

Even after 25 years, there's no shortage of targets

Michael Costello/Lewiston Tribune

This is my last column for the Lewiston Tribune. I'm retiring from this position after 25 years. I've loved every day of it. Most weeks, the biggest challenge that I faced each week was deciding which of the many subjects swirling around in my head would make it into print.

And so, to indulge that particular weakness, I'm going to briefly touch on several of the topics that had me thinking this week.

The Democratic Party has embraced the position that, in the words of Hillary Clinton, "Islam has nothing whatsoever to do with terrorism." In the next breath, Democrats will assert that criticism of Islam incites terrorism. How does that make sense? Those two statements are entirely contradictory. At least one is a lie, and probably both.

How is it that Muslims cannot be held accountable for Omar Mateen's atrocity in Orlando, Fla., but all gun owners can be held to account for his crime?

Barack Hussein Obama couldn't even wait for the victims to be identified before he exploited the Orlando Islamic terrorist attack to advance one of the items on his legacy checklist. Because the whole Islamic terrorism contradicts his ideology, every terrorist attack must be caused by something else. This terrorist attack proves the need for gun control.

Last year, terrorism proved that we needed a global warming treaty. After Islamic terrorists slaughtered 130 people attending a Paris concert, Obama argued that we could show them by signing the Paris Accords.

Earlier, Secretary of State John Kerry tried to make the case that the emergence of the Islamic State was a direct result of global warming.

Democrats have been arguing that the slaughter in Orlando proves that we need to deny firearm purchases to those who are under suspicion of having ties to terrorism. As Hillary Clinton phrased it: "If the FBI is watching you for a suspected terrorist links, you shouldn't be able to just go buy a gun with no questions asked."

If Clinton insists that the subject of a criminal investigation cannot be trusted to purchase a gun, then how dare she ask us to trust her with the nuclear codes?

How old were you before you knew better than to poke fun at handicapped people? If you ever did ridicule a disabled person's handicap, it was so long ago that you probably can't remember it. You might recall a grammar school playground bully who persisted until he was 7 or 8 years old, but even bullies learn better.

Donald Trump is 70 years old and he still doesn't know better. After New York Times reporter Serge Kovalski disputed Trump's disproven claim that "thousands" of New Jersey Muslims celebrated the fall of the Twin Towers on Sept. 11, 2001, Trump took to the stage and performed an impersonation of Kovalski that included mimicking the reporter's congenital handicap.

As Trump himself might tweet, it was "disgusting," which happens to be one of the few polysyllabic words in Trump's vocabulary.

The rise of Trump is largely attributable to the meekness of establishment Republicans. For decades, liberals have derided those who believe in constitutional democracy as racists and Nazis. And they've never heard the Republican Party defend them. The establishment found the Tea Party embarrassing. The Republican establishment, as most recently personified by John McCain and Mitt Romney, preferred decorum to actually winning.

So when the bellicose Trump came along and displayed a willingness to engage the Democrats and fight in their gutter, Tea Partiers applauded.

But the man is an ignorant, bigoted, unprincipled oaf. And I encourage the establishment to dump Trump. Legally, there is no such thing as a "bound delegate." Every delegate to the Republican National Convention is free to vote his or her conscience. I plead with the Republican establishment to show some courage for the first time in living memory and nominate another candidate.

And finally, I would like to explain something that routinely caused great consternation among my liberal readers. I frequently refer to the president by his full name, Barack Hussein Obama. For that, I've been called racist and worse. But the reason I used that appellation dates back to 2007. Shortly after announcing his candidacy for president, Obama was asked during a television interview how his presidency would differ from George W. Bush's. He answered that his administration would be as different as his name was from Bush's. He then pronounced his name as "Barrack Hussein Obama," with an emphasis on Hussein.

I was just following the man's lead.

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