

OPINION

- Columnists
- Letters to the Editor

Corker calls for objective investigation into death of journalist

CHATTANOOGA – U.S. Senator Bob Corker (R-Tenn.), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, released the following statement in response to Saudi Arabia's claims regarding the death of Jamal Khashoggi, a Saudi journalist and columnist for The Washington Post:

"The story the Saudis have told about Jamal Khashoggi's disappearance continues to change with each passing day, so we should not assume their latest story holds water," said Corker. "They can undergo their own investigation, but the U.S. administration must make its own independent, credible determination of responsibility for Khashoggi's murder under the Global Magnitsky investigation as required by law."

In a letter to President Donald J. Trump last week, Corker and Senators Bob Menendez (D-N.J.), ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) and Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), chairman and ranking member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, triggered an investigation and Global Magnitsky sanctions determination regarding the disappearance of Khashoggi.

Text of the letter is included below:

Dear Mr. President: The Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act requires the President, upon receipt of a request from the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on



which includes "torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, prolonged detention without charges and trial, causing the disappearance of persons by the abduction and clandestine detention of those persons, and other flagrant denial of the right to life, liberty, or the security of person." Therefore, we request that you make a determination on the imposition of sanctions pursuant to the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act with respect to any foreign person responsible for such a violation related to Mr. Khashoggi. Our expectation is that in making your determination you will consider any relevant information, including with respect to the highest ranking officials in the Government of Saudi Arabia.

BACKGROUND

Under the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, the president, upon receipt of a letter from the chairman and ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, must make a determination and is authorized to impose sanctions with respect to a foreign person responsible for extrajudicial killings, torture, or other gross violations of internationally recognized human rights violations against individuals who seek to obtain, exercise, defend, or promote human rights and freedoms, including freedom of expression.

Foreign Relations, to determine whether a foreign person is responsible for an extrajudicial killing, torture, or other gross violation of internationally recognized human rights against an individual exercising freedom of expression, and report to the Committee within 120 days with a determination and a decision on the imposition of sanctions on that foreign person or persons.

The recent disappearance of Saudi journalist and Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi suggests that he could be a victim of a gross violation of internationally recognized human rights,

rating for these cuts hovers around 36% according to a rolling average polling by RealClearPolitics. Indeed, the tax cuts were targeted to large corporations and people in the top 1% of the economic bracket; it's no wonder average Americans don't appreciate such an increase in the national debt for people who don't need the money.

Party of fiscal responsibility? Think again



By Emily Weathers Kennedy

It might come as a surprise to conservatives that liberals also prefer fiscal responsibility. Not one liberal I know has ever wanted our country spent into massive debt. In fact, as much as anyone loves a tax break, most fiscal conservatives would rather decrease the national debt than get an extra hundred bucks or so just like liberals.

Lots of good people saw and heard Trump on the stump and believed he would be a change from the ordinary politician, someone who would make these awesome deals and somehow fix what ails the folks who have not seen prosperity in a while. I get it.

But, economically speaking, Trump hasn't lived up to his rhetoric.

As of October 4, 2018, the official debt of the United States government was \$21.6 trillion. The tax cuts that began in early 2018, amount to \$1.9 trillion added to the budget deficit. And, since average Americans have seen little increase in their paychecks, the approval

Now Trump is talking about a Phase Two of the tax cuts. He has been vague about what exactly the cuts will include other than to shave another percentage point off the corporate rate. Democrats call this corporate welfare.

And what about the middle class? Catherine Rampell of the Washington Post describes the effects of Trump's tariffs most clearly: "His tariffs on steel, aluminum, washing machines, solar panels, semiconductors, plastics and about 1,000 other intermediate, capital equipment and consumer goods...are taxes! Regardless of who pays them statutorily, the costs of tariffs are passed down the supply chain, with middle-class consumers ultimately footing at least part of the bill. So when Trump threatens a 25 percent import tax on autos and auto parts for dubious 'national security reasons,' that's going to raise the price of cars that American consumers purchase by thousands of dollars."

It's no wonder Harley Davidson decided to zoom out of the country and take its hogs with it.

The reality is that Trump's deals are really something else in disguise.

Remember the \$4.7 billion in farm aid to offset losses from retaliatory tariffs? You can spit and shine it, but it really amounts to a big old welfare program.

Conservatives in the Republican Party have pretty much abandoned their own fiscal responsibility mantra to hitch their wagons to Trump. It's a matter of pleasing the base and winning primaries. As long as there is no check and balance on this president, the GOP cannot be the purveyor of fiscal responsibility any longer. That responsibility now goes to the Democrats.

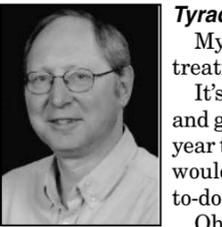
Being liberal doesn't mean throwing every penny into the welfare state. But it does mean fighting to keep people insured (which may be tough once Republicans eliminate pre-existing conditions from the ACA), stopping rampantly outrageous insurance premiums (which are going up after ACA cuts), and protecting Medicare and Medicaid (which have come under treat from the Republican congress again). It means protecting the middle class, to which most of Trump's base belongs. I scratch my head when people vote against their own self-interest, but they do.

Question any late promise to give the middle class a tax break because this is merely a smoke screen for the election.

My friends, please VOTE!!

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.

