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OUR VIEW

Better way to handle disputes at nation's ports

The labor dispute affecting West Coast ports has gone on long enough. It's past time to end the work slowdown and take measures to prevent a repeat.

The work contract between the International Longshore and Warehouse Union and Pacific Maritime Association expired July 1. Union members began a slowdown to demonstrate their unhappiness with the PMA, whose members operate container terminals on the West Coast. Ports in Longview and Portland, as well as those in Seattle and Tacoma, are impacted by the slowdown.

But instead of hurting the PMA, the union has hurt agricultural exporters and other industries that import and export their goods via the ports. The result is billions of dollars in lost business. The National Association of Manufacturers and National Retail Federation estimate the port slowdown cost their members \$2 billion a day.

The region's apple, potato, hay, dairy, Christmas tree and pear industries have all been damaged. Any crop or commodity that is shipped in a container is vulnerable to the ILWU's slowdown.

Washington state's apple industry is losing about \$19 million a week, according to that state's Apple Commission. That is the equivalent of 300 container loads of apples rotting each week.

The dispute is costing jobs as well as profits. A Boise, Idaho-based beef processor reports that slowdown is costing the company millions of dollars and reduced its export

volume by 70 percent. As a result of the lost business, the company has had to reduce employees' hours, according to the Idaho State Department of Agriculture, which surveyed the damage the union action has caused to farmers, ranchers and processors.

"We are losing \$700,000 a week in sales," Dusty Standlee, president of Standlee Hay told the ISDA. "The bigger problem is that we have contracts in place that are at risk of being voided by our customer because we cannot deliver."

Phrases such as "wreaking havoc," "lost business" and "canceled orders" are repeated as agricultural exporters are damaged by the ILWU-created disaster on the docks.

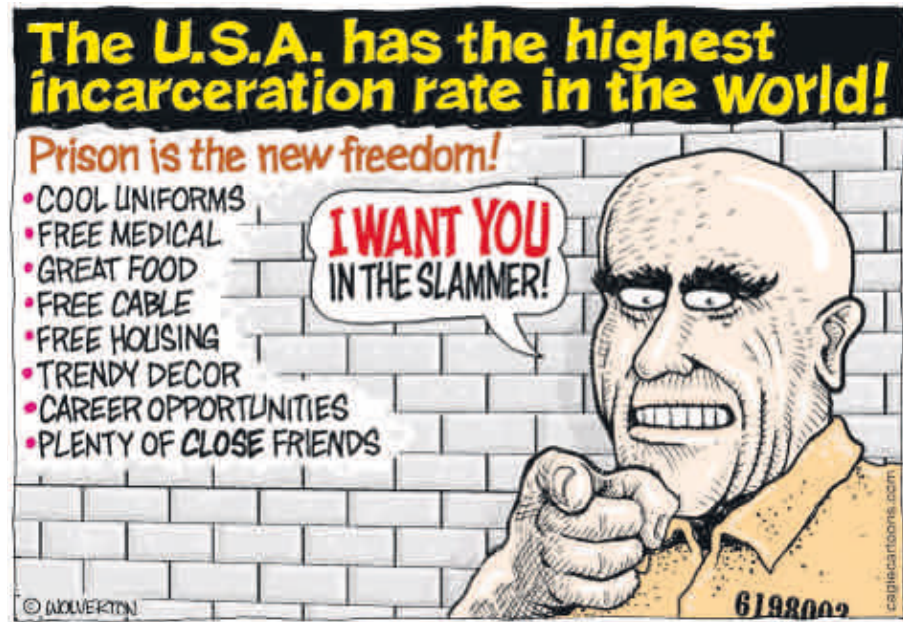
Such damage to the nation's economy cannot be overlooked.

There is a way to prevent the union from throwing tantrums: Put the ports under the Railway Labor Act. That law bars railroad and airline unions from striking until they have gone through arbitration and mediation.

The law was passed because of the importance the railroads and the airlines have to the nation and its economy. Certainly the ports have a similar impact on the economy. It only makes sense to place them under the jurisdiction of the Railway Labor Act, too.

Members of Congress can wring their hands about the mess the current labor slowdown has made of West Coast ports, or they can pass legislation that will prevent it from ever happening again.

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the East Oregonian editorial board of Publisher Kathryn Brown, Managing Editor Daniel Wattenburger, and Opinion Page Editor Tim Trainor. Other columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the East Oregonian.



Motanic statue deserves space on Main Street

This letter is in response to "Boulevard of Bronze" in Friday's *East Oregonian*. There were 5 photos of bronze statues with descriptions for each one. Unfortunately, the bronze statue of Esther Motanic, 1926 Round-Up queen, did not make the cut; yet in the local surveys taken to select the statues, Motanic was the second choice with Jackson Sundown being the most popular.

If Esther Motanic was the second choice, why was her statue relegated to a traffic island east of town?

It is impossible for anyone to interact with Esther Motanic's statue, as cars filled with tourists cannot pull over so the drivers step out. It is extremely difficult to even get close enough to the statue to read the plaque explaining who she was.

