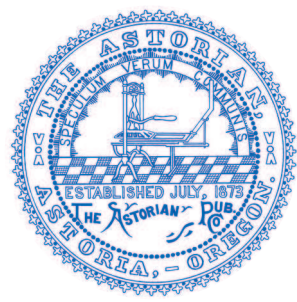


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OUR VIEW

Court rulings on terminals benefit coast

News since the start of the year has not been good for proponents of fossil-fuel terminals in our region. There are lessons to be learned from this experience.

Early this month, Washington state Public Lands Commissioner Peter Goldmark denied a key lease for the proposed Millennium Bulk Terminals coal export facility in Longview, Washington. This wasn't necessarily the last nail in the project's coffin, but it further weakened the economic arguments for a plan already on shaky ground.

And last week, the Washington State Supreme Court issued a ruling that effectively blocks a crude-by-rail terminal in Hoquiam on Grays Harbor. The ruling was based on a state law that places a top priority on making sure the coastline is safe from catastrophic environmental damage. The ruling was celebrated by the Quinalt Indian Nation and fishing groups.

"This is a strong decision protecting and preserving coastal communities now and into the future," said Dale Beasley of Ilwaco, Washington, the president of the Coalition of Coastal Fisheries, a group that includes fishermen, oyster growers and charter boat operators. "Today's decision gives commercial fishermen another handle to protect our livelihoods."

These decisions have direct implications for communities on both sides of the Columbia River. Commercial fishermen have been worried about the potential for oil spills that could decimate their industry. At a recent meeting with newly elected Washington State Rep. Jim Walsh, Lower Columbia fishermen said they were equally worried about the Longview coal terminal — which might result in coal-particulate pollution and increase the potential for shipping accidents. Tourism, home values, and recreational and commercial shellfish harvesting also would be endangered by fossil-fuel pollution.

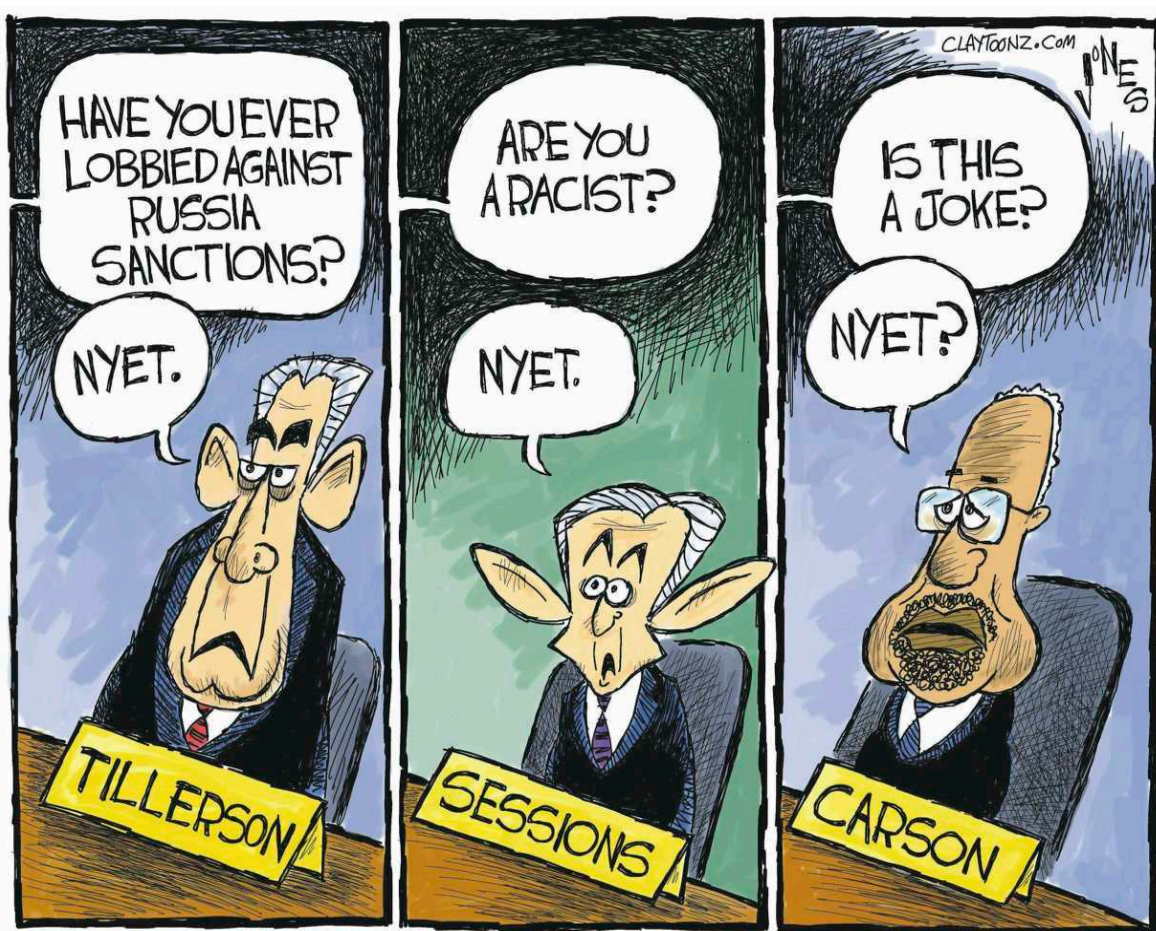
Supporters of these projects point to job creation, society's continuing need for energy and the generally good safety records of railways and ocean-going ships. The Longview terminal, by providing a cost-effective way to export Powder River Basin coal to Asia, would bolster coal-state economies and improve the U.S. trade balance sheet.

