

O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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OUR VIEW

States are capable of managing gray wolves

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown last week wrote a puzzling letter. It was addressed to Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt.

In it, she tries to appease all sides of the issue of managing gray wolves in Oregon — ranchers, environmentalists, hunters and others.

“The success of wolf recovery in Oregon is unquestioned,” she wrote.

So far, so good. More than 137 wolves live in the state. They have been turning up in much of Oregon, from the northeastern corner to the southwestern corner. There’s no reason to believe they won’t keep thriving as they continue to spread across the rest of the state.

But then she said something we found to be, well, a bit odd.

“I appreciate the documentation of the significant successes our fish and wildlife agency has described in its letter,” she wrote. Earlier in the week, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife had supported taking the gray wolf off the list of wildlife protected under the federal Endangered



Capital Press File Photo

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown.

Species Act. Brown was writing to “clarify and correct” that letter.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, an agency of the Interior Department, has proposed taking the gray wolf off that list. It cites the rapid growth of the wolf population in the Lower 48 states — from 66 to more than 6,000

in about 25 years. That’s more than the combined recovery goals for the Northern Rocky Mountains and the Western Great Lakes populations, according to the agency.

Like Brown, the federal Fish and Wildlife Service describes the wolf’s comeback as a “success.”

But the governor frets that, even though wolves are doing well in Oregon, some other states may not be up to the task of managing them.

“Our collaborative work and its success cannot protect imperiled wildlife beyond our borders in other states,” she wrote. “(W)olves are on the path to recovery and do not warrant a listing within Oregon, but their listing under the federal Endangered Species Act affords them some protection across their range.”

Then Brown sums up her positions. “Oregon supports the current federal listing status for gray wolves, and opposes delisting,” she wrote. “Our state investments should be mirrored by other states that can help lead to recovery of the species across a significant portion of its historic range.”

So, according to the governor, the wolf doesn’t need to be federally protected in Oregon. We agree.

But we’re also sure those other states will do just fine in managing gray wolves in spite of the governor’s concerns.



YOUR VIEW

Global warming scare tactics will bankrupt America

If Winston Churchill was alive today he would caution the youth of Morrow County planning a climate strike, “The farther backward you look, the farther forward you see.”

In 1975 the national press and media were issuing dire warnings that fossil fuels and capitalism were causing catastrophic damage to the environment. Newsweek proposed a solution in the April 28, 1975, edition that included outlawing fossil fuel engines to save the planet from the coming ice age.

Fast forward 25 years to the dawn of the 21st century and Al Gore’s “An inconvenient Truth” provided graphic images of apocalyptic consequences if fossil fuels were allowed to continue warming the planet. The national press and media and school curriculum deluged our youth with pictures of “global warming” — melting glaciers, dying polar bears, coastal cities inundated by massive floods, cities wiped out by hurricanes and tornadoes, and food supplies exterminated by drought.

“Global cooling” and “global warming” have lost their luster so the new mantra of “climate change” has frightened the present generation of our youth to take action against the catastrophic consequences carbon

dioxide emissions and fossil fuels. The New Green Deal proposed by Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez would replace fossil fuels with “renewable energy” to save America from the approaching climate catastrophe.

The cost of this socialist Marxist social engineering proposal to save America from fossil fuels and CO2 emissions: \$66 to \$100 trillion over ten years, or \$350,000 to \$650,000 per family. Print more money, raise higher taxes, get rid of the Constitution and everything else that restricts the federal government from controlling Americans from birth to the grave under the guise of saving the planet.

Here are the facts young citizens of Morrow County preparing to “Fight for our future” May 24, 2019: The U.S.A. could cut carbon dioxide emissions by 100% and it would have no impact on “global cooling,” “global warming,” or “global climate change.” What will impact your lives is the \$20-plus trillion dollar U.S.A. debt plus the accruing interest your generation will be required to pay. This debt could well devastate your future and end your hope for the lifestyle you now enjoy.

I exhort the youth of Morrow County to study history; do not be manipulated by Democrat socialist scare tactics and indoctrination that will bankrupt America, destroy your future, and have zero impact on saving the planet.

