

**EAST OREGONIAN**  
Founded October 16, 1875

**KATHRYN B. BROWN**  
Publisher  
**JENNINE PERKINSON**  
Advertising Director

**DANIEL WATTENBURGER**  
Managing Editor  
**TIM TRAINOR**  
Opinion Page Editor

**OUR VIEW**

# Hanford has been 'unlimited spigot'

If a massive amount of money is available for spending, at a minimum there will be waste, perhaps fraud and maybe theft. The larger the amount of money, the bigger the magnet. We've seen that in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. The same thing happens in the private sector. And it seems to be happening domestically at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation.

The Richland-based journalist Anna King said Thursday that 14,000 Department of Energy employees are working on Hanford's cleanup. And work is stalled, perhaps hopelessly, at the multistory vitrification plant.

Also last week, Sen. Ron Wyden decried the lack of progress in the Hanford cleanup. "Obama has no plan," said Wyden. "It has been an unlimited spigot. It is astounding the amount of money that's been laid out."

Hanford was an enormously important, but secret, installation of World War II. Its B Reactor made radioactive material that became

the ingredient for the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, leading to Japan's unconditional surrender.

When things are done in secret, there is little skepticism and no cross-examination. From the start,

Hanford officials failed to recognize they were creating a mess that would haunt our region for eons.

Wyden raises the prospect that national willingness to clean up Hanford might wane. "I'm not sure the rest of the country will go along with this much longer," he said.

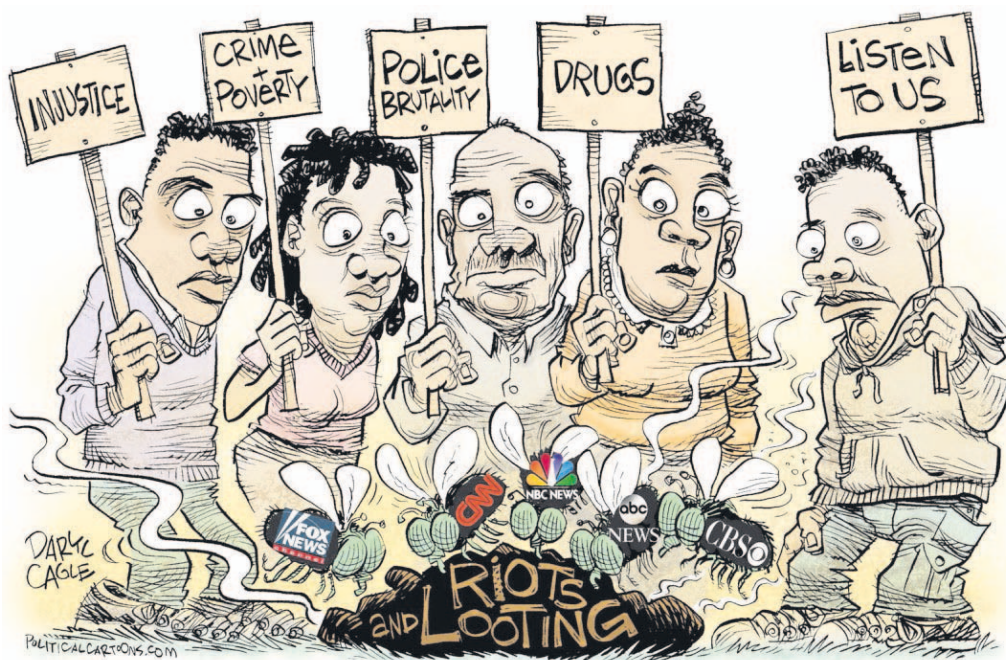
Mismanagement is the polite word for what's going

on at Hanford. While Hanford is no longer off limits to the public, the vestige of secrecy lingers. Anna King described a situation that is long on massive reports and short on candor.

She is also correct that Hanford is "the legacy that we were handed." We must contain the damage that is sitting there, perilously close to the Columbia River.

**From the start, Hanford officials failed to recognize they were creating a mess that would haunt our region for eons**

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.



**OTHER VIEWS**

## Restoring faith in justice

Last week, Baltimore's chief prosecutor, Marilyn J. Mosby, charged six officers in the death of Freddie Gray. The charges included second-degree murder, manslaughter, assault, misconduct in office and false imprisonment.

(These were only charges. There will be a defense and a trial. The officers remain innocent until and unless proven guilty.)

