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Editorial | Letters

Trump and Duterte are two of a kind

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Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte

It should not be a surprise that President Donald Trump and Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte seem to get along, to the point that Duterte has been invited to the White House.

Both have demonstrated a disdain for human rights and a tolerance for harsh measures in dealing with crime and terrorism.

What apparently triggered Trump's invitation was Duterte's counseling of restraint for both sides in the intensifying conflict between Washington and North Korea.

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To the impulsive Trump, those were welcome words that seemingly overshadowed Duterte's issues, including a denunciation of U.S.-Philippine military and economic ties and a strange embrace of China.

The main objection to Duterte is his endorsement of extra-judicial killings — numbering in the thousands — in the campaign against drug use. He has made no secret of his approval of such tactics, outraging human rights groups in the Philippines and worldwide ("[Philippine president's White House invitation upsets some](#)," *Star-Advertiser*, May 1).

None of this seems to matter to Trump. So if the invitation to Duterte bears fruit, the world will see two subverters of democratic values embrace in the White House.

Carl H. Zimmerman

Salt Lake

—

NYC rail project has problems, too

Many people have complained about the booming cost of the Honolulu rail transit project.

Former Gov. Ben Cayetano called it the most expensive in the world, at \$500 million per mile ("[Cayetano asks Trump to ax Honolulu rail funds](#)," *Star-Advertiser*, *Top News*, April 21). While I'm not doubting that figure, I have found a rail project that costs even more — New York's Long Island Rail Road East Side Access.

It is currently budgeted at \$10.178 billion and is meant to connect the Long Island Rail Road to Grand Central Terminal in Manhattan. At an average length of 10 miles of

tunnels it costs \$1 billion per mile. And like the rail project, it is long overdue and well over budget. It is expected to open in 2022 with construction started in 2002.

So I guess that Honolulu is not alone in feeling overburdened by transportation projects.

Dexter Wong

Waialae

—

Bridge over Ala Wai could be beautiful

I was happy to see at least one positive letter about the Ala Wai footbridge ([“Ala Wai Canal needs more than 1 bridge,” Star-Advertiser, Letters, April 20](#)).

I can see I need to start attending my McCully-Moiliili Neighborhood Board meetings in person instead of monitoring them online ([“City moves to plan controversial Ala Wai footbridge,” Star-Advertiser, April 13](#)).

I for one am all in favor of the bridge. The benefits to improved circulation (and an additional evacuation route if needed) are real, and NIMBY reactions based on the potential of additional “bad elements” are addressing that problem from the wrong angle. This issue definitely needs to be addressed, and aggressively, but the approach should be positive and targeted, not by denying access across the canal.

The pedestrian bridge hopefully will be beautiful, not a blight, and a win-win for both neighborhoods and beyond. I vote yes.

Karin Lynn

Moiliili

—

Search for DOE chief repeats past mistakes

Hiring a new state Department of Education superintendent — here we go again.

Haven't we learned that hiring people with a good resume or interview for an important government position does not work?

Presently the state Board of Education has narrowed it down to two finalists from other parts of the country. Who will be accountable if the new hire does not work out? Who will be held accountable when the state ends up buying out the remainder of her contract — BOE vice chairman Brian De Lima, Cheri Nakamura, director of the Hui for Excellence in Education, or teachers union president Corey Rosenlee?

If the governor will be held responsible, why not tap Darrel Galera? Galera is someone the governor has known and worked with, which is better than any unknown with a good resume or interview.

Ryan Kumabe

Aiea

—

Congress won't love a \$20 billion wall

Robert Frost wrote:

"Before I built a wall I'd ask to know

What I was walling in or walling out,

And to whom I was like to give offense.

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,

That wants it down."

I know that there is no way Frost could have known this, but apparently one of those somethings that doesn't love a wall is the 115th U.S. Congress.

Thank God that that \$20 billion and counting disaster won't see funding anytime soon.

Jim Howard

Manoa

—

All mail-in voting would save money

I write not as the chairman of the State Elections Commission but as a private citizen. Our Legislature has again failed to pass a bill that would alter our voting to all mail-in.

Throughout the session, all we heard was, "How are we going to pay for this, or how can we pay for that?" While all mail-in voting certainly wouldn't be able to pay for all of the messes we are facing, it would save some \$800,000 per election cycle. Our chief elections officer has shown time and again that we would have all the proper safeguards in place to assure the electorate of a secure ballot.

What am I missing? We have a financial mess at the airport, the rail and our schools — but given an opportunity to save and recoup some money, no, we can't seem to do that. Auwe!

F.M. Scotty Anderson

Waialae-Kahala

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