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OUR VIEW

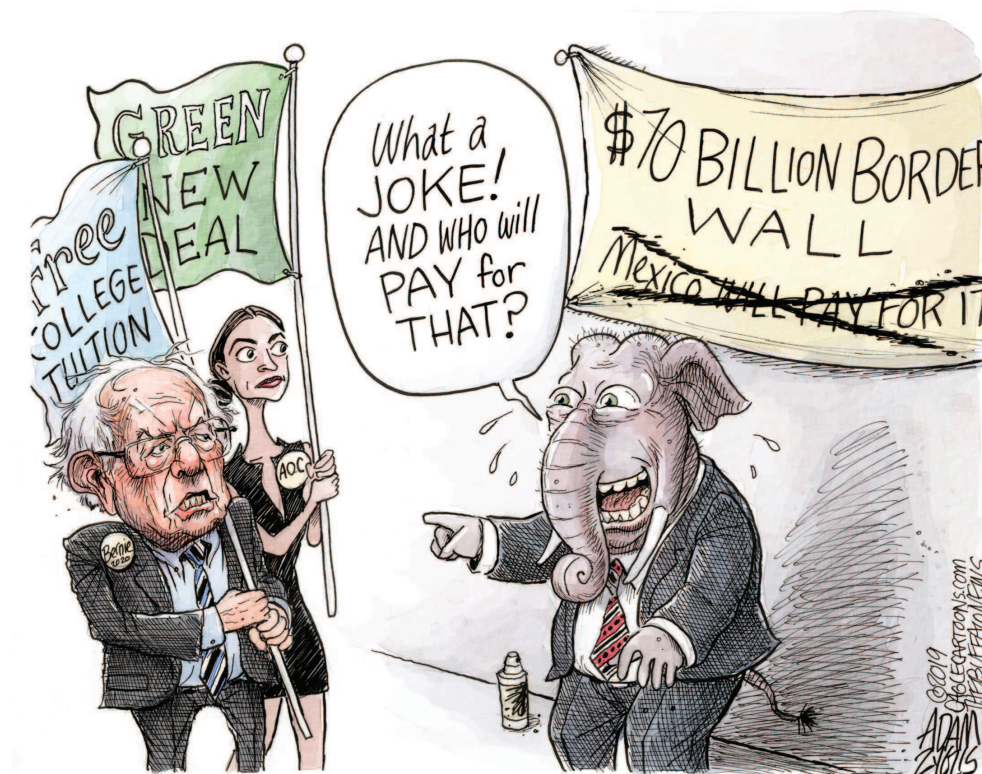
Who has the best climate change plan?

“Climate change is real,” reads the opening line of a recent op-ed penned by U.S. Rep. Greg Walden and two fellow Republican congressmen. It was repeated by Walden during his town hall Monday in Boardman.

It’s a declaration most Republicans are now willing to endorse, though with varying levels of commitment. To his credit, Walden began publicly affirming the reality of climate change more than a decade ago.

Others have been slower to come to the table, a reluctance exacerbated by President Trump’s purposefully foolhardy treatment of the dangers, where global warming could be called in to save the day after a frigidly cold weekend in the Midwest. It’s a joke he’s repeated on Twitter in the past.

But more concerning is Trump’s assertion that intelligent people like himself aren’t necessarily “believers.” His lack of belief — as if it were a matter of faith and not science — runs counter to reports from every federal agency. And because Trumpism requires unwavering commitment, many have been unwilling to take that step.



Walden goes on in the op-ed to pick at the Green New Deal, a rough plan by House Democrats to take a big swing at climate change by forcing major reform across government and industry. As we addressed in this space yesterday, there are problems with the plan that would do more harm than good to agriculture in par-

particular if implemented as prescribed. It’s a solid reason to have an elected and diverse body creating policy rather than a central administration.

But we have to say, we’re wary of Walden’s broad claim that Republicans have a better solution to climate change than Democrats. It’s hard to fathom that a party still coming to

terms with the fact that the climate is changing should be trusted to lead the way on innovation to mitigate the effects and prepare for the impact.

Walden took questions on climate change at both the public and private venues on Monday. At the open meeting in Boardman, a resident of The Dalles pushed the representative on why he hadn’t done more while chairing the Energy and Commerce Committee to address the topic.

Walden wasn’t silent during his term as the chair, nor at the town hall. He held hearings on modernizing energy infrastructure and the impact of wildfire smoke.

Energy production is an area where Republicans and Democrats should be able to find common ground. As Walden rightfully pointed out, “We helped create this mess, we should help clean it up.”

That will come only from purposeful collaboration. It also takes the realization that the situation is dire — that we are living in the realities of climate change now, and our best hope is a bold plan developed from meaningful work of those committee meetings and not grandstanding.

OTHER VIEWS

A nation of ‘Weavers’

I start with the pain. A couple times a week I give a speech somewhere in the country about social isolation and social fragmentation. Very often a parent comes up to me afterward and says, “My daughter took her life when she was 14.” Or, “My son died of an overdose when he was 20.”

Their eyes flood with tears. I don’t know what to say. I squeeze their shoulders, but the crying does not stop. As it turns to weeping they rush out of the auditorium, and I am left with my own futility.

This kind of pain is an epidemic in our society. When you cover the sociology beat as I do, you see other kinds of pain. The African-American woman in Greenville who is indignant because young black kids in her neighborhood face injustice just as gross as she did in 1953. The college student in the Midwest who is convinced that she is the only one haunted by compulsive thoughts about her own worthlessness.

