort to exploit the event for his own benefit. The only question that remains in my mind is: When will we ever learn?

Daniel Ramberg




To the Editor:

The first Presidential Debate was two days ago (at time of letter submission) and I am still trying to wash off the aftermath as an assault victim tries to wash off the filth of defilement.

I am defiled by Trump’s assault, the contemptuous non-stop interruption and disrespect — a pounding slap in the face on verbal, emotional, and psychic levels. Although it was endured first-person by Vice President Biden, it extends to all Americans.

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