Opinion
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A demonstrator in New York City holds a placard during a protest Nov. 19 after Kyle Rittenhou

A demonstrator in New York City holds a placard during a protest Nov. 19 after Kyle Rittenhouse was acquitted by a jury that day in the shooting deaths of two people and the wounding of another with an AR-15-style rifle in 2020. (CNS/Reuters/David Dee Delgado)



by Michael Sean Winters

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At Politico, Meredith McGraw catalogues what for me was the most disturbing part about the trial of Kyle Rittenhouse: the fact that this young thug was lionized on the right even before the frightful verdict was rendered in the courtroom. Every night, Tucker Carlson, Sean Hannity and Laura Ingraham would find excuses for Rittenhouse's outrageous behavior and, in the process, essentially defend the idea of vigilantism. It was appalling. To my mind, there is no more insidious adjective one can apply to another human person then to call them "hateful" and the Fox News primetime troika is hateful.

Our friends at Jubilee USA are not exactly unsung heroes: Many people know of their good work. But the special interest they have shown for the suffering of the people

of Puerto Rico, combined with both their expertise about fiscal issues and their deep commitment to Catholic social doctrine, has made the organization a real hero to the island's people. This press release, with links to their letter to members of Congress, looks at the provisions of the Build Back Better bill, which will help alleviate the poverty in Puerto Rico.

In the Los Angeles Times, columnist Gustavo Arellano looks at the reaction to Archbishop José Gomez's recent speech attacking social movements among the deeply faithful Catholic Workers in the City of Angels. These people who live and work in the field hospital could teach their archbishop a thing or two about how working for social justice is a form of witness to the Gospel.

At Religion News Service, columnist Mark Silk wonders what Maimonides would have said about conservative provocateur Dennis Prager's latest foolishness about vaccines. A splendid send-up of Prager, who is an imposter, not an intellectual.

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In The New York Times, Bosnian journalist Srecko Latal warns about the impending dismemberment of Bosnia and Herzegovina due to the unconstitutional machinations of Milorad Dodik, leader of the Serbs in Bosnia. He writes that the "main responsibility lies with the countries themselves, especially political representatives and their affiliated media, who based their popularity on spreading animosity toward other ethnic groups." Swap "ethnic" for "ideological" and the statement mirrors our own situation. Still, in the Balkans, we have been down this road before, and violence, once unleashed, is difficult to constrain. The West, including the United States, needs to intervene now before it is too late and the snipers are again strafing the streets of Sarajevo.

In the Washington Post, Carlos Lozada reviews the book version of "The 1619 Project" and examines the various changes the project has undergone since its inception. Lozada really has emerged as one of the most careful and incisive literary critics in the business, and he deals with the often delicate and always controversial issues the 1619 Project raises with deftness.

In The New York Times, Zachary Woolfe profiles the "omnipresent and energetic" Yannick Nézet-Séguin, the new conductor of the Metropolitan Opera. The Canadian conductor is making a splash in New York City with new additions to the repertoire at

both the Met and at Carnegie Hall, where he recently led the Philadelphia Orchestra, which he also directs. Everything about Nézet-Séguin is exciting, and he sure sounds like just what the Met needed after labor strife and the pandemic.