Opinion
NCR Voices
A worker carries a ballot box as he prepares the polling station in Le Touquet-Paris-Plage, Fra

A worker carries a ballot box as he prepares the polling station in Le Touquet-Paris-Plage, France, April 6, for the April 10 presidential election. (Pascal Rossignol, Reuters/CNS)



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In The New York Times, Michelle Cottle looks looks at the polarization surrounding education and rightly bemoans a new Tennessee law that converted nonpartisan school board elections into partisan ones. The ability to talk and argue with one another, in ways that do not descend into threats of violence, is the one societal characteristic without which democracy cannot breathe. What are we doing to our children and their future?

In Slovenia, Prime Minister Janez Janša was ousted by voters who did not warm to his Trumpian nationalism and dire warnings about left-wing conspiracies undermining the country. His Slovenian Democratic Party garnered only 28% of the vote, and their coalition partner, the Christian Democrats, captured only an additional 8%. The newly formed, left-leaning Freedom Movement took 33% and, with their prospective

coalition partners, will have no problem forming a majority in parliament. Combined with Emmanuel Macron's victory in France, the elections in Slovenia are wins for the European Union.

In the Washington Post, contributing columnist James McAuley has one of the better analyses of the French presidential vote. Macron's victory is a relief, but if he does not take steps to actually make the government in Paris more responsive to the whole of France, and begin to chart a course that is less reliant on neoliberal policies that have succeeded nowhere, the extremes will only grow stronger. One point McAuley – nor anyone else so far as I can tell – did not make is that some of Le Pen's vote was likely a protest vote, just as some people voted for Trump in 2016 thinking he could not possibly win, but they wanted to send an anti-establishment signal. There is no way to know how many voters thought Macron's victory was assured, so they could vote for Le Pen and send a message. That, combined with Le Pen's softening her message, may have accounted for her improved showing.

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In the Moscow Times, the Russian presidential property management department is spending $43.4 million to renovate a former imperial compound in the town of Pushkin, south of St. Petersburg, for the use of the Russian Patriarch Kirill. The patriarch has publicly supported Putin's criminal regime and its murderous war in Ukraine.

At MarketWatch, Levi Sumagaysay reports on the efforts to unionize some of the most iconic corporations of our time: Amazon, Starbucks and now Apple. These organizing efforts are still in their infancy, to be sure, but the workers at Amazon and Starbucks have already gotten further than any group of workers at Walmart and Target ever did. Passing the PRO Act, which aims to protect workers attempting to organize, would help a lot, as does the tight labor market.

If I told you what I really thought of this next story, I would get fired. Tucker Carlson, who opens Fox News' primetime schedule on weeknights, has long been concerned about the declining masculinity of the culture and now he thinks he has found a cure: Tanning one's testicles! Now, why didn't I think of that? Rolling Stone has the story.