Do you have an irrational fear of Halloween?



Tyrades/By Danny Tyree

My son Gideon will not be trick-or-treating this year.

It's not because of any fear of ghosties and ghoulies, mind you. We decided last year that his advancing age meant 2017 would be the last hurrah for the door-to-door begging.

Oh, he still loves the holiday and will be reprising his fortune-teller routine

at a Halloween In The Park event; but I don't want him to be one of those teens (and post-teens) who just can't outgrow hogging the treats meant for tykes.

Here's a rule of thumb: if you're old enough to have heard Johnny Cash sing at Folsom Prison, you and your buddies are probably too old to look cute going from house to house collecting fun-size Snickers bars in a black-and-white-striped jailbird costume.

Anyway, I mentioned fear earlier because while researching goblins and such, I ran across the term "samhainophobia" – the irrational fear of Halloween.

Samhainophobia, of course, is named for Halloween's precursor Samhain, the sacred festival that marked the end of the Celtic calendar year. Can you imagine a Celtic New Year's Eve? ("Should old acquaintance be forgot and never brought to mind/ Should old acquaintance be forgot – hey, that Druid bared his behind!")

Samhainophobia is closely linked to phasmophobia (fear of ghosts), wiccaphobia (fear of witchcraft), nyctophobia (fear of darkness) and balldropophobia (fear of Ryan Seacrest crashing your Celtic New Year's Eve celebration).

At least Halloween gives us one night to watch little ghosts running around in nice clean sheets instead of politicians airing dirty laundry.

Sorry, I used to suffer from claustrophobia myself, so I'll TRY to empathize with samhainophobes and the inexplicable levels of discomfort they endure at this time of year.

I guess I had a sheltered childhood. The neighborhoods I trick-or-treated in were so lame that the creepy old hermits cleverly tried stuffing the candy bars and taffy apples with Norelco electric shavers. At least the x-ray technicians got to snooze on the job.

I realize today's weird weather patterns can lead to anxiety at this season. You know, like when the merest hint of an early snow threatens vital supply lines. ("There's a run on toilet paper! We can't t.p. any of the houses down the block. Maybe we can vandalize the neighbors' homes with milk and bread --What? Those, too???"

I don't see classic monsters being able to cause a lot of trouble nowadays. If Dracula took his son out for a simple drink of blood, social justice warriors would swoop down on them and harass them into submission. ("You're associated with October – the same month that contains COLUMBUS DAY. How can you look at yourselves in the mirror? No, that's not your pal Wolfman coming to the rescue. That's part of our organization howling at the moon because of Dwight Eisenhower winning the 1952 election.")

No, the real dangers of Halloween 2018 include situations more like unscrupulous doctors chasing skeletons down the street and yelling, "Here! Take this opioid prescription! It's good for what ails you!"

Perhaps the greatest Halloween-related fear afflicts trivia buffs who know that the first jack-o'-lanterns were actually made from turnips – and that the NEXT generation of jack-o'-lanterns might very well be made from KALE! Be afraid. Be very afraid.

"I hear the trends a-comin'/ They're rollin' 'round the bend/ And I ain't had no real food/ Since I don't know when..."

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October is Let's Talk Month!

Empowering parents to talk, teach about healthy relationships

NASHVILLE – The Tennessee Department of Health invites parents and caregivers to take part in Let's Talk Month this October. This annual campaign empowers parents to take advantage of teachable moments every day to talk with their families about healthy relationships.

"Let's Talk Month equips parents with facts, advice and tips to help them grow more comfortable in talking about challenging topics like sexual activity," said TDH Assistant Commissioner for Family Health and Wellness Morgan McDonald, MD. "Watching a TV show, experiencing the birth of a child or hearing a song with suggestive lyrics are all moments parents and their children can use to reinforce the family's values and to discuss sexuality."

Let's Talk month is an ideal time for community agencies, non-profit organizations, schools, mentor and parenting groups, religious organizations, media, health care providers, educators and civic organizations to plan events that promote healthy communication between parent and child.

"Providing an open line of communication for a child gives a parent or guardian the opportunity to foster a healthy and nurturing relationship," said Tennessee Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Director Amber Jackson.

Parents can find tips and other resources for talking with their children and helping them make healthy

choices at www.advocatesforyouth.org/parents-sex-ed-center-home?task=view and www.cdc.gov/teenpregnancy/parent-guardian-resources/index.htm.

Teen birth rates in Tennessee have drastically decreased from 53.8 births per 1,000 females aged 15 – 19 in 2008 to 26.6 in 2017. This is due to prevention education programs taking place in schools and communities across the state.

The Tennessee Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program currently funds 13 programs that provide education to youth that promotes self-respect, responsible decision-making and avoidance of sexual risk. For more information, contact the TAPPP program at 615-532-0274 or visit www.tn.gov/health/health-program-areas/fhw/mch-tapp.html.

To learn more about teen pregnancy prevention, visit <https://powertodecide.org/what-wedo/information/why-it-matters>.

The mission of the Tennessee Department of Health is to protect, promote and improve the health and prosperity of people in Tennessee. TDH has facilities in all 95 counties and provides direct services for more than one in five Tennesseans annually as well as indirect services for everyone in the state, including emergency response to health threats, licensure of health professionals, regulation of health care facilities and inspection of food service establishments.

Lawrence County

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