

# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

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## Fulton mortgages Port's credibility

*Bad old days of self-dealing and cronyism are back*

Just as the Port of Astoria is emerging from a dark financial cloud, Commissioner Stephen Fulton evokes the bad old days. The bane of the Port has been self-dealing and cronyism. Old habits die hard.

While acting as the Port's representative on the board of the Columbia Estuary Study Taskforce, Fulton brought with him John Nygaard, the lawyer of his employer, Warrenton Fiber-Nygaard Logging. This led to a confusing and contentious situation, as Edward Stratton reported on Jan. 29.

CREST Chairman Scott Lee had believed the Port Commission had removed Fulton as its representative, because Fulton was mixing his public role with his employer's private agenda. Fulton and John Nygaard have been at odds with CREST over replacement of a dam with a bridge on the Skipanon River at Eighth Street in Warrenton. Stratton also reported that, "Fulton wrote that he is concerned about the impacts of several CREST projects, including the Otter Point Estuarine Restoration in Lewis and Clark National Historical Park ... and the Vera Slough project next to Astoria Regional Airport."

Over decades, CREST has been essential to an array of governments and agencies in the Columbia-Pacific region. In a nutshell, CREST gives its member agencies expertise in environmental and land use regulations they could not otherwise afford. With a wide array of funders, CREST serves members such as port districts, at nominal membership fees. Over a long period, CREST has had a beneficial relationship with the Port of Astoria.

Any notion that the Port should withdraw its participation from CREST is fundamentally wrong. The Port *must* be part of CREST.



Stephen C. Fulton

By carrying water for the Nygaards in his public role, Fulton debases CREST. And his corruption of the Port-CREST relationship damages the Port of Astoria.

Fulton further compromised himself by threatening a CREST employee. Fulton says this never happened, but it is a vivid memory for the employee.

All of this is reminiscent of how Richard Lee corrupted the Clatsop County Commission. While chairman of that commission, Lee pursued a private agenda with the county planning staff. It led to Lee's recall.

The Nygaards can well afford to speak for themselves. Using Fulton as their shill is a step too far.

Port Commission Chairman Robert Mushen should wait no longer to remove Fulton from the CREST board. Surely a commission majority will support him.

The professionalization of local governments — starting in the 1970s — was a hugely beneficial movement. It has given the taxpayers more accountability. Stephen Fulton beckons us back to the era of good old boy politics in which a few moneyed interests get richer at the expense of the larger public good.

**FYI:** Clippings from the press of the Pacific Northwest and the nation

## Progress in the global war on poverty

The headlines on any given day suggest a world under siege. War. Terrorism. Refugees. Disease. Recession. Famine. Climate change. But beneath these often very real problems, something remarkable has been happening, something on a more epochal level that has gone almost completely unnoticed.

Global poverty has fallen faster during the past 20 years than at any time in history. Around the world hunger, child death, and disease rates have all plummeted. More girls are getting into school. In fact, never before have so many people, in so many poor countries, made so much progress in reducing poverty, increasing incomes,

improving health, reducing conflict and war, and spreading democracy.

Some of these gains — especially the declines in poverty and child mortality — rank among the greatest achievements in history. Yet few people are aware that they are even happening. Most people believe that, apart from a few special cases such as China and India, developing countries by and large remain hopelessly mired in poverty, stagnation, and dictatorship. Yet the reality is quite different: A major transformation is quietly under way, affecting the lives of hundreds of millions of people in nearly every corner of the world.

Steven Radelet in *The Christian Science Monitor*

# Feminism, hell and Hillary

By FRANK BRUNI  
*New York Times News Service*

I'm 51. My health is decent. And while my mother died young, there's longevity elsewhere in the family tree.

I could live to see an openly gay presidential candidate with a real chance of victory.

Will there be a "special place in hell" for me if I, as a gay man, don't support him or her?

I can guess Madeleine Albright's answer. She more or less told women that they're damned if they're not on Hillary Clinton's team.

