

KeizerOpinion

KEIZERTIMES.COM

Not all Oregonians treated fairly with new taxes

As we are midway through December and Christmas is upon us, I wanted to write a few things preparing you for what's coming in 2018.

First, I have to give a huge shout out to Danielle Bethell and the Keizer Chamber of Commerce for another outstanding Holiday Lights Parade! Our city is served well by our Chamber and the great business owners that work tirelessly to make Keizer a great place to live.

I want you to be aware of what is coming in regards to the transportation package and how it is going to cost all of us some pretty substantial money. Starting in January not only will you be paying more for fuel, but there will be other taxes and fees that I don't think are helpful to the vast majority of residents in Oregon.

For instance: the .05 percent vehicle privilege tax on all new vehicles sold in Oregon. Now if you are the Ford dealership in Keizer, you will certainly not "eat that." You'll have to pass it on to the consumer. The problem is not just in the tax, it's where that money goes, not to roads and bridges but in the form of a "tax credit" to those who purchase electric vehicles. Therefore if you are buying a vehicle and live in Mitchell, Oregon, where it might be 100 miles from your home to the nearest larger city, you've just paid \$300-600 for basically nothing. An electric car is something that rural Oregon has no need for. If you live in a large metro area, it might be a good thing as you might be inclined to purchase an electric vehicle with its limitations on distance it will travel between charges.

Later in July, all employees in Oregon, no matter where they live, will have .01 percent taken out of their

paycheck to fund transit in what amounts to a handful of cities that have transit systems. Again, that's great if you live in a metro area like Salem-Keizer but imagine if you live in Scio. You get nothing for that tax. Remember that payroll tax is on all employees everywhere in Oregon; and to make matters worse, a potential \$250 fine to employers per employee if they don't take that tax out of the employee's paychecks. Neither of these taxes will benefit the vast majority of Oregonians. Let's not forget there will be fairly heavy increased DMV fees and an increase in the truck weight/mileage fees (which means though you and I may not be paying that tax directly, we will pay more for the

goods delivered by truck). So, while we all want better roads and bridges and more safety on those roads and bridges, be prepared for more money out of your pocket and to not see much difference in our roads and bridges in our area. There has to be a more equitable way to fund our transportation across the entire state.

Looking ahead to 2018, I am anxious to serve you in the short session in February as I have two potential bills that I am working on. One is to protect seed farmers and another to protect teachers from misinterpreted law on mandatory reporting of sexual activity amongst high school students.

I hope to continue to fight for less and smarter government. I want to wish you a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year as well.

(Bill Post represents House District 25. He can be reached at 503-986-1425 or via email at rep.bilpost@oregonlegislature.gov.)



from the capitol

By BILL POST

Keizer comes through again

To the Editor:

Dear Keizer: Keizer Network of Women (KNOW) helped feed and clothe 387 children this year, all made possible with your donations, your shopping skills, and especially your time.

It is heart-warming to know these children will have gifts on Christmas morning. It's great knowing these children will celebrate, then go back to school, wear-

letters

ing something new—especially those who now have a warm jacket. You are wonderful people, and the rewards you received on delivery day, will carry you through the season. We appreciate those near and far who have supported us—from peanut butter locally and jelly from out of state, potatoes and tortillas, wrapping and delivery...we hope to see you again next year. Thank you!

Audrey Butler
Keizer Network of Women



Films shows leader can change history

By MICHAEL GERSON

The Winston Churchill biopic *Darkest Hour* is a movie that should be seen, but not entirely believed. Gary Oldman's alternately fierce and vulnerable Churchill is a triumph of both acting and the cosmeceutician's art. Just hearing him deliver snippets of Churchill's speeches is worth the ticket price. (Am I the only one who tears up at the words "We shall fight on the beaches"? My wife: "Probably.")

But the central conceit of the film—that a deflated, defeated Churchill required bucking up by average Brits—is a fiction. Very nearly the opposite was true. The policy of appeasement was broadly popular in Britain during the early to mid-1930s. In 1938, a majority supported Neville Chamberlain's deal at Munich (which ceded much of Czechoslovakia to Nazi Germany in return for ... nothing). It is more accurate to say that Churchill summoned British courage and defiance by his intense idealization of British character. He saw heroic traits in his countrymen that even they, for a time, could not see.

This is not to say that May and June of 1940 weren't dark times, even for Churchill. As resistance in France collapsed and Italy seemed destined to enter the war on Germany's side, Churchill asked his chiefs of staff if it were possible to continue the war at all (they gave a conditional "yes"). The despair implied in that question still startles.

But on June 3, even as British troops were being evacuated at Dunkirk, Churchill's private secretary Jock Colville wrote in his

diary: "Winston is tired of our always being on the defensive and is contemplating raids on the enemy. 'How wonderful it would be,' he writes to [Gen. Hastings] Ismay, 'if the Germans could be made to wonder where they were going to be struck next instead of forcing us to try to wall in the Island and roof it over.'" In the midst of catastrophe, Churchill was dreaming of Normandy (and North Africa, and Italy). Not the thoughts of a defeated man.

Where *Darkest Hour* shines is in presenting the alarming, inspiring contingency of great events. In the spring of 1940, Europe was being shaken by massive, impersonal, world-historic forces—the apparent failure of liberal democracy and free markets, the rise of communism and fascism, the unleashing of anti-Semitism. Millions marched, line by line, to the "Horst Wessel" song or the "Internationale."

And yet, in saving the remnants of the British Army at Dunkirk, it fell to 665 private British boats (along with 222 British warships) to rescue their country from (likely) capitulation or invasion. All the powerful, impersonal forces funneled down and down to 665 volunteer captains in pleasure craft and fishing trawlers. The future of freedom was determined by the choices and courage of a few hundred free people.

