Weld to challenge Trump for GOP nod

By HOLLY RAMER and BOB SALSBERG
Associated Press

BEDFORD, N.H. (AP)—William Weld, a former Massachusetts governor who ran for vice president on the Libertarian Party ticket in 2016, became the first Republican to take a serious step toward challenging President Donald Trump in 2020.

Speaking Friday at a breakfast in New Hampshire, Weld said he has created a presidential exploratory committee. He blasted Trump for leaving the nation in "grave peril."

"We have a president whose priorities are skewed towards promotion of himself rather than for the good of the country," Weld said. "He may have great energy and considerable raw talent but he does not use that in ways that promote democracy, truth, justice and equal opportunity for all. To compound matters, our president is simply too unstable to carry out the duties of the highest executive office in the land."

The move makes Trump the first incumbent president since George H.W. Bush in 1992 to face a notable primary challenge. Other Republicans eyeing a presidential campaign include former Ohio Gov. John Kasich and Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan.

Trump remains very popular with Republicans so faces little risk in losing the GOP nomination. But primary challenges often foreshadow trouble ahead for incumbent presidents. Bush, Weld and others run on the Libertarian Party ticket in 2016, proposed creating a legislative committee to study the health and safety impact of revising commercial sexual activity laws, which would include looking at the impact of decriminalizing prostitution. The resolution states that criminalization of prostitution disproportionately impacts women, transgender people and people of color.

A group that advocates for sex workers, COYOTE, or Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics, endorsed the effort. It says decriminalization would improve the health and safety of sex workers in Rhode Island.

If the commission is created, it would report its findings to the House of Representatives next year.

Lawmaker proposes studying whether to decriminalize sex work

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The House Judiciary Committee is currently considering the proposal by Democratic Rep. Anastasia Williams, of Providence.

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— Rami Malek on his working relationship with director Bryan Singer on "Bohemian Rhapsody". Pleasant or not, Singer's direction did result in Malek getting an Oscar nomination.

School of Rock Delivers

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Other reviewers were less enthusiastic. In The Atlantic, Martha Bacon said the book “would not meet the needs of the initiated and might arouse in the unconcerned unnecessary interest or alarm or both.” Queer people today may look askance at the book’s immagination that the boys’ relationship was just a phase (though some have argued Donovan leaves it an open question), and that it was both caused by and caused tragedy in the protagonist’s life.

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School of Rock, National tour presented by Broadway in Boston at Opera House, Boston, through February 24

By Jules Becker

"Think of prep school substitute teacher Dewey Finn in “School of Rock” as a 21st century musical variation on Harold Hill in "The Music Man." Anyone family with the high energy, often hilarious Jack Black movie of the former(2003) knows that Dewey, like River City school band-leading Hill, is a clever charismatic con man—one who knows more about making his Horace Green Academy classroom exciting than teaching students about music.

If you loved the film’s stirring if somewhat thin plot, very positive message of diversity and understanding of the first young adult novel to include a same-sex relationship, one between two teen boys. The book made the Washington Post’s 1969 Honor Roll of Spring Children’s Books and gained starred reviews in the influential Kirkus Reviews and School Library Journal.

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Regardless, the book inspired many
A cure for political pathology: 2020 vision
This is no time for Democrats to lose their nerve

by Richard J. Rosendall | rosendall@starpower.net

contributing writer

Since January 20, 2017, America has been like Olivia de Havilland in The Snake Pit, trapped in a mental hospital with no memory of how she got there.

The president, after his rambling “national emergen- cy” announcement last week, is even more of a walking argument for the 25th Amendment than before—except that he packed his cabinet with like-minded loons and grifters. Maybe he’ll go if we can persuade the Norwegian Nobel Committee to give him the Peace Prize his Obama jealousy demands. But if Magic Vikings fail to rescue us, we’ll need a better backup plan than drinking ourselves into a stupor or praying that William Weld can mount a successful primary challenge in Trump’s invertebrate GOP.

That leaves us with Democrats—the witch-hunting globalists, according to Alex Jones of InfoWars, who use MS-13 to kill people, celebrate infanticide, and ally with Chinese Communists to infiltrate Silicon Valley. Jones, you understand, inhabits an alternate universe. In real- ity, the mass shooters are usually white people who were born here; Trump’s racist border policy is what’s killing children; and the Chinese granted Ivanka a trademark for voting machines. Seriously, what better brand for replacing Dickolexit?

