

Our View

Compassion due for prodigal daughter

One of the attitudes that differentiates most Americans from the vicious murderers of the Islamic State terrorist group is compassion. IS killers consider it a weakness. We take pride in it.

Perhaps we ought to show Hoda Muthana some of that compassion.

Muthana once lived in Alabama. A few years ago, while in college, she told her parents she was going on a trip. She did not reveal her destination: Syria. There, she joined the Islamic State.

She is in a refugee camp in Syria now, having fled from an IS-controlled area. She has an 18-month-old son with her. Muthana says she made a terrible mistake.

She wants to come home.

U.S. officials say that will not be permitted. They insist she is not an American citizen, thus has no right to come to this country. Her family's lawyer says she is a citizen and is honestly repentant.

If so, she ought to be welcomed back as a prodigal daughter.

Her story has to be checked out, of course. There is the possibility that she is a committed IS recruit on a mission for the murderers.

It also is possible Muthana retains IS beliefs and is merely trying to get off a sinking ship safely.

A final concern is whether she took an active role in IS operations. If so, she may have to answer for her crimes.

Simply rejecting her out of hand answers none of those questions. What if she is exactly what she says she is — a young person who, upon discovering the error of her thinking, repented and is asking for a second chance?

And what of her little boy? Do we reject him, too?

It won't do. We give people who have committed serious crimes here second chances. Muthana — assuming she is being honest — deserves the same consideration we might give to a young woman who never left Alabama.

Letters

U.S., country of laws and borders

To the editor:

On Sunday, Jan. 6, 2019, and article was printed in The Journal on page 4A. It was entitled, "A criminal, an immigrant and a wall." I know this is an opinion page, but some of the information in the letter would be difficult to substantiate. Like the information that St. Joseph had six children from a previous relationship. The writer of that article must read a different bible than most of us.

Then again, it doesn't really have any relevance about the person of St. Joseph. He was chosen by God, to be the foster father of His Son, "Jesus Christ." A young maiden, by the name of Mary, was greeted by an Angel and asked to be Jesus's mother. Upon saying, "Yes!" Mary was conceived by the Holy Spirit, her spiritual spouse.

I'm not sure how this relates to the wall at the southern border, between the United States and Mexico, but the story continues.

King Herod heard that a new "king" was born, so he immediately set out to kill all the newly born, boy babies. While still living in Bethlehem, where Jesus was born, an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and advised him to flee to Egypt for safety. In the year 4 A.D., Kind Herod died. Joseph then took Jesus and Mary back to Nazareth, their native land, in Israel, to live out their lives.

Recently, caravans of thousand upon thousands of immigrants have been entering our southern border illegally. Among them are human traffickers, drug dealers, rapists, child smugglers, terrorists and freeloaders. It has created a "crisis" at the border.

Whereas, Jesus, Mary and Joseph were "not" traveling to a foreign land as criminals. An angel, sent by God, would "not" have advised Joseph to commit an illegal act.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph were not human traffickers or drug dealers.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph were not rapists.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph were not child smugglers.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph were not terrorists.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph were not freeloaders.

You can be sure, Joseph worked as a carpenter and supported his family during their stay in Egypt.

The United States is a country of laws and borders. Just as "our" ancestors came to seek a new-life as immigrants, they had to follow the ruled to become legal citizens of this country. We applaud them!

If the immigrants come through the proper "Ports of Entry," and they follow the laws of our country, they will earn their citizenship! But if they don't, there will be consequences! They "shall not" enter the United States and become citizens.