Stuart Dick
Irrigon

OTHER VIEWS

Don’t fight Iran

Sometimes it’s important to write a column about something you’re pretty sure isn’t going to happen. In this case, that thing is war with Iran, which Donald Trump clearly doesn’t want, and which he will therefore probably avoid. But since the president’s current foreign policy is making war more likely, it’s still worth saying clearly that it would be a terrible idea for the United States to enter into a serious armed conflict with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In the past I have argued that there is a certain coherence to the Trump foreign policy, even if it’s just an accidental synthesis of a chaotic White House’s competing impulses. According to that synthesis, recent American presidents have been overly optimistic about democratic transformation, embracing naively utopian hopes in the Islamic world and naively accommodating the rise of China. So what is needed instead is a retrenchment in the greater Middle East, an abandonment of occupations and nation-building efforts and a return to kill-your-enemies, back-your-friends realpolitik, which in turn will make it easier for the United States to pivot to a more confrontational approach with Beijing.

In practice, this retrenchment has included backing out (or trying to) from the Bush-era military commitment to Afghanistan and jettisoning the Obama-era effort to woo Iran into détente. Spun in realpolitik terms, the Trump White House’s hard line toward Tehran reflects a belief that the mullahs’ enmity is an ineradicable fact, that deals with them in one area inevitably just enable aggression elsewhere, and that it’s better to just back our Sunni and Israeli allies rather than reaching for an unlikely realignment and just reaping more mischief in return.

But the (arguable) coherence of this approach has been breaking down as the Trump administration has moved into its “maximum pressure” phase of sanctions against Tehran. Because if you impose maximum pressure on a regional power you are, by definition, no longer trying to maintain a Middle Eastern status quo while pivoting to Asia. Instead, you’re effectively returning to the last two administration’s more dramatic Middle East ambitions: You are assuming either that some great diplomatic coup awaits (so Barack Obama was right to seek détente, just wrong to settle) or that your pressure will lead to regime change and democratization (so George W. Bush was right about the freedom agenda after all).

I suspect that Trump is making the first assumption, imagining all this pressure as a prelude to a dramatic deal, while John Bolton and Mike Pompeo are making the second

one, imagining the Iranian regime suddenly buckling like the Soviet Union in 1991.

But whatever the core assumption, the maximalist approach inevitably increases the risk of war. If the White House is wrong about the Iranian regime’s willingness to make more concessions, then they’re turning a dial that can produce only two policy responses: endurance or armed reaction. And if they’re right that regime change is a possibility, then the regime they’re trying to change will become more likely to lash out the closer it gets to its own breaking point.

Either way, there is nothing about the current situation in the Middle East, or globally, that makes the chance of war with Iran worth taking — as hawks as well as doves concede.

For instance: National Review’s David French, generally far more hawkish than I am, describes a potential conflict with Iran as possibly worse than any of our wars since 9/11, and a terrible idea “absent the most serious, urgent and compelling need.” David Frum, once a notable Iraq War supporter, writes that war with Iran would recapitulate our Iraq blunders on “a much bigger scale, without allies, without justification, and without any plan at all for what comes next.”

There is no explicitly pro-war rejoinder to these points; there’s only the sort of half-hawkish argument offered by Eli Lake of Bloomberg, who writes that of course nobody wants war, and the recent flurry of U.S. moves is just all about establishing deterrence.

But even Lake acknowledges that “this strategy is fraught,” and “as tensions rise, so does the risk of miscalculation.” Which brings us back to the question of whether the larger context in which tensions are rising — the broad “maximum pressure” approach by the U.S. — makes clear strategic sense.

I think that it does not. The United States can treat Iran as an enemy without going all in for brinkmanship; it can leave the nuclear deal without taking steps that make a conventional war more immediately likely.

Trump’s 2016 campaign rhetoric made a case against a hawkish Republican foreign policy consensus that seemingly wanted to confront all our enemies, at once, everywhere. The president is now in the middle of a trade war with China that by his own logic is far more important to long-term U.S. interests than some immediate breakthrough or regime breakdown in Tehran. So he should return to that campaign-season wisdom, and to the maxim it suggested: Whenever possible, one war at a time.

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