

sports organizations such as Major League Baseball are *not* legally protected from independent league baseball, but nonetheless are sometimes called legal monopolies on grounds that they are exempted from U.S. antitrust law.”

And the cable companies would probably disagree with you because of the other choices available to the consumer. Their monopoly is only for the laying of the cable — and *not* the delivery of the product. In fact, federal regulations specifically prohibit monopolizing the delivery of the product.

Frank Skipton
Springfield

GRATE EXPECTATIONS

The Donald is often greeted with ridicule when he promises to “make this country *grate* again,” although no one doubts his ability to make this country grate. His mistake, as Hillary pointed out, is to say “again.” To paraphrase her response, this country has never stopped grating.

Tony Waters
Eugene

REFORMS NEEDED

As this election year grinds on, it has become clear that our political and financial systems need a complete overhaul. Corporate media and corporate-sponsored

politicians are the captives of special interest groups. Their interests often run contrary to the national and international well-being of the U.S.

Consider two powerful lobbies and their influence on domestic and foreign affairs: The National Rifle Association (NRA) and the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC).

Despite numerous gun-related deaths and injuries, including political and civil rights leaders, our public servants in Congress have been unwilling to pass meaningful legislation to stop the carnage, largely due to the role NRA money plays in influencing elections.

Internationally, American supporters of Israel have been successful in stymying all efforts at realizing an independent and viable Palestinian state. AIPAC, with its generous support of American politicians, has jeopardized our national security.

According to the 9/11 Commission Report, Israeli oppression of Palestinians was one of the chief grievances of the 9/11 attackers, and the Palestine/Israel quagmire has served as a radicalizing recruitment tool for groups that target the U.S. and its allies.

We need comprehensive campaign finance reform to strengthen the democracy we cherish, as well as the moral imperative we aspire to.

Until then, we have no claim to the moral high ground and less to democracy.

M. Reza Behnam
Eugene

CAN WE TALK?

We must be the laughingstock of the world. Our so-called presidential campaign is little more than a school-yard shouting match. Except for the Democratic debates, there is nary a word about policy and substance.

As a nation, and in particular those subscribing to the Republican banner, we have every reason to feel embarrassed. Will Donald Trump continue to build his campaign around attack and chest-beating?

But Trump’s emergence is no mystery. Brawn and bluster have arguably become the American way. How do we explain 30,000 gun deaths every year? Why only in America is there a multi-billion dollar industry built on a coliseum sport of hyper-violence, even as reports of terrible brain injuries grab headlines?

We have only to recall — history is such a bother — that as swords rattled for war post 9/11, many of us were like angered gorillas needing to kill something, anything. To ask people at that time to reflect was to find oneself accused of being unpatriotic or un-American. Indeed, the prevailing mood supported a mistaken war that opened a Pandora’s box in the Middle East, which we continue to pay for.

Walls along our borders? A more flush Pentagon? More torture? How about ramping up education?! Wouldn’t America be stronger and better with a populace reared and educated in history, debate and compromise? We are Trump.

Can we talk?

Russ DesAulnier
Eugene

THE BIGOT VOTE

Let’s stop all the hand-wringing over David Duke’s endorsement of Donald Trump. Everyone knows that Republicans need the bigot vote to win elections.

Not all Republicans are bigots, but it is probably safe to say that most bigots are Republicans. Not all Republican politicians explicitly seek the racist vote, but Republican policies and rhetoric certainly attract the less tolerant and enlightened among us.

Raise your hand if you can name a Democrat who was endorsed or supported by the Aryan Nations or the Ku Klux Klan.

Spud Smith
Oakridge



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