

WAS IT A WAR?

Who would consider an encounter in a boxing ring between Mike Tyson and a small child a fight? A brutal assault perhaps, or maybe an aggravated murder, but not a fight. Why then does the media and our delusional leadership refer to the invasion and brutal assault on Iraq as a "brilliant military victory" and something of which to be proud?

The world's number one military power attacks a poor, Third World country ravaged by war and 12 years of economic sanctions, 90 percent disarmed by the U.N. inspectors and militarily defeats it. What an accomplishment! A country that spends \$1.4 billion a year on defense is defeated by another that spends \$400 billion — not counting \$70 billion extra for Iraq — all in the name of freedom.

Iraq joins the list of other bombed and liberated countries: Afghanistan, Yugoslavia, Nicaragua, Panama, etc., democracies all. Add to that list my country Poland, not bombed but raided by American economic and political advisors like Jeffery Sachs, Zbigniew Brzezinski and finally strangled by IMF and Globalization austerity projects. It is a shell of a country now with an American puppet government, ready to serve its master by sending 200 special forces troops to aid the "coalition of the willing," while 96 percent of Poles oppose it. Democracy thrives in Poland. Add to the list "new Europe" on its knees, whose governments are prepared to sell their souls and sovereignty for a few dollars of American aid.

Behind it all, 70 percent of Americans waving the Old Glory and cheering. Shame.

*Adam Uminski
Eugene*

START TALKING

What I believe we need and desire is com-

munication face-to-face, thoughtful discussions that are respectful, with both sides listening fully with open ears, minds and hearts. I am naïve enough to believe that any two people brought together would have something to teach each other.

Our culture, media and two-party political system do not work to bring us all together. On the contrary it is quite the opposite: polarizing, stereotyping and dividing us and sensationalizing the negatives.

My hope at all levels (personal, community and global) begins face to face with old-fashioned, slower-than-snail-mail talk. We need open, honest discussions across the divide of ideas. Community being built person by person, real life connections being made. To me, it seems what's more important than talking of our differences is talking of what we have in common. I believe we all have much, much more in common than we might think.

I would ask you all to take a chance, reach out a bit, open yourself up to someone (a neighbor or a co-worker maybe). Start a conversation with the intention of listening, not judging or wanting to change their views, but openly listening to see where they are coming from. It might seem daunting at first, but gets much easier the more you do it. What do you have to lose, fear? There is so, so much to be gained!

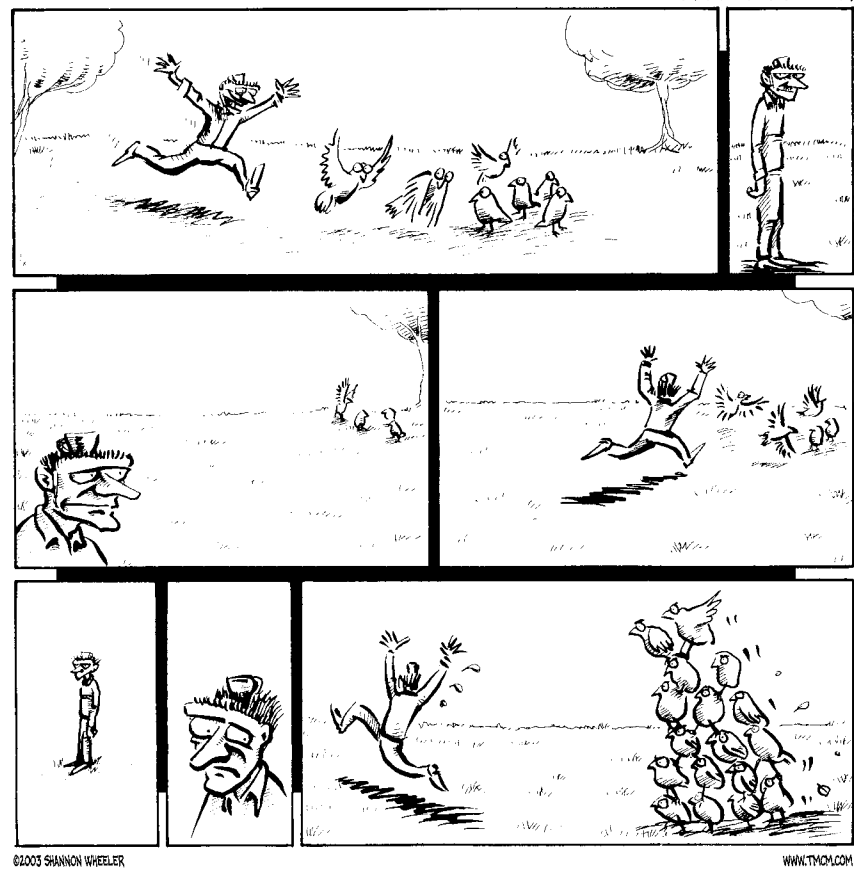
We might come to realize we do not have to act to agree upon everything to be friends.