It is increasingly difficult to distinguish mass delusion from acquiescence. When yet another person talks as if snowstorms disprove climate change, is he stubbornly ignorant or just worn down? In any case, Trump’s fan- ciful pronouncements do not eliminate our problems. Sea levels rise as ice sheets melt and warming sea wa- ter expands. Most states lack “red flag laws” to permit removal of firearms from people who pose a danger to themselves or others. Conservative state legislatures de- vice cruel new anti-LGBT bills. Our spirit of innovation is being superseded by circled wagons, scapegoating, and loss of nerve.

With moderation considered treachery, evidence mocked, and nuance cast as weakness, we are divorcing higher brain functions from public affairs like despots criminalizing elites.

James Madison distrusted direct democracies such as ancient Athens, preferring representative democracy and reasoned deliberation. Poor sap! Trump is doing an end run around Madison’s separation of powers. What will non-Fox viewers do about it?

Other than suing, we start in the House with a resolu- tion disapproving the emergency declaration. We pass legislation addressing gun safety, healthcare, and greenhouse gas emissions. When the Republican Senate fails

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Theater
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...and appealing musical segments, you will be rocking in your seat at an above average tour that captures the in- fectious spirit of its Broadway predecessor. (A most musical nominee running through at the Winter Garden).

Sporting one of Andrew Lloyd Webber’s better recent scores—with evocative lyrics by Glenn Slater, “School of Rock”—as in the film—takes would be rock and roll star Dewey on a madcap odyssey to self-realization.

That odyssey begins with an impulsive decision by the jobless hero to take on the substitute job meant for his best friend Ned. As Dewey seems to improve his class- room techniques, he proceeds to elude questions from standards-conscious Horace Green principal Rosalie about his methods. Even so, he succeeds in encouraging his students to rise to the challenges of their respective voices and musical instruments. Eventually his very bright students become a unified ensemble whose rewarding musical performance demon- strates self-empowerment even as it impresses their parents. Those parents include an African-American businessman and a doting gay couple.

Musical buff will appreciate the fact that the young actors who portray the students in “School of Rock” actually play their instruments—and very well, for that matter. Notably Mystical Inisco plays a mean lead guitar as Zack—who introduces his own composition, and Le- anna Parks the same on bass as Katie.

Then Mitchell-Pennor has the right passion on key- board as intense Leonardo, while Cameron Trueblood is properly hard-driving on drums as Freddy. In “The Music Man,” their counterparts simply make enough sounds to satisfy their own parents about Hill’s credibil- ity leading them as band leader.

By contrast, both shows are similar with regard to ro- mance. Where Hill falls in love with River City’s Marian the librarian in “The Music Man,” Dewey and Rosalie share an unlikely but delightfully convincing romance in “School of Rock.”

Another essential difference between “The Music Man” and “School of Rock” involves the young people being generally more supportive characters in the for- mer and the students actually become more and more important in the latter as its title suggests. Character wise, “School of Rock” could do with more individually developed parents and faculty members with connected songs.

Even so, director Laurence Connor gives smartly bal- anced attention to Dewey and the students’ respective challenges and blossoming as characters. Merritt David Jones (Gary Trainor at some performances) is properly expansive and likeable as Dewey. He fully convinces firing up the class—especially on the snappy num- ber “Stick It to the Man.” Leslie Dorsett Sharp moves smoothly from a restrained principal to a date comfort- able with both Dewey and the music of Stevie Nicks. Her vibrant delivery of the beautiful solo “Where Did the Rock Go?” is a true highlight.

Camille de La Cruz—who finds ostensibly differ- ent Tomoki’s niche as the class’ lead singer—movingly sings “Amazing Grace” in a rendition deservedly receiving ex- tended applause. Layne Roate has the right early reserve and nerdy body language as Ned. As the Horace Green students arrive at the Battle of the Bands, Dewey heartily reminds them, “We came here to rock.” To borrow from the show’s soulful score, the entire cast climb to the top of Mount Rock.

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...and Jimmy Carter lost their bids for a second term after facing challenges from inside their own party.

Asked to comment on Weld’s campaign, White House press secretary Sarah Sanders responded: “Who?”

Stephen Starepan, the chairman of the New Hamp- shire Republican Party, pointed to Weld’s past support of President Barack Obama and said he didn’t “expect his campaign to get very far among Republican primary voters.”

