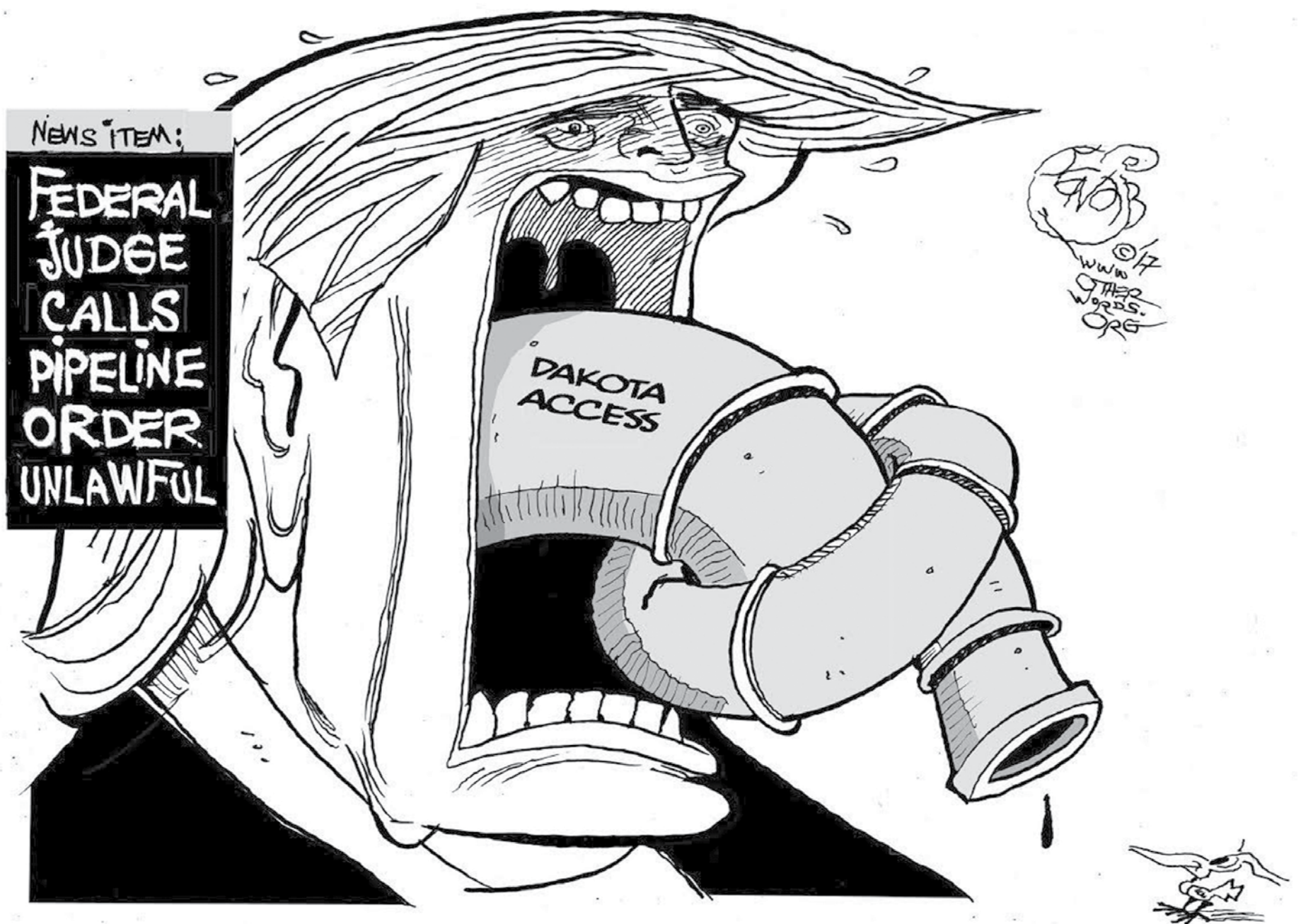


# OPINION

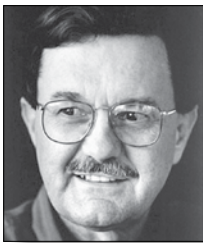


## Another Troop Surge and More Casualties

### America's Longest War

BY JIM HIGHTOWER

President Trump might have dodged military service in his youth, but he certainly is militaristic — he's bellicose, likes to issue commands, and is constantly firing off militant tweets at anyone he perceives to be an enemy (which seems to include everyone who dares to



disagree with him). Meanwhile, he and his White House full of military commanders are pondering the launch of a real shooting war, a military offensive that would be known as "Trump's War."

Actually, he'd be attempting to achieve battlefield glory by picking up and extending what at first was Bush's War, then Obama's

War. The place is Afghanistan, and the strategy is to shove another 5,000 or so American soldiers (none of whom will be named Trump) into that brutish hellhole.

Yes, that mess is still boiling, despite President Obama's 2012 pledge to end our involvement in the longest war in U.S. history.

After 16 years — and after more than 2,300 Americans killed, 20,000 others maimed, and more than \$800 billion spent on it — 8,400 of our troops are still there,

the killing continues, and we taxpayers keep pumping \$3 billion a month into the insanity.

For all of that, the Taliban forces we've been trying to defeat are stronger than ever, and the Afghan government we're supporting is as corrupt, inept, and despised as ever.

Nonetheless, Trump is violating a basic rule of civilian control of the military: Never ask the generals if they need more resources. This president has surrounded

himself with generals and surrendered crucial decision-making authority to them.

We weren't able to win in Afghanistan when 100,000 of our troops were there — so what do we "win" by putting 5,000 more soldiers in harm's way, other than more casualties? If Trump can't tell us that, we should tell him no way.

*OtherWords* columnist Jim Hightower is a radio commentator, writer, and public speaker.

## Smith Investigation Followed Process

Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury issued the following statement in response to press inquiries asking for comment on a rebuke letter she received from an esteemed group of local African American leaders charging a flawed and racially bias human resources investigation of County Commission Loretta Smith (*Unwavering Support for Smith, June*

*21 Portland Observer issue.*):

"Beginning in January, two current and former staff members made serious allegations that Commissioner Loretta Smith had misused county resources and bullied her staff.

Under our rules, the county has a process to thoroughly investigate personnel complaints. We followed that process. As the

Multnomah County Chair and Chief Executive Officer, I have an obligation to all employees to maintain a respectful, professional and harassment-free workplace.

Commissioner Smith herself publicly asked that the county investigate these allegations.

We were extremely careful with how we proceeded. The county contracted with an inde-

pendent third-party investigator specializing in employment law. The county also hired an attorney to represent Commissioner Smith in these matters. Finally, Commissioner Smith received an advance copy of the investigator's final report and she had the opportunity to respond.

In light of what is happening in our country right now, we at

Multnomah County take issues of race, gender and religion extremely seriously and strive to ensure that our workplace is free of discrimination. My duty is to ensure that process is followed, regardless of whether those involved are an elected official or line staff.

This isn't about the Commissioner's race, it's about ensuring Multnomah County has a professional and respectful workplace for everyone."