

# OPINION

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## BAGLEY'S VIEW » «DON'T BE BUFFALOED»

**BUFFALO  
OR  
BISON?**

IT DOESN'T MATTER  
TO THE ANIMAL  
AND EVERYONE  
KNOWS WHAT  
YOU'RE TALKING  
ABOUT.



## Don't let a few radicals get in the way of free speech — or democracy — in Utah

"Come now, and let us reason together."  
— Isaiah 1:18

Democracy and higher education. Two parts of our society where people of good will are supposed to come together and work out the great questions of how we will live. To do it peacefully, respectfully, intelligently, reflecting what Abraham Lincoln called "the better angels of our nature."

By that standard, the Utah branch of the Party of Lincoln performed very poorly last weekend.

Recent confrontations on the campus of the state's flagship university, meanwhile, should not be allowed to overshadow this weekend's commencement festivities, which mark the many accomplishments of students and of the state's institutions of higher learning.

The popular and not unfounded image of the Utah Republican Party is that it is the political wing of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. LDS members are a super-majority of the super-majority party in the state.

But last Saturday's state Republican convention was notable for how little heed party delegates and candidates have given to frequent admonitions from church leadership calling for its members to discharge their duty as voters and citizens, "always demonstrating Christlike love and civility in public discourse."

Recently the Utah Area leadership of the church urged members to look for candidates, "who have demonstrated integrity, ability and service to others, regardless of party affiliation."

While that may be the line espoused by many Utahns on Sunday, there was very little of that sentiment in evidence at last Saturday's GOP convention.

The Utah Republican State Nominating Convention was 17 hours of confusion, booing, anger and hands and vulgar words aimed at anyone, including children, who

just happened to be wearing a T-shirt for a rival candidate.

By the end of the day, delegates representing the far-far-right of the party cast most of their votes for candidates from their Donald Trump — that is, fascist — wing. They put forward candidates who are likely, once again, to be thumped by more moderate hopefuls when all Republicans — not just the activists willing to spend a whole day whipping up hatred and anger — get to vote in the June 25 primary election.

It was a demonstration of just how far from democracy the convention system is. How it attracts and empowers a true-believing minority and pulls it away from the core of moderate voters. Why it is a relic of 19th-century crony politics that Utah should abandon once and for all.

The quote of the day came from someone who was not particularly popular at the GOP's gathering.

Gov. Spencer Cox, who wound up polling only a third of the delegates' votes, tried to burnish his conservative credentials in the face of boos and catcalls. He concluded, "Maybe you hate that I don't hate enough."

The governor has recently tried to suck up to the party's right wing by, for example, abandoning his former support for LGBTQ rights and attacking diversity programs in government and academia. But

## OUR VIEW

By the Tribune Editorial Board

all he has managed to do is make people wonder who the real Spencer Cox is, whether his cultivated nice guy, sensible center image wasn't leadership at all, but something that left him vulnerable to being chewed up and spit out by the party's activists.

Cox will be on the June primary ballot because, in addition to subjecting himself to the incoherence of the convention, he gathered enough signatures to win a slot in the primary. There, he will face the choice of nearly two-thirds of the convention delegates, state Rep. Phil Lyman, for the Republican line on the November ballot.

A place where democracy still has a chance.

Students have a right to speak out, not disrupt

Things also got a little tense last week on the University of Utah campus.

There, a tent city of demonstrators who oppose shanties

attacks on Palestinians in Gaza was swept aside by more than 100 area police officers in riot gear.

Such encampments are illegal in the city and against U. policy — though such gatherings are winked at when they involve football games. And it was more than just disturbing to see that at least one demonstrator was carrying a hatchet.

Demonstrations opposing war and racism have been part of campus life in the United States for many years, back to the anti-war movement of the 1960s and later efforts opposing the Apartheid government in South Africa.

As long as such gatherings are peaceful, so long as they don't block the ability of other students to go to class or participate in other campus activities, they surely have a place.

But, as 14 of the 19 people arrested at the U. when police moved in Monday night were neither students nor staff at that school, there is also reason to worry that — like the Utah Republican convention — such expressions of free speech can be infiltrated and captured by a few radical bent on causing mayhem.

A university should be a place where people learn how to properly protest and express a variety of views without violence or stoking division. How to, in the words of the First Amendment, "peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

Educators should do their best to guide that learning process, not preemptively shut it down. And those who wish to protest should understand that First Amendment rights are not without their limits, and that real civil disobedience involves the willingness to accept the consequences of illegal acts.



TOM PRICE

## Campus protests lead to change. It's how we got the U. to divest from South Africa.

The unrest at the University of Utah around Gaza is a deeply disturbing sight. Not because of the students protesting, but rather the immediate and violent police reaction to forcibly shut it down.

Whatever you think about Israel and Palestine, we can and should and indeed must debate these issues fully — and in public. That debate in the public square is the foundational bedrock on which our republic rests.

And if there's any place in our

society where strident voices should clash, it's on our campuses. That is their very purpose — to allow ideas and identities to bump against each other, to challenge our accepted beliefs.

I should know. In early 1986, I was part of a group of students that built and occupied shanties

at the U. over 18 months, protesting apartheid in South Africa and demanding divestment from companies. The shanties were ugly, annoying, in your face — which was precisely the point, to bring to life something we students were connected to half a world away.

Opposition was fierce — we were firebombed by students who disagreed with our expression, and they weren't the only ones. After six months, administrators moved to forcibly eject the protesters. So we sued in federal court, arguing that a structure was a form of free speech. And in a groundbreaking decision, a federal court agreed and ordered we be allowed to continue our protest.

Photo by PRICE, ILL.