

# KeizerOpinion

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## Those who disagree are not enemies

The murder of five police officers in downtown Dallas, Texas by a frustrated and radical former Army Reserve private is tragic. The officers were patrolling a peaceful Black Lives Matter protest after police shootings in Louisiana and Minnesota.

editorial

or the other. Some say that Obama does not support law enforcement personnel as strongly as he should; some on the other side suggest the president subtly attacked black communities when he said “[Y]ou know how dangerous some of the communities where these police officers serve are, and you pretend as if there’s no context. These things we know to be true.”

Though every police officer takes their lives into their hands each time they don the uniform and badge there should not be a target on their back. The shooter allegedly said he wanted to kill as many white people—and white cops—as possible in retaliation for black deaths by law enforcement. More cops were killed than at any time since September 11.

The killer’s rage was sparked by the shooting deaths of two men, one in Louisiana, the other in Minnesota. His rage was most likely stoked further by the deaths of other African-Americans at the hands of police officers.

At the memorial service for the five officers in Dallas this week President Barack Obama and former President George W. Bush offered words of comfort and condolence. Bush eloquently said: “Too often we judge other groups by their worst examples while judging ourselves by our best intentions.” Those words ring true, especially in our climate of political and ideological divisiveness.

There are calls for people to come together, to communicate, to understand one another. Police are not the enemy, nor are African-Americans. Liberals are not the enemy, nor are conservatives. Supporters of Donald Trump are not the enemy, nor are the supporters of Hillary Clinton. Yet, the American people have been given permission by some pundits, orators and politicians to view their counterparts as enemies that need to be vanquished at the ballot box and in the courts.

“I’m here to insist that we are not as divided as we seem,” Obama said at the memorial in Dallas. The president has made too many speeches after tragic deaths over the past seven years. There are words spoken at such occasions—especially after Dallas—that boil the blood of those in one camp

organizations Jeff Cowan (and friend) and Bob Shackelford (and Tanya). Bob was instrumental in organizing volunteers from MAK.

Many thanks to all. **Pam Vorachek, Executive Director, Antique Powerland Museum Association**

There is more that unites us than divides us but at times it is hard to see that through all the trees of anger, fear and disrespect.

The mightiest forest begins with but one sapling; our leaders should inspire us to plant a little sprig of tolerance that will multiply into a forest that can never be cut down. —LAZ

## Men of Keizer and Rotary volunteers

To the Editor:

I’d like to thank several members of Keizer service groups for their volunteer help over the 4th of July weekend at Antique Powerland. Two groups assisted: Keizer Rotary and Men of Action (a Keizer Chamber of Commerce group). Members who volunteered were: Betty Hart and Alex Miller (and son) from Rotary Club of Keizer, Joe Cecere (and Jasmine), Hughie Baker, Rob Miller, Mario Monteil from Men of Action in Keizer (MAK) and members of both

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organizations Jeff Cowan (and friend) and Bob Shackelford (and Tanya). Bob was instrumental in organizing volunteers from MAK.

Many thanks to all. **Pam Vorachek, Executive Director, Antique Powerland Museum Association**

Antique Powerland Museum Association

### Share your opinion

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## America needs smart law enforcement

By JOHN TEAGUE

The July 7 events in Dallas, Texas can’t help but evoke something. I’m not especially given to sadness or grief; I have another, rather undefined emotion, and I hear other cops who share mine: it’s akin to consternation mixed with a bit of dread, and not so much for us cops as for our collective, American future.

Regardless, what happened punctuated something that’s been haunting my conscience for at least the last two years. It isn’t the killing of police officers—occupational violence is part of the job description; it’s the random killing of them. If we’ve turned a corner where the occasional, indiscriminate killing of cops is a new normal, the consequences will be dismal, and I don’t mean for the cops—we’ll adjust our tactics—but for the communities we serve, and firstly in the poorer neighborhoods, where the mostly good people are most in need of good policing.

The vast majority of peace officers patrol alone, and they’re used to keeping the threats to their safety in front of them. The consequence of having to safeguard their flanks and rear is that cops will be less willing to expose and invest themselves in recalcitrant neighborhoods. Some folks may think they’ll be unaffected, but deteriorating neighborhoods have a pernicious way of metastasizing whole communities.

guest column

By JOHN TEAGUE



So, what’s to be done about it? There’s no doubt some change in policing is required because the present strategy of policing people instead of problems inevitably leads to over-policing, too much law enforcement. That seems commonsensical now, but we didn’t understand it until relatively recently.

