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RESEARCH + OPINION ON PUBLIC POLICY

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ON THE COVER

A piece of Belgian lace from the Lou Henry Hoover Collection highlights the American eagle. During World War I, a remarkable agreement between the Allies and the Central Powers allowed Belgian women to continue making traditional lace amid the warfare devastating northern Europe, keeping open a key economic lifeline. Grateful for US intercession, the lace makers of Belgium sent thousands of examples of their work to the Americans who had helped save them from starvation. See story, page 191.



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Belgian women, backed by US aid during World War I, thanked Americans by sending messages made from traditional lace and needlework. Lou Henry Hoover gathered those fragile reminders of a historic humanitarian moment. *By Jean McElwee Cannon*





The Case Against Higher Taxes

“Deadweight loss” is just as bad as it sounds, just as inefficient, just as unfair.

By David R. Henderson

A number of Democratic politicians—and some economists, including Paul Krugman—have recently advocated substantially higher income tax rates on high-income Americans. The current top federal tax rate on income is 37 percent for married people filing jointly, and it applies to all taxable income over \$612,350. The highest state income tax rate in the United States is in California, where it is 13.3 percent on taxable income over \$1 million. Thus, the highest-income people in California lose over half of their incremental income to the government.

That politicians favor higher tax rates is not surprising. That some economists do, and that one particular economist is making such a bad case for higher tax rates, is somewhat surprising.

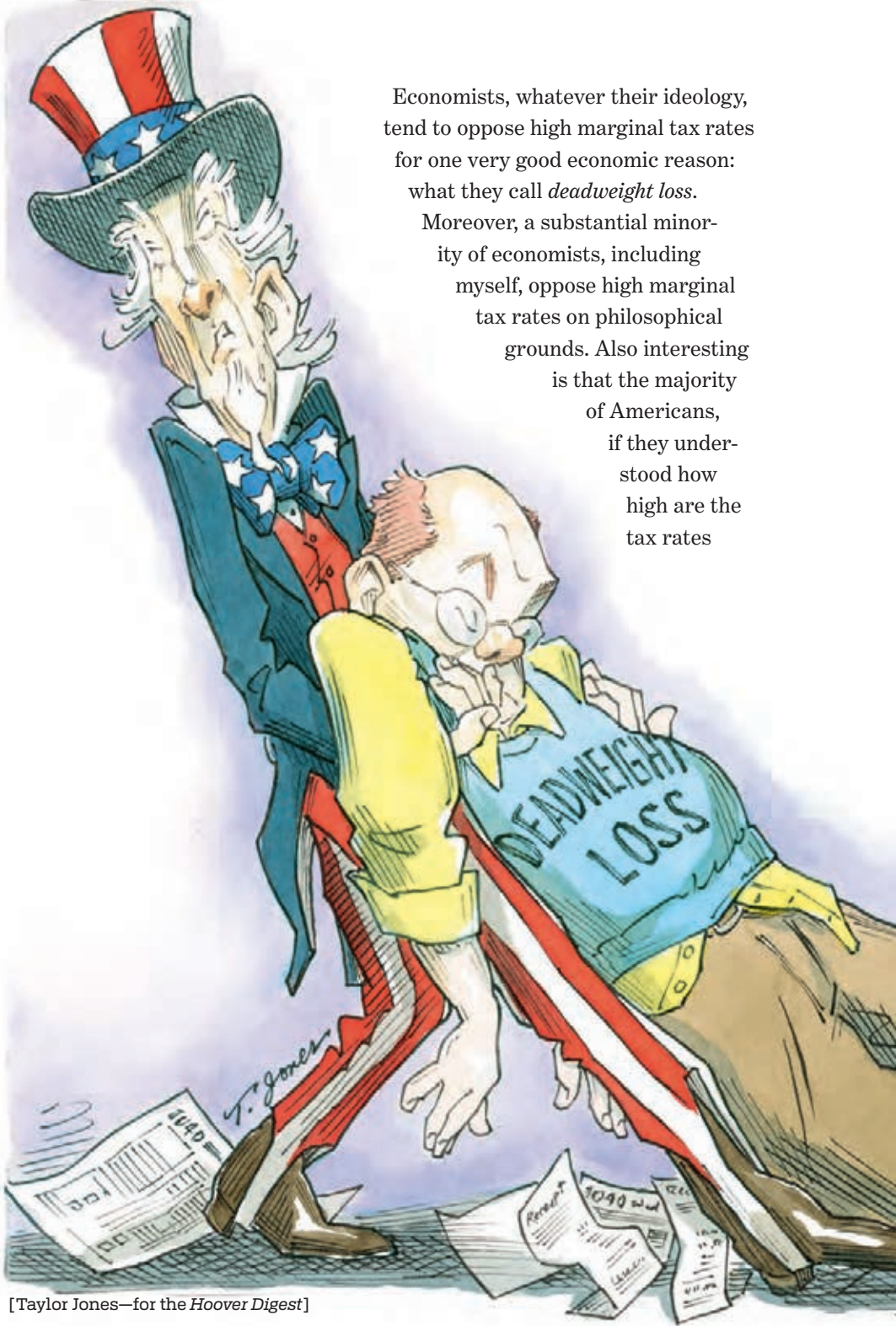
Key points

- » “Deadweight loss” arises from attempts to avoid taxes.
- » An increased tax rate causes people to engage in behavior that would otherwise be inefficient.
- » Most people believe in fairness even when considering taxes on the rich.

David R. Henderson is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution and an emeritus professor of economics at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.

Economists, whatever their ideology, tend to oppose high marginal tax rates for one very good economic reason: what they call *deadweight loss*.

Moreover, a substantial minority of economists, including myself, oppose high marginal tax rates on philosophical grounds. Also interesting is that the majority of Americans, if they understood how high are the tax rates



[Taylor Jones—for the Hoover Digest]

that high-income Americans pay, would favor substantially cutting tax rates on the top earners.

THE DEAD HAND

Economists often come up with cumbersome terms to describe important concepts. But deadweight loss is quite clear: it beautifully describes one of the big harms from taxation. The deadweight loss from taxes is the loss imposed on some that is

not a gain to anyone. So, for example, a typical estimate of deadweight loss from taxes is 30 percent of revenue raised. That means that

if the government takes \$1 million in additional taxes, there is an additional \$300,000 cost imposed on players in the economy.

Where does this deadweight loss come from? People's attempts to avoid taxes. So, for example, an increase in the marginal tax rate might cause people to work less. Or it might cause them to buy a more expensive house so that they can deduct the additional interest on the mortgage. Those are just two of the ways people can adjust. They might also evade taxes by understating income or overstating expenses and deductions. Why do we call the result deadweight loss? Because in each case, the tax system gives people an incentive to do something that they would not have chosen to do at a lower

Americans don't understand how high tax rates already are. Asked to choose a fair rate, they would actually favor cuts for the top earners.



tax rate. The increased tax rate causes them to engage in behavior that otherwise would be inefficient for them.

This can best be illustrated with an extreme hypothetical example. Imagine that the federal government imposes a \$2,000 additional tax on everyone, but gives them a way out: they can avoid the tax if they fly to Alaska and back. For those who would have flown to Alaska anyway, there is no deadweight loss. But for those who would not have, there is a deadweight loss. As long as the cost of flying to Alaska—including the cost of your time minus any “disvalue” you put on going to Alaska—is less than \$2,000, you will do it. Imagine that the cost is \$1,900. Then you will fly there, and the deadweight loss from your adjustment will be a whopping \$1,900.

The fact that taxes cause people to adjust to avoid some or all of them is one of the reasons that many economists oppose high tax rates.

And here’s the kicker. A theorem in economics says the deadweight loss from a tax is proportional not to the tax rate, but to the *square* of the tax rate. Consider the 37 percent top federal tax rate. Some economists, such as MIT’s Peter Diamond and UC-Berkeley’s Emmanuel Saez, have advocated that it

be raised to 70 percent or higher. To make the math simple, imagine that Congress and

The deadweight loss from taxes is the loss imposed on some that is a gain to none.

the president were to double it to 74 percent. The deadweight loss wouldn’t double. It would quadruple.

In the 1970s, when the top marginal tax rate in the United States was 70 percent, economist Art Laffer drew his famous Laffer Curve. He showed that tax rates could be so high that cutting them would actually increase revenue and raising them could decrease revenue. And even if raising tax rates doesn’t decrease revenue, what’s clear from both basic economics and empirical studies is that raising tax rates by x percent will raise tax revenues by less than x percent. Why? Because of the adjustments people make to avoid taxes.

So, for example, consider a high-income Californian who is currently paying 50.3 cents in federal and state taxes on every additional dollar earned, which means that he’s keeping 49.7 cents. Then imagine that the advocates of higher tax rates get their way and raise his federal tax rate to 70 percent. Now he’s paying 83.3 cents on every additional dollar earned and keeping only 16.7 cents. Put aside all the other ways he might adjust, and consider just his decision about how much to earn. His incentive to earn an additional

dollar has fallen from 49.7 cents to 16.7 cents, a drop of 66 percent. Is it hard to imagine that this Californian will work less?

TAXATION EQUALS EXTRACTION

Economist Paul Krugman, in his January 5 column in the *New York Times*, admits that high tax rates reduce the incentive to work, but says it doesn't matter for anyone other than the people who are taxed. Perhaps you think I'm exaggerating his point. But here's what he wrote:

In a perfectly competitive economy, with no monopoly power or other distortions—which is the kind of economy conservatives want us to believe we have—everyone gets paid his or her marginal product. That is, if you get paid \$1,000 an hour, it's because each extra hour you work adds \$1,000 worth to the economy's output.

In that case, however, why do we care how hard the rich work? If a rich man works an extra hour, adding \$1,000 to the economy, but gets paid \$1,000 for his efforts, the combined income of everyone else doesn't change, does it? Ah, but it does—because he pays taxes on that extra \$1,000. So the social benefit from getting high-income individuals to work a bit harder is the tax revenue generated by that extra effort—and conversely the cost of their working less is the reduction in the taxes they pay.

Or to put it a bit more succinctly, when taxing the rich, all we should care about is how much revenue we raise. The optimal tax rate on people with very high incomes is the rate that raises the maximum possible revenue.

Krugman's denial of basic economics is stunning. The fact is that there are gains from trade, and the fewer people there are producing things, the less trade there is. So the losers from higher tax rates are not just those who are taxed but also those who don't get to buy the goods and services that those higher-taxed people stop producing. There is no contradiction between the idea that people are paid their marginal product and the idea that when they produce, other people benefit.

Notice something else that Krugman seems to believe: rich people literally don't count. He writes, "The social benefit from getting high-income individuals to work a bit harder is the tax revenue generated by that extra effort." That's true only if rich people aren't part of society. And in case you thought Krugman was just being careless, look at another line above: "When taxing

the rich, all we should care about is how much revenue we raise.” He seems to regard “the rich” as cattle to be raised and exploited. That’s a very negative view of humanity.

It’s also a strange view. Krugman, who is quite rich whether measured by income or wealth, is excluding himself from society. Some might say that I care more about Paul Krugman than Paul Krugman does.

AMERICANS THINK TAXES ARE HIGH ENOUGH

Fortunately, I’m not alone. Guess who else cares about rich people, whether we measure “richness” by income or wealth? The vast majority of Americans do. If you poll people about whether the rich should pay more in taxes, the majority will typically say yes. But then ask them what percent of their income the rich should pay in taxes, and the vast majority will give a number that’s below the percent

they currently pay. In a 2012 poll conducted by *The Hill*, 75 percent of respondents thought that the rich should pay

a rate of 30 percent or lower. So they don’t forget about fairness when they consider taxes on the rich and they don’t, like Krugman, seem to regard the rich as cattle.

Unfortunately, the poll specified neither whether the question was about marginal tax rates or average tax rates, nor whether it was about income taxes or taxes in general. Still, the data are striking. And they’re consistent with data from a *Reader’s Digest* poll in the 1990s. The poll asked what percent of their income a family of four making \$200,000 should pay in all taxes to all levels of government, including income taxes, Social Security, sales taxes, and property taxes. The median response of almost all income and demographic groups was that the maximum should be 25 percent. That is well below the percent of income paid in taxes by actual families making \$200,000 then (which is approximately \$320,000 in today’s dollars).

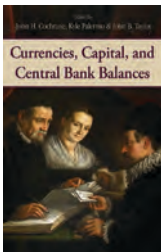
Even noted activist Al Sharpton thought the rich should be taxed less. In a 2004 interview with John Stossel, Sharpton said the rich should pay their fair share of taxes. Stossel asked him what percent of total federal income taxes the rich should pay. Sharpton’s answer: at least 15 percent. At the time, noted Stossel, they paid 34 percent of all federal income taxes. All the rich people I know, except for Paul Krugman, would take Sharpton’s deal in a New York minute.

Certain politicians seem to think that rich people are cattle to be slaughtered for their tax revenue.

The simple fact is that people are ignorant of the tax structure and don't understand how a progressive income tax works. In the 1990s, a petitioner asked a high-income friend of mine to sign a petition to put a progressive income tax on the ballot in Massachusetts. The state constitution required, and still requires, a proportional state income tax. My friend asked the petitioner why she thought higher-income people should pay higher tax rates. She answered, "Because people who make more money should pay more in tax." My friend agreed, saying, "If I make five times as much as you, then my taxes should be five times as high as yours." "We agree," said the woman. "Now will you sign my petition?" Of course he refused. She didn't understand that with Massachusetts's proportional tax on income, she had already achieved what she claimed to want.

In short, the economics, the polling data, and basic fairness say that it's a bad idea to raise taxes further on high-income people. That probably won't stop many advocates from pushing for higher taxes. But it should. ■

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Perilous Pensions

Social Security is still heading for a fall. Not even the rising number of new workers can postpone this reckoning.

By Charles Blahous

Late last year, Morgan Stanley published a research report projecting that US labor-force growth would exceed Congressional Budget Office (CBO) projections starting in the 2020s, and also asserting that this faster growth “should” delay Social Security’s insolvency, “perhaps by decades.” Specifically, the report stated that “a faster increase in the pool of covered workers is an important factor in the Social Security trustees’ ‘low cost’ scenario, which would delay the date at which the Social Security trust fund reserves could become depleted from 2034 to 2062.”

Multiple news stories seized uncritically upon this tantalizing prospect, with an article on *MarketWatch* stating that such variance in labor-force growth has “tremendous implications,” that it might help Social Security solvency last “for another generation,” and that “if Morgan Stanley is right, the Social Security trust fund reserves might become depleted in 2062,” long after the current projection of 2034.

The *MarketWatch* headline, stating that “higher-than-predicted labor-force participation” might by itself plausibly sustain Social Security for several additional decades, is flatly wrong. Morgan Stanley’s report should not have suggested this, news articles about the study should not have asserted it, and their respective authors should correct these misimpressions if they haven’t already.

Charles Blahous is a visiting fellow at the Hoover Institution.

A CASCADE OF ASSUMPTIONS

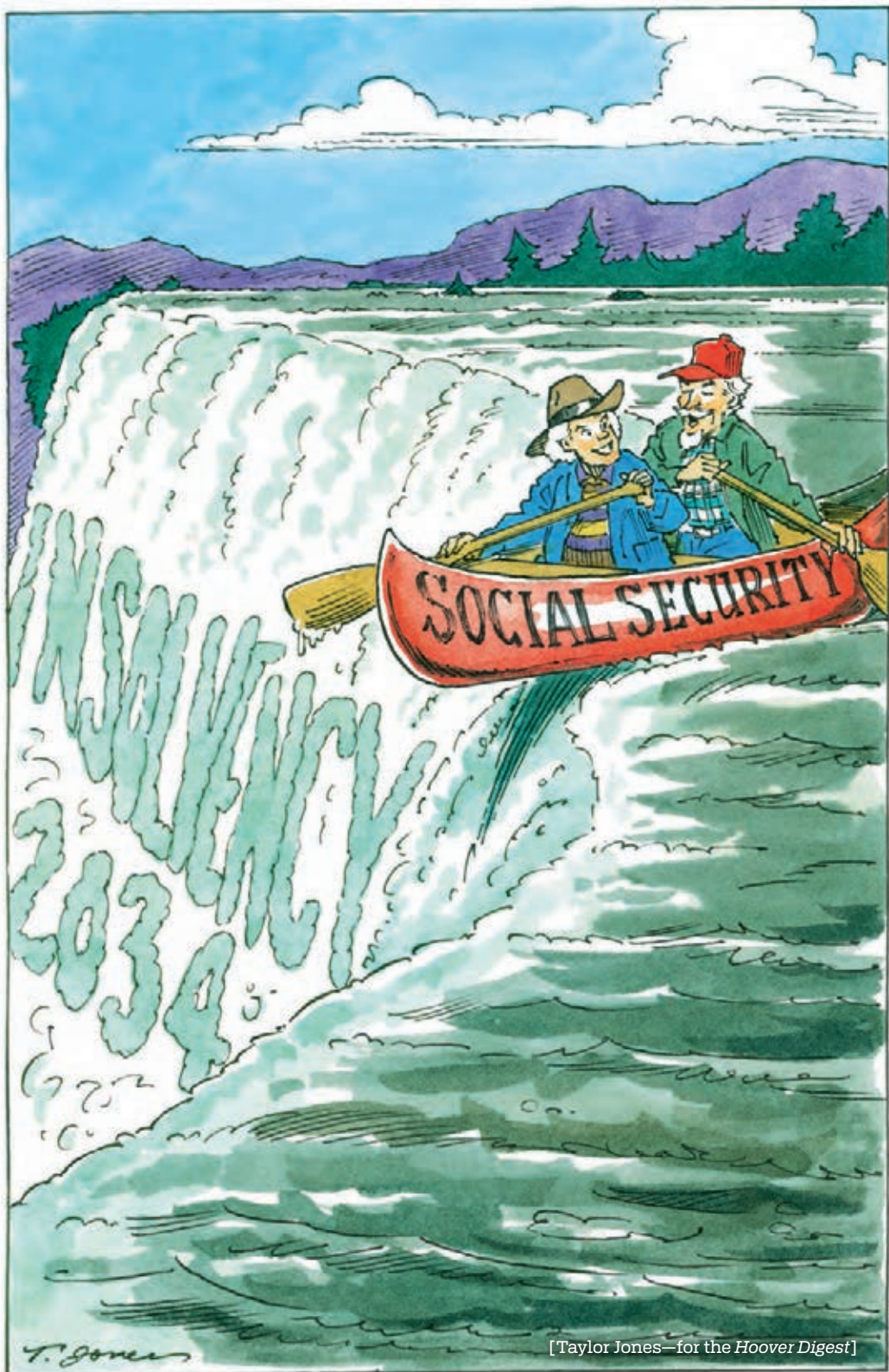
First, some quick background. For several decades now, annual Social Security trustees' reports have warned consistently that the program's scheduled benefit obligations far exceed its projected revenues and have urged lawmakers to enact financial corrections before it is too late to realistically do so. These reports have stressed that although various economic and demographic factors cannot be projected precisely, there is nevertheless a high degree of certainty that the shortfall will not correct itself without legislative action. The idea that faster labor-force growth might by itself substantially postpone the problem is sharply at odds with these repeated bipartisan messages.

Second, a brief disclaimer. I believe strongly in the benefits of increased labor-force participation. Indeed, much of my own writing about Social Security policy stresses the value of reforming the program to fix work disincentives. More labor-force participation is good not only for Social Security finances but for the economy as a whole, for the larger federal budget, and for workers themselves. Nothing that follows in this article should be misconstrued as failing to recognize the many benefits of faster labor-force growth.

Here is why the "solvent until 2062" claim is erroneous.

Social Security's trustees sometimes stress that its projected depletion date is an inadequate proxy for system financial health, for the simple reason that by the time the insolvency date rolls around, it is far too late to fix the problem. What matters is the size of the shortfall requiring correction and whether there is still a reasonable chance to correct it. But even when we invoke the program's projected insolvency date as a crude shorthand for its financial condition, it's still clear that increased labor-force participation won't change the contours of the financial problem all that much.

A larger labor force means more wages subject to the Social Security tax, which in turn means more revenues for the program. But it also means larger benefit obligations later, deriving from the additional contributions. The additional revenues arrive first, delaying insolvency somewhat. Still, the qualitative net effects aren't very large. A sensitivity analysis in the trustees' report shows that even if annual national real wage growth increases over 50 percent faster than current projections, insolvency will be delayed by only three years, from 2034 to 2037. Note that this analysis does not focus narrowly on labor-force participation but models a wider array of factors that might conceivably lead to more taxable earnings. The bottom line is that even if increased labor-force participation were to result in a dramatic acceleration of national earnings growth, it would still change Social Security's financial picture very little.



T. Jones

[Taylor Jones—for the Hoover Digest]

So, what about that trustees' "low cost" projection scenario that shows Social Security's trust funds lasting until 2062? Well, that projection has virtually nothing to do with increased labor-force participation. Here are just some of the assumptions that all must pan out for that scenario to transpire:

» The US **fertility rate** rebounds to 2.2, permanently. For reference, the current US fertility rate is about 1.8, and the United States has not had a single year exhibiting a 2.2 fertility rate since 1971.

» Annual US **mortality improvements** will slow down to barely half the rate of progress assumed in the primary projections. Basically, this scenario assumes that Social Security will cost less than now projected because we'll stop making significant progress in improving longevity and recipients won't collect benefits for as long.

» **Immigration** will be more than 25 percent higher than now projected.

» Annual **productivity growth** will be more than 20 percent higher than now projected.

» Real **wages** will grow more than 50 percent faster than now projected.

» After 2028, the United States will never again see an **unemployment rate** above 4.5 percent.

» **Disability incidence** will drop by more than 20 percent, relative to the primary projections.

» **Disability recovery** rates will increase by more than 20 percent, relative to the primary projections.

If you think it highly unlikely that all of these factors will occur simultaneously, thereby delaying Social Security's projected insolvency until 2062, you are not alone.

