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OUR VIEW

Tip of the hat; kick in the pants

A tip of the hat to Treasury Department, who will put a woman on the \$10 bill by 2020.

Now for the hard part: what woman should be bestowed with the honor? Harriet Tubman seems to be the early favorite for gracing the bill. (In case you need a refresher, Tubman was an Africa-American who helped organize and operate the Underground Railroad, shuttling slaves from the south into the free north. After the Civil War, Tubman became a major proponent of women’s suffrage.)

Other possibilities include Eleanor Roosevelt, Sally Ride, Susan B. Anthony, Sacajawea, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Sojourner Truth, Wilma Mankiller, Rosa Parks or Clara Barton.

The country has time to decide, and it’s great to know the Treasury Department will take the nation’s choice into consideration when it changes the visage on a bill for the first time since 1928.

On the other side of the bill, we have to say goodbye to Alexander Hamilton, a pretty darn righteous dude and one of the great Founding Fathers of this country. We imagine in today’s age of enlightenment, he would be open to stepping aside and making room for a Founding Mother.



A kick in the pants to Rachel Dolezal, the Spokane woman who lied about her race.

This is a sensitive subject, and nuance is required rather than just harsh rebuke. But there is no way to get away from a pants-kicking if you lie about your race to forward your career.

Don’t get us wrong. It’s admirable for a white woman from northwest Montana to study and teach African studies and work for the NAACP. But Dolezal’s actions did not advance the cause she purported to promote, and only leads to suspicion and resentment.

Although it is tempting to draw larger parallels here, it can’t be done. This is one woman with an incomprehensible story, and some severe family and identity issues. She rightfully is no longer a professor or directing the NAACP. Let’s hope she tells the truth moving forward.



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OTHER VIEWS

Birth control legislation will result in fewer unwanted pregnancies

The (Medford) Mail Tribune

Gov. Kate Brown signed the nation’s first law requiring insurance companies to provide a full year’s worth of prescription contraceptives at a time, making it easier for women to prevent unwanted pregnancies.

Lawmakers should also pass a second measure, which would permit pharmacists to dispense birth control to adult women without a prescription.

The measure that becomes law today should reduce the odds of unplanned pregnancies by 30 percent when compared with dispensing contraception every 30 or 90 days, according to supporters.

The second measure, still making its way through the legislative process, would empower pharmacists to dispense birth control pills without a prescription to women 18 and older. Minors still would need to see a doctor for their first prescription, but could obtain refills without a subsequent visit to a doctor.

The measure, House Bill 2879, cleared the House last week on a bipartisan 50-10 vote. It is sponsored by Rep. Knute Buehler, R-Bend, a physician, who said he was prompted to introduce it because women could obtain

the “morning-after pill,” or emergency contraception, without a prescription but not ordinary birth-control pills. He also notes that men can obtain contraception over the counter, but women cannot.

Although some lawmakers have raised concerns about health risks, a committee of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists in 2012 recommended on-demand birth control pills as a way to reduce unplanned pregnancies up to 25 percent. HB 2879 would require women to complete a 20-item health screening questionnaire before obtaining contraceptives, a step recommended by the panel.

The panel also noted that the risk of blood clots from newer types of birth-control pills is quite low, and in fact is less than the risk of the same complication in women who are pregnant or have just given birth.

The important thing here is that both of these pieces of legislation will make it easier and less expensive for women to obtain contraception in the first place and to continuously protect themselves against unwanted pregnancy thereafter. The fewer unwanted pregnancies, the fewer abortions. That’s an outcome everyone can agree on.

This legislation will make it easier and less expensive for women to protect themselves.



OTHER VIEWS

For Hillary, a new Iraq war trap

President Obama’s decision to send 450 more American troops to Iraq has put Hillary Clinton in a tough spot. What will she say about the fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria?

The answer, beyond a few boilerplate remarks, is nothing. There is no topic more radioactive in the Clintonworld psyche than Iraq. Look for her to avoid taking any clear, decisive position, at least for now.

No, it wouldn’t be hard for Clinton to stand against Republicans who have denounced Obama’s move as an ineffective half-measure — a “duct tape approach,” in the words of Sen. Lindsey Graham. Clinton, or at least her surrogate spokesmen, can accuse them of wanting yet another war in Iraq.