Ramping up U.S. energy development is a major priority of President-elect Donald Trump — a way of firing up the national economy while continuing to increase our independence on oil imports. Based partly on this promise, the coal states of Wyoming and West Virginia provided Trump's largest winning margins.

The Washington state terminal decisions suggest limits to Trump's ability to deliver. This doesn't mean his administration won't try. The federal legal arsenal includes a variety of tools designed to keep states from interfering with national policies, including the possibility of coercive measures like tying federal aid to compliance with federal wishes.

The West Coast states have been described as the "Thin Green Line" blocking coal and other carbon fuels from reaching purchasers and, ultimately, the atmosphere in the form of greenhouse gases. Citizens of our states are far from united on this position.

In our area, however, no matter our individual feelings about U.S. energy policies, we should be united in defending our long-established industries that rely on pure water.



The Trump and pony show

By **TIMOTHY EGAN**
New York Times News Service

As a professional skeptic, I'm going to remain doubtful that Donald Trump has been a willing Russian tool, masterfully serving the needs of a dangerous American adversary. I'm not going to buy all the sordid details of "that crap," as

the president-elect called intelligence reports of his being compromised by nasty people operating out of the Kremlin.

I'm going to believe Donald Trump, for now, which is more than he ever did for the graceful president soon to exit. Trump has been a garbage conveyor belt, passing along every bit of half-fermented slop that came his way. "An extremely credible source has called my office and told me that Barack Obama's birth certificate is a fraud," he tweeted in 2012, to cite one lie among thousands.

I'm going to believe this same Donald Trump who urged Russia to interfere with an American election, because to believe otherwise, without irrefutable evidence, is a pretty damn horrific thing to imagine. It would mean that in a week, the Russians will have installed a stooge — and done it with the right wing of this country cheering them on.

I'm going to follow the advice an old journalism hand gave me when I started out at City Hall: pay more attention to what a politician does than to what he says. In that sense, Trump's adviser Kellyanne Conway was half-right when she urged people to largely ignore "what's come out of his mouth."

His tweets are a diversion, many of them celebrity-on-celebrity drivel without a dust mite of dignity. They move markets, and ignite news cycles — an addictive power for an insecure man. His Trump Tower perp walks, showing off the latest poor soul to kiss the king's ring, reveal little but the everyday nourishment needs of a narcissist.

In the combustible Wednesday news conference, the skills of a talented charlatan were on display. Trump is a terrific showman, and the press was no match. He belittled, bragged, dodged, told a half-dozen half-truths. His motto should be: stay unclassy! He said he could run the country and his business at the same time. And judging by the paper-thin conflict-of-interest wall he set up, he probably will.

You know we're in trouble when the only reasonable voice during a week of capital chaos is a man whose nickname is Mad Dog.

His tax returns could reveal many of those opportunities to enrich himself from the Oval Office. But he refuses to release this vital information. He never answered two essential questions of the transition: What will he replace Obamacare with? And, did anyone in his campaign have contact with Russian operatives working to ensure that Hillary Clinton would not get elected?

Watch. Trump mentioned that over the weekend he was offered a \$2 billion deal with Dubai, which sounds like a bribe. Don't worry, the Trump organization will not do deals abroad while he's president, he said. But he will be making decisions that can fatten his own family holdings at home, and he will be conducting foreign policy with countries where the Trumps have business entanglements.

"This is not a blind trust," said

Walter Shaub, the director of the Office of Government Ethics. "It's not even close."

Watch. When Russia preys on a defenseless neighbor, or Trump allows Vladimir Putin, a man U.S. Sen. John McCain called "a thug, a murderer, a killer and a KGB agent," to commit war crimes without consequence, we'll have something to talk about. Will Rex Tillerson, the former Exxon Mobil chief picked to be secretary of state, earn his Order of Friendship Award from Putin, or act like the top diplomat of a nation long committed to defending human rights?

Watch. When Trump's only real infrastructure program is a wall along the Mexican border, saddling taxpayers with a bill that could exceed \$50 billion with no discernible economic benefit at home, then he must answer for something far more consequential than his opinion of the acting skills of Meryl Streep.