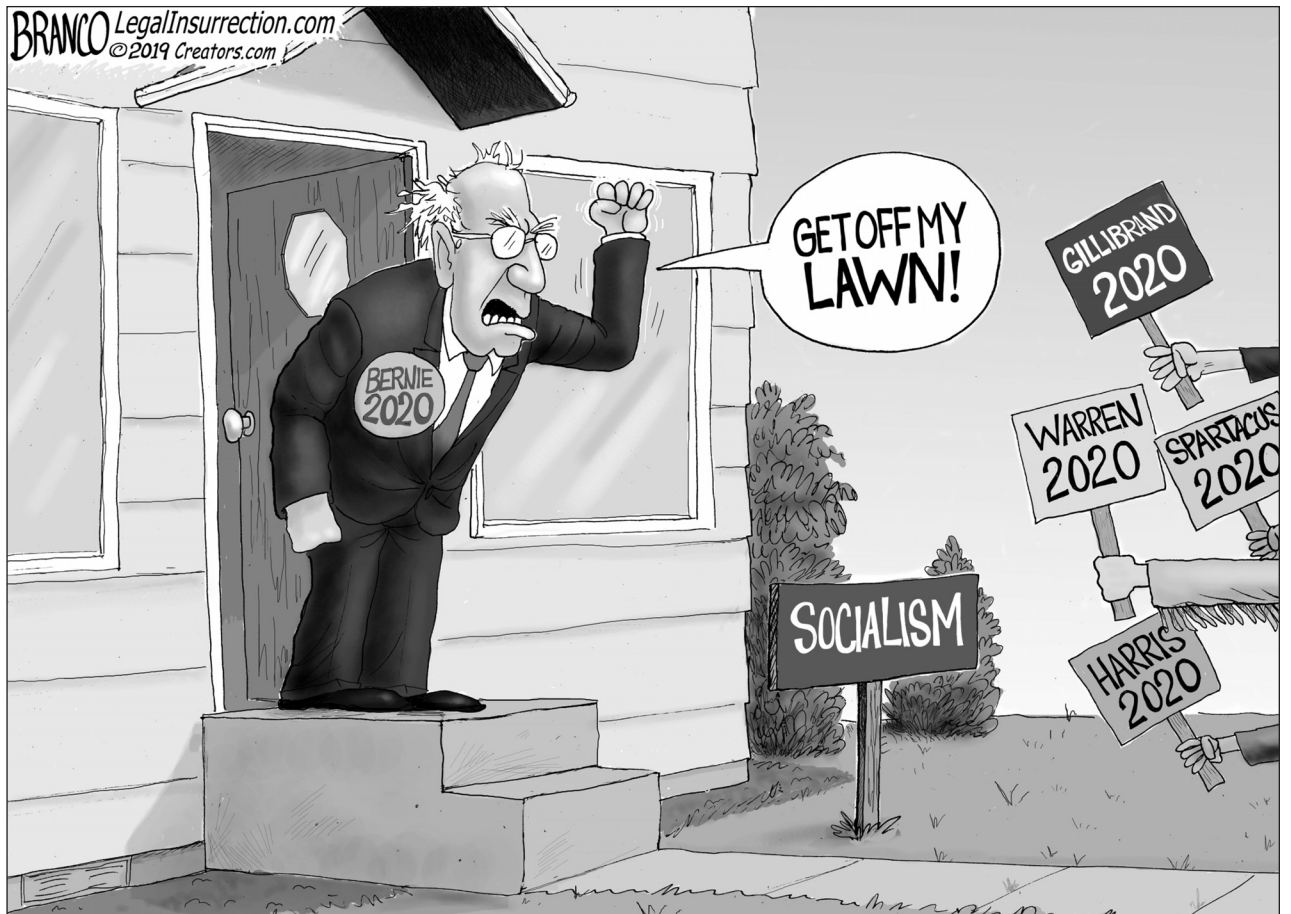
The immigration system has been insufficiently handled for decades. It is in desperate need of revision. We should be taking the advice of border security agents, who deal with the "crisis" every day.

Consider the billions of dollars we have been spending to house the illegal immigrants in sanctuary cities, for food, clothing, medical care, education, etc. Some have even voted illegally! There is no price you can put on the loss on human lives, killed by illegal aliens, whether it be shooting or dying from opioids.

