

# KeizerOpinion

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## Use power, not troops

It took the death of an attractive young American woman for President Obama and other politicians to get really mad. This week Obama sent Congress a request for broadened war power authority to fight the Islamic State (ISIS).

Kayla Mueller, a 26-year old woman from Arizona, and a captive of the Islamic State (ISIS), was killed while being held hostage; ISIS says she was killed in as a result of a Jordanian air raid. Was the decapitation of James Foley not horrible enough for Obama and others to act? Obama has the executive power to order airstrikes against ISIS (as he has done for months now), but he wants to get bipartisan support for an escalation. We presume as a result of Mueller's death.

Turn the clock back 50 years. A president asked for and received almost unanimous support for his war power authority request. That president was Lyndon Johnson, the result was the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, which gave Johnson free reign to do anything he wanted. After all he had the approval of a bipartisan Congress.

There is one big similarity between the war in Vietnam and the coming war against ISIS: a lack of a defined battle line. In Vietnam troops were constantly blindsided by enemy troops who were fighting a different kind of war than the Americans were. The enemy hid in plain sight amongst the civilian south Vietnamese population.

In Syria and Iraq any Allied fighting force on the ground cannot be sure where the enemy is. There is not battleline with ISIS troops on one side

and Allied troops on the other. That's reason enough not to send in America's young people into a region that has been in turmoil more often than not.

Obama says he does not want to put American boots on the group to fight ISIS, but who knows what hawkish arguments might carry the day in the near future? Obama could be prodded by members of his own political party to send in troops to stave off Republican taunts before the 2016 presidential campaign heats up.

In 1991 President George H.W. Bush took the time to build a coalition that pushed Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait within weeks. Jordanian and the United Arab Emirates have launched airstrikes against ISIS; that should be the beginning of a new coalition. It is not only the U.S. that fears ISIS and its intentions; most governments in the Middle East are just as fearful. A coalition should include as many as America can put together and that includes Iran. In his final two years in office Obama has the opportunity to take some giant geopolitical steps in that region of the world.

America is not at war with Islam. We are at war against a self-styled theocracy that does want to harm the United States. If it takes the death of an idealistic American woman to get this country to take the action against them she did not die in vain. But we should keep a watchful eye on what the president does with his new authorization. Let's use our military technology not our men and women to fight this good fight. —LAZ

## Mayor Cathy Clark

To the Editor:

A big "thank you" to Mayor Cathy Clark for her attention, giving and bringing, to our long neglected River Road merchants!

They are the true heart of Keizer. Cathy features and visits a different Keizer business every Wednesday as a part of her Keizer Business Day program. Carol Doerfler  
Keizer

## Senator wants people to stop SB324

To the Editor:

One of the first public hearings of the Oregon Legislature's 2015 session was for Senate Bill 324, which extends the sunset for a low carbon fuel standards (LCFS) program set to expire December 31.

The alleged purpose of LCFS is to reduce the "carbon intensity" of fossil fuels. Producers of biofuels will be given "carbon intensity credits" for their production of "renewable" energy products. Suppliers of gasoline and diesel will be forced to purchase these "carbon intensity credits" to "mitigate" their carbon dioxide

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emissions. The Department of Environmental Quality estimates this will increase the price of gasoline by about 19 cents per gallon. Consumer user groups are estimating costs to be closer to \$1 per gallon.

SB 324 requires no notification of the covert tax to be provided to consumers. Most Oregonians won't realize that they are paying an extra \$2 to \$20 to fill up their gas tanks.

The LCFS is not really about saving the planet. Even the complete elimination of all Oregon greenhouse gas emissions would not result in a measurable difference in global emissions.

It's not about social justice, either. Families living at or near poverty levels spend the highest percentage of their income for energy. They will suffer the greatest harm by forcing artificial and unaffordable increases in energy prices upon them.

