

KeizerOpinion

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The color orange

There are few things as promising as the dawning of a new year. As the calendar flips from December 31 to January 1, everything will be reset. We make resolutions in an effort to be better. A new year holds the promise of adventures and experiences as well as milestones and celebrations.

Spring is the season when nature starts to bloom anew, but for the people, New Year's Day heralds all that is bright and new and unexplored. For most people anyway.

There is no getting around the fact that not everyone will celebrate a new year, because for them it will look much like the previous year. Many people will continue to struggle with finances, living situations and more. People who don't live the great American lifestyle don't always have a choice. They should not be judged. For those in need who ask for help should receive it, not just from some bureaucracy but from their fellow man.

We judge when we are intolerant of other's life style, life choice or ideology. That intolerance begets isolation, bias and injury.

Our world has become a society in which too many people feel they've been given the permission to attack, verbally and physically, those who are different. That includes the bullying of children, whether it is in person or cyber. It is not nearly enough to just express the sentiment that everyone should get along—that's too simplistic. It takes action from all corners; society must make intolerance shameful.

We can take the tools of other messages—ribbons—to take a stand, locally, against intolerance. Tying orange-colored ribbons to our trees, wearing orange-colored ribbons on our chests will create curiosity and questioning from neighbors, friends and strangers. When asked what the ribbon is for we can say it is to promote tolerance amongst and between people, here in Keizer and around the globe.

Judging less and tolerating difference is a good resolution for each of us to make. It will make the new year better and more promising, even here in our little corner of the world. —LAZ

editorial

Hate and divisiveness

By PRITAM K. ROHILA, Ph.D.

Acrimony and nastiness have become hallmarks of the recent presidential election campaign in the United States. Divisive ideas, which were being propagated by hosts of a handful of talk radio and cable TV channels, became mainstreamed. Opponents were demonized, and differences among Americans were accentuated. Suspicion, anger and hate became widespread.

The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) recorded a 14 percent increase in the number of hate groups in the country in 2015. In its 2016 report, released in late November, it counted almost 900 incidents of harassment and intimidation in a variety of settings, all directed against immigrants, minority individuals and related institutions. Even children, disabled individuals and houses of worship were not spared.

New York Police Department has noted a 115 percent increase in hate crimes in New York City. According to the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations, in parts of the county, there was a 24 percent rise in hate crimes, mostly targeting minorities, and there was 69 percent increase in hate crimes just against Latinos.

The FBI reported 5,850 hate crimes in the United States, last year. Muslims and Muslim-appearing individuals were targeted on 263 occasions, the second highest number on record, trailing only the September 11,

2001 terrorist attacks backlash. Many Muslim women have experienced hijab-grabbing incidents. In some cases, even Muslim police officers were victimized.

It is ironic that all this is happening in a nation where the Statue of Liberty, the internationally-renowned icon of freedom, has welcomed immigrants from all over the world, and a nation that has so frequently highlighted human rights violations in other parts of the world.

Let us hope that the divisiveness, which has marked the recent elections, does not pit some Americans against other Americans and minorities in the country continue to enjoy rights and protections enshrined in the U.S. Bill of Rights.

Regardless of who occupies the White House, and which political party dominates Congress, we must continue to uphold and abide by the many international covenants we have endorsed, and the basic rights and freedoms enshrined in the U.S. Constitution.

In the spirit of reconciliation and brotherly love, we must combat divisiveness and bigotry, as some churches across the country did with their communion services on the election-day this year, and as two of the nation's largest Jewish and Muslim advocacy groups recently did to form an unprecedented partnership.

(Dr. Pritam Rohila, of Keizer, is a retired neuropsychologist. He can be reached at pritamrohila@yahoo.com.)

guest column



The economy needs attention now

By LAWRENCE KUDLOW

President-elect Donald Trump's transition continues to go smoothly. Actually, better than smoothly—confidently. More than confidently—transcendently.

And to top it all off, the Dow is up 9 percent since the election, while economic-sensitive small caps have jumped nearly 16 percent. These are signs of Trump confidence.

Hard-nosed investment manager Ray Dalio, founder of Bridgewater Associates and a nonpolitical guy, expects the Trump years to be as transformational as the years of President Ronald Reagan and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. He says the Trump era could "ignite animal spirits" and "shift the environment from one that makes profit makers villains with limited power to one that makes them heroes with significant power."

That's as good a summary as I have found.

Since the election, I have argued that the Barack Obama/Hillary Clinton war against business will come to an end and that America will once again reward success, not punish it. And while the left has demonized Trump's Cabinet appointees as a terrible group of successful business people, free-market capitalists such as myself regard this group as very good indeed.

Why shouldn't the president surround himself with successful people? Wealthy folks have no need to steal or engage in corruption. Their business success demonstrates that they know how to achieve goals and convince skeptics that good deals can be made to the benefit of both sides. Isn't this just what America needs?

