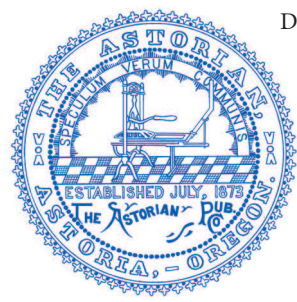


THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Founded in 1873



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OUR VIEW

No growth in housing is not a realistic choice

Few residents of the Lower Columbia region will deny that lack of affordable housing is one of our biggest problems. It is a dilemma that hits workers who see an increasingly painful share of income go to ever-escalating rent. It impacts existing employers and those who would like to get into business here by limiting the size of the workforce. Even those who already own satisfactory homes are affected, as property assessments increase and options decrease for children who may want to live here.

Agreement on possible solutions seems far away. Collapse of plans to build multifamily housing in Miles Crossing — scaled down from 168 to 48 units — is a timely example of the challenges that lie ahead. Located within an easy commute of Astoria and Warrenton, and close enough to North Coast resort communities to house some of their hospitality and retail labor force, the Miles Crossing project would have been a significant first step toward alleviating pent-up demand.

Neighbors' concerns weren't lacking in merit. Rural utility and transportation infrastructure might not have been up to the job of accommodating several hundred new residents. And we all live close enough to the Portland and Seattle suburbs to be aware of how poorly planned urban growth can dramatically impact quality of life. In particular, south King County between Seattle and Tacoma has addressed city housing needs, but at a huge cost to the landscape. People who lived there 30 years ago would barely recognize the place.

We can, however, learn from nearby bad examples and yet work to accommodate economic development and the natural growth that is intrinsic to healthy communities. Acting upon longterm plans for expanding workforce housing and other types of residential development will inevitably displease some.

We must, however, persevere in identifying areas to build multifamily housing, subdivisions for single-family residences and places for manufactured homes. For developers and agencies, a key part of this task will be to make certain streets, water and sewer systems, schools, policing and other municipal services are up to the task.

Growth is no panacea. Many who live here like things just as they are, and hope policy decisions will aim for minimal or no impacts from new housing. This is understandable, but unrealistic.

Northwestern Oregon is attracting tens of thousands of new residents a year. They have to live somewhere, and some are going to live here, along with city residents seeking more peaceful and scenic surroundings at the coast. Our housing shortage must be addressed in a deliberate and intelligent fashion.

To that end, The Daily Astorian is publishing a five-day series on our area's housing shortage starting Oct. 24. We're talking to people from all walks of life impacted by the difficulty in finding a place to live and painting a clearer picture of what the problems are and presenting possible solutions.

**COMING FRIDAY: ENDORSEMENTS
 IN LOCAL, STATE, FEDERAL ELECTIONS.**

A great fight of our times: stagnation

By DAVID LEONHARDT
New York Times News Service

Think, for a moment, about the stories that your family likes to tell about itself. They are probably miniature versions of the American story, with progress as the central theme.

Maybe your great-grandparents arrived here as striving immigrants, and you now talk about how proud they would be. Maybe you're the first college graduate or doctor in the family, and your parents brag about you. Maybe your grandparents couldn't vote because of their skin color — and then had the thrill of voting for a president with the same skin color.

These stories aren't about only your family. They are also stories of tribal pride — about Italians, Irish, African-Americans, Jews, Asians, Latinos and others — that make people feel part of something larger.

When progress is the norm, it

feeds on itself. People can trust that their own sacrifices will usually pay off. They can endure hard times without becoming cynical and can be generous toward others.

Now, imagine a different reality: one in which your family — or whole community — had known scant progress for decades.

You couldn't tell stories of upward mobility, because they wouldn't be true. Instead, you would be frustrated, about hard work gone unrewarded, and anxious, for your future and your children.

Such stagnation is the reality for much of the country's population — roughly one third by many measures, closer to half by others. Some of the statistics are familiar. But as a group, they're chilling.

The typical household, amazingly, has a net worth 14 percent lower than the typical one did in 1984, according to a forthcoming Russell Sage Foundation publication. The life-expectancy gap between the affluent and everyone else is growing. The number of children living with only one parent or none has doubled

since the 1970s (to 30 percent). The obesity rate has nearly tripled (to 38 percent). About 8 million people have spent time behind bars at some point in their life, up from 1.5 million 40 years ago. While college enrollment has grown, the norm for middle-class and poor students is to leave without a four-year degree.

Central challenge

This column is my first for the Op-Ed page, which is why I'm devoting it to the great American stagnation. That stagnation is a central challenge of our time.

