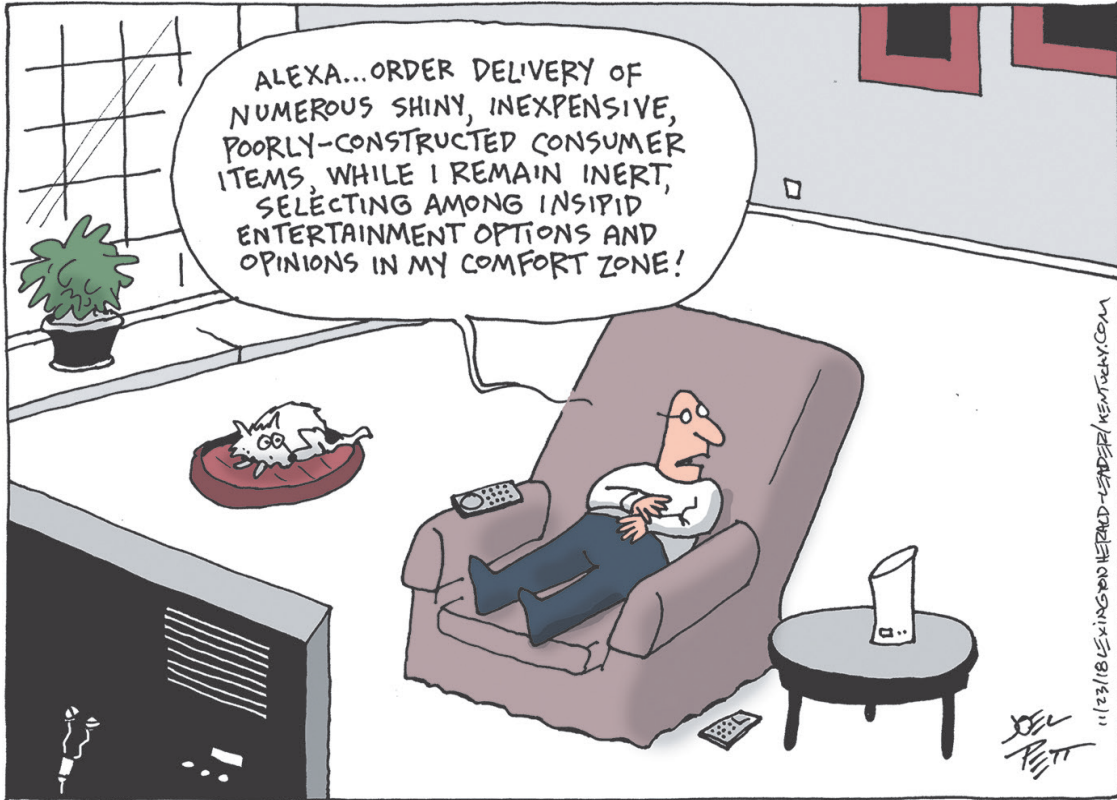


O P I N I O N



Letters to the Editor...

The Nugget welcomes contributions from its readers, which must include the writer's name, address and phone number. Letters to the Editor is an open forum for the community and contains unsolicited opinions not necessarily shared by the Editor. The Nugget reserves the right to edit, omit, respond or ask for a response to letters submitted to the Editor. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned. The deadline for all letters is noon Monday.

To the Editor:

Re: "The meaning of art in 2018," *The Nugget*, November 7, page 14

This article is one of the finest summaries I have ever read. If only everyone in this country could see, feel, and express as Chris Morin does, we would have a society to be proud of.

Thank you, *Nugget News*.

Jerold Chapman



To the Editor,

I attended the Sisters Christmas parade on Saturday. I was surprised that there was no music. No marching band, no cheerleaders or dance team, and no sports teams representing our Sisters Outlaws.

It was a noticeable missing.

