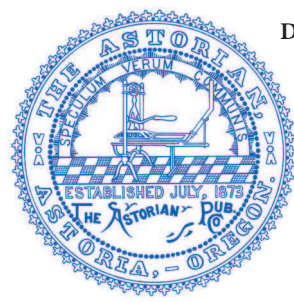


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OUR VIEW



Thomas E. Franklin/The Bergen Record

Firefighters raise the American flag at ground zero in New York after the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

Our strength is in our unity

For many Americans, the unimaginable images of 16 years ago today are burned into our national fabric, never to be forgotten.

Those searing memories of mass death and destruction resulted from coordinated attacks by the Islamic terrorist group al-Qaeda aboard four hijacked airliners.

Two hijacked jets toppled the Twin Towers of New York's World Trade Center while a third slammed into the Pentagon in Arlington County, Virginia. Aboard the fourth hijacked plane, which initially changed course toward Washington, D.C., passengers bravely fought the terrorists and the plane crashed into a vacant field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

In all, the attacks killed 2,997 people, injured more than 6,000 others, and caused at least \$10 billion in infrastructure and property damage. The deaths tragically included more than 325 responding law enforcement officers and nearly 100 firefighters.

The 9/11 legacy, however, goes far beyond the attacks. It rattled our national consciousness, our sense of security and it changed our lives in ways we previously took for granted. A generation of children born that year are now teenagers entering their final years of high school, about to enter adulthood in a world far different than before their birth. They have never experienced our nation at peace.

What they have seen is that the attacks spurred the War on Terrorism, which continues to this day, the longest war in our history. They have learned the 9/11 events also spawned increases in hate crimes, overarching government surveillance and profiling. They have observed that as the war progressed it created bitter political partisanship and has cost billions of tax dollars. They have watched as it's divided those who believe the money should have been spent to cure deep domestic ills with those who say the far-away fighting is protecting our freedom, security and values.

As citizens and taxpayers, we must consider it all as we try to set a positive example for the future. While we need to oppose those who engage in hate and violence and uphold the principles our nation was founded upon, we must always hold government directly accountable when it oversteps or misleads.

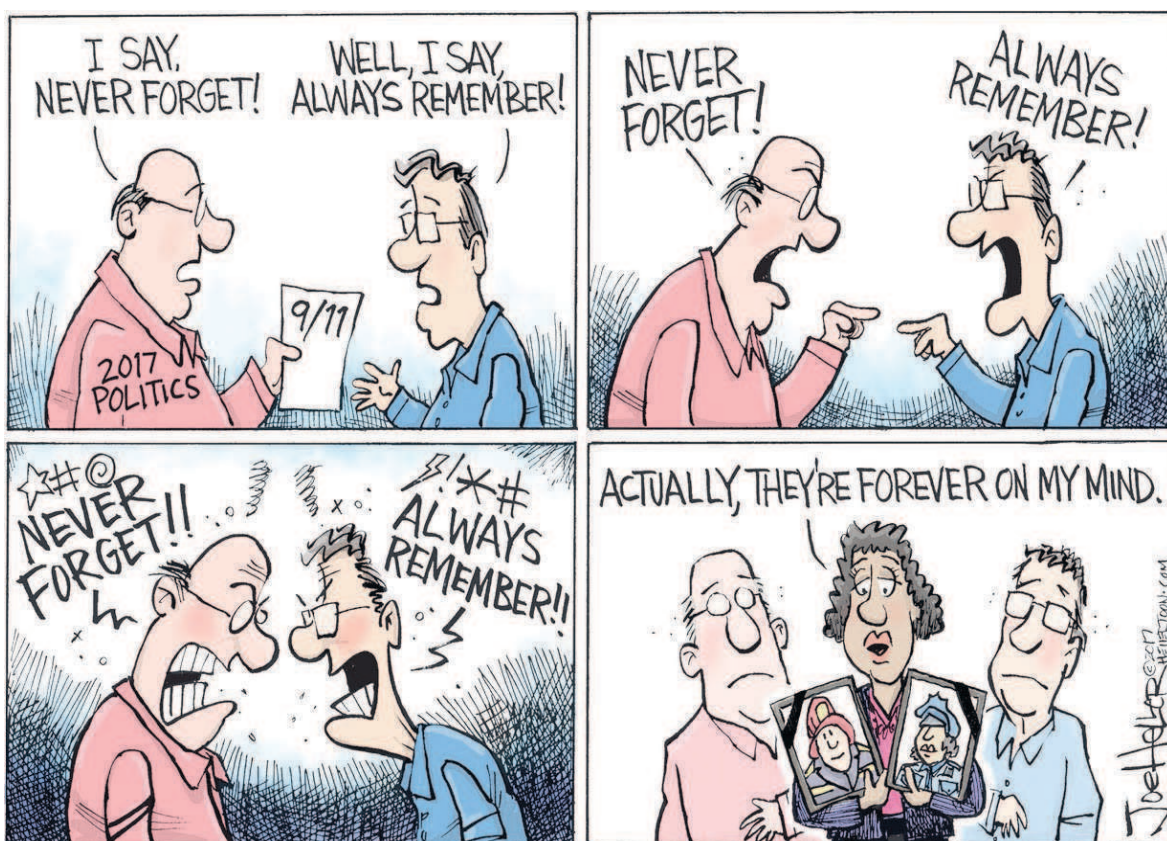
Importantly, we must also never forget the pain and loss of life from 9/11, and we must never lose sight of the incredible heroism and sacrifice it provoked or the national unity that surfaced in its wake. On that day and those that immediately followed, we weren't Democrats and Republicans, we weren't divided by race and cultural issues. We unified as one nation, people helping people, sacrificing when necessary, all Americans.

