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OPINION

Guns Lethalize Hatred, Anger, Despair

Speak out,
organize and
vote

BY MARIAN
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On Aug. 2, I wrote about the relentless scourge of gun violence and the two children killed in Gilroy, Calif. and asked: Why does gun violence remain a uniquely horrible American epidemic and why does it go on and on and on and on? Two days later a new shooting made national headlines when an employee killed two people and injured a police officer at a Mississippi Walmart.

Then came El Paso. 22 died. 24 injured. Then came Dayton. 9 died. 27 injured.

In one week 36 people died and more than 60 were injured not including the dozens of others killed by daily gun violence. A child or teen is killed by gunfire every two hours and 34 minutes in our nation. People of all ages are killed with guns every 14 minutes.

None of this is normal and should not continue to be normalized in the United States of America. In fact it is absurd and morally intolerable in a purported democratic nation where our pledge of allegiance declares liberty and justice for all.

The FBI has opened domestic terror investigations into the Gilroy and El Paso shootings. The El Paso shooter's manifesto echoed the same hateful and racist language permeating our nation, beginning in the Oval Office. We must band together to

fight resurging racism and white supremacy with urgency and persistence at every level and in every institution in our national life.

A kindergartener and third grader have shown us the way with their words. They created the slogan behind "Hate Has No Home Here," an awareness campaign that began in a Chicago neighborhood. These children's message of love, nonviolence and insistence that hate has no home here must spread across our nation and world. I urge families, neighbors, businesses, congregations, schools, city halls, communities and all who oppose hate and violence to take up this cause. If you believe everyone in America should be safe from violence and hate, then act! Visit HateHasNoHomeHere.org to download the free artwork uplifting this simple expression of human decency in a number of languages, and display it on posters, yard signs, bumper stickers, buttons and everywhere you can hang a banner or sign.

Everyone should want and work to ensure that our children, grandchildren, friends, neighbors, worshippers, communities, nation and world are safe from terror. But making children feel welcome and valued is hollow if we cannot protect them from the guns that make hate uniquely dangerous in our nation.

Guns lethalyze hatred, anger, domestic disputes, mental illness and despair. Easy access to guns—including military-style weapons that should have no place in civilian hands—has made expressions of hate and violence devastating. The shooter in Dayton had an AR-15-style assault rifle with 100-round drum magazines. Police responded and stopped him in 32 seconds. But it took only 32 seconds for him to

kill nine people and injure more than two dozen others. The Gilroy and El Paso shooters used similar semiautomatic weapons.

What a difference moral political leadership at the highest levels of government makes. In New Zealand, less than a week after the horrific mass shooting in March 2019 that snuffed out the lives of 51 people of Muslim faith, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern proposed a national ban on all military-style semiautomatic weapons and assault rifles, high-capacity ammunition magazines and parts that allow weapons to be modified into semiautomatic guns and a government funded buyback of existing assault weapons. Within weeks, New Zealand's Parliament enacted her proposed assault weapons

ban.

Between 1994 and 2004 our federal government banned civilian ownership of semiautomatic assault weapons and large-capacity ammunition magazines. In the fifteen years since this ban expired, most members of Congress have refused to renew this urgently needed ban or pass any other common-sense gun legislation. So here we are again with a rash of tragedies and a groundswell of voices demanding Congress and governors do something right now. What will it take to end the indifference to the lives and safety of our children?

Please speak out, organize and vote to save child lives and do not stop until all our children are safe. The House of Representatives has passed several

measures to keep guns out of the hands of those who might harm children and communities but the Senate has refused to act on these measures. Demand Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell end the slaughter of children in Kentucky and throughout the nation and urge him to reconvene the Senate immediately to pass effective gun violence prevention legislation.

All of us must disarm hate and violence in America. We must drown out voices of hate and White supremacy with love and action and end our national gun violence epidemic. We don't have another moment—or life—to waste.

Marian Wright Edelman is founder and president emerita of the Children's Defense Fund.



ALBINA MINISTERIAL ALLIANCE COALITION FOR JUSTICE AND POLICE REFORM TO HOST COMMUNITY FORUM ON POLICE ASSOCIATION CONTRACT

Monday, August 26, 2019
6:00-8:00 PM

Maranatha Church • 4222 NE 12th at Skidmore

- Why is it so difficult to fire officers?
- Why doesn't Portland's civilian oversight body have the ability to investigate use of deadly force or to compel officer testimony?

We want to hear from the community about what you want to see included in the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Portland Police Association (PPA) and the City. We will pass your ideas on to City Council. The PPA contract expires on June 30, 2020 and the City is expected to begin negotiations early this fall. For more information see albinaministerialcoalition.org or call 503-288-7242.

JESUS Coming Again SOON!!



"Dear G-d, Please forgive ALL my sins. I accept
Jesus into my heart as my Lord and Savior, Amen"

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