“The Republican Party is a big tent, but someone who endorsed Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012 and sup- ported Hillary Clinton in 2016 as the Libertarian Party’s vice presidential nominee really needs to think about how welcome he is in the Republican Party,” Starepan said in a statement.

Fiscally conservative but socially liberal, the 73-year- old Weld ran on the Libertarian party ticket in 2016 with former New Mexico Gov. Gary Johnson, receiving about 4.5 million votes, or a little more than 3 percent of the national popular vote.

Despite a pledge to libertarians that he would remain loyal to the party going forward, Weld on Jan. 17 walked into the clerk’s office of the Massachusetts town where he lives and re-registered with the GOP, adding to specu- lated that he would challenge Trump in the primaries.

Weld has not won a political race since being re- elected governor by a landslide in his heavily Demo- cratic state in 1994. He was first elected to the office in 1990, defeating a conservative Democratic candidate, and quickly became one of Massachusetts’ most popular governors in recent history.

While holding the line on spending and taxes, Weld as governor embraced liberal positions at odds with na- tional Republicans on abortion and gay rights. His low- key style and sharp wit also seemed to play well with voters as did his penchant for the unexpected: He once ended a news conference touting progress in cleaning up Boston’s polluted Charles River by diving fully clothed into the waterway.

After winning a second term, Weld’s attention ap- peared to drift away the governor’s office and toward other political pursuits. He briefly entertained a run for president in 1996 before-mounting an unsuccess- ful campaign that year to unseat Democratic Sen. John Kerry.

He resigned as governor the following year after then-President Bill Clinton nominated him to be ambassador to Mexico, but it was a post he would never hold. Re- publican Sen. Jesse Helms of North Carolina refused to schedule a hearing on the nomination, claiming among other things that Weld’s support for medical marijuana and needle exchange programs for drug users disquali- fied him from serving in Mexico because of that coun- try’s history of drug trafficking.

Weld fired back at Helms, suggesting it was un-Amer- ican for Helms to refuse to hold a public hearing on a high-profile ambassadorial nomination.

Weld left the public arena but later moved to New York, where he would make a brief, unsuccessful bid to become the first person since Sam Houston to serve as governor of two different states.

Upon returning to Massachusetts, he joined ML Strategies, the lobbying arm of the high-powered law firm of Mintz Levin. He consulted for Las Vegas casino mogul Steve Wynn during a regulatory process that in 2014 resulted in Wynn’s then-company being awarded a coveted license to operate the state’s only Boston-area casino.

Bob Salberg reported from Boston. Associated Press writ- er Zeke Miller in Washington contributed reporting.

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young queer people who first saw a reflection of themselves in print.

Ten years later came When Megan Went Away, by Jane Seaver, the first picture book with clearly LGBTQ characters. In it, a young girl named Shannon expresses sadness after her mother’s partner moves out but cautions that other children might make fun of him—and they do. His teacher knows he was imagined as a gay man.

The book, Ole' Button is a Sissy, whose protagonist didn’t like to do things that boys are supposed to do. The book, based on dePaola’s own childhood experiences, has had more staying power than the others from 1979. Part of that may be the skill of the award-winning dePaola; part may be that Oliver’s gender and family don’t stray as far as the others—Oliver likes to dance, but does so in traditional boys’ clothes. He also has a mom and a dad.

In 1989, as AIDS was decimating the queer community, came the first picture book about a person with AIDS, MaryKate Jordan’s Losing Uncle Tim. Tim is not explicitly gay, but is unmarried and runs an antique store; it’s easy to assume he was imagined as a gay man.

That year, too, came Lesléa Newman’s Heather Has Two Mommies, the first picture book to show a happy, intact family with same-sex parents. It was also the first to describe assisted insemination (although that part was removed in later editions to focus on the core message of family acceptance). Newman and a friend had published it themselves after over 50 publishers rejected it. The next year, LGBTQ publisher Alyson Publications bought the rights to Heather when it launched a line of children’s books.

Heather brought queer-inclusive children’s books into the public eye—but also faced numerous challenges from those who wanted it removed from schools and libraries. It remained popular enough to go through several editions, however, most recently one from Candlewick Press (2015) with updated illustrations and text. Heather’s moms now also wear matching rings as a nod to marriage equality.

Controversy also lay behind the 1999 publication of the photo essay Love Makes a Family: Portraits of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Parents and Their Families, edited by Peggy Gillespie, with photographs by Gigi Kaeser. The book was based on the groundbreaking traveling exhibit from what would become the non-profit Family Diversity Projects. When the exhibit of LGBTQ parents and their children was first shown in schools in 1995, several communities responded with outrage and one sued. A federal court dismissed the case, however, saying the exhibit was protected under the First Amendment.

