

KeizerOpinion

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After the UCC shootings

The tragic shooting at Umpqua Community College in Roseburg has whipped up the gun control discussion in America. Again. The discussion gets heated after every mass shooting.

Some want to enact gun control laws that outline who can purchase a gun and how a gun is sold. Some say that any effort to slap more controls on guns is an infringement of an individual's rights they cite in the Bill of Rights.

Research has shown that an overwhelming majority of Americans—including guns owners—are in favor of more stringent background checks before a gun is sold. The recent effort to add gun shows and internet sales failed as does every other legislative proposal.

After Sept. 11, 2001 many Americans were comfortable giving up some rights in the war against terror. Today we live with the reactions to failed successive terrorists attacks, as anyone who has traveled by plane in the 14 years can attest. We comply with the regulations that require we take shoes and belts off at security gates, we think twice when we are packing our luggage or carry-on bags.

The National Rifle Association (NRA) is portrayed in some quarters as the Evil Empire that disregards life and limb. Yes, it is a powerful group which lobbies for its point of view. That's democracy. The NRA is not evil, its members can be found across the geographic, economic and social spectrums. The system we have allows groups and individuals to espouse their opinions and work to shape legislation.

Those who want to see legislation

editorial

that changes background checks for any gun purchase anywhere have just as much right as any other organized group. The people are not powerless. But, they are powerless when they are silent and don't vote. It all comes down to the ballot

box.

As President Obama said with barely concealed anger last week, if people want change they have to become single-issue voters for several cycles.

The argument can be made that a very small percentage of the American population would like to see all guns banned forever. That's never going to happen.

There is not one person in elected office at any level in this country who is seeking to take anyone's guns away. That's the kneejerk reaction to any suggestion of tightening and enhancing things like background checks. We don't advocate the government undertake an effort to take guns away. We are in favor of rational, common sense action.

After the shooting in Roseburg the national debate turned to mental health disease—which has been applied to a myriad of symptoms, from feeling blue to bi-polar disease and beyond.

Just as victims of mass shootings need action rather than heartfelt thoughts and prayers, those who suffer from mental health issues need understanding and, most of all, a willingness of the people to say something when they see something. Sometimes privacy is trumped by the good of society.

—LAZ

Payroll transit tax

To the Editor:

I am co-owner of Home Instead Senior Care, serving the area's seniors. The proposed employer payroll tax will add to the financial burden we are facing in upcoming years. This is an unfair tax to levy on private businesses, and it targets an already vulnerable part of the community. The Transit District does not need to fund their program at the expense of private businesses. Most of our clientele are on fixed incomes and higher rates mean fewer services for them.

Looking ahead:

- In-Home-Care minimum wage will be \$14/hour in 2016, with another increase in 2017.

- ACA's effect on businesses has raised costs.

- Mandatory Sick Pay legislation will cause the discontinuation of current benefits, such as paid vacation, because we can't do both.

- These do not include the cost of doing business: worker's comp fees, franchise fees, business loans, liability insurance rates, to name a few.

It is a constant struggle to keep our wages above minimum wage for our caregivers, to keep our fees affordable for the senior population we serve and to maintain a business that provides services and jobs for the community.

Please vote *no* on the employer payroll tax.

**Bobbi Boles
Salem**

KFD bond measure

To the Editor:

In November we will be voting on Measure 24-389 to fund the replacement of aging equipment for

letters

the Keizer Fire District (KFD). This is primarily to keep ambulances and emergency equipment on the road for