We all wish to someday enter through "The Pearly Gates" in the Kingdom of Heaven. So if there are gates in Heaven, there must also be a "Wall!" . . . Translation . . . God's 10 Commandments! If we don't follow the laws of God, there will be consequences! And we, "shall not" enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

God is a "Just and Loving God!" We citizens must support our United States to be a "Just and Loving Country!"

Jan Platz
New Ulm



Three lessons from the Jussie Smollett hoax

By Ben Shapiro

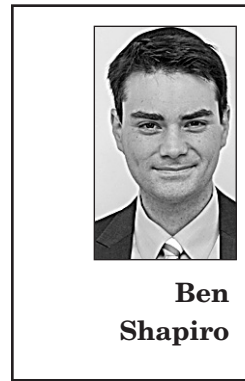
So, Jussie Smollett was lying. The "Empire" actor claimed that when he was walking home at 2 a.m. in Chicago, in the midst of the polar vortex, he was accosted by two assailants, both of whom shouted anti-gay and anti-black slurs at him. They then attempted to throw a noose around his neck and pour what he thought was bleach on him while shouting, "This is MAGA country!" he says.

None of this is true. Police now believe that Smollett paid two of his friends to stage the entire attack.

Why, exactly, would Smollett do it? He is a successful actor on a hit television show. He's been continuously working in Hollywood for years, with roles in the 2017 films "Marshall" and "Alien: Covenant." He's not exactly a textbook victim.

The answer to this question makes for some uncomfortable lessons.

First, alleged victims sometimes have an incentive to lie. For several years, each time an alleged victim tells an unverified and unverifiable story, we are told that we must believe that victim's story. Why? Because why would the victim lie? But this is often untrue. Smollett had an in-



Ben Shapiro

centive to lie: unending media attention, fawning sycophancy from politicians and the potential for even greater Hollywood stardom. If Smollett had gotten away with his hoax, he'd be the

face of gay, black suffering in the United States. Few had heard of Smollett before this story. Suddenly, he found himself on "Good Morning America," telling the world about his own bravery. That's a lucrative career path.

Second, hoaxers can read the tea leaves. There's a reason that the most prominent racial and sexual hoaxes have generally flattered the political sensibilities of the political left. Right-wing hoaxes might catch the attention of right-wing sources, but left-wing sources are far more powerful and plentiful. Imagine if a MAGA-hatted young Republican had accused two young black men of assaulting him while shouting, "F--- Trump!"

That story might get play on talk radio and Fox News, but it wouldn't earn one iota of attention from celebrity culture or the mainstream media.

Third, social media makes hoaxes infinitely easier. There are large-scale incentives for jumping on every story before the facts are clear, which is why both Sens. Cory Booker, D-N.J., and Kamala Harris, D-Calif., both running for president, tweeted their support for Smollett ... and then had to backtrack radically, suggesting as the hoax emerged that they had to wait for more facts. Being the first to rip America bears political fruit; waiting for the whole story often earns public castigation for insufficient sensitivity.

All of this means that the hoaxes won't stop anytime soon. The incentives simply aren't aligned for hoaxes to end. Media members are too eager to buy into stories that support their preferred narratives; social media is too eager to engage in pile-ons of epic proportions; hoaxes are obviously eager to make a buck or win some fame. Which means that we should all wait next time we hear a story too good to be true.

But we won't. Nobody knows who the next Jussie Smollett will be. But within a few weeks, we'll surely know. ©2019 CREATORS.COM

Back to the Munich Agreement

By Cal Thomas

"There are none so blind as those who will not see."

One might think that after denying the evidence of Adolf Hitler's rise and objectives that resulted in World War II, Europeans might be more attuned to modern threats.

Last week on a visit to Munich (oh, the irony), Vice President Mike Pence criticized Europe's continued support of the Iran nuclear deal from which President Trump has withdrawn. According to BBC.com, under the deal, which was never ratified by the Senate, "Iran agreed to limit its sensitive nuclear activities and allow in international inspectors in return for the lifting of crippling economic sanctions."

