

# **‘The Day After Tomorrow’ is entertaining but fictional**

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It might surprise those of you who know my stance on the validity of man-made global warming that one of the movies I have seen repeatedly is *The Day After Tomorrow*, a 2004 fictional climate science disaster film. I actually enjoy watching the film because of its special effects and its theme of beyond-all-odds human conquest over insurmountable circumstances.

The film stars actors Dennis Quaid as Professor Jack Hall, who portrays an expert on climatology, and Jake Gyllenhaal as his son Sam, who, along with other teenagers his age, become trapped in New York City by a monstrous weather event.

Three large super-hurricane-size storms envelope the northern hemisphere, flash freezing anything caught out in the open. This is because man-made global warming has caused a disruption in ocean currents, creating the giant weather event and an enormous tsunami that floods New York City.

The professor warns his son that he and his friends need to remain inside and burn anything they can to stay warm until the storm passes. Before leaving on a trip to rescue his son, he briefs the president, advising him to evacuate the entire southern half of the United States to Mexico, saying that it was too late to evacuate anyone in the northern half.

The professor also admonishes the vice president, who plays an arrogant global warming denier, that had he listened to him earlier, the killer storm that was ushering in a new ice age could have been prevented.

At the end of the movie, the vice president has become the president, administering the U.S. government from Mexico and admitting how his arrogance and the that of other global warming deniers was inexcusable and he had finally seen the light.

When the movie was released, it was met with mixed reviews and received some criticism for scientific accuracies. One of the inconsistencies in the film occurs early in the story when Sam and his friends visit a natural history museum and marvel at the woolly mammoth display. His friend says, (I’m paraphrasing), “it says here that when this animal was discovered, they found food in its mouth and stomach. It was like he was flash frozen!”

The scene is clearly meant to set the stage for what is about to happen in the rest of the film, but how did its producers miss the irony of the scene? If man-made global warming had been caused by a large population burning fossil fuels, how did the woolly mammoth become victim to a flash-freezing storm at a time when there were few people occupying the planet?

In this month's issue of Architectural Record, an article entitled, "Design Community Reacts to Paris Agreement Withdrawal", lamented President Trump's recent stance against the Paris (Climate) Agreement.

The article began, "On June 1, President Donald Trump fulfilled a campaign promise to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. The POTUS cited 'onerous energy restrictions' and 'draconian financial and economic burdens' of the international climate accord, which aims to mitigate global warming. He went on to affirm that under his administration, the country 'will be environmentally friendly, but we're not going to put our businesses out of work and we're not going to lose our jobs.' The announcement set off a flurry of responses from governments and organizations around the world – including many in the design community. The American Institute of Architects (AIA) President Thomas Vonier expressed concern that the withdrawal would 'put us behind our major global competitors'" in a statement that afternoon."

The article's author, Miriam Sitz, wrote "The Paris Agreement originated at DOP21, the 21st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and went into effect on November 4, 2016. Signatories cannot leave the deal for four years, meaning the United States is committed through November 2020 – the end of Trump's current term."

She also quoted Vonier that "U.S. architects have truly been at the forefront of international efforts to address energy and climate issues. The decision to withdraw signals retreat; that hurts the image of the United States and, along with it, its architects."

I beg to differ. I think Mr. Vonier might be surprised at the number of architects that don't agree with his assessment, albeit quietly. Dealing with problems that don't exist is a burden on business. Trump's plan to renegotiate flawed agreements such as the Paris Accord in order to put America first is the right thing to do. When America is not bound to agreements based on bad science and lop-sided rules that favor polluting countries, America will be cleaner and more prosperous, and along with it, so will the rest of the world.

As for me, I'll probably watch The Day After Tomorrow again and again. It's fun fiction.



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