And we don't feel nearly enough urgency about it.

One reason is that many Americans don't have daily contact with it. College graduates who live in a major metro area — those who tend to read a national newspaper, to put it another way — do enjoy a rising standard of living.

Yet even for them, the stagnation looms over life. It breeds political dysfunction, and it helps explain why so many Americans aren't swayed by facts. When you have been struggling

for decades, you tend to lose faith in society's institutions and their sober-minded experts.

Without that faith, all of our other problems become harder to solve. America's standing in the world will be diminished. The damage from climate change — one problem that's even more important than stagnation — will accelerate in the face of inaction.

Obviously, the past year has highlighted the depth and breadth of the frustration. It takes different forms and crosses demographic and political boundaries.

Most productively, the Black Lives Matter movement has focused attention on the persistent ways that discrimination blocks progress. Police shootings are only part of it: The typical white household earns 70 percent more than the typical black household, unchanged from 40 years ago.

Most dangerously, Donald Trump has captured a presidential nomination with one of history's oldest tricks — using economic frustrations to attract political support by igniting

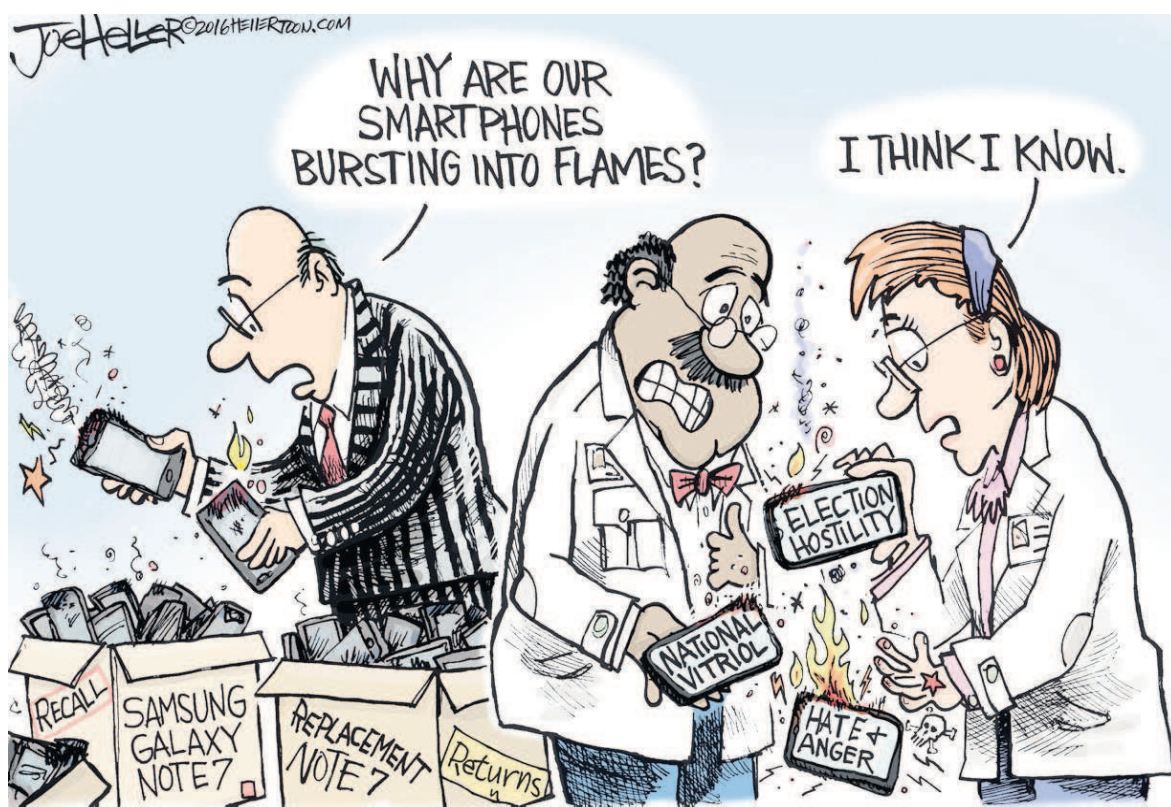
ethnic hatred. Much of the hatred may have been lurking already, but the frustrations let it come out of hiding and flourish.

The country's immediate task is to reject Trump — for each of us to help ensure that his deeply un-American campaign remains un-American. I'd encourage everyone to find one concrete way over the next four weeks to play a part.

But rejecting Trump isn't enough. If that is all we do, Trumpism will return, with a savvy frontman.

