

EDITORIAL OPINION

WANT SOMEONE FROM THE NAPLES DAILY NEWS to speak at your event or club? Please go to naplesnews.com/customerservice.

Men must lead to end domestic violence



TROY VINCENT

As young boys in Trenton, New Jersey, my brother and I grew up behind the closed doors of a home often engulfed with the haunting cries and unspeakable images

that predictably come with horrific acts of domestic violence.

Huddling together, we would squeeze our eyes shut, muffle our sobs and, without a sound, wordlessly agree that during those frequent occurrences of violence, our best survival plan was to blanket our pain and fear with silence.

We dared not to breathe, lest we further provoke the man who was hitting our mother. Instead, we silently and fervently willed the violence to stop. It did not.

Like so many children who are victims, witnesses or survivors of domestic violence, my brother and I regularly endured such inescapable and sickening violence in silence. Who would hear

us anyway? Who would help our mother; who would help us? And most of all, who in the world possesses such all-encompassing power that they can, once and for all, make such harmful violence stop?

As an adult, the answer to that question is clear to me. We all have the power to help eradicate domestic violence. Instead of turning away, we must step forward. Instead of silence, we must speak up. For those who think their inaudible cries are not heard, let us be the ones who hear them. Let us be their voice.

Some have wrongly claimed that domestic violence is a "woman's issue." But the facts are more than sobering: Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women — more than car accidents, muggings and rapes combined. Ten million children witness some form of domestic violence every year; every day more than three women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends; men are twice as likely to abuse their wives if they witnessed domestic violence as children.

It largely has been the voices of women speaking up for their sisters who face domestic or relationship violence. Women have been burdened with the responsibility to educate the rest of us, not only about the physical injury but also the devastation to a woman or child's spirit and soul.

In the decades I've served as an advocate to end domestic violence, one truth is abundantly clear to me: Domestic violence is predominantly a man's issue. As a man, husband and father, part of my mission in life is to break the silence. It is men who must not only hear but heed our call to action to end domestic violence.

Men have the power to say no to domestic violence. As men, we must speak up and say domestic violence will not happen in my home, in my neighborhood, on my campus, on my team, in my workplace or in my circle of family and friends.

As men, we cannot be silent; we must not be bystanders to this behavior. Individually and collectively men have tremendous influence over other

men, especially young men. We must use our power and our platforms to bring hope to those who want to believe that a new life, a better life, awaits them.

Violence against women and children is a choice. Choices have consequences.

The choice to harm a woman or child has lifetime implications both physically and psychologically. I'm lending my voice and my platform to challenge all men to take a stand and demand that none of us allow violence against women and children to occur in our presence.

It is an honor to speak Monday at the 17th annual Mending Broken Hearts with Hope luncheon to benefit the Shelter for Abused Women & Children in Collier County.

I am in awe of the work that is being done by the shelter and am humbled to be a part of their mission.

Vincent played for the Miami Dolphins and other teams. He is executive vice president of the National Football League.

Today in history

Today is Sunday, Feb. 19, the 50th day of 2017. There are 315 days left in the year.

On this date in:

1881: Kansas prohibited the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages.

1945: Operation Detachment began during World War II as some 30,000 U.S. Marines began landing on Iwo Jima, where they began a successful month-long battle to seize control of the island from Japanese forces.

1963: "The Feminine Mystique" by Betty Friedan was first published by W.W. Norton & Co.

2008: An ailing Fidel Castro resigned the Cuban presidency after nearly a half-century in power; his brother Raul was later named to succeed him.

Today's birthdays

Actress **Carlin Glynn** is 77. Singer **Smokey Robinson** is 77. Singer **Lou Christie** is 74. Actor **Jeff Daniels** is 62. Talk-show host **Lorianne Crook** is 60. Actor **Leslie David Baker** is 59. Singer **Seal** is 54.



Actress **Jessica Tuck** is 54. Drummer **Jon Fishman** is 52. Actress **Justine Bateman** is 51. Actor **Benicio Del Toro** is 50.

Actress **Bellamy Young** is 47. Singer-actress **Haylie Duff** is 32. Guitarist **Seth Morrison** is 29. Actress **Victoria Justice** is 24. Actress **Millie Bobby Brown** is 13.

