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EXPOSING SYRIA'S HORRORS

RE "THE AGONY OF SYRIA" [March 12]: News is not just about political leaders shaking hands or giving rousing speeches. Nor is it about celebrities and their exploits. News is a human story with its own emotions and logic. TIME exemplified this by sharing the horrific details of the daily life of Syrians in the line of fire. It would have been even better if you had featured people who have borne the brunt of forces opposed to President Bashar Assad, But this does not take away from the tremendous hard work, research and raw courage that must have gone into putting together this story.

Gulbahar S. Sidhu JALANDHAR, INDIA

AFTER SEEING THE HORrific and heart-wrenching pictures of the mayhem that is being meted out by Assad's regime on his own people, it is incomprehensible that no Western power is willing to get involved in trying to put a stop to this carnage. It is time to send a message to Assad, that his air force will not be unchallenged allowing him to commit these atrocities with impunity, and to his Russian and Iranian allies that retribution will be handed out for their crimes.

Allan de Sousa, CALDAS DA RAINHA, PORTUGAL

THE LESSONS OF CALVIN

RE "MARILYNNE ROBINSON Promotes Reason in Unreasonable Times" [March 12]: Sarah Begley's article caught exactly the Marilynne Robinson that her readers have come to know. Except in one respect: it did not mention that Robinson is a confessed Calvinist. Her citation of John Calvin in support of her openhanded liberalism shows how the image of Christianity's paradoxical God can be reflected in human history, cultures and politics. I don't agree with Robinson on everything, but she is driving me to take my copy of Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion from the shelf where it has been lovingly kept for 28 years, but never read.

> Richard Wilkins, WATFORD, ENGLAND

A MESSAGE DIMINISHED

RE "A HOUSE DIVIDED" [March 12]: I was a little disappointed by Elizabeth Dias' article on Billy Graham. Instead of focusing on the familv's differences, Dias should have concentrated on the impact Graham has made in the lives of people across the world and how he conveyed the message of love of God. It is a universal truth that when a leader dies, family members show some kind of division to own the legacy. It need not be the theme for the



first article after one's death.

R. Bhakther Solomon,

CHENNAI, INDIA

AN ABSOLUTE MISTAKE

RE "CHINA STEPS CLOSER to Despotism as Xi Becomes Leader for Life" [March 12]: Rulers of authoritarian states have absolute power because they cannot be removed. They are free to abuse their power for as long as they live. To err is human, and a leader who tolerates no checks is even more likely to err, because power can make one impervious to other views. The Cultural Revolution led by Mao Zedong from 1966 to 1976 was the best example of abuse of absolute power. Chinese President Xi Jinping should have known better.

> Song Xiaowen, TAOYUAN CITY, TAIWAN

READING THE BRIEF REgarding the Chinese leader,

my first thought was, "I hope Donald Trump doesn't read TIME." You know what happened when he saw the big parade in France.

Bob Newell, sutton, mass.

MONEY ISN'T EVERYTHING

RE "WHY IS THE GOP TOUTing New Gun Restrictions After Parkland? Follow the Money" [March 12]: In doctrinaire leftist fashion, this piece deliberately conflates the NRA with gun manufacturers. The NRA did not shoot up the Parkland high school. Its members did not. Its members' interest is not in whether more or fewer guns are sold, or whether gunmakers are more or less profitable. The NRA's focus is on gun safety and the constitutional right to keep and bear arms.

Steve Baur, WESTMINSTER, COLO.

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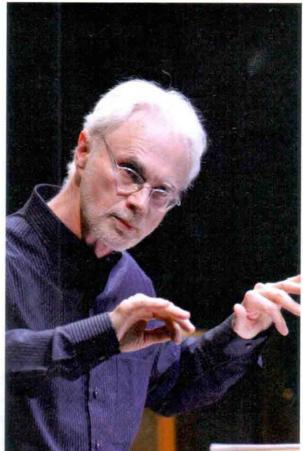
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