

O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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OUR VIEW

A wall doesn't solve the illegal immigration issue

If you believe the headlines, the partial shutdown of the federal government has been the result of a dispute between President Trump and congressional Democrats over money to build a wall on the border with Mexico.

The actual reason the government is shut down is because Congress failed in its constitutional duty to pass an annual budget and the necessary appropriations for the fiscal year that began last Oct. 1. Instead, as it has repeatedly done since the George W. Bush administration, Congress has passed a series of continuing resolutions to extend previous spending for a specific period of time.

Each time those resolutions expire without being replaced, the government faces a shutdown. And the can is kicked, as it was again Friday.

But we digress.

Trump wants \$5 billion or so in the next continuing resolution to build a wall on the southern border. Democrats don't want to build a wall.

Building a wall, or not building a wall, is not the central issue in the debate over illegal immigration. It's not that simple.

The real question is who do we let into this country?

The Constitution gives Congress sole authority to regulate immigration and there are numerous laws already on the



A line of migrants recently released by U.S. immigration authorities waits to check in at the Catholic Charities shelter in McAllen, Texas.

AP Photo/Eric Gay

books addressing the topic.

Congress could liberalize those rules and expand the number of legal immigrants it allows from Latin America, whether they be refugees or traditional immigrants.

Though it seems to us that despite all the chest thumping and hand wringing that has passed in official Washington over this issue going back to the Reagan administration, precious little has changed.

It is almost as if it is preferred that new arrivals creep over the border at some desolate desert crossing rather than be welcomed at the front door.

And what of those who have so entered?

There are perhaps 12 million illegal immigrants in the country. The majority are economic refugees, drawn here by the promise of opportunities unavailable in their home countries. The agriculture, construction and hos-

pitality industries have come to depend on these workers, despite their status.

Congress must offer illegal immigrants temporary legal status and a path to permanent residency, but not citizenship, after 10 years if they can be properly vetted and meet strict requirements — no prior felony convictions, no violations while awaiting residency, learning to speak English and assimilate, and pay a fine and back taxes.

The border should be secured. A viable agricultural guestworker program must be established, and employers must verify the work status of their employees.

We respect the rule of law, and do not lightly suggest rewarding those who have flouted it. But we are reluctant to disrupt the lives of otherwise harmless people who have done what we would do — whatever it takes to ensure the safety and welfare of our families.

If Congress wants to make it easier for refugees and others to enter the country legally, it should make it so.

Only Congress can change the laws.

Let more foreign nationals enter legally, or keep them out. Let illegal immigrants that are here stay, or make them go.

Keeping them forever in the shadows does not serve the rule of law.

OTHER VIEWS

Your loyalties are your life

In 1900, there were two great philosophers working side by side at Harvard, William James and Josiah Royce. James was from an eminent Boston family and had all the grace, brilliance and sophistication that his class aspired to. Royce, as historian Allen Guelzo points out, was the first major American philosopher born west of the Mississippi. His parents were Forty-Niners who moved to California but failed to find gold. He grew up in squalor, was stocky, lonely and probably knew more about despair and the brooding shadows that can come in life.

James and Royce admired and learned from each other, but their philosophies were different, too. James was pragmatic and tough-minded, looking for empirical truth. Royce was more idealistic and tender-minded, more spiritual and abstract.

They differed on the individual's role in society. As David Lamberth of Harvard notes, James' emphasis was on tolerance. We live in a pluralistic society and we each know only a fragment of the truth. People should give one another enough social space so they can be themselves. For Royce the good life meant tightly binding yourself to others — giving yourself away with others for the sake of a noble cause. Tolerance is not enough.

James' influence is now enormous — deservedly so. Royce is almost entirely forgotten. And yet I would say that Royce is the philosopher we need today. In an age of division, fragmentation and isolation, Royce is the philosopher we don't know we have. He is the philosopher of binding and connection.

Royce argued that meaningful lives are marked, above all, by loyalty. Out on the frontier, he had seen the chaos and anarchy that ensues when it's every man for himself, when society is just a bunch of individuals searching for gain. He concluded that people make themselves miserable when they pursue nothing more than their "fleeting, capricious and insatiable" desires.

So for him the good human life meant loyalty, "the willing and practical and thoroughgoing devotion of a person to a cause."

A person doesn't have to invent a cause, or find it deep within herself. You are born into a world of causes, which existed before you were born and will be there after you die. You just have to become gripped by one, to give

yourself away to it realizing that the cause is more important than your individual pleasure or pain.

You're never going to find a cause if you are working in a bland office; you have to go out to where the problems are. Loyalty is not just emotion. It is action.

"The loyal man serves. That is, he does not merely follow his own impulses. He looks to his cause for guidance. This cause tells him what to do," Royce wrote in "The Philosophy of Loyalty."

The cause gives unity and consistency to life. The cause gives fellowship, because there are always others serving the same cause. Loyalty is the cure for hesitancy.

Of course, there can be good causes and bad causes. So Royce argued that if loyalty is the center of the good life, then we should admire those causes, based on mutual affection, that value and enhance other people's loyalty.

