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OUR VIEW

Tip of the hat; kick in the pants

A tip of the hat to the distinguished citizens from Hermiston and Pendleton, and dozens of other smaller cities in the region, who were celebrated recently at awards banquets in their respective towns.

Firefighters and librarians, mothers and fathers, business owners and lifelong volunteers were all feted, and deservedly so. They help make all our little communities work. Without them, each would be less prosperous and personable.

As our reporter Jade McDowell noticed, compassion was the thread that went through this week's festivities in Hermiston. If you

want to make a mark in your community and engender admiration and appreciation, being compassionate to as many people as possible is the best way to do it.

And it's heartening to know compassion is something everyone is capable of, no matter how much money or time or smarts or strength they have. It's about being conscious and sympathetic to the problems of others, and desiring to alleviate it.

You distinguished citizens provide a great example.

A tip of a hat to the death of the House Bill 621, a disastrous provision that would have sold 3.3 million acres of public land in the American West.

The outcry against it was fierce, and it came from all sides.

Conservationists, hunters and anglers, hikers and ATVerers were up in arms over the bill sponsored by Sen. Jason Chaffetz, R-Utah.

The pushback was so strong and so one-sided that Chaffetz decided to quickly withdraw the bill.

"I'm a proud gun owner, hunter and love our public lands," he said when doing so. "The bill would have disposed of small parcels of lands President Clinton identified as serving no public purpose but groups I support and care about

fear it sends the wrong message. The bill was originally introduced several years ago. I look forward to working with you. I hear you and HR 621 dies tomorrow."

It's a good reminder that the American people can pull the strings of power when they show up and speak up. Thousands of people did just that in capitols from Utah to Montana to Nevada. And calling your legislator works, too — Chaffetz said he heard from numerous organizations and many more constituents and Americans from all corners of the country.

The West is better off because of 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

Clean Fuels Program will affect transportation deal

The (Albany) Democrat-Herald

Will Oregon's Clean Fuels Program throw a wrench yet again into the Legislature's ability to approve a transportation package?

That's how it played out during the 2015 session, when attempts to approve a transportation deal to pay for badly needed improvements to the state's roads and bridges foundered on Republican objections regarding the fuels program.

The program itself is a well-meaning attempt to reduce the carbon intensity of Oregon's transportation fuels by 10 percent over

the next decade. It's not clear whether the program will do much to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, but it's been estimated that it will increase the price of fuel: Previous estimates say it could cost consumers anywhere from 4 cents to \$1 a gallon, although Gov. Kate Brown said Thursday that, thus far, the program has added less than a penny (0.25 cents) to the cost of a gallon of fuel in Oregon. (Remember that the Oregon Environmental Commission has voted to delay enforcement of the mandates until 2018 to allow time to develop cost-containment strategies and to work on other tweaks to the program.)

Democrats went ahead and renewed the fuel program during the 2015 session, despite warnings from Republicans that they would be unable to support any later transportation package that relied on an increase in the gas tax. Republicans said they didn't want to saddle their constituents with what amounted to two separate price increases at the pump. GOP legislators agreed true to that promise, and since the increase in the gas tax required at least some Republican support, the transportation package died.

The 2017 session is scheduled to begin in earnest next week, and the transportation package is at or near the top on just about everyone's "to do"

list. And, in fact, a joint committee of legislators has been traveling the state to gather information for the package, including ways to pay for it. But if the package requires tax increases, it still will require some votes from Republicans.

And it became clear on Thursday, during a legislative preview session sponsored by The Associated Press, that Republican leaders still consider the Clean Fuels Program to be an obstacle to a transportation package.

In fact, "obstacle" was the exact word used by Ted Ferrioli, the GOP's minority leader in the Senate.

What was not clear on Thursday — and likely

will not be clear until later in the session — was whether Democrats are willing to consider changes to the fuels program. Sen. Ginny Burdick, the Democratic Senate leader, urged flexibility from both sides but noted that she was gratified that the focus was on finding the best ways to reach the state's overall goal of carbon reduction and not on a debate over whether the state should be reducing emissions in the first place.

Gov. Brown said Thursday that she was open to options, but has said in the past that she's not in favor of wholesale changes to the program — and the fact that she was ready with that new estimate of increased fuel costs suggests that she still feels that way.

But she, and other Democrats, might need to set those feelings aside and prepare to do some bargaining. The logjam over the transportation package was likely the signature failure of the 2015 session. In fact, you might recall, Brown vowed early in the session that she wouldn't let legislators leave Salem until that particular deal was done. Then they left, with no deal in hand.

This session will be considerably more difficult than its 2015 counterpart, especially with a \$1.8 billion budget shortfall looming. Still, the Legislature can't afford to leave Salem this year without a finished transportation deal.

Prepare to do some bargaining.

OTHER VIEWS



The extremist in our midst

Whenever an extremist in the Muslim world does something crazy, people demand that moderate Muslims step forward to condemn the extremism. So let's take our own advice: We Americans should now condemn our own extremist.

In that spirit, I hereby apologize to Muslims. The mindlessness and heartlessness of the travel ban should humiliate us, not you. Understand this: President Donald Trump is not America!

I apologize to Nadia Murad, the brave young Yazidi woman from Iraq who was made a sex slave — but since escaping, has campaigned around the world against ISIS and sexual slavery. She has been nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize yet is now barred from the United States.

