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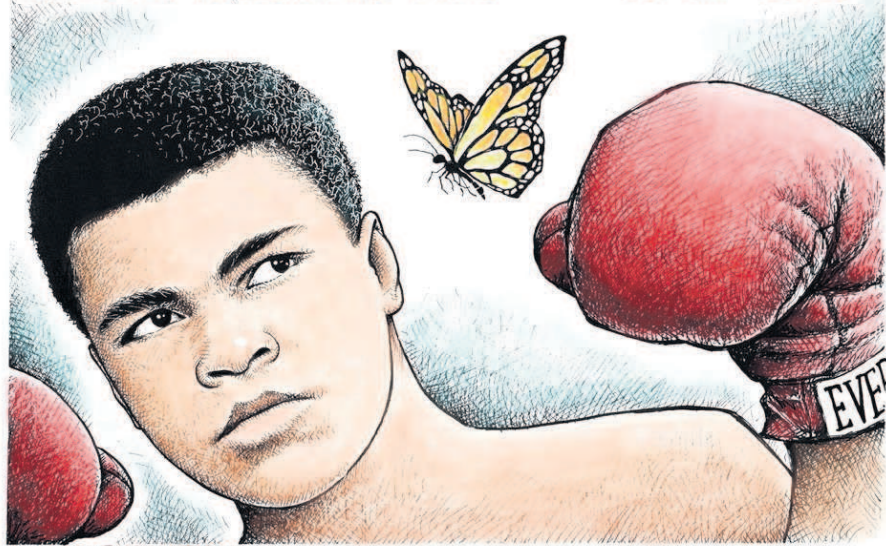
DANIEL WATTENBURGER
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OUR VIEW

MUHAMMAD ALI ◊ 1942 - 2016



Remember Ali by celebrating pacifism

In this year of deaths of cultural icons — David Bowie, Harper Lee, Merle Haggard and Prince — perhaps no one was as universally admired as Muhammad Ali. He is arguably the most famous human being of the last half century.

Ali is an American hero in the truest sense of the word, not only for his athletic achievements but his contributions to civil rights, religious understanding, modern culture and human dignity.

He “invented” the modern black athlete and the modern black entertainer — he was both 60 years ago. His wordplay was as rhythmic and charged as any modern poet. He challenged and changed sportswriting and the larger media. He reinvented one of the basic tenants of pugilism. He showed that

a person could live and die with dignity, even when suffering from a debilitating disease. He was a UN ambassador of peace.

Ali was no saint, of course. His militant wing of the civil rights movement pushed as hard for segregation as the Ku Klux Klan. His racially-tinged insults of Sonny Liston were terribly cruel. Yet he took so many great risks with his health and his legacy, it’s amazing that he lived most of his life with even one of them intact.

Perhaps Ali’s greatest contributions to a better world was his refusal to fight in Vietnam. In 1967, Ali was at the height of his physical powers and cultural influence — he was the heavyweight champion of the world, he had changed his name and his religion, he routinely graced the cover of magazines while inflaming and enraging White America. His refusal to enlist was a

dangerous thing to do and he paid dearly for it. While never jailed, he was stripped of his title, banned from fighting in the United States and forbidden from leaving the country. Ali’s famous quote “I ain’t got no quarrel with the Vietcong,” helped galvanize the anti-war movement behind a simple truth.

Ali was a unique pacifist and conscientious objector. Surely no one could call him a coward. He tested himself physically, mentally and morally as much as anyone

on the planet. He took more punches — literally and figuratively — than anyone else. Though he was proud of never having punched anyone outside the ring.

Perhaps we should remember and memorialize Ali and men and women like him. Dylan Matthews of Vox wrote a column last week titled “It’s

time we have a holiday to honor those who try to stop wars, too.”

