

# Opinion

## Yesterday once more

A old saw goes: the more things change the more they stay the same. That is so true when one considers politics in America, circa 2019.

The issue of race is everywhere in politics, from the Oval Office to the Democratic presidential candidate debate to Keizer's city council chambers.

At the first set of Democratic debates, school busing and segregation took center stage for a portion of the evening. What former vice president Joe Biden said about school busing in the early 1970s was fair game for one of his rivals, Kamala Harris.

There are those who seek to make America like it used to be, in some previous, supposed Golden Age when things were simple. Or simpler than today.

The United States has always produced political candidates and leaders who looked forward and offered visions of what the future could be. As the 2020 presidential campaign heats up, many of the candidates are looking backward. That kind of campaign certainly appeals to some segments of society, but America has always been best when our grasp exceeds our reach.

To be fair, discussion of race will never end. As long as people are victims of bias, as long as people are fearful of others different from them.

Though busing and school segregation are issues for national candidates to bludgeon each other with, we don't face those issues here. But as a community, we do need to be vigilant about racism raising its ugly head. The proposed City Charter

Review Committee has stalled when one nominee was found by the Volunteer Coordinating Committee to not be a U.S. citizen, and thus not a registered voter. The resolution

forming the committee stated that members are required to be electors. The words 'registered voter' (it means the same as elector)—everyone understands voter, not everyone understand elector—should have been used instead and avoided this fracas. The volunteer in question was heralded for their knowledge and their interest. Some said there should be a waiving of the elector/register voter requirement.

Those who opposed that opinion were painted as racist due to the applicant's heritage. There no place in Keizer government for that sentiment, and yet it is here, fostered by some of our national leaders.

Aside from the issues busing, school segregation and racism being dredged up from the 1970s, some wouldn't mind if the clock were turned back and Keizer returned to a simpler time when traffic was light, there was little crime and everyone knew their neighbor.

Time marches on, things change, but not to everyone's taste. We are a fifth of the way through the 21st century and we are refighting the battles of old. The leaders we choose with our votes should foster a sense of optimism in the people. Rather than the issues of the 1970s, public officials should challenge us to be the America we tell ourselves we are. —LAZ

editorial

## Wins and loses of 2019

By BILL POST

I want to briefly share an update of some of the things my office was able to accomplish in the 2019 legislative session.

HB 3213 – Establishes safety corridors around the state, which I hope will address the *death road* (as described by *The Newberg Graphic*) in North Marion County.

SB 320 – If approved by Congress, this measure will establish permanent Daylight Saving Time.

HB 2236 – Allows farm tractors to operate on state highways that have speed limits of 35 miles per hour or more. This is important to our district because so much of it is agricultural.

HB 2336 – Relating to affordable housing. We have an affordable housing issue in Oregon and this bill will help.

HB 2428 – Strengthens our public indecency laws.

HB 2515 – Ensures humane treatment in women's correctional facilities.

HB 2579 – Strengthens the Farm to School Program so that our farms can deliver their foods to our kids in schools.

HCR 13 – Honors Keizer's own Private First Class Ryan J. Hill with a Highway Memorial Sign.

SB 390 – Allows olive oil farmers to sell their product at their farms, in-

cluding one farm in our district.

Unfortunately, the following bills did not pass due to the one-sided majority, but I hope to pursue these concepts in the future.

HB 2303 – Would have allowed for behind-the-counter purchase of common cold medicine with a government issued photo identification, just as in 37 other states in America.

HB 2302 – Would have provided funds to the Government Assistance Program.

HB 3276 – Would have provided a tax credit for veterans to use to pay back student loans.

HB 3446 – Would have eliminated the corporate sales tax on basic necessities.

HJR 14 – Would have dealt with the dreaded emergency clause on legislation.

SB 1040 – For my Keizer constituents, this would have addressed errant bullets flying across the Willamette River into a residential neighborhood.

HB 2295 – Would have addressed Measure 11 concerns without going around the voter's will.

