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OPINION | LETTERS

John Kerry's Phony Climate Accomplishments

The only thing historic about the Glasgow conference was its cost and carbon footprint.

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John Kerry, U.S. special presidential envoy for climate, at the COP26 U.N. Climate Summit in Glasgow, Nov. 12.

PHOTO: ALBERTO PEZZALI/ASSOCIATED PRESS

The comparison by John Kerry of this month's international climate carnival with the Constitutional Convention was preposterous ("[COP26 Prepared the World to Beat Climate Change](#)," op-ed, Nov. 22).

The Biden administration's commitments in Glasgow would cripple America's economy, empower China and Russia and do little to address climate change. President Biden's war on U.S. energy has already resulted in rising natural gas and gasoline prices and sent inflation to a 31-year high.

While the White House works to shut down U.S. energy production, our adversaries can emit at will. China's emission-reduction target actually allows its emissions to increase until 2030. In 2019 China emitted more greenhouse gasses than the rest of the developed world combined.

The "significant" methane reduction agreement Mr. Kerry reached with China was little more than a regurgitation of old language. Meanwhile, Russia has had several massive methane leaks this year alone. That hasn't stopped the president from pleading with Russia and the OPEC cartel to increase energy sales, even as he hamstring cleaner U.S. production.

The administration simply opposes traditional American energy. While in Scotland, Mr. Kerry recklessly declared, "By 2030 in the United States, we won't have any coal." At a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee hearing last week, however, Mr. Biden's own Energy Department forecast that coal will continue to be critical part of our electricity mix for decades to come. Abundant U.S. coal, along with natural gas and oil, provide reliable and affordable energy. Mr. Kerry's goals amount to unilateral American energy disarmament.

The only thing historic about the Glasgow conference was its cost and carbon footprint. COP26 resulted in an estimated 102,500 tons of carbon-dioxide emissions. That's more than the annual emissions of some of the nations that participated.

America is already a world leader in carbon reduction. In 2019 our greenhouse-gas emissions were 14% lower than their 2004 peak. The reason? Free-market innovation, not regulation or lopsided global treaties. Thanks to America's entrepreneurs and innovators, we live in an energy-independent republic. Will the Biden administration let us keep it?

Sen. John Barrasso (R., Wyo.)

Casper, Wyo.

Credit John Kerry for trying to make the best out of the futile spectacle that was the COP26 climate conference. Despite COP26's goal of "consigning coal to history," coal remains for the foreseeable future the No. 1 fuel for electricity generation world-wide.

Ahead of the conference, West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin exercised his own veto of sorts to effectively block President Biden from zeroing out the U.S. coal industry by 2030. Neither the coal-loving Chinese nor Russian presidents (both putting off "net zero" until 2060) even bothered to attend the conference. The leader of coal-dependent India showed up but delayed his country's elusive net-zero goal until an unimaginable 2070.

Meanwhile, COP26 took place amid a global energy crisis caused by Europe's green policies. After shuttering coal plants in favor of wind turbines, the wind failed to show up sufficiently in 2021, forcing Europe to fall back on natural-gas plants and causing a continuing rise in gas prices.

Especially hard hit was the U.K., which saw skyrocketing gas prices close factories. Gas is so expensive now in Europe that even with record CO₂-emissions prices, it's cheaper to burn coal. High natural-gas prices will cause U.S. utilities to burn about 20% more coal this year. In short, Europe's thoughtless green policies have led to a global double whammy of higher energy prices and more carbon emissions.

Like Mr. Kerry's notion that the 1.5-degree-Celsius temperature target is meaningful (rather than an arbitrary, nonscientific number the Climategate scandal revealed to be "plucked out of thin air"), his claims of progress at COP26 bear little relation to reality.

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Mr. Kerry states clearly that the private sector will be needed to fund the trillions needed for the transition to clean energy. He mentions the companies that have signed on to the First Movers Coalitions. But on the role of the consumer in ultimately bearing the costs of

the transition, i.e., paying higher gas prices, he stays quite mum.

Justin Purohit

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