We should despise those causes, based on a shared animosity, that destroy other people's loyalty. If my loyalty to America does not allow your community's story to be told,

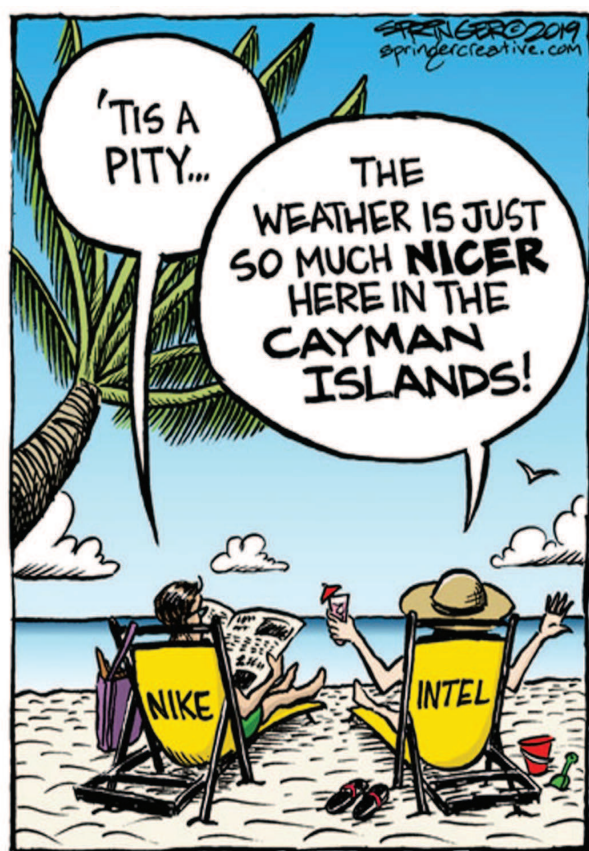
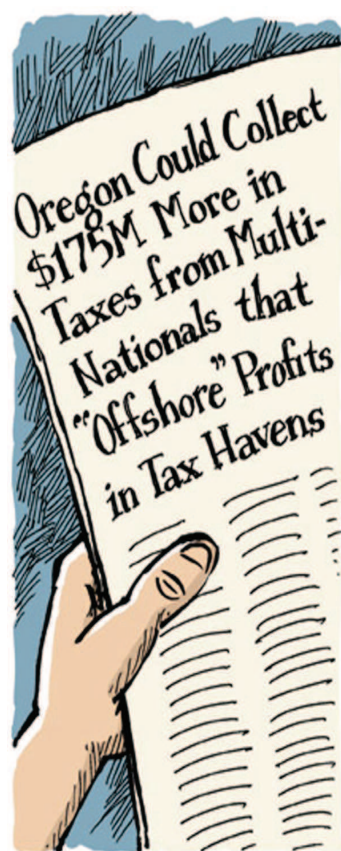
or does not allow your community's story to be part of the larger American story, then my loyalty is a domineering, predatory loyalty. It is making it harder for you to be loyal. We should instead be encouraging of other loyalties. We should, Royce argued, be loyal to loyalty.

Before Martin Luther King Jr. used it, Royce popularized the phrase "the beloved community." In the beloved community, political opponents honor the loyalty the rival has for a cause, and learn from it.

In such a community, people submit themselves to their institution, say to a university. They discover how good it is by serving it, and they allow themselves to be formed by it. According to Royce, communities find their voice when they own their own betrayals; evil exists so we can struggle to overcome it.

Royce took his philosophy one more crucial step: Though we have our different communities, underneath there is an absolute unity to life. He believed that all separate individuals and all separate loyalties are mere fragments of a spiritual unity — an Absolute Knower, a moral truth.

David Brooks is a columnist for the *New York Times*.



YOUR VIEWS

City tackles transient invasion

Fueled by the variety of available sleeping accommodations both indoors and out, a seemingly endless supply of empty cans and bottles, and limited interference permitted from police by state and federal judicial officials, Pendleton has become a new destination of choice for transients.

Local agencies vary on their approach to what some refer to as a crisis. Fed up with the attempted takeover of the post office, the U.S. Postal Service has taken the tough love approach and eliminated overnight guest accommodations. City Hall, on the other hand, has taken a more enabling approach, providing the cityhall lobby and library for daytime use, while the city Parks and Recreation Department has apparently donated the Stillman Park shelter with 24-hour lights, electricity, and a covered smoking/sleeping area.

The addition of free bus service is also an added bonus. I was hoping this would reduce the sidewalk bike traffic, but it seems to have had little impact.

At the request of Neighbor 2 Neighbor, operators of the warming center, City Hall

has waived the rental fee for use of the recreation center cafeteria to provide a free Sunday breakfast program previously held at the Methodist Church. However, lack of an adequate volunteer force is currently a stumbling block in getting the program back in operation, even with the city bearing the cost of utilities.

This is where the Pendleton Enhancement Project and North Bank Umatilla Advisory Committee people come into play. Since they seem so anxious to get involved in civic and social projects, this is a chance to shine by getting involved in something constructive. These groups should find this new opportunity to serve the community a much more rewarding experience than repurposing a bridge or creating a wildlife refuge.

City Hall's focus on the "enabling" approach hasn't had much success, judging from the vandalism in city parks and the increase in temporary guests at the local crossbar hotel. Help from this host of new eager volunteers could really make a difference.

Rick Rohde
Pendleton

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