Mosby said at a news conference Friday as she laid out the case and announced the charges: "To the people of Baltimore and the demonstrators across America: I heard your call for 'No justice, no peace.'" She continued: "Last but certainly not least, to the youth of the city. I will seek justice on your behalf. This is a moment. This is your moment. Let's ensure we have peaceful and productive rallies that will develop structural and systemic changes for generations to come. You're at the forefront of this cause and as young people, our time is now."

Mosby seemed to recognize in that moment that this case and others like it are now about more than individual deaths and individual incidents, but about restoration — or a formation — of faith for all of America's citizens in the American justice system itself.

Faith in the system is the bedrock of the system. Without it, the system is drained of its inviolable authority. This is the danger America now faces.

After George Zimmerman shot Trayvon Martin through the chest and walked free. After there was no indictment of the officer who choked the life out of Eric Garner on video. After an officer shot and killed John Crawford in an Ohio Wal-Mart as he walked around the store with an air rifle he'd picked up off the store's own shelves, and another officer grilled his girlfriend until she cried, "accusing her of lying, threatening her with jail time and suggesting she could be on drugs," according to CNN.

After the city of Cleveland claimed — then apologized for claiming — that Tamir Rice was responsible for his own death when officers shot him in the stomach — an injury he would later die from — in a park as he played with a toy gun.

According to *The Washington Post*: "In the court filing, which was a formal response from the city to a federal lawsuit by the Rice family, city attorneys declare that Tamir and his family 'were directly and proximately caused by their own acts ...' and added that Tamir caused his own death 'by the failure ... to exercise due care to avoid injury.'"

And after Anthony Ray Hinton sat on Alabama's death row for 30 years — "one of the longest-serving death row prisoners in



**CHARLES BLOW**  
Comment

Alabama history," according to the Equal Justice Initiative, which won his release last month — for murders he didn't commit. He was arrested and charged based on the assertion that a revolver taken from his mother's home was used in two capital murders and a third uncharged crime. Even after experts found in 2002 that the gun didn't match the crime evidence, prosecutors refused to revisit the case.

It took more than a decade of additional litigation before a judge threw out the case. Prosecutors finally conceded that the crime bullets couldn't be matched to the Hinton weapon.

"For all of us that say that we believe in justice, this is the case to start showing, because I shouldn't have (sat) on death row for 30 years," Hinton said. "All they had to do was test the gun."

Last year Glenn Ford, Louisiana's longest-serving death row prisoner, was also set free after nearly 30 years facing execution for a murder that he also did not commit. According to *The New York Daily News*: "A judge freed Ford from the Louisiana State Penitentiary a year ago when evidence, believed to have been suppressed during the trial, surfaced exonerating him from the all-white jury's decision in the murder of a nearly blind Shreveport watchmaker, Isadore Rozeman."

The lead prosecutor in the Ford case, A.M. Stroud III, apologized in a column published by *The Shreveport Times*, saying: "In 1984, I was 33 years old. I was arrogant, judgmental, narcissistic and very full of myself. I was not as interested in justice as I was in winning. To borrow a phrase from Al Pacino in the movie 'And Justice for All,' 'Winning became everything.'" He concluded: "How totally wrong was I."

After last month, NPR reported that Mayor Rahm Emmanuel of Chicago was supporting a \$5.5 million reparations package for victims of a former police commander and his officers in that city. As MSNBC's Trymaine Lee put it, they "for decades ran a torture ring that used electrical shock, burning and beatings on more than 100 black men."

All of this and more eats away at public confidence in equal justice under the law and reaffirms people's worst fears: that the eyes of justice aren't blind but jaundiced.

As Langston Hughes once wrote: "That Justice is a blind goddess / Is a thing to which we black are wise: / Her bandage hides two festering sores / That once perhaps were eyes."

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



**YOUR VIEWS**

### No standing still for BMCC

At only 25 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value, the Blue Mountain Community College bond proposal is both a great value for taxpayers in Morrow and Umatilla counties and a critically needed investment in the future of our regional economy. One third of the total project cost covers replacement of essential parts of the aging physical plant, including energy management systems, heating and cooling systems, and natural gas lines and regulators. The Energy Trust of Oregon estimates that these investments will save the college approximately \$100,000 each year in energy expenses. About twelve percent of total project costs covers badly needed upgrades to outmoded information technology and communication infrastructure, improvements to the emergency access road on the Pendleton campus, and the correction of other safety and security deficiencies. Forty-eight percent of total project costs will specifically address employers' stated needs for high-priority workforce training programs in Pendleton, Hermiston and Boardman.