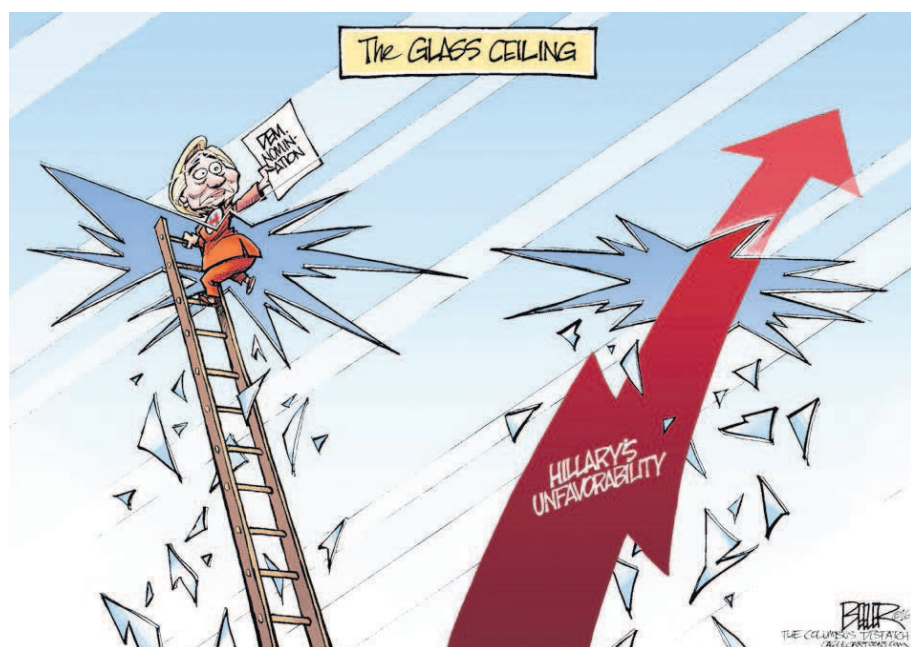
This country celebrates Memorial Day and Veterans Day, as we should. The sacrifice those men and women gave cannot be understated and cannot be forgotten.

But should we also celebrate, in some way, the people who saved just as many lives by trying to avoid and end wars — and sometimes succeeded at it. We could celebrate American pacifists such as Albert Einstein, Pete Seeger, Martin Luther King Jr., Helen Keller, Eugene Debs, Jeannette Rankin and Wendell Berry. We’d be introduced to others that aren’t household names. Open it up the world and you include Mahatma Ghandi, John Lennon and Leo Tolstoy.

No one is more beloved today than Muhammad Ali. As a country, we should remember his remarkable heart, and the thing he kept closest to it: his deep desire for peace.

The United States should celebrate the people who saved lives by trying to avoid and end war, and sometimes succeeded at it.

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the East Oregonian editorial board of Publisher Kathryn Brown, Managing Editor Daniel Wattenburger, and Opinion Page Editor Tim Trainor. Other columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the East Oregonian.



OTHER VIEWS

THE OREGONIAN CARTOONISTS

WHY SHOULD I RESPECT YOU, LADY? I MEAN, YOU'RE A 6 OR 7 AT BEST!



The #NeverTrump party desperate scenarios

The #NeverTrump conservatives who hope to recruit a third-party candidate to challenge Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton have so far had no luck. A number of potential candidates, well known and not, have turned down the chance to run. But no matter who eventually takes the job, the new party will operate on a set of wishful-thinking scenarios in which victory depends on one improbable event after another.



BYRON YORK
Comment

One such scenario is the hope of winning the election outright. Organizers insist that a third-party candidacy would not be a frivolous exercise, and that the purpose of a run would be to win. But the fact is there is no chance a third-party candidate could reach the 270 electoral votes required to win the White House.

It’s a commonplace that the states that have voted Democratic in the last six presidential elections total 242 electoral votes — just 28 short of a Democratic victory. Republicans have more than 100 electoral votes in states that have voted for the GOP in the last six elections. At this point in the race, it is simply not possible that 2012 nominee Mitt Romney, who won 206 electoral votes, or Nebraska Sen. Ben Sasse, who has never run for national office, or any lesser-known candidate would win 270 votes. It just won’t happen.

Indeed, third-party advocates concede there was never a chance. “The way this would happen would never be to win 270,” one such advocate said in a recent conversation. “That was never a plausible scenario.”

Knowing they would never hit the winning number, the third-party planners instead hoped to create a situation in which neither the Republican nor the Democratic candidate would reach 270, which would send the election to the House of Representatives.

