

GOOD QUESTION

As a Jewish man, I was amazed at the national response to the slaughter in the Pittsburgh temple: front-page news every day for a week; flags at half-mast; a visit from the president; medals to the officers who were wounded protecting the survivors; a great uproar over anti-Semitism.

As a father of two black men, I was not surprised by the response to the murder of two black people in a Kentucky supermarket just two days before. What are their names? Who was the heroic person who stopped the killing? Why is there no great uproar about murdering people because they are not white?

Do we even care?

Norman Bellitt
Springfield

NOT OK ANYMORE

Global warming and climate change were not a consideration in 1937. Could someone please tell me why a dated act (O & C Lands) continues to be used as a rationale for logging that contributes to such? Time after time, the BLM uses an 81-year-old act as grounds to ignore the serious ecological problem of this time.

Essential services for schools and communities are cited as a justification for the overzealous harvesting. That is ironic to me, as the resource depletion, ecological instability and boom/bust cycles of heavy industry contribute to economic and regional depression in the first place.

The industrial logging model impacts more people and aspects of everyday living than ever before. The fact that the BLM and the timber industry are not responsive to that is a wake-up call that something is seriously awry.

The BLM's Thurston Hills plan to clearcut large portions of a public recreation area close to farms and homes demonstrates how destructive their industry ties are. We need to speak out and say this is not okay anymore.

Kerstin Britz
Cottage Grove

WHAT BOYS LEARN NOW

I wonder what a young male growing up in this country might learn from the hearings in the Senate recently.

He might learn that when you are young, you can travel in the circles of drunken partiers (we are loud, obnoxious drunks with prolific pukers among us) and use misogynistic language ("Renate alumnus," "boofing") and it will all be forgiven, even overlooked. What the heck. Why not? It's cool.

He might learn that even if you are belligerent, rude and disrespectful on national TV, it does not disqualify you for a lifetime appointment to the highest court of the land. Wow. My mom was wrong. I can act that way whenever I feel like it.

Most unnerving of all, he might learn that failing to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth under oath is now perfectly acceptable in this country and will help you advance in life. This was a very sad and shameful episode in our history.

Carolyn Partridge
Eugene

ADAPT OR DIE

Right on the heels of utter devastation wrought by hurricanes Florence and Michael comes an alarming report in the prestigious journal *Nature* that mitigation of global climate change will require a massive switch to plant-based eating.

The report concludes that global warming threatens the world's very food supply, in addition to generating scorching heat, raging wildfires, devastating hurricanes, massive flooding and rising sea levels. It was compiled by an international panel of 23 climate experts and follows the latest warning about rising temperatures by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

A 2010 United Nations report blamed animal agriculture for 19 percent of greenhouse gas emissions, 70 percent of freshwater use and 38 percent of land use. Carbon dioxide is emitted by burning forests to create animal pastures and by operating factory farms. The more damaging methane and nitrous oxide are released from digestive tracts of cattle and from animal waste cesspools, respectively.

In an environmentally sustainable world, just as we replace fossil fuels by wind, solar and other pollution-free energy sources, we must also replace meat and dairy products in our diet by vegetables, fruits and grains.

Our next supermarket visit offers a superb opportunity to get started.

Elijah Hennison
Eugene

CAPITALIST MEATHEADS

Capitalism owes no loyalty to flag, God or family. Capitalism has no code of ethics, no shared moral conscience, no values other than profit.

The entire point of capitalism is to make money — period. There is no other goal. The longed-for objective of all supranational billionaires is monopoly. Their creed is: "Charge as much as you can, pay as little as is possible."

The Chinese, Vietnamese and Bangladeshis are not to blame for the Rust Belt — capitalists are. If capitalists had any loyalty or patriotism, they would have paid decent wages and kept manufacturing jobs here in America, but they have none of either commodity. Their do-all, be-all and end-all is money. They sold America out for a few pennies on the dollar, and they congratulated themselves for it.

The grand panjandrums of American business would be perfectly fine with an American Gulag (pay nothing, feed the workers just enough to stay alive); they long for the good old days of slavery (you pay nothing and you get to rape the help) and fantasize about the concentration camp system (you don't even have to keep the workers alive — just work 'em 'til they die and then get some more).

Economically (absolutely not socially) America was at its best and fairest in the early 1950s when the average CEO made 18 times what his workers did, the top 1 percent was taxed 90 percent, and corporations (which were not then "people") were taxed 55 percent.

As Archie Bunker sang: "Those were the days ..."

Jamie Selko
Eugene

LANGUAGE AND VIOLENCE

How did we become so violent?

Dictators seize and remain in power through the use of what the late psychologist Marshall Rosenberg calls "domination structures." He defines these as structures in which some people claim to be superior and have the right to control others because they know what's best. They call themselves kings, czars and geniuses.

VIEWPOINT BY RABBI RUHI SOPHIA MOTZKIN RUBENSTEIN

A Culture of Joy and Solidarity

RABBI RUBENSTEIN ON THE TREE OF LIFE SHOOTINGS

Thank you all for being here this evening. My heart is with you from New York.

Your presence together this evening is not just an act of solidarity. It is an act of resistance.

The shooter and the culture he represents want us to be isolated and afraid. They want all of our energy to be on the defensive, hunkering down, making ourselves smaller. They want us to disappear. This is true whether the target is a black church, a queer nightclub or a synagogue.

No matter who wants us to disappear, no matter who is targeted, we defy them best by showing up for each other, by gathering allies together and by being in solidarity with all marginalized people, all people of good faith. We defy them by being active for our vision of a better world.

We defy them by living large.

Fortunately, the strategies by which we defy them happen to be the same strategies by which we keep our own souls and our community healthy and, in this community, the strategies by which we show our children that being Jewish means many things. But being a victim is *not* one of them.

Our children — all Jewish children — need to see us modeling a culture of joy and solidarity. So if you are Jewish and this is the first time you've been to

synagogue in a while, I want to encourage you to do one thing this week that is a positive, joyful identification with Judaism. Light Shabbat candles. Come to services. Show that we are not just Jewish in reaction to something.

To all of the allies here tonight: Thank you. You help us be brave. Thank you especially to Dan Bryant, who has been a stalwart ally to this community for decades. Thank you to the families and individuals — some of whom I did not meet — who rushed here with flowers yesterday as soon as they heard the news.

If I can make one request of you allies beyond what you have already done, it is that you show your solidarity outside of this building as well. Challenge anti-Semitic rhetoric — and there is plenty of it — in the public sphere.

There is so much work to be done. We can only hope to do it if we take good care of ourselves and each other. I am sorry not to be with you right now. Please do reach out to me if you are needing extra support. I will be back in town on Wednesday.

As Rabbi Nachman of Breslov taught: The whole entire world is a very narrow bridge; the essential thing is not to give in to fear.

Thank you all for refusing to give in to fear. May we stay courageous together.

Rabbi Ruhi Sophia Motzkin Rubenstein was at a conference in New York. Her comments were read by Jeff Kirtner, first vice president of Temple Beth Israel.