The real answer has to involve ensuring that a large majority of Americans enjoy a rising quality of life. Doing so means better, more equal schools. It means a tax code less favorable to the rich and, yes, the upper middle class. It means criminal justice reform. It means a bigger emphasis on good-paying jobs.

The moral case for a fairer society is clear. But there is also a self-interested case. If the trends continue, the United States will ultimately become a worse place to live, for all Americans, no matter how insulated they may feel today.



Can the US win this election?

By THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN
New York Times News Service

Seriously, why didn't we sell tickets? If only our national election had been pay-per-view for the rest of the world, we could have wiped out the national debt. But while viewers around the world seem to be lapping up our national reality TV show, are we, the citizens of America, going to get anything out of it?

Specifically, are we going to get the thing we need most and have enjoyed least this century: effective government? We have



too much deferred maintenance to fix, too much deferred leadership to generate and too much deferred re-imagining to undertake to wait another four years to solve our biggest problems, especially in this age of accelerating technology and climate change.

If we will have indulged in almost two years of electoral entertainment and pathos just to end up back where we were, only worse, with even more venomous gridlock in Washington, it won't just be emotionally depressing, we'll really start to decline as a nation. When we forfeit governing our country strategically at the national level for this long, inevitably the roof will start to leak and the floors will start to buckle.

But how can anything good come from a campaign where the entertainment is increasingly X-rated and where the winner will be so morally injured — because of the hatchet wounds that were inflicted by the loser or that were self-inflicted?

Fixing the end

What needs to happen for this election-drama script to end differently, or at least not so tragically?

For starters, this version of the Republican Party has to die. I don't say that as a partisan. I say that as a citizen who believes that America

needs a healthy center-right party that offers more market-based solutions to problems; keeps the pressure on for deregulation, freer trade and smaller government; and is willing to compromise. But today's version of the GOP is not such a problem-solving party.

We have known that ever since the GOP speaker of the House John Boehner quit, not because he couldn't work with President Barack Obama but because roughly a quarter of House Republicans, the so-called Freedom Caucus, were simply not interested in governing and had made his job impossible.

For the sake of the country, this version of the Republican Party has to be fractured, with the extreme far right going off with the likes of Donald Trump, the Tea Party, Ted Cruz — along with all the right-wing TV and radio gasbags who thrive on chaos — leaving behind a moderate center-right bloc, which, one hopes, one day would become the new GOP. But it will need to nurture a new base, one inspired by a Jack Kemp spirit of conservative innovation, not by Trump dog whistles of anger, xenophobia and racial enmity.

Toward that end it is particularly important that Trump be crushed at the polls to send the message inside the GOP and out that someone of his poisonous ilk can never win in America, and to strip him and his loyalists of any argument that the election was rigged.

At the same time, we have to hope not only that Hillary Clinton wins the national election but also that Democrats retake at least the Senate, so she has some real leverage to forge trade-offs with a more sane GOP to start fixing things: putting in place common-sense gun laws, like restoring the Assault Weapons Ban, requiring universal background checks and making it illegal for anyone on the terrorist watch list to buy a gun; borrowing money at near-zero interest rates to rebuild our infrastructure; replacing some

income and corporate taxes with a revenue-neutral carbon tax to stimulate more clean-energy production; fixing Obamacare; and implementing sensible immigration reform and responsible tax and entitlement reforms.

The bigger Clinton's margin of victory, the less dependent she'd be, I hope, on the left wing of her party, and the more likely she'd work with Republicans, as she vowed during the last debate, by "finding common ground, because you have to be able to get along with people to get things done in Washington."

I say "hope" because I don't know who the real Hillary is — the more Bernie Sanderish one speaking publicly or the more Bill Clintonish one who spoke privately to Goldman Sachs.

Nightmare scenario

The nightmare scenario — ruling out, God forbid, a Trump victory — is that Clinton wins with a slim majority and the GOP holds the House and the Senate. The Democratic left would have a stranglehold on Clinton while Trump, who would start his own TV network and movement, would keep the Republican base in a state of permanent anger, intimidating every Republican lawmaker who contemplated compromise. If that happens, America will be adrift.

One more wish. Within hours of the leak of the "Access Hollywood" tape showing Trump saying vile things about women, WikiLeaks, which seems to have become an arm of Russian intelligence, leaked Democratic Party emails meant to embarrass Clinton. The Clinton camp suggested that Russia was trying to tilt the election to Trump. If so, crushing Trump at the polls is the best way for Americans to say to Vladimir Putin, "You can manipulate your elections, but you can't manipulate ours."

But please, Lord, let that not be the only good thing to come out of this election.