

Nazis have right to clean up road

Laura Cameron
The Clackamas Print

What do you get when people vandalize and steal to prove that they aren't a community of bigots?

Answer: a prime lesson in poverty.

When Marion County put up signs acknowledging that the American Nazi Party had adopted a section of road near Salem, residents were understandably upset. After all, nobody wants to discover that there's a Nazi chapter active in their neighborhood. But the locals' reactions to the signs were totally out of line.

First were the demands that the signs be removed; then, that the Nazis not be allowed to participate in the Adopt-a-Road program. Finally, when the county refused to meet these demands, someone defaced, damaged and stole the signs — which will no doubt be replaced, making the whole thing moot.

It goes without saying that I find this all rather amusing, especially the man on the news saying that the protests and thefts

were an effort to prove that they weren't "a community of bigots." Thank you, random man on Channel 8 news. I hadn't laughed that hard in a long time.

The crown jewel of this whole affair, however, is the repeated demand that the Nazis not be allowed to participate in this public program. Here, the laughter ends. Indeed, this is the most serious that many of you will ever see me become.

First, let me point out that I am *not* a Nazi, nor have I ever sympathized with Nazis or agreed with their highly skewed beliefs. Having said that, I will continue by saying that I have a much bigger problem with whoever vandalized and stole those signs than with the Nazis' desire to clean up roadside trash.

Let's be honest here: how much damage has the American Nazi Party done by adopting that small stretch of road?

The answer is, of course, none at all. The person who stole those signs, however, has done approximately \$600 in damage to the very county whose image they are supposedly protecting.

OK, so I lied earlier; I haven't

completely dispensed with laughing. That last paragraph made me chuckle.

But the way I see it, that \$600 is the least of the troubles precipitated by this event. There is a larger issue here, one that, if some people get their way, could wreak havoc with the 14th Amendment. You all know the 14th Amendment, or you should, anyway; it grants us equal protection under the law.

Many people say that Marion County shouldn't allow the Nazis to be part of the Adopt-a-Road program. But for what reason? Because the people of Marion County aren't overly fond of the Nazis' viewpoint?

Well, I'm not overly fond of the viewpoint of over-zealous Christians who attempt to force the love of Jesus down my throat with a hydraulic ram, but that doesn't mean that they shouldn't be allowed to take part in a public service program.

I am going to invoke some language here that is normally reserved for discussions of same-sex marriage: this situation is a "slippery slope." After all, if the squeaky wheels in Marion County succeed in getting the

American Nazi Party blackballed from the Adopt-a-Road program, who else could be banned? Once the precedent is set, who would be next on the list of "banned by reason of unsavory politics?"

Basic Rights Oregon, perhaps? Planned Parenthood? The NRA? The Baptist church? The Boy Scouts?

If the American Nazi Party is banned, how long before only the most easily offended in our society control who can and cannot be part of a public program?

Surely that possibility is more offensive than a few Nazis picking up cigarette butts and beer cans that some non-Nazi has tossed by the roadside.



Mike Navarro shows his opposition to the Nazi sign. His flier reads, "They only pick up white trash."

Associated Press



Internet Photo

Children are the most susceptible to malaria and need things like food and nets to protect them from mosquitoes that may infect them with disease. These starving children are from a village in Sudan.

Malaria kills millions while America stands by

Kyle Slate
The Clackamas Print

The recent tsunami in Asia has attracted the attention of dozens of relief groups and huge amounts of media attention. About 220,000 have died globally from the tsunami that has been said to be the biggest natural disaster of our time.

Today there is another disaster taking place that has been killing for years, malaria. Malaria kills close to 3 million people each year, roughly 90 percent of them in Africa, mostly young children, making malaria the leading cause of death in children under five years old (20 percent).

Malaria also makes people more susceptible to other diseases rampant in the area, such as AIDS and common viruses. Malaria is not just found in poverty but is also a cause of poverty.

The best defense against malaria is sleeping under a mosquito net that costs less than a dollar to make, but

many African families aren't able to get hold of the necessary precautions.

Millions of children are being infected with it at birth from their mothers being bitten by mosquitoes while pregnant. These deaths are extremely unnecessary and avoidable, unlike most natural disasters.

The lethal epidemic is being ignored, over-shadowed by the tsunami that took place because it is something that happened very suddenly and can be physically seen. While tsunamis don't happen every day and people will stop being mortally effected by the recent one very soon, millions will continue to die of malaria, which is estimated to kill a child every 30 seconds.

Africa's been ignored too long, and it's easier and cheaper to stop infestation before it happens. We as a country should support other nations by how much help they need, not by what is most apparent or makes us look good in intention.

A nation isn't honored for self-glorified existentialism but for true empathy.

Iraqi elections successful

Jeremy Freid
The Clackamas Print

I think the recent elections in Iraq were a success. There are many reasons why I think this, but first I need to clarify just how important this recent election was to the citizens of Iraq.

The elections that were held were to decide on a 275-member national assembly that will write a constitution and appoint a president and two deputies. The real success though was that the election was held and people did vote. According to CNN, early and very rough estimates on the voter turnout ranged from about 65 to 75 percent, and this was despite the fact that the terrorists and/or insurgent groups promised that a river of blood would be spilled on election day.

Although 28 people died and 71 were wounded, that really is a low number considering just how big this step is. If the elections were derailed, you only had a 10 to 20 percent voter turnout, people were afraid to vote, or many polling places were getting blown to bits, then the terrorists would have been able to at least delay the elections for many months, if not for a year or more.

But the river of blood did not happen, and in the wake of the elec-

tions, terrorist groups are threatening to behead a G.I. Joe doll and giving reporters a doctored video "showing" that they shot down a British military transport although it went down in a sand storm instead.

There are many speculations as to exactly why "bloody Sunday" (Iraqi elections were held on Sunday, Jan. 30) did not happen. One reason is maybe that the terrorists/insurgents could not marshal the forces necessary, as conservative estimates hold that in Iraq, about 15,000 terrorist/insurgents have died in the continued fighting.

The elections were a success because people came out to vote despite the terrorist threats. The elections were held on time, with only sporadic violence, such as car bombings. Although the process to get a new government on its feet will be slow, the process is now in a position to keep going despite the arguments and disagreements that are bound to come up.

The most important thing was that the Iraqi people came out to vote, despite everything, and that Iraq's own security forces played a major role in making that happen. In fact, one Iraqi police officer threw himself onto a suicide bomber so that the citizens around him at those polling booths could take part in the election process. He sacrificed himself so others could have the opportunity to vote, and that, in my opinion, is the most important reason why Iraq's election was a success.



Internet Photo

Shiites bearing posters of Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani celebrate on Monday in Baghdad's Sadr City following Iraq's election.