The trustees perform an annual stochastic analysis that provides 80 percent and 95 percent confidence bands for the projections, including the insolvency date. The 2017 analysis found with 80 percent confidence that Social Security's trust funds would be depleted between 2032 and 2039, and 95 percent confidence that depletion would occur between 2030 and 2043. In other words, there is only a 2.5 percent chance that the trust funds will remain solvent past 2043. The 2062 insolvency projection scenario is not remotely within the range of likely outcomes and is not intended to be. It is designed to be an illustration of the potential range of movement in the projections if, unrealistically, all relevant variables break in the same direction.

CANCELED OUT

A particularly glaring error in the *Market Watch* piece, though an understandable misimpression given the wording of the original Morgan Stanley report, is its failure to note that faster labor-force participation growth plays virtually no role in the trustees' 2062 projection scenario. Consider this passage from the trustees' report:

More optimistic economic assumptions in the low-cost alternative are consistent with higher labor-force participation rates, while demographic assumptions in the low-cost alternative (such as slower improvement in longevity) are consistent with lower labor-force participation rates. These economic and demographic influences have largely offsetting effects. Therefore, the projected labor-force participation rates do not vary substantially across alternatives.

Translated, this means that there are some assumptions in the trustees' low-cost (2062) scenario that push labor-force participation up, and others that push it down. On balance, though, there isn't significant variation in labor-force participation between the trustees' main 2034 projection and their illustrative 2062 projection.

The Morgan Stanley report itself fails to account for the net effects of these interrelated factors. The report projects higher labor-force participation rates than CBO does, based on an expectation that recent "improvements in health and life expectancy" will "continue over the next couple of decades." But if those life-expectancy improvements do continue, they won't boost only labor-force participation; they will also increase Social Security expenditures because recipients will collect benefits over longer lifetimes. This is the opposite of what is assumed in the trustees' low-cost (2062) projection scenario, in which program expenditures are lowered by beneficiaries dying earlier.

In summary, the trustees have indeed produced an illustrative scenario in which Social Security insolvency is delayed until 2062, but it's the product of an array of extremely improbable assumptions, and, moreover, increased labor-force participation has nothing to do with it. The representation that faster labor-force growth might by itself plausibly delay Social Security insolvency for nearly three decades is inaccurate and should be corrected. ■

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Conservatism for the People

When society and politics become degraded, when American communities crumble, merely “conserving” isn’t enough. **Conservatism must restore.**

By **Peter Berkowitz**

Of all the strange and remarkable features of politics in the Trump era, among the least surprising is the alliance between conservatism and populism. Donald Trump’s emergence as the tribune of conservative hopes and popular anxieties was improbable. But he didn’t invent the alliance between conservatism and populism—or, to speak less polemically, between conservatism and the people. He rode the wave of a populist revolt sweeping across the Western world.

In many liberal democracies, right-wing politicians have made common cause with disaffected portions of the working and middle classes. A recurring complaint reverberates across rural and suburban

Key points

- » Sound traditions and communities nurture political freedom.
- » Conservative elites must listen more, and more carefully, to the people to better understand their aspirations, discontents, and fears.
- » Conservatives must restore liberal education.

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Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Iowa; similar grievances roil swaths of Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Hungary, Poland, Israel, and Brazil: an imperious ruling elite has imposed laws, norms, and practices that radiate disdain for the people's beliefs and endanger their way of life. Elites have conspired across partisan lines to promote globalization, free trade, and mass immigration, benefiting themselves while ignoring the costs for the less educated and less wealthy. Meanwhile, the mainstream press and social media, the entertainment industry, and the universities—all dominated by progressive elites—propagate scorn for conservatism. Conservative elites and many regular voters find themselves bound together by a common political opponent.

Yet the alliance between conservatism and the people—between elites devoted to preserving tradition and local communities and those who want them preserved—is as old as modern conservatism itself. Its roots can be traced to 1790. In “Reflections on the Revolution in France,” Anglo-Irish statesman Edmund Burke sought to preserve British morality, civil society, and political order, which he regarded as essentially healthy, from baleful Parisian ideas. The French revolutionaries wanted to perfect politics by eradicating tradition and transforming humanity. Burke replied that the British people were fine. Their traditions and communities nurtured political freedom, which gave tradition and community room to develop and flourish.

Reconciling freedom and tradition has since emerged as modern conservatism's perennial task. A little more than one hundred and fifty years after Burke, the founders of the conservative movement in America renewed the

relationship between the right and the people. William F. Buckley—a classical liberal devoted to self-government and free markets, and a tradi-

The alliance between conservatism and the people is as old as modern conservatism itself.

tionalist dedicated to morality anchored in Christianity—launched *National Review* in 1955 to safeguard the commitments to freedom and faith that he believed were alive and well among ordinary Americans.

In a 1985 essay, Irving Kristol distinguished “the new populism” from the populism America's founders feared, in which the people's passions “overwhelm the political and legal process by which our democracy has traditionally operated.” Inept conduct of the Vietnam War, overreaching courts, failing schools, and a broken criminal justice system had shattered the people's

confidence in the political elites. “The common sense—not the passion, but the common sense—of the American people has been outraged over the past twenty years,” Kristol wrote, “by the persistent un-wisdom of their elected and appointed officials.”

Today, the people are restive and in distress. The danger to their communities isn’t distant and vague. It isn’t lurking on the outskirts. It has breached the town walls. It has occupied neighborhoods and infiltrated homes.

Charles Murray explored this multifaceted crisis in his 2012 book *Coming Apart*. The lower middle class is beset by plunging marriage rates, a rise in births to unwed mothers, erosion of men’s industriousness, surging crime, and a steep decline in religious faith.

Reconciling freedom and tradition has emerged as modern conservatism’s perennial task.

Culprits, particularly in the industrial heartland, include globalization, workplace automation, and opioids. The contempt that progressive elites heap on the lower middle class fuels indignation and resentment.

Preserving and reforming no longer suffice. To conserve, one must also restore. To restore America’s beleaguered lower-middle-class communities—indeed, to earn the support of people throughout the nation, regardless of socioeconomic class—conservative elites must convince the people that liberty and limited government advance the people’s long-term interests. Conservative elites must listen more, and more carefully, to the people to better understand their aspirations, discontents, and fears. This will aid in developing policies—informed by the principles of constitutional government—that address the people’s immediate priorities, starting with good jobs, which are essential to healthy communities.

Sound policy is of little use if Americans don’t understand the precepts of liberal democracy. A proper liberal education yields that understanding. To put it mildly, however, few American institutions of higher education transmit knowledge, and cultivate the spirit, of freedom. Rather, colleges and universities inculcate the practices and spirit of the tribalism that disfigures American politics.

Conservatives, therefore, must restore liberal education. That is a long-term undertaking. In the near term, conservatives should multiply the supplemental on- and off-campus programs they have already established to fill the college curriculum’s gaping holes and counteract its illiberal lessons.

It's true that liberal education has always been the province of elites. It's also true that beginning with Burke, conservative elites have brought their learning to bear on behalf of the interest they share with the people in conserving freedom, including the freedom to conserve local community, national tradition and religious faith.

In this strange and remarkable moment, lively appreciation of modern conservatism's origins, major ideas, and perennial task furnishes invaluable resources for understanding our politics and advancing the public interest. ■

Adapted from Peter Berkowitz's Wriston Lecture, "The Conservative Challenge in a Populist Moment," delivered at the Manhattan Institute.



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Children of Entitlement

Young leaders who preach socialism and other fantasies demonstrate an astonishing disregard for facts—maybe because they’ve never been forced to face any facts.

By Bruce S. Thornton

Many millennials have developed an affection for socialism, in defiance of its long record of failure. Electoral maven Karl Rove recently warned us not to ignore or dismiss this enthusiasm. Socialism’s dismal record “doesn’t mean new forms of socialism can’t gain a following,” he wrote in the *Wall Street Journal*. Rove’s solution is for Republicans to “do the hard work of updating old arguments” and to “hone their arguments” against socialist policies in preparation for the 2020 presidential race.

Welcome back to 2,500 years of dubious thinking about the power of reason and coherent argument to dispel bad ideas. It didn’t save Socrates from the hemlock, and it’s unlikely to change the minds of the worst educated, most self-centered, and most pampered cohort in American history.

This stubborn belief in the power of rational thought and knowledge to improve human life lies at the heart of modern political ideologies like

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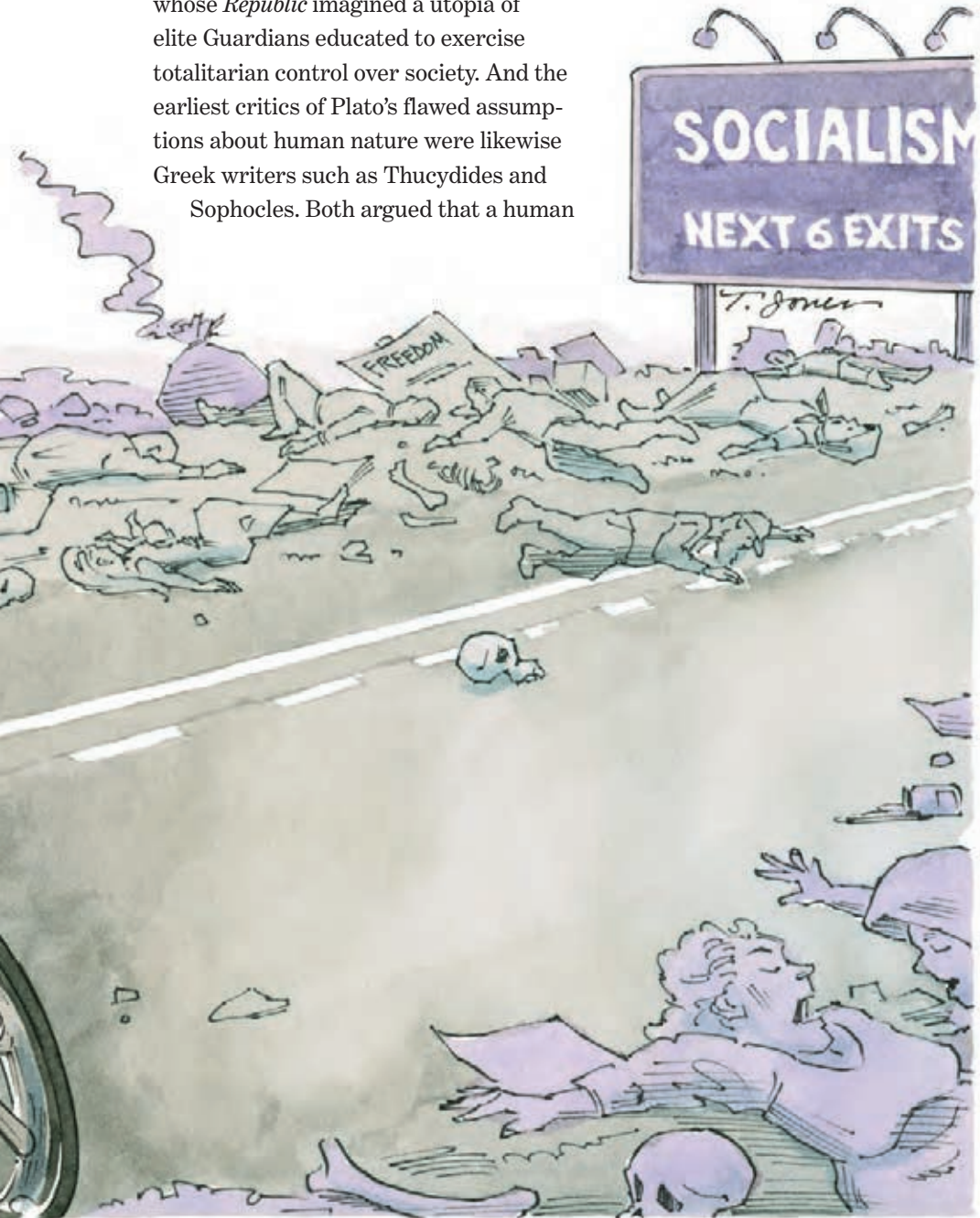
Marxism and progressivism. Both assume that the knowledge useful for politically organizing a state or society is “scientific,” comprising principles and techniques that are beyond ideology and universally true. Hence the



[Taylor Jones—for the *Hoover Digest*]

need for enlightened technocratic elites to control social institutions and use power to rationally arrange human existence more justly and efficiently.

The flaw in this thinking was first identified by contemporaries of Plato, whose *Republic* imagined a utopia of elite Guardians educated to exercise totalitarian control over society. And the earliest critics of Plato's flawed assumptions about human nature were likewise Greek writers such as Thucydides and Sophocles. Both argued that a human



nature universally subject to irrational passions, free will, and a tragic world would always to some degree triumph over the rational mind.

Yet despite the subsequent millennia in which history demonstrated that the road to utopia is lined with mountains of corpses, the dream of creating heaven on earth by applying rational techniques of control and improvement over human beings has not lost its allure. In modern times, the decline of faith and the belief in a transcendent reality has made us even more vulnerable to political religions, those delusional visions of human power and will purportedly able to eliminate the tragic limits of earthly life, such as inequality, suffering, injustice, and violence.

HEDGING IN THE “FACTIONS”

The founders knew this history of political speculation going back to ancient Athens, and they agreed with Machiavelli that “it is necessary for whoever arranges to found a Republic and establish laws in it, to presuppose that all men are bad and that they will use their malignity of mind every time they have the opportunity.” This fundamental assumption also underlies the Constitution’s architecture, most famously laid out by James Madison in *Federalist* No. 10.

To protect political freedom, Madison writes, the state must be organized to protect against “faction,” groups of citizens united and motivated “by

Human nature, subject to irrational passions and free will, will always to some degree defeat the rational mind.

some common impulse or passion, or interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interest of the community

as a whole.” Freedom nourishes faction and gives it scope, especially freedom of speech, which allows opinions to be publicized and conflict with those of others. Finally, faction is not a result of bad education or poverty, it is “sown in the nature of man,” which creates a “connection between his reason and his self-love,” and makes “his opinions and passions” a “reciprocal influence on each other.” To protect the freedom of all from this dynamic, the founders checked and balanced and divided power so no one faction could dominate the rest and create tyranny.

Notice that although Madison does mention “interest,” property and wealth, he says nothing about rational scientific truths or rational arguments as causes of factions or means for restraining them. We don’t as a people gather into parties over facts, scientific theories, and mathematical formulas,

rather than over factional purposes to which some, like global warming, can be put. Mainly that's because the most important political disagreements concern questions that science or reason or facts alone can't answer: What are human beings? What do we owe to others? Why do we do what we do? What is the best way of life? What is the highest good for a political community? And who should participate in governing?

Most of us, then, are not going to be talked out of our political passions, any more than we will abandon our economic interests. Yet every elec-

tion we hear over and over about the "partisan divide" that keeps us from rational discussions and solutions about important issues. Half an hour on any raucous website, cable show, or network news program will demonstrate that what we decry as "partisanship," "polarization," and even "hatred" are politics just as Madison understood it, and whose threat to freedom he guarded against by making "ambition counter ambition."

There are, however, differences between our world and the centuries before World War II that have exacerbated these factional passions. Our high level of material existence, safety, and comfort is on an unprecedented scale. One consequence has been the elevation of expectations for our existence far beyond what's possible for flawed, passionate creatures like us. And these expectations never seem to be gratified, but only to escalate.

Older generations grew up in a harder, more dangerous, more contingent world of material want, disease, and daily physical labor. Their expectations were tempered by hard experience and constant reminders that their desires and dreams were a matter of indifference in such a world. More of them were skeptical about the utopian promises of socialism and communism. These collectivist ideologies did see some success after initial enthusiasm, but

invariably they failed because they couldn't meet the expectations they had raised. As a consequence, collectivist ideologies have had to resort to murder, gulags, tyranny, and corruption—imposing by force what could not be won by the persuasion of success, as free market capitalism has done.

Machiavelli warned, "Presuppose that all men are bad and that they will use their malignity of mind every time they have the opportunity."

We don't gather into parties over facts, scientific theories, and mathematical formulas.

Millennials are a different breed. They have lived in this brave new world of affluence from childhood, and so have a much higher baseline standard of material comfort and greater expectations for achieving political ideals like universal free health care, guaranteed jobs, free college tuition, social harmony, and equality of outcomes rather than of opportunity. But they are continually disappointed and aggrieved: our country hasn't been eager to repeat the failures of a century of socialist economies and social policies.

Having spent forty years in the university watching the degradation of scholarly disciplines, I'd like for Rove to show me where to find the millennial socialists educated enough in traditional subjects like history, philosophy, or critical thinking to be open to rational persuasion. A generation marked by both an elevated, unearned sense of self-regard and an arrogant certainty about their own intellectual and moral superiority is likelier to complain and threaten than to listen thoughtfully.

GOOD CITIZENS VS. BAD IDEAS

Not all millennials, of course, resemble this portrait. Millions reject the nostrums of fashionable leftism and trendy socialism. They have experienced a world more challenging than their parents' basements or a college dorm room. They go to church, serve in the military, protect our streets, and raise their children to be virtuous. But because they are busy at these adult activities, they don't have the impact on our culture and politics that subsidized activists and "social justice" warriors do. That's why the establishment media ignores them.

In our safe, comfortable society, expectations rise far beyond what's possible for flawed creatures like us. And these expectations seem only to escalate.

Will socialism, as Rove fears, start to attract more and more voters as the boomers die off and the Democratic coalition of tribes expands? I don't think so, and not because of President Trump's success in starting to reverse

Barack Obama's "fundamental transformation" of America, of which the current socialist enthusiasm is the logical culmination. Nor will socialism be rejected because Republicans fanned out across the country to meetings and town halls and made converts with refurbished messaging.

Rather, our socialist poseurs are heading inexorably toward a looming economic disaster: the unfunded liabilities, mountains of government debt, and

unsustainable entitlement spending, for which the reckoning is relentlessly growing closer. And who's on the hook for that bill? Not most of us boomers. The millennials are going to be left holding the bag, and some hard lessons about an unforgiving reality and the eternal laws of compound interest will have to be learned.

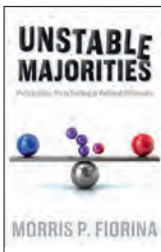
But crises are unpredictable and irrational, and, as Thucydides said, bring men's characters down to the level of their circumstances. That process of righting our

fiscal ship is likely to be dangerous and rife with social disorder that will make our petty quarrels over tweets and porn stars seem quaint. Voters may even become sufficiently frightened for their economic future, and desperate enough, to turn to socialism for solutions that don't require anything from them beyond more of other people's money.

There's no predicting how things will turn out in such circumstances, or how millennials will respond. But one thing right now we know for sure: socialism will fail. It always has, and it always will. ■

Collectivist ideologies resort to murder, gulags, tyranny, and corruption—imposing by force what they couldn't win by the persuasion of success.

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A Manifesto of Misery

Socialism has never succeeded in any way—except in surviving in credulous minds.

By Charles Calomiris

The overarching message of *The Opportunity Costs of Socialism*—a study recently released by the President’s Council of Economic Advisers (CEA)—is that the advocacy of socialism cannot reasonably be based on policy preferences; its attraction has always been grounded in a combination of wishful thinking and ignorance. For example, the CEA study shows that the socialist approach to “single payer” health care advocated by many on the left would cost much more than other approaches and deliver much less, resulting in the significant worsening of mortality and morbidity, not just higher taxes and reduced economic growth.

One prominent opinion-page editor described the study’s conclusions to me as too obvious to warrant

Key points

» Many people are infatuated with socialism yet ignorant of its failures.

» Socialism is built on false promises, but the most egregious failure is this: it has never conquered poverty.

» Historians agree that prosperity comes through personal freedom, property rights, and free markets.

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mention. That reaction reflects the very problem the study seeks to remedy. Obvious facts about socialism are not discussed enough. Few people are willing to read fifty-page studies like the CEA's and there has been very little media coverage of it—journalists or politicians who could summarize the CEA findings haven't seen sufficient reason to do so (or may themselves be among the uninformed advocates of socialism). The ignorant advocacy of socialism is a significant threat to our democracy.

Socialism has existed in many forms. They lie on a continuum, from the central-planning nightmare of the USSR to the Scandinavian democratic experiments of several decades ago. The idea

that unites the various embodiments of socialism is that economic freedom is counterproductive to the aspira-

tions of humanity. It would be far better and fairer, socialists argue, for the state to distribute scarce resources rather than let the market allocate goods and services by itself. Socialism seeks control of economic decisions, either through central planning or through expropriative taxation and regulation, purportedly in the interest of the common man.

The difference between market-based and socialist economies is not the presence of redistributive policies per se. For over a century, market-based economies around the world have taxed and redistributed wealth and provided a host of services such as public education and care for the poor, sick, and elderly. But in market-based systems, taxation is regarded as an unfortunate burden, employed out of necessity to ensure other priorities are achieved. Socialist regimes, by contrast, do not see taxation as undesirable—it is as a means to prevent individuals from controlling their collective economic destiny.

Marx made many specific, erroneous predictions about capitalism, including its declining profitability and rising unemployment.

EMPTY PROMISES, FAILED PROPHECIES

Socialism's appeal has always been its false promise to create wealth better than capitalism can. Advocates of socialism promise great economic achievements, which they argue are worth the price of reduced individual economic liberty. It is worth remembering that Karl Marx regarded socialism as an economic necessity that would emerge out of the ashes of capitalism precisely because capitalism would fail to sustain wealth creation. Marx made many specific, erroneous predictions about capitalism, including its declining

profitability and rising unemployment. His analysis did not consider permanent economic growth in a capitalist system to be possible. And his “historical materialist” view of political choice claimed that the rich and powerful would never share power voluntarily with their economic lessers or create social safety nets. Writing in the mid-nineteenth century, Marx fundamentally failed to understand the huge changes in technology, political suffrage, or social safety-net policies occurring around him.

