

OPINION

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Stand with the poor and marginalized ■ Guest Columnist Emily Weathers Kennedy



You can't be anywhere near a newspaper, online or in print, or listen to news reports on television or radio and not hear about the new policy by the Trump Administration to deter immigration by ripping babies away from their parents. It's called a deterrent, and the Republicans are banking on Americans' loathing of Latin Americans' crossing the border over and above their own humanity.

Attorney General Jeff Sessions, who issued the policy on April 6, fully admits this government now will interpret border crossing as breaking the law so that they can force people to hand over their children (who cannot be jailed with their parents). According to the Washington Post quoting nonpartisan fact finders: "He [Trump] signed off on prosecuting all migrants who cross the border, including those with young children. Once they're locked up, the administration declares the kids to be unaccompanied minors and turns them over to a division of the Department of Health and Human Services to care for. The White House has also begun interpreting a 1997 legal agreement and a 2008 bipartisan human trafficking bill as requiring the separation of families. Neither George W. Bush or Barack Obama took this posture."

Since the backlash started,

Trump and his surrogates have been trying to spin this whole fiasco to be the fault of Democrats, who, they proclaim won't come to the table to bargain on immigration. The Democrats aren't buying it, answering that tearing babies from their parents amounts to extortion to build a wall. Meanwhile 12,000+ infants and children have been traumatized since April as they have been stripped from their loved ones and placed in detention centers like the reconfigured Walmart, tent cities, and interior pens or cages. And, any relative who even tries to rescue the

children are under threat of their own criminalization and deportation.

The White House invoked the Bible as justification for its actions. Unsurprisingly, clergy from multiple denominations have decried this cruelty to our most vulnerable and most innocent.

Father James Martin, an American Jesuit priest and editor-at-large of America, didn't mince words in a recent interview with Andrea Mitchell. He said that this policy is evil and doesn't in any way follow Jesus' teachings.

He said the biblical quotes used by the White House to justify the policy are essentially the same ones used to justify slavery and are antithetical to Christ's message.

Father Martin said, "It is not biblical to treat migrants and refugees like animals. It is not biblical to take children away from their parents. It is not biblical to ignore the needs of the stranger. It is not biblical to enforce unjust laws. The Bible should not be used to justify sin. It should also be clear where Jesus stands on these questions. Jesus stands where he always stands and where we should stand: with the poor and marginalized."

I am horrified at what our country is doing to these poor and marginalized people. I stand with them too.

Emily Weathers Kennedy, a Loretto native and a graduate of Vanderbilt University, is a freelance writer and photo stylist. You can read more of her work and contact her at emilyweatherskennedy.com.



Alexander and Corker: Stop separating parents and children detained at U.S. border

Published June 19, 2018 | By Tom Humphrey

Statements from U.S. Sens. Bob Corker and Lamar Alexander of Tennessee on the Trump administration policy of separating children detained at the U.S./Mexico border from their parents, as reported by the

Times Free Press:

"While the issues surrounding our immigration system are complex, we can all agree that innocent children should be protected and not used for deterrence," said Corker, chairman of the Senate Foreign

Relations Committee.

He said the administration "should use all tools available to stop needless family separation without delay, and Congress should act swiftly to address the serious challenges facing our nation's immigration system."

Alexander said in his statement, "Illegal immigration is against the law but new enforcement policies have resulted in hundreds of children being separated from their parents. The administration should end that new policy immediately while Congress works with the president on a bipartisan immigration solution that secures the border, provides a status for those already here and prevents a humanitarian crisis at the border."

Farm Bureau to Congress: Tariffs' impact on U.S. Agriculture must be considered

From the Farm Bureau

April 17, 2018

Any effort to impose tariffs on Chinese imports by the U.S. runs the risk of retaliatory measures against the nearly \$20 billion in agricultural products U.S. farmers and ranchers sent to China in 2017, the American Farm Bureau Federation recently told Congress.

"The impact on American farmers and ranchers, and associated businesses, must be considered when pursuing trade actions. U.S. agriculture has strongly supported, for decades, efforts to open the world to our agricultural and other trade products," AFBF said in statements submitted for the record to the Senate Finance Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee. The committees were discussing market access challenges in China and the effect of tariff increases on the U.S. economy and jobs, respectively.

On April 2, China responded to new U.S. steel and aluminum tariffs with tariffs on imports of 128 U.S. product lines. Of those 128, 94 are agricultural in nature; the remainder are steel and aluminum. The agricultural lines are divided into two categories – 86 products, including fresh and dried fruit, tree nuts and wine, that will be subject to an additional 15 percent tariff and eight products, including pork, that will be subject to an additional 25 percent tariff.

On April 3, the Trump administration announced it was reacting to an August 2017 investigation into Chinese intellectual property theft by considering a 25 percent tariff on imports of about 1,300 Chinese product lines valued at \$50 billion in total. The following day, China countered with a retaliation list of 106 imports from the U.S.—including soybeans, sorghum, cotton, corn, wheat, beef and other products—that will be subject to a 25 percent tariff. Thirty percent of U.S. soybeans—about \$14 billion worth per year—go to China, making soybeans the United States' top ag export to China.

