

**Commentary...**

# Hyperbole is a greenhouse gas

By Jim Cornelius  
News Editor

President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement on climate has fogged the earth with an unprecedented emission of hyperbole.

The withdrawal from a non-binding accord is going to save millions of jobs and trillions of dollars ... or... it's going to precipitate an extinction-level event.

If hyperbole is a greenhouse gas, we're screwed...

Trump's action is more stunt than substance, a high-profile way to throw some red meat to a base that figures that if liberals and Europeans like an agreement it's ipso facto bad for America. As historian Max Boot (neither a liberal nor a Europhile, by the way) notes, "President Obama pledged fairly aggressive action by the U.S., including significant reductions in emissions from power plants that run on fossil fuels. But it would be easy to undo his proposed cutbacks without leaving the Paris agreement. In fact Trump has already done that..."

"So why provoke a global firestorm of criticism? Why join Syria and Nicaragua as the only nations to renounce the Paris agreement? For Trump, the criticism is precisely the point. It's an easy way for him to signal to his base that he is implementing his campaign rhetoric of 'nationalism' over 'globalism.'"

In other words, it has nothing really to do with the environment or the economy. And, Boot argues, the withdrawal is likely to further damage America's stature.

"If the U.S. pursues a 'me first' policy, then every country in the world will do the same — and the result will be international lawlessness," Boot writes. "... Ultimately we are likely to be drawn into conflicts that could have been avoided had we maintained our position as Leader of the Free World, a hard-won achievement that Trump appears intent on frittering away with his characteristic recklessness and thoughtlessness."

On the other hand, many "climate activists" approach the subject with a kind of messianic fervor, raising the spectre of apocalyptic scenarios worthy of the Book of Revelation and fetishizing alternative energy as if it is holy, and wholly without

negative impact or cost.

A rational cost/benefit debate about climate and energy policy (which would require honesty both about the failures and successes of public investment in alternatives and about the degree to which we've subsidized fossil fuels for more than 100 years) would be a wonderful thing. Unfortunately, that does not seem possible in our disordered and dysfunctional political climate.

Merely musing in these pages on the benefits of "red-teaming" climate science — testing assumptions and consensus in a public adversarial process — has drawn scorn from those who assure us that the debate is settled. Nevermind the potential that if the consensus in fact holds up under a red team assault it becomes *stronger* — and the public better informed and more capable of informed consent on policy enacted to address the brutally difficult and complicated social, cultural, political and economic challenges the future holds.

Forbidding questions is the tactic of puritanical zealotry, not of science.

Meanwhile, there are more than a few people in Sisters who are walking the walk without much talk — making rational, thoughtful choices about the way they live, not for ideological reasons but because they are seeking a better way, something deeper out of life.

*National Review* columnist Charles C.W. Cooke acknowledges that there is a serious discussion to engage in, posing the environmental costs of our civilization reaped from the Industrial Revolution, a worthy debate to be had over what sacrifices in liberty and what opportunities attend choices to modify our way of life, should we decide it is necessary to do so to protect the health of the planet.