These projects are supported by donations of land and other resources by partner organizations and by state matching and lottery funds. BMCC has done an excellent job of talking with and listening to voters in both counties to refine the list of projects to those receiving the greatest amount of support. Partners have stepped up to share the load, the expense, and the responsibility of offering critically important workforce training programs that will prepare students for local jobs that employers have difficulty filling.

If the college is not moving forward to address our region's changing economic, educational, and training needs, then it is either frozen in time or sliding backward. Please join me in voting yes on the BMCC

bond; it's a vote for strengthening the college's service to our students and to our communities.

**Susan Plass Pendleton**

### BMCC reputation extends state-wide

As a result of my time in Salem, I have become even more impressed with Blue Mountain Community College. BMCC and President Cam Preus have excellent reputations state-wide. For over 50 years BMCC has earned that reputation, and is an integral part of our communities throughout the region.

I support the BMCC Bond and ask others to join with me in voting yes.

**Bill Hansell Athena**

### Wyden made Medicare stronger

Thank you, Senator Wyden, for strengthening Medicare! Until last week, access to health care for American seniors, military personnel and their families was threatened by significant cuts to Medicare reimbursement for physicians each year, sometimes more than once a year, under the flawed Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) payment policy.

As the senior Democrat on the Senate Finance Committee, Sen. Ron Wyden played a critical role in securing passage of the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act that was signed into law on April 16, ending an era of uncertainty for America's patients and physicians. The new law stabilizes the Medicare program and makes it more sustainable for future generations by providing the support for physicians to adopt innovative health care models that will improve quality of care and reduce costs.

It also extends funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program and community health centers that serve some of our nation's most vulnerable populations.

We applaud Sen. Wyden for his leadership in securing enactment of this important bipartisan legislation. On behalf of our patients, we thank you for addressing our nation's health care needs.

In addition to Sen. Wyden's leadership, this success could not have happened without the support of Oregon's entire Congressional delegation. Thank you to Sen. Jeff Merkley, Rep. Kurt Schrader, Rep. Greg Walden, Rep. Earl Blumenauer, Rep. Suzanne Bonamici and Rep. Peter DeFazio.

**OMA President Sylvia Emory, MD  
AMA President Robert Wah, MD**

### Pendleton's infrastructure answers aren't easy

I am appreciative of Robb Corbett spending time to meet with me recently. He clarified the dilemma the city had trying to maintain the city's decaying infrastructure with a limited amount of revenue that also has to be used to pay for other expenses.

Mr. Corbett admitted that the city has a communication problem and he hopes that "listening" sessions will ameliorate this issue. As a result, the city reserved the newly expanded Pendleton Convention Center to hold a "listening" session. Unfortunately, only two dozen attended.

The session started out with the grim

news that the city takes in around \$5 million in property taxes yet faces \$7.4 million in infrastructure costs. After the city's presentation, the audience quickly expressed its dismay with Pendleton's maintenance of its streets. Then, the East Oregonian reported, "Councilwoman Jane Hill asked the audience if they would like the city to dedicate more of its current funds toward neighborhood streets, but her question was left unanswered." I guess no one was listening at the "listening" session.

A gander at the new city budget reveals that the city is going to dedicate the grand sum of \$25,000 for pothole repair. Perhaps they could offer special pricing to residents for bags of asphalt for DIY projects.

City councilman Al Plute recently told me that Pendleton residents are going to have to pay more fees, taxes, and utility costs in order to repair the streets.

The plans include a frontage tax, city-based income tax earmarked for streets and a rental tax, all reported by the EO.

The city also wants to pass a bond to build a new fire house. Can't we just make do until the economy improves?

How can the city expect residents to enthusiastically rally behind new taxes, fees, and utility costs yet have streets that look like they did when my great-grandparents arrived in Pendleton in 1882?

Quit wasting our money on unsuccessful investments that aren't profitable.

**Jerry Cronin Pendleton**

**LETTERS POLICY**

The East Oregonian welcomes original letters of 400 words or less on public issues and public policies for publication in the newspaper and on our website. The newspaper reserves the right to withhold letters that address concerns about individual services and products or letters that infringe on the rights of private citizens. Submitted letters must be signed by the author and include the city of residence and a daytime phone number. The phone number will not be published. Unsigned letters will not be published. Send letters to Managing Editor Daniel Wattenburger, 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801 or email editor@eastoregonian.com.