"Farm Bureau believes in negotiations, not additional tariffs, to resolve trade issues. American farmers and ranchers rely heavily on export markets for their business success, especially at this time of reduced

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Happy Father's Day 2018



By Elizabeth Kennedy Blackstone
Advocate Editor

I had, I will ALWAYS have, a wonderful father, a perfect father to my mind. He left this world on May 1, a much better place for having had him in it for 91 years. He was home on the farm, there and then gone, with much of his family around him. I have wanted to write something about my hero ever since and could not quite bring myself to do it. Here I offer some "Dadisms":

UNLAX.

I think Dad invented this word – it basically means "relax". He used it often in connection with Type A personalities like his daughter's. I had been editing his columns for over 20 years when he quit writing them last year. Sometimes, as we discussed changes, I got in a bit of a swivet over his content. For example, our current President often puts me in said swivet. "Unlax, Lizzy," he would say, "I have seen worse and you will see worse. This too shall pass." His attitude was a reflection of almost a century's worth of experience. He had seen (and written about) everything, twice – presidents, wars (race and world), feast, famine, Watergate, tea parties (of all ilk), and everything in between. Sometimes we actually resurrected a past column for a current situation and barely changed a word.

TELL THE TRUTH.

Dad was pretty laid back and understanding when it came to the shortcomings of his family, his colleagues, and his civic leaders, but he really had no truck whatsoever with those who were dishonest by nature (he did not like the "L" word and would not like me to use it here). He thought any good society, any good family, any good anything was built on a foundation of facts and fair dealings and he lived by that thought – no kidding.

WATCH THE SUNSET. DANCE. MAYBE DRINK A LITTLE. LAUGH.

About 340 days a year, my parents took a break around the 6 o'clock news, to discuss their day, to maybe have something to drink, to watch the sunset if available, to sometimes listen to mariachi music, or Dean Martin, to just pause and enjoy life and each other for a half hour or so. Sometimes they would call me out of the garden to join and often they would invite others to join. It was all about the thought that life actually is worth living. Papa loved a sunset, a sad song, the Tennessee River, the occasional bourbon, the farm, Vanderbilt ballgames, a new friend, an old friend, any child, especially his grandchildren and great grandchildren, travel of all sorts, his cows, and my mamma. "Happiness is not a destination", he would say. I say he was mighty comfortable living there.

HAVE FAITH.

Papa said this often and he meant it in the traditional, church sense surely but he was also always urging me to have faith in my fellow men and women, all of them. I was a cold war baby and he would often tell me "Russian daddies love their little girls too. They just want to eat and be safe with their families, just like we do."

He returned to this idea many times over the years, in many contexts, and in his columns: "Most people sincerely believe they are doing what is good and what is right. We must find a way to get along."

DON'T BE AFRAID.

Dad thought fear was a waste of precious time and he was so right about that. As a grown man with children, he changed (successful) careers (District Attorney, judge, publisher/business owner, County Executive, columnist, farmer) several times with what looked like relative ease – no fear, or so it seemed.

He must have been scared, at least a few times, when he made business decisions or moved our family in ways that would change the lives of my mother, my brother, and me forever. He never let me see him sweat.

I asked him how he pulled this off a few times and the answer always had to do with his wife of 64 years.

"Your mother counts the money," he would say. "She is smarter than I am and will never let me go too far."

When I was "small" (0-57), he would say to me, "Watch your Daddy, if I am afraid, then you be afraid."

I saw him cry once, in a small room at Maury Regional Hospital in 1979 where they told us that mother's cancer was no longer in her body (and he must have been afraid then, right?) but *I never saw him be afraid*, not even when he died quietly in my arms – in fact in that moment, what I saw was peace. He had a "time to go now" – "quittin' time" (he liked to quote "Gone with the Wind") look. It was a sight to behold, a reaffirmation of everything he had taught me over the years and yes, a reaffirmation of faith (the church kind). Dad was not afraid and so I was not afraid for him and I hope I will be brave enough, faithful enough, a worthy enough pupil, to have learned that lesson when it comes my time to go.

LIFE IS FOR THE LIVING.

I heard this from him a million times. I think it was because he was a product of the Depression and of World War II. He had known loss, lots of it. His parents died when he was a young man. He also lost my mother's parents, who he loved dearly, early on. He was one of eight siblings and, at the time of his death, only he and my Aunt Frances had survived.

By "Life is for the living" I think he meant, don't be bogged down by it all, don't let life defeat you, don't dwell on things you can't change, and don't be a slave to the past. Life is a gift. Surround yourself with the people you love and enjoy it.

Happy Father's Day to all you great ones out there and to all those enjoying the day with you. To those missing their great dads like I am, have faith, you are never really alone on this day or any other.

Blackstone's father Sam Delk Kennedy, was an acclaimed newspaperman who published the Advocate since 1983 and several other newspapers over the years including the Columbia Daily Herald. He wrote a regular column for many years.

Should college freshmen pick their own roommates?



Tyrades! by Danny Tyree

According to the Washington Post, at some universities, nearly 50 percent of first-year students have already screened and selected a roommate before moving into a dorm.

Duke University and some other institutions of higher learning are now insisting that the freshmen instead live with a stranger drawn at random from the student body.

Some students are outraged at this loss of freedom

("But I want somebody like ME, somebody I KNOW, to head out from the dorm and accompany me to the 'Tear Down The Border' rallies!"), but the movement does have its supporters.

I am normally leery of diversity programs and social engineering, but I can understand where the schools are coming from.

Although I can't quantify the benefits or cite any blinding epiphany, I think I am better off for having been "stuck" with a succession of three African-Amer-

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