Socialist theory not only was wrong about the economic and political fruits of capitalism, it failed to see the problems that arise in socialist governments. Socialism’s record has been pain, not gain, especially for the poor. Socialism produced mass starvation in Eastern Europe and China as it undermined the farmers’ ability to grow and market their crops. In less-extreme incarnations,

Socialism’s record has been pain, not gain, especially for the poor: hunger, malnutrition, corruption.

such as in Britain in the decades after World War II and before Margaret Thatcher came to power, it stunted growth. In most cases, socialism’s

monopoly on economic control also fomented corruption by government officials, as was especially apparent in Latin American and African socialist regimes. The adverse economic consequences of socialism led the Scandinavian countries to dial back their versions in the past decades. If the United States had imitated Scandinavian-style socialism, the CEA study estimates, our GDP today would be 19 percent lower.

Virtually all the developing world has abandoned socialism. Countries today do not seek to emulate the disasters of North Korea, Cuba, or Venezuela. They also avoid high taxation of the rich, which reflects the recognition that countries compete with each other for capital. Expropriating the rich tends to make them leave, and when they leave they take their wealth with them.

WAKING UP FROM SOCIALIST FAILURES

This philosophical shift in the developing world is a major change since the 1980s, when socialism was still fashionable among some. The shift away from socialist thinking was grounded in the growing body of empirical evidence about the kinds of policies that produced growth and poverty alleviation—that is, policies that used markets as a lever of economic development. Now developing countries such as Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, India, China, South Africa, Vietnam, Thailand, and Indonesia are known as “emerging



BUSTED: A bust of Karl Marx, coauthor of *The Communist Manifesto*, stands in Chemnitz, Germany, a city that in communist times was known as Karl-Marx-Stadt. Lines from the Manifesto are inscribed behind the bronze monument, dedicated in 1971, which remained intact after German unification. [Dirk Liesch, Initiative Lebenswertes Chemnitz—Creative Commons]

economies,” a description that recognizes their need to emerge from state control of their economies through privatization, free trade, and the creation of viable private financial intermediaries to promote growth and poverty alleviation.

All around the developing world, socialism is understood as a false promise, an ideological opium that repressive elites use to keep and expand power.

Capitalism, in contrast, is seen as the force that has lifted more than a billion people out of poverty worldwide since 1990.

To historians, that was obvious long before the 1980s. Socialism has never conquered poverty. It has never competed with capitalism as a means of effectively allocating resources and promoting sustainable growth. Over the past half century, scores of economic historians have sought to explain what produced the economic progress that Europe and some of its offshoots enjoyed in the eighteenth to twentieth centuries. This group of scholars,

which includes Angus Maddison, Joel Mokyr, Eric Jones, David Landes, Deirdre McCloskey, and Douglass North, tend to

Capitalism is the force that lifted a billion people out of poverty.

hold quite diverse political preferences, but they universally agree on the facts: government policies that safeguard a combination of personal economic freedom, secure property rights, and the ability of individuals to gain personally by participating in markets have promoted the effort and innovation that conquered poverty and promoted growth through the ages.

The facts about socialism and capitalism may shock the young people of America, many of whom lionize Senator Bernie Sanders, an unapologetic socialist who honeymooned in the USSR, as the new conscience of our nation—and many of whom, 51 percent, according to Gallup, hold a positive view of socialism. Only 45 percent have a positive view of capitalism. That represents a 12-point decline in young adults' positive views about capitalism in just the past two years. Many of these young people are thoughtful and intelligent—but also ignorant about the history and economics of the systems they favor or condemn. ■

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When Deregulation Really Took Off

Airline deregulation remains one of the triumphs of sound economic thinking. But for a while it was touch and go . . .

By David R. Henderson

“**W**hen Democrats Loved Deregulation” is the title of a recent article by Matt Welch and Alexis Garcia on the Reason Foundation’s *Hit & Run* blog. Welch and Garcia recount how President Jimmy Carter and Senator Ted Kennedy were leaders in the drive to deregulate major sectors of the economy, including airlines, trucking, and railroads. Welch and Garcia bemoan the fact that no current major Democratic politician supports measures to deregulate the economy. And this is at a time when, aside from those three sectors and a few others, the US economy is, in many respects, more regulated than it was in the 1970s.

A closer look, though, at the deregulatory movement of the 1970s offers some grounds for optimism. Neither Carter nor Kennedy was particularly ideologically opposed to regulation. Rather, the deregulation was due to a confluence of circumstances, not all of which could be predicted but which

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one can imagine being imitated. The circumstances behind airline deregulation, which I'll focus on here, were ideas on the shelf; dissent within the regulatory bureaucracy; a budding consumer movement; in Kennedy's case, the hiring of a political entrepreneur, Stephen Breyer; and a fracture within

Any new deregulator would do well to hold hearings, as Kennedy did, to make Americans aware of the harm done by regulation.

the organized defenders of regulation. Few of these factors, other than the first, could easily have been predicted and, by and large, were not predicted.

A key ingredient in political reform is reform proposals thought out in advance. When those ideas are first spelled out and backed by credible research, they don't typically have much effect. But they are there, ready to be drawn on when circumstances are ripe. Without those ideas, well-articulated and -backed, the prospects for reform are weaker.

Martha Derthick and Paul J. Quirk, in *The Politics of Deregulation*, the definitive book on the 1970s deregulation movement, make the point well:

When events occur that call for a political response—an urgent public problem such as severe inflation, or a tide of public opinion—officeholders tend to cast about quickly for suitable responses and to make a choice from the current stock of political wisdom. They look to the latest and best thinking because events occur too fast and ideas mature too slowly for responses to be devised anew for each pressing situation.

The case of airline deregulation is Exhibit A. As early as 1949, economist Lucile Keyes had argued in the *Journal of Air Law and Commerce* that government restrictions on entry of airlines into the commercial air passenger business was a mistake. Then, in 1962, Harvard economist Richard E. Caves published *Air Transport and Its Regulators: An Industry Study*, in which he showed that there was no “natural monopoly” case for regulating entry into the airline industry or for regulating fares. On this basis, he called for “relatively free competition.”

The major breakthrough came in 1965, when law professor Michael Levine published an article in the *Yale Law Journal* showing that airfares within California, which were not subject to regulation by the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB), were approximately half the fares charged on similar-length routes that crossed state borders. From then on, those who argued for deregulation

drew on his comparison and on a similar finding in 1970 by William A. Jordan of Canada's York University.

Also helpful was a 1974 finding by economists George Douglas and James C. Miller III that airlines were not big gainers from regulation. One might expect that with the CAB enforcing a legal cartel that made it difficult to cut fares, the airlines would have made above-normal profits. But that expectation ignores a pillar of economic wisdom: competition is a hardy weed, not a delicate flower. If airlines are constrained on cutting prices, they will compete in other dimensions. One such dimension is frequency: they will fly more planes in a day with fewer seats occupied. A jingle from Delta's ads in the early 1970s sums it up: "Delta is ready when you are." Douglas and Miller found that airlines competed away the profits by providing more frequent flights.

CREATIVE TURBULENCE

One of the most fascinating parts of the story of deregulation, which Derthick and Quirk tell very well, is the role of regulators within the CAB who were becoming uncomfortable with their role. One was lawyer J. Michael Roach, who, from 1967 to 1974, worked for the CAB and came to oppose regulation in what he described as a "Paul on the road to Damascus" experience. What turned him was his assignment to write the basis for the CAB's decision to give a route to a particular airline. He was given no instructions other than the name of the airline. Roach made up reasons for the board's decision, and the board changed not a single word. This was corrupt, not in the narrow sense of someone being bought off, but in the wider sense that the reasons were made up: there was

no good reason other than sharing the gains and giving this particular airline its turn. That made no sense to Roach. He left the CAB in 1974

In the Ralph Nader era, convincing consumers that airlines were taking advantage of them was a relatively easy sell.

but came back in 1977 to work with President Carter's new choice for chairman of the CAB, Cornell University professor Alfred Kahn.

While we now think of Kahn as someone who arrived at the CAB ready to deregulate, that was not the case. Kahn was an open-minded economist who read the economics literature, saw the CAB up close, and decided that moving in the direction of deregulation was a good idea.

Another deregulator within the CAB was Roy Pulsifer, assistant director of the CAB's Bureau of Operating Rights. He read the economics literature

and found himself convinced. In 1975, the CAB asked him to do a “self study.” He chose three CAB staff members plus the aforementioned economist Lucile Keyes, and, in July 1975, the group recommended changing the law to eliminate restrictions on entry, exit, and fares over a period of three to five years. Note that this was under CAB Chairman John Robson during the Ford administration.



TAKING OFF

Starting in the 1960s and extending through the 1970s, there was a strong consumer movement in the United States. Ralph Nader was certainly the most well-known “consumerist,” and he and his “Nader’s Raiders” analyzed (often superficially) the actions and effects of various regulatory bodies. Nader advocated abolishing the CAB, although his efforts to abolish such agencies were less energetic than his efforts to enact consumer protection

laws. Still, he was not just an instigator of the consumer movement. His rising star was in part a result of that movement.

Consumers were ready to believe that large, greedy businesses were taking advantage of them. So, while that wasn’t true in many cases, convincing them that the airlines really were taking advantage of them was a relatively easy sell.

At the same time, it’s quite conceivable that airline deregulation by the US Congress would not have taken place if Senator Kennedy had not hired Harvard law professor



[Taylor Jones—for the Hoover Digest]

Stephen G. Breyer, now a US Supreme Court justice. In 1974, when Kennedy learned that he would chair the relatively unimportant Subcommittee on Administrative Practice and Procedure of the Senate Judiciary Committee, he needed someone to direct the subcommittee's staff. Breyer, a professor of administrative and antitrust law, seemed like a natural.

Breyer accepted and, presumably aware that Kennedy was making plans to run for president, gave Kennedy a choice between two issues to pursue: airline regulation and competition; and procedural changes suggested by the Watergate scandal. Kennedy chose the first option, and I often wonder whether Kennedy did so in part because he was worried about possible scandals in his own background. We may never know.

Breyer, aware of the economics literature, set up seven days of hearings to which he invited consumer advocates, CAB officials, and airline executives. As Robert E. Litan writes in *Trillion Dollar Economists*, the only witnesses who favored the status quo “were those who benefited from it, the industry and its regulatory agency.” According to Litan, that fact, plus the economists' findings, convinced Kennedy that something needed to change.

Interestingly, legislation to change airline regulation was not in Kennedy's subcommittee's bailiwick. But Howard W. Cannon, chairman of the Subcommittee on Aviation of the Senate Commerce Committee, presumably not wanting to be upstaged, held his own hearings. Although Cannon started off neutral, bit by bit he became a deregulator. When Jimmy Carter became president in 1977, the stage was set.

READY FOR DEPARTURE?

Even with the first four factors converging, deregulation was not a done deal, for an obvious reason: the concentrated gainers from regulation—the airlines and the airline unions—were dead set against deregulation. Even though airlines were not making impressive profits from regulation, they had learned to live within a regulated environment, and the unknown was probably scary. Airline workers' unions, we now know, were capturing many of the monopoly rents and opposed relaxing the regulations. In a fight between concentrated interest groups whose members gain a lot per person and dispersed interests whose total losses exceed the gains to the concentrated groups but whose per-person losses are small, the concentrated groups usually win.

Why the difference in this case? Two factors seem important. One was that in 1975, United Airlines, the largest airline at the time, endorsed deregulation. United complained that it was getting a raw deal, having been granted almost no new route authority for the previous eight years. The second was that the

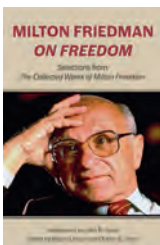
Air Line Pilots Association, which had much to lose from deregulation, had no full-time lobbyists on its staff. Gary McDonnell, an economist at Northern Michigan University, speculated in a 2015 article that “perhaps the unions felt that the industry would lobby on their behalf.”

Occasionally, a confluence of events makes deregulation possible. One tempting target is occupational licensure—government restrictions on practicing various occupations. According to economists Morris Kleiner and Alan Krueger, about 35 percent of employees are licensed or certified by government. The results are not just more difficulty for people to get into those occupations, but also higher prices for consumers, whether they are getting a haircut, a manicure, or a coffin. Could there be a consumer push for deregulation? Possibly. The evidence about the negative effects exists, and even former president Obama’s Council of Economic Advisers issued a study critical of licensure.

If someone in Congress wants to push it, the issue is ripe for the taking. Whoever does so would do well to hold hearings, as Senator Kennedy did, that make more Americans aware of the harm done by regulation. This seems obvious, but it would come as news to Republicans in Congress. Health economist John Goodman points out that in their attempts to overturn ObamaCare in the past two years, Republicans held exactly zero hearings. They gave up an obvious opportunity to tell the ObamaCare horror stories.

The lessons from airline deregulation are there for anyone who cares to look. The groundwork needs to be laid with ideas that can be put on the shelf. Beyond that, other factors need to come together and these factors are hard to predict. Who, after all, would have said in 1973 that Ted Kennedy would be a hero of deregulation? ■

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“End of History” Lessons

The big education battles seem to have settled down, but history suggests they won’t stay settled. It’s time to consolidate gains and push the next wave of education ideas.

By Michael J. Petrilli

Thirty years ago, in February 1989, the political scientist Francis Fukuyama gave a talk that was later turned into an article that was later turned into a book, with the provocative title “The End of History?” With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, Western-style liberalism had triumphed over communism, and had already fended off fascism. As a recent article in the *New Yorker* noted:

If you imagined history as the process by which liberal institutions—representative government, free markets, and consumerist culture—become universal, it might be possible to say that history had reached its goal. . . . There would be a “Common Marketization” of international relations and the world would achieve homeostasis.

It’s a strange time to be using “the end of history” as an analogy because, as we now know, the end of the Cold War was not the end of history at all, but

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the end of just one chapter. But it is fair to say that for a decade or two the world did achieve some sort of homeostasis, perhaps a break from history instead of its end. Democracy was on the move, global trade boomed, and the world became a freer, more prosperous place.

So what does this have to do with education?

We are now at the “end of education policy,” in the same way that we were at the end of history back in 1989. Our own Cold War pitted reformers against traditional education groups; we have fought each other to a draw, and reached something approaching homeostasis. Resistance to education reform has not collapsed like the Soviet Union did. Far from it. But there have been major changes that are now institutionalized and won’t be easily undone, at least for the next decade.

HOLD ON TO WHAT WORKS

For instance, we are not going back to a time when urban school districts had the exclusive franchise to operate schools within their geographic boundaries. Public charter schools now serve over three million students, many of them in our large cities, cities where 20, 30, 40, and even 50 percent of the students are now in charter schools. These charter schools are not going away. Another half million students are in private schools thanks to the support of taxpayer funding or tax credit scholarships. Those scholarships are not going away either. At the same time, the meteoric growth of these initiatives has slowed. Numbers are no longer leaping forward but are merely ticking up.

Meanwhile, alternative certification programs now produce at least a fifth of all new teachers. We are not going back to a time when traditional, university-based teacher preparation programs had the exclusive right to train teachers.

And even testing—that hated policy with no natural constituency—is now entrenched, at least until the Every Student Succeeds Act comes up for reauthorization. It appears, knock on wood, that the testing backlash is starting to recede, thanks, I would argue, to policy makers addressing many of the concerns of the testing critics. The underlying academic standards are stronger and clearer; the tests are more sophisticated and rigorous, and encourage better teaching; the state accountability systems that turn test results into school ratings are fairer and easier to understand; and teacher evaluation systems have been mostly defanged. And truth be told, school accountability systems no longer have much to do with “accountability,” but are really about “transparency”—telling parents and taxpayers and educators the truth of how their schools and students are performing, but mostly leaving it to local

communities to decide what to do about underperformance, if anything. All of this has made testing and accountability, if not popular, at least less unpopular.

So we have reached a homeostasis in education policy, characterized by clearer and fairer but lighter-touch accountability systems; the incremental growth of school choice options for families; but no appetite for big and bold new initiatives.

To be sure, there are still fights—battles in state legislatures between reform advocates and their opponents, and sometimes little skirmishes in Congress—but they are at the margins. Should we spend a little more or a little less? Grow the charter sector a bit or shrink it a smidge? Add some regulations or reduce some? Throw out PARCC or keep it? Use A–F grades or something less clear? Add indicators around social and emotional learning or stick mostly to test scores?

Those are important but, compared to the broad policy shifts of the education reform era, small ball. What's important to acknowledge is that the period of big new policy initiatives stemming from Washington or the state capitals appears to be over, at least for now.

Our “end of history” will not last forever. It is fleeting. But it provides a real opportunity while it is here.

The opportunity is, for us as a field, to finish what we started, for us to usher in a golden age of educational practice. To implement the higher standards with fidelity. To improve teacher preparation and development. To strengthen charter school oversight and quality. To make the promise of high-quality career and technical education real.

It's not a moment too soon. As my colleague Robert Pondiscio has long argued, a focus on education practice is sorely needed. That's because, despite real progress in recent decades, we are still so far from where we need to go. Reading and math achievement rose dramatically in the late 1990s and early 2000s, especially for the lowest-income and lowest-performing students. But it's been mostly flat since then; the latest NAEP scores marked a lost decade for educational progress. And while high school graduation rates are higher than ever—in part because of those achievement gains ten or fifteen years ago—more than half of our students graduate from high school without the academic preparation to succeed in what's next. More than half. They aren't ready for a four-year university program. They aren't ready for a one- or two-year technical training program. They aren't ready to take a well-paying job. They are not ready.

THINK BIG

So while policy makers might be taking a break from education policy, we cannot afford to take a break from educational improvement.

But how? How can we get fourteen thousand local school systems, and seven thousand charter schools, rowing in the direction of better outcomes for kids, if big new policy initiatives are off the table?

The challenge is to think big enough so that initiatives might have an impact at scale—to move the needle on the Nation’s Report Card; or to lead to a significant increase in postsecondary completion rates, especially for low-income students and students of color; or to boost the number of young people prepared to earn a family-sustaining wage, thanks to strong education and training. Once you start thinking about continental scale, and take policy off the table, there are no easy answers. Though I do believe there are some possibilities, especially if philanthropists are willing to come to the table.

But it can’t just be wishful thinking. Let’s go back to Francis Fukuyama. Imagine if we had spent the 1990s helping Russia make a successful transition to a real democracy, or working to cushion the working classes in the United States and Europe from the ill effects of global trade, or paying more attention to the growing risks from radical fundamentalists around the world. We might not face our current predicaments.

So too with our opportunity. If we take a break from the hard work of educational improvement, if we accept another “lost decade” of academic achievement, we will be giving up on the futures of millions of kids, and we will set the stage for another era of top-down policies that may or may not help our schools. We cannot afford to fritter away these years. We must continue to act.

The leadership for this golden age of educational practice is not coming from Washington, and it’s not coming from the states. It needs to come from each of us. ■

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No Free Lunch— Or Health Care

“Medicare for all” promises nothing but crippling expense, inefficiency, and delays.

By Scott W. Atlas

Health care was a priority for voters in the recent midterm elections, and for good reason. In the nearly five years since ObamaCare’s major provisions came into effect, insurance premiums have doubled for individuals and risen 140 percent for families, even while deductibles have increased substantially. Hospitals and doctors continue to flee ObamaCare’s coverage network, to the point that almost 75 percent of plans are now highly restrictive. ObamaCare also encouraged a record pace of consolidation among hospitals and physician practices. All these developments will raise health care prices, as fewer hospitals compete for payers.

The Democrats’ solution would make the problem far worse. Single-payer health care is an alluringly simple concept: a government guarantee for all medical care. Advocates insist that such care is “free.” The constitution of Britain’s National Health Service states: “You have the right to receive NHS services free of charge”—ignoring that the United Kingdom funds the

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program by taxing citizens some \$160 billion a year, even with its severe limits on access to specialists, drugs, and technology.

For California alone, single-payer health care would cost about \$400 billion a year—more than twice the state’s annual budget. Nationwide “Medicare for all” would cost more than \$32 trillion over its first decade. Doubling federal income and corporate taxes wouldn’t be enough to pay for it. No doubt, that cost would be used to justify further restrictions on health care access.

But the problems with single payer go well beyond cost. In the past half century, nationalized programs have consistently failed to provide timely, high-quality medical care compared with the US system. That failure has countless consequences for citizens: pain, suffering and death, permanent disability, and forgone wages.

Single-payer programs usually impose long waiting lists and delays unheard of in the United States. In 2017, a record 4.2 million patients were on England’s NHS waiting lists; 362,600 patients waited longer than four months for hospital treatment as of that March; and 95,252 waited longer than six months. By July 2018, 4,300 people had been on the wait list more than a year—all after

receiving their diagnosis and referral—according to NHS England’s “Referral to Treatment” waiting-times data.

The United Kingdom funds its “free” program by taxing citizens some \$160 billion a year.

In Canada in 2017, the median wait time between seeing a general practitioner and following up with a specialist was 10.2 weeks, while the wait between seeing a doctor and beginning treatment was about five months. According to a Fraser Institute study, the average Canadian waits three months to see an ophthalmologist, four months for an orthopedist, and five months for a neurosurgeon.