It's not the first time we've had that national unity, and it won't be our last. It's in our blood and dates to our nation's birth. It heroically rises like the American flag hoisted by three firefighters at ground zero in the 9/11 aftermath, and it proudly flies like the Star-Spangled Banner over Fort McHenry in Baltimore 203 years ago this week during the War of 1812.

Each time our freedom is threatened, and whenever the country or a region suffers a calamity, Americans always respond. The outpouring of national support for the victims of hurricanes Katrina, Sandy and Harvey provides recent examples. Our history is filled with countless others.

What we must do is to continue to learn from these lessons. They teach us all that our strength as a country is in our unity, not in our divisiveness.

Each time our freedom is threatened, and whenever the country or a region suffers a calamity, Americans always respond.



Dreamers, liars and bad economics

By PAUL KRUGMAN

New York Times News Service

Does it matter that Jeff Sessions, the attorney general, tried to justify Donald Trump's immigration cruelty with junk economics? It's definitely not the main issue. Trump's decision to rescind the Deferred Action

for Childhood Arrivals policy is, above all else, immoral. The 800,000 beneficiaries of DACA — the so-called Dreamers — have done nothing wrong; they came to the United States illegally, but not of their own volition, because they were children at the time.

They are, according to all available data, an exemplary segment of our population: hard-working young people, many seeking to improve themselves through higher education. They're committed to the values of their home — because America is their home.

To yank the rug out from under the Dreamers — perhaps even to use the information they supplied voluntarily to harass and deport them — is a cruel betrayal. And it's self-evidently driven by racial hostility. Does anyone believe this would be happening if the typical Dreamer had been born in, say, Norway rather than Mexico?

Still, Sessions chose to put economics front and center in his statement, declaring that DACA, which allows the Dreamers to work legally, has "denied jobs to hundreds of thousands of Americans by allowing those same jobs to go to illegal aliens." That's just false, and the decision to lead with such a falsehood tells you a lot, not just about this decision, but about the Trump administration in general.

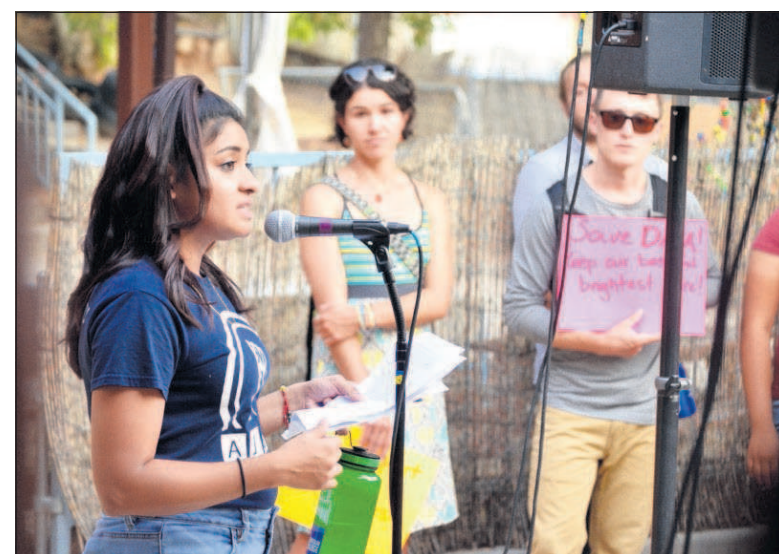
It's true that Trump and company tell a lot of lies about economics (and everything else).

