

OPINION

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Choosing Hope over Fear *The way forward after tragedy*

BY ALGIE C. GATEWOOD

Sometimes, a little time must pass before we can gain some perspective on the events in our lives and our world. This is especially true in the wake of a tragedy, when the sheer horror of things can make calm deliberation next to impossible. The heartbreak of Virginia Tech is still fresh in our minds, but it is time to consider its ramifications on our lives as Americans.



will we still be able to recognize ourselves as a people?

Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the federal government's answer has been simple and direct: Be afraid, be very afraid. The combination of legislation and executive action emanating from 9/11 has eroded the writ of habeas corpus (the right of Americans to not be held in prison without being charged with a crime); vastly increased the government's ability to monitor the lives of Americans, in many cases without a search warrant; and has embroiled us in a foreign war which, in addition to being unconnected to 9/11, has by every measure exacerbated the tensions that helped lead to the attacks and led to the

deaths of tens of thousands of people.

And to make matters worse, Hurricane Katrina exposed the dark underbelly of class and race in America, as well as the seeming unwillingness of the establishment to intervene on.

Many of the responses to the Virginia Tech tragedy have been similar—some have advocated turning college campuses into virtual police states, while others have claimed that the shooter could have been stopped early in his rampage if only his fellow students had been armed. Be afraid, be very afraid.

In my opinion, the mindset behind these responses—both to the Virginia Tech shooting and to the larger question of terrorism—is one that leads us in the wrong

direction, away from our birthright as Americans and away from the ideals of intellectual freedom and collective responsibility embodied by colleges and universities.

Should we be wary? Should we have a healthy respect for the dangers that beset us in the modern world? Absolutely, we should. But

security enclaves?

We have at our disposal two distinct and powerful advantages—a flexible form of government designed to withstand the ebb and flow of internal and external pressures; and, more importantly, a culture, shaped by that government that is inclined toward openness, tolerance, and freedom. The

that violence and terrorism are easy to see as the dead-ends that they are. As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. tells us, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

I am happy to see that this view appears on its way to becoming predominant. An overwhelming majority of Americans want to see the Iraq War come to an end. A growing consensus sees the necessity of changing our lifestyle to address the issue of global warming. And more and more of us are rejecting the notion that increasing government secrecy and surveillance make us safer.

In a free society, we will never be able to completely eliminate every threat to our safety and security, and nor should we—an acceptance of a certain amount of risk is one of the prices of liberty. But given the choice between hope and fear, I will choose hope every single time.

Algie C. Gatewood, Ed.D., is president of Portland Community College's Cascade Campus.



Can we rightly claim to be the defenders of freedom in the world if we foster an environment that is ever more paranoid, more fearful, more restrictive?

at what cost?

Is our society worth defending if, in so doing, we slide inexorably down the slippery slope toward authoritarianism? Can we rightly claim to be the defenders of freedom in the world if we foster an environment that is ever more paranoid, more fearful, more restrictive? Are colleges and universities still bastions of discourse and intellectual exchange if they become high-

way forward after 9/11, the Iraq War, Katrina, and the Virginia Tech tragedy lies in maximizing liberty, not restricting it. The way forward lies in reaching out to other nations and cultures, not alienating them.

We must be on our guard, to be sure, but we must not continue down the road to being less than what we are. We must make the advantages of intercultural and international cooperation so evident

Supreme Court is No Friend of Women

Others promote 'diversity' in place of fairness

BY MARTHA BURK

The Bush Supreme Court under Chief Justice John Roberts recently delivered what could be a devastating blow to women experiencing discrimination in pay and promotion. After many years of employment at Goodyear, Lilly Ledbetter learned that she had been paid less all along than the 16 men at her management level, including those with less seniority.

She sued under the nation's main gender discrimination law, Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, but the Court said she had no case. Why? In an opinion delivered by Bush appointee Samuel Alito, the majority said Title VII only allowed Ledbetter 180 days to sue from the time her discriminatory pay was initially set, even though it had been a tightly held secret in the company for over a decade before she found out about it.

While the statute does indeed call for an employee to act within 180 days of experiencing a specific discriminatory event, courts for the last 40 years have treated each new short paycheck as such an event—until now.

Legal scholars are arguing about the long-term implications, but

members of Congress aren't waiting. Rep. Carolyn Maloney, D-N.Y., is introducing a bill to give women a fairer shake by allowing a longer timeline for action.

Meanwhile, sex discrimination in corporate America marches on. In a case filed against General Electric two days after the ruling, female lawyers and senior management employees put forth damning evidence against the company. Citing pay and promotion data on top management, the women demonstrate that GE's claims of "diversity" and valuing female employees under lead defendant Chairman

damning. Of the 16,000 women in the network (not all female employees belong), only 22 had made it to officer level in 2003.

The current suit tells us nothing has changed at GE. Citing a clearly male dominated "officer's club" in the senior ranks, the complaint shows that female representation at the officer level is still languishing at 13 percent. If women at high levels are so blatantly shut out, what are the prospects for those in the rank and file?

Big corporations use diversity departments and meaningless initiatives all the time to obscure the

Big corporations use diversity departments and meaningless initiatives all the time to obscure the truth.

Jeffrey Immelt are, as they say in Texas, all hat and no cattle. We shouldn't be surprised.

Immelt, along with his board members Sam Nunn and Douglas Warner (also named in the suit), stood staunchly against women a few years ago by maintaining their memberships in the biggest of boys cult of all, Augusta National Golf Club. Even in the face of a national controversy over the club's policies, they defied their own corporate statements about fairness.

At the same time, Immelt was engaging in what I call the "diversity dodge," that many companies employ to make themselves look good on race and gender while doing nothing, or worse, hiding outright discrimination.

Immelt was saying all the right words, touting the "GE Women's Network" as a pipeline for top jobs. But the numbers, then as now, were

truth. It's sort of like Exxon Mobil claiming to be "green" while dodging responsibility for the Exxon Valdez oil spill (they've yet to pay out a dime).

It's unknown what effect the latest ruling from the Supreme Court will have on the women at GE and thousands of their sisters at other companies getting paid less, promoted less and often patted on the fanny to boot. But one thing is sure—big corporations headed by men who say one thing and do another will try to sell "diversity" in place of fairness as long as they're allowed to do it by lax laws and female-hostile courts.

Congress ought to act fast to right this wrong.

Martha Burk is the author of "Cult of Power: Sex Discrimination in Corporate America and What Can Be Done About It."



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A Legacy of Shame

Immigration raid stirs hatred

BY SEN. AVEL GORDLY

My office has received numerous responses to my previous statement in support of Mayor Tom Potter on the recent immigration raid in north Portland, both pro and con.

Many of those who wrote in opposition made exaggerated or erroneous claims, including lumping the lettuce choppers arrested in North Portland with the terrorists who hijacked airliners on September 11 and turned them into bombs.

Others did not understand that both Mayor Potter and I spoke against the misallocation of limited and costly law enforcement resources to make wholesale arrests



of people trying to survive at the bottom of the wage-earning ladder instead of focusing on the hard-core criminal elements that pose real risks to public safety.

Many of the negative comments my office has received could have been (and were) used in previous anti-immigrant and race-based campaigns against Chinese, Japanese, Mexican, African and other populations.

The same level of hate has been leveled against African Americans since the founding of the nation, regardless of citizenship and the fact that they were brought here against their will and in chains.

It is a legacy of shame, and its inheritors are among us still.

Sen. Avel Gordly represents northeast and southeast Portland in the Oregon Legislature.