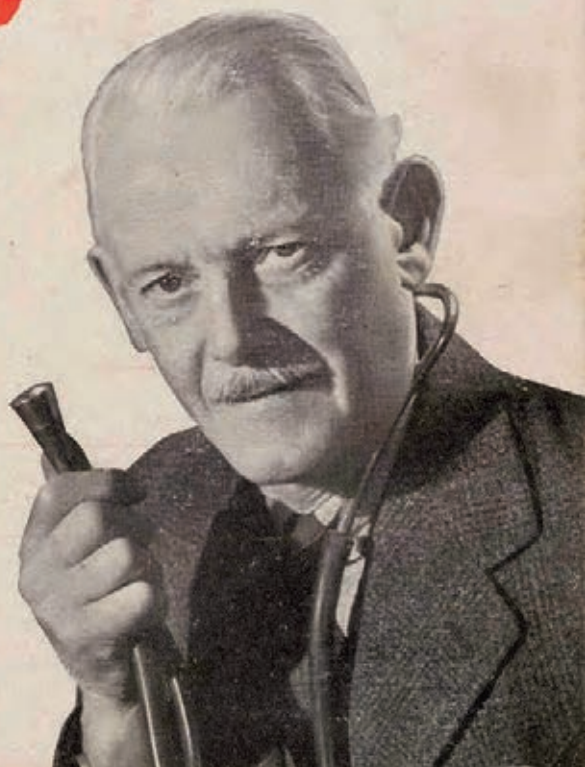
In single-payer systems, even patients referred for “urgent treatment” often wait months. More than 19 percent of patients in Britain’s NHS wait two months or longer to begin their first urgent cancer treatment, while 17 percent wait more than four months for brain surgery. In Canada the median wait for neurosurgery after seeing a doctor is about eight months. Canadians with heart disease wait three months for their first treatment. And if you need life-changing orthopedic surgery in Canada, like a hip or knee replacement, you’ll likely have to wait a startling ten months.

America’s system is much quicker. Aside from transplants, one paper by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development states, “waiting lists are not a feature in the United States.”

YOUR HEALTH

Service

HOW IT WILL
WORK IN
SCOTLAND



A study in *Health Affairs* found that “in contrast to England, most United States patients face little or no wait for elective cardiac care.” The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality has said that low-risk US heart patients “sometimes have to wait all day or even be rescheduled for another day” for catheterization—that is, a wait for even one day is considered unusual.

Calls for reform were widespread in American media in 2009, though waits for appointments at that time averaged twenty-one days for five common specialties. With the exception of orthopedist appointments for knee pain, those waits were for healthy checkups, the lowest medical priority. In the United States, even waits for checkups are usually far shorter than waits for seriously ill patients in countries with single payer.

Single-payer systems also impose long delays before debuting the newest drugs for cancer and other serious

A single-payer “guarantee” is no promise of access to quality medical care.

diseases. A 2011 *Health Affairs* study showed that the Food and Drug Administration approved thirty-two new cancer drugs in the decade after 2000, while the European Medicines Agency approved twenty-six. All twenty-three drugs approved by both Europe and the United States were available to American patients first. Two-thirds of the forty-five “novel” drugs in 2015 were approved in the United States before any other country.

These waits and restrictions have severe consequences for patients. Single-payer systems have proved inferior to the US system in outcomes for almost all serious diseases, including cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, and heart disease.

Meanwhile, the nations most experienced with single-payer systems are moving toward private provision. Sweden has increased its spending on private care for the elderly by 50 percent in the past decade, abolished its government’s monopoly over pharmacies, and made other reforms. Last year alone, the British government spent more than \$1 billion on care from

WAITING ROOM: A 1948 pamphlet (opposite page) describes how nationalized medicine would be carried out in Scotland. Single-payer programs typically impose long waiting lists and delays unheard of in the United States. For instance, more than 19 percent of patients in Britain’s National Health Service wait two months or longer to begin their first urgent cancer treatment. [Lothian Health Service Archive]

private and other non-NHS providers, according to the *Financial Times*. Patients using single-payer care in Denmark can now choose a private hospital or a hospital outside the country if their wait time exceeds one month.

A single payer “guarantee” is no promise of access to quality medical care. If single-payer is brought to the United States, the only reliable promises would be worse health care for Americans and higher taxes. America’s poor and middle class would suffer the most from a turn to single payer, because only they would be unable to circumvent the system. ■

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Inconvenient Billionaires

We can never keep money out of politics. But there is a solution to the problem of hugely expensive campaigns: eliminate the spoils of office.

By Richard A. Epstein

Amid the increased democratization of American politics we see a procession of billionaire candidates for high office, including the current occupant of the White House. As the 2020 campaign started to come into focus, it was rumored that former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg—net worth approximately \$50 billion—was considering a run for president on the Democratic ticket. Last year he committed some \$80 million to help Democrats regain control of the House of Representatives. Bloomberg is not the only wealthy Democrat whose name cropped up: former Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz publicly floated the idea of pursuing the White House as an independent.

Their political views aside, it is important to understand how campaign finance laws have created this trend in American politics: self-funded campaigns for high office.

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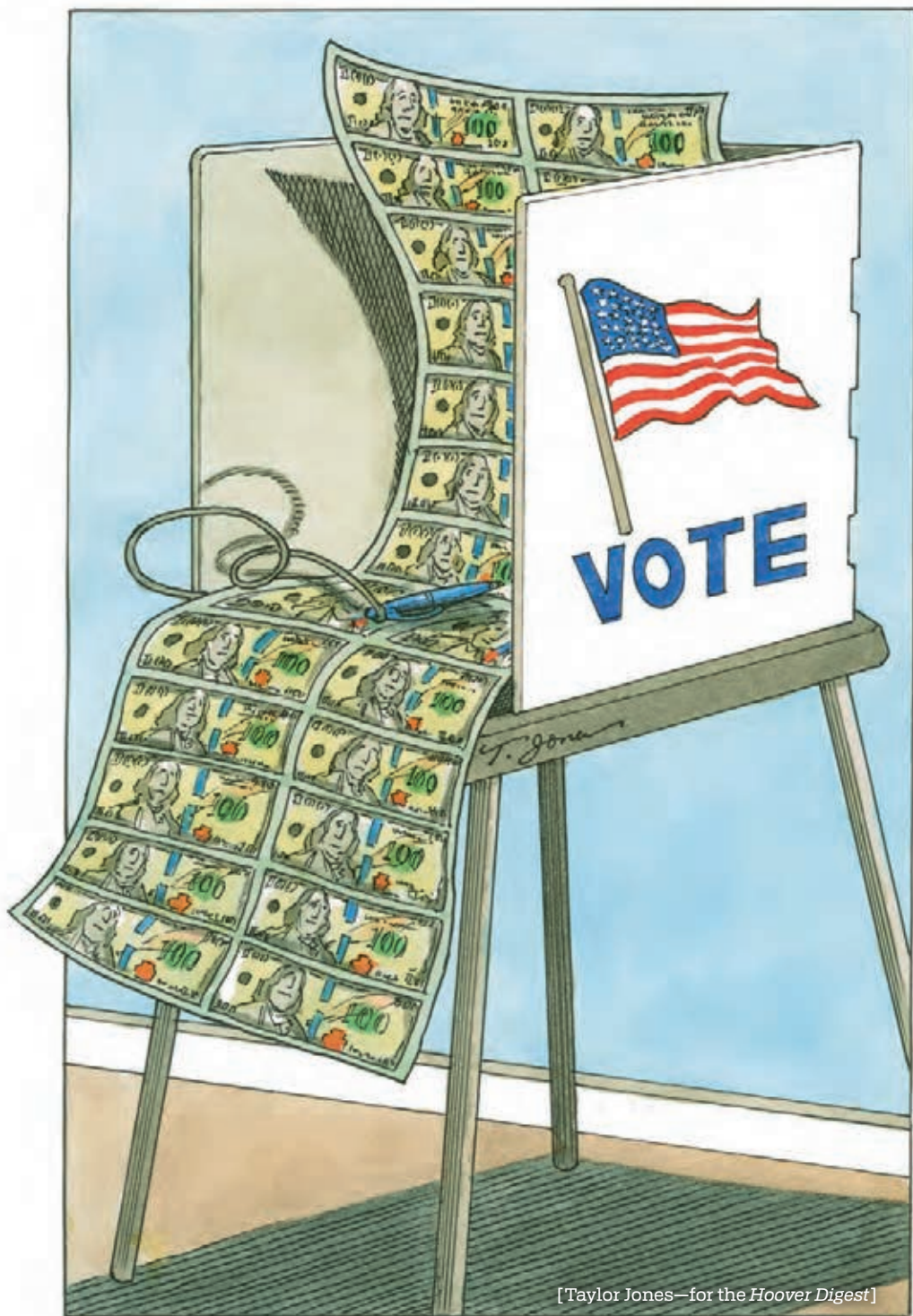
Campaign finance law has bedeviled Supreme Court jurisprudence for more than forty years, for it is no easy task to develop a legal regime that can impose various restrictions on campaign finances without running afoul of the First Amendment guarantee of freedom of speech.

For instance, it would be wholly improper to say that anyone can use wealth and influence as he pleases to advance his own business agenda. To see why, think of the position of a corporate executive who is bribed by one of his shareholders to take a position antithetical to the welfare of the corporation as a whole. Freedom of speech should be read as creating a *presumption* that people can use their own resources to advance their own political causes. But the freedom of speech, like the freedom of contract, is always subject to principled regulation, such as to protect against bribery and extortion. In addition, there are situations so fraught with risk that the safer course of action is to limit freedom of speech. This rationale underlies the 1939 Hatch Act, which prohibits federal employees from taking “an active part in political management or political campaigns,” and which in 1973 the Supreme Court upheld in *US Civil Service Commission v. National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO*. The conflicts of interest that arise in these cases are too pervasive to respond to on a case-by-case basis; only a blanket prohibition would work.

A TANGLED WEB

Modern campaign regulation does more than reach for this low-hanging fruit. Instead, its objective is to regulate the way in which private money can be spent to influence the election campaigns that lie at the heart of the political process. The key early case on this subject, the court’s 1976 decision in *Buckley v. Valeo*, had to consider three related provisions of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (FECA), which imposed what was, and with modifications remains, the most comprehensive scheme of campaign financing for the election of the president, vice president, and all members of Congress.

In particular, FECA addressed First Amendment challenges to three different forms of campaign finance limitations. The first imposed criminal sanctions on any individual whose contributions to political campaigns exceeded \$25,000 per annum for all candidates and \$1,000 for any particular candidate. The second limitation concerned the amount of money that independent groups could spend for “express advocacy of candidates made totally independently of the candidate and his campaign.” The third limitation covered expenditures that a candidate makes on his or her own



[Taylor Jones—for the Hoover Digest]

behalf—the sort made by Bloomberg—to \$50,000 for presidential candidates, with lesser amounts for candidates for the Senate and the House.

Any sensible approach would treat each of these three types of expenditures as close substitutes for the others, so that they all either stood or fell together. Unfortunately, the Supreme Court split the difference so that the First Amendment allowed the government to impose limits on campaign contributions but not on independent bodies or self-financed campaigns.

Of immediate relevance here, the court held that individual candidates can spend as much money as they please on their own campaigns, on the ground that there was no risk of corrupt influence if a candidate were to spend a

small fortune “vigorously and tirelessly” extolling his personal virtues and substantive positions. The point shows a serious set of institutional blinders,

Campaign finance law has bedeviled Supreme Court jurisprudence for more than forty years.

for now the obvious risk is that the candidate will use his wealth to curry favor from those who might otherwise be inclined to oppose his nomination. The situation is even worse on the ground because the sharp limitations on campaign contributions make it much more difficult for independent candidates to put together the funds needed to mount an effective campaign. To be sure, that serious obstacle need not be wholly insuperable, as candidates like Barack Obama and Bernie Sanders were able to turn large numbers of small contributions into considerable campaign war chests. But other candidates with less public visibility will have to remain on the sidelines, while billionaire candidates move ahead full tilt.

To fully grasp the implications of the court’s decision in *Buckley v. Valeo*, it’s important to understand the distinction between campaign contributions and independent expenditures, those made by parties outside the candidate’s campaign organization. For the court, this distinction rested on what I consider a dubious edifice: independent expenditures are fully protected by the First Amendment. Without that constitutional protection, FECA “necessarily reduces the quantity of expression by restricting the number of issues discussed, the depth of their exploration, and the size of the audience reached.” In the court’s view, these expenditures are protected for the most obvious reason. Money, after all, is needed to purchase the humblest circular or smallest election hall. The evident dangers of implicit coordination were shoved off to one side, and any risk in preventing corruption was thought too marginal to matter.



DEEP POCKETS: Megadonor Tom Steyer, shown in January at a meeting in Hanover, New Hampshire, has pressed for President Trump's impeachment. Steyer, who recently announced he would not seek the presidency himself, poured millions of dollars into last year's congressional midterm campaign, which boosted Democratic representation in the House. [Marc Nozell—Creative Commons]

The court refused to extend that same protective logic to campaign contributions to candidates. Instead, it sustained these limitations on the utterly implausible ground that “a limitation upon the amount that any one person or group may contribute to a candidate or political committee entails only a marginal restriction upon the contributor’s ability to engage in free communication.” But there is no explanation whatsoever of why the number of dollars spent does not count as much in the one context as the other. If the point is that campaign contributions are valued solely for

their symbolic effects, the same conclusion should apply to independent contributions.

The untenable distinction thus has the powerful effect of undermining party discipline through these independent expenditures that sometimes do and sometimes don't reflect the candidates' wishes. Both should be treated the same, and it appears that the better position is to let anyone make whatever contributions they choose.

The situation is even more skewed than it might appear because the basic finance law also contains strict reporting and disclosure requirements, sustained in *Buckley* and subsequent cases. These requirements are meant to let the public know who is behind any particular candidate, even if they impose high costs and ticklish compliance requirements. The individual candidate faces no parallel burden with private expenditures.

HIGH-STAKES ELECTIONS

At one time, there was perhaps a credible case for upholding these statutes on the ground that the public has the right to know who seeks to gain a candidate's ear. But the rule never made any sense for small individual contributions that grant the donor no candidate access. And amid the rise of social media, the disclosures have become a double-edged sword, since well-organized groups can single out contributors for retaliation and abuse. The secret ballot is regarded as a critical safeguard precisely because it protects voters from retaliation and abuse. It's important to keep that idea in mind here, too. Individual names should never be released even if a candidate is required publicly to specify in general terms the interest groups from which he or she has received support.

But the bigger point is that *Buckley's* elaborate edifice of campaign finance law is one we can do without. The progressives have long aspired to limit the

influence of money on politics, both independent and corporate, but that is a pipe dream. FECA does not cover contributions used to lobby public officials on particular

Elections can literally create, destroy, or transfer trillions in wealth. Money and influence will fill that financial void no matter what.

issues, to which some money will be redirected. Nor did the original version of FECA cover the explosive question of corporate expenditures. That topic was addressed only in the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 (BCRA), which prevented corporations and unions from making any electioneering

contributions within sixty days of a general election or thirty days of a primary, including those for *Hillary: The Movie*. Then, *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* provoked an uproar when limitations on corporate electioneering expenses were rightly struck down in 2010, on the simple ground that the speech most deserving of protection is that made in anticipation of a primary or general election.

Money, after all, is needed to pay for the humblest circular or smallest election hall.

Citizens United should point the way. Quite simply, it is not possible to live with the ideal that we can always keep money out of politics. We live in a political environment of vast federal powers and weak individual property rights. The president and Congress have more power and discretion than ever. Elections can literally create, destroy, or transfer trillions in wealth. Money and influence will fill that financial void no matter what ungainly system of campaign finance is put into place.

Billionaires like Bloomberg and Schultz come and go. Some will actually get lucky. But throughout it all, the only effective cure to the problem of money in politics is to shrink the powers of the federal government, which will require a thoroughgoing, if unlikely, constitutional revolution. ■

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Robespierre for President?

The Jacobins of the left wing, like those of revolutionary France, hunger for power—no matter what it costs, no matter whose heads will roll.

By Victor Davis Hanson

By the middle of 1793, the radical Jacobins had completed their hijacking of the French Revolution. They openly enacted agendas that might have seemed impossible in the heady days of 1787. Long gone were the pretenses of the original idealism when the revolution abolished feudalism, issued the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, and wrestled with turning the ancien régime of Louis XVI into some sort of constitutional or parliamentary monarchy analogous to what had emerged in Great Britain.

Soon, executing the clerisy en masse was logically followed by Jacobins guillotining thousands of surviving aristocrats and fellow revolutionaries for supposed counterrevolutionary sympathies.

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Most of the leaders of the Jacobins were themselves finally guillotined, largely because their ascendant revolutionary zeal could end only in a sort of cannibalism—given that no revolutionary could possibly meet their accelerating purist demands. Mao’s Cultural Revolution was similar, though he slaughtered millions, not thousands.

In less melodramatic terms, we are watching a rare revolutionary phase in American politics as strident liberals have devoured Democrats. Progressives consumed liberals. And progressives are now being devoured by socialists, and soon no doubt socialists will be eaten by hard-leftists, communists, anarchists, and nihilists. In such revolutionary logic, perhaps only Antifa will emerge as pure.

The result is that the 2020 election will offer the starkest choices in the past fifty years, far eclipsing the radical contrasts of 1972. The current parade of would-be Democratic presidential hopefuls is already apologizing for their past sins of Democratic centrism, in fear of being politically guillotined.

HOW GREEN IS MY POVERTY

Senator Kamala Harris has pledged to follow the “Green New Deal” currently championed by Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. In other words, the Democrats, within ten years of passing such a bill, would favor ending all “nonrenewable” sources of electrical generation (natural gas, oil, coal, and nuclear)—or 83 percent of all the current ways that we produce electrical energy. Would the government go after classic Corvettes, confiscate Priuses, and electrify NASCAR? Outlaw gas lawn mowers and chainsaws? Confiscate leaf blowers? Would

Nancy Pelosi board a private solar- or battery-powered jet? Would Silicon Valley yachts rely on wind and sail?

America is currently the largest producer of gas and oil in the world. Energy production is a vital source of national wealth, central to millions of American workers, and perhaps the greatest subsidy of middle-class lifestyles, through inexpensive fuel. Would fracking and horizontal drilling become like corn-mash stills during Prohibition?

The Green New Deal would wipe out the economies of a broad swath of states including Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. Such legislation

Strident liberals devoured Democrats. Progressives consumed liberals. And progressives are now being devoured by socialists, with worse to come.

would make Hillary Clinton's 2016 campaign blunder—"We're going to put a lot of coal miners and coal companies out of business"—seem not a major gaffe but timid and counterrevolutionary.

"Medicare for all" will likewise become a 2020 rallying point, even though, in addition to its multitrillion-dollar costs, it would destroy the fifty-five-year compact of Medicare and indeed the eighty-five-year-old history of Social Security itself.

The elderly are not historically illiterate. They grasp that all universal "free" health care scams such as those proposed by the Democratic revolutionaries eventually hinge on culling out the costly and bad investments, that is, themselves. They know that "Medicare for all" translates into "Medicare for no one," especially in an age of open borders, another Democratic

***Remember Bill de Blasio's taunt:
"There's plenty of money in this country, it's just in the wrong hands."***

priority. So they will rightly assume that in an era of euthanasia and "managed" and "rationed" care, it makes more progressive social sense to "invest" in our youthful future than to "prolong" already-spent lives—especially when we will be adding more ethnic and racial fuel to the generational inferno. The generational psychological bond forged at the creation of these programs would be broken, and a new logic of Social Security as a war between old and young would arise.

A society that approves of killing an infant shortly after it emerges from the birth canal might similarly have little compunction about pulling the plug on a ninety-year-old who was deemed "unproductive" or suffering from "severe deformities"—albeit of course after a "conversation" with family and their "doctor." To the Margaret Sanger mind, abortion and euthanasia are twins, and both are cost-effective means to free up dollars for more "moral" purposes.

ENEMIES OF THE STATE

Another likely plank of the new Democratic Party will be a "you didn't build that" wealth tax. Many Democrats are talking seriously about an additional 2 percent or 3 percent tax on the accumulated wealth of particular large private fortunes, wealth that has already been taxed as income or capital gains.

Income over \$10 million (or lower) would be taxed at 70 percent—or perhaps 90 percent, as Democrats' race to Venezuela accelerates. Ocasio-Cortez and her adherents point to prior high rates of American taxation without



DANGEROUS LIAISONS: A counterprotester displays the slogan of the French Revolution at a January event in Madison, Wisconsin. Democrats seeking the White House, fearful of being politically guillotined, have been swift to line up to apologize for past sins of centrism. [Nima Taradji—Polaris]

noting that they were accompanied by an array of tax loopholes and deductions, many of them eliminated in the 1980s Reagan tax revolution.

In our Balzac world of “behind every great fortune is an equally great crime,” assets of \$10 million and up are prima facie proof of illegality. Talk of new wealth taxes, higher income-tax rates, and soaring estate taxes will make good on New York City mayor Bill de Blasio’s taunt that “there’s plenty of money in this country, it’s just in the wrong hands.”

A poorly disguised but predictable dislike of religion is also a feature of the American political landscape, just as it was during the French Revolution. Today we see a particular aversion to Catholicism and Judaism—at least if one collates the various statements of Senators Dianne Feinstein, Kamala Harris, and Mazie Hirono, and Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Hank Johnson, Ilhan Omar, and Rashida Tlaib. The mainstreaming of anti-Semitic Louis Farrakhan, television commentary by the likes of Marc Lamont

Hill, and the growing anti-Israel foreign policy of the Democratic Party only add to the anti-Jewish and anti-Christian hostility.

Revolutionary “scientific” socialism is historically agnostic, if not atheist. Anywhere it has taken root in its multifarious forms—China, Cuba, North Korea, Russia, Venezuela—it seeks to destroy or corrupt religion. We have already seen attacks on Israel’s supporters within the Democratic Party, attacks that are only thinly disguised anti-Semitic rants. One wonders how the anti-Catholicism of the Democratic Jacobins will connect with millions of first- and second-generation Latino Catholic voters.

REVOLUTIONS EAT THEIR OWN

Once revolutionary movements accelerate, they must devour their own to ensure revolutionary purity. This was true in fifth-century Greece, republican Rome, revolutionary France, Bolshevik Russia, or Mao’s China.

The new socialists have already begun consuming their aging progenitors. Liberal television figure Tom Brokaw was forced to apologize for stressing the value of assimilation and suggesting English should be re-emphasized by the Latino immigrant community. During the nomination hearings for Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh, Senators Cory Booker and Kamala Harris upstaged old-guard Democratic liberals with their televised histrionics and this revolutionary creed: that if one in theory could have done a crime, then one is guilty of in fact committing it. Male feminists are learning that “inappropriate” jokes, staring, or forbidden attitudes are grounds for #MeToo ostracism.

