

SENSELESS IDEOLOGY

In his 6/23 letter, Steven Gider appears to not understand my 6/16 letter. I simply showed that Chris Calef's claim (Viewpoint 6/9) of Jeff Luers' sentence being greater than that of murderers was untrue, as the minimum in Oregon for murder is longer than Luers' sentence. I never said that he did not receive a long sentence for arson.

Gider has unfortunately missed the critical problem with Calef's editorial. And that was his clearly anarchist philosophy: stating that it was meaningless for people to vote, that communicating with politicians did little good, and that peaceful protest was pointless. It is this kind of dysfunctional thinking which has led to tragedies such as Luers' long imprisonment. If people wish to point fingers in this matter, it should be towards those in the local anarchist movement who indoctrinated Luers into this corrupt and senseless ideology, and thus ruined his life.

Recently, the city of Eugene renamed a major street after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Just this past week, Springfield began construction on a major parkway, also to be named in his honor. The key question here for our community is whether we want to be a society that pays homage to Dr. King's commitment to the teachings of Jesus Christ and Mahatma Gandhi, or whether we want to be one that disgraces his memory, by rejecting his guidance about violent protest. I believe that 99 percent of the people in Lane County want to do the former.

*Lance Jacobs
Springfield*

HERITAGE OF MURDER

The Senate recently voted to apologize for never making lynching a federal crime. Twenty senators still could not bring themselves to sign on to the bill, and to protect them, the bill was passed on a voice vote in the dead of night so no one had to declare their vote. They missed another opportunity to truly confront America's murderous heritage, because they never stated why the Senate defeated more than 200 attempts to make lynching illegal. They merely acknowledged that those defeats happened, and they still have not passed an anti-lynching law.

The mass media did no better — not one program addressing the lynchers, their motivations, and the ongoing impact of their actions on any major TV or radio network. There was no mention that most lynching victims had in some way tried to assert social and/or economic equality between blacks and whites. The media did state a body

count of fewer than 5,000 since the 1880s, and that count only includes cases documented in newspapers and is low by tens of thousands.

There was also no mention that most of the lynchings occurred in what we now call red states, and that the most conservative Christian states had the most lynchings. Furthermore, no mention was made that lynchings were considered family entertainment. Lynchings have happened in all but two states and continue occasionally to this day. This is not ancient history, and most whites refuse to participate in any truth and reconciliation efforts to address these crimes.

Because of the reopening of the Goodman, Cheney, and Schwerner and the Emit Till lynching cases, there has been some acknowledgement that lynching is a form of murder most often used to control black people. However, there has been no acknowledgment that lynching is an integral part of the American heritage. There was no mention that while dredging the rivers for Goodman, Cheney and Schwerner's bodies more than 200 bodies of missing black men were found. Only a few were ever identified.

I have yet to hear a white Christian, conservative or otherwise, explain why whites felt comfortable attending lynchings with their wives and children. They don't explain why they proudly took photos with the bodies or why they took home souvenirs including body parts, and they don't explain why the Post Office proudly delivered lynching postcards or why people would travel hundreds of miles to attend show lynchings, demanding that they don't kill the victims too quickly. Less than 1 percent of the perpetrators have been prosecuted, much less convicted.

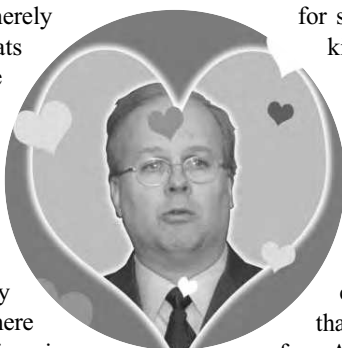
*Charles Dalton, President Emeritus,
Eugene/Springfield Branch, NAACP*

FEED-BAG POLITICS

I see Karl Rove has crawled out of his fat farm feed bag long enough to blubber about the Dems being traitors and wimps for starting a phony war and killing a bunch of non-terrorists while subverting the Constitution and bankrupting the country.

Perhaps we cowardly Dems should be stuck in a concentration camp or something like that ... like those poor twits from Afghanistan down in Cuba.

Yes, that would show us all just what democracy is really about, according to the tubby man and his fellow feeders ... oh, pardon me,



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