

OPINION

OUR VIEW

Heal and move forward

A Florida jury’s decision to find George Zimmerman not guilty of murder and manslaughter has brought race relations to the forefront of America.

Living in a community that is predominately of one color may make it difficult for us to completely understand the frustration and anger the verdict has caused. But the outrage by the verdict isn’t limited to just one race.

The verdict has made it clear that it is time to revisit efforts aimed at ensuring that all people are treated equally in all circumstances, perhaps a naive, yet honorable goal.

Some have argued that Zimmerman stalked teenager Trayvon Martin, while others believe Zimmerman was protecting himself by standing his ground.

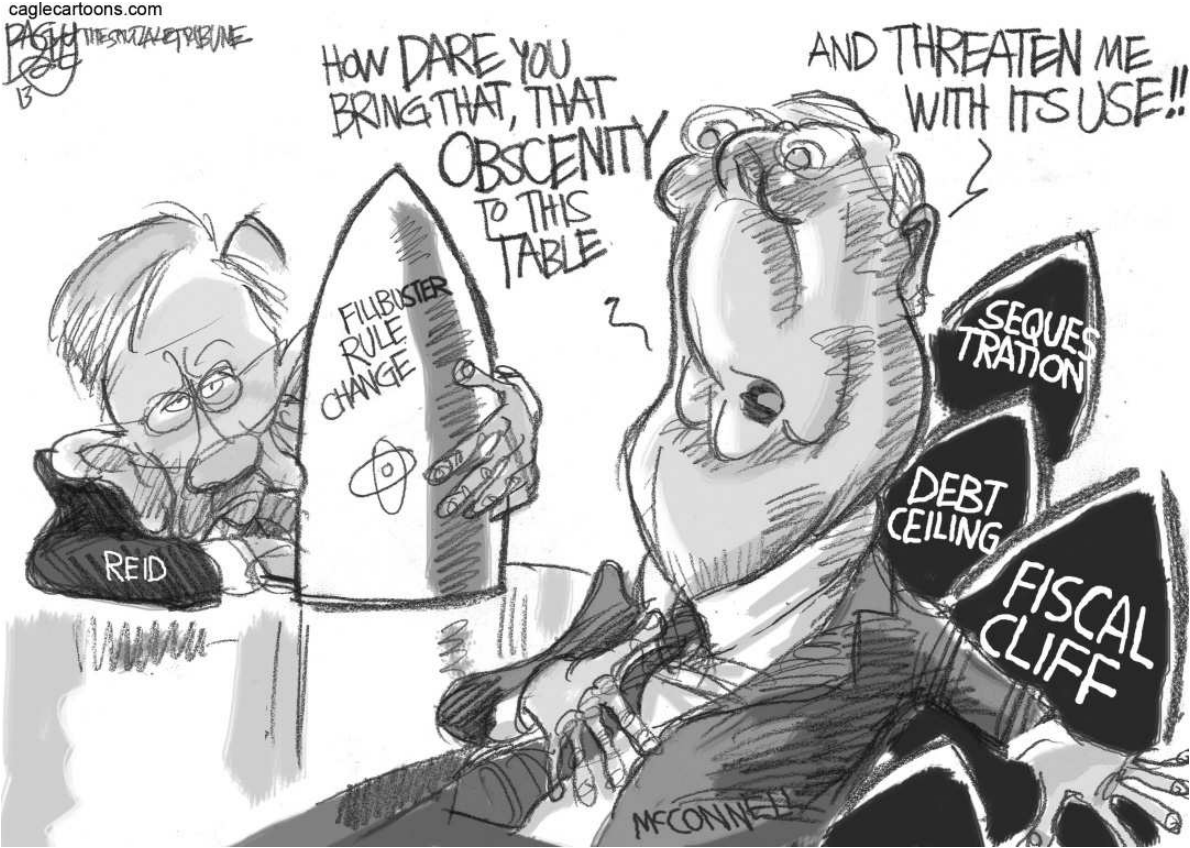
We lean toward that idea that Zimmerman was told by police to stop following Martin, and disobeyed an officer when he continued to follow Martin. That’s when Zimmerman should have returned to his home and called police again to ask them to followup on his concerns. That should have

been the end of Zimmerman’s involvement. But, it was not and Martin, whether he was innocently walking or up to no good, should have been the concern of the police at that point. Martin may be alive today if that’s how the story would have played out.

Clearly, under law, everyone has the right to their views on this and any other heated and controversial issue. And everyone has the right to express those views. But that’s where their rights end. No one should be using their outrage over the verdict as an excuse for violence and to break the law.

A jury — right or wrong — has decided the issue. And we must stand by that decision regardless of our own views because the system we, as Americans, have put in place has done it’s job.

That’s not to say that people shouldn’t use this incident to as a lesson and tool to renew civil discussions about racism in our nation. This great nation continues to be a melting pot of people of all kinds as it should be. It’s time to heal from this tragedy and use it to move forward in a positive way.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Coaches need to be fair

To the editor,
It has been brought to my attention by many parents of International Falls of the favoritism with sports for kids which is something that I’m well aware of.

When you see it, experience it, and live it, it’s not an opinion, it’s the truth.

Each and every parent pays the same for their kids to play. Not to sit on the bench. So when the parents speak up and ask why, well now they’re labeled as troublemakers. So some of these fine upstanding citizens who are coaches and refs will target these kids and will ride them until they make them cry and quit.

These people are supposed to be adults. As one coach told me, he said, “Darren, its all politics.” No, it’s not politics. Politics is government. This is just plain and simple favoritism.

Some of these coaches are nothing more than power trippers. They ruin the desire for these kids to play sports and the favoritism for sports for kids is part of the reason why parents pull their kids out

of the school system and enroll them in Littlefork or Indus.

This favoritism has to stop. This isn’t the pros, it’s not the Olympics, it’s not college; it’s just kids wanting to have fun, play the game with their friends. And this is why parents taxpayers pay for school board members.

Put a stop to this big problem. These are kids, just kids. And I expect my kid will be targeted because of this letter, which has already happened because I speak up and ask why, because I voice my opinion and tell the truth.

But, I’m not going anywhere and neither is my kid. Some of these coaches are looking for self recognition. It’s not about the kids, it’s all about them. Yes, I’ll admit there are some good ones out there but far and few. As I was told by one of our representatives in St. Paul on July 15, 2013, that if a person is employed or being paid by the taxpayers, it is their job and duty to do the public business and to serve the people fair and with justice, and all out in the open.

This is the excuse I hear

all the time. Well, it’s done all over. So that makes it right. Set the example. Do what’s right. What’s right for the kids. But because of ego problems they have and putting themselves on a self-made pedestal, which they think they’re above the parents. In their minds they think they’re so good that they can’t be replaced.

Well, think again. The town of International Falls goes through more coaches in one or two years than any other town that I know about goes through in 10 to 20 years. There is a reason for that.

And here’s the real kicker – the taxpaying parents pay for all these sports. But yet they’re not supposed to say anything or speak up when their kids are getting the shaft. And the reason some of these parents came to me is because they’re afraid if they say something there will be retaliation towards their kids.

Sad, very sad. It’s all about the kids. Kids of today have a hard enough time. They don’t need this crap.

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