

# Opinion

## UGB: What do the farmers say?

The desire to expand Keizer's Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) has captured the imagination of civic leaders and developers alike. Setting aside questions of the cost of infrastructure needed to turn land north of Keizer into residential neighborhoods or industrial/office parks, who is speaking for Marion County's rich agricultural land?

Some of the richest land is on the north border of Keizer and includes most of the land that would be considered for future development.

A major reason for Oregon's precedent-setting land use law was to protect farmlands from urban sprawl, it birthed the Urban Growth Boundaries in the state. Will land owners fight to keep their agricultural lands out of the hands of development and citification?

The old saying, 'buy land, they're not making any more of it,' is never more true than when talking about farmland. Some say Marion County agricultural land is the most productive of any in the world. Though most of us here in Keizer are not farmers we benefit from our local farmland. Those acres are a buffer from encroaching urban sprawl from the Portland metropolitan area. Those acres provide jobs and the farms are generous in donating needed food for our

food banks. Farms carry on the tradition and heritage that dates to the first settlers in this area back in the 1850s.

A drive north and west of our area allows a motorist to pass thousands of acres of productive land here in Marion County as well as the counties Clackamas, Polk and Yamhill. It is a shame to think that our insatiable appetite for developable land might one day turn much of that land into city.

That is why it is important for those on various task forces and committees considering the future growth of Keizer. To accommodate expected population growth the first option to consider is to build up rather than out.

The way people live now will match mixed used developments that take up small footprints but reach for the sky, up to five floors.

That will protect vital farmland, if the current owners want to protect it. We think it is important to hear from those whose livelihoods could be challenged by a UGB expansion.

Though the lure of big payouts by developers is enticing, we hope that the tradition of farming wins out over money. They are not making any more land. Let's be sure we are using ours wisely.

—LAZ

our  
opinion

## Tap brakes on legislative agenda

History has taught that one party rule rarely works out well for the governed. Books are filled with stories about societies that have suffered under rule by one party or ideology.

However, that flies in the face of the adage, "To the victor go the spoils." The Democrats control Oregon's governorship and they have supermajorities in both houses of the legislature. Elections have consequences for someone. You certainly can't satisfy all the people.

The current state legislature is taking on some big issues that will end up costing lots of Oregonians lots of money, including businesses of every size.

On the so-called Cap and Trade bill, cooler heads prevailed and a listening tour was undertaken throughout the state. The traveling legislators got an earful, which made some of them pause. They heard, especially from farmers, how the legislation would drive up fuel costs. The bill's intent is good, we can't let more time go by without talking about clean energy and cleaning our environment. Yet, some of the proposed solutions will harm the economic life of many businesses.

Doing nothing is not an option in the 21st century, a solution must be found that is not so anti-business.

A gross receipts tax is raising its head again in 2019. Anytime the word 'tax' is used, everyone gets up in arms, as if the sky was falling

A gross receipts tax is now being

touted as one form of funding for Gov. Kate Brown's additional \$2 billion investment in education. Who is going to say no to additional money for our children's schooling? Not many, but a lot want to do it without taxing Oregon business even more.

The spoils may go to the victors but what goes around comes around. The Democrats could find themselves in a legislative superminority sometime in the future. When one party overreaches to attain its goals, it leaves a sour taste for the opposition, an opposition that waits for the opportunity to turn the tables.

Politics is the art of the possible but it is primarily the art of compromise. Just because your party can pass any legislation it wants, it doesn't mean it should. Regardless from what county a legislator is elected, Representatives and Senators should do what is fair and right for Oregonians.

What incredible powers of leadership and vision would it take for those in the majority to look at ways to reduce some items in the state budget to pay for the things that most citizens want: a fully funded education system from top to bottom. Is there any will to take a scalpel to billions of dollars in the current budget?

Build a better mousetrap and the world will beat a path to your door. Propose a state budget that funds what's most important to the people without raising taxes and you will win every time.

—LAZ



## No grand case against Trump shown

By DEBRA J. SAUNDERS

At one point during his hours of testimony before the House Committee on Oversight and Reform Wednesday, President Donald Trump's former personal attorney and "fixer" Michael Cohen was asked what "breaking point" prompted him to split with Trump.

"There were several factors," Cohen responded. "Helsinki"—a reference to Trump's summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin last year—"Charlottesville"—think Trump's racially insensitive decision to blame "many sides" for the death of an activist protesting white nationalism—and "watching the daily destruction of our civility to one another."

Many House Democrats clearly wanted to believe that Trump's one-time tough-guy enforcer had found enlightenment, but their desire to take Cohen's side did them no credit.

The more likely breaking point came on April 9, 2018, when FBI agents raided Cohen's home, office and New York hotel room. Cohen was facing 65 years in prison as prosecutors dangled felony counts that included charges of tax evasion and lying to Congress.

By cutting a plea deal, Cohen reduced his prison time to three years.

Cohen admitted to the committee that he will try to get that sentence reduced further. So, the worst he can expect from Wednesday's performance is that if he serves the whole 36 months, he can walk out of prison a hero for gullible Democrats.

Republicans have no such hero right now. All but the die-hard base know Trump's warts too well.

Former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, who endorsed Trump for president when he dropped out of the GOP primary in 2016, noted the problem when he told *ABC News*, "There

hasn't been one Republican yet who's tried to defend the president on the substance."

"Where is the defense of the president?" Christie asked.

But really, what robust defense can there possibly be other than offense?

There is no grand defense for Trump. You can say only that there is no grand case against him.

The two campaign contribution violations to which Cohen pleaded guilty are dicey at best. They were the first criminal charges brought by Special Counsel Robert Mueller that involved the 2016 Trump campaign, but by a dubious route.