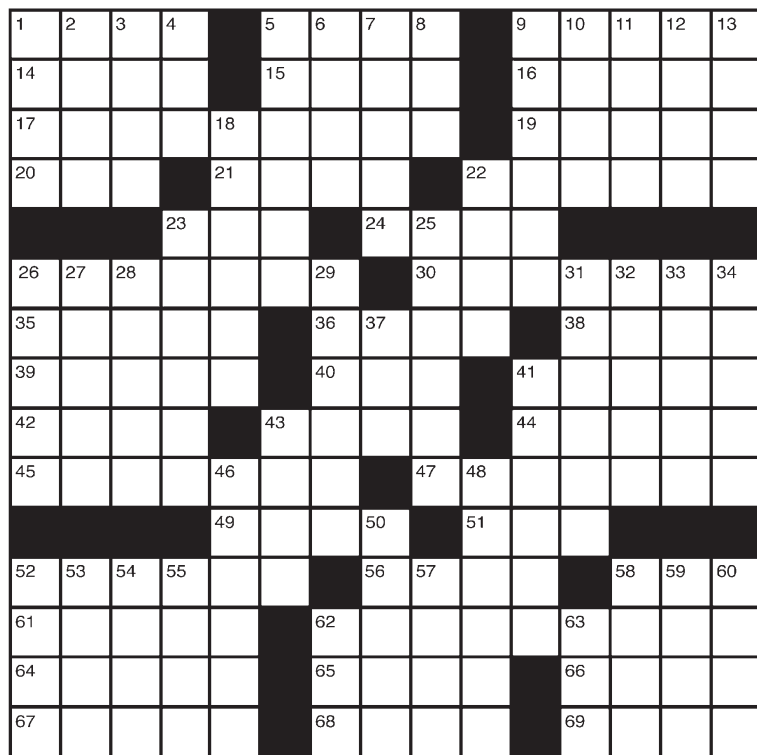
"People can disagree on the answers to these questions in good faith. But it is harder and harder for them to do so amid the hysteria that grips this topic," Cooke writes. "...It's unsurprising that people who have more nuanced views choose instead to go to the pub."

Well, that's an option. And, luckily, Sisters has a fine array of watering holes to choose from, where you can enjoy your beer, wine and spirits — hold the chaser of hyperbolic gas.

# The Nugget Newspaper Crossword

By Jacqueline E. Mathews, Tribune News Service

- ACROSS**
- 1 El \_\_\_, Texas
  - 5 Sock \_\_; 1950s dances
  - 9 Think \_\_; plan
  - 14 Frosted
  - 15 Smell
  - 16 Covered with lather
  - 17 Poverty
  - 19 Shopping \_\_; spender's fling
  - 20 \_\_ for; request
  - 21 Cozy home
  - 22 Comic W.C. \_\_
  - 23 Commercials
  - 24 Views
  - 26 Very hard rock
  - 30 Old soldier
  - 35 Sri \_\_
  - 36 Actress Patricia
  - 38 Ore deposit
  - 39 Liver or spleen
  - 40 \_\_ the way; pioneered
  - 41 Hay bundler
  - 42 Saloon order
  - 43 Fellow
  - 44 Irritated
  - 45 Unpredictable
  - 47 Black eyes
  - 49 Spanish cheers
  - 51 Half and half
  - 52 Naked
  - 56 Sink stopper
  - 58 Actor McBride
  - 61 Acting parts
  - 62 Adviser
  - 64 19th-century U.S. president
  - 65 Auctioneer's cry
  - 66 \_\_ off with; steal
  - 67 Containing nothing
  - 68 Misfortunes
  - 69 Peepers
- DOWN**
- 1 \_\_ colada; sweet cocktail
  - 2 High cards
  - 3 Hunt for
  - 4 Bizarre
  - 5 Truthful
  - 6 Some works of Wordsworth
  - 7 Emily & Markie
  - 8 Soon-to-be grads.
  - 9 Help
  - 10 Give up \_\_; despair
  - 11 Actor James \_\_ Jones
  - 12 Made fun of
  - 13 Coloring liquids
  - 18 Third-largest ocean
  - 22 Didn't \_\_ well; ailed
  - 23 Turkey's capital
  - 25 Steers clear of
  - 26 Desktop sphere of the world
  - 27 More scarce
  - 28 Wrath
  - 29 Intertwine
  - 31 British singer & actress Paige
  - 32 Actress Esther
  - 33 "Doe, \_\_, a female deer..."
  - 34 "Revenge of the \_\_"
  - 37 Snakelike fish
  - 41 \_\_ up; mentions
  - 43 Not at all harsh
  - 46 Comfortably warm
  - 48 Hunting dogs
  - 50 Thread holder
  - 52 Egg on
  - 53 Set standard
  - 54 Applaud
  - 55 Church season
  - 57 Soothe; put to sleep
  - 58 Play-Doh, e.g.
  - 59 Bagel's center
  - 60 Annoys
  - 62 TV crime series
  - 63 Female sheep



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

6/14/17

— Last Week's Puzzle Solved —



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6/8/17

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