The year 2009 gave us the first LGBTQ-inclusive board books for the very youngest children, also by Newman: Mommy, Mama, and Me and Daddy, Papa, and Me. They each depict a child with two moms or two dads enjoying everyday activities such as playing in the park.

These are far from the only important LGBTQ-inclusive children’s books—just ones celebrating decennial anniversaries this year. And today? In January 2019, when the American Library Association’s GLBTQ Round Table announced its Rainbow List of recommended, LGBTQ-inclusive children’s and young adult books from the past year, the selection committee wrote on its website that they were “overwhelmed by the explosion of content in all age groups” and noted the number of Frontvoices titles, those whose author shares a marginalized identity with the protagonist. From what I know of upcoming titles, 2019 could be equally impressive—and that will benefit all children as they see themselves, their families, and their world reflected.

Dana Rudolph is the founder and publisher of Mombian (mombian.com), a GLAAD Media Award-winning blog and resource directory for LG-BTQ parents.

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billy masters

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Jussie, Jussie, Jussie. I tried. Really. I did. I wanted to believe that you had been attacked—not because I wanted anyone to harm you, but because I didn’t want to think that anyone would stage such a thing. I defended you when people I love and respect told me something about this story wasn’t quite kosher (not to bring the Jews into it). I looked the other way when asked to believe that you went to a Subway sandwich shop at 2AM. I even fought every instinct I have to yell bullshit when you said you went there to buy a salad. But, damn, this is getting harder.

I would like to be able to say to Jussie Smollett not only lying about the attack, but perhaps manufacturing it. “We can confirm that the information received from the individuals questioned by police earlier in the ‘Empire’ case has in fact shifted the trajectory of the investigation,” said the Chicago PD. And who were those “individuals?” Nigerian brothers Olabinjo and Abimbola Osundairo, who are aspiring models and personal trainers. In fact, one of them is Jussie’s personal trainer, and one or both have appeared on “Empire”! They claim that Jussie paid them $4,000 to stage the assault, which the trio rehearsed for days. The police found some receipts in their apartment. The MAGA hat allegedly purchased at Uptown Beauty Supply, while the rope allegedly put around Smollett’s neck was purchased at Crafty Beaver Hardware Store—and if there’s one thing you can be sure of, never cross a crafty beaver. According to the brothers, Jussie paid for those items. In case you don’t believe theircredible, this little tidbit might change your mind—when the police told Jussie the two were in custody, he refused to press charges against them because he knew them and felt bad for them. Now, I dunno about feeling bad, but I’m feeling something since I came across some exceptionally hot shirtless pics of the brothers—which, of course, you can find on BillyMasters.com. I’m now wondering what else they may have done during those long rehearsals.

The news against Jussie gets worse. After the brothers were questioned and agreed to cooperate with law enforcement, they were released—one assumes with an immunity deal firmly in place. The cops are still watching him, presumably waiting for the brothers to talk. Meanwhile, they’ve asked Jussie to come in for a re-interview, which is never a good sign.

We hear that he has not made himself available “in a timely fashion”—uh-oh. He’s probably concerned about reports that a grand jury is being convened to hear the case. Some are even speculating that “Empire” creator—and one of Jussie’s most vehement supporters—Lee Daniels might be implicated. Jussie’s lawyer says, “As a victim of a hate crime who has cooperated with the police investigation, Jussie Smollett is angered and devastated by recent reports that the perpetrators are individuals he is familiar with.” The mouthpiece adds that the actor “angrily denies complicity in attack.” And he should—filling a false police report could land him three years in the pokey...and three years of non-concensual kissing.

If the brothers’ story ends up being true and Jussie orchestrated this whole debacle, he’s done a huge disservice to everyone who has ever been attacked; everyone who is at risk of being attacked; everyone who feels marginalized, ostracized, and politicized. And to come out after this “attack” and do a concert in West Hollywood to rally support from people who loved and stood by him...well, it’s almost unforgivable. But, people are innocent until proven guilty. If all these twists and turns are wrong and Jussie was the victim—well, all I can say is, “Oops!”

