

# KEIZERTIMES PUBLIC SQUARE

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## Athletes who protest the flag are playing right into China's hands

By **MARC A. THIESSEN**

The U.S. women's national soccer team is denying team members turned their backs on a 98-year-old World War II veteran as he played the national anthem before an exhibition game, claiming that some players were simply looking at the flag at the other end of the stadium. "Get your facts straight before you assume anything," U.S. midfielder Carli Lloyd tweeted.

Hmm, why would anyone assume that the players were showing disrespect during the playing of our national anthem? Maybe it's because, long before U.S. track and field athlete Gwen Berry turned her back on the flag while the national anthem played, it was the U.S. national women's soccer team that was demanding the right to protest the anthem.

Maybe it's because in 2016, U.S. co-captain Megan Rapinoe refused to stand during a national team game against Thailand. Maybe it's because in 2019 Rapinoe refused to place her hand over her heart during the anthem, declaring "I'll probably never put my hand over my heart. I'll probably never sing the national anthem again."

Maybe it's because in 2020 the national team players issued a joint statement demanding that U.S. Soccer repeal its policy requiring them to "stand respectfully" during the anthem—and U.S. Soccer capitulated to the players' demands. Maybe it's because last November, nine of the team's 11 starting players kneeled during the playing of national anthem before their game against the Netherlands, and then seven of the starting 11 players took a knee during the anthem before a game against Columbia in January.

Given this history, it's no surprise that so many assumed the players were showing disrespect during the playing of the anthem during a game with Mexico last week. Because they had been agitating for the right to do so for years.

In a statement, U.S. Soccer said that none of the players "turned their back on WWII Veteran Pete DuPré during tonight's anthem" adding "the players all love Pete." Note the statement didn't say the players would never disrespect the American flag—because that would be demonstrably untrue. The team seems most upset at the notion that anyone thought they had shown disrespect to a sweet old man like Pete. What they don't seem to understand is that when they protest the flag, they show disrespect for Pete and all the veterans who fought under that flag. They show disrespect for all of Pete's comrades who sacrificed their lives so they could have the freedom to play a kid's game for a living.

It's one thing for players to protest the anthem on their own free time. But it's quite another to do so while playing on the international stage for Team USA. With both the summer and winter Olympic Games set to take place during the coming year, athletes should not be allowed to protest the stars and

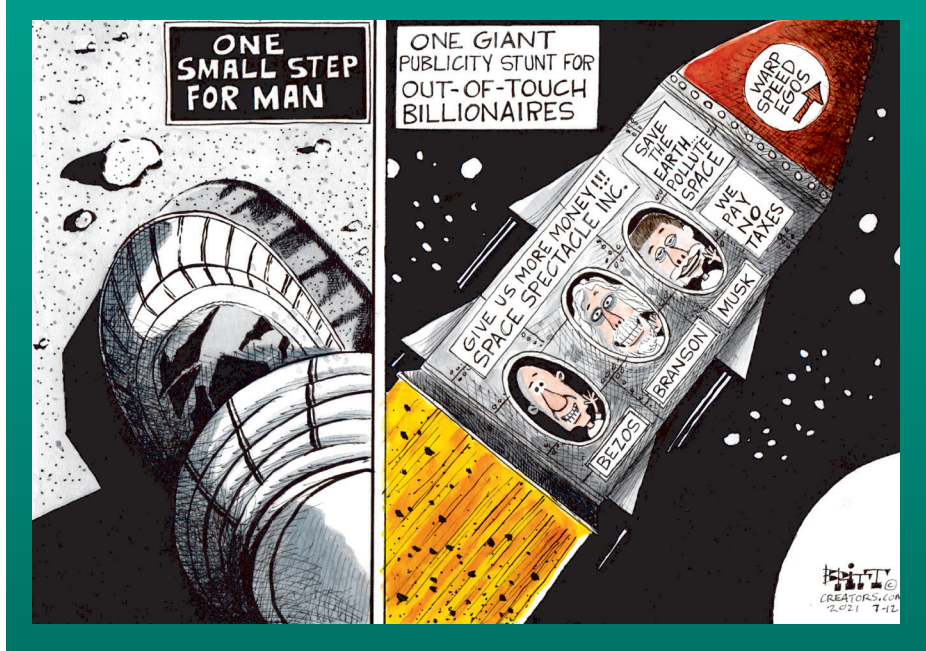


stripes while wearing the stars and stripes. If you can't show respect for the U.S. national anthem, then don't play for the U.S. national team.