Watch. When the executive puts his signature to real policies. First up is likely to be the Obamacare repeal, which would give a huge tax cut to the wealthiest Americans. The 400 highest taxpayers would each get a break of about \$7 million, on average. Soon to follow, gutting the estate tax, which could benefit his Cabinet and his family by upward of \$9 billion total.

Watch. When that same Cabinet, heavy on billionaires and people with no government experience goes to work. In the inner circle, Trump's national security adviser will be Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn, who was paid to give a speech by RT, the Kremlin's main propaganda outlet for English-language television.

Watch for a counterweight of sanity, the nominee for defense secretary, retired Marine Corps Gen. James Mattis. On Thursday, he broke with Trump, saying the United States must confront Putin and should try to make the Iran nuclear deal work. You know we're in trouble when the only reasonable voice during a week of capital chaos is a man whose nickname is Mad Dog.

What happened to the post-election honeymoon?

By **CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER**

Washington Post Writers Group

WASHINGTON — The shortest honeymoon on record is officially over.

Normally, newly elected presidents enjoy a wave of goodwill that allows them to fly high at least through their first 100 days. Donald Trump has not yet been sworn in and the honeymoon has already come and gone.

Presidents-elect usually lie low during the interregnum. Trump never lies low. He seized the actual presidency from Barack Obama within weeks of his election — cutting ostentatious deals with U.S. manufacturers to keep jobs at home, challenging 40-year-old China policy, getting into a very public fight with the intelligence agencies. By now he has taken over the presidential stage. It is true that we have only one pres-

ident at a time, and for over a month it's been Donald Trump.

The result is quantifiable. A Quinnipiac poll from Nov. 17 to Nov. 20 — the quiet, hope-and-change phase — showed a decided bump in Trump's popularity and in general national optimism. It didn't last long. In the latest Quinnipiac poll, the numbers have essentially returned to Trump's (historically dismal) pre-election levels.

For several reasons. First, the refusal of an unbending left to accept the legitimacy of Trump's victory. It's not just the demonstrators chanting "not my president." It is leading Democrats pushing one line after another to delegitimize the election, as in: he lost the popular vote, it's James Comey's fault, the Russians did it.

Second, Trump's own instincts and inclinations, a thirst for attention that leads to hyperactivity. His need to dominate every news cycle feeds an almost compulsive tweet habit. It has placed him just about continuously at the center of the national

conversation and not always to his benefit.

Trump simply can't resist playground pushback. His tweets gave Meryl Streep's Golden Globes screed priceless publicity. His mocking Arnold Schwarzenegger for bad "Apprentice" ratings — compared with "the ratings machine, DJT" — made Trump look small and Arnold (almost) sympathetic.

Nor is this behavior likely to change after the inauguration. It's part of Trump's character. Nothing negative goes unanswered because, for Trump, an unanswered slight has the air of concession or surrender.

Finally, it's his chronic indiscipline, his jumping randomly from one subject to another without rhyme, reason or larger strategy. In a week packed with confirmation hearings and Russian hacking allegations, what was he doing meeting with Robert Kennedy Jr., an anti-vaccine activist pushing the thoroughly discredited idea that vaccines cause autism?

We know from way back during the Republican debates that Trump

himself has dabbled in this dubious territory. One could, however, write it off as one of many campaign oddities that would surely fade away. Not so, apparently.

This is not good. The idea that vaccines cause autism originally arose in a 1998 paper in the medical journal *The Lancet* that was later found to be fraudulent and had to be retracted. Indeed, the lead researcher acted so egregiously that he was stripped of his medical license.

Kennedy says that Trump asked him to chair a commission about vaccine safety. While denying that, the transition team does say that the commission idea remains open. Either way, the damage is done. The anti-vaccine fanatics seek any validation. This indirect endorsement from Trump is immensely harmful. Vaccination has prevented more childhood suffering and death than any other measure in history. With so many issues pressing, why even go there?

The vaccination issue was merely an exclamation point on the scatter-brained randomness of the Trump

transition. All of which contributes to the harried, almost wearying feeling that we are already well into the Trump presidency.

Compare this to eight years ago and the near euphoria — overblown but nonetheless palpable — at the swearing-in of Barack Obama. Not since JFK had any new president enjoyed such genuine goodwill upon accession to office.

And yet it turns out that such auspicious beginnings are not at all predictable. We could see it this same week. Tuesday night, there stood Obama giving a farewell address that only underscored the failure of a presidency so bathed in optimism at its start. The final speech, amazingly, could have been given, nearly unedited, in 2008. Why it even ended with "yes we can."

Is there more powerful evidence of the emptiness of the intervening two terms? When your final statement is a reprise of your first, you have unwittingly confessed to being nothing more than a historical parenthesis.