In truth, there are far more revolutionary agendas to come. The Jacobins will have to explain how they plan to abolish \$1.5 trillion in aggregate student

debt, at a time of a likely \$22 trillion national debt, and how they will make college “free for all” in the manner of health care. Will adults who

The new Jacobins are busy demanding more transfers of riches and power to the federal government.

have driven a truck since they were eighteen have to shoulder the debts of students who dabble in six-unit semesters ad infinitum?

Will Representative Maxine Waters’s idea of racial “reparations” become a mandatory position for Democratic candidates? If so, will Jay-Z, Oprah Winfrey, Eric Holder, Louis Farrakhan, and LeBron James qualify?

Abortion is already being reconceptualized as a new Jacobin issue, but new only in the sense of pushing back the limit when babies can be

“terminated”—oddly (or not so oddly) at a time when science is itself lowering the age of fetal viability ever closer to the moment of conception. Will Dr. Kermit Gosnell be granted post factum amnesty?

Gun control will likewise be de rigueur, but not just in the sense of more paperwork and petty annoyances for the gun owner. In truth, eventual confiscation is the only way to “control” millions of guns Americans hold.

Finally, just as the eighteenth-century Jacobins transferred the wealth and power of the church to the state, so the new Jacobins will demand more transfers of riches and

power to the federal government. We have already seen the weaponization—or rather, *libération?*—of the IRS,

the FBI, the CIA, and the NSC. Leftists like the idea of surveilling, unmasking, and leaking the names of their ideological foes. And the Jacobins of this new revolutionary age revere rogue bureaucrats who have warped their enormous powers of surveillance and prosecutorial power to serve the correct agendas.

By the time November 2020 arrives, the Clintons will be seen as reactionaries and the Obamas as old fogeys. ■

Democratic candidates are apologizing for their past sins of centrism, in fear of being politically guillotined.

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Discrimination and the Ivory Tower

The Supreme Court may finally get to clean up the mess that race-based admissions have created at our universities.

By John Yoo and James C. Phillips

America has a race problem. It has always had a race problem. Slavery, as many have observed, is America's original sin. The challenge that will confront the Roberts court is how far it will allow government to make amends for that sin, while preventing a new elite of social engineers from jury-rigging the right racial balances—all in the name of a racial diversity that has suddenly become an end of a just society, rather than merely a means. As with its passages on religion, the Second Amendment, and the role of the courts, the Constitution's command is relatively clear. It is the Supreme Court's past failures to live up to principle that has kept the issue in doubt.

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More than one hundred and fifty years after the end of slavery, sixty years after the end of public school segregation, and two years after America's first black president left the Oval Office, accusations of racism fill our airwaves and screens. Democrats fresh off a solid midterm victory in Congress still claim that the suppression of minority voting cost them governorships and Senate seats, despite voter turnout that reached heights not seen since 1914. On the other hand, those same Democrats argue that governments should use racial data to draw voter districts and hand out government contracts, and argue that state and local police harbor such racial animus against minorities as to shoot them at high rates.

Meanwhile, Asian students have uncovered evidence that Harvard University has used ridiculous stereotypes to engineer the right racial balances in its admissions process. As a recent lawsuit against the Ivy League school has revealed, Asian-Americans consistently make up just 19 percent of the student body, despite an increasing percentage of Asian-American college students nationwide. Asians score higher than any other group on academic criteria and extracurricular activities. If academic merit alone determined admissions, the university admitted that Asians would make up 43 percent of the student body, about the same level reached at the University of California, Berkeley, after California ended affirmative action by popular initiative.

So where are Asians getting dinged? Personality. To avoid having too many Asians, Harvard has recycled a practice that Ivy League schools applied to Jews in the first half of the twentieth century. According to Harvard admissions, Asians trail far behind their peers in areas such as humor, sensitivity, creativity, grit, and leadership. (Harvard's judgment may come as news to our military, which is preparing a strategy against the one billion Chinese who currently present the greatest long-term challenge to American hegemony, or to our business leaders, who see the Chinese and one billion Indians rising into economic power—both the products of civilizations that existed when Europeans thought rocks made ideal weapons.) Apparently only those working in college admissions offices can discern this race-wide personality deficit.

Harvard's racial and ethnic balancing is the poisonous fruit of the Supreme Court's jurisprudence on race and affirmative action. And higher education isn't the only place where racism rears its ugly head. Take the drawing of districts for congressional elections, especially the practice of gerrymandering, whereby legislatures create electoral maps to maximize their party's advantages. The Supreme Court has injected itself into this most political of

activities, one that the Constitution explicitly assigns to state legislatures and whose politically partisan use is as old as the Constitution itself. (The word *gerrymander* itself comes from Elbridge Gerry's drawing of a Massachusetts state senate district that resembled a salamander; Gerry was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, a delegate to the Constitutional Convention, and a contributor to the first Judiciary Act and the Bill of Rights.) Historically, Southern state legislatures used gerrymandering to reduce the voting



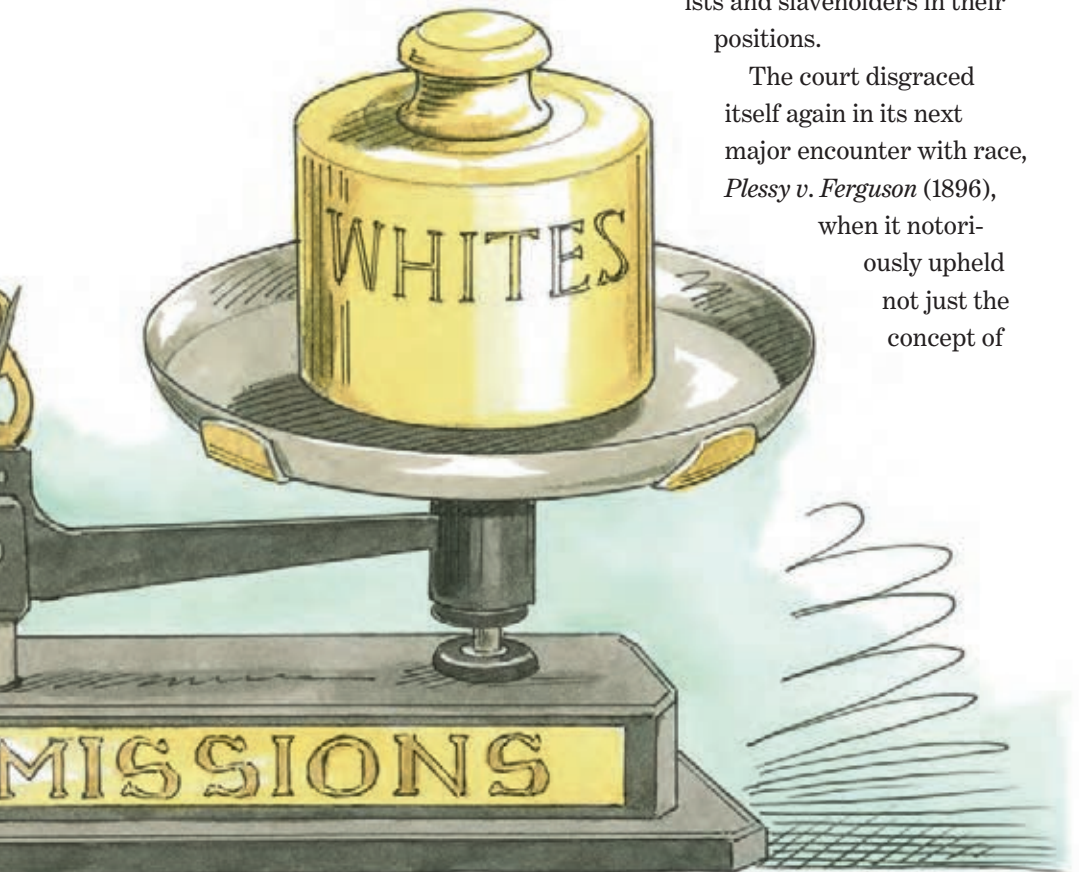
[Taylor Jones—for the *Hoover Digest*]

strength of racial minorities, particularly African-Americans. But now the Supreme Court has allowed the federal government and states to consider race in drawing voting districts designed to maximize the voting strengths of racial groups.

JUSTICE HASN'T BEEN SERVED

Throughout our nation's sorry history on race, the Supreme Court has more often than not served as enabler. In *Dred Scott v. Sandford* (1857), the court's first effort to solve the nation's race problem proved a disaster. Chief Justice Roger Taney thought he could head off a looming division between North and South by striking down the Missouri Compromise, holding that blacks could never become citizens, and forbidding congressional regulation of slavery in the territories. By departing from the Constitution in the name of enlightened policy making, Chief Justice Taney only further enflamed sectional divisions, spurred the rise of the Republican Party, and hardened abolitionists and slaveholders in their positions.

The court disgraced itself again in its next major encounter with race, *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), when it notoriously upheld not just the concept of



“separate but equal” but the right of governments to enact policies based on race. By denying the Fourteenth Amendment’s ban on race-conscious policies, the court helped usher in the Jim Crow era. In yet a third case, *Korematsu* (1944), the World War II court allowed the internment of Japanese-American citizens because the government assumed their ethnicity indicated disloyalty.

The court sought to restore its reputation in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), which finally put an end to segregation in public schools. It then undertook the difficult work of uprooting *de jure* racism in area after area,

from public facilities to employment to government contracts. To their credit, the elected branches helped promote the end of official racism, with President Harry S.

Campus racial and ethnic balancing is the poisonous fruit of the Supreme Court’s jurisprudence on race and affirmative action.

Truman desegregating the military, President Dwight D. Eisenhower helping desegregate public schools, President John F. Kennedy prohibiting racial segregation by government contractors, and Congress enacting the foundational Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Unfortunately, however, the American instinct to make up for past sins mutated into a new ideology of racial diversity for its own sake. In the past, the court has sensibly allowed the use of race to remedy actual discrimination. But in the hands of higher education, where many minority applicants by the 1990s had not suffered the direct effects of segregation, racial diversity became an end in itself. Faced with the zero-sum enterprise of having to allocate a limited number of seats, colleges and universities followed admissions priorities that sought to increase the number of students of some races (usually blacks and Hispanics) at the expense of others (usually whites and Asians).

It should come as no surprise that universities became the vanguard for a new racial spoils system, when its administrators and many scholars replaced the search for truth with Marxist ideologies that interpret reality as the product of economic-class, and now racial, struggles.

Like universities, and then the media and Hollywood, and even now corporations and the military, the Supreme Court accepted the new racism. In *Regents of University of California v. Bakke* (1978), a fractured court struck down the University of California’s use of actual quotas by race but allowed the consideration of race among other factors in admissions. While hard

quotas became illegal, quiet ones took hold. Universities became expert at hitting the racial numbers they want by manipulating soft, subjective criteria such as “personality,” as the Harvard litigation revealed.

Although Republicans have appointed the majority of Supreme Court appointees in the years since, the court has stuck to its guns. In *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003), a liberal majority led by Justice Sandra Day O’Connor upheld the University of Michigan Law School’s use of race in admissions. In allowing the official use of race for the first time since the Japanese internment cases, the court showed it had swallowed the new racism hook, line, and sinker. Justice O’Connor wrote that the Constitution “does not prohibit the law school’s narrowly tailored use of race in admissions decisions to further a compelling interest in obtaining the educational benefits that flow from a diverse student body.” Now, instead of remedying past discrimination, racial-diversity policies were good in their own right. Racial diversity, Justice O’Connor argued, produced the wide spread of ideologies and backgrounds that advanced the quality of education.

Of course, this theory would justify diversity in any number of other contexts. Governments can

The American instinct to make up for past sins mutated into a new ideology: racial diversity for its own sake.

claim they need racial diversity to have the ideological diversity for better policy debates; corporations will argue they need racial diversity to understand racial groups so as to sell to them better; medical schools will argue they need diversity to treat racial communities more effectively. But even worse, it only reinforced the very racial stereotypes upon which past racial discrimination had built. The court assumes that racial diversity equals ideological diversity; that could only be true if the court believes that racial groups hold uniform views. But this is offensive as well as unconstitutional. Races are not homogeneous in their views, their culture, or their experience. To believe otherwise is racist.

A CHANGE IN THE COURT

The Roberts court can finally put an end to the tangled relationship between our government and race. As Chief Justice Roberts observed in a 2007 case limiting racial-diversity plans in elementary and secondary schools: “The way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to stop discriminating on the basis of race.” Justice Brett Kavanaugh’s confirmation can make all the difference. Justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito have joined Roberts

in his stalwart opposition to race-based policies, and Justice Neil Gorsuch's affinity for natural law should make him a fellow traveler.

After Justice O'Connor's retirement, Justice Anthony Kennedy became the crucial fifth vote to uphold affirmative action, as he did in *Fisher v. University of Texas* (2016). With Justice Kavanaugh's replacement of Justice Kennedy, the Roberts court can now stop this "sordid business" of "divvying us up by race," as Chief Justice Roberts has written.

Favoring a particular race—an immutable characteristic beyond one's control—hurts both the favored and the disfavored. For the favored, there are two harms. One is that a racial preference can create doubt as to whether the beneficiary is really good enough to succeed on their own merits—"a badge of inferiority," as Justice Thomas has called it. The other harm, sadly, as the work of Richard Sander has shown, is that putting people in an academic environment they would not have entered on pure merit often sets them up for failure. It doesn't matter what the characteristic is that causes the boost—gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, age, or anything else the ensuing mismatch often harms the very group the affirmative action was meant to help. As for the disfavored groups, affirmative action stokes racial resentment. That will prolong, rather than overcome, any lingering racism.

But even if the consequences of racial preferences were exactly opposite, the Roberts court would still have to strike the preferences down because of the Fourteenth Amendment. Enacted during Reconstruction, the amendment bolstered the constitutional support for federal civil rights laws that required states to treat the new freedmen as equal citizens. The court has

based most of its decisions forbidding governmental use of race on the equal-protection clause: "nor [shall any State] deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal

As Justice Thomas has argued, supporters of racial preferences often put forth theories similar to those of segregationists.

protection of the laws." Textually, we think that phrase speaks more directly to executive-branch refusal to enforce laws on the books equally without regard to race. If the court were to restore the original understanding of the Fourteenth Amendment, it should root the prohibition on race more directly in the privileges and immunities clause, which states that "no State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States." As we have argued earlier, that clause

recognizes a package of individual rights that inheres in each American; one of those is the right to be treated the same by the government regardless of skin color.

But regardless of whether the equal-protection clause or the privileges and immunities clause supplies the textual basis, the Constitution establishes the fundamental principle that the government cannot discriminate on the basis of skin color. “Our Constitution is colorblind, and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens,” Justice John Harlan famously declared in his *Plessy* dissent.

Amazingly, defenders of affirmative action object. They want to read the Constitution to not be colorblind. Despite the government’s sorry history on race, they now trust the state to hand out benefits to favored races and inflict harms on its past

racial opponents. They also argue that conservatives are hypocrites for supporting judicial activism that overrules

the judgment of federal and state governments in favor of racial preference. Some supporters of racial preferences even rely on historical examples of segregation to justify their stance now—for example, they point out that the congressional framers of the Fourteenth Amendment allowed segregation in the public schools in the District of Columbia. As Justice Thomas has argued, supporters of racial preferences often put forth theories similar to those of segregationists. Yet there is no racial-paternalism exception to the equal-protection clause: benign prejudice is just as unconstitutional as hostile prejudice.

Perhaps sensing the internal contradiction of today’s new racism, Justice O’Connor declared in *Grutter* that racial preferences should prove only temporary; affirmative action in college admissions could last for only twenty-five more years. But this makes no sense. Either something is constitutional or it is not. The passage of time does not cure unconstitutionality. There is no reason why, under O’Connor’s theory, racial diversity will no longer provide intellectual diversity in ten years if it does so now.

Races are not homogeneous in their views, their culture, or their experience. To believe otherwise is racist.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL ANSWER IS CLEAR

So what is to be done? Simply prohibit the government from considering race at all. That’s what the Constitution demands. The equal-protection clause makes no exception for beneficial discrimination. One cannot pick up the

stick of “helpful” discrimination without harming someone. And American history sadly shows that government has discriminated invidiously against minorities while facially pretending to be helping them.

Affirmative action is unconstitutional. Full stop. That doesn’t mean that legislatures cannot craft solutions that will have the result of helping

When hard quotas became illegal, quiet ones took hold.

cannot be based on race. Nothing in the Constitution, for example, prohibits institutions from seeking diversity based on poverty or skills. It just cannot use race. And if the court must use its power of judicial review to override the considered judgment of the elected branches of government, this is what the Supreme Court’s power is for: to refuse to carry into effect the commands of the other branches that violate the higher law of the Constitution. That is not activism; it is constitutional fidelity.

If the Roberts court does not want to return to the Fourteenth Amendment’s original meaning, it could at least faithfully apply its strict-scrutiny test to racial classifications. Scholars once observed that strict scrutiny was “strict in theory, fatal in fact” because it requires a “compelling interest” for the government program that is “narrowly tailored” to achieve that end. Until *Grutter*, the only government interest that qualified was military necessity in wartime, and even that was questionable (due to its origin in *Korematsu*). It seems obviously wrong that achieving racial diversity is as important a government interest as prevailing in wartime. And to the extent the court wants to keep strict scrutiny for racial classifications, it must enforce it

minority students succeed or making business more competitive; it just means those solutions

vigorously against racial discrimination that is allegedly beneficial as well as discrimination that is harmful.

Benign prejudice is just as unconstitutional as hostile prejudice.

There is no doubt that there are despicable aspects of our history when it comes to race. But the constitutional solution to correcting our past is not to perpetuate it under the guise of helping those once harmed. After all, as Justice Thomas has noted, the Constitution protects individual, not group, rights. Just because a particular racial group once suffered discrimination does not entitle an individual who has not actually suffered discrimination to claim a benefit based on race.

Ending judicial approval of racial preferences won't cure all of the nation's tensions on race. But at the very least, it will move the conversation out of the courts and into society, where it belongs.

We can do better on race in this country. We must do better. We've come a long way, though we're not there yet. But we cannot hijack the Constitution in ways that are antithetical to its meaning. The court can reverse its mistakes by making all racial discrimination constitutionally taboo, as the Fourteenth Amendment requires. ■

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Gimme Shelter

The definition of a “refugee” dates back decades and has outlived its usefulness. Nations now need a much more rigorous idea of just who deserves refuge.

By *Ayaan Hirsi Ali*

The global asylum and refugee system is no longer fit for purpose. As a beneficiary of that system, I do not make such a statement lightly. The reality is that it is outdated and can no longer cope with the challenges posed by mass violence and global migration today.

After the displacement of European Jews during World War II, the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees was devised not out of idealism but as a practical, Eurocentric Cold War policy. It's been argued that the convention's architects intended it to provide a method of escape for those caught on the wrong side of the Iron Curtain. It defined refugees as those outside their country who could not return to it for fear of persecution “for reasons of race, religion, nationality,

Key points

- » The 1951 convention establishing refugee status was part of a temporary, practical Cold War policy.
- » Today, the distinction between a migrant and a refugee is unworkably blurred.
- » The crush of asylum seekers has led to huge, costly bureaucracies.
- » In many countries, a backlash against unregulated immigration has led to the rise of populists.

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membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.” The convention was a temporary solution to a postwar problem, not a long-term offer. And it certainly wasn’t intended as a way of skipping the line to access a better quality of life.

In 1967, the convention was extended universally. This afforded the West further opportunity to thwart communism with the mass resettlement of Vietnamese refugees. But this shift also invited broader interpretations of the definition of a refugee to anyone living in a dangerous place, not just those personally persecuted by the state. Millions—potentially hundreds of millions—now hope to qualify, even those who are merely migrating to seek a better quality of life.

Consequently, the distinction between a migrant and a refugee has blurred to such an extent that it is no longer useful. In her analysis of Eurostat data on asylum applications in the European Union between 2010 and 2017, the French demographer Michèle Tribalat concludes that “the migratory crisis has been converted into an asylum crisis. For an illegal migrant, asylum is the only way to be taken care of legally.”

As Tribalat’s analysis suggests, migrants who did not meet the requirements for asylum in one jurisdiction, and thus are deemed “illegal” in policy terms, have likely

A new system should assess the likelihood that migrants will abide by the laws and adopt the values of their host societies.

tried applying again at a different border. The data show dramatic spikes in new asylum applications in Germany and Sweden in 2015 and 2016, but while these numbers subsequently fell in those two countries, they continued to rise in France. The Schengen Agreement, which eliminated border checks between twenty-six European countries in 1985, makes such movement easy—as does the reluctance of countries to deport those whose applications have been rejected.

STRETCHING ASYLUM TOO FAR

For many migrants, seeking asylum is their best chance to gain residency in the West. Developed economies have less need for low-skilled labor than in previous generations and the appetite for welcoming additional newcomers is weak.

The best policy to cope with these issues is to work to repair the causes that make people leave their homelands in such numbers in the first place.

Push factors include wars, natural disasters, gang violence, failed or failing states, or economies so broken they cannot sustain their populations. The pull factors in the West include political and economic freedoms, generous welfare systems, and rule of law.

The economics of immigration is also a driving force, whether it's the big business of people smuggling and human trafficking or remittances from successful immigrants, which encourage others to follow in their footsteps.

The challenge of processing these migrants has given rise to an enormous bureaucracy. Many countries are overwhelmed with asylum applications. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees recently reported 3.1 million asylum seekers waiting for decisions. Meanwhile, national governments must fund numerous programs and services for new arrivals and for the longer-term task of integration. These include housing, health care, social work, security, language training, formal education, job-skills training, cultural values classes, and legal services—not to mention foreign aid and development funding.