It’s Clinton’s fellow Democrats who are the problem. On the one hand, the White House presents the new deployment of troops as part of an ongoing “train, advise and assist” mission that will help Iraqis fight the Islamic State without the presence of a large number of U.S. ground troops. On the other hand, some Democrats are increasingly worried about “mission creep” in Iraq and will not support Obama’s policy.

“I am very concerned about mission creep in Iraq,” Democratic Rep. Chris Van Hollen told MSNBC recently. While Van Hollen said he supports Obama’s air war in Iraq, “Putting more U.S. troops on the ground and putting them in harm’s way is something that would give me grave, grave concern.”

“It represents an escalation ... incremental mission creep,” Democratic Rep. Jim McGovern told Politico. “This won’t be the last deployment. It will continue to increase.”

Another Democrat, Sen. Chris Murphy, is urging Congress to constrain Obama’s ability to wage war in Iraq. “I support the president’s mission to try to assist in the training of the Iraqi forces, but I’d be much more comfortable in supporting that mission if I knew what the limits of if were,” Murphy said on MSNBC. “Congress has to vote next week on a prohibition on the large scale deployment of ground troops, so that that creeping number of hundreds-at-a-time doesn’t become a second Iraq war before we have anything to say about it.”



BYRON YORK
Comment

So where does that leave Clinton? Very, very quiet. “Just remember this about Hillary,” says a Democratic strategist not affiliated with any campaign. “She thinks she’d be finishing her second term in the White House if she’d been right about the war the first time. So she’s not going to wander into this eagerly or quickly.”

When Clinton is asked about Iraq — and that might not be for a while, given her avoidance of the press and unscreened voters — it’s not hard to imagine her answering that the president is looking at all the intelligence, that he’s making a judgment based on that intelligence, and that she would have to know more to make an informed judgment herself.

That won’t satisfy anyone. But Clinton might well decide that suffering a little bad press would be better than taking a strong position and having it blow up in her face.

“Can she avoid taking a stand? Yes,” says the strategist. “Will it cause her some damage? Yes. Will she do it anyway? Yes.”

Clinton’s Democratic opponents won’t be so cautious. Both Bernie

It’s Hillary Clinton’s fellow Democrats who are the problem.

Sanders and Martin O’Malley opposed the invasion of Iraq back in 2003. They can both say Clinton was wrong then and is wrong now.

The reason Clinton does not have to respond, at least quickly, is that she currently enjoys a 47.5-point lead over Sanders, and a 56.7-point lead over O’Malley in the RealClearPolitics average of national polls. Given the caution her campaign has exhibited so far, there’s no reason to expect her to engage such a dangerous topic with such a comfortable lead.

Anyone who thinks Clinton won’t, or can’t, stay away from the subject should ask this question: What is her position on the giant Pacific trade deal currently being negotiated by the Obama administration, a deal about which many Democrats have passionate feelings? She hasn’t said.

“This is not a campaign that is taking any risks,” says the Democratic strategist. “She’ll do nothing for as long as she can get away with it.”

■

Byron York is chief political correspondent for The Washington Examiner.



Like mullahs, Forest Service wants to keep public ignorant

The U.S. Forest Service has sunk to a new low in Eastern Oregon, that is, they have decided that you are too dangerous a group of people to be informed as to what roads they plan to close in your mountains.

How do I know that? Because I have received a response telling me so.

While they put out propaganda of how they want to engage with you on the national forest, when I

or anyone else requests documents to engage, we are told we may cause “injury to the quality of the agency decision.”

Let me emphasize: We, the people of Eastern Oregon, may cause injury because we received a document to educate ourselves with.

Much like the mullahs in the mosaics of Afghanistan, the U.S. Forest Service means to keep you ignorant as to what is going on around you.

Communities and citizens are easier to control if they are kept from the truth of what’s going on around them and the decisions

a few are making for the larger population. See, you/we/I are too dumb, too backward, too unenlightened to understand the complexities of such ecological process — or are we?

I have a college education in natural resources, I know that water flows downhill and that active management techniques play a greater role in meeting the public’s needs than exclusion of use.

I know that there is a “tread lightly” campaign being pushed by a small minority on the upper echelons of the U.S. Forest Service where man is looked at as a disease on the landscape and not a part of

it. But most importantly, I know this: You and I are not dumb, backwards or unenlightened. It’s a lie.

If you want to keep your mountains open you are going

to have to dig in and fight; are you willing to do that? I hope so, because your kids’ and grandkids’ right to access depends on it.

John D. George
Bates, Ore.

LETTERS POLICY

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