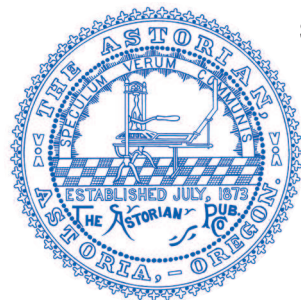


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Molly J. Smith /Statesman-Journal via AP
 Gov. Kate Brown outlined her 2016 policy agenda at a press conference at the State Capitol in Salem in January.

Why won't Gov. Brown show the gumption to lead?

Governors are supposed to be leaders

If a politician stays in Washington, D.C., long enough you master the art of saying something while saying nothing. The congressman from Eastern Oregon, Greg Walden, is a master of the articulate non-statement.

Governors cannot afford such sleight of hand. After all, they are *supposed to be* leaders. We are also closer to them, physically. Congressmen can go to Washington to hide. Governors cannot.

It is unfortunate to see a penchant for non-speak develop so early in our Gov. Kate Brown.

Our sister newspaper the *Capital Press* sought to learn the position of Gov. Brown on the disputed proposal to create a national monument in Malheur County. The proposed monument is the Owyhee Canyonlands wilderness and conservation area.

Wrote the CP: "Here's what (Brown's) people said she said:

"While this is ultimately a federal decision, I have heard from many Oregonians with strong views about the Owyhee. There's agreement as to the beauty and uniqueness of the Canyonlands and disagreement over whether a monument designation can best ensure those characteristics will be enjoyed for future generations. I have communicated those viewpoints to federal administration officials and will be closely following this issue in the months ahead."

Huh? Brown conveyed the persona of a lawyer or TV news anchor. She does not present herself as a leader, as a governor.

On Jan. 7, this page made a similar observation about a comment that was relayed to us by Gov. Brown's media

person. The topic was a legislative proposal to have public employees contribute to their retirement, as private sector employees do. We wrote about the Public Employees Retirement System train wreck that is coming for school districts and city governments. Here was our response to Brown's ambivalence.

"Gov. Brown's response is a disappointment, because it contains no leadership. She sounds more like a lawyer or a news anchor — stating the obvious — than a governor. Where is Brown's amazement that Oregon is the only state that requires no employee participation in retirement funding? Where is her anger about the pending horror in which school districts and cities will be decimated to pay for a phantom workforce of retirees?"

We then asked the question, "Why won't Gov. Brown lead Oregon on PERS?"

On the Owyhee Canyonlands, she does not have to lead. But acting like she is an umpire in the middle of the tennis court is an insult to Oregonians' intelligence.

Brown is, of course, waiting for the election to be over. But our guess is that even then she will not lead Oregonians if she is asked to be at odds with public employee unions or the liberal Portland center of her electorate.

Even prior to her first election to office, Brown is becoming a big disappointment.

In the matter of Paul Ryan

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER
 Washington Post Writers Group

WASHINGTON — The morning after, the nation awakes asking: What have we done?

Both parties seem intent on throwing the election away. The Democrats, running against a man with highest-ever negatives, are poised to nominate a candidate with the second-highest-ever negatives. Hillary Clinton started with every possible advantage — money, experience, name recognition, residual goodwill from her husband's successful 1990s — yet could not put away until this last week an obscure, fringy, socialist backbencher in a country uniquely allergic to socialism.

Bernie Sanders did have one advantage. He had something to say. She had nuthin'. Her victory speech was a pudding without a theme for a campaign without a cause. After 14 months, she still can't get past the famous question asked of Ted Kennedy in 1979: Why do you want to be president?

So whom do the Republicans put up? They had 17 candidates. Any of a dozen could have taken down the near-fatally weak Clinton, unloved, untrusted, living under the shadow of an FBI investigation.

Instead, they nominate Donald Trump — conspiracy theorist (from Barack Obama's Kenyan birth to Ted Cruz's father's involvement with Lee Harvey Oswald), fabulist (from his own invented opposition to the Iraq War and the Libya intervention to the "thousands and thousands" of New Jersey Muslims celebrating 9/11), admirer of strongmen (from Vladimir Putin to the butchers of Tiananmen).

His outrageous provocations have been brilliantly sequenced so that the

shock of the new extinguishes the memory of the last. Though perhaps not his most recent — his gratuitous attack on a "Mexican" federal judge (born and bred in Indiana) for inherent bias because of his ethnicity. Textbook racism, averred Speaker Paul Ryan. Even Trump acolyte and possible running mate Newt Gingrich called it inexcusable.

Trump promptly doubled down, expanding the universe of the not-to-be-trusted among us by adding American Muslims to the list of those who might be inherently biased.

Yet Trump is the party's chosen. He won the primary contest fair and square. The people have spoken. What to do?

First, dare to say that the people aren't always right. Surely Republicans admit the possibility. Or do they believe the people chose rightly in electing Obama? Twice. Historical examples of other countries choosing even more wrongly are numerous and tragic. The people's will deserves respect, not necessarily affirmation.

I sympathize with the dilemma of Republican leaders reluctant to affirm. Many are as appalled as I am by Trump, but they don't have the freedom I do to say, as I have publicly, that I cannot imagine ever voting for him. They have unique party and institutional responsibilities.

For some, that meant endorsing Trump in the belief that they might be able to contain, constrain, guide and perhaps even educate him. To my mind, this thinking has always been hopelessly misbegotten but not necessarily — nor in all cases — venal.

Which brings us to the matter of Paul Ryan, now being excoriated by



Charles Krauthammer

First, dare to say that the people aren't always right.

many conservatives for having said he would vote for Trump.