I apologize to Edna Adan, a heroic Somali woman who has battled for decades for women's health and led the fight against female genital mutilation. Edna speaks at U.S. universities, champions girls' education and defies extremists — and she's one of those inspiring me to do the same.

I don't want to take Trump-as-an-extremist too far: He's not beheading anyone, and the security challenge is real. Nobody has a problem with improving safety, and Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama both oversaw improvements in vetting. Yet Trump tackled the issue in a way that bolsters the ISIS narrative and thus makes us less safe.

In effect, Trump took a real problem, inflated it with hysteria, handled it with incompetence and created an unjust policy that targets seven mostly impoverished Muslim countries that haven't produced a single person involved in a lethal terrorist attack in America since before 9/11. Islamophobia swirls through the order, and Rudy Giuliani has helpfully explained that Trump asked him to devise a way to create a Muslim ban and "do it legally."

There's a certain symmetry here. I've sat down in mosques in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Yemen and heard jihadis justify intolerance. Those men (always men!) "otherize" infidels as fundamentally different, as threats who must be confronted; Trump "otherizes" Muslims in a similar way.

Trump's national security adviser, Mike Flynn, has referred to Islam as a "cancer" and has shared a video asserting that Islam "wants 80 percent of humanity enslaved or exterminated." That's the mirror image of the bigotry I hear from jihadis who tell me that Jews were behind the 9/11 attacks.

The real chasm is not between Muslims and others, but between the moderates and the extremists of whatever religion.

A Reuters poll found that many Americans approve of Trump's travel ban, but that's not surprising. The same was true of barring Jewish refugees in the 1930s, and of interning



NICHOLAS KRISTOF
Comment

Japanese-Americans in 1942. When we're fearful, we're vulnerable to politicians who play on our fears and scapegoat immigrants; in the fullness of time, we come to regret our xenophobic behavior and to appreciate the immigrants.

So I apologize to Muslims. I have seen the worst of Islam, but also the best.

The newly chosen Rhodes scholars include a Somali refugee, Ahmed Ahmed, who was born in a Kenya refugee camp and was admitted to the U.S. as a 1-year-old. Raised by a struggling single mom, sometimes showing up at high school at 5:30 a.m. to study, he attended Cornell and won the university's outstanding student award. Such people don't threaten us, but enrich us.

If Somalis can stand up to extremists, then we can, too.

If we need an inspiring example of how moderates can successfully challenge extremists, consider an extraordinary Somali gynecologist, Dr. Hawa Abdi, who ran a displaced persons camp in Somalia, including a 400-bed hospital

(and a jail for men who beat their wives). Islamic militants, enraged that a woman was running such an important enterprise, ordered her to hand it over. When she refused, 750 armed militants from the Party of Islam attacked the camp and ordered Abdi to run it under their direction. She refused.

Yet Abdi's camp, serving 90,000 people, was just about the only thing working properly in Somalia, and Somalis at home and around the world united to denounce the militants and speak up for her. The pressure on the gunmen grew. Finally, they slunk off.

If Somalis can stand up to extremists, we can, too.

Indeed, that is happening. When Japanese-Americans were rounded up, other Americans were silent. Today, it is heartwarming to see Americans of all creeds standing up against similar bigotry. In Victoria, Texas, after a mysterious fire destroyed the only mosque just hours after Trump announced his travel ban, local Jewish leaders gave Muslims a key to their synagogue. Four churches also offered their space for as long as needed, and in just a few days, people of all faiths contributed \$1 million to build a new mosque.

At an airport protest, one much-shared photo showed a Jewish man and a Muslim man protesting side by side, each with a child on his shoulders.

My dream is of the day when Jews protest Islamophobia, Muslims denounce the persecution of Christians and Christians stand against anti-Semitism. That's why I apologize to Muslims, and it's why ALL of us, not just Muslims, should stand up to condemn extremism in our midst.

Nicholas Kristof grew up on a sheep and cherry farm in Yamhill. Kristof, a columnist for The New York Times since 2001, twice won the Pulitzer Prize.

YOUR VIEWS

Trump's immigration policy void of moral leadership

President Trump's immigration travel ban violates the spirit and principles of our Constitution on at least two fronts: It discriminates against people of color (racial discrimination) and it discriminates against Muslims (religious discrimination). Many would-be travelers are already green card holders with certain rights.

Does anyone really think any white Anglo-Saxon Protestants will be applying for travel from any of the seven countries the ban applies to? No, and this clearly makes the ban both racial and religious discrimination.

All but one of the Twin Towers attackers on September 11, 2001, in New York City were from Saudi Arabia. So why is Saudi Arabia not included in Trump's ban? The reason is the Trump Organization has many current business deals and interests in Saudi Arabia. If the ban applied to Saudi Arabians, it might

upset their political and business leaders, and they could retaliate with leverage of their own against the Trump Organization and this could threaten The Donald's business profits. And that is the last thing Trump wants.

So this is what we get when the country elects a television showman and celebrity to our presidency. Trump is also a con man, but a not-so-slick con man who got caught by the courts at least twice.

Trump University had to settle with students who sued him for fraud, and one of his exclusive golf courses in Florida had to recently reimburse former members millions of dollars for some bad deal or another that went sour.

The President of the United States is supposed to provide moral leadership for the entire nation and country, but where is the moral leadership of the president in these situations?

Bob Shippentower
Pendleton

LETTERS POLICY

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