Because Cohen paid off porn actress Stormy Daniels and former Playboy Bunny Karen McDougal to keep them from talking about their alleged affairs during the Trump campaign, the feds argued, that made the hush money illegal campaign donations.

Problem: A jury wouldn't convict former Sen. John Edwards, D-N.C., after a big donor paid to cover up an affair Edwards had with an aide that produced a child. It's hard to see the illegality in Cohen paying hush money with his own money and Trump reimbursing him.

Still, there's no place for a gung-

ho defense. Trump denies having been involved with Daniels and McDougal, yet even his die-hard base doesn't believe it. The affairs and payoffs do not speak well of his judgment. So really, who can get outraged because Cohen called Trump a "conman" and a "cheat"?

Cohen also called Trump a racist—an angle picked up by Rep. Rashida Tlaib, D-Mich., who complained that Department of Housing and Urban Development official Lynne Patton attended the hearing as a guest of Rep. Mark Meadows, R-N.C., as a "prop," she said, which is "racist in itself."

You see, Patton is black, and it's perfectly fine for Democrats to call African-Americans props, as if they are unable to act on their own, because black Americans cannot possibly be thinking for themselves if they lean to the right. In another universe, people would call Tlaib's charge racist.

Democrats pretty much have abandoned their quest to prove Trump's campaign colluded with Russia. They did make it clear that Trump's choice of associates has room for improvement.

And for that—a hearing that provided the same meager revelations as the Republican hearings of the previous two years—Democrats scheduled an event tailor-made to distract Trump as he was in Hanoi trying to ply denuclearization concessions from North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

Trump walked away from a bad deal with the hermit kingdom, but American voters are stuck at the table.

(Creators Syndicate)

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## The 'isms' that define U.S. history

Americans enjoy debates. The first debate of consequence was whether the thirteen colonies, after the Revolutionary War, should come together as a whole or remain divided into 13 separate nations. The "ism" under debate was federalism, defined as a system based on democratic rules and institutions in which the power to govern is shared between national and state governments.

The matter was ultimately settled by the creation of the Constitution and Bill of Rights. However, "settled" endured only through a shaky 70 years whereupon the states of the union in the South decided to go their own way through a confederacy where human slavery, upon a victory of those states over the others, would continue. After the North won, the Constitution again ruled supreme.

Meanwhile, enhanced and practiced by the Industrial Revolution, mainly after the Civil War, capitalism took a firm hold on the way Americans got things done. Capitalism is an economic and political system in which a nation's trade and industry are controlled by private owners for profit rather than by the state. It worked well enough for a few American families with titular heads to take over exclusive control of business and industry while both white and dark-skinned folks fell into roles of servitude where men, women and children lived mostly in poverty. Thus, a few wealthy families lived like the royalty of old Europe.

With the appearance of change-agent leaders like President Theodore Roosevelt and the rise of labor unions in the U.S., there developed a great hue and cry among the American citizenry to bring control over those leaders of

business and industry who practiced virtual monopolies in their respective areas and chose to keep all the riches for themselves. These developments

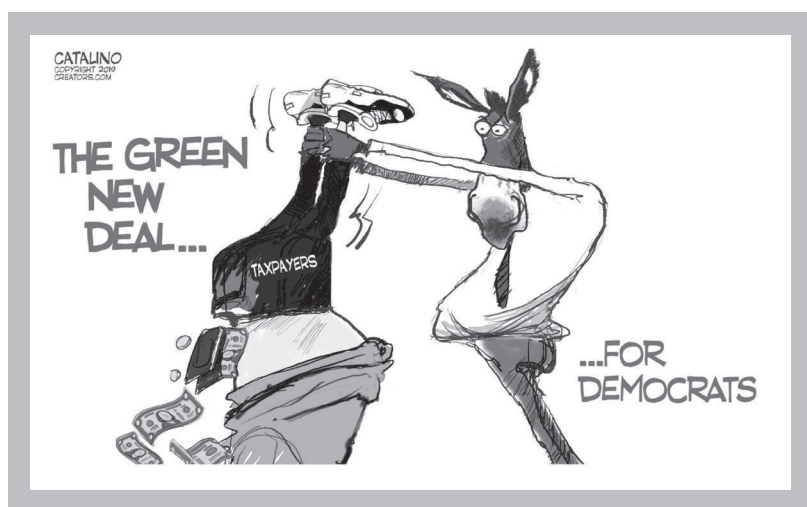
led to financial relief for the American worker that endured, for argument's sake, until some time in the 1980s when we began a reversal back to the gross inequalities of the 1880s that now disunite us.

Overseas, for the most part in Europe, there were armed revolutions ending nations ruled for centuries by royal families. These revolutions were sped up during and after World War I. One political theory was led by a German, Karl Marx, and known as communism. It advocates class war leading to a society where all property is publicly owned and each person is paid according to ability and need. Socialism mainly sprung from the 1789 French Revolution. It is a political and economic theory where produc-

tion, distribution and exchange of all things are owned and regulated by the community as a whole. Fascism has attracted some Americans. It's a dictatorial form of government that rejects democracy, socialism and capitalism with one person in power.

An "ism" for current debate is humanitarianism, a belief in the value of human life where humans practice benevolent treatment of one another and provide assistance to others in order to establish humanity for the whole community. It involves a blending of the most viable "isms" and systematically excludes their worst features. When defined in specific terms to address today's America, an appropriate humanitarian design could avoid revolution and provide the opportunity—under the stresses and strains of modern demands and challenges—or a U.S. future without another destructive and bloody civil war and serve to remedy the persistent divisiveness now causing so much unrest.

(Gene H. McIntyre shares his opinion frequently in the *Keizertimes*.)



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