But resources in even wealthy societies are not infinite, and failed integration programs, as well as the resulting social problems, have turned immigration into a vote-winner for populists in liberal democracies around the world.

INTEGRATION

If we step back and take a dispassionate, long-term view, it is clear that we need a better definition of what refugees are and how they can best be helped. We must retain the core principle of providing refuge for individuals or groups persecuted by intolerant movements or regimes—for example, the

Pakistani Christian Asia Bibi, who is still threatened with death despite having been cleared by the courts of blasphemy charges.

We need a better system for admitting those

“The migratory crisis has been converted into an asylum crisis. For an illegal migrant, asylum is the only way to be taken care of legally.”

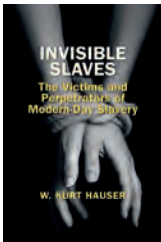
who do not qualify as refugees—one that builds integration considerations into the process from the outset when the person applies for entry. Rather than focusing on where people come from and what their motivations are for leaving, I believe the main criterion for granting residence should be how

likely migrants are to abide by the laws and adopt the values of their host society.

Like many migrants, I would have been better off if given an option to prove my ability to adapt, rather than having to shoehorn my life story into the convention's framework. Priority should be given to those individuals with the highest probability of entering the labor market, not the welfare state, and those who genuinely wish to become American, Dutch, French, or British, and live among, rather than just nearby, their fellow citizens.

The world's population has tripled since 1951, when the refugee convention was ratified in Geneva. And along with it, the number of those fleeing war, persecution, and authoritarian ideology. But we must be frank: the refugee convention and its amendments have served their purpose. They belong to the era of the Cold War, not to the era of globalization and clashing civilizations. ■

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Tech in the Trenches

Silicon Valley has shown a remarkable indifference to national defense, depriving the Pentagon of both brains and technological brawn.

By Amy B. Zegart and Kevin Childs

A silent divide is weakening America's national security: the growing gulf between the tech community in Silicon Valley and the policy-making community in Washington. Democrats and Republicans share a growing alarm over the return of great-power conflict. China and Russia are challenging American interests, alliances, and values—through territorial aggression; strong-arm tactics and unfair practices in global trade; cyber theft and information warfare; and massive military buildups in new weapons systems such as Russia's "Satan 2" nuclear long-range missile, China's autonomous weapons, and satellite-killing capabilities to destroy our communications and imagery systems in space. Since President Trump took office, huge bipartisan majorities in Congress have passed tough sanctions against Russia, sweeping reforms

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to scrutinize and block Chinese investments in sensitive American technology industries, and record defense-budget increases.

In Washington, alarm bells are ringing. In Silicon Valley, not so much. “Ask people to finish the sentence, ‘China is a (blank) of the United States,’ ” says former National Economic Council director Keith Hennessey. “Policy makers from both parties are likely to answer with ‘competitor,’ ‘strategic rival,’ or even ‘adversary,’ while Silicon Valley leaders will probably tell you China is a ‘supplier,’ ‘investor,’ and especially ‘potential market.’ ”

DIFFERENT LANGUAGES

The rift is deep, and a long time coming, because it’s really three divides converging into one.

A yawning civil-military relations gap exists between the protectors and the protected. When World War II ended, veterans could be found in seven out of ten homes on a typical neighborhood street. Today it’s two. Fewer than half a percent of the US population serves on active duty. A senior executive from a major Silicon Valley firm recently told us that none of the company’s engineers had ever seen anyone from the military.

It should come as no surprise that when people live and work in separate universes, they tend to develop separate views. The civil-military gap helps explain why many in tech companies harbor deep ethical concerns about helping warfighters kill people and win wars, while many in the defense community harbor deep ethical concerns about what they view as the erosion of patriotism and national service in the tech industry. Each side is left wondering, how can anyone possibly think that way? Asked what he would tell engineers at companies like Google and Amazon, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Joseph Dunford said, “Hey, we’re the good guys. . . . It’s inexplicable to me that we wouldn’t have a cooperative relationship with the private sector.”

There’s a training gap between leaders in Washington, who are mostly lawyers struggling to understand recent technological advances, and leaders in Silicon Valley, who are mostly engineers struggling to understand the age-old dynamics of international power politics. Congress has two hundred and twenty-two lawyers but just eight engineers. On the Senate Armed Services Committee, it’s even more stark. Of its twenty-five members, seventeen are lawyers and just one is an engineer. (He’s actually the only engineer in the entire Senate.) In the past, policy makers didn’t have to work that hard to understand the essence of breakthrough technologies like the telegraph, the automobile, and nuclear fission. Technology moved faster than

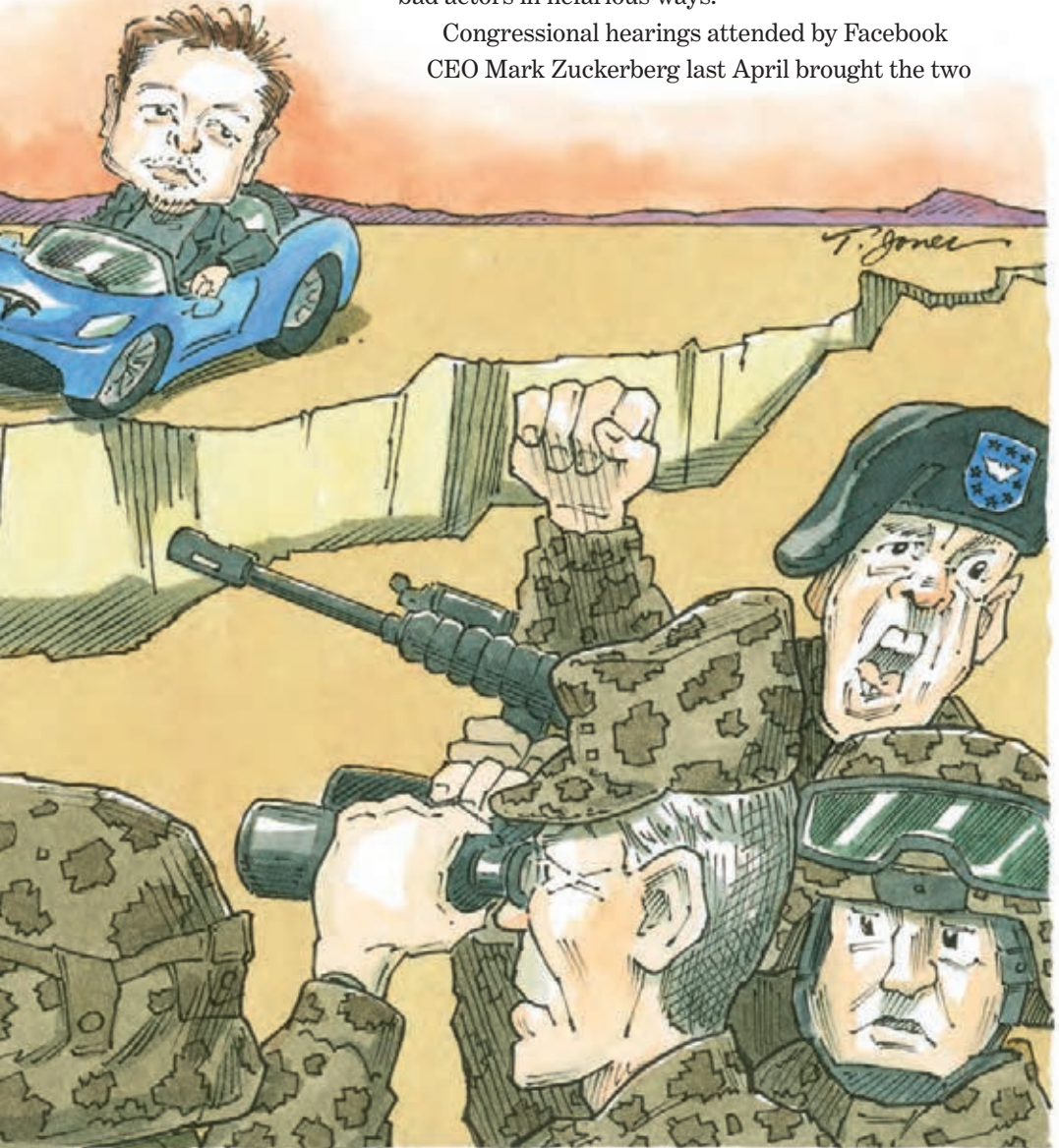
policy, but the lag was more manageable. Digital technologies are different, spreading quickly and widely, with societal effects that are hard to imagine and nearly impossible to contain. Understanding these technologies is far more challenging, and understanding them fast is essential to countering Russia and China.



[Taylor Jones—for the Hoover Digest]

At the same time, today's brightest young engineers barely remember 9/11, view the Cold War as ancient history rather than lived experience, and can get computer-science degrees at elite institutions without ever taking a course about cyber security or thinking about what is in the national interest. For technologists, technology holds the promise of a brighter future, not the peril of dark possibilities. Their overriding challenge is getting a breakthrough to function, not imagining how it could be used by bad actors in nefarious ways.

Congressional hearings attended by Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg last April brought the two



perspectives—and the chasm between them—into full view. For the tech community, it was a jaw-dropping moment that revealed just how little members of Congress know about the products and companies that are transforming global politics, commerce, and civil society.

Senator Orrin Hatch appeared surprised to learn that Facebook earned the majority of its revenue through ad sales. “How do you sustain a business model in which users don’t pay for your service?” Hatch asked quizzically. “Senator, we run ads,” replied Zuckerberg, his aides grinning behind him.

Senator Lindsey Graham asked whether Twitter was the same thing as Facebook.

Even Senator Brian Schatz, considered one of Congress’s tech aficionados, didn’t seem to know the difference between social media, e-mail, and encrypted text messaging. As former secretary of defense Ash Carter wrote, “All I can say is that I wish members [of Congress] had been as poorly prepared to question me on war and peace in the scores of testimonies I gave as they were when asking Facebook about the public duties of tech companies.”

For policy makers, the hearings were a jaw-dropping moment showing just how much naiveté and profits were driving Facebook’s decisions, and just how little thought Zuckerberg and his team had given to the possibility that all sorts of bad actors could use their platform in all sorts of very bad ways. In his opening statement, Zuckerberg acknowledged, “Facebook is an idealistic and optimistic company. For most of our existence, we focused on all of the good that connecting people can do.” Zuckerberg added, “But it’s clear now that we didn’t do enough to prevent these tools from being used for harm.”

YOUTH WILL BE SERVED

The third divide is generational. In Washington, power runs vertically and rests in the hands of gray eminences. In Silicon Valley, power runs horizontally and rests in the hands of wunderkinds and their friends. Steve Jobs was twenty-one years old when he started Apple with his buddy Steve Wozniak. Bill Gates quit college in his junior year to start Microsoft. Zuckerberg launched Facebook in his sophomore dorm room. Larry Page and Sergey Brin were old men, starting Google at the age of twenty-five.

In the policy world, thirty years of experience usually makes you powerful. In the technical world, thirty years of experience usually makes you obsolete.

It’s hard to overstate just how foreign the worlds of Washington and Silicon Valley have become to each other. At the exact moment that great-power conflict is making a comeback and harnessing technology is the key to victory, Silicon Valley and Washington are experiencing a “policy makers are

from Mars, tech leaders are from Venus” moment, with both sides unable to trust or understand each other.

Closing this divide is a national-security imperative. And it requires thinking differently, generating inspiration rather than just regulation, and targeting the leaders of tomorrow, not just the leaders of today.

For starters, the Pentagon needs a messaging overhaul. It should stop telling engineering students at top universities, “If you want to make money, go into industry, but if you want a mission bigger than yourself, work for me.” When Admiral Mike Rogers, who led the US Cyber Command and the National Security Agency, gave this standard recruiting pitch to Stanford undergraduates a few

Congress has two hundred and twenty-two lawyers but just eight engineers.

years ago, it fell flat. It still does. We recently held a focus group of Stanford computer-science majors. When we tested the message on them, heads started shaking in a “wow, you just don’t get it” kind of way. “One of the main reasons people pick companies is they want to do social good,” said Anna Mitchell, a senior. “People would laugh if the government said the only way to be impactful is to work in government.”

For these students and their peers, the desire for impact is real and deep. They believe that they can achieve large-scale change faster and better outside the government than within it. “A message suggesting a dichotomy of working in companies versus helping your country alienates a good portion of people on the fence,” Michael Karr, a Stanford junior, told us. “If you’re working on autonomous vehicles, you could be saving lives by making cars safer.”

So what message does work? Giving them opportunities for impact at scale that don’t take a lifetime of moving up the ladder. Deploying the best young engineers against the toughest challenges, early. Telling them what one of the authors of this essay tells potential recruits: If you do cyber operations for anyone else, you’ll get arrested. If you do them for me in the Air Force, you’ll get a medal.

A VIRTUOUS “REVOLVING DOOR”

The Pentagon also needs to create ambassadors, not lifers. More than getting technical experts into government for their entire careers, we need to get more national-security-minded engineers into tech companies. Winning hearts and minds in the tech world starts early, with new college graduates who are more open to experiences that can last a lifetime. Imagine a

technology fellows program like the White House fellows program, only younger. It would select the fifty most talented American engineering students graduating from college for a prestigious, one-year, high-impact stint in government service, working directly for senior leaders like the Air Force chief of staff, the secretary of defense, or the commander of US forces in the Middle East.

Tech fellows would work on the most important projects and participate in special programs for their cohort to bond and form a lifelong network. “People really care about their cohort,” said Andrew Milich, a Stanford senior

specializing in artificial intelligence. Tech fellows could defer company jobs or take a leave of absence, knowing that all the other

The Pentagon needs a radically new civilian talent model.

fellows would be the best in the world who would also be heading back to industry. The goal isn't for them to stay in government. The goal is for their government experience to stay with them. As one of our students told us, “Everyone has a friend at Google.” Imagine the ripple effects if these friend networks across the tech industry included tech-fellow alumni.

Doing it right won't be easy. The tech fellows program would have to be high on prestige and low on bureaucracy. Fellows would need flexibility to select projects that align with their values, not just their expertise. As sophomore Gleb Shevchuk told us, “There has to be a transparent discussion of ethics. The program has to come off as a program that understands the concerns of people who dislike certain things the government is doing.” Google engineers may object to helping the Pentagon improve its targeting algorithms, but they might jump at the chance to defend US satellites from attacks in space.

In addition, the program would have to dramatically reduce logistical pain points. Tech companies compete aggressively on quality-of-life dimensions for their workforce—locating in cities where top talent wants to live, providing free housing and transportation, and offering exciting programs outside of the job. The tech fellows program would need to do the same. The National Security Agency has cutting-edge technological programs that would be a natural fit for tech fellows, but that's a hard sell. The hot cities for attracting top engineers include Austin, Seattle, San Francisco, New York, and Denver—but not Fort Meade.

In the longer term, the Pentagon needs a radically new civilian talent model. Programs like the Air Force's Kessel Run and the Defense Digital

Service are breaking new ground to bring technology and tech talent into the Pentagon, but these programs are green shoots surrounded by red tape. Will Roper, the assistant secretary of the Air Force for acquisition, technology, and logistics, and someone who is no stranger to innovating inside the Defense Department, would like to see a much more fluid pathway in and out of industry and government. “I would invest to make the term ‘revolving door’ superlative instead of pejorative,” he told a Georgetown class. “The people that we want are going to be people in industry that will want to come in and help us, and be able to go back out and come back in and help us, [so] that we’re continually refreshing the ideas, the creative thought . . . and right now we make it damn difficult to get in and out of government.”

These challenges are substantial, but small steps could have big impact over time. Congress could start by holding hearings with the goal of writing the best proposals into the National Defense Authorization Act. And if Congress doesn’t act, then the Pentagon should, creating a Rapid Capabilities Office dedicated to developing new civilian talent programs, just as it has for developing new technologies.

In 1957, the launch of *Sputnik* spawned a fear that an underfunded education system had allowed the United States to lose its technological advantage to the Soviets. A year after the launch, Congress passed the National Defense Education Act, increasing funding for science, mathematics, and foreign-language education at all levels and allowing for substantially more low-cost student loans. Within a decade, the number of college students in the United States had more than doubled, supercharging US breakthroughs in the space race. What our national leaders realized in 1957 is still true today: what people know and how they think are just as important to the nation’s defense as the weapon systems we deploy. ■

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Fake Newsies

This just in: journalists are people, too—sometimes very dishonest people. The story of a German journalist who told his readers a pack of lies about the United States.

By Josef Joffe

Fake news wasn't invented by the Russians. The *New York Times* had Jayson Blair, who faked dozens of articles and interviews over the years. *USA Today* had Jack Kelley, who made up sensational stories about events he had not witnessed and places he had not seen. In both cases, the editors were forced to resign.

Now, it's the turn of *Der Spiegel*. The fabled German news magazine's award-winning reporter Claas Relotius, a legend in his time, replaced facts with fantasy. He quoted people he had not interviewed. He described streets and buildings he had seen only on Google Earth. Painted in exquisite detail, the scenes were nothing more than figments of his imagination.

For *Spiegel*, which prides itself on having the best fact-checking department in the business, this was Armageddon. To salvage its honor, it launched a top-to-bottom investigation of the publication, ruthlessly trying to answer the Big Question that tortured the *Times* and *USA Today* as well: How could this have happened—and to us, the best of the best?

The issue transcends continents and publications. As Juan Moreno, the colleague who first raised suspicions about Relotius's work, put it in a video

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interview on *Spiegel Online*: “People are people, and journalists are people.” Basically, what we tend to forget is that journalists are human beings driven by vanity, pride, and greed for fame and advancement. This may well be true, but then the question becomes: Why did the system set up to corroborate every fact and assertion, every quote and statistic, fail to expose and stop the fake artist?

BETTER THAN BEING THERE

Relotius was a most brilliant counterfeiter. His pieces are full of minute detail so specific, so precise, as to appear necessarily authentic. And why doubt a celebrated reporter who describes a small-town street corner as if it were etched into his photographic memory?

“He could not have made it up,” his fact-checker might have surmised. “It is so perfect, you feel as if you are standing there yourself.” Too bad Google Earth can do that for you from five thousand miles away, as the all-seeing camera captures the flowerpot on the stoop.

Like Jayson Blair, Relotius was a wunderkind of journalism. He won Germany’s Reporterpreis, a

coveted annual award, four times. Why would you insult this giant

by pestering him with picayune questions? Only

small-minded tax officials running through an audit would probe and poke.

Something similar happened in 1983—when, in perhaps the biggest, most memorable scandal of them all, German magazine *Stern* published the “diaries” of Adolf Hitler. These sixty-three volumes—which the magazine trumpeted would turn our view of Nazi history on its head—were fiction from beginning to end, the product of a forger who pocketed millions from the publication.

How did it happen? The famed British historian Hugh Trevor-Roper certified the authenticity of the forged diaries—and the ennobling verdict clinched the case, silencing the last doubters and convincing *Stern* to go ahead.

REDNECK FANTASY

In Relotius’s case, another, more insidious dynamic may have been at work: the unarticulated expectations of editors as they send off their reporters, and their anticipation the reported piece that comes back will confirm what they already know to be true.

Among Relotius’s most celebrated articles were his pieces on Donald Trump’s America. They paint a picture of the country Europeans love to despise.

Why check facts if this is what we have always known and what confirms our beliefs?

“In This Small Town”—a 7,300-word story about Fergus Falls, Minnesota, where “people pray for Donald Trump on Sundays”—confirmed what we all “know.” It was a tableau of “redneck” America—a gun-toting, intolerant, anti-immigrant, and irrationally religious nation.

The fact-checking work of two Fergus Falls citizens, Michele Anderson

and Jake Krohn, revealed this to be a fabrication.

Not only does Relotius’s starring character, city administrator Andrew Bremseth, not carry a Beretta 9mm to work, he doesn’t even own one. Nei-

Among Claas Relotius’s most celebrated articles were his pieces on Donald Trump’s America. They paint a garish picture of the country Europeans love to despise.

ther does the town have a sign that reads “Mexicans stay out.”

Relotius’s report was about perpetuating “an ugly and exaggerated stereotype,” Anderson and Krohn concluded, unsurprisingly. “We are either backward, living in the past, and have our heads up our asses, or we’re like dumb, endearing animals that just need a little attention in order to keep us from eating the rest of the world alive.” (Anderson added in a tweet, “Hey Germany. We’re cool, no hard feelings to you as a country.”)

The scandal is a wake-up call to Relotius’s editors back home—and everyone else. It’s unfortunately all too easy to fall into the same trap they did. Why check carefully if this is what we have always known and what confirms our beliefs? People are people, and journalists are people—with their unarticulated prejudices and stereotypes.

We need these scandals, embarrassing and awful as they are. They teach journalists that their first responsibility is to facts and the truth. Whatever your politics, some stories are just too good to be true. ■

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Europe Does Not Exist

Brexit is just one vivid symptom of the Continent's failure to produce a true union.

By Josef Joffe

By the numbers, the European Union is a giant. Its economy exceeds China's by \$7 trillion and is just a bit smaller than America's \$20 trillion. Russia? Its GDP of \$ 1.7 trillion is petty cash. On paper, the EU nations marshal as many soldiers as does the United States, and half a million more than Russia. Their combined population dwarfs both.

But if one measures by its weight in world affairs, Europe is a runt. It does not play in the superpower league, and it does not muster the will to do so, no matter how splendid the rhetoric of "self-reliance" and "self-assertion." The cause is rooted in postwar history. Europe was shattered and had to rebuild, and so came to rely for its existential safety on the United States. At the height of the Cold War, up to three hundred thousand US troops, backed up by thousands of tactical nuclear weapons, stood guard at the Iron Curtain. Then at the end of the past century, its deadly foe, the Soviet Union, simply vanished, committing suicide on Christmas Day 1991 and leaving behind Russia and fourteen orphan republics.

