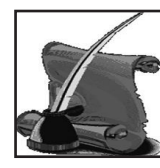


Letters & Opinions

Amendment 1 - "Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press ... or the right of the people to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

The content in the letters and opinions is not necessarily the opinion of The Voice of South Marion



Opinions

This Is America Today



Daniel L. Gardner

President Trump ended the partial government shutdown last Friday until February 15. Hopefully, he and Congress can make a deal before February 15 to strengthen border security and keep the government open.

Earlier that morning, twenty-nine heavily armed federal agents in nineteen vehicles with flashing lights, including two armored vehicles, arrested a pajama-clad and shoeless

Roger Stone and raided his home before dawn. Stone has been charged with lying to Congress. Mueller's team knows Stone's passport has expired and he is no flight risk. Nevertheless, when Stone answered the front door, he faced the barrel of an assault weapon and was brought outside and handcuffed while CNN covered the raid with their cameras. Later that day, Stone appeared in court and was released on his own recognizance.

On Friday, January 11, New York Times' headline read, "F.B.I. Opened Inquiry Into Whether Trump Was Secretly Working on Behalf of Russia." Unnamed sources cited in the story claimed, "Agents also sought to determine whether Mr. Trump was knowingly working for Russia..."

What is it with Friday news?

Late Thursday night, January 17, just in time for Friday news, BuzzFeed posted this: "President Trump Directed His Attorney Michael Cohen To Lie To Congress About The Moscow Tower Project." America's leftwing Trump-haters went apoplectic claiming "the smoking gun" and "final nail in the coffin." Later that day Mueller's team released a rare public statement rebutting BuzzFeed's claim: "BuzzFeed's description of specific statements to the Special Counsel's Office, and characterization of documents and testimony obtained by this office, regarding Michael Cohen's Congressional testimony are not accurate."

If that were not enough fake news for a

Friday, a group of high school boys from Kentucky got caught up in a national scandal, i.e. fake news. Covington Catholic high school sponsored a field trip to the March for Life in Washington. Ordinarily, Catholic teens attending the national March for Life would not be news. But, these are not ordinary times. America's left continuously looks for any semblance of "news" for Trump-haters. The teenaged boys represented nearly everything the left hates: white, male, Christian, Catholic, pro-life, and wearing MAGA hats. Talk about making yourself a target and inviting vile hatred and expletive-filled rhetoric that has become mainstream and unremarkable for lefties!

The boys were waiting for their school bus

in the same area where Black Hebrew Israelites were verbally assaulting Native Americans with such rhetoric as "You ain't no child of God. You are the Indian. You are a blue-eyed demon. That's the last Mohican." The attackers were using a bullhorn, thus attracting a lot of attention, especially from curious teens on a high school field trip.

That's when the attackers turned their attention to the boys, shouting, "Bring your cracker ass up here. Dirty ass crackers, your day coming. We can give a hell about your police. No one's playing with these dusty-ass crackers." And, "Don't get too close or your ass gonna get punished ... You crackers are some slithery ass bastards. You better keep your distance."

One of the Native Americans stepped between the boys and the Black Hebrew Israelites to try to keep the peace. Selected video of one of the boys facing the Native American went viral.

For the rest of the day, without knowing what actually happened, the left brutally, bitterly, and hatefully launched an unrestrained attack on the boys in the national media and social media.

This is America today.

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Opinions

Free, Black and Twenty-one



By Marilyn M. Singleton, MD, JD

I ran into a 20-something fellow wearing a T-shirt that said "I love being black." I had a wave of fond nostalgia remembering how my mother began our outings with "I'm free, black, and 21 - let's do it!"

What happened to that great attitude? We have allowed it to be hijacked by the likes of race baiters and charlatans. It remains an embarrassment that Al Sharpton was able to parlay a giant provable lie into hosting a TV show. It seems the media's flavor of the day is anyone who is black, female or new to this country. Worse yet, white males are painted as evil for the sake of political gain with no qualms about the negative effect on social and

race relations. (Beware: the white male-hating circle will ultimately engulf strong black men who support their families.)

White privilege is so yesterday. I'd like to put my ten cents in for those of us whose families have been here for some 400 years and earned our black privilege. It is a singular privilege to be associated with the strength and ingenuity that runs through the blood of our freedom-seeking black Americans.

Take the incredible courage and desire for freedom of African American slaves. Henry "Box" Brown, determined to escape slavery in Virginia, devised a daring escape. With the help of a freed slave and a white shopkeeper he was stuffed into a 3 feet by 2 1/2 feet by 2 feet box labeled "Dry Goods." After some 27 hours, half of which was spent upside down, he arrived at the home of a Philadelphia abolitionist.

Then there was Harriet Jacobs of North Carolina who decided to escape. Knowing the odds were slim that she'd

make it to the North, she spent seven years with rats as roommates in a crawlspace of her grandmother's place. In 1842, she made it to New York where she became active in the abolitionist movement.

In the spring of 1862, while their white shipmates were ashore, Robert Smalls, disguised in the captain's hat and jacket, and some shipmates hijacked the steamship CSS Planter in Charleston, South Carolina. After picking up their families, the slaves sailed into the Charleston Harbor, safely past Fort Sumter. Smalls sailed to the Union blockade and hoisted the white surrender flag for the first US Navy ship they encountered.

And when black physicians were not allowed on hospital staffs, they started their own hospitals, sometimes in their own homes.

It is more important than ever to re-ignite that old can-do attitude, starting with thinking for ourselves. We cannot instantly believe puff pieces about opportunistic politicians who offer goodies

only when they want your vote. A deeper look may find a politician's "plan" is really about gaining power for power's sake, not to empower you. I'm still waiting for our most famous black politician to go to Chicago and community organize against black on black violence.

These proposals for giving people money for this or that omit the most important place where financial help will reap benefits for years: school choice. We know that the best welfare program is a job, complete with a paycheck and a heavy dose of self-respect. The Washington Post just reported that not only is the unemployment rate at an all time low, the black unemployment rate has never been closer to the white unemployment rate. A good education is the best start to erase the remaining gap.

No American wants to be enslaved by welfare or dead-end programs that perpetuate dependency. The great Booker T. Washington warned of poverty hustlers. "There is another class of colored people who make a busi-

ness of keeping the troubles, the wrongs, and the hardships of the Negro race before the public... Some of these people do not want the Negro to lose his grievances, because they do not want to lose their jobs. There is a certain class of race-problem solvers who don't want the patient to get well."

We all want the freedom to succeed in life and we have to look within ourselves. In coping with his daughter's cancer diagnosis NFL player Devon Stills found his power in "changing the story" from a 50 percent chance of failure to a 50 percent chance of success.

Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., dreamed that his children would be judged by the content of their character, not their skin color. While society continues on its journey to colorblindness, not only is blaming others and calling people racists counterproductive, it is not representative of how everyday people live and feel. Let's embrace our history of courage and self-determination, take a break from politically motivated vitriol, and

put our lives in our own hands.

Dr. Singleton is a board-certified anesthesiologist. She is President of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons (AAPS). She graduated from Stanford and earned her MD at UCSF Medical School. Dr. Singleton completed 2 years of Surgery residency at UCSF, then her Anesthesia residency at Harvard's Beth Israel Hospital. While still working in the operating room, she attended UC Berkeley Law School, focusing on constitutional law and administrative law. She interned at the National Health Law Project and practiced insurance and health law. She teaches classes in the recognition of elder abuse and constitutional law for non-lawyers.