Today's quote

"As I get older I find that the friendships that are the most certain, ultimately, are the ones where you and the other person have made substantial amounts of money for one another." — Jonathan Lethem, "Men and Cartoons: Stories"

Bible quote

O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusts in him. — Psalms 34:8



Then & now

Recognize this Southwest Florida site? If you think you know where this is, go to www.naplesnews.com, click the "business" tab and then the quick link "breaking ground" to enter your answer. We'll print the answer here next week. **Last week's answer:** Gulf Gate Plaza, intersection of U.S. 41 East and Bayshore Drive. **Last week's winner:** John Jaffee

FILE

The case of the cover-up in search of a crime



CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

WASHINGTON — It's a Watergate-era cliché that the cover-up is always worse than the crime. In the Mike Flynn affair, we have the first recorded instance of a cover-up in the absence of a crime.

Being covered up were the Dec. 29 phone calls between Flynn and the Russian ambassador to Washington. The presumed violation was Flynn negotiating with a foreign adversary while the Obama administration was still in office and, even worse, discussing with Sergey Kislyak the sanctions then being imposed upon Russia (for meddling in the 2016 elections).

What's wrong with that? It is risible to invoke the Logan Act, passed during the John Adams administration, under which not a single American has been prosecuted in the intervening 218 years. It prohibits private citizens from negotiating with foreign powers. Flynn was hardly a private citizen. As Donald Trump's publicly designated incoming national security adviser, it was perfectly reasonable for him to be talking to foreign actors in preparation for assuming office within the month.

Worst case: He was telling Kislyak that the Trump administration might lift sanctions and therefore, comrade, no need for a spiral of retaliations. How different is this from Barack Obama telling Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, on an inadvertently open mic, during his 2012 re-election campaign, "This is my last election. After my election, I have more flexibility."

Flynn would have been giving the Rus-

sians useful information that might well have contributed to Russia's decision not to retaliate. I'm no Russophile. But again: What's wrong with that? Turns out, the Trump administration has not lifted those sanctions. It's all a tempest in an empty teapot.

The accusations of misbehavior by Flynn carry a subliminal echo of a long-standing charge against Richard Nixon that he interfered in the Paris peace talks in October 1968 to prevent his Democratic opponent from claiming a major foreign policy success on the eve of the presidential election.

But that kind of alleged diplomatic free-lancing would have prolonged a war in which Americans were dying daily. The Flynn conversation was nothing remotely of the sort. Where's the harm?

The harm was not the calls but Flynn's lying about them. And most especially lying to the vice president who then went out and told the world Flynn had never discussed sanctions. You can't leave your vice president undercut and exposed. Flynn had to go.

Up to this point, the story makes sense. Except for one thing: Why the cover-up if there is no crime? Why lie about talking about sanctions? It's inexplicable. Did Flynn want to head off lines of inquiry about other contacts with Russians that might not have been so innocent?

Massive new leaks suggest numerous contacts during the campaign between Trump associates and Russian officials, some of whom were intelligence agents. Up till now, however, reports The New York Times, there is "no evidence" of any Trump campaign collusion or cooperation with Russian hacking and other interference in

the U.S. election.

Thus far. Which is why there will be investigations. Speculation ranges from the wildly malevolent to the rather loopily innocent.

At one end of the spectrum is the scenario wherein these campaign officials — including perhaps Flynn, perhaps even Trump — are compromised because of tainted business or political activities known to the Russians, to whom they are now captive. A fevered conspiracy in my view, but there are noncertifiable people who consider it possible.

At the benign end of the spectrum is that the easily flattered Trump imagines himself the great deal-maker who overnight becomes a great statesman by charming Vladimir Putin into a Nixon-to-China grand bargain — we jointly call off the new Cold War, join forces to destroy the Islamic State group and reach a new accommodation for Europe that relieves us of some of the burden of parasitic allies.

To me, the idea is nuts, a narcissistic fantasy grounded in neither strategy nor history. But that doesn't mean Trump might not imagine it — after all, he maintains that if we had only stayed in Iraq to steal its oil, we wouldn't have the Islamic State terrorists. And if this has indeed been his thinking about Russia, it would make sense to surround himself with advisers who had extensive dealings there.

I believe neither of these scenarios but I'm hard put to come up with alternatives. The puzzle remains. Why did Flynn lie? Until we answer that, the case of the cover-up in search of a crime remains unsolved.

— Washington Post Writers Group