

Mr. Obama pick up your standards

Standards are principles we live by as well as banners marking rallying points in battle. Echoing back to the noble days of heraldry and held high, all knew what they were and embraced their power.

Standards are also the inherent right or wrong of a thing. We neither limbo under nor vault past them. Lowered, we can witlessly and blindly stumble past. Change your standards, and you change how you are guided during peace and war.

A guidon is similar. This swallow-tailed streamer carried by foot soldiers originated under Charlemagne where the word referred to a sacred anointed group charged with guiding the faithful to the Holy Land. Over the millennia, guidons retained a connotation of troops and teams rallying around truth.

History has borne witness to many a warrior giving their last full measure rushing to raise them when in the heated pitch of an enemy's assault, standards and guidons seemed poised to fall. These standards have brought forth pluck under fire. They mean the most when others regard them least. America is a foundry of freedom where many of those guidons and standards remain aloft and unfurled. True leaders carry them the highest when times are lowest.

Decades of medical training spent learning its standards and guidons prepared me as an oncologist to cradle the hearts and con-



Kevin Ryan

quer the fears of those frightened. That task was little in comparison to learning to lead.

Leading is not learned solely in the classroom, but you need books and diaries and droves of lessons repeated and worth memorizing since antiquity.

Leadership is neither synonymous with nor dependent on gifted intellect, yet there is a certain genius to it. It cannot be connived or contrived, yet it requires exquisite mastery and understanding of strategic and tactical thinking and vision.

You must love people but not depend on theirs in return. The passion, pain and loneliness of its position are sometimes just desserts.

Now, far away from America, a pentagon of pinheads possibly complicit in a long term scheme awarded President Obama a prize he doesn't deserve. It comes on the eve of crucial moments in world history. It is a brazen attempt to sully the standard the easiest way, change and lower them.

Mr. Obama, pick it up, bow to the true weight of leadership and marshaling your magical mouth, media and writers, tell all the real reason why you are giving it back.

Your actions have destabilized the dollar. If post-deficit-spending inflation kicks in and employment stays low there will not be peace. Fomenting inept legislation for non crises, hand slapping Korea,

Iran, confusing the Middle East, and devotion to the non science of delusional greener pastures is not "Nobellian."

Mr. Obama, Afghanistan is not that complex. Evil rarely is. Getting in bed with the Taliban and expecting to not get a little pregnant is nuts.

Mr. Obama, Pakistan is an unstable nuclear nation whose rogue scientists for decades dealt through German brokers with Iran and Korea. A strong America insures our strategy; we win, they lose.

Mr. Obama, if your hands are clean, divorce yourself from the slavish yoke of world opinion. Embrace the exceptionalism of American idealism. Don't let it be trampled under feet enfeebled by entitlement.

We must not witness apology as the last American gasp before ap-
peasement.

Oh, Oslo, Oslo, how I mourn for you. Your pursuit of fatally flawed social reengineering is not in the interest of peace. Beware what you reward.

We cannot continue setting low standards and consistently fail to meet even them. When leaders lose sight of the guidon, entire nations blindly leap into mediocrity.

Dr. Kevin Ryan is a retired colonel, physician, musician and author who lives in Fairfield. Reach him at ryan_k@comcast.net.