This is a description of Esther Motanic from the May 22, 1924, *Walla Walla Union-Bulletin* describing the Pioneer Pageant, "How The West Was Won."

"Esther Motanic is an outstanding figure among Indian girls of the present generation, even as the Indian

girl she is to portray (Sacagawea) was outstanding in her time. Champion of oratory in the entire Pendleton high school in 1922; an accomplished violinist and pianist; possessor of a mezzo soprano voice of unusual quality, she is a leader in Christian life among the Indians of her reservation."

Motanic is a positive role model. This contrasts with the selection of Stella Darby, whose fame was providing prostitutes for the local men of Pendleton on Saturday nights and then those same men attended church with the their wives and children on Sunday mornings until the pastor threatened to reveal the names of the patrons of the bordello.

Motanic's granddaughter, Kathryn Lewis Munden wrote in a letter to the editor on September 8, 2014, the following statement: "I find it offensive that the Pendleton city council would think it appropriate to erect a statue of my grandmother and that of a whorehouse madam. So not the same."

I recommend that Stella Darby be relocated to the front of the Underground Tours and Esther Motanic take her place.

Jerry Cronin
Pendleton

Motanic a more meaningful part of Pendleton history

For some time now, I have been following the articles in the *East Oregonian* and the subsequent discussions regarding the bronze statues being placed on Main Street. In general I applaud the effort of the city council in their support of these projects, and I certainly was glad to see the relocation of the Jackson Sundown statue that was moved from a remote corner of the Round-Up Grounds to Main Street. However, as I see it, there appears to be one glaring omission in the current status of the projects.

I have yet to hear any discussion of also relocating the statue of Esther Motanic from its obscure location in the middle of the confluence of Southeast Court and Dorian avenues to Main Street. Esther Motanic was the first Native

American chosen as Round-Up queen as well as the first Native American to attend Pendleton High School. It seems obvious to me that it is only fitting and proper that her bronze be relocated and included in the Main Street project.

I am still scratching my head at the decision to place the bronze of a prostitute on Main Street rather than that of Esther Motanic, who was a much more meaningful part of Pendleton history.

Denzel Fisher
Pendleton

Gas prices can't be all about attendant wages

I guess being a rural raised farm boy, I am not smart enough to explain the higher prices for fuel in the Pendleton and Hermiston areas than in other areas and would like it explained to me. I have heard the old excuse of "transportation costs" already, so please give me

another reason.

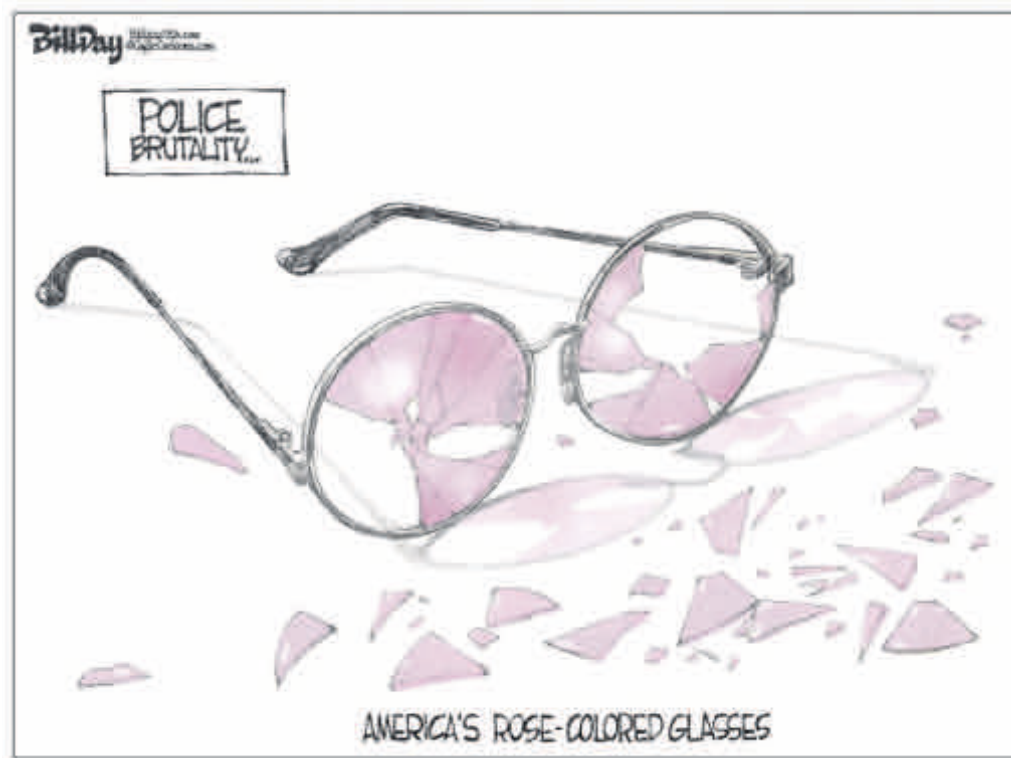
Pendleton should have a bit higher costs due to transportation costs, but why is Pilot and Space Age fuel most always in the range of 10-20 cents a gallon cheaper than in Hermiston?