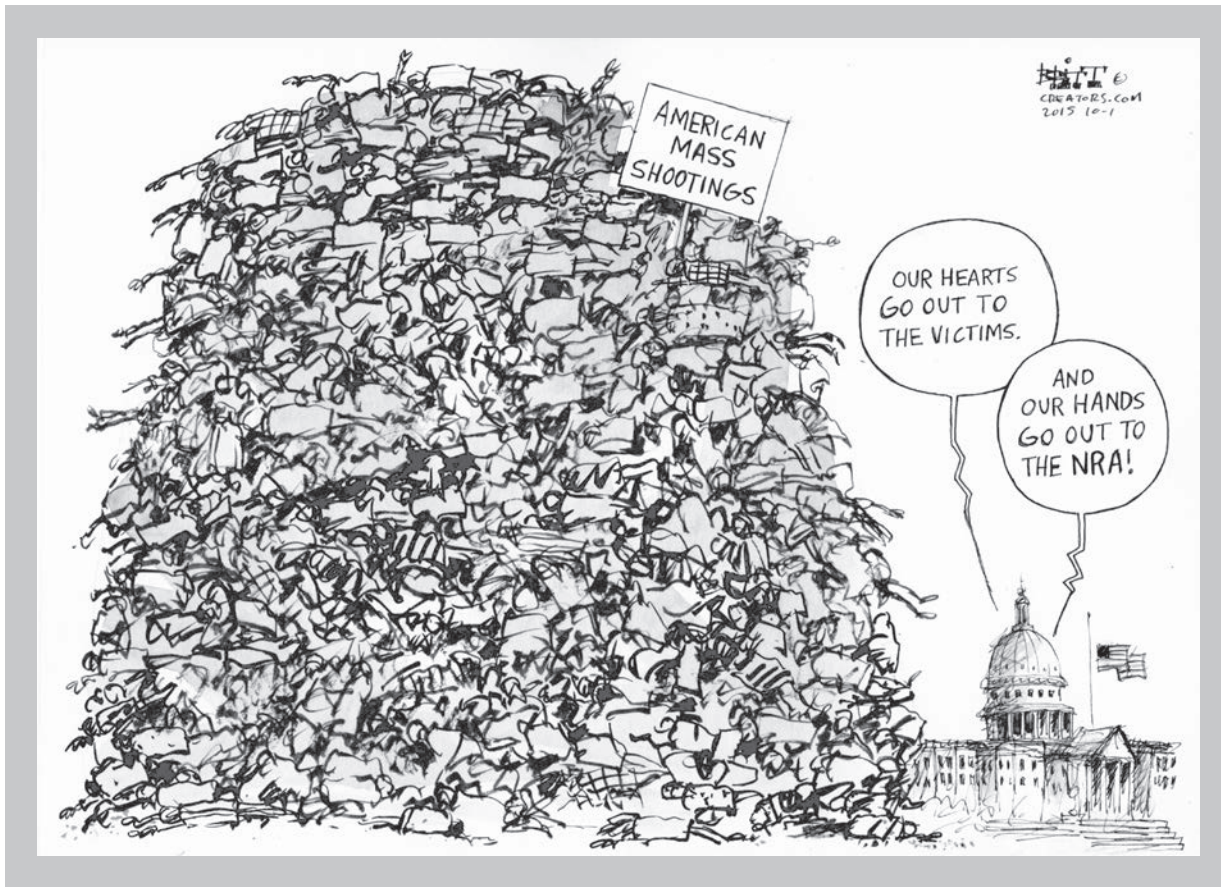
Keizer citizens. You may recently have noticed a disabled ambulance or two being towed in for repairs—which is a constant worry for the fire district as the number of emergency response calls increases yearly.

The newest engine is 11 years old and the newest ambulance is seven years old. This is an exceptionally long time in service for emergency response equipment to be reliable for response. The safety of the emergency response professionals is also a serious issue. This bond measure is a 20-year plan to meet the increasing needs of the Keizer community.

I have served on the Keizer Fire District Budget Committee for four years and can tell you the KFD Board and Administration are very frugal with taxpayer money. The professional fire fighters union has also voluntarily taken pay cuts to help manage the budget during difficult times. They have consistently provided a well-managed, cost-effective budget with no extravagance. But they can no longer safely manage the deteriorating equipment which must be replaced. A citizens advisory committee has reviewed the proposal and found the need to be substantiated and necessary.