You know who was really assaulted? Our virginal “Bachelor”, Colton Underwood. Apparently his virtue was compromised at an event supporting his own charity. During a fundraiser for The Legacy Foundation—which raises money for cystic fibrosis—people waited in line to take photos with the hunk. Allegedly, someone got a bit too handy and the former football player felt...well, I’ll let him tell you. “At one point during the event I was grabbed and touched inappropriately while people were throwing cameras in my face...I didn’t sign up to be a piece of meat or a zoo animal.” I have two questions: 1) What is inappropriate after being on “The Bachelor”? and 2) Isn’t part of the job description of “The Bachelor” to be a piece of meat and a zoo animal? A new book claims that 80 percent of Vatican priests are gay. What? Only 80 percent? The book, appropriately called “In the Closet of the Vatican”, is careful to point out that not all of these gay priests are sexually active. The author, French journalist Frederic Martel, claims that while some of the priests are celibate, many of them are in long-term monogamous relationships, while others regularly have casual sex with random partners or hookers. Martel claims he spoke with 41 cardinals, 52 bishops and monsignors, 45 Papal diplomats and ambassadors, 11 Swiss guards, and 200 priests and seminarians. You know what’s missing from that list? Hookers! How many hookers did he talk to?

Last weekend was a blur, because I was on a whirlwind 48-hour trip to NYC with Jennifer Lewis, who appeared as part of Lincoln Center’s “American Songbook” series. To call the event a triumph would be an understatement. One of the administrators congratulated Jennifer for bringing in the most diverse audience they’ve ever had. Gays, straights, drag queens, and a rainbow of colors. I must single out the divalicious Flotilla DeBarge, who helped out by running the meet-and-greet like clockwork. And speaking of divas, the Divine Miss M was in attendance—you surely know that Jennifer was one of Bette’s most beloved Harlettes. Midler chatted on her old friend, cried at some of the more moving moments and fist-pumped Lewis’s activism. It was all simply grand (but exhausting).

By the by, Bette will be performing on the Oscars telecast, singing “The Place Where Lost Things Go”, from “Mary Poppins Returns”. The song was written by Marc Shaiman and Scott Wittman. Fun fact—Wittman accompanied Bette to Jennifer’s show, and Marc will accompany Bette on the piano at the Oscars.

Since I was at Lincoln Center, I sauntered across the plaza and FINALLY saw the revival of “My Fair Lady”. I went primarily for the luminous Laura Benanti, who is fulfilling a lifelong dream by playing Eliza Doolittle. To say the role fit like a glove isn’t quite right—in fact, it was a tad more arch than I’d imagine, but no less beautiful. But, more than that—she acted the role to perfection. Her commitment is peerless and her ability is inseparable. I just wish her Eliza were a trifle less dour and had a bit more charm and sparkle—especially in her early scenes. But my hunch is that’s a remnant of the person Benanti replaces in the cast—or perhaps part of director Bartlett Sher’s vision, which takes a serious look at gender roles and sexual dynamics. It makes the show more timely than ever. Truly, it’s impossible to fault anything in this luxurious production.

The sets, the orchestra, the costumes, the cast—everything is simply perfect. In fact, if NBC is seriously looking for a family-friendly musical to do live, this is it—cast and all. Having Harry Hadden-Paton opposite Benanti is a stroke of luck. Not only does he fit the traditional role of Higgins to a T, the duo’s constantly evolving dynamics work on every level. And, what can one say about Rosemary Harris—it is simply an honor to be in her presence. Benanti has extended her run through July 7th, and it would be a crime to miss this piece of magic should you be in NYC.

I musta missed a memo—Ben Platt came out. The “Dear Evan Hansen” star released a music video for “Ease My Mind” where he is seen making out with Charlie Carver. I’ve been out since I was 12 years old to my family and anyone in my life. I’ve never sort of hidden that or been ashamed by it. It’s just a part of me.” He also calls the video the “first opportunity to represent my relationships and the men I’ve loved.” So, if you wanna make out with Charlie Carver, you’ve gotta write a song and shoot a video for it. Oh, and winning a Tony probably wouldn’t hurt.

With the conclusion of “Celebrity Big Brother” (which I loved), everyone is talking about Gina Lohan and the boyfriend she’s had for five years and never met. While it turns out that her beau probably isn’t a “catfish”, there is a similar story in the news about one of our own. It all started when a woman in Vienna reported that a man bilked her out of 46K Euros with promises of investments in diamond and gold mines. The police published a photo of the man in question, only to learn that he is the positively perfect Peter Marc Jacobson—former husband of Fran Drescher and currently single gay man! Apparently the fraudster used Pete’s photo thinking...well, probably thinking who wouldn’t do anything this gorgeous guy wanted. The real Peter came forward and is working with the Austrian police...which I believe was a subplot cut from “The Sound of Music”.

