

BLONDE AMBITION

To whom should we show our respect?

Was he a murderer, or a 'high-ranking military official' deserving of respect?

According to the long, long list of atrocities committed under his hands, the answer should be simple.

Qasem Soleimani was a murderer. A thug of gigantic proportions. A terrorist with the blood of masses on his hands, including American blood.

But apparently, we must weigh those accusations and refrain from calling him what he was.

We must also refrain from calling his death anything other than an assassination. Just ask Elizabeth Warren.

The Democratic presidential candidate called the man a murderer - at first. But apparently she opted to back-track in the face

of left-wing blow-back. Instead, she decided that she would not call the man a murderer, even if all evidence proves he was one.

But she, and so many others who share her hatred of President Trump, never hesitate to accuse, berate, and call all manner of evil the man who leads our own country.

The liberal talking heads in Washington and beyond have all made no bones about it - they seem to offer more dignified words, weigh their regard for Soleimani, and walk lightly in their definition of who and what he really was, all the while they



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offer none of the same for President Trump.

Truthfully, the action taken to take out Iran's top terrorist was a difficult one, with difficult consequences likely to come, and we all should be concerned about what may happen in the future because of it.

No one wants a full-fledged, all-out war with Iran. No one wants to lose even more heroes in the U.S. military in a war in the Middle East. But we can't draw lines in the sand and say 'don't cross this', or allow terrorists - even those affiliated with a so-called nation - to thumb their noses at us, plot against our forces

and allies, kill our people, organize attacks on our entities and embassies, and place bets on the fact that we won't do a thing about it.

Iran placed that bet, and they lost. By all accounts, they won't accept the loss quietly without retaliation. Of course they won't. And we had better resign ourselves to the fact that we are in for some turbulent times in that area of the world.

But then, we've been there before. Again and again and again.

In a perfect scenario, we would not be there at all. We would pack up our jeeps and our planes and our guys and head home, leaving them with their sand and their radical ideology and their death-

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JP DOODLES



LETTERS FROM READERS

The family of Judy Stokley would like to thank everyone for the prayers, visits, calls, and food while she was in the hospital and we thank the Good Lord for having her back. Also, a special thanks to Debra Stafford for all you are doing.

Demar, Judy, Demita, Ritchie and family.

Thank you - two words that are

supposed to convey heartfelt gratitude to others for their acts of kindness and thoughtfulness, but they are so inadequate.

To the people of Choctaw County, North to South, East to West, may "God" pour out his presence, his mercy, and his grace upon you all. You've lifted us to "God's" throne in intercession, you've been "God's" hands by meeting our physical needs, and you've been his

voice by whispering words of comfort to our broken hearts.

I praise "God" for allowing our family to grow and live in this county of loving, caring people. With all the things that are complained about, there is no place I'd rather be at this time than Choctaw County, Alabama.

Thank you for being you. Rita Grice and family

FROM THE PRESSBOX

Not old enough to fire one up?

A few weeks ago it was announced that the minimum age in which to purchase tobacco products in the United States has been raised to 21. The rationale, I guess, is that those under the age of 21 are not mature enough to realize the potentially deadly consequences of using such products. The FDA has also announced a ban on flavored vaping products.

Herein lies the problem and the recent actions show the true hypocrisy of our society.

If you are keeping score at home, you have to be 21 to purchase a handgun, 21 to drink alcohol and now 21 to purchase tobacco products. (At least legally)

It seems that the age in which one becomes an adult has been raised to 21 but like I said, it proves that our society is a society of hypocrites.

When a young man reaches his 18th birthday, he must go down to the post office or go online and register with the selective service. What this means is that if a military draft is ever enacted again you stand a decent chance to be summoned by Uncle Sam for service in the



Clint Franks
Sports Reporter

U.S. Armed Services and could be ushered to a foreign land to fight in a war.

When a young man or young woman reaches the age of 18, he or she can write a blank check payable to Uncle Sam for an amount up to and including their life in service in one of the five branches of the armed services. The average age of a soldier in Vietnam was 19 years of age.

Since the passage of the 26th amendment, citizens of this country have been able to be involved in some of the most important decisions in our nations history. The 26th amendment to the Constitution gave those 18 and older the right to vote.

If I am 18, I can voluntarily join the U.S. Military to fight and die for my country. When I reached my 18th birthday I was legally required to register with selective service and if needed could have been drafted to fight and die for my country, when I am 18, I can cast my vote that helps decide not only my local and state leadership but I can vote to help decide who is going to be the next President of the United States.

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KING'S COMMENTS

I sure wish I could've been in 'hot water'

By Bill King
Contributing columnist

There have been a few times in my life when I did or said something that caused me to find myself in hot water. That's not a place where most of us normally want to be, but Christmas week I longed to be in some hot water. No, I didn't want to be in trouble. I wanted to literally be in hot water, because we didn't have any.

We had a wonderful Christmas. We woke up to find a Christmas tree with plenty of presents and goodies underneath it, but we also discovered we had no hot water in our house. Of all the days for a water-heater to go on the blink, ours choose Christmas day. Way down in central Alabama we rarely, if ever, see a white Christmas. I grew up in the mountains of northeast Alabama where we saw a few

white Christmases. Most of those were not white with snow but heavy frost. It's simply not that cold down here and this Christmas it was unseasonably warm. I must admit though, it was colder than I thought when I tried to step into that cold shower that morning. I didn't linger long.

Christmas day is not a good time for anything to break down. No repairman or plumber wants to come out on a holiday, especially Christmas. Even if one did, I wouldn't want to pay that holiday price. I didn't even consider calling anyone for help until the day after Christmas. Even then, I discovered my regular helpers were gone on vacation. Hey, I don't blame them. We all need a break from things occasionally. Even my water-heater thought so! We decided we could tough it out and live without hot water for a few days. The stove still worked so we boiled water.

Most important of all, the coffeemaker still worked! Our daughter's house is only a few miles up the road. They had plenty of hot water and they were gone for the week. Besides that, the Sportsplex where I play racquetball has plenty of showers. Things were slightly inconvenient, but we survived.

Not so long ago, people got by without water-heaters all the time or even running-water, for that matter. I've been blessed to enjoy both all of my life, but as a boy, I did take a bar of soap to the pond occasionally, just for the fun of it. I remember listening to my parents talk about having to draw water from a well and having to heat it on a stove top or in a fireplace. They also took baths in number two washtubs...with that hot water they had heated. Some people back then waited until spring to take a bath or to be baptized. Some went to the creeks

to do either. Thank God for indoor baptisteries and water-heaters! Mama always referred to the heater as a "hot water-heater." Well, I did too until someone asked me if the water was hot, why I needed to heat it. Maybe we should call them cold water-heaters.

Few things feel better than stepping under a nice hot shower, especially on a frigid morning. Few things are more relaxing and refreshing than to soak in a tub of hot water after a hard day's work. On the other hand, no one should enjoy getting themselves into the proverbial hot water because of something we said or did. Either way, usually we step into hot water by our own choice. As we live out this new-year, may we make wise choices, say smart things, and may the only hot water we find ourselves in be the kind that helps us get clean.

The Choctaw Sun-Advocate

USPS 022-326

13440 Choctaw Avenue, Gilbertown, AL 36908
Periodical class postage paid at Gilbertown, AL 36908.

Postmaster: Send address changes to: P.O. Box 269, Gilbertown, AL 36908-0269. Phone 251-843-6397 • Fax 251-843-3233

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