They share a common thread: our lack of healthy connection to each other, our inability to see the full dignity of each other, and the resulting culture of fear, distrust, tribalism and strife.

On Dec. 7, 1941, countless Americans saw that their nation was in peril and walked into recruiting stations. We don’t have anything as dramatic as Pearl Harbor, but when 47,000 Americans kill themselves every year and 72,000 more die from drug addiction, isn’t that a silent Pearl Harbor? When the basic norms of decency, civility and democracy are under threat, isn’t that a silent Pearl Harbor? Aren’t we all called at moments like these to do something extra?

My something extra was starting something nine months ago at the Aspen Institute called Weave: The Social Fabric Project. The first core idea was that social isolation is the problem underlying a lot of our other problems. The second idea was that this problem is being solved by people around the country, at the local level, who are building community and weaving the social fabric. How can we learn from their example and nationalize their effect?

We traveled around the country and found them everywhere. We’d plop into cities and small towns, and we’d find 25 to 100 community “Weavers” almost immediately. This is a movement that doesn’t know it’s a movement.

Some of them work at organizations: a veteran who helps other veterans with mental illnesses in New Orleans; a guy who runs a boxing gym in Appalachian, Ohio, where he nominally teaches young men boxing, but really teaches them life. Many others do their weaving in the course of everyday life — because that’s what neighbors do. One lady in Florida said she doesn’t have time to volunteer, but that’s because she spends 40 hours a week looking out for local kids and visiting sick

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folks in the hospital.

We’re living with the excesses of 60 years of hyperindividualism. There’s a lot of emphasis in our culture on personal freedom, self-interest, self-expression, the idea that life is an individual journey. But Weavers share an ethos that puts relationship over self. “We” precedes “me.”

Whether they live in red or blue America, they often use the same terms and embody the same values — deep hospitality, showing up for people, putting town before self. I met one guy in Ohio who stood in the town square with a sign: “Defend Youngstown.”

The trait that leaps out above all others is “radical mutuality”: We are all completely equal, regardless of where society ranks us. “We don’t do things for people. We don’t do things to people. We do things with people,” said a woman who builds community for teenagers in New Orleans.

Being around these people has been one of the most uplifting experiences of my life. Obviously, it’s made me want to be more neighborly. But it has also changed my moral lens. I’ve become so impatient with the politicians I cover! They are so self-absorbed! Weavers live for others and are more joyful as a result.

The big question is how do we take the success the Weavers are having on the local level and make it national? The Weavers are building relationships one by one, which takes time. Relationships do not scale. But norms scale. If you can change the culture, you can change behavior on a large scale.

Culture changes when a small group of people, often on the margins of society, find a better way to live, and other people begin to copy them. These Weavers have found a better way to live.

We at Weave — and all of us — need to illuminate their example, synthesize their values so we understand what it means to be a relationalist and not an individualist. We need to create hubs where these decentralized networks can come together for solidarity and support.

I guess my ask is that you declare your own personal declaration of interdependence and decide to become a Weaver instead of a ripper. This is partly about communication. Every time you assault and stereotype a person, you’ve ripped the social fabric. Every time you see that person deeply and make her or him feel known, you’ve woven it.

I ask that you in your context think about what little extra you can do to be a neighbor, citizen and Weaver. I ask you to have faith. Renewal is building, relationship by relationship, community by community. It will spread and spread, as the sparks fly upward.

David Brooks is a columnist for the New York Times.



YOUR VIEWS

Press is in cahoots with anti-Trump forces

The liberal socialist-controlled press uses doctored and/or malicious falsehoods to advance their global anti-American agenda. Need evidence?

A recent front page *East Oregonian* article illustrates the danger of false/fake news: “Solidarity walk focuses on unity.” The writer (one of the very best) and marchers were deceived by fake news. Nathan Philips was not a Vietnam veteran, nor was he mocked by the student that supported President Trump’s MAGA vision, nor were the Covington students disrespectful. Video footage illustrates that Philip initiated the confrontation, not the students.

Truth, journalistic integrity and honor matter not to the global left.

Disappointingly, the *EO* has issued no retraction for their false news. America’s national news organizations (CNN, CNBC, ABC, CBS, NBC, *USA Today*, *Newsweek*, *Time*, *Buzz Feed*, major newspapers, the AP, etc.) are nothing more than the communication arm of the present socialist democratic party.

Any person of political merit that supports President Trump’s administration has been ruthlessly attacked by the press and Mueller inquisition. Mueller has unlimited power, unlimited resources, and absolute cover by the national press and media to destroy a duly elected president. Roger Stone is

a classic example of the ominous danger of the Mueller inquisition. Stone was targeted by Mueller for one reason: he supports President Trump.

This man posed no threat to anyone. He had no police record. He had cooperated with Mueller’s interrogators. How did Mueller treat this Trump supporter? Twenty-nine SWAT team members in full tactical gear with assault weapons, backed by 17 police vehicles, including two armored vehicles, a helicopter overhead and amphibious vehicles in the back, broke into Stone’s home at dawn and placed him in shackles. Next Stone will be bankrupted by Mueller’s taxpayer-funded lawyers in order to blackmail him into turning on Trump.

This Mueller inquisition is a covert operation with the liberal national press and media. Fake news is deadly to a republic that requires and depends on a fair, objective news media that exercises journalistic integrity. It was no mistake that CNN was on the ground when Roger Stone was taken violently from his home because Mueller can not continue this inquisition without their cover.

To those who support President Trump and his agenda, beware. Without a fair and unbiased press and media, liberty, justice, freedom and our American republic will not endure.

Stuart Dick
Irrigon