*Tim Boyden
Eugene*

BAD ADVICE

I take offense to the bad advice given by Charles Gray (Commentary 4/10) for tax resistance. From the picture of Mr. Gray, I would guess he doesn't have to worry about his income anymore because it's fixed by now. To ad-

TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN BY SHANNON WHEELER



vised young, working-class folks with kids and mortgages to "lower their income" to below taxable level is not only impossible for most but utterly stupid and irresponsible.

His advice to quit your job and become self-employed and sell advice to people is way off. Your self-employment tax kicks in at \$400. Your accounts, estates and trusts can all be garnished or have liens filed against them. You can ruin your credit and lose your home by following Mr. Gray's advice. True tax resistance is a shell game for millionaires.

For the rest of us, make donations to your favorite nonprofit organizations that provide the services you want to support. This is a dollar-for-dollar reduction of income. It lowers your taxes so you pay less into the war machine. You can donate a huge amount of your income. The amount is determined by your income; if you donate then you can carry forward to the next year what you missed in the present year.

Ask yourself this: Do you really want to lose your home and have you and yours live in a tent just because it will cause the IRS problems? Or

INSIDER BASEBALL BY TONY CORCORAN



Dueling Science

Take 10 steps, fire and turn.

Cougars: Recessionary budget wolves at the door, and all the Oregon House can talk about are cougars? The biennial bear and cougar fights are on again. Ever since Measure 18 passed in 1994, for my past five legislative sessions, hunters have tried to overturn the will of the people by turning to the Legislature; and I always get caught in the middle of it because of my district. From the UO campus to the Steamboat Inn on the North Umpqua, from the south hills of Eugene to Drain and Yoncalla, from Oakridge to Oakland. Talk about a swing district — my two House members are Jeff Kruse and Floyd Prozanski, Elmer Fudd and Abraham Lincoln!

Here's the Senate, preoccupied with disappearing school days, brain-dead seizure patients who ran out of Medically Needy coverage, suicides caused by closing down mental health programs, and PERS; and the House is wasting our time on professional wrestling, metal pants and cougars? Here's the perfect political solution to this biennial debate, and we can charge admission. We'll form a work group composed of the "special interest" lobbyists involved in this bill, then we'll put them all in one of those caged, no-holds-barred, no-exit wrestling arenas. We'll pass food and assorted liquid beverages through on a slider. We will feed them experts from both sides — dueling sciences. The last side standing wins.

(And they'll only have one Porta-Potty manned — with a towel on his arm — by our distinguished colleague, Senator Atkinson. Jason must be still trying to overcome a childhood trauma dealing with the aforementioned plumbing fixture by pushing a bill that would require perma-potties on the Capitol mall; he has issues, as they say — but, I digress.)

I know, most of us were taught that "dueling science" is an oxymoron, because sound, verifiable, scientific methodology should yield only one result. Think again. Welcome to the world of predator management, testosterone, trophy hunts, animal defenders and other self-proclaimed stewards of the planet Earth. One side holds up the argument that it's just a matter of time until someone's little baby gets

eaten, so we gotta hunt them critters. Then a wildlife biologist on the other side points out that hunting cougars actually creates more human/cougar confrontations because hunters love to kill big mature adult males, and when they do, that territory is taken up by immature cubs who don't understand the borders and boundaries of their new turf.

Anecdotally, I believe the cougar population has increased. We'd never seen cougars in our 20 years out here at the Flying Pig Ranch, but in the past few years we've seen a cougar several times at our place; and our neighbor met one in his driveway one morning recently. Last week, in Blachly, two cubs and their mother were executed after eating two goats. But I generally end up in the same place on this issue: There's a reason we hire wildlife biologists to work for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife — to manage the damn animal populations. If ODFW says control the cougars, we should probably listen to them. Meanwhile, shut up Jeff Kropf, go get signatures on an initiative if you want to vote on this thing again — the voters already told you NO. For now, Jeff, just go put on your Elvis suit and chill.

The animal rights folks will argue that ODFW doesn't have the right attitude; after all, they used to be known as "Fish and Game." I'll never forget the time Jeannie caught a chicken-thievin' bobcat in a Hav-a-Heart trap and when she asked the wildlife guy what she should do next, he assured her that she couldn't have captured the bobcat. That was not the answer she wanted to hear.

Farmworker justice: Speaking of biennial events, it appears the growers will try to push another bad bill out of the House. Attacks on farmworkers have been going on since the 1997 session, since the Oregon Supreme Court ruled on the Oregon Roses case. The current version would give farmworkers the right to strike, but not during harvest time; and it would not provide any venue for timely settlement of labor violations and bargaining. No, se puedes.

It's déjà vu again, Yogi. The next thing you know, the House will be trying to eliminate motorcycle helmets again. What's that? They are? They did? Back to the bad movie: "Dial V for Veto, The Sequel!" starring, guess who?

Sen. Tony Corcoran of Cottage Grove represents portions of Lane and Douglas counties in Senate District 4, which includes the UO area. He can be reached at sen.tonycorcoran@state.or.us