

KeizerOpinion

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President

The presidential election will be decided by the thin slice of undecided independent voters. Presently Hillary Clinton is leading Donald Trump nationally by about six points. With the campaign entering its final weeks, any can happen.

editorial

Trump's performance in the second debate on Sunday evening could change things—either in his direction or in Clinton's. Vice presidential nominee Mike Pence may have taught his running mate a few things for the upcoming town hall meeting style debate. Pence stayed on his message—never giving a full-throated defense of Trump's style, history, plans or policies. Rather, Pence positioned himself perfectly to become the front runner for the GOP nod in 2020 (if Trump does not win, that is).

We were told earlier this year, after it was clear that Trump would be the Republican nominee and Clinton was but assured her party's nomination, that 2016 would be a nasty, personal campaign. Both candidates have given each other, their campaign surrogates and the media plenty of fodder.

Trump can't stay off Twitter nor can he stay on message, even with a teleprompter. Clinton is still untrustworthy to a majority of voters—people can't get past her emails (Benghazi doesn't merit much coverage these days).

It seems that those who support Trump cannot be dissuaded regardless of what their candidate says or does. That demonstrates that the desire for a complete change in the way Washington does business is paramount. Those who support Clin-

ton also cannot have their minds changed—it's uncertain if it is due to Clinton herself or the fact that they can't fathom a Trump presidency.

This newspaper can envision a Clinton presidency, which means that it cannot support Trump. He

has a message that has obviously resonated with a great swath of America but we don't think he is the person to seriously address those issues. Sure, we wish we had a different choice of candidates, but primary and caucus voters across the country have endorsed these two for their party's nomination.

The presidency tends to moderate the person elected. There are many factors that can keep the occupant of the Oval Office from going too far off track, Congress and the Supreme Court being just two. But words have consequences, and Trump's statements on whether to support our NATO allies, use nuclear weapons and a cavalier attitude about other nations getting them are just a few that we find worrisome—not to mention allies around the world.

Trump's personal and hurtful attacks against other politicians and civilians is very unrepresentative—his late night Tweets are akin to the taunts of the playground, much like his yep for nicknames like Little Marco and Lyin' Ted.

The unfortunate reality of this election campaign is that the Republicans have a message but it has the wrong messenger. America always gets the leaders it needs, not necessarily the leaders it deserves. Donald Trump is the wrong leader.

—LAZ

I'm with her (Ameya)

By ERIC A. HOWALD

I always hesitate to call myself a feminist. It makes me feel like a stray dog digging up a stranger's garden.

However, as a father to an only daughter, Ameya, I also feel duty-bound to say something when issues of gender inequity arise.

A day after the first presidential debate, Ameya's social studies class discussed the Hindu belief in reincarnation, the notion that a living being begins a new life after each biological death. The discussion prompted the teacher, Whiteaker Middle School's James Decker, to pose a question to the class, "What would you like to come back as if you were reincarnated?" Ameya told me she was one of the first to raise her hand. Mr. Decker called on her.

"A boy," she said. "Just to see what the experience is like."

Inwardly, I cringed a bit as she told me this, but the story was only half finished.

Mr. Decker then asked the rest of the girls how many of them wanted to come back as boys. All but one of the girls raised their hands. The majority of the boys wanted to come back as animals.

I wanted to believe that this is an anomaly, but Mr. Decker told the class the answers have been the same in most classes when he has posed similar questions in the past three years. The girls want to come back as boys, the boys mostly want to be animals—generally things with big teeth, big claws or some combination of the two. It varies little from year-to-year. Mr. Decker confirmed it in an email discussion we had later in the week.

Mr. Decker said that this is the one question he asks the kids where they still manage to surprise him.

moments of lucidity

While the general trend is steady, some of the more recent responses have been students hoping to come back as minorities in hope of having a better understanding of life from a different perspective. That lessened some

of my frustration with the future of the world Ameya will inherit.

He said that the girls generally feel that there is too much drama within their gender, that they are held to different standards than boys in terms of how they look and act, or that their parents are more protective of the females in their family while the boys get to run roughshod through life.