We have an aging population with many new health and senior care facilities in Keizer. This plan meets the future needs of all Keizer citizens.

**John P. Rizzo
Keizer**



Tantrums won't end gun violence

By MICHAEL GERSON

Following the mass shooting at Umpqua Community College, a "smoldering" (as one commentator put it) President Obama gave a revealing speech—a clarification, a culmination, of much that had come before. "What has become routine," he said, "of course, is the response of those who oppose any kind of commonsense gun legislation. Right now, I can imagine the press releases being cranked out. 'We need more guns,' they'll argue. ... Does anybody believe that?"

"This is a political choice we make," he claimed, "to allow this to happen every few months in America."

The president's frustration, after delivering a sad series of similar speeches, is understandable. But his argument is still indefensible.

Even if you support "commonsense gun legislation" (as I do), there was nothing in Obama's speech that effectively argued for it. No policy proposals or serious justifications. No one listening to the speech would be persuaded to take a position he or she did not already hold. Obama was saying, in essence, that it is obvious what we should do about mass gun violence, that evil people are blocking it, and that they have innocent blood on their hands.

This is apparently what some liberal people think when anger releases them from civility and rationality. Obama speaks as if the gun laws he wants passed would put an end to these killings—a position for which there is no evidence. I believe that more thorough background checks and further restrictions on the type and firepower

other views

of weapons, along with improved health services for the severely mentally ill, would be good for our society, apart from mass killings. I hope that, in the long term, this system might, just might, intervene before a prospective mass killer strikes (though such causality would be very hard to demonstrate). But I have no basis for the calumny that people who disagree with me are choosing to allow mass murder.

This is the politics of moral posturing, not an argument rooted in social science. With his last election behind him, Obama is free to be Obama. And it appears that he is, deep down, a liberal commentator of the MSNBC variety—perhaps providing a preview of his post-presidency. The only apparent purpose of his gun speech was to incite the faithful by expressing a seething arrogance.

Obama would surely blame the other side for the sorry state of our politics. Didn't Mitch McConnell have it out for him from the beginning? Hasn't every attempted compromise been slapped away?

But it matters when the president of the United States decides that democratic persuasion is a fool's game. It encourages the kind of will-to-power politics we see on the left and right. In this view, opponents are evil—entirely beyond the normal instruments of reason and good faith. So the only option is the collection and exercise of power.

When the main players in our poli-

tics give up on deliberative democracy, it feels like some Rubicon is being crossed. Our system is designed for leaders who make arguments for their views, seek compromise and try different policy angles to break logjams. And when they lose, their proper recourse is ... to make more arguments, seek other compromises and try different policy angles.

At this time, gun control legislation would probably not pass. Because such a law would not directly prevent mass murders (even if the law had useful purposes). Because Obama doesn't know how to work with Congress. Because the National Rifle Association would oppose it. Because the political environment is not right. But someone who supports gun control should still argue for it, because that is what we do in a democracy.

The spirit of our democracy is very much at issue. Donald Trump says we have a corrupt system run by stupid people. Obama says we have a corrupt system run by evil people. Both of them are part of the same problem. I really don't give a damn if they are disillusioned and fed up with democratic processes or not. If they are tired of the game, they should stop playing it, not engage in ideological commentary or entertain fantasies of personal rule.

The best way to restore faith in our democratic structures is to spend a lifetime trying to make them work, like Hubert Humphrey did, or Jack Kemp did, or Henry Jackson did, or Ronald Reagan did, or Ted Kennedy did. But it is easier, and surely satisfying in its own way, to throw a tantrum when democracy disappoints you.

(Washington Post Writers Group)

The disaster that was Carly at H-P

gene h. mcintyre

she has never been offered another CEO position in the ten years since she was given the boot.