Indeed, American athletes who insist on protesting their own country on the international stage are playing right into the hands of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which will host the Winter Olympics in 2022. Just as Nazi Germany used the 1936 Olympics to legitimize its murderous regime, Communist China sees the Olympic Games as an opportunity to increase its global legitimacy and deflect attention from its brutal suppression of freedom in Hong Kong and its genocide against Uyghur Muslims.

During a U.S.-China summit in Anchorage earlier this year, the head of the Chinese delegation, Yang Jiechi, laid out the Communist Party line: The Black Lives Matter movement shows that "the challenges facing the United States in human rights are deep-seated" and that "many people within the United States actually have little confidence in the democracy of the United States." Therefore, Yang said, "it is important for the United States to change its own image and to stop advancing its own democracy in the rest of the world."

If U.S. athletes protest the national anthem in Beijing, they will be echoing this Chinese Communist propaganda. Instead, maybe they should focus their protests on China's systematic rape and forced sterilization of Uyghur women. Or perhaps they could call out their own corporate sponsors, such as Nike, which has been credibly implicated in the use of Uyghur forced labor and has lobbied Congress to water down the bipartisan Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, which would ban imported goods made with forced labor in China's Xinjiang region. Unlike woke anthem protests, that would be an act of real courage -- and perhaps even some personal sacrifice.  
(Washington Post)



## The heat is on

By **JIM PARR**

It wasn't a singular event such as sunshine alone that caused our recent searing heat spell.

It was instead a combination and timing of weather patterns occurring exactly at the summer solstice which provided our longest daily exposure to sunshine along with the shortest nights of the year. Thus, with long cloud-free days and very short nights, there was little opportunity for the nights to cool off. Each day began with a morning a little warmer than the previous day. Also requisite to the mix was an upper atmospheric pattern that, once established, was very persistent and resistant to change. This pattern warmed the upper and mid-levels of the atmosphere and the unrelenting sunshine baked the surface. Typical with this weather pattern, a warming, light northeast wind added heat to the mix. Global warming likely provided an additional two or so degrees to the daily maximum temperature and as we now know, the heat was deadly.

Had the hot spell occurred in mid-August, the longer nights would have provided more time for cooling and the daily high temperatures would have been less extreme. As it was, several records for our area were broken including daily high temperatures and the speed and extent of the cool-down that occurred when the sea breeze finally broke through and displaced the hot unstable air at the surface.

Can it happen again you might wonder? A similar heat spell (heat-dome) occurred in

## Guest COLUMN

the summer of 1936 but it was centered further east. The prairies of Canada and the upper Midwest took the brunt of the heat that time with many records being broken throughout the southern tier of Canada.

Ironically, the upper atmospheric wind pattern that causes these hot spells is the same jet stream that brings the dreaded, very cold, long lasting and infamous "polar vortex" during winter. The "heat dome" transports air masses from the far south northward while the "polar vortex" transports air masses from the far north southward. Both patterns can occur during any time of a year but they bring and generate extreme weather when they occur at or near the solstices.

Climate change or global warming is upon us and changes already set in motion will be with us for many decades. To reverse or limit this trend will require modern societies to make major changes to the way we live. Primarily, we will have to use far less fossil fuel and this will mean less driving and flying, habits that we will find hard to give up. Are we capable of change? Are we willing to adapt to a simpler way of life? Hopefully we will have the will to do so for the sake of our young people. To do nothing puts the long term survival of mankind in doubt.

(Jim Parr lives in Keizer.)

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