Since we’re running short of space, I’ll answer the most popular “Ask Billy” question of the week. Many of you have written in wondering if I had any photos from Shawn Mendes’ underwear shoot for Calvin Klein. Two snaps from the spread have fallen into my hands and, naturally, you can find them on BillyMasters.com.

When Shawn is spreading for Calvin Klein, it’s definitely time to end yet another column. Dashing hither and you can be exhausting, but I’m never too tired to fill you in on www.BillyMasters.com—the site that allows and encourages you to reach out and touch whatever you’d like. If you have a question, drop me a line at Billy@BillyMasters.com and I’ll answer it the next column. -- Billy Masters

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One step closer
Chick-Fil-A could open next year

By Sue O’Connell

Once upon a time, back in 2012, the CEO of Chick-Fil-A Dan Cathy, expressed opposition to same-sex marriage saying the company was “guilty as charged” for backing “the biblical definition of a family.” The company has also donated millions to several anti-gay groups.

The result: the late Boston Mayor Tom Menino made it clear that Chick-Fil-A was not welcome in the city of Boston.

On February 5, the Zoning Board of Appeals gave approval to Chick-fil-A to begin preparations to move into the Boloco’s space on Boylston Street.

Getting approval from the Boston Licensing Board is the next step for the fast-food change.

Jussie Smollett: Feds probe actor’s role in threatening letter

Victor Morton
Associated Press

Federal officials are reportedly examining whether “Empire” actor Jussie Smollett has made a habit of hate-crime hoaxes.

According to ABC News, citing “two federal officials,” the FBI and the U.S. Postal Service are investigating whether Mr. Smollett was involved in sending a threatening letter to himself a week before the purported attack.

The network reported Tuesday that the claim was made by the two brothers who have told the Chicago Police Department that Mr. Smollett paid them to help fake the Jan. 29 attack on the gay actor that became a national cause.

The FBI crime lab is analyzing the letter, which was sent Jan. 22 to Mr. Smollett at the show’s Chicago studio, one of the sources told ABC News.

Authorities have not independently confirmed Olabinjo and Abimbola Osundairo’s claim that Mr. Smollett was also behind the letter, ABC News reported.

Sources already had told ABC News on Monday, again according to information given to Chicago police by the Ousundairos, that the letter’s not getting sufficient attention is what caused Mr. Smollett to fake the attack.

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Continued from page 2

to act, we run on the contrast. We defend reproductive choice. The latest anti-choice ploy focuses on “late-term abortions” (a term used misleadingly by opponents), which are rare and mostly involve fatal conditions. The right seeks to ban all abortions. The question is whether we’ll lose our nerve or defend our sisters against coercion.

If we ignore Trump’s provocations and distortions, we will make the same mistake Hillary made in 2016 when she resisted the impulse to turn around and tell Trump to back up when he loomed behind her during a debate. In December, before Nancy Pelosi retook the Speaker’s chair, she proved her mastery when she calmly rebuked Trump’s patronizing at an Oval Office meeting. He apparently thought the presence of news cameras would play to his advantage; he underestimated the daughter of Thomas D’Alessandro Jr.

Democrats must not be deterred by absurd claims that supporting reproductive choice makes us pro-infanticide; that supporting a Green New Deal means we’ll avoid working on the details; or that supporting LGBT equality means arresting disagreeable ministers.

Private hand-wringing by GOP lawmakers cowed into public submission will not restrain their rampant man-child. Restoring political sanity and finding solutions requires voting for the Democratic grownups in the room. Democrats’ diversity can sometimes lead to contentiousness, but Republicans have been reduced to attack dogs or abused pets.

Trump never touches alcohol, which only makes his mental state more troubling. One might say he is emulating the Roman emperor Caligula, though the latter was far more prodigious in his cruelties and debaucheries. Suetonius wrote, “Such was still the dread of imperial power, though vested in the hands of so weak and despicable a sovereign, that no insurrection was attempted... but the obnoxious emperor fell at last a sacrifice to a few centurions of his own guard.”

Our present tyrant, contrastingly, will be removed by an election.

Richard J. Rosendall is a writer and activist who can be reached at rosendall@me.com.

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