

# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

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## OUR VIEW

# Trump's team needs to move on trade deals

Our colleagues at Politico last week published an analysis that showed the nation's 11 former partners in the Trans-Pacific Partnership are involved in 27 separate negotiations with each other, with major international trading blocs and regional powerhouses such as China.

It reports that seven deals that impact U.S. farmers have been signed since the Trump administration pulled the United States out of the TPP.

The TPP was seen by many, but not all, U.S. agricultural groups as a boon. It included the U.S. and 11 other countries — Japan, Canada, Mexico, Australia, Vietnam, Chile, Malaysia, Peru, New Zealand, Singapore and Brunei. Japan, Mexico and Canada are among the biggest trade partners for U.S. agriculture.

Negotiations on the pact began in 2008 under President George W. Bush. A deal was reached in October of 2015.

President Barack Obama supported the final deal and submitted it to Congress for ratification. With an election looming, Republicans and Democrats in Congress weren't anxious to be pinned down on a deal that had both support and opposition that crossed party lines.

The pact's critics included the Republican and the Democratic presidential nominees.

Donald Trump said the deal would undermine the U.S. economy.

As secretary of state, Hillary Clinton raved about the deal, calling it the "gold standard" of trade pacts. Candidate Clinton opposed the deal during the campaign and vowed to oppose it as president.

So without ratification prior to the election, the U.S. was destined to reject the TPP in its present form.

Following through on his campaign promise, President Trump withdrew from the accord on Jan. 23.

Among the other parties in the pact there are differing opinions as to what the TPP means without the United States. Shinzo Abe, Japan's prime minister, says the deal is meaningless without the U.S.

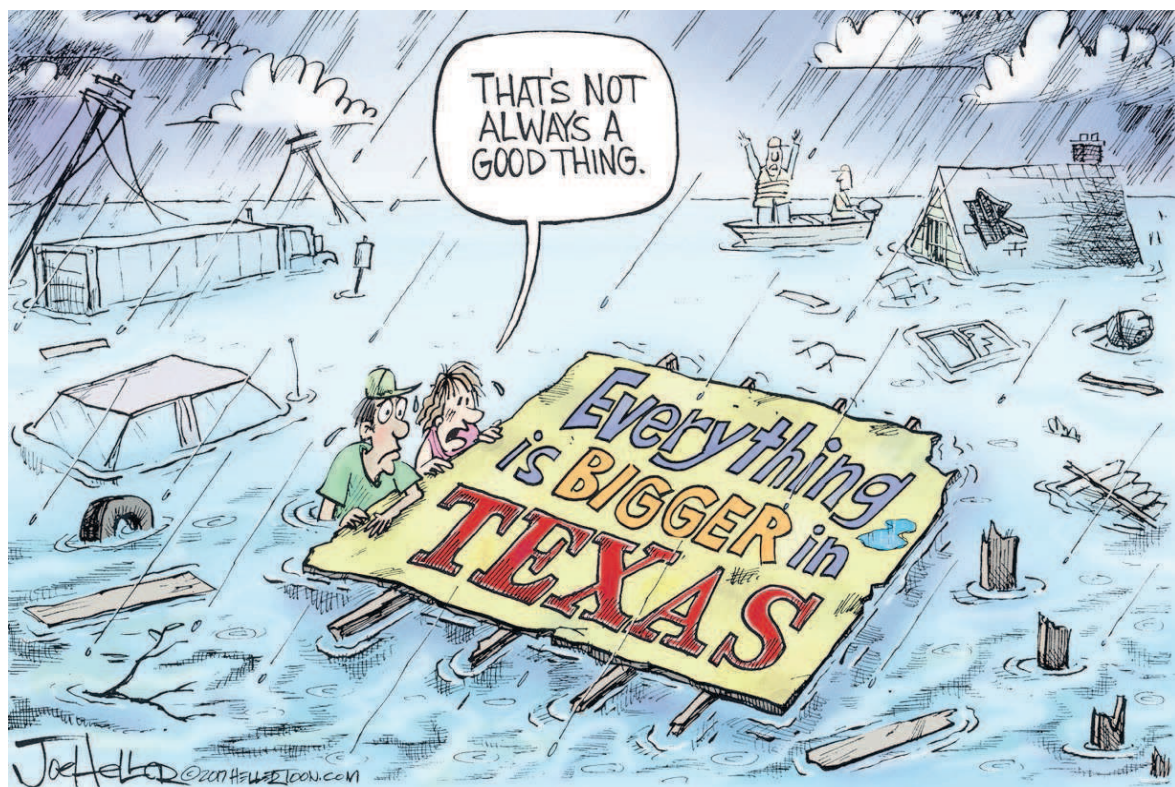
Nevertheless, our trading partners around the Pacific Rim aren't wasting time. There are a host of bilateral and multilateral discussions in the works. China, Trump's campaign nemesis, is trying to make deals with our trading partners.

