

# KeizerOpinion

KEIZERTIMES.COM

## Oregon in the national news

Three months after the nation's media flooded Roseburg after the Umpqua Community College shooting, they are back for another story that is getting national attention: occupation of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge by members of a self-proclaimed citizen militia.

editorial

who were ordered back to prison to serve a longer term for a crime of which they were convicted.

Bundy was followed by others who came from around the country (primarily the west) citing Constitutional issues and federal government overreach in the rangelands of eastern Oregon.

Americans would be forgiven if, after the past three months, they have a jaundiced view of our state. Madmen shooting up a classroom, an armed group taking over a lonely outpost, what is going on over there in Oregon?

Every protest has its valid points. The militia in Harney County have good points about public lands managed by federal agencies and how they develop plans that impede the public's use of those lands for their livelihoods.

Once a solution is fostered and this is behind us, all of us should concentrate on the things that would result in good news in the national media.

—LAZ

Bad news always leads the news, that's a given. For a state the size of Oregon to have two major news stories within 100 days of each other is rare.

We expect cool heads to prevail in Malheur County and the occupation to end without violence or destruction. It is unlikely that there will be a Waco-like invasion by law enforcement; the most probable outcome is the militia members will slowly start to return home, regardless of their protestations that they'll stay for months or years.

Ammon Bundy (of the Nevada Bundy family that perpetrated a stand-off at their ranch in 2014) came to Malheur County to support Dwight Hammond and his son Steve

## Optimistic for 2016

I hope this article finds you and your loved ones having had a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year. In our house we enjoyed the fact that our son moved home from Missouri and we were thrilled to see him, making Christmas very special this year.

from the capitol

By BILL POST



here to tell you that your vote does matter. And not only your vote, but your participation in the discussions that happen, not only at the local level, but all the

way up the chain. If I could ask for one thing, it would be that as many of you as possible register to vote and also remind a friend or two—and then make sure you and they fill out those ballots. This is the only way we will see positive change in our state and nation.

I am also filled with anticipation because of the quality of the Oregonians I have had the privilege of meeting this past year. Last month I participated in a hearing on how we can prevent more tragic events like what happened at Umpqua Community College, and also how we can better respond to the events that do occur. All of the people who testified before our committee expressed amazement at how strong of a response Oregonians gave to UCC, in flocking to Roseburg, fundraising for victims and sharing the support of their prayers. It is this spirit that fills me with hope for 2016. We Keizerites are truly blessed as well.

As always, I am here to serve you. Please do not hesitate to contact my office at any time.

From my family to your family I wish you a Happy New Year.

(Bill Post represents House District 25. He can be reached at 503-986-1425 or via email at rep.billpost@state.or.us.)

## Politicizing guns

To the Editor:

In a recent column (*Keizertimes*, Dec. 18), Gene McIntyre joined in lockstep with the Obamas, Clintons and Schumers in blaming the Republicans and NRA for the lack of gun control.

Of course, this always follows reminders of all the horrific acts recently committed by madmen.

One would have to be more than a little naïve to not see who is the intended target. McIntyre writes, "Meanwhile, the National Rifle Association, and those Republicans who pledge their allegiance to the NRA, has brought about no halt to these folks getting guns."

No one bothers asking, if it is only the Republicans preventing gun control from happening? Why did it not happen during all those years Democrats were in control of both houses of Congress and the presidency? They pushed through all the other legislation they wanted, including some that continues to be hotly debated.

One answer is that millions of law-abiding gun owners—Republicans and Democrats—believe they

letters

have the right to own guns.

Many do not belong to the NRA for various reasons. Some, because they don't want to be constantly ridiculed by the

"politically correct" folks that choose to paint the NRA as an evil force, responsible for acts of criminals.

McIntyre also says the NRA wants everyone armed. Truth is, the NRA wants everyone to have the right to be armed, if they so wish. There is a big, big difference.

McIntyre finishes up with "The NRA apparently wants everyone armed. Under that scenario the country moves ever closer to a nation-wide shooting at the OK Corral where everyone owns a gun and will use it whenever it's judged necessary." Guess that's meant to be some sort of dark humor?

Before the hate mail begins, in no way do I pretend to be a spokesperson for the NRA, or the Republican Party. I'm a gun owner who is deeply troubled by people who have access to media, and choose to use horrific tragedies to advance their political agendas.

G.I. Wilson  
Keizer



## What if the worst happens?

By MICHAEL GERSON

What if the worst happens?

The worst does not mean the nomination of Ted Cruz, in spite of justified fears of political disaster. Cruz is an ideologue with a message perfectly tuned for a relatively small minority of the electorate. Uniquely in American politics, he has made his reputation by being roundly hated by his colleagues—apparently a prerequisite for a certain kind of anti-establishment conservative, but unpromising for an image makeover at his convention.

Cruz's nomination would represent the victory of the hard right—religious right and tea party factions—within the Republican coalition. After he loses, the ideological struggles within the GOP would go on.

No, the worst outcome for the party would be the nomination of Donald Trump. It is impossible to predict where the political contest between Trump and Hillary Clinton would end up. Clinton has manifestly poor political skills and Trump possesses a serious talent for the low blow. But Trump's nomination would not be the temporary victory of one of the GOP's ideological factions. It would involve the replacement of the humane ideal at the center of the party and its history. If Trump were the nominee, the GOP would cease to be.

Whatever your view of Republican politicians, the aspiration, the self-conception, of the party was set by Abraham Lincoln: human dignity, honored by human freedom and undergirded by certain moral commitments, including compassion and tolerance. Lincoln described the "promise that in due time the weights should be

other views

lifted from the shoulders of all men, and that all should have an equal chance."