For decades, arrest-and-punishment seemed to work and to make sense. Maybe it did in what seemed to be a relatively homogenous culture; however, our culture is not homogenous, except that almost every man and woman—regardless of his or her race or station in life—longs for the same things: among them are security in one’s home and person, a good job, and an optimistic future for their children.

The police play a significant role in securing the ability to achieve those desires, but we should play a role that is at the same time more significant and less unintentionally harmful. Instead of quickly defaulting to arrests, law enforcement has been steadily, and with quickening speed, moving in the direction of fixing root problems. It’s a moment

that’s been coming for two decades.

Yet at this crossroads, there are also some who profit from the teased-out narrative that cops are inherently bad for communities and people of color, and they—wittingly or not—provoke angry, impressionable people into becoming angry, dangerous people. If this continues—if there is a new normal—then high-risk and at-risk communities, and ultimately all of us, will experience more crime.

Two things need to happen. People need to protest softly without letting agitators define the narrative. And policy-makers must resist the urge to wrangle the police, hobbling them into the same old tried-and-failed tactics; rather, they need to let us continue on the path of change. But because they’ll be pressured to take action now, policy-makers can work with law enforcement to define the outcomes and set benchmarks for getting there.

Because the systems that right wrongs are often downstream from police work, there isn’t always immediate reward, but occasionally we right wrongs that only we who are in the right place at the right time are able to make right. For this reason, America needs cops. She needs them to police smartly and justly, and to be present and unafraid, even, like in Dallas, to protect those who protest them.

(John Teague is Chief of the Keizer Police Department.)

## Trump has credibility on NATO remarks

The world’s largest military alliance met in Warsaw last week. The largest agenda item was money.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has been pushing long and hard for more spending by its members. Just last year, the alliance increased defense spending for the first time in 20 years. However, the fly in the organization’s machinery is that most NATO countries do not pay their recommended share. If this matter rings a bell for the reader, then it is timely to remind that one of Donald Trump’s pet peeves and one about which he has harped and harped, and may be serious, is that the U.S. should rethink its involvement in the military alliance because it is “obsolete” while other member nations don’t pay a fair share.

Yet, those involved in NATO’s leadership, as anyone who knows how much having a job with longevity is valued by those in it, the NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, a Norwegian politician, said, “The world is a more dangerous place than just a few years ago.” That statement was likely inspired by the fact that the former Soviet Union is Russia again, and allows Vladimir Putin too much access to the steroid storage. We’re all aware that Putin, at the very least, has taken back the Crimea and wants back all of the Ukraine as well as those that have been free of the Soviet yoke for years, like Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. Of course, other nations are worried, too.

But back to the subject of money. NATO statistics report that the U.S. spent an estimated \$650 billion last year. It turns out that our amount is more than double that amount of all the other member nations combined so we’re mainly protecting them: This fact grinds on many Americans because the other

gene h. mcintyre

member states enjoy a combined GDP that tops that of the U.S.

N A T O publicly acknowledges it has an “over-reliance” on the U.S. and reports also that one of the most economically weak member nations, Greece, is the second biggest NATO spender in proportional terms at 2.38 percent. Hillary Clinton has been soft on skinflint NATO members, imploring those folks to please, please, please do their part. Donald Trump has gone a lot further in what he promises to demand from the other members and, if elected, he’ll put feet to a proverbial fire, and, whether Russia is just playing boogeyman beyond the Ukraine or not, get those people off their nearly total defense dependence-on-America ways.

The repeated fact here is that our contribution in dollars to NATO is \$650 billion, with the U.K. at \$60 billion, France at \$44 billion and

Germany at \$40 billion with most of the others in the category of small change. Canada, with a fairly large economy, comparably contributes nearly nothing.

An impression of President Barack Obama is that he’s been weak-to-totally passive at getting the NATO members to do their part as his best asset comes across as pontificating policy which adds up to nothing more than a long list of impressive words found only in academia. Hillary Clinton tells us she wants to wear his shoes which are apparently just her size as they share a seat on Air Force One and campaign and are campaigning for her in a modern day Astaire-Rogers routine. If Donald Trump’s elected, this is an issue it’s hoped he will stand by his word, pinning the cheapskates on the NATO mat and thereby correcting the huge imbalance in payments far too many years overdue or demand the freeloaders cough it up or the U.S. will exit NATO.

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



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