And most of these folks aren't political. They won't be afraid to reach

across the aisle for bipartisan solutions. And that includes Trump himself. For many years, he was a Democrat—just like Reagan, just like me.

In our new book, *JFK and the Reagan Revolution*, Brian Domitrovic and I explain how the two great pro-growth tax-cutting presidents—John F. Kennedy, the Democrat, and Ronald Reagan, the Republican—used civility and respect to communicate key ideas in a bipartisan effort that yielded terrific results for American prosperity.

So far, this has been the Trump way. Not only has he conducted himself with great civility, beginning with his Oval Office meeting with President Obama, but he has also sought an inclusive approach wherever possible, irrespective of party.

Yet with less than a month until the inauguration, it is crucial that Trump embark on immediate bipartisan efforts to strengthen the economy. It was the number-one election-year issue. And despite strong post-election increases in business and consumer confidence—along with the stock rally—the economy is weakening yet again.

Measured year-to-year, real gross domestic product is rising only 1.7 percent. Business fixed investment, or BFI, continues to decline. Productivity is flat. Consumer spending has barely risen in the last two months, while both auto production and sales are slumping. Nonfinancial domestic profits have declined year to year for the last six quarters.

Of all these factors, the slump in business fixed investment is the most harmful. If you go back in history across the four long post-war recoveries of the '60s, '80s and '90s, BFI averaged nearly 7 percent. In the Obama recovery, BFI was only 4 percent. Over the past two years, it

has been flat. Using a back-of-the-envelope rule of thumb, if the investment performance of Presidents Kennedy, Reagan and Clinton were in place now, our economy would be growing at 3 percent rather than 2 percent—a big difference.

That's why pro-growth tax reform is so important. It is reported that Trump will immediately move to overturn costly Obama regulations, especially on small business. This is good. It will add to growth.

But the big decision will be whether to repeal and rewrite Obamacare or enact tax reform as the first order of legislative business.

Replacing Obamacare is hugely important, both to improve our health care system and remove the economic drag of its taxing, spending and regulating. But business tax reform, with low marginal corporate rates for large and small companies, easy repatriation and immediate expensing for new investment, will have an enormously positive impact on the weakest part of our economy, namely business investment.

That's where we'll see 3 or 4 percent growth, higher productivity, more and better-paying jobs and fatter family pocketbooks.

If there was a way to combine a two-year budget resolution with reconciliation instructions (51 Senate votes) to reform health care and taxes in one full sweep, that would be ideal. However, if tax reform (be it business or individual) comes second and the start dates are postponed until 2018, then businesses and consumers will postpone economic activity. That could make 2017 a much weaker economic story than confidence surveys and the recent stock market suggest.

There's a great transition going on, but the economy needs immediate attention. Tax reform is the key. (Creators Syndicate)

other views

gene h. mcintyre

An equation for disaster?

Americans have heard it more than once: "I'll bet he is turning over in his grave," when a matter occurs that we know would greatly upset a certain deceased person.

I think of Alexander Hamilton when I think of a person from the past who'd likely be rolling over in his grave if such an event ever happens. What would do it to him? The outcome of the nation's Electoral College meeting and vote.

From the founding of our republic, members of the Electoral College have had a constitutional responsibility to vote for a qualified person to be the president of our nation. At the urging of Hamilton, the Electoral College was made a part of the Constitution to make certain that every president—including the 45th, now waiting in the wings for January 20—must be competent and capable to perform the duties of the office.

Hamilton and the other founding fathers were cautious in their faith of voters to be good judges but had the foresight to realize that sometime in the future, voters might not select a candidate with the right stuff sufficient to be president. It has been argued of late, in no uncertain terms, that Donald J. Trump lacks the temperament and ability, causing him to be unfit for America's most important political job.

They met in Washington, D.C. on December 19 and gave their votes in sufficient number to elect Trump.

Millions of Americans are disappointed in them. I am one of the disappointed and thereby fear for our future. My reason, in brief, is a deep and abiding anxiousness for the fate of my nation in shoot-from-the-hip hands. Further, my view of the Electoral College is that it's a dismal failure and should now be abolished in future in favor of the popular vote.

A selective list of concerns about Trump includes the following: he listens only to himself, his children and son-in-law + he's not accountable or transparent + he's committed to making money first and foremost + he's not been able to elaborate on his program and policy changes and will allow the most backward-looking to rule the nation + he's

selected mainly super-wealthy persons and military warhawks to his cabinet + several of his appointments will dismantle federal departments that help Main Street Americans + he promises to end, by substituting something "wonderful," the Affordable Care Act now insuring former uninsured millions of Americans + he promises to do away with regulations on business and industry that protect the environment for all and keep American workers safe + he lacks a sense of propriety + and he has all the makings of an American president who neither respects nor believes in democratic principles and practices = Angst.

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



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