To call such an outcome implausible would be generous. To keep both Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump below 270, a third-party candidate would have to win at least a few electoral votes, which means he would have to win a state. That is hard to do. Ross Perot won 19 percent of the popular vote in 1992 and zero electoral votes, because he did not win a single state.

One hopeful scenario envisions a third-party candidate winning Utah, where Trump was trounced in the Republican primary.

Start with the 2012 electoral map, advocates say, in which Obama won 332 electoral votes and Romney 206. Assume Trump wins every state Romney won. Then assume Trump wins Florida, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. That would put him at 273 — victory — and Clinton at 265. But then take away Utah, with its six electoral votes, and give it to the third party candidate. That leaves Trump at 267 and Clinton at 265 — both

below the magic 270 — and the third party at 6. The election would then go to the House of Representatives.

It’s far-fetched, to say the least — no Republican has won Florida, Ohio, and Pennsylvania since George H.W. Bush drafted on Ronald Reagan’s popularity in 1988. But even if Trump pulls it off, and also wins every other state Romney took in 2012, what are the chances a relatively obscure candidate could accomplish what Perot could not — winning a state? Not very

high. And even if all that happened and the election went to the House of Representatives,

One hopeful scenario envisions a third-party candidate winning Utah, where Trump was trounced in the Republican primary.

there are more insurmountable problems. The Constitution specifies that the vote be taken by state, with each state given one vote for president. So a state with a Democratic majority in its House delegation would cast one vote for Clinton. And a state with a Republican majority would cast one vote for ... who?

The Constitution says the House must vote for one of the top three candidates in number of electoral votes. That means no Paul Ryan or other outsider scenario. So the president would

be Clinton, Trump, or the third-party candidate. Assuming the House is still in Republican hands — remember, this would be next January, when the House that is elected this November takes office — does anyone believe that Republican politicians, acting in concert within their state delegations, would select the candidate with six electoral votes over the candidate with 267?

Some third-party advocates embrace other scenarios. In one, an independent candidate would draw just a point or two from Trump in a few closely contested states — enough for Trump to lose. But that, of course, would lead not to third-party victory but to a Hillary Clinton win, which is an outcome some longtime Republican #NeverTrumpers cannot publicly support.

Other scenarios rely on the hope that something crazy will happen. Perhaps Trump will implode, or a third-party candidate will emerge on the left. After all, it’s been an unpredictable year.

Finally, some third-party advocates concede they have little chance of winning but just want a candidate for whom a conservative who can’t accept Clinton or Trump can vote in good conscience.

It’s still not clear whether the third-party run will actually happen. Organizers have promised a strong organization and plenty of money. But with only pie-in-the-sky scenarios, and so far no candidate, hope — and enthusiasm — are dwindling.

Byron York is chief political correspondent for The Washington Examiner.

YOUR VIEWS

Instead of secession, have equal rural representation

In the December 31, 2015, edition of the *East Oregonian* there was a review of significant news events. The number one local news story viewed online was: “La Grande man pushing for secession to Idaho” (Sept. 24, 2015, by Jade McDowell).

The *East Oregonian* article related to the growing discontent of those who live on the dry side due to our limited number of votes in determining the direction of our state.

The problem is mathematics. We live in a state where our state representatives and senators are proportioned by population. Thus the western side of the state has the population and therefore the most number of elected representatives and senators.

Our founding fathers realized the need to keep the power balanced. The Connecticut Compromise stipulated that representatives would represent a specified number of

citizens. However, the number of senators was fixed at two per state regardless of size or population of the state. This concept equalizes the large number of representatives from populous states with a fixed number of senators.

My simple proposal would be to follow the federal approach. Maintain the election format for state representatives. Senators would be distributed by landmass. Oregon has a landmass of about 98,000 square miles. We presently have 30 state senators, 26 from west of the Cascades and four on the east side. In the new equation, each senator would represent about 3,000 square miles of Oregon.

This proposal would just be endorsing the concept that our Founding Fathers established: to allow small populations areas to have a strong voice.

This solution would be far simpler than seceding.

Kristopher B. Peterson
Hermiston

LETTERS POLICY

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