

WHAT KIND OF FORCE?

I know it's tilting at windmills, but I want to express a quibble I have long had with a phrase that policymakers and journalists alike seem to love to employ: "use(s) of force."

The brief article about Eugene Police Department's "'sustained' rate of misconduct," [7-24] utilizes this phrase eight times. What does the speaker saying "use of force" intend to mean? The common assumption is *violent* force, i.e., coercive by employing pain and threat.

It bears pointing out that "force," in and of itself, is a quite neutral term. From physics, the word connotes the capability to create movement or change in a given system. This, under particular circumstances, could be a very good thing. It takes force to pull a drowning life form out of the water.

Only a sustained force of some type can bring down repressive governments or oppressive cultural habits; but this force does not ever necessarily have to be violent.

Martin Luther King Jr. famously said that unarmed truth and love are "the most powerful force in the universe."

Our media and community leaders have fallen into a semantic habit that eclipses our possibilities to be better as a people and as a society. If you are reporting on affairs in our various communities that affect us all, take the extra time to specify the *kind of force* you are referring to: Do you mean destructive, violent force, or by some chance are you actually evoking another way to both protect the populace as well as move us all forward to a better world?

Gandhi's *satyagraha* is typically translated to mean "the force of truth and love." Real change can happen without stooping to violence and coercion.

Vip Short
Eugene

MEDICARE FOR ALL

Until recently I have had no medical insurance. I've paid out of pocket for any care that I needed. Luckily I haven't had any catastrophic diseases or accidents that would've put me in that sinking boat known as medical bankruptcy.

In recent years my personal health care bills have averaged \$1,155 annually. Obamacare has forced me to buy health insurance which is OK in theory, knowing that we all need quality health care, and it has done some good things like eliminating existing conditions denials.

The problem is that under the current system I now have a monthly premium of \$330 and maximum deductions before I get any service. Let's do the math: For one year for a very healthy person, my costs would be \$3,960 plus \$6,300 equals \$10,260, and then the insurance plan only pays 40 percent for services. Additionally, I will still have to pay for any visits to chiropractors, naturopathic physicians, acupuncturists, massage therapists and urgent care facilities I may need to keep my body and brain functioning optimally.

Wow, I could be medically bankrupt in a heartbeat. I'm way better off paying the \$1,155 a year and taking my chances.

I'm disgusted with our current system. We need a different approach, one that provides better health care for all of us at less cost. Insurance companies are not truly interested in helping "the public" — they are a huge middle-man drain to our pocket books.

I believe we should eliminate the insurance companies and go to a Medicare-for-all system. Canada, New Zealand and all other countries which have this type of approach are so much better off health-wise and cost-wise than the U.S.

Vicki Anderson
Springfield

ACA IS ONLY A STEP

Human rights of various kinds are mentioned in the news. I believe that health care is a basic human right. A study of other countries' health care offerings indicates the notion is not new. It's high time that health care is affordable for all. Economists have shown that a reasonable monthly premium would cover it without co-pays or non-covered procedures. The Affordable Care Act cannot do that; it is only a step in the right direction. It's time to take this next step.

Joan Armstead
Eugene

ON LINDENS AND APHIDS

I have great friends in this community who helped remind me that there are exceptions. After my comment [Letters, 7/17] stating that "if it's a bad year, Lindens will be covered with aphids — no exception!" I realized that usually silver

lindens (*Tilia tomentosa*) are not normally susceptible but I wasn't 100-percent sure. As soon as the comment was public, my two good friends Whitey and Erik called me and confirmed my doubts: Aphids don't bother silver lindens. I felt like it needed to be said; we wouldn't want to stop planting lindens now, would we?

Alby Thomsin, arborist
Sperry Tree Care
Eugene

READING COMPREHENSION

Early in grammar school, while I was being taught to read, I was also taught comprehension. Billy Lindros [7/17] responded to my letter [7/10] about bike path safety, which indicates he can read, but I give him an "F" in comprehension.

He tells me to slow down when approaching groups and signal when passing, to use common sense and compassion, and if I don't like it I should drive on the freeway and complain about people driving too slow in the fast lane.

I don't know where in my letter it said that I'm a disgruntled cyclist. One paragraph stated a person looking at a cell phone walked into me while I was on my bicycle. This incident happened while that group was walking *toward* me, and had nothing to do with me not giving warning when passing, or being courteous.

Fact is I walk/jog about an hour every other day, so I spend around 180 hours a year on the path as a pedestrian. I'm 71 and couldn't race along on my bike if I wanted



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