I'm still trying to get my head around that — and around Gloria Steinem's breathtakingly demeaning assertion that young women who back Bernie Sanders are in thrall to pheromones, not ideas or idealism, and angling to score dates with the young bucks in the Sanders brigade.

That's right, "Democratic socialism" is a known aphrodisiac: the oyster of politics. There's nothing like denunciations of oligarchs to put you in the mood.

Also, has Steinem forgotten about lesbians? More than a few of them support Sanders, and it's not because of the way some 26-year-old doctoral candidate looks in his L.L. Bean flannel.

There's a weird strain of thought swirling around Clinton's campaign: that we should vote for her because she's a woman. Or that she's inoculated from certain flaws or accusations by dint of gender. Or that, at the least, there's an onus on forward-looking people who care about gender inequality to promote her candidacy.

I care about gender inequality, and I don't buy it. It's bad logic. It's even worse strategy. People don't vote out of shame. They vote out of hope.

Clinton, who lost the New Hampshire primary on Tuesday, is on sturdy ground, morally and tactically, when she mentions a double standard for women. So are her surrogates. Actually, there are so many double standards that you couldn't fit them in a column eight times the length of this one, and she has bumped into plenty, including, yes, the fuss over her raised voice.

But the argument that she's somehow not a full-fledged member of the establishment because she's a woman — as she contended during the most recent Democratic debate — is nonsense. On that night, she also echoed a past statement to CBS News that she "cannot imagine anyone being more of an outsider than the first woman president."

Really? Anyone? Off the top of my head I can think of a person who might quibble with that. His name is Barack Obama.

Admittedly, there's no easy way to navigate the terrain she inhabits. Eight years ago, she denied her campaign the romantic sweep of Obama's playing down and trying to correct for gender. This time around, she was advised, rightly, not to repeat that mistake. But how to do that without going too far?

I think she started out perfectly, with incontestable reflections on women's challenges in the workplace and with casual asides about the historic nature of her bid. Discussing her age, she said, "I will be the youngest woman president



Frank Bruni

in the history of the United States."

But more recently, things have fallen out of whack. Bill Clinton's diatribe about the misogyny of some Sanders supporters sounded like a defensive outsourcing of blame for any disappointments in the polls and the returns: the narrowest of victories in Iowa followed by the New Hampshire defeat.

The Clintons are always quick to point fingers and slow to look in the mirror. "When the exact same problems crop up in separate campaigns," the Democratic political strategist David Axelrod tweeted Monday, "at what point do the principals say, 'Hey, maybe it's US?'"

On top of which, Bill Clinton's invocation of sexism felt too pat, his citation of gross language on Twitter (which, sadly, brims with it) too easy.

Clinton's gender indeed matters. Just as you couldn't properly evaluate Obama's arc without factoring in race, you can't see her accurately without recognizing that she's a woman of her time, with all the attendant obstacles, hurts, compromises and tenacity.

That informs — and, ideally, illuminates — her perspective. And her presidency would carry a powerful, constructive symbolism that can't and shouldn't be ignored.

But those are considerations among many, many others in taking her measure and in casting a vote. To focus only or primarily on them is more reductive than respectful, and to tell women in particular what kind of politics they should practice is the antithesis of feminism, which advocates independence and choices.

We're all complicated people voting for complicated people. We're not census subgroups falling in line.

I'll go to the barricades for that imagined gay candidate if he or she has talents I trust, positions I respect and a character I admire. If not, I'll probably go elsewhere, because being gay won't be the sum of that person, just as womanhood isn't where Clinton begins and ends.

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## The many Mideast solutions

By THOMAS FRIEDMAN  
*New York Times News Service*

In December at the Brookings Saban Forum on the Middle East, *Atlantic* magazine reporter Jeff Goldberg asked right-wing former Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman this provocative question: "Things are shifting radically not only in non-Jewish America but in Jewish America as it concerns Israel and its reputation. My question is: (A) Do you care? (B) What are you going to do about it? And (C) how important is it to you?"

"To speak frankly, I don't care," Lieberman responded, adding that Israel lived in a dangerous neighborhood. Give Lieberman credit for honesty.