Oregonians concerned about this misguided policy should contact their state representatives and senators and urge them to oppose SB 324. **Sen. Doug Whitsett**  
**Klamath Falls**

## Kitzhaber's time is running out

gene h. mcintyre

he joined the Kitzhaber administration. Another job paid her \$118,000 over a two-year period, a matter brought

about by another Kitzhaber associate who became a Kitzhaber staff member the very same month Hayes begin receiving installments on her \$118,000 stipend.

Kitzhaber's been asked about these matters and has played them down. Played them so that we're expected to actually believe he was not orchestrating his fiancée's financial gain advantages over most, and likely all, other persons seeking help to secure work in the state of Oregon.

Kitzhaber apparently got indignant when asked about the hard-to-miss connection. He commented that those two people who got high-paying state jobs in Kitzhaber's office right after helping Hayes, did not need to "curry favor" with him and that it'd be "silly" to think so. Okay, I'm silly.

Hayes first got on the radar screen when she was trying for a salaried position after getting implicated in a state investigation of how her 3-Strategies company in Bend won a piece of a state energy contract. Hayes was never charged but that dark cloud was never burned off by exposure to the "sun" in reviews of her shenanigans along with what was Kitzhaber's role. She nevertheless got away with whatever she had done, suspected not altogether right or ethical, and may have been more emboldened ever since.

It is believed that only the top of the Kitzhaber-Hayes iceberg has yet been publicly seen. Since they can't even seem able to even find a place to meet, I'm personally not expecting a bold coming out with the facts

by the Oregon Government Ethics Commission. After all, they are dependent on Kitzhaber for their existence and know what he does with those who disagree with him.

Meanwhile, based on the sheer weight of the accumulating negative stuff and quite possibly law-breaking, *The Oregonian's* editorial board, joined by a chorus of others, has called for Kitzhaber to resign, a drastic measure that seems more and more appropriate with each passing day's revelations. However, since Kitzhaber can't sidestep the reports of what he and Hayes have apparently conspired together to accomplish for what appears as immediate personal financial gain and future earnings through state policy influence, items of a controversially problematic nature, it is not against the law, then Kitzhaber's departure from office is an action whose time has come.

One additional thought has to do with related disappointments. It's deeply troubling and disturbing enough that Kitzhaber has turned a lot of his gubernatorial authority over to girlfriend Hayes. What's also greatly unsettling is that we know of only one, now former Kitzhaber administration communications director Nkenge Harmon Johnson, who apparently commented that she and her colleagues should be wary of Hayes "so she doesn't just go on her merry way," and lost her job for it. Meanwhile, Hayes has dictated operational terms to Michael Jordan, director of the Department of Administrative Services, and other state agency directors, but not one of those highly-paid civil service appointees—who get paid by the taxpayers—had the courage to publicly protest her power grabs. They, too, should find work elsewhere.

(Gene H. McIntyre's column appears weekly in the *Keizertimes*.)

## Condemning Islam is the wrong course

By MICHAEL GERSON

Days after the video appeared of a Jordanian pilot horribly burned to death by an Islamic State death squad, President Obama told the National Prayer Breakfast that all faiths can be "twisted and misused in the name of evil" and that terrorists who profess "to stand up for Islam" are, in fact, "betraying it." Critics found Obama's timing offensive and his message about Islam naive: He should avoid moral equivalence, stop playing the theologian and recognize that Islam has a unique problem with violence and extremism.

Days after the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001—in which temperatures inside the collapsing World Trade Center reached 2,000 degrees and the bodies of many passengers on the airplanes were consumed by burning jet fuel—George W. Bush took off his shoes, entered a Muslim prayer room at the Islamic Center of Washington, spoke with Muslim leaders and made a short statement. "These acts of violence against innocents," he said, "violate the fundamental tenets of the Islamic faith. ... The face of terror is not the true faith of Islam."

On Sept. 20, 2001, speaking to a joint session of Congress, Bush called the teachings of Islam "good and peaceful." "The terrorists," he said, "are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself."

Later in his presidency, when the charge came that America was fighting a war against Islam, Bush answered that it was radicals who had "spread the word that this really isn't peaceful people versus radical people or terrorists; that it is really about America not liking Islam."