And, of course, the choices and courage of one man. A New York Times review of *Darkest Hour* sneered at the movie's "great man fetish." But is there really any doubt that history would be darker if Churchill had truly lost his nerve,

or had died when hit by a car in New York in December of 1931 (he escaped with two cracked ribs and a severe scalp wound)? History can hinge on a single life.

From Churchill, we learn to resist pessimistic extrapolation. May 1940 was terrible, but not permanent. We learn the power of unreasonable optimism—the value of planning for revival in the midst of defeat. We see the possibility of leadership that can not only ride the tide but summon it.

Many of us view this example, not only with appreciation, but with longing. The problem of our time is not only arrogance without accomplishment or swagger without success. These are common enough in politics. Rather, it is the arrival of leadership that survives by feeding resentment, hatred and disorienting flux. Leadership urging us—at angry rallies, in ethnic stereotyping, through religious bigotry—to forget who we really are as a people. Leadership that has ceased to believe in the miracle at our country's heart—the inclusive, unifying power of American ideals.

But the moment is not permanent. Many are looking for a place to invest their hope. And some leader, we trust, will rise who calls his countrymen to choose decency and civic friendship above the destructive pleasures of hatred and blame. Who can see and summon the best in American character, even if, for the moment, it is hidden.

In the meantime, we shall fight on the beaches.

(Washington Post Writers Group)

Classless society? Not so much anymore

By GENE H. MCINTYRE

Income inequality, and its corollary, much more for the few and much less for the many in access to goods, services and even educational opportunity, has of late become a concern again. Some conservatives argue that this kind of talk is unwise as it will do harm to economic growth. These Americans, seeking the matter muted, want us to ignore the growing disparities, viewing such discussions as un-American. For them, it's a no-no to suggest that some people control too large a share of the nation's wealth, possessing inordinate power and permanency by it, keeping every cent of it for their heirs.

Of course, then, no true conservative American would ever say this: "The absence of effective state, and, especially, national, restraint upon unfair money-getting has tended to create a small class of enormously wealthy and economically powerful men whose chief objective is to hold and increase their power" and not call, as a result, for "a graduated inheritance tax on big fortunes, increasing rapidly in amount with the size of the estate."

Who was this "threat" to those who believe it an American right to greedily own and control forever, everything in sight? Why it was none other than a conservative Republican former President Theodore Roosevelt, in a speech on the "New Nationalism," he delivered in 1910.

Fact of matter is, in the early part of the last century, a number of lead-

ing Americans warned about the dangers of extreme wealth concentration being passed along untouched and supported tax policy used to limit the growth of big fortunes. Another example from the time came from noted economist Irving Fisher in 1918 to warn against the effects of "an undemocratic distribution of wealth" and spoke in favor of ways to limit inherited wealth through effective taxation of estates. Economist Thomas Piketty said that taxation to reduce income and wealth disparities was an "American invention."

Back another 100 years, this "American invention" had its roots in the Jeffersonian vision of an egalitarian society of small farmers. At the time Teddy Roosevelt gave his speech, thoughtful Americans realized that extreme inequality was making a mockery out of Jefferson's dream while the U.S. was in considerable danger of turning into a society dominated by huge fortunes and hereditary wealth. Their view: that this relatively new nation, the United States of America, was at high risk of becoming decadent, corrupt, self-indulging, and rotten-to-its-core, like Old Europe.

Taking notice of current data, it is interesting to look at the *Forbes* list of the wealthiest Americans and, by a somewhat rough count, to be aware of the top inherited large fortunes that about a third of them are inherited. Another third are 65 or older, so they will likely leave large fortunes to their heirs. The bottom line is that we are closing in on becoming an ar-

istocracy of hereditary wealth.

Hence, criticizing our fellow Americans who talk about the dangers of concentrated wealth in a very few hands misleads the public into ignoring the consequences from history where nations with concentrated wealth led to decadent, corrupt, self-indulging, rotten-to-the-core cultures. It should be very American to be concerned and to do whatever's possible to replace those members of Congress who are busy now with a new taxation scheme making sure that the wealthy can aggrandize excessively and keep it all for those they have sired.

Masterpiece Theatre presentations such as *Upstairs, Downstairs* and *Downton Abbey* glorified and celebrated domestic service in the England of near yesteryear. However, that work in reality meant totally surrendering one's freedom, being at the beck and call of inherited wealth and facing loss of employment for the most petty of infractions. In Merry Old England, if you were not born rich, then you served the rich, for all intents and purposes you gave up your citizenship to the rich, you dug coal to keep the rich warm or you starved and no one gave a damn and a class society ruled. Is this what Americans want for their progeny?

(Gene H. McIntyre lives in Keizer.)



Keizertimes

Wheatland Publishing Corp.
142 Chemawa Road N.
Keizer, Oregon 97303
Phone: 503.390.1051
www.keizertimes.com • kt@keizertimes.com



EDITOR & PUBLISHER
Lyndon Zaitz
publisher@keizertimes.com

MANAGING EDITOR
Eric A. Howald
editor@keizertimes.com

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Derek Wiley
news@keizertimes.com

ADVERTISING
Paula Moseley
advertising@keizertimes.com

PRODUCTION MANAGER & GRAPHIC DESIGNER
Andrew Jackson
graphics@keizertimes.com

LEGAL NOTICES
legals@keizertimes.com

BUSINESS MANAGER
Laurie Painter
billing@keizertimes.com

RECEPTION
Lori Beyeler

INTERN
Random Pendragon

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

facebook

facebook.com/keizertimes

twitter

twitter.com/keizertimes

Share your opinion

Email a letter to the editor (300 words) by noon Tuesday.
Email to:
publisher@keizertimes.com