The seventh graders' responses to that single question speak volumes about the value placed on females and feminine perspectives in our society. My daughter is 12 and she's already drawn some conclusions about her inherent worth based solely on her gender. That's not the world I want for her and no ill-defined societal norm should be able to impact her self-esteem in that way.

I told an associate recently that I wasn't particularly a fan of the Democrat in the presidential race, but she was a woman and a female president was something I wanted my daughter to see in her lifetime.

He countered by saying that there were lots of women in positions of power in business and academic settings.

I am more convinced than ever that it is not enough. I am the grandson, son, brother, husband and father of women. In the upcoming election, it may appear as though I'm standing with "her," but it's because I want Ameya's daughter to hope for reincarnation as president.

(Eric A. Howald is the managing editor of the *Keizertimes*.)



Support Citizens United

By DEBRA J. SAUNDERS

Hillary Clinton has promised that in her first 30 days as president she will propose a constitutional amendment to overturn the U.S. Supreme Court's 2010 Citizens United decision, which she characterized as a "disaster for our democracy." Because Clinton has a better-than-even chance of being elected president, who am I to argue?

The California Legislature is ahead of Clinton. It has placed on the November ballot an advisory measure, Proposition 59, which instructs state officials to use "all their constitutional authority" to overturn the ruling.

It's funny how Democrats talk as if Republicans are rolling in dough, while Dems are stuck passing the hat. The opposite often is true, especially this year. As of Aug. 31, *The Washington Post* reported, pro-Clinton campaigns had raised almost twice as much money (\$795 million) as pro-Trump concerns (\$403 million). *Bloomberg* looked at super PAC money on Sept. 21 and reported that pro-Clinton super PACs raised \$153 million and spent \$121 million, while pro-Trump super PACs raised \$16 million and spent \$12 million. That's the Dems outspending the GOP 10-1. Where's the outrage?

Bloomberg recently reported that Clinton campaigns are out-raising money from billionaires on a margin of 20-1 against Trump. If Clinton wants to do something about the corrupting effect of big money in politics, all she has to do is talk to the mirror.

It's a good thing money doesn't buy popularity. At Monday night's presidential debate, Trump ribbed Hillaryland for spending buckets on advertising designed to bury him.

other views

Quoth The Donald: "\$200 million is spent, and I'm either winning or tied, and I've spent practically nothing."

That's the dirty little secret about campaign spending—it cannot compensate for a bad candidate. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, Trump won the GOP primary after spending half the amount that bankrolled the candidacy of former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush. Florida Sen. Marco Rubio was a good candidate who outspent Trump, but he could not win his home state. Like it or not—I'm on the "not" side—Trump won the GOP primary because his message popped with GOP voters.

It's laughable that Clinton is proposing a constitutional amendment to overturn Citizens United because whoever her Supreme Court picks are, they are bound to oppose Citizens United as Clinton has promised to have a litmus test for her Big Bench picks. There would be no need for a constitutional amendment.

The left gets all teary-eyed about the absolute authority in the Supreme Court's decision to uphold Obamacare. That ruling is sacrosanct. Citizens United, however, is easy prey—so easy that state lawmakers are invited to venture into deciding federal law.

"It's become a code word for everything you dislike about politics," Bradley Smith, former Federal Election Commission chair and now chairman of the Center for Competitive Politics, told me. The public has come to think that a rever-

sal of Citizens United will end the supersize role of money, especially corporate money, in politics. They forget that the 5-4 decision written by Justice Anthony Kennedy denied the government's authority to censor a political documentary. The conservative group Citizens United had produced an unflattering 90-minute film called, *Hillary: The Movie*. The FEC prohibited the film's airing on pay-per-view stations to comply with the 2002 McCain-Feingold ban on "electioneering communications" funded by corporations or labor within 30 days of a presidential primary.

If the Big Bench were to overturn Citizens United, Smith added, the court likely will make it "impossible to air a documentary movie close to the election"—whether the filmmaker is Citizens United or Michael Moore—but would not cleanse politics of corporate funds.

Jeffrey Toobin reported as much in the *New Yorker*. "People use Citizens United as shorthand for all the problems of money in politics, but in fact the decision itself had little to do with money in politics, and reversing it would do little or nothing to remove money in politics," Pamela Karlan, a professor at Stanford Law School who also worked in the Obama Justice Department told him.