Why is fuel costing \$2.59-\$2.69 here, when Washington has a 14 cents a gallon higher fuel tax but fuel in the Tri-Cities, also with a higher transportation cost, is selling between \$2.27 and 2.29 a gallon?

On Dec. 14, 2014, we drove back from Las Vegas; the highest fuel cost along the way was \$2.49 a gallon in Ely, Nevada, and the cheapest was \$2.29 in Twin Falls, Idaho. The price of fuel just prior to entering Oregon was 16 cents a gallon cheaper than in Ontario. I am sure the minimum wages paid to fuel attendants can't be all the costs, so please someone explain it to this simple farm boy.

John Harvey
Stanfield

OTHER VIEWS



Privilege of 'arrest without incident'

The day after Christmas, a shooter terrorized the streets of a Chattanooga, Tennessee, neighborhood. According to the local newspaper, the shooter was "wearing body armor" and "firing multiple shots out her window at people and cars." One witness told the paper that the shooter was "holding a gun out of the window as if it were a cigarette."

There's more: "Officers found two people who said they were at a stop sign when a woman pulled up in a dark-colored sedan and fired shots into their vehicle, hitting and disabling the radiator. Then more calls reported a woman pointing a firearm at people as she passed them in her car, and that she fired at another vehicle in the same area."

When police officers came upon the shooter, the shooter led them on a chase. The shooter even pointed the gun at a police officer.

Surely this was not going to end well. We've all seen in recent months what came of people who did far less. Surely in this case officers would have been justified in using whatever force they saw fit. Right?

According to the paper, the shooter was "taken into custody without incident or injury."

Who was this shooter anyway? Julia Shields, a 45-year-old white woman.

Take a moment and consider this. Take a long moment. It is a good thing that officers took her in "without incident or injury," of course, but can we imagine that result being universally the case if a shooter looks different? Would this episode have ended this way if the shooter had been male, or black, or both?

It's an unanswerable question, but nevertheless one that deserves pondering. Every case is different. Police officers are human beings making split-second decisions — often informed by fears — about when to use force and the degree of that force.

But that truth is also the trap. How and why are our fears constructed and activated? The American mind has been poisoned, from this country's birth, against minority populations. People of color, particularly African-American men, have been caught up in a twister of macroaggressions and micro ones. No amount of ignoring can alleviate it; no amount of achieving can ameliorate it.

And in a few seconds, or fractions of a second, before the conscious mind can catch up to the racing heart, decisions are made that can't be unmade. Dead is forever.

It's hard to read stories like this and not believe that there is a double standard in the use of force by the police. Everyone needs



CHARLES BLOW
Comment

to be treated as though his or her life matters. More suspected criminals need to be detained and tried in a court of law and not sentenced on the street to a rain of bullets.

It is no wonder that whites and blacks have such divergent views of treatment by the police. As *The Washington Post* noted recently about a poll it conducted with ABC News, only about 2 in 10 blacks "say they are confident that the police treat whites and blacks

equally, whether or not they have committed a crime." In contrast, 6 in 10 whites "have confidence that police treat both equally."

Michael Brown was unarmed. (Some witnesses in Ferguson, Missouri, say he had his hands up. Others say he charged an officer.)

Eric Garner was unarmed on a Staten Island street.

Tamir Rice was 12 years old, walking around a Cleveland park and holding a toy gun that uses nonlethal plastic pellets, but he didn't shoot at anyone.

John Crawford was in an Ohio Wal-Mart, holding, but not shooting, an air rifle he had picked up from a store shelf.

The police say Antonio Martin had a gun and pointed it at a police officer in Berkeley, Missouri, but

didn't fire it.

And Tuesday, the police say, a handgun was "revealed" during a New Jersey traffic stop of a car Jerame C. Reid was in.

But none had the privilege of being "arrested without incident or injury." They were all black, all killed by police officers. Brown was shot through the head. Garner was grabbed around the neck in a chokehold, tossed to the ground and held there, even as he pleaded that he couldn't breathe; it was all caught on video. Rice was shot within two seconds of the police officers' arrival on the scene. Crawford, Martin and Reid were also cut down by police bullets.

In the cases that have been heard by grand juries, the grand juries have refused to indict the officers.

Maybe one could argue that in some of those cases the officers were within their rights to respond with lethal force. Maybe. But shouldn't the use of force have equal application? Shouldn't it be color- and gender-blind? Shouldn't more people, in equal measures, be taken in and not taken out?

Why weren't these black men, any of them, the recipients of the same use of force — or lack thereof — as Julia Shields?

Charles M. Blow is *The New York Times's* visual Op-Ed columnist. His column appears in *The Times* on Saturday.

YOUR VIEWS

LETTERS POLICY

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