And why didn't the Senate ratify the Iran deal? Because, writes National Review, it was "...deliberately negotiated by the Obama administration in a way that enabled it to evade the U.S. Constitution's requirement that treaties be ratified by the Senate."

Pence said, "The time has come for our European partners to withdraw from the Iran nuclear deal." He called Iran a "murderous regime" and "the leading state sponsor of terrorism in the world."

Speaking at the same gathering, German Chancellor Angela Merkel sounded as if she was channeling the late British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain

when she acknowledged Iran's military buildup and the threat it poses to Europe and the world. In spite of those known facts, Merkel, like Chamberlain, remains in denial.

Merkel said, "I see the ballistic missile programs, I see Iran in Yemen and above all I see Iran in Syria. The only question that stands between us on this issue is, do we help our common cause, our common aim of containing the damaging or difficult development of Iran, by withdrawing from the one remaining agreement? Or do we help it more by keeping the small anchor we have in order maybe to exert pressure in other areas?"

This takes wishful thinking to an entirely new level. Better to help the younger Iranians who hate the regime to topple it as the U.S. is doing in Venezuela. How can Merkel acknowledge that Iran represents and in the next breath diminish it? Not surprisingly those assembled, many of whom believe as Merkel does, gave her remarks thunderous applause.

The flaw in this thinking — and in the Munich Agreement, the 1938 settlement reached by Germany, Great Britain, France and Italy that permitted German annexation of the Sudetenland, which led to World War II — is that Westerners too often impose our morality on those who are evil. Evil should not and cannot be accommodated, or "contained." Evil

must be crushed and eliminated. Imagine if the policy of the United States and Britain had been to contain Hitler and his Nazi regime instead of defeating it. For decades, containment of the Soviet Union was the policy of the United States (authored by the U.S. diplomat George F. Kennan) until Ronald Reagan had a better idea. His goal was to eliminate "the evil empire" of Soviet communism.

Students of Scripture will recall God's admonitions to the Israelites: "You must purge the evil from among you." Deuteronomy 13:5 is one of many such commands in both Testaments.

Purging evil is not easy and requires a choice. It may be more difficult at the start, but if delayed it becomes costlier in lives and the destruction of property on the back end.

In her speech, Merkel defended and promoted the importance of a multilateral approach to global affairs. Under the right circumstances and with the right policies, multilateralism can work, but not when proponents of a multilateral approach to serious problems choose to play down the threat before them.

World War II should have taught Merkel and the rest of Europe a lesson about denial. One hopes it won't take another disaster with many more deaths caused by Iranian nuclear weapons to show those who survive how mistaken they were.

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Town Talk

Gas-powered appliance replacement

From the City of New Ulm Building Safety Department

Every year the City of New Ulm Building Safety Department receives dozens of calls from homeowners or area contractors wondering about what is needed by the City if you are planning on replacing a gas-powered appliance in New Ulm. The City's Building Safety Department's role with gas-powered appliances is to protect the safety and health of the owner by ensuring that all connections are made correctly and not leaking as well as making sure that CO (Carbon Monoxide) is being vented properly and not

going to build up in the structure.

Typical gas-powered household appliances include, but are not limited to: furnaces, water heaters, boilers, stoves, garage heaters and various other appliances. When these appliances are proposed to be installed and gas powered, the City requires a permit to be taken out, which costs \$30, according to the current fee schedule. The fee for the permit includes the inspection, therefore there is not a separate cost for the inspection alone. Installation of a gas-powered appliance can be installed by the homeowner or a contractor. Advanced notice of the installation of the gas-powered appliances is appreciated

but not required. A permit application, inspection and fee is NOT required for an electrically powered appliance.

The permit application can be picked up from City Hall at 100 North Broadway, 2nd Floor Building Safety Department or you can print it off online from the City of New Ulm website, under Community, Applications, Licenses and Permits, then "Mechanical Permit". Please feel free to call the Building Safety Department at (507) 359-8245 if you have any questions or are getting your gas-powered appliance replaced.