Yet what was surprising was not Ryan's ever-so-tepid semi-endorsement, which was always inevitable and unavoidable — can the highest elected GOP official be at war during a general election with the party's democratically chosen presidential candidate? — but his initial refusal to endorse Trump when, after the Indiana primary, nearly everyone around him was falling mindlessly, some shamelessly, into line.

That was surprising. Which is why Ryan's refusal to immediately follow suit created such a sensation. It also created, deliberately, the time and space for non-Trumpites to hold the line. Ryan was legitimizing resistance to the new regime, giving it safe harbor in the House, even as resisters were being relentlessly accused of treason for "electing Hillary."

In the end, Ryan called an armistice. What was he to do? Oppose and resign? And then what? What would remain of conservative leadership in the GOP? And if he created a permanent split in the party, he'd be setting up the GOP's entire conservative wing as scapegoat if Trump loses in November.

Ryan had no good options. He chose the one he felt was least damaging to the conservative cause to which he has devoted his entire adult life.

I wouldn't have done it but I'm not House speaker. He is a practicing politician who has to calculate the consequences of what he does. That deserves at least some understanding.

One day, we shall all have to account for what he did and what we said in this scoundrel year. For now, we each have our conscience to attend to.

Orlando and Trump's America

By ROGER COHEN
 New York Times News Service

Omar Mateen, the Florida shooter who had pledged allegiance to the Islamic State, just ushered Donald Trump to the White House, Britain out of the European Union, Marine Le Pen to the French presidency, and the world into a downward spiral of escalating violence.

Aged 29, Mateen is the Gavrilo Princip of the early 21st century, the young man who ripped up an old, decaying political order. Like the 19-year-old Bosnian Serb nationalist whose bullets ignited World War I, Mateen has set a spark to a time of inflammable anger.

Of course, these somber imaginings may prove to be no more than that. Mateen has not yet changed the world; he may never.

But there is no question that the largest mass shooting in U.S. history comes at a time of particular unease. In both the United States and Europe, political and economic frustrations have produced a groundswell against the status quo and an apparent readiness to make a leap in the dark. Washington and Brussels have become bywords for paralysis.

Trump and "Brexit" represent action — any action — to shake things up. They are, to their supporters, the come-uppance smug elites deserve.

On top of this, and feeding this, Islam is in epochal crisis. Its Sunni and Shiite branches are mired in violent confrontation. Its adjustment to the modern world has proved faltering and agonized enough to produce a metastasizing strain of violent anti-Western jihadi beliefs to which Mateen — like the San Bernardino shooters — was apparently susceptible.

That he shot revelers in a gay club suggests once again that Islam and sexuality constitute a particularly combustible realm. Liberal Western sexual mores are the most troubling affront to a certain strain of Islam. The resultant confrontation incubates explosive violence.

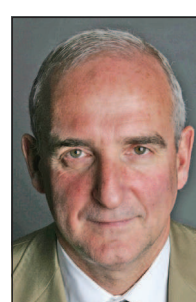
It is 12 years since Theo van Gogh

was murdered in Amsterdam by a Dutch-Moroccan Muslim jihadi for making a movie about the treatment of women in Islam; and now homosexuals at the Pulse club in Orlando, Florida, are targeted by a U.S. citizen of Afghan descent who, it seems, had also found in Islamic extremism the ideological answer to his troubles.

It is poisonous to blame all the world's 1.6 billion Muslims for this crisis of their religion. Trump's self-congratulatory reiteration of his call for a temporary ban on non-American Muslims entering the United States exemplifies his violence-tinged politics of division. Michael Oren, the former Israeli ambassador to the United States, was quoted on Twitter hours after the massacre as saying: "If I were Trump, I'd emphasize the Muslim name, Omar Sadiqui Mateen. This changes race." Later, he said Trump would do this, not that he had recommended it.

It is, however, also dangerous to ignore or belittle the potency of ISIS ideology, the core role it has played in recent violence from Paris to California, and the link between that ideology and the broader crisis of Islam. The favored phrase of the Obama administration in addressing this scourge — "violent extremism" — is vague to the point of evasive meaninglessness. Yes, jihadi terrorists are "violent extremists" but calling them that is like calling Nazism a reaction to German humiliation in World War I: true but wholly inadequate.

Mateen demonstrated again just how potent the mix of ISIS and National Rifle Association ideology is. America is the perfect setting for "lone wolf" ISIS followers because they



Roger Cohen

America is the perfect setting for "lone wolf" ISIS followers because they have access to the weapons they need to do their worst.

have access to the weapons they need to do their worst. Despite having been investigated twice in recent years by the FBI for possible ties to terrorism, Mateen was able to walk into a Florida gun dealership recently, and acquire a "long gun" and a pistol. This, by any reasonable standard, is madness.

The AR-15 assault weapon used by Mateen was also the weapon used by the San Bernardino shooters. The former NRA president, David Keene, once described the weapons as the "gun liberals love to hate." It is in fact the rifle that illustrates why lax U.S. gun laws make American lives cheap. The laws are an aberration.

President Barack Obama described the shooting as "an act of terror and an act of hate." He made clear his disapproval of gun laws. He called for solidarity. He said nothing about ISIS, or the way the Islamic

State's hold on territory in Syria and Iraq reinforces the charismatic potency of its ideological appeal, disseminated from that base through the internet.

He also said this: "To actively do nothing is a decision as well."

Yes, to have actively done nothing in Syria over more than five years of war — so allowing part of the country to become an Islamic State stronghold, contributing to a massive refugee crisis in Europe, acquiescing to slaughter and displacement on a devastating scale, undermining America's word in the world, and granting open season for President Vladimir Putin of Russia to strut his stuff — amounts to the greatest foreign policy failure of the Obama administration.

It has made the world far more dangerous. I hope for the best but fear the victory of the politics of anger in America and Europe.

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