Hewlett-

Packard stock plunged between the time she started and the time she departed. At her entry to the company, HP stock sold at \$55. When she was shown the exit, HP stock was around \$20. The steep drop was due to the company's missed earnings.

Fairness in a review of that time warrants a reminder that Fiorina's tenure overlapped the end of the dot-com bubble. However, HP's stock performance was a lot worse than other big tech companies like Cisco, Intel, Microsoft and Oracle. A contributing factor in HP's stock demise was that Fiorina bought Compaq over strong objections from HP board members as she wanted HP to become the biggest PC maker. Fiorina fought company founder William R. Hewlett's son, William, who was opposed to the purchase, by launching a proxy fight which she won and thereby bought Compaq for around \$19 billion in 2002.

The acquisition became a huge problem when things like integration of Compaq went down a very rough road where key Compaq executives reporting to Fiorina left or were shown the door. The massive layoffs she brought about cut as many as 30,000 HP jobs. Her reports of revenue growth then are now viewed as exaggerations.

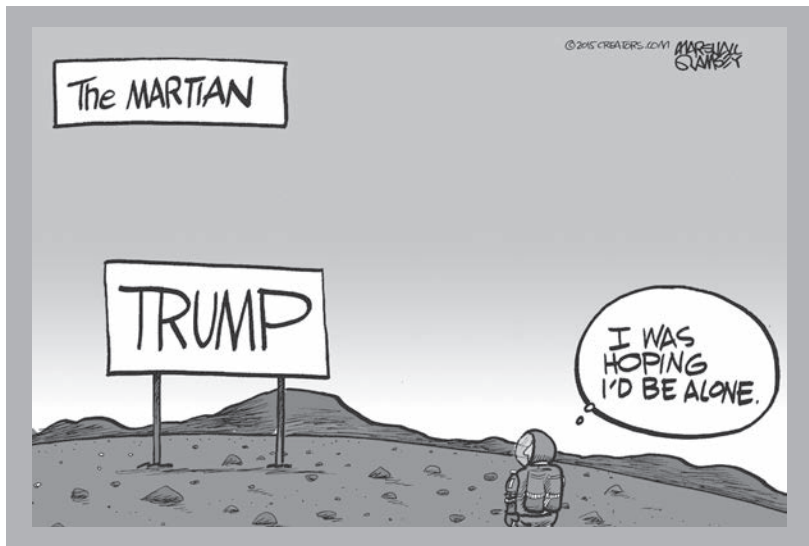
The workers let go were further angered when their final responsibility with HP under Fiorina was to train their overseas replacements. This sort of management was seen

as contrary to the HP way, a culture widely characterized as egalitarian in a decentralized system that resulted in high morale and love of job but that, under Fiorina, was changed by her authoritarian interventions on every matter, leaving employees to feel unimportant and mindless. End result: Fiorina was hated by HP employees.

Since she became known by the end of her stay at HP as a CEO who could not be trusted, that reputation has followed her elsewhere, too. Further, she underscored her apparent ability to exaggerate and tell big fibs at the most recent CNN GOP debate. Her story about viewing a baby on a table, heart beating, legs kicking, about to have its brain tissue harvested by Planned Parenthood folks is a fabrication of the highest order and the dirtiest of lies. The truth is that the privately-made film she referenced was produced by Planned Parenthood haters who filmed a baby that was a miscarriage, one that did not even take place in a Planned Parenthood office. When Fiorina was recently questioned about the matter on *Meet the Press* she was unable to provide an understandable answer.

It is the opinion here that there should be more women vying to be president of the United States. Unfortunately, with her record and reputation, Fiorina in the job is ill-advised. There are some outstanding women in the GOP ranks; it'd be most encouraging if those among them would give the presidential sweepstakes a try. That ideal person from either gender would offer experience in foreign relations and have succeeded in working effectively with others from both sides of the aisle.

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



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