"I believe that Islam is a great religion that preaches peace," Bush said. "And I believe people who murder the innocent to achieve political objectives aren't religious people, whether they be a Christian who does that—we had a person blow up a federal building in Oklahoma who professed to be a Christian, but that's not a Christian act to kill innocent

other views

people."

Those who long for greater clarity in describing the peculiarly Islamic nature of terrorism (see Bobby

Jindal: "Let's be honest here: Islam has a problem") should also be clear about something else. They are proposing a fundamental shift in the rhetorical strategy of the war against terrorism. In the Bush/Obama approach, terrorism is an aberration that must be isolated. Critics believe it emanates from Islam and must be expiated. And some urge the president to declare that one of the Abrahamic faiths belongs in a special category of menace.

There are, of course, consequential historical differences among faiths. It is harder to separate divine law from positive law in a faith where the founder was also a political and military leader—though it was hard enough even in a faith where the founder was killed by political and military authorities.

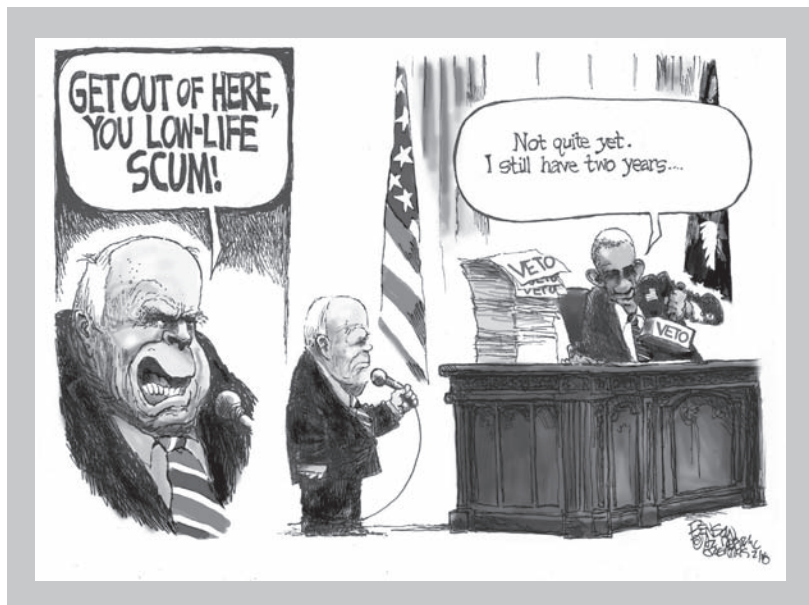
But those who wish the president to publicly explore these matters are the ones urging him to act as a theologian. Presidential rhetoric on this issue should not be theological but phenomenological. The vast majority of the world's Muslims—and an almost unanimous majority of American Muslims—believe their faith to be inalterably opposed to putting people in a cage and setting them on fire, or employing the

mentally disabled as suicide bombers, or burying children alive. This is the actual division that matters most, and the rhetorical division that best serves American interests: peaceful people versus the terrorists.

Most of those urging Obama to assert that Islam is somehow especially flawed among the great faiths have never been closer to power than a fuse box. There is no possible circumstance in which a president could say such a thing. It would cause a global firestorm, immediately alienating Muslim allies and proxies whom we depend on to help fight the Islamic State and other enemies. How would the king of Jordan, for example—a 41st-generation descendant of the Prophet Muhammad—be forced to react? How would the terrorists use such a critique in their own propaganda? Some of the president's critics are blithely recommending a massive, unforced geostrategic blunder.

Obama's speech at the prayer breakfast was cliché-ridden and historically shallow. But its basic framework—pitting true faith against nihilistic violence—will be adopted by every future president. Some of the intense reaction against Obama's formulation is rooted in a broader fear that he is not serious enough in prosecuting the war against the Islamic State—a concern I share. But the answer is to prosecute that war more vigorously—not complicate it with careless and counterproductive rhetoric.

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