It is this universality that Trump at-

tacks. All of his angry resentment against invading Hispanics and Muslims adds up to a kind of ethno-nationalism—an assertion that America is being weakened and adulterated by the other. This is consistent with European, right-wing, anti-immigrant populism. It is not consistent with conservatism, which, at the very least, involves respect for institutions and a commitment to reasoned, incremental change. And Trumpism is certainly not consistent with the Republicanism of Lincoln, who admitted no exceptions to the promises of the Declaration of Independence and was nominated, in part, because he could appeal to anti-slavery German immigrants.

Liberals who claim that Trumpism is the natural outgrowth, or logical conclusion, of conservatism or Republicanism are simply wrong. Edmund Burke is not the grandfather of Nigel Farage. Lincoln is not even the distant relative of Trump.

Trump, in some ways, is an odd carrier of ethno-nationalist beliefs. He held few of them, as far as I can tell, just four years ago. But as a demagogue, he has followed some of America's worst instincts wherever they have led, and fed ethnic and religious prejudice in the process. All presidential nominees, to some extent, shape their parties into their own image. Trump would

deface the GOP beyond recognition.

Trump is disqualified for the presidency by his erratic temperament, his ignorance about public affairs and his scary sympathy for authoritarianism. But for me, and I suspect for many, the largest problem is that Trump would make the GOP the party of racial and religious exclusion.

Many Republicans could not vote for Trump, but would have a horribly difficult time voting for Clinton. The humane values of Republicanism would need to find a temporary home, which would necessitate the creation of a third party. This might help elect Clinton, but it would preserve something of conservatism, held in trust, in the hope of better days.

Ultimately, these political matters are quite personal. I have spent 25 years in the company of compassionate conservatives, reform conservatives, Sam's Club conservatives, or whatever they want to call themselves, trying to advance an agenda of social justice in America's center-right party. We have shared a belief that sound public policy—promoting opportunity, along with the skills and values necessary to grasp it—can improve the lives of our fellow citizens, and thus make politics an honorable adventure.

The nomination of Trump would reduce Republican politics—to the presidential level—to an enterprise of squalid prejudice. And many Republicans could not follow, precisely because they are Republicans. By seizing the GOP, Trump would break it to pieces.

(Washington Post Writers Group)

## Is war the only response to N. Korea?

North Korea's leader, Kim Jong-un, is just about as entertaining as our nation's lineup of presidential candidates. Several of these guys on the American stump want to go to war as soon as they're in the White House and that's what Kim's saying, too. Does this mean that if one of our "hawks" is elected that we'll be at war with North Korea early next year? Stand by for details in 2017.

The war torch was lit again by Kim on New Year's day when he announced he is again ready for war. That is, he's ready for war if provoked by "invasive" outsiders. While our presidential contenders are foretelling war as their first order of business, Kim's been at his war blustering since 2011 when he took over after his ruthless papa, Kim Il Jung, passed. He has all along wanted to increase "in every way the political and military might" of his small nation. The other day, his raves and rants went on for a 30-minute televised broadcast.

Kim has made many war threats. In fact, just last October, in a speech marking the 70-year founding of the ruling Workers' Party, Kim said he was prepared if necessary to wage war against the U.S. That'd be some war, perhaps lasting an even shorter time than the U.S. war when U.S. forces kicked Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait.

Depending, of course, on whether conventional or non-conventional might is used, it'd be predictably short. It would, nevertheless, provide a hawk like several of the survivors on the GOP debate stage a first opportunity to show his or her "strength" via the delivery of American men and materials overseas again.

Now, really, what sort of war would a war between the U.S. and North Korea be? It's surmised that if a couple of those stored up H- or even A-bombs were used, the few North Koreans who lived through the holocaust would look quickly for something to be used as a white flag. If the U.S. sends a huge squadron of B-52 bombers with 500-

gene h. mcintyre

1,000 pound bombs, the likes of which Mr. Trump says he'll unload on certain players in the Middle East,

then a cry for a halt would most likely come desperately soon.

However, North Korea's trump card is its big ally in the Republic of China. And the Republic of China is no bowl of rice to overcome as it was a number of decades ago, those years before World War II got underway, when the Empire of Japan invaded it. It is, now, to the contrary, an even bigger foe than it was when American forces under Douglas MacArthur tried to subdue invading communists from northern Korea seeking to take over the entire peninsula in the early 1950s. China took North Korea's side which ultimately resulted in a stalemate lasting to the present day, with no end in sight.

Kim's a problem that won't go away. After all, aside from China, he must rant and rave over his own peo-

ple so they will continue with body and soul to support him. As it turns out, if every North Korean decided to revolt and members of Kim's military sided with disenchanted millions, calling for his hide, Kim wouldn't last long. He has got to sound and look tough and thereby show to his people that he's in charge.

What would any one of these self-proclaimed geniuses among the GOP contenders going to do about Kim? He'd be nothing if he stands solo; yet, he carries so much troublesome baggage. Kim's just one big mouth who can't be muzzled by Navy SEALs and placed conveniently in an unmarked grave at sea. Contenders like Jeb Bush, Ben Carson, Chris Christie, Ted Cruz, Carly Fiorina, Marco Rubio, and Donald Trump go about wagging their unhinged tongues to Americans who are looking for simple solutions for which they believe another foreign war would solve the Korean problem . . . or any other problem in today's troubled world.

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

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