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The Daily Astorian/File Photo

Coho salmon leap to catch food pellets thrown by Rod Litton, with Clatsop County Fisheries, inside a netted container on the Marine and Environmental Research and Training Station campus in May. The 1 1/2-year old salmon were released into the Columbia River for their journey to the ocean.

Keep your fingers crossed for coho

Despite all the well-deserved publicity and love lavished on Chinook salmon, coho are the backbone of the Lower Columbia region's important recreational fishing industry.

We are learning this may be another difficult year for coho, otherwise known as silver salmon. Weak forecasts for coho returning to Washington coastal streams and Puget Sound may necessitate closing the ocean to fishing, even off the relatively healthy Columbia River, since weak stocks mix with stronger ones offshore. An ocean closure would also apply to Chinook salmon.

Forecasts can be far wrong, particularly for coho, which experience high variation in returns from one year to the next. But there is concern that 2016 will continue last year's pattern.

In 2015, 539,600 coho were predicted to return to the Columbia; only 242,000 actually did. The actual count of successful coho returnees at Bonneville Dam was only 37,402, the worst since 1997 and less than 30 percent of the 10-year average of about 129,000. In contrast, 2014 coho returns were outstanding.

For 2016, returns to the Columbia are currently forecast to reach 380,000.

The Columbia is actually in better shape than most of the U.S. coast north of Cape Falcon (in Oswald West State Park between Cannon Beach and Manzanita). One of three fishing-season options announced this week would be to allow

ocean salmon fishing only in the vicinity of the mouth of the Columbia but not to the north. Another option would provide a modest level of fishing throughout the north of Cape Falcon area, while the third choice is no fishing at all.

This situation brings home the local importance of several issues:

- It's vital for diverse Lower Columbia interests to be well represented in season-setting discussions.

- Changing ocean conditions — in this case rising ocean temperatures that are impacting salmon — have real-world economic impacts. These conditions and their causes warrant intense study and monitoring, possibly paired with policy decisions.

- What happens elsewhere on the West Coast impacts us here. Successful habitat restoration, predator control and other efforts to rebuild salmon runs in the Columbia-Snake system can be undone by distant problems, like failing glaciers in the Olympic Range and North Cascades. We all must effectively work together. This includes Pacific Northwest treaty tribes, who bring expertise and political gravitas to this subject.

When it comes to this year, let's keep our fingers crossed for coho.

Goodbye, Bushism

By ROSS DOUTHAT

New York Times News Service

Even in the last limping years of his deeply unpopular administration, George W. Bush was still popular with Republican voters.

After Barack Obama took office, Bush's image popped up in anti-Obama iconography, with a cheeky "miss me yet?" attached.

And as his presidency receded, Bush's favorable ratings floated upward, rising above Obama's and Hillary Clinton's as the 2016 campaign got underway.

These numbers were no doubt present in Jeb Bush's consciousness when he made his fateful and destructive decision to run for president. But they were also clearly part of Marco Rubio's read on the Republican Party, which ultimately led him to last night's campaign-ending defeat: Even more than George W. Bush's own brother, Rubio tried to make himself an heir to Bushism, and to build a bridge between the last Republican administration and the one that he aspired to lead.

Rubio's defeat, like most in politics, had many causes: a weak ground game, a media strategy that was overwhelmed by Donald Trump's cable-TV dominance, a persona and positioning that made him a second choice all over the map but a winner hardly anywhere, a youthful mien in a "hard man for hard times" election, and of course that one dreadful New Hampshire debate.

But in purely ideological terms, what primary voters were rejecting when they rejected him was the political synthesis of George W. Bush.

In domestic politics, that synthesis had four pillars: a sincere social conservatism rooted in a personal narrative of faith; a center-hugging "compassionate conservatism" on issues related to poverty and education; the pursuit of comprehensive immigration reform as a means to win Latinos for the GOP; and large across-the-board tax cuts to placate the party's donors and supply-side wing.

In foreign policy, Bushism began with the promise of restraint but ultimately came to mean hawkishness

shot through with Wilsonian idealism, a vision of a crusading America whose interests and values were perfectly aligned.

From his arrival in Washington, Rubio seemed intent on imitating this combination of ideas. He associated himself with neoconservative foreign policy proposals and personnel. He became the face of comprehensive immigration reform, take three. He wooed a rising generation of evangelical and Catholic activists. He filled out a domestic policy portfolio with "reform conservative" ideas on welfare reform, health care, higher education and family-friendly tax policy. And then to make sure nobody accused him of being some sort of redistributionist squish, he attached those ideas to a sweeping capital gains and corporate tax cut.

Politically it was by no means a crazy strategy. For all his blunders, George W. Bush is still the only Republican candidate for president to win the popular vote in the last 25 years, and the only figure to successfully unite and lead a fractious party. Parts of Bushism look more optimistic, inclusive and economically relevant than either the angrier Tea Party message that Rubio piggybacked on in his 2010 Senate campaign or the generic "Mr. Republican" messages that John McCain and Mitt Romney lost with in 2008 and 2012.

And with the Middle East in flames, Russia increasingly aggressive and the Islamic State camped out in Iraq and Syria, you can see why many conservative elites imagined that Americans — and Republican primary voters, especially — might want a more hawkish, even Bushian successor to Barack Obama.

But alas for Rubio, it turned out that Republicans didn't want any of this.

They didn't want comprehensive immigration reform, which shouldn't have been surprising because they hadn't wanted it when Bush was president, either; it was an idea that had hung around and hung around without ever finding a conservative constituency outside Washington.

They didn't want an optimistic, next-generation version of social conservatism, preferring either Ted Cruz's old-time religion or Don-



Ross Douthat

ald Trump as the church's heathen bodyguard in a post-Christian landscape.

