

Weary of Unqualified People Making Our Laws

Editor:

□ California has started another one in a string of crazy ideas. Being born and raised in Oakland, I remember what actually happened over time.

□ Originally there were reusable bags, generally made of cloth and such material that could be washed. But they were bacteria breeders of the first order. Each fall and winter we had a lot of diseases and quite a few people died as a result.

□ Few people used a car to shop then so you walked to the store and pulled a two-wheel cart. Safeway began giving you paper bags to pack your groceries and it spread like wildfire and these bags were free.

□ Finally, someone came up with the good idea of these ultra-strong, cheap and clean disposable plastic bags. They were much cleaner and healthier than paper bags. Newspaper articles told us that studies showed a reduction in bacterial illness due to the use of plastic bags. And they seldom tore and dumped your groceries on the ground.

□ Everything these days is made from plastic. Recycling of plastic has become ubiquitous. Plastic grocery bags require almost no energy to recycle along with everything from water bottles to car fenders. It is far cheaper to recycle plastic bags than paper products, which absorb all sorts of bacteria from fluids.

□ With everything becoming more and more expensive, the use of automobiles is going to go down, especially among older residents of Alameda County. Does it seem intelligent to make it more difficult and unhealthy to obtain and carry groceries?

□ I am growing weary of unqualified people who are making far-reaching decisions for the general populace.

—Thomas H. Kunich

San Leandro

Urges Letter-Writing Effort for Assault-Weapons' Ban

Editor:

□□ I am inviting the First United Methodist congregation to write letters on the upcoming Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday, urging our elected officials (local, state, and federal) to support legislation that would restrict or ban the access and use of assault weapons.

□ I invite others to join us in this effort – either from your home, or with others who will be writing from the church that day. I have heard elected officials stress that petitions usually don't carry as much weight or influence as a few personal letters. Therefore, I think this effort could yield some real results.

□ Given that Dr. King lost his life to an assassin's bullet, and that he was a strong advocate of non-violence and a vision of a "Beloved Community" among us all, I believe it's very fitting to honor his memory by taking such action.

□ In memory of all those who've lost their lives due to gun violence, each of us can speak up and say, "No more."

□ I agree wholeheartedly that the issue of mental health care also runs through the recent "mass shootings." That issue surely must also be addressed. Nevertheless, I can't help but feel that without access to guns and assault weapons, these tragic attacks (as well as on-going urban violence) might not have happened.

□ I also firmly believe that, in spite of the stunning contention of the NRA to the contrary, “the way to stop a bad man with a gun” is to take away his gun, and to arm ourselves and our children with strong conflict resolution skills that de-escalate, rather than perpetuate, violence. Other voices besides the powerful gun lobby’s must also be heard and brought to the table.

—**Rev. Myrna Bernadel-Huey**, *Pastor*

First United Methodist Church

San Leandro

Is the NRA on the Right Side of the Gun Issue?

Editor:

□ When I walk past school yards and see all those children running and squealing as they enjoy their recess, I think about Newtown and those beautiful children at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

□ Are we to tell these kids that we the adults can't figure out a way to keep them from being slaughtered by some mad dog with a Rambo complex?

□ Folks like Earl Cava (*"Calls Making Laws to Control Guns 'A Waste of Energy',"* Letters, Jan. 10) who say there is nothing that can be done and the loonies who are locked and loaded for the impending invasion by the Black UN helicopters, the black Panthers, or whatever, cannot be allowed to prevail.

□ Walk past any school yard during recess and look at those little folks, bursting with energy and life, then go home and tell yourself that the NRA is on the right side of this issue.

—Vernon S. Burton

San Leandro