Angelena Bosco



To the Editor:

Regarding the Jim Anderson article on the unusual "four-eared" rabbit published November 2 issue of *The Nugget*, more information and clarification is needed on my part. Perhaps I was too brief in my description; I am providing a more detailed accounting of my experience with "Wabbit."

I did have one opportunity to get closer than 10 feet as Wabbit had hopped into nearby lilac bushes to "hide." The shrubs have no foliage lower on the trunk which allowed me to get within three feet and was able to look down. I could see that the larger ears, although having an abnormal deformity, were in fact the "real ears" as I could see the ear canals. The two smaller "ears" in front of the ear canals were no more than ear-like growths resembling a smaller ear thereby giving the appearance of

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Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
PM Showers 46/31	Cloudy 42/31	PM Light Snow 42/26	Snow Showers 38/25	AM Snow Showers 36/16	Mostly Sunny 35/16

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Jonah Goldberg

"America First!"

— President Donald Trump, November 20, 2018

That's how the president's official statement giving the crown prince of Saudi Arabia a pass for authorizing the gruesome murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi begins. The president goes on— with even more exclamation points. The very next sentence declares, "The world is a very dangerous place!"

And so it is.

This was the argument made by the original 1930s isolationist movement, a bipartisan campaign against getting entangled, again, in Europe's wars.

The isolationist idea, which came to be known as America First, has roots going back to Washington's farewell address and his call to avoid entangling alliances. It was grounded in the idea that America was an exceptional place that had turned its back on the bellicosity and ancient hatreds of the Old World.

A "shining city upon a hill" should not descend into the muck of the world beyond its shores. As President Hoover put it, "It was a belief that somewhere, somehow, there must be an abiding place for law and a sanctuary for civilization." And that place would be America. Or, as Norman Thomas—head of the American Socialist Party and a founder of the America First Committee—argued, America needed to lead by example because "America lacked the wisdom and the power to play God to the world."

The America First movement, and isolationism generally, got uglier as the imperative to fight the Nazis grew more obvious for most Americans, but not those whose isolationism derived less from a lofty principle and more from a bias for the German cause. By the eve of World War II, isolationism had become a dirty word, and after Pearl Harbor and — later — after the Holocaust, a filthy one.

President Trump adopted "America First" when a reporter used the term in an interview. Clearly ignorant of the historical baggage the label carried, he made it his own. Some of his advisers, clearly aware of the same

baggage, encouraged him to do so anyway.

I am no fan of the original America First Committee or the broader isolationist movement it represented. Nonetheless, I find it remarkable how Trump has managed to debase the term America First.

President Trump's statement is a mockery of the best sentiments of America First. His argument for why we should turn a blind eye to the Khashoggi murder, even as the Saudi regime plans to execute the men who carried out the crown prince's orders, is that we are too entangled in our alliance with Saudi Arabia to care. They are a "great ally" because they have "agreed to spend and invest \$450 billion in the United States." He even goes on to list the defense contractors who benefit from Saudi largesse.

Nowhere in Trump's statement does he offer any meaningful condemnation of Saudi behavior or suggest that there is a limit to the portion of the American soul Saudi petrodollars can buy.

His defenders praise the president's "frankness," which is fine. But frankness means telling the truth, and that means the truth is that the president frankly doesn't care much about anything but the Saudis' wallet and their praise for him. A statement condemning their behavior could have been frank, too. Ronald Reagan often modeled such frankness.

As Sen. Rand Paul, a man largely in the tradition of the original America First, put it, "I'm pretty sure this statement is Saudi Arabia First, not America First."

It's fine to defend America's economic interests, but it's ugly to suggest that American interests begin and end with arms sales and military alliances.

America has an interest in standing up for more than a balance sheet. Progressive historian Charles Beard, an America Firster, argued that the U.S. government must "surrender forever the imbecilic belief that it was her duty to defend every dollar invested everywhere and every acquisitive merchant seeking his private interests everywhere."

That was America First. This is something different.

Opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the writer and are not necessarily shared by the Editor or The Nugget Newspaper.