That conversation came back to me as I listened to the Democratic and Republican debates when they briefly veered into foreign policy, with candidates spouting the usual platitudes about standing with our Israeli and Sunni Arab allies. Here's a news flash: You can retire those platitudes. Whoever becomes the next president will have to deal with a totally different Middle East.

It will be a Middle East shaped by struggle over a one-state solution, a no-state solution, a non-state solution and a rogue-state solution.

That is, a one-state solution in Israel, a no-state solution in Syria, Yemen and Libya, a non-state solution offered by the Islamic caliphate and a rogue-state solution offered by Iran.

Start with Israel. The peace process is dead. It's over, folks, so please stop sending the New York Times Op-Ed

page editor your proposals for a two-state solution between Israelis and Palestinians. The next U.S. president will have to deal with an Israel determined to permanently occupy all the territory between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, including where 2.5 million West Bank Palestinians live.

How did we get there?

So many people stuck knives into the peace process it's hard to know who delivered the mortal blow. Was it the fanatical Jewish settlers determined to keep expanding their footprint in the West Bank and able to sabotage any Israeli politician or army officer who opposed them? Was it right-wing Jewish billionaires, like Sheldon Adelson, who used their influence to blunt any U.S. congressional criticism of Bibi Netanyahu?

Or was it Netanyahu, whose lust to hold onto his seat of power is only surpassed by his lack of imagination to find a secure way to separate from the Palestinians? Bibi won: He's now a historic figure — the founding father of the one-state solution.

And Hamas is the mother. Hamas devoted all its resources to digging tunnels to attack Israelis from Gaza rather than turning Gaza into Singapore, making a laughingstock of Israeli peace advocates. And Hamas launched a rocket close enough to Tel Aviv's airport that the U.S. banned all American flights for a day, signaling to every Israeli, dove or hawk, what could happen if they ceded the West Bank.

But Hamas was not alone. The Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, sacked the only effective Palestinian prime minister ever, Salam Fayyad, who was dedicated to fighting corruption and proving that Palestinians deserved a state by focusing on build-



Thomas L. Friedman

ing institutions, not U.N. resolutions.

They all killed the two-state solution. Let the one-state era begin. It will involve a steady low-grade civil war between Palestinians and Israelis and a growing Israeli isolation in Europe and on college campuses that the next U.S. president will have to navigate.

Meanwhile, a no-state Syria — a Syria that Bashar Assad and his Russian and Iranian backers only partly control — will be a chest wound bleeding refugees into Europe. I am certain that Russia's President Vladimir Putin is deliberately bombing anti-regime Syrians to drive them into Europe in hopes of creating a rift in the European Union, strain its resources and make it a weaker rival to Russia and a weaker ally for America.

And the non-state Sunni caliphate (ISIS) and rogue-state Shiite Iran will feed off each other. I love it when both Democratic and Republican candidates say, "When I am president, I'll get Sunni Arabs to take the lead in fighting ISIS." Gosh, I bet Obama never thought of that!

The Sunni Arabs are never going to destroy a non-state ISIS as long as Iran behaves like a Shiite rogue state, not a normal one. It's true, Iran is a great civilization. It could dominate the region with the dynamism of its business class, universities, science and arts. But Iran's ayatollahs don't trust their soft power. They prefer instead to go rogue, to look for dignity in all the wrong places — by using Shiite proxies to dominate four Arab capitals: Beirut, Damascus, Sanaa and Baghdad.

So my advice to all the candidates is: Keep talking about the fantasy Middle East. I can always use a good bedtime story to fall asleep. But get ready for the real thing. This is not your grandfather's Israel anymore, it's not your oil company's Saudi Arabia anymore, it's not your NATO's Turkey anymore, it's not your cabdriver's Iran anymore and it's not your radical-chic college professor's Palestine anymore. It's a wholly different beast now, slouching toward Bethlehem.

**So many people stuck knives into the peace process it's hard to know who delivered the mortal blow.**

### Where to write

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