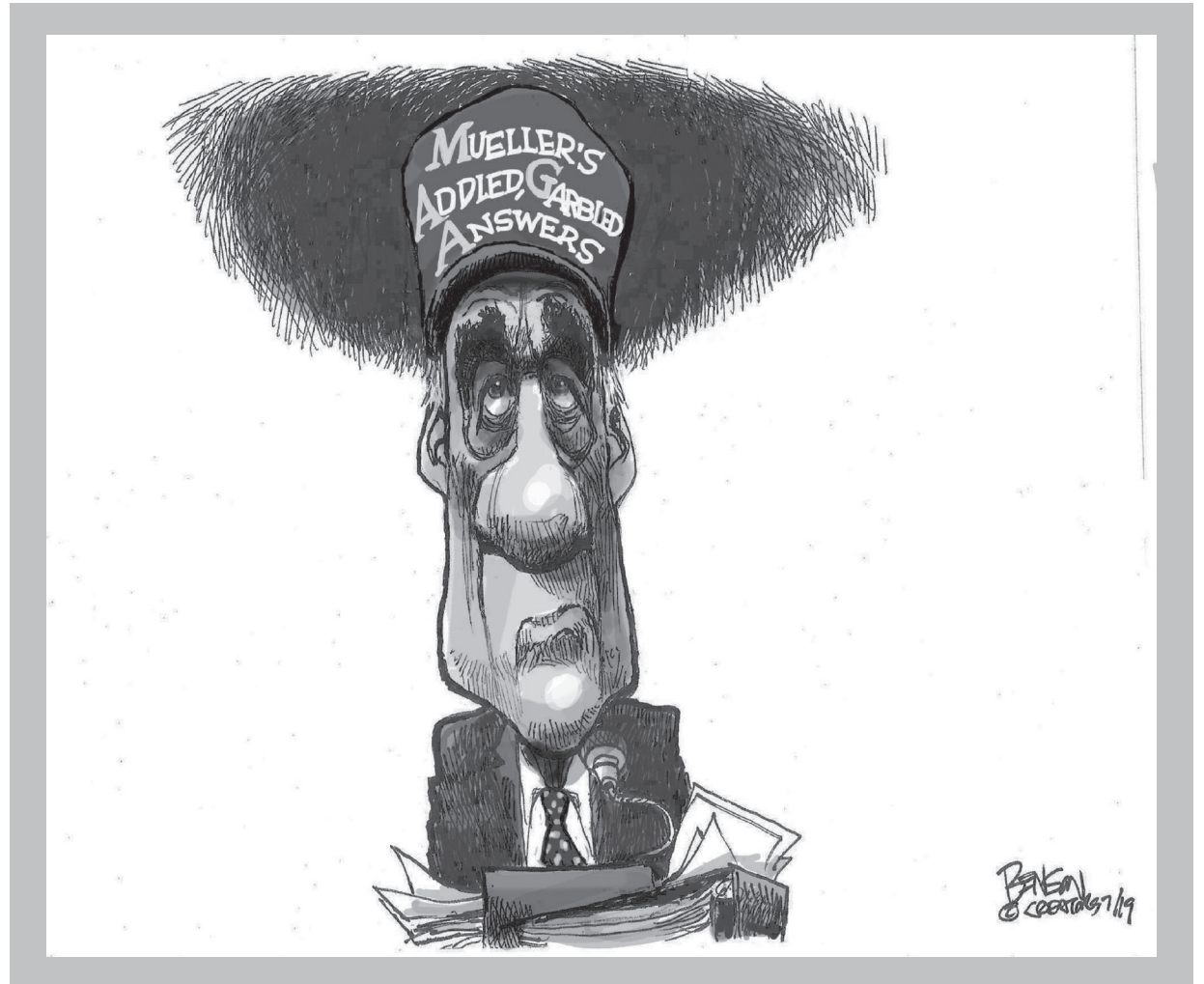
As always, please contact my office at any time with questions or concerns.

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from the capitol

other voices

gene h. mcintyre



## Mueller has no savior

By MICHAEL GERSON

WASHINGTON -- I was at the dentist getting a tooth drilled at the start of Robert Mueller's comparable experience on Capitol Hill. I am the kind of person who cringes intensely while watching anyone fail in a public and humiliating fashion. So it was just as well that I missed the beginning of Mueller's halting, unsure performance and the Twitter reaction of typical ruthlessness.

It was a failure conducted with a code. As a criminal justice professional, Mueller clearly did not want to say anything that served a political agenda, so he said almost nothing at all. It is galling that a president without discernible ethical standards benefited so decisively from Mueller's conception of his own standards. It is also disappointing, because Mueller was mistaken. He had a public responsibility to summarize and explicate the findings of the report he was charged to prepare. As it was, Mueller undermined the careful work of his staff and deprived the electorate of an accurate and useful synopsis.

Mueller was never going to say something new at his hearings. But the old information remains as damning as ever. By way of reminder: Though the report did not demonstrate a criminal conspiracy between the Russians and the Trump campaign, it recounted a serious level of cooperation. Donald Trump publicly urged the Russians to get and release dirt on Hillary Clinton. Trump campaign officials welcomed a meeting on the assumption that Russian intelligence

operatives would provide that dirt. Russian operatives eventually did hack damaging information from Clinton associates, and released that material on a schedule designed to help the Trump campaign. Meanwhile, people in the Trump circle maintained suspicious ties to the Russian government in the hope of making money for Trump himself.