They didn't care about the size of Rubio's tax cut, because all the candidates were promising a big tax cut, they were all equally implausible, and voters — even conservative voters — just aren't as tax-obsessed as they were in the Reaganite glory days.

They did want, perhaps, a different domestic policy than the uncreative platform Romney had offered, one that promised less to the wealthy and more to the working class. But Rubio's half-hearted reform conservatism was outbid and overwhelmed by Trump's brassy promises to renegotiate trade deals, slap on tariffs, leave entitlements untouched and bring back the jobs of 1965.

And they did want a kind of hawkishness — but not a Wilsonian hawkishness, in service to an ambitious grand strategy to stabilize or remake the Middle East. No, they wanted a Jacksonian hawkishness, one that promised to rain destruction on our enemies without the mess of nation building.

These desires don't add up to a new Republican synthesis, and the candidates who have catered to them more successfully haven't devised one. Trump's populist, illiberal Jacksonianism can't unite the party the way Bush once did, and Cruz's hard-edge social and economic conservatism probably can't win the median voter the way Bushism did twice (well, once plus a close second).

But they do add up to the desire for a new synthesis, and an understanding that whatever the Republican Party needs now, it can't just be what worked for Bush and Karl Rove until Iraq went sour and Wall Street melted down.

At times, Rubio's biography, his youth and his eloquence seemed to make him the natural candidate for a party in search of What Comes Next. And in certain ways he was victimized by a conservative electorate that fears the future, that wants any "new" synthesis to simply recreate the glories of a vanished American past.

But he was also a victim of his own fateful look backward, his assumption that what worked for the last Republican president could be made to work again. It didn't, it couldn't, and it probably won't be tried again: Whoever wins the nomination in 2016, George W. Bush has gone down to defeat.

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Let Trump make our free-trade deal

By THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN

New York Times News Service

What if the United States had had a truly savvy deal maker like Donald Trump negotiate the Trans-Pacific Partnership free-trade accord instead of the wimpy Obama team?

I mean, be honest, folks, would you let Barack Obama sell your house?

I've researched the deal and concluded Trump would have gotten us this:

He would have begun by saying "a baby could figure out" that since 80 percent of the goods from our 11 TPP partners come into our country duty-free already, and so much of our stuff is still hit with tariffs in their countries, if we eliminate 18,000 tariffs we'll be able to keep more production at home and sell more abroad. "We'll export so much we'll actually get tired of exporting," Trump would say.

After all, America's total manufacturing output was nearing an all-time high at the end of 2015. True, it was with more robots and fewer people, but we've still created nearly 900,000 manufacturing jobs since 2010 because we have cheap energy, skilled workers and good rule of law. Our workers can compete if we level the playing field, so Trump would have told opponents of the trade deal, "Just do the math, people." Our average applied tariff is already only 1.5 percent while the tariffs of these Pacific countries can range much higher — Vietnam has peak tariffs of over 50 percent on cars and machines — so if we get rid of those tariffs our exporters are poised to benefit.

Since Trump cares about blue-collar workers, unlike the elitist Obama, he'd have demanded that in return for free access to our markets the 11 other TPP countries had to agree, some for the first time, to freedom for their workers

to form independent trade unions, to elect their own labor leaders, to collectively bargain and to eliminate all child and forced labor practices. He'd also have insisted that they adopt laws on minimum wages, hours of work and occupational safety and health, again, precisely to level the playing field with U.S. workers.

Trump would also have required that the deal prohibit all customs duties for digital products, make sure companies did not have to share source codes in order to get into new markets and ensure free access for all cloud computing services in all TPP countries — all areas of growing U.S. strength.

Trump's no sucker for a wink and a smile.

If you don't comply, you lose your trade benefits. (Trump's no sucker for a wink and a smile.)

Moreover, Trump would have made sure that the accord, in a first for any trade deal, put restrictions on state-owned companies that compete with our private businesses, like Vietnam's oil company. These state-owned companies often get special benefits that enable them to undercut our companies. Trump's trade deal would also have been the first requiring criminal penalties for stealing our industrial secrets.

"No more ripping off America," Trump would have said.

He certainly would have insisted on strong intellectual property protections for America's software industry, one of our greatest export assets, and taken an approach to pharma-



Thomas L. Friedman

ceuticals that splits the difference between what the big drug companies want in the way of intellectual property protection time for their products and what the generic manufacturers want. Everybody would have gotten something but nobody would have gotten everything. It's called "the art of the deal," folks!

Trump would also surely have required that all signatories combat trafficking in endangered wildlife parts, like elephant tusks and rhino horns, and end all their subsidies that stimulate overfishing.

And Trump, who has a lot of Chinese restaurants in his hotels, would know that if we walk away from the TPP all our friends in the Pacific will just sign up for China's RCEP, or Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, which will set trade rules in Asia and include weak intellectual property protections, no labor or environmental protections and no disciplines on state-owned industries.

So that's the Pacific trade deal Trump would have struck! And by now I hope you've figured something out: This is the trade deal Obama actually struck.

You don't know that because Trump doesn't know it himself; because Bernie Sanders knows it and doesn't want to tell you; and because Hillary Clinton knows it but, sadly, won't tell you, choosing instead to play "Bernie Lite." (Remind me how that worked out for her in Michigan.)

No trade deal is perfect. No single deal will save every job or remake our economy. And we must be more generous in caring for workers hurt by trade. But we also have to recognize that smart deals, like the TPP, help keep us the most efficient and innovative economy in the world and strengthen our security alliances — as opposed to abandoning our allies to regimes that don't support our values.

Thank goodness we had a former community organizer negotiating for us.

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