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Europe was now “whole and free,” as George H. W. Bush famously proclaimed, and life was sweet. Why dabble in power politics when history had ended, when capitalism and democracy were on a roll? For the next twenty-five years, the nations of the EU cashed in their peace dividends, whittling their armies down to the core. Europe now gloried in its avant-garde role as a “civilian power” or “power of peace.”

Take Germany, Europe’s largest economy and the world’s fourth-largest. After the Berlin Wall fell thirty years ago, the forces of the reunited country were cut by two-thirds. Its 2,800 tanks dwindled to 280. Today, its navy has six U-boats, none of which is operational. When Europe acts, it does so behind the United States, as in Afghanistan, Iraq, Serbia, and Libya or, if alone, out of real harm’s way, as in Mali.

The halcyon days are over. Europe confronts new threats aplenty. Indeed, at no time since the birth of European integration in 1952 has the Old Continent faced so many perils all at once, inside and out.

BESIEGED FROM ALL SIDES

Plotting to restore Russia’s grandeur, Vladimir Putin is pressing on Europe from the east. He gobbled up Crimea, then sliced off Ukraine’s southeast with his local surrogates. A new round of confrontation is unfolding in the Sea of Azov, where the Russians intercepted three Ukrainian naval vessels late last year, foreshadowing the blockade of Mariupol, Ukraine’s third-busiest port.

Putin’s purpose is to strangle Ukraine until it submits to Moscow’s imperial ambitions. The Nord Stream gas pipelines between Russia and Germany (one is completed, the other under construction) are designed to tighten the noose on Kiev, circumventing Ukraine by pumping gas directly across

the Baltic Sea. Dutifully protesting, Europe has neither the means nor the will to defend Ukraine, and economic sanctions are not popular. The three

Why dabble in power politics when history has ended, when capitalism and democracy are on a roll?

Baltic states, formerly Soviet possessions, are not amused. Though they are NATO and EU members, the Baltics might be the next victims of Russian hauteur.

From the south, Europe is besieged by vast civilian armies. North Africa is the EU’s Mexico, serving as springboard for potentially millions of African migrants in search of a better life. Muslim refugees from the Mideast keep streaming into highly regulated economies that are far less equipped than

the United States to absorb “tired, poor, and huddled masses.” High minimum wages and barriers to market entry undercut the greatest advantage of immigrants throughout the ages, which is their willingness to work more for less. New York’s all-night Korean markets would run afoul of mandated shop-closing hours throughout the European Union.

The pace of assimilation in Europe keeps lagging behind the rate of immigration. The

At no time since the birth of European integration in 1952 has the Old Continent faced so many perils all at once.

market for anti-immigrant parties is booming. With the great exception of Spain, they have captured seats in all of the Continent’s parliaments; in seven countries, foremost among them Italy and Austria, they co-govern or vote with the ruling coalition. Europe’s traditional parties are losing out to the extremes. The moral of this tale: a munificent welfare state and open borders of the kind initially welcomed by German chancellor Angela Merkel in 2015 do not for a happy marriage make. They spawn resentment, envy, and cultural pushback.

Meanwhile, President Trump is muscling in with his trade wars against the EU. He thinks that Uncle Sam has been suckered into protecting wealthy free riders who have outsourced their security to the United States. Shape up or we ship out, his message runs. Naturally, the Europeans are nervous, especially those on NATO’s eastern border. Don’t blame Trump alone, if you want to blame someone; it was Barack Obama who brought down US forces to some thirty thousand. During the Cold War, the number was ten times as high. It was Obama who told the *Atlantic*: “Free riders aggravate me.” Trump has actually boosted the US military presence in Europe. Nor should we ignore that Europe’s NATO members have been increasing defense outlays since 2014 when Vladimir Putin grabbed Crimea. But money doesn’t buy everything.

In the end, the reason Europe isn’t rising to the moment is that “Europe” does not exist—not as a state and not as a strategic actor that can hold its own among the restive superpowers.

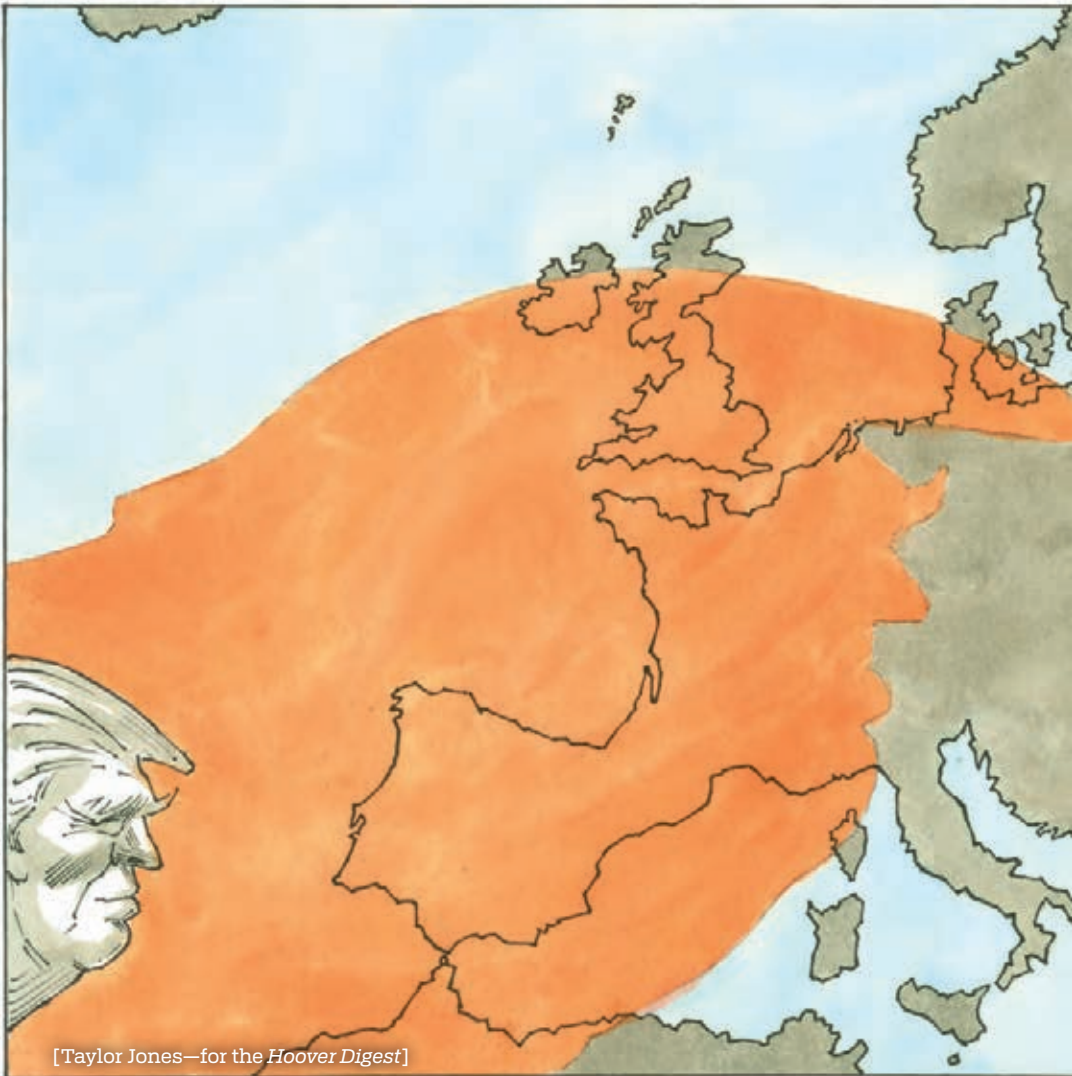
A PHANTOM UNITY

To be sure, the EU has made magnificent strides toward “ever closer union,” as the 1957 Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community envisioned its future. It has installed various accoutrements of a state: a European Parliament, a Court of Justice, a Commission as quasi-executive, a common currency, a growing body of Community law, even integrated

battle groups. The EU has “Pesco,” or Permanent Structured Cooperation, the pledge to pool defense resources and contribute combat units for EU missions.

Unfortunately, these feats do not add up to a United States of Europe. Real power is lodged in the national parliaments and executives. The EU-28 (soon minus Britain) do not an *e pluribus unum* make.

Modern history knows no example where nation-states voluntarily coalesced into one. The United Kingdom is the product of endless war among the warring tribes of the Isles. Germany’s twenty-five city-states



[Taylor Jones—for the Hoover Digest]

and kingdoms were fused by “iron and blood” in 1871, to invoke Bismarck’s famous phrase. In the beginning, the thirteen colonies did strike a peaceful deal in Philadelphia. But in the end, it took a murderous civil war to fuse North and South into one nation. In those four years, more Americans died than in all wars thereafter.

Unification will not be achieved by committees hashing it out in Brussels. Or by national parliaments emasculating themselves for the sake of the greater European good. To bestride the world as a heavyweight like the



United States requires cracking the hard shells of sovereignty, notably in matters of defense and public finance.

Never in our lifetime will this Europe go to war because a majority of member states says so. Nor will elected governments hand over spending and taxation to Brussels—not when their fate at the ballot box hangs on the state of the business cycle. No national parliament will give up the power of the purse, the Holy Grail of democratic governance.

Cracking these shells would require fusing twenty-seven post-Brexit states into one, complete with a supreme legislature like Congress and an elected executive like the US president. Yet power in Europe remains rooted in the European Council representing twenty-seven governments jealously guarding their turf.

To list such deficits is not to belittle how many chunks of sovereignty the EU has already pried off. The largest is monetary union, which unites nineteen of the twenty-seven in the eurozone. Still, the common currency may well have been one bridge too far, as the recurrent crises of the euro testify—first in Greece, now Italy. While the eurozone will continue to muddle through, the “ever closer union” of the EU as a whole is receding as we speak.

WHO LEADS AND WHO FOLLOWS?

Start with leadership. The engine of integration has always been the Franco-German “couple.” This marriage has never been bliss incarnate; today it yokes two governments at odds with each other and their electorates.

Who leads and who follows are the questions that govern all politics. For a few years, Merkel was feted as uncrowned empress of Europe. Now she is on the way out, paying the price of opening Germany’s gates to a million-plus Mideast refugees in 2015–16.

As Merkel stumbled, France’s Emmanuel Macron stepped up in a blaze of glamor. His rhetoric was as bold as his ambitions were grandiose. Elected in a landslide, he would make France great again by recasting it and grabbing the helm of the EU.

The nakedness of the new emperor, now in his second year, is visible to all. Like so many French governments before him, his was denuded in the streets of Paris by the usual suspects of French “expressive politics.” The “yellow vests” were set off late last year by his “green” fuel tax. In truth, they went to war against Macronism—the attempt to loosen up rigid labor markets and fracture ancient group privileges.

It was street versus state again. Within three weeks, the government buckled, as it has done so often in the past when fishermen, truckers, farmers, or students went on strike. So the government “postponed” the tax by six months. Having shown their clout, the protesters kept exacting more concessions. Say *au revoir* to reform and rejuvenation *à la Macron*.

Merkel was undone not in the streets but at the ballot box. In the fall, her ruling Christian Democrats were trounced in two critical state elections, while the Alternative for Germany, an anti-immigrant upstart on the far right, improved its showing by up to 10 points.

In the national polls, Merkel’s Christian Democrats were down to 29 percent at the beginning of 2019, a deadly drop from the mid-40s of the past.

Reading the handwriting, Merkel beat a tactical retreat, resigning as head of her party. In December, the conven-

Twenty-seven European governments jealously guard their turf.

tion replaced her with Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, a Merkel protégée hailing from the tiny state of the Saarland, where she had served as prime minister. A Maggie Thatcher she is not.

It was an orderly transition, but Merkel may not last to the end of her term in 2021. Either way, say *auf Wiedersehen* to the legendary stability of Germany, which has gone through only eight chancellors while Italy has burned through sixty-five governments since the end of World War II.

For decades, Germany was essentially ruled by the center-right and the center-left. The Christian Democrats and Social Democrats either alternated in power or governed in tandem, as they have been during the past nine years. This duopoly is history. Long gone are the balmy days when these two together netted 80 percent of the ballots. If there were a general election today, polls say, they would haul in 43 percent. Their grand coalition has shrunk to a petty coalition. While the Social Democrats, as elsewhere in Europe, totter on the brink of oblivion, the system has splintered into six parties, two of which represent the radical left and right. Look forward to shaky coalitions and shorter-lived governments in a country that used to be Europe’s rock of ages.

EUROFATIGUE

So the Franco-German couple is walking on crutches. Vying for leadership, they have never agreed on the what and how of “ever closer union.” Emerging from centuries of absolutist rule, the French have become wedded to the

all-providing state. They distrust the free market and look to the government for succor and shelter. This is why the yellow vests were able to cut Macron down to size, clamoring for more spending, shorter workweeks, and higher wages. Across the Rhine, the Germans hark back to the Holy Roman Empire, where power was spread across myriad kingdoms, cities, and duchies. With memories of twelve years of Nazi totalitarianism, Germans have come to cling to federalism and states' rights, be it in Europe or at home. Decentralization is as German as Volkswagen and bratwurst. France remains the bastion of centralism.

Macron wants a European budget and a European finance minister to spread the wealth from rich Germany to the stagnating south. With their balanced budget, the Germans naturally insist on fiscal rigor, pushing the members of "Club Med" to get their house in order. This tug of war between the (Protestant) north and the (Catholic) south has always bedeviled the EU, mimicking the religious divides of the Thirty Years' War in the seventeenth century. Today, this cleavage is just one among many threats to ever closer union. As the world is muscling in, the EU is drifting apart.

Brexit is the most blatant symptom of Eurofatigue. The United Kingdom would rather face not-so-splendid isolation than submit to Brussels, and damn the gargantuan costs of defection. For the UK it is not "ever closer," but simply "no union."

Meanwhile, Poland and Hungary are marching to the beat of authoritarian nationalism. They will gladly take the goodies—billions in subsidies—from Brussels but refuse to obey its dictates of liberal-democratic virtue.

Italy is in a class of its own. In a historical first, it has voted right-wing and left-wing populists into power. Hostile brothers, the League and the Five Stars are held in harness by "Italy first" and anti-EU resentment. If they don't shrink the national debt, the eurozone's largest as a fraction of the GDP, the endless Greek euro crisis will look like a hiccup. With its tiny economy, Greece can be saved. Italy, Europe's fourth-largest, cannot.

Finally, there is the latter-day "Hanseatic League" that the Dutch are harnessing against the French, now that their natural ally Britain is absconding. Informal members are the Scandinavians, the Baltics, and Ireland. These are fiscally conservative and highly competitive economies. Germany is a silent partner because it is loath to challenge France directly.

AN EXCESS OF DISCRETION

So much for the rifts inside. Now look at the wider world, where history has not ended. Geopolitics and geo-economics are back. While Russia grabs land, China pushes its "Belt and Road" across Asia and into Europe. In the tariff

wars, President Trump deploys raw power to change the terms of trade in America's favor. His contempt for Europe, especially for Merkel, is boundless. For him, Europe is a fat mouse too timid even to roar.

The United States, China, and Russia are re-arming as they stake out spheres of influence. Where does that leave those four hundred and fifty million post-Brexit Europeans with the world's second-largest GDP? The twenty-first century does not favor this mighty "civilian power." Its best weapons, such as commerce, friendly persuasion, and institutionalized conflict resolution, are being blunted. For all the breathtaking advances of our time, the new arena of world politics looks more like the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries than the second half of the twentieth, the Golden Age of the West.

When arms buy influence, economic strength trades at a discount. Unless there is a mailed fist

beneath the white glove

of diplomacy, states will not excel at power politics. Nor will the EU, and then for reasons of psychology rather than lack of clout. Preceded by millionfold slaughter

in two world wars, seventy years under the strategic umbrella of the United States have set in motion an unprecedented cultural transformation.

Once the Europeans were a race of warriors who conquered the four corners of the world. But the millionfold slaughter that almost led to Europe's suicide in the twentieth century, not to speak of the industrial annihilation of Jews and other peoples, may have cracked its collective soul. The spirit of "Never again!" has overwhelmed the quest for booty, glory, and domination. Heroism is out, discretion and pacifism are the better part of valor—and far less costly to boot.

Maybe Tocqueville was right when he attributed to bourgeois society "that coolness of understanding that renders men comparatively insensible to the violent and poetical excitement of arms [and] quenches the military spirit." It is a "constant rule that among civilized nations the warlike passions will become more rare and less intense in proportion as social conditions are more equal." The sage was writing about America, but his prediction fits Western Europe to a T.

The signs abound. You have to look hard for oversized national flags fluttering above gas stations in Europe as they do in the United States. Once, an

To bestride the world as a heavy-weight—like the United States—requires cracking the hard shells of sovereignty, notably in matters of defense and public finance.

officer's career was the quickest way to status and advancement in Europe. Today, the military enjoys about as much prestige as the post office. Soldiering is a job, not a national calling. Only France and Britain boast remnants of an ancient warrior culture. Its values—honor, duty, self-sacrifice—have dwindled in favor of civilian virtues like cooperation and compromise.

THE ESSENTIAL AMERICANS

How to re-establish moral worth in the face of an unspeakable past—conquest, colonialism, and exploitation, as the catechism of correctness has it? Europe draws righteousness from its new incarnation as a moral superpower that will study war no more. Setting an example as “light unto the nations,” it will teach the world the wisdom of accommodation and rules-bound intercourse and so transmute strife into win-win for all. That's what “civilian powers” do best; this is where the EU's great comparative advantage pays off most. Clausewitz, who preached the twinship of force and diplomacy, doesn't

live here anymore.

For decades, acting (and orating) in this manner was a marvelous business model, keeping Europe out of harm's way and filling its coffers.

The United States isn't doing the Europeans a favor by extending a credible security guarantee. It's doing what interest and prudence demand.

Today, the model is losing its luster because the cultural transformation depended on a reliable American security guarantee. That pillar is not so sturdy now. As Merkel puts it in the age of Trump, “we have to go some way toward taking our destiny into our own hands.”

Well spoken. Yet Europe's tragedy is the gulf between fabulous wealth and feeble will, between its glorious past and a future now dimmed by the return of power politics. The new threats are devaluing the EU's abundant civilian assets: trade and investment, suasion and cooptation. In the benign setting of yore, the Union grew from six to twenty-eight nations. But it would take a “United States of Europe” to play in the great-power league, where force is the ultimate currency of clout.

To make Europe great again, the post-Brexit twenty-seven would have to coalesce into a single state with a strong executive characterized by “decision, activity, secrecy, and dispatch,” as Alexander Hamilton famously argued in *The Federalist Papers*. Alas, with their national histories dating back to the days of Rome, the EU twenty-seven will not replicate the fusion of America's thirteen colonies in our lifetime.

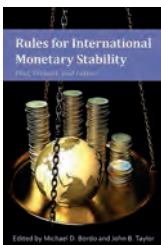
Nor is time on their side, not with Putin pressing in and Trump threatening to move out. So it will help to buy some insurance by arming and training a credible force embedded in NATO, history's oldest alliance of free nations. Why NATO? Cold-eyed analysis would impress on both Americans and Europeans what a good deal the alliance has been.

For the Europeans, one big American umbrella is more reliable than lots of little European ones, while a single European army remains a beautiful dream. For the United States, it is all about being there. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, whose seventieth birthday is this month, has spared the United States a remake of World Wars I and II, when it first hung back and then had to pay with hundreds of thousands of fallen to restore the balance. Staying in Europe after 1945 was a wondrous blessing. It is always more economical to be in place than to have to fight your way back in. Try now to dislodge the Russians from Syria.

The point is not to coddle Europe, but to stress America's well-considered interests. Squeezed by Russia and China, the United States would not want to ditch Europe, not with its half billion people and the world's second-largest GDP. Even the greatest of powers will not thrive behind the walls of Fortress America. Just like nature, international politics abhors a vacuum, and those who wish America ill will be only too happy to fill it.

The United States would not be doing the Europeans a favor by continuing to extend a credible guarantee. It would be doing what interest and prudence demand in a world where Russia and China want to make America small again. Without its older European cousins, the United States would be a lonely giant with a limp. To let go of America's largest strategic asset would be an act of folly that would not even play in the long term in Trump's red-state redoubt. ■

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Competence and Confidence

“Strategic patience” in Asia has run its course. Now we and our allies must prepare for whatever comes next.

By H. R. McMaster

In East Asia, our free and open societies must re-enter arenas of competition vacated after the end of the Cold War. We must also demonstrate a much higher degree of strategic competence. As China promotes a system of authoritarian capitalism while actively undermining our free and open societies, we must also demonstrate strategic confidence—confidence in our principles and in our democratic institutions and processes. Let’s focus on those three words—*competition*, *competence*, and *confidence*—to think about how to cope with the significant challenges to security and prosperity posed by China and North Korea.

In the 1990s, in the wake of the Soviet Union’s collapse and at the end of the Cold War, our free and open societies became complacent. Several flawed assumptions about the nature of the post-Cold War world underpinned American foreign policy and national security strategy. Many believed that the collapse of the Soviet Union fit into an arc of history that guaranteed the primacy of free and open systems over authoritarian and closed systems. Others defined the emerging world order in aspirational terms: we would

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live in a world in which geopolitical competition was a phenomenon of the past. The most optimistic predicted that a great-power condominium would emerge in the post-Cold War period as international organizations fostered cooperation to solve the world's most pressing problems. And, drafting off these winds of optimism, US policy toward China assumed that Beijing, after being welcomed into global business and trade governance systems, would liberalize, become a trusted partner, and welcome international businesses into its immense market.

Unrealistic assumptions also affected our approach to North Korea, especially the belief that North Korea would change if we demonstrated “strategic patience.” In a recent essay in the *Journal of Contemporary East Asia Studies*, Jinwook Choi observed that the North Korea nuclear crisis stems, in part, from “wishful thinking regarding [North Korea’s] intentions” and “the failure of the international community to speak with one voice on how to resolve it.”