Trump and his associates thought that the public revelation of their cooperation with the Russians would be politically damaging, so they sought to hide it. Trump wanted to directly disrupt the investigation of these ties by firing the special counsel, according to the report, and was only prevented from doing so by the timely intervention of staffers. And Trump attempted to pressure prospective witnesses to make them less cooperative with the Mueller investigation. Though Mueller did not think it was legally appropriate to bring charges of obstruction of justice against a sitting president, he pointedly refused to exonerate Trump from obstruction. In the end, the report said: "Congress has authority to prohibit a President's corrupt use of his authority in order to protect the integrity of the administration of justice."

This is the key word: "corrupt." People may disagree on the criminality of these actions by Trump and his associates. But to deny that these actions constitute corruption is to lose contact with reality and morality. A poor performance by Mueller did nothing to change this.

But something did end during

the Mueller hearings, at least for me. It was the death of the *deus ex machina*—the hope that a G-man of mythic abilities would decisively intervene on the side of good and save the honor of the country. If asked, I would have never admitted such a hope. I knew the verse: "Put not your trust in princes." But I invested a great deal of trust in Robert Mueller, who is the living repudiation of the shoddiness and shallowness of the Trump era.

Yet politics seldom works in this way. A democratic country is generally not saved by the virtues of a single man but by the composite character of millions of principled citizens.

This is particularly true in the Trump era. For many of us, the greatest damage Trump has wrought has not come from violations of law; it has resulted from his destruction of democratic norms and culture. It is the blinding snowstorm of his lies, which undermines the very idea of a political truth. It is his compulsive cruelty toward migrants, refugees and anyone who defies him, which has excused and encouraged dehumanization. It is his increasingly unvarnished racism, which is reopening some of the deepest wounds of our history.

Can this kind of damage be reversed? It is an open question. If it can, it will not come by the application of the law. It will come through the repudiation of Trumpism by the public. Democratic ills must be healed by democratic means. When politics is contaminated by hatred and cruelty, our ritual of renewal is a national election with a decisive result. And that means the savior is us.

(Washington Post Writers Group)

## Changing demographics breeds anger

Should we worry? It would seem appropriate. Why? Referenced are the ever more frequent threats and delivery of violence by what appears a growing number of Americans who've become upset or disenfranchised with their lives. Then there are those who harm others when not understood or do not respond to them on their terms or with whom they disagree by religious or political differences.

Violence in Oregon was notable at the Umatilla National Wildlife Refuge take-over by right-wing militia members. The refuge occupation was an event in which government workers employed at the refuge, local residents, and journalists covering the incident had their lives threatened while federal property damage occurred at huge costs in tax dollars to repair.

Ultimately it ended badly with the death of a militiaman. More recently, we've witnessed the case of state Senator Brian Boquist. He threatened violence to the president of the state senate, Peter Courtney, and threatened to kill any Oregon State Police officer sent out to return him to the duties in the Capitol he swore to uphold. Consequences have followed for Boquist who now seeks help from President Trump. This fits.

Each act and threat of violence serves as predicate for Trump, who

himself provides words of encouragement for violence, thereby providing tacit permission to those who otherwise might not act out. An increased level of late has to do with threats and delivery of violence by white supremacists to Americans of color. As we know, almost half the U.S. population is made up of persons of color who are mostly citizens and will not "return from where they came" since most were born here. Then, too, African Americans were forced here by slavery, Latinos settled in the Southwest before whites, while the forebears of native American tribe members arrived millenniums ago.

The disgruntled elements in American society are making their appearance more and more often by lawless acts, resulting in the infliction of injuries predictably leading to homicides. As they have notoriously demonstrated in 1930s Germany and post-Revolution Russia, right-wing and left-wing militias are almost always paramilitary organizations, using intimidation, and, ultimately, murder to gain the upper hand. We're on the verge of critical mass by violent acts in Oregon.

Violence is delivered every day throughout the U.S. Millions of Americans struggle with opioid-based substance abuse disorders while the nation's pharmaceutical industry continues to pay-off

medical doctors to prescribe it for so much as a sprained ankle with death for hundreds every day as a common outcome. Reports by the hour inform us that persons high on alcohol and/or marijuana drive a vehicle causing a violent death to innocents. Then there are those who bring violence by gun use almost every minute in America while little is done, save afterwards, prayers and condolences.

What can any ordinary American do about these threats to our health and democracy? There are not enough police officers to stop it entirely. So, each of us must denounce it whenever and wherever it shows up and make certain our children and those we can influence find futures through more education and training in apprenticeships, college certificate and degree programs and so on. Thereby, secure for our children a future that does not end for them in shouting hateful slogans, beating people up and ending in jail with a rap sheet. Waiting for others to remedy our social ills is bound for a land of disappointment.

(Gene H. McIntyre shares his opinion regularly in the *Keizertimes*.)



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