Throughout the campaign, and since taking office, Trump said he'd replace the 12-party pact with a series of bilateral trade deals that would bring jobs and industry back to the United States. That sounds great. When can we expect that to happen?

Farmers and ranchers, a group that largely supported Trump's election, have a lot riding on foreign trade. The U.S. exports \$135 billion in agricultural products each year. It could always be better, but it's pretty great as it is.

It's hard to say what dumping the TPP and renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement may mean for the economy in general, and for farmers and ranchers in particular.

But at the moment it's fair to ask what happens next, and when will it happen? We await a tweet, or any other appropriate communication, from the Oval Office.



## GUEST COLUMN

# Regular attendance at school is vital to academic success

By CRAIG HOPPES  
Special to The Daily Astorian

As the start of the school year quickly approaches, I would like to take this opportunity to personally welcome returning Astoria School District students, as well as new students and their families to the school district.



The beginning of the school year is always a renewed and exciting time for students and we are excited to welcome you to the 2017-2018 school year! Students are showing tremendous academic growth in numerous content areas including reading and math. The school district's targeted strategic plan and dedicated staff have not only increased student learning, but have also provided numerous student-centered learning opportunities for all students. A few examples of these opportunities are: a new program that provides targeted instruction within the regular elementary classroom for all Spanish speaking students; after-school programs designed to provide extra academic support for students in third to 12th grades, that includes transportation; a new elementary-level report card designed to better communicate student progress in the lower grades.

The school district continues to dedicate time each week for teachers to collaborate and learn from each other, as well as many other programs that are designed to help with student learning.

Student attendance is an area of improvement that the school district continues to focus on. Nearly 1 out of every 4 students is considered chronically absent, which means that a student would have to miss at least 10 percent of all school days. According to our enrollment, this means that over 400 students are considered chronically absent. Staff continue to work with families to provide assistance and support in helping parents get their children to school on a regular basis. Although staff strive to support student attendance, we have not been able to

improve student attendance over the last five to years.

Regular student attendance is vital in the overall success of student academics, and in some cases has a direct relationship with a student graduating from high school. The following is research from the Attendance Works website:

- Absenteeism in the first month of school can predict poor attendance throughout the school year. Half the students who miss two to four days in September go on to miss nearly a month of school.
- An estimated 5 million to 7.5 million U.S. students miss nearly a month of school each year.
- Absenteeism and its ill effects start early. One in 10 kindergarten and first grade students are chronically absent. Poor attendance can influence whether children read proficiently by the end of third grade

**School staff are anxious to help families who may need assistance with getting their children to school. Please do not hesitate to reach out for help, if needed.**

or be held back.

- By sixth grade, chronic absence becomes a leading indicator that a student will drop out of high school.
- Research shows that missing 10 percent of the school year, or about 18 days in most school districts, negatively affects a student's academic performance. That's just two days a month and that's known as chronic absence.

In an effort to better support

regular student attendance, the Astoria School District has begun a new program called "Strive for 5 — Attendance Matters." The school district's goal is for each student to miss less than five days throughout the 2017-2018 school year. Each school has an attendance committee that has gone through extensive training about student attendance.

Each school is in the process of creating an attendance plan that will be used to monitor and support students who have chronic absenteeism. It is important for parents to know the academic impact of missing school is the same whether the absences are excused or unexcused. School attendance matters no matter why a student misses school.

There are some important strategies that parents can use to help with student attendance. These strategies include:

- Set a regular bed time and a morning routine.
- Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before.
- Introduce your child to teachers and classmates before school starts to help with the transition.
- Don't let your child stay home unless he/she is truly sick. Keep in mind complaints of a stomachache or headache can be a sign of anxiety and not a reason to stay home.
- If your child seems anxious about going to school, talk to teachers, school counselors or other parents for advice on how to make them feel comfortable and excited about learning.
- Develop backup plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a neighbor, or another parent.
- Avoid medical appointments and extended trips when school is in session.