Because of all the misinformation, expect Californians to approve Prop. 59. But the measure likely would fail if its effects were characterized more accurately. Smith's suggestion: "We should make (Prop. 59) an up-or-down vote on whether the government ought to be able to censor political documentaries." Voter, beware. A truly apolitical ban wouldn't apply to conservatives only.

(Creators Syndicate)

Trump's immigration stand is wrong

Some sources of wisdom on last week's debate gave Hillary Clinton the win by an overall rout. That happened because Donald Trump allowed his apparently often uncontrollable temperament to take over. Nevertheless, Donald did well, even admirably well for about 30 minutes, when he drove hard his strongest issue: trade.

In *The New York Times*, Ross Douthat and Maggie Haberman gave Trump the nod for the first 25 minutes. Douthat said he "seized on the issue, trade, and hammered away at it: linking his opponent to every establishment failure and disappointment, trying to make her experience a liability rather than a strength." Haberman wrote that Trump "has a strong case to make on trade, when he makes it."

Trump kept swinging in Hillary's direction, coming hard at her on NAFTA, it being "the worst trade deal maybe ever signed anywhere." During these moments, he spoke with the confidence of a man who knew what he was talking about.

But what may have been Trump's best part of the debate was—factually speaking—probably his worst. Although a strong contender for this dubious status would have to be where he said he both would and would not honor the NATO treaty and then said he both would and would not adhere to the first strike doctrine on nuclear weapons. This juxtaposition on issues adds up (fact checked by CNN) to 140 changes of mind or reversals on 20 current issues.

Trump throughout made a lot of noise about how horrible NAFTA

has been for the U.S. In the first place, some disagree regarding the effects of NAFTA. However, respected economists who've written about the sub-

gene h. mcintyre

ject is that the effect on the American economy was small. Economic studies of NAFTA find its effects causing a small reduction in wage growth for blue-collar workers to less than .20 percent increase in American wages. Further, the Congressional Research Service concluded a slight growth in output and productivity and nearly no impact on employment numbers.

NAFTA came into existence in 1994, shortly before one of the greatest economic booms in U.S. history; and NAFTA did not devastate the U.S. economy as unemployment dropped from 6.6 percent in January, 1994, to 4 percent in January, 2000.

Early on, Trump was asked how he would raise the wages of American workers. Here's verbatim what he said: "Our jobs are fleeing the country. They're going to Mexico. They're going to many other countries. You look at what China is doing to our country in terms of making product. They're devaluing their currency, and there's nobody in our government to fight them. And we have a very good fight. And we have a winning fight. Because they're using our country as a piggy bank to rebuild China, and many other countries are doing the

same thing.

"So we're losing our good jobs, so many of them. When you look at what's happening in Mexico, a friend of mine who builds plants said it's the eighth wonder of the world. They're building some of the biggest plants anywhere in the world, some of the most sophisticated, some of the best plants. With the United States, as he said, not so much."

All that he said would be eye-popping...if it were true. Jobs are not fleeing the U.S. In August, 2016, our country marked the 78th straight month where our country increased its jobs while we're in the longest private sector jobs growth in U.S. history. China is propping up its currency to stop its investors from running away from China. Tesla is building the biggest manufacturing plant in the world in Fremont, California; up until now, Boeing has had the largest manufacturing plant in the world in Everett, Washington.

The accumulation of Trump's minor inaccuracies and blatant lies are so long they might not fit on this entire page. He's simply not credible most of the time but has bamboozled those Americans seeking a fictional immigrant from the planet Krypton, a Superman-like superhero, to save them—when virtually every American, through hard work and stick-to-it-ness has a better chance than anywhere else in the world to save himself.

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

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

One year:
\$25 in Marion County,
\$33 outside Marion County,
\$45 outside Oregon

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY

Publication No: USPS 679-430

POSTMASTER

Send address changes to:
Keizertimes Circulation
142 Chemawa Road N.
Keizer, OR 97303

Periodical postage paid at
Salem, Oregon

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