The day after announcing that he would rescind DACA, Trump gave a speech on tax reform in which he claimed, as he has on multiple occasions, that America is the "highest-taxed nation in the world." As fact-checkers have pointed out every time he says this, this isn't just false, it's almost the opposite of the truth — the U.S. collects less in taxes, as a share of national income, than almost any other advanced economy. But Trump just keeps repeating the lie.

So having officials make false claims about the economics of DACA is, in a way, just standard operating procedure for this administration. Yet I'd argue that in this context it's especially noteworthy, and especially vile.

For one thing, what was stuff about jobs even doing in a statement by the attorney general?

The official administration line



Ryan Summerlin/Glenwood Springs Post Independent

Anahi Araza, a Dreamer with the activist group AJUA, leads a rally at Colorado Mountain College in Glenwood Springs, Colo., on Tuesday protesting the revocation of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.

In short, letting Dreamers work is all economic upside for the rest of our nation, with no downside unless you have something against people with brown skin and Hispanic surnames. Which is, of course, what this is all really about.

is that Trump had no choice, that he was regretfully taking harsh action because DACA was an illegal exercise in executive power — which was also supposedly the reason the statement came from Sessions rather than the president himself. Actually, the legal case for DACA is pretty strong, and putting Sessions in front was probably about Trump's cowardice more than anything else. But in any case, adding "and besides, they're stealing our jobs" undercuts the whole pretense.

Furthermore, the claim was, as I said, junk economics. The idea that there are a fixed number of jobs, so that if a foreign-born worker takes a job he or she takes it away from a native-born worker, is completely at odds with everything we know about how the economy works. Hearing it from a conservative is especially surreal.

The truth is that letting the Dreamers work legally helps the U.S. economy; pushing them out or into the shadows is bad for everyone except racists.

To understand why, you need to realize that America, like other advanced economies, is facing a double-barreled demographic challenge thanks to declining fertility.

On one side, an aging population means fewer workers paying taxes to support Social Security and Medicare. Demography is the main

reason long-run forecasts suggest problems for Social Security, and an important reason for concerns about Medicare. Driving out young workers who will pay into the system for many decades is a way to make these problems worse.

On the other side, declining growth in the working-age population reduces the returns to private investment, increasing the risk of prolonged slumps like the one that followed the 2008 financial crisis.

It's not an accident that Japan, which has low fertility and is deeply hostile to immigration, began experiencing persistent deflation and stagnation a decade before the rest of the world. Destroying DACA makes America more like Japan. Why would we want to do that?

What about the claim that immigrant workers compete with less-educated native-born workers, driving their wages down and increasing income inequality? Most of the evidence suggests that this claim is wrong, but in any case it's irrelevant here: The Dreamers are a relatively well-educated group, very different from undocumented immigrants who came as adults.

In short, letting Dreamers work is all economic upside for the rest of our nation, with no downside unless you have something against people with brown skin and Hispanic surnames. Which is, of course, what this is all really about.

WHERE TO WRITE

• **U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D):** 439 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C., 20515. Phone: 202-225-0855. Fax 202-225-9497. District office: 12725 SW Millikan Way, Suite 220, Beaverton, OR 97005. Phone: 503-469-6010. Fax 503-326-5066. Web: bonamici.house.gov/

• **U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley (D):** 313 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. Phone: 202-224-3753. Web: www.merkley.senate.gov

• **U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden (D):** 221 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C., 20510. Phone:

202-224-5244. Web: www.wyden.senate.gov

• **State Rep. Brad Witt (D):** State Capitol, 900 Court Street N.E., H-373, Salem, OR 97301. Phone: 503-986-1431. Web: www.leg.state.or.us/witt/ Email: rep.bradwitt@state.or.us

• **State Rep. Deborah Boone (D):** 900 Court St. N.E., H-481, Salem, OR 97301. Phone: 503-986-1432. Email: rep.deborah_boone@state.or.us District office: P.O. Box 928, Cannon Beach, OR 97110. Phone: 503-986-1432. Web: www.leg.state.or.us/boone/

• **State Sen. Betsy Johnson (D):**

State Capitol, 900 Court St. N.E., S-314, Salem, OR 97301. Telephone: 503-986-1716. Email: sen.betsyjohnson@state.or.us Web: www.betsyjohnson.com District Office: P.O. Box R, Scappoose, OR 97056. Phone: 503-543-4046. Fax: 503-543-5296. Astoria office phone: 503-338-1280.

• **Port of Astoria:** Executive Director, 10 Pier 1 Suite 308, Astoria, OR 97103. Phone: 503-741-3300. Email: admin@portofastoria.com

• **Clatsop County Board of Commissioners:** c/o County Manager, 800 Exchange St., Suite 410, Astoria, OR 97103. Phone: 503-325-1000.