Student attendance is a priority for school staff and the school board. The school board has created a goal concerning attendance for the 2017-2018 school year. School staff are anxious to help families who may need assistance with getting their children to school. Please do not hesitate to reach out to school staff for help, if needed.

Craig Hoppes is the superintendent of the Astoria School District.

# Arpaio brought fascism, American style, to Arizona

By PAUL KRUGMAN  
New York Times News Service

As sheriff of Maricopa County, Arizona, Joe Arpaio engaged in blatant racial discrimination. His officers systematically targeted Latinos, often arresting them on spurious charges and at least sometimes beating them up when they questioned those charges. Read the report from the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, and prepare to be horrified.

Once Latinos were arrested, bad things happened to them. Many were sent to Tent City, which Arpaio himself proudly called a "concentration camp," where they lived under brutal conditions, with temperatures inside the tents sometimes rising to 145 degrees.

And when he received court orders to stop these practices, he simply ignored them, which led to his eventual conviction — after decades in office — for contempt of court.

But he had friends in high places, indeed in the highest of places. We now know that Donald Trump tried to get the Justice Department to drop the case against Arpaio, a clear case of attempted obstruction of justice. And when that ploy failed, Trump, who had already suggested that Arpaio was "convicted for doing his job," pardoned him.

By the way, about "doing his job," it turns out that Arpaio's officers were too busy rounding up brown-skinned people and investigating President Barack Obama's birth certificate to do other things, like investigate cases of sexually abused children. Priorities!

Let's call things by their proper names here. Arpaio is, of course, a white supremacist. But he's more than that. There's a word for political regimes that round up members of minority groups and send them to concentration camps, while rejecting the rule of law: What Arpaio brought to Maricopa, and what the president of the United States has just endorsed, was fascism, American style.

So how did we get to this point?

Trump's motives are easy to understand. For one thing, Arpaio, with his racism and authoritarianism, really is his kind of guy. For another, the pardon is a signal to those who might be tempted to make deals with the special investigator as the Russia probe closes in on the White House: Don't worry, I'll protect you.

Finally, standing up for white people who keep brown people down pleases Trump's base, whom he's going to need more than ever as the scandals creep closer and the big policy wins he promised keep not happening.

But the Trump base of angry white voters is a distinct minority in the country as a whole. Furthermore, those voters have always been there. Fifteen years ago, writing about the radicalization of the GOP, I suggested the hard core of angry voters was around 20 percent of the electorate; that still seems like a reasonable guess.

What makes it possible for someone like Trump to attain power and hold it is the acquiescence of people, both voters and politicians, who aren't white supremacists, who

sort-of kind-of believe in the rule of law, but are willing to go along with racists and lawbreakers if it seems to serve their interests.

There have been endless reports about the low-education white voters who went overwhelmingly for Trump last November. But he wouldn't have made it over the top without millions of votes from well-educated Republicans who — despite the media's orgy of false equivalence or worse (emails!) — had no excuse for not realizing what kind of man he was. For whatever reason, be it political tribalism or the desire for lower taxes, they voted for him anyway.

Given the powers we grant to the president, who in some ways is almost like an elected dictator, giving the office to someone likely to abuse that power invites catastrophe. The only real check comes from Congress, which retains the power to impeach; even the potential for impeachment can constrain a bad president.

But Republicans control Congress; how many of them besides John McCain have offered full-throated denunciations of the

Arpaio pardon?

The answer is, very few. Paul Ryan, the speaker of the House, had a spokesman declare that he "does not agree with this decision" — not exactly a ringing statement. Yet Ryan did better than most of his colleagues, who have said nothing at all.

This bodes ill if, as seems all too likely, the Arpaio pardon is only the beginning: We may well be in the early stages of a constitutional crisis.

Does anyone consider it unthinkable that Trump will fire Robert Mueller and try to shut down investigations into his personal and political links to Russia? Does anyone have confidence that Republicans in Congress will do anything more than express mild disagreement with his actions if he does?

As I said, there's a word for people who round up members of ethnic minorities and send them to concentration camps, or praise such actions. There's also a word for people who, out of cowardice or self-interest, go along with such abuses: collaborators. How many such collaborators will there be? I'm afraid we'll soon find out.