



Omar of Minnesota surely meant to oppose US policy toward Israel but somehow couldn't quite manage to do it without being obviously anti-Semitic — "Israel has hypnotized the world," "It's all about the Benjamins baby." It caused an uproar, she apologized, but it seems never to have occurred to her that you can't talk about your fellow Americans that way. Or that she is a public figure and has to actually model admirable behavior.

Ocasio-Cortez is quick — quicker — to aggression. Her default position, behind the smiles and hugs and warmth and dancing, is the pointed, accusatory finger. From just the past two weeks: The New Deal was "an extremely economically racist policy," Ronald Reagan "pitted white working-class Americans against brown and black working Americans in order to just screw over all working-class Americans," so he too was racist. Pretty much everyone on the political scene was racist until Ocasio-Cortez arrived.

I am not talking about mere comportment, and none of this is a misfortune of temperament. It is a strategy and it is working. Polarization yields prominence. They equate peacefulness with complacency. Politico's Tim Alberta spoke with Omar this week. "I am certainly not looking to be comfortable, and I don't want everyone necessarily to feel comfortable around me," she said. "I think really the most exciting things happen when people are extremely uncomfortable."

I'm sure she'll do what she can to keep things exciting.

As for the imitators of the new style, they are making category errors. Courtesy, for instance, is not cowardice. It is not shrinking from real truths or their bracing expression. Courtesy is simply an act of public or private re-

spect that comes from self-discipline, and self-discipline is not boring and antique, it's a heroic little item that helps civilization to continue.

There is always a great temptation among the young in politics, and especially of the left, to see common respect as an admission of insincerity in opposing injustice. If you were sincere you'd be passionate — fierce and rude. They see courtesy as acceding to bourgeois political norms, when they are certain the bourgeoisie established those norms so they'd never be called out and forced to admit their culpability.

They believe that to be enraged is to demonstrate seriousness. It is to show that you understand the urgency of the moment, even if others don't. To behave in a way that shows respect for the humanity of others is to concede too much. After all, if they were truly human they'd be just as enraged as you are.

You must be crude to show the authenticity of your contempt for injustice. A gentle word is a useless word. But in reality you can't have justice without mercy, it doesn't work.

I think we all know where this started, the political brutishness, the ignoring of traditions and norms. Donald Trump is both origin and rationale.

The mean girls of Congress have learned at his knee. They have taken their tactics from him. They claim to be his reluctant imitators but I think they admire his ferocity. They have a taste for it, and a talent.

They are good at being the thing they supposedly despise. They are not the antidote to the current brutality but an iteration of it.

They are his natural children.

From The Wall Street Journal

## LETTERS

### Parents and pot

One of Betsy McCaughey's major concerns is how marijuana affects the brains of teens and children ("Lost in the Weeds: Pot's Impact on Kids," PostOpinion, March 20).

This is not an issue, as marijuana will only be legal for those 21 and over. Making something illegal because of how it affects teens is ludicrous. If that's the concern, why is alcohol still legal? Think about that next time you have a glass of wine.

While I am a firm legalization supporter, I can certainly understand her concerns on children and teens. However, the answer isn't keeping marijuana illegal: It's better parenting.

Michael Fetter, East Islip

### A fur-diculous bill

Why is Albany looking at banning a major New York City industry without considering the implications for thousands of small-business owners and their employees ("Dem wants to go 'fur' broke," March 18)? Not to mention the impact on consumers, for whom fur remains in high demand.

This past year, fur contributed roughly \$400 million to the city's economy. The fur industry is already one of the most highly regulated in the country, ensuring its products are produced humanely and sustainably.

It's not the business of government to be the fashion police. Consumers, not lawmakers, have always determined what they

can and can't wear. If a consumer opposes fur products, he can simply make another choice.

Marcie Rea, president, Marcella Furs & Leather Inc., Amarillo, Texas

### Vetting for-profits

Your editorial, "Cuomo's War on Hope" (March 17) forgot about veterans. Veterans organizations, including the American Legion, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, the Association of the US Navy and a dozen others, are calling on Albany to enact Gov. Cuomo's For-Profit College Accountability Act. Why? Because unscrupulous for-profit colleges target veterans through the "90/10 loophole" that Cuomo wants to fix.

As Gen. David Petraeus' wife Holly has written, this loophole leads for-profit colleges "to see service members as nothing more than dollar signs in uniform, and to use aggressive marketing to draw them in."

In Albany last week, New York veteran Michelle Kernizan testified, "As a veteran who has served this country, I was looking forward to bettering my future by obtaining my degree. Instead, I was misled by a for-profit college that has put a financial burden on my life." Please support this legislation.

Ramond Curtis, Veterans Education Success, Brooklyn

### Lose lobbying

Just because lobbying is ingrained in our political and legal culture doesn't make it legitimate, and it doesn't mean that

we have to keep up the charade ("Basking in the Lobbyist Love," Editorial, March 21).

Large corporations and large groups (unions, etc.) are just buying influence and legislation. This process hurts the consumer by paving the way for monopolies, driving up prices and allowing unelected influencers to pay off elected officials and set policies. It is high time (no pun intended to the marijuana-industry lobbyists) to end this practice.

Bob Fishman, Somers

### Stop & frisk fallout

I read that "stop-and-frisks" by police were down 98 percent.

The article "Straphanger shot in Qns." (March 16), on top of the shooting last month of a person on a subway platform, indicates that there is no longer any fear of being caught carrying weapons into subways or on the streets. Think there may be a correlation?

M. Klein, New Hyde Park

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