I believe that today we are at the “end of the beginning” of a new era. And the United States and the free and open societies of the world are lagging because we have been too slow to abandon the wishful thinking and flawed assumptions that have underpinned much of our foreign and economic policy since the end of the Cold War. There is no arc of history that guarantees the security and prosperity of our free and open societies.

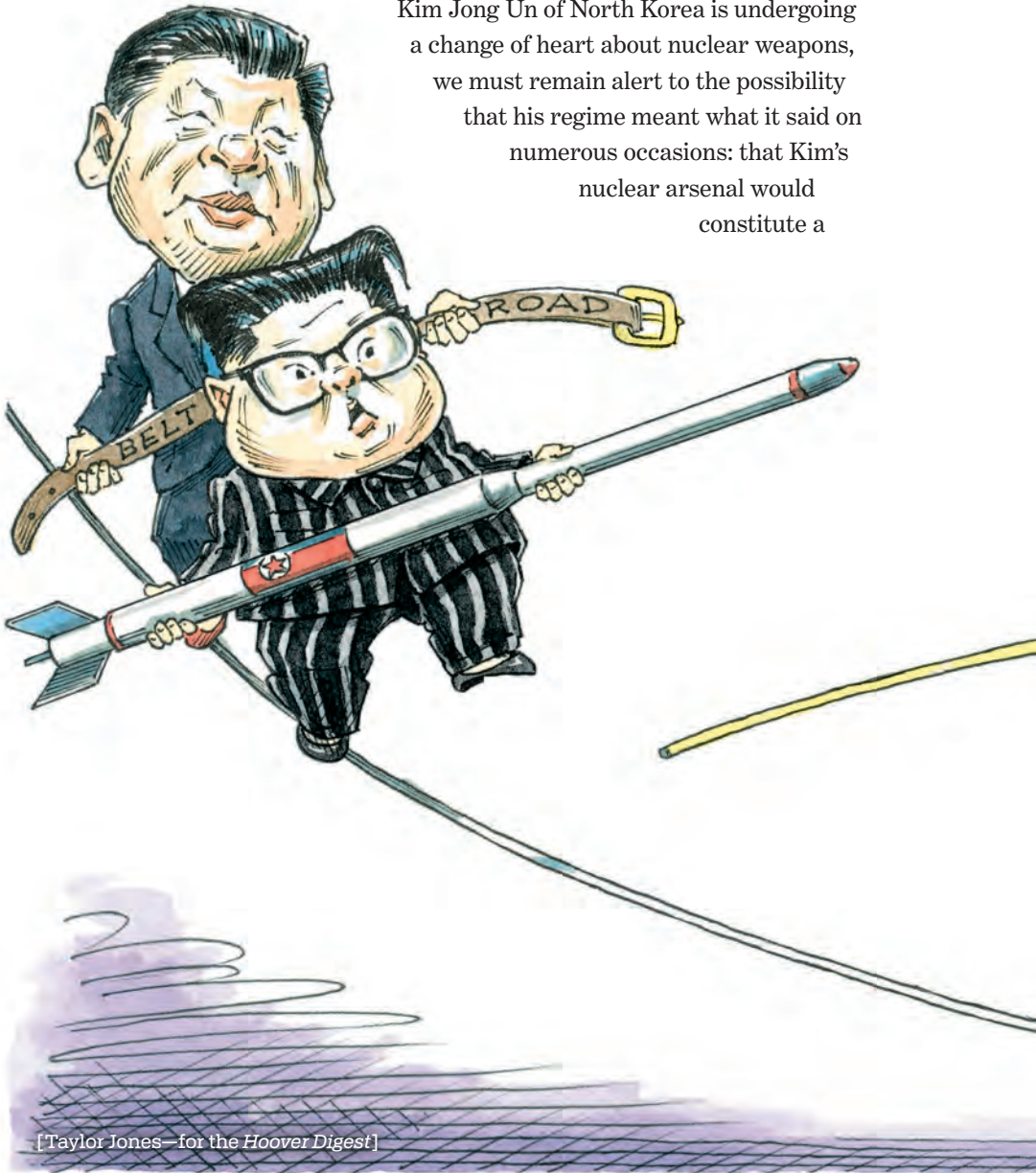
NEW DANGERS

Geopolitical competition has returned. China’s land grab in the South China Sea, in violation of international law, and its provocative behavior there and elsewhere have created dangerous flashpoints and a high risk of military confrontation. And even as China has succeeded economically because of its integration into the global economy and membership in the World Trade Organization, the Chinese Communist Party has not been a trusted partner. Instead, the Chinese government has used mercantilist policies, the theft and forced transfer of intellectual property, and heavy state subsidies for key enterprises and industries to enrich itself at others’ expense.

China’s economic and security policies are integrated. For example, China uses state profits to fund a significant military buildup, offers loans with dubious terms for ports and other infrastructure in strategic locations around the world, and then takes ownership of those same locations when countries cannot service the debt. These debt-for-equity swaps appear to be a deliberate feature of China’s “One Belt, One Road” strategy. One Southeast Asian leader compared Chinese loans to the “unequal treaties” that colonial powers foisted upon China two centuries ago. Moreover, Beijing aims to

dominate critical and emerging sectors of the global economy through the purchase of technologies with state funds, overproduction and dumping of goods to eliminate competition, forced transfer of intellectual property in exchange for access to the Chinese market, and a sustained campaign of industrial espionage.

And, while we all hope that Chairman Kim Jong Un of North Korea is undergoing a change of heart about nuclear weapons, we must remain alert to the possibility that his regime meant what it said on numerous occasions: that Kim's nuclear arsenal would constitute a

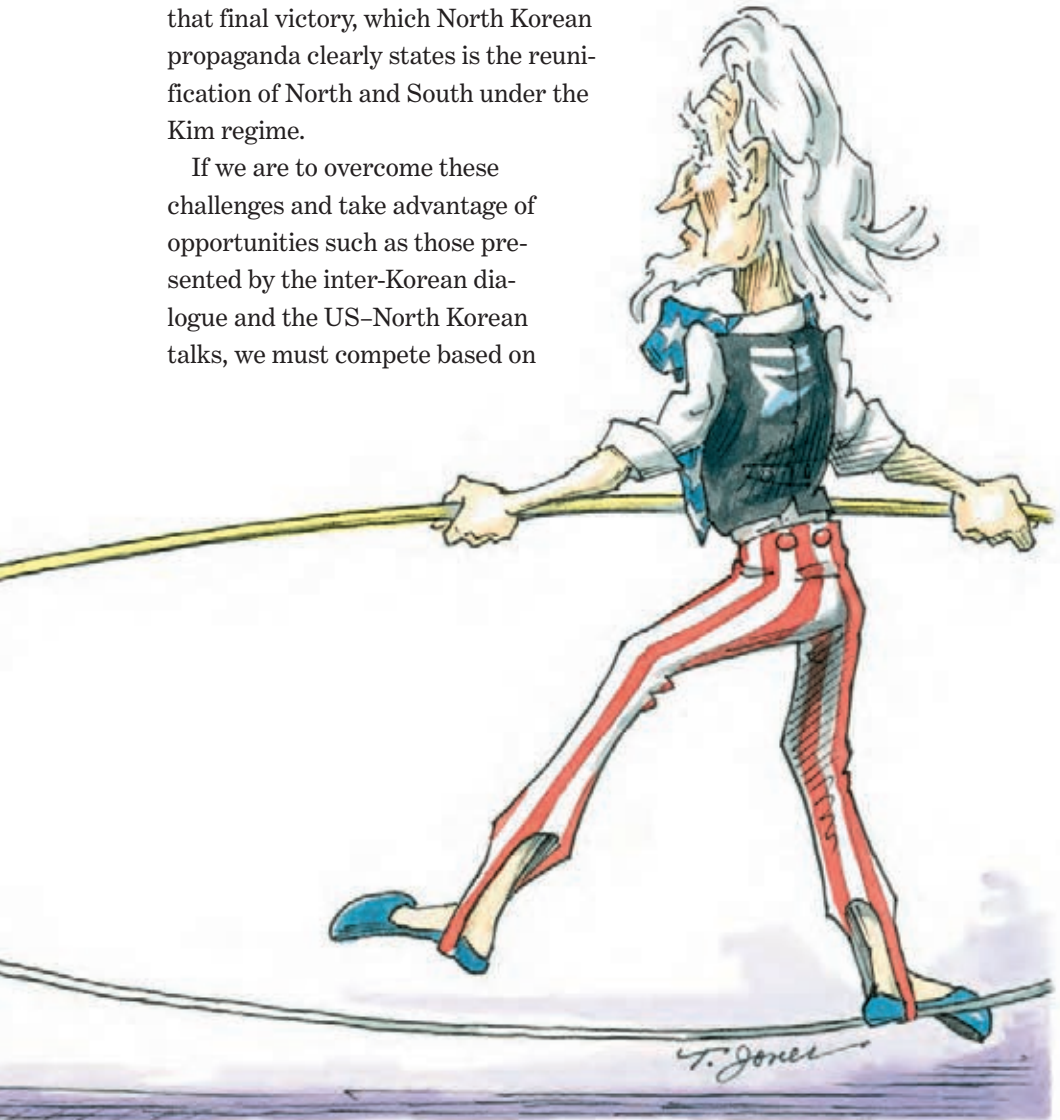


[Taylor Jones—for the Hoover Digest]

“treasured sword” designed to pry apart the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea, by making America think twice about ever coming to South Korea’s aid in time of war.

As we all know, Chairman Kim is the third in a succession of ultranationalist leaders in Pyongyang whose very legitimacy rests on the promise of “final victory.” It’s no accident that Kim uttered the term “reunification” at least eleven times in his 2018 New Year’s Day speech. We must consider that North Korea may intend to hold on to its nuclear weapons because they are instrumental to achieving that final victory, which North Korean propaganda clearly states is the reunification of North and South under the Kim regime.

If we are to overcome these challenges and take advantage of opportunities such as those presented by the inter-Korean dialogue and the US-North Korean talks, we must compete based on



a recognition of the world as it is, not as we might like it to be. This requires a sober assessment of North Korean intentions. It also includes recognizing Chinese Communist Party policies and practices as they are, not as we might like to imagine them.

NEW COMPETENCIES

Competition, however, does not have to lead to confrontation. Indeed, if our free and open societies are passive and complacent, confrontation will become *more* likely as autocratic revisionist powers are emboldened and overreach. Competition also entails communication—it is indeed good that Seoul and Washington are talking with Pyongyang. And an honest dialogue with China between governments and businesses will prove critical to convincing Chinese leaders that China will benefit from behaving as a trusted partner and working to strengthen, rather than undermine, the international trade and business system from which the Chinese people and the world have benefited. That is what US officials mean when they cite the importance of competition.

To compete effectively, we have to improve our strategic competence, especially our ability to integrate economic and security policy. It will be important to work through international organizations such as the World Trade Organization to address China's unfair trade and economic practices. The United Nations Security Council has been helpful in approving sanctions in response to North Korea's illegal nuclear weapons program, but it is past time for like-minded nations to do more. We should expose China's unfair practices and refuse to bend to Chinese coercion. Succumbing to the lure of easy money or paying for access to China's market through the transfer of intellectual property may generate profits in the near term, but it will compromise sovereignty and the long-term viability of industries.

And China and all responsible nations, recognizing the grave danger that a nuclear-armed North Korea poses to the world, must refuse to relax sanctions on North Korea until denuclearization.

A competent response to both North Korea's nuclear program and Chinese Communist Party policies that threaten security and prosperity requires a high level of international cooperation. We must compete together, and we must do so with confidence.

In recent years, experiences and the actions of strategic rivals have undermined the confidence of the United States and other free and open societies. Those experiences include unanticipated difficulties encountered in what were supposed to be fast, cheap, and efficient wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the 2008 financial crisis, and the inadequate international response to the

humanitarian and political catastrophe in the Middle East that began with the Arab Spring and is now centered on the Syrian civil war. Russia and China have taken advantage of, and worked to worsen, our loss of confidence. Russia directs a sustained campaign of disinformation, propaganda, and political subversion

against Europe and the

United States. China

augments its form of eco-

nommic aggression with

sophisticated influence

campaigns in the United States and across the globe.

Confidence among nations that share liberal democratic principles is vital to preserving peace.

To compete and respond competently to the threats to our free and open societies, we might make a conscious effort to rebuild our confidence. We should remember why Kim Il Sung decided to launch an invasion in June 1950. He did so because he believed the South Korean people didn't support their republic or feel much solidarity with other democracies. He thought South Koreans would put nationalism above their freedom. He was sure that once his troops took Seoul, the rest of the country would welcome them with open arms. He also thought America would not fight to preserve South Korea's freedom.

It was a costly war that took the lives of too many Koreans, American soldiers, and soldiers from other countries. But we remained confident in our ability to prevail. My father was among the many veterans of that war. He remained proud of his service in defense of freedom and the Korean people.

A TIME-TESTED ALLIANCE

Confidence in our principles and our free and open systems should not breed complacency. I have seen in the news that some people say, "We don't need to station THAAD anti-missile batteries in South Korea because they protect only the American troops." They speak as if those American troops were not there to protect South Korea. I also read that some South Koreans are saying, "We shouldn't fight, no matter what the North does." In the 1950s we fought a devastating war on this peninsula because the Pyongyang regime thought the South lacked confidence and would not defend itself.

Some people seem to want to start an argument between friends that could precipitate a breakup in the alliance that has prevented war on the peninsula for the past sixty-five years. I assure you, America doesn't want to keep any country in a military alliance unwillingly. The partnership would then fail to serve its purpose of deterring the enemy and keeping the peace. However, I believe that most South Koreans remain committed to our alliance.

Making good on the opportunities associated with inter-Korean dialogue and the US–North Korean talks will require a clear communication of confidence to North Korea around three points:

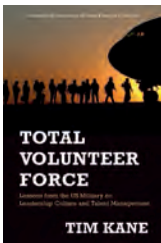
» **Alignment between the Republic of Korea and the United States will continue.** Movement on inter-Korean relations cannot outpace concrete action by North Korea to denuclearize. We must avoid past mistakes by adhering to the joint pledge that there be no sanction relief absent the final, fully verified denuclearization of North Korea. And together we should emphasize that denuclearization would open the way to tremendous cooperation with North Korea—if cooperation is what the North Korean regime wants.

» **The UN Security Council resolution obliges North Korean action,** not US and South Korean “confidence building measures” or other concessions.

» **Pyongyang has a fleeting opportunity** in the alignment of four critical constituencies prepared to support enhanced US–North Korean engagement *if* North Korea denuclearizes: the US president, the Republican Party, the Democratic Party, and the Republic of Korea. Our advice to Pyongyang should be: do not lose this opportunity.

Even if we stay aligned and put forward our best effort, it is conceivable that tension will increase. The North Korean program for weapons of mass destruction is the issue most likely to cause conflict because it threatens not only South Korea, Japan, and the United States but all nations. A nuclear North Korea could collapse the nonproliferation regime in Asia and beyond, and the North Korean regime has never developed a weapon or technology it did not try to sell. It is for that reason that all nations, including China, must make clear to the North that its nuclear program does not enhance security—instead it makes North Korea vulnerable and would deprive Chairman Kim of a tremendous opportunity for peace and prosperity. ■

Special to the Hoover Digest. This essay is adapted from a speech delivered at the 19th World Knowledge Forum in Seoul, South Korea.



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The Empire Strikes Back

Determined to hold all power, China is forcing its minority Uighurs into re-education camps and attacking their very culture. The Uighurs will not go quietly.

By Michael R. Auslin

After repeated denials, Chinese officials have finally admitted to setting up internment camps in the far western province of Xinjiang, where up to a million ethnic Uighurs, almost all of whom are Muslim, are being held. Under China's antiterrorism law and "religious affairs regulation," the government in the Xinjiang Autonomous Region publicly introduced the "Regulation on De-extremification." What it describes is a new gulag, where re-education and the suppression of Uighur identity is its main goal.

There are approximately twenty-five million Muslims in China today, but these draconian new laws in Xinjiang are aimed solely at the ethnic Uighurs, of whom there are just over eleven million. Unlike the Hui, another major Muslim ethnic group who have largely assimilated into Chinese society, Uighurs have resisted intermarriage, speak their own Turkic language, and have advocated for some level of autonomy, making them a target for

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suppression. Over the decades, Beijing's heavy-handed approach has helped outside Islamist elements make inroads among Uighur youth and spurred the formation of radical groups. As a result, the Uighurs have remained a largely colonized people, and Xinjiang has become the center of Chinese Muslim resistance to Beijing.

Uighur activists have conducted numerous violent attacks since 1990, including bus bombings in Shanghai and Kunming, multiple sword and knife attacks at train stations in major cities, and a car bombing in Tiananmen Square, the symbolic center of China. Ties between Uighur radicals, previously known as the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, and the Taliban and Al-Qaeda are among the reasons Beijing has cracked down on them so strongly.

It is undeniable that some Uighurs are extremists. But the new measures introduced by the Chinese authorities do not just aim to prevent religious violence. At first glance, many of the new regulations concern activities that

bedevil Western states, such as the forced wearing of the burqa in Muslim communities; or which occur in Islamist-run territories

China cannot allow successful independence movements in any of its subordinate areas, for fear of contagion.

around the Middle East, such as ethnic cleansing by forcing those of other faiths out of their homes. Yet read a little further and the real objectives of the regulations are soon revealed. In order to “contain and eradicate extremism,” the state will make “religion more Chinese . . . and actively guide religion to become compatible with socialist society.” In other words, the goal is to Sinicize Islam and make it serve the state.

POLICE STATE

To achieve this, those suspected of being extremists or being susceptible to extremist ideology are interned in military-school-style camps, with regimented daily schedules. The provincial regulation mandates Maoist-style “ideological education, psychological rehabilitation and behavior correction” and the use of informants throughout society. The totalitarian reach of the law is shown by the fact that it is now illegal in Xinjiang to “reject or refuse public goods and services such as radio and television.” Reminiscent of the Stalinist era, it is now a crime simply to opt out of listening to state propaganda.

Xinjiang has become, in essence, a police state, controlled by a massive paramilitary force; ubiquitous, intrusive surveillance, including advanced



[Taylor Jones—for the Hoover Digest]

facial recognition technology; regular roundups of suspected radicals; and a stifling of civil society. Sinification takes various forms, including cutting short the dresses of Muslim women. More controversially, reports from Chinese state media suggest mandatory “health examinations” in Xinjiang have allowed the state to collect DNA from Uighurs, in order to build a genetic database that will allow even tighter control. And then there are the internment camps.

To understand the driving motive behind the new laws, it is important to remember that the People’s Republic of China is fundamentally an empire. Over the centuries, China’s Han majority, which today makes up 91 percent of the Chinese population, has pressured and actively suppressed ethnic minorities. The Chinese Communist Party continued these assimilation-

ist policies as part of a strategy for ruling one of the most linguistically and ethnically diverse polities on earth. From Tibetans

It is now a crime simply to opt out of listening to state propaganda.

to Tatars, and from Kazakhs to Uzbeks, today’s Chinese empire is built on the control of dozens of minority groups and the tight monitoring of their religions and cultures. Maintaining the integrity of the state is a top priority for President Xi Jinping, second only to ensuring the party’s own survival, and both aims are inextricably linked.

Uighurs portray themselves as freedom fighters, challenging Beijing for their independence, little different from Tibetans or Taiwanese, other than being ethnically distinct and Muslim. Any viable separatist movement in the region alarms the central government, as other autonomy movements are watching closely what happens in Xinjiang. If Xi relaxes his grip there, activists in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Tibet are sure to take advantage to press their own claims.

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD

The Uighurs and Xinjiang pose another problem for the central government, this one geopolitical. Xinjiang sits squarely along Beijing’s “One Belt, One Road” (OBOR) corridor. Xi’s flagship foreign policy initiative, OBOR aims to be a \$1 trillion infrastructure development which will create land and maritime trade routes reaching all the way from China to Western Europe.

Xinjiang’s geostrategic location along the Belt and Road means it is the access point to much of Central Asia. Just as important, Xinjiang contains vast natural resources, with estimates of up to five billion barrels of oil and

up to thirteen trillion cubic meters of natural gas. Any effective resistance to Chinese control over Xinjiang, let alone the formation of an independent Islamic republic, would pose a huge threat to Beijing's plans to increase its influence throughout Eurasia.

Ethnic separatism, driven by religious radicalization, is one of the greatest fears of Xi and his fellow rulers. As a

multiethnic empire, China cannot allow successful independence movements in any of its subordinate areas, for fear of contagion. This political concern is heightened by the transnational nature of the Islamist movement. Even moderate Muslims in Xinjiang are perceived by Beijing as a threat, the leading edge of a radicalization movement that could challenge central control of the strategic province as well as infect other Muslims in China and spill over to other regions.

Xi will not soon ease his heavy-handed control over Xinjiang and its Uighurs, and as a result is engendering more of the anti-Chinese sentiment he is trying to stamp out. Such repression is becoming a hallmark of Xi's rule and is increasingly defining China's direction over the next decade. ■

The Uighurs have remained a largely colonized people, and Xinjiang has become the center of Chinese Muslim resistance to Beijing.

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“Covert, Coercive, or Corrupting”

Beijing has declared war—an information war. A team of Hoover researchers sounds the alarm.

By *Orville Schell and Larry Diamond*

President Trump insists that China has been ripping off America for decades, but even if the two countries manage to negotiate—and honor—new terms for trade, basic reciprocity will still be sorely lacking elsewhere in the relationship and will continue to create tensions.

Consider the stark imbalance in media access. In the United States, Beijing has established both a radio network and a television network, which distribute state-controlled programming to American audiences. China also publishes newspapers and magazines

Key points

- » China has ignored the principle of reciprocity for years.
- » When China restricts visas for US media companies or constricts public-diplomacy efforts, Washington should retaliate.
- » The United States needs to stop the hemorrhaging of US technology through one-way deals with China.

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here in Chinese and English, Chinese websites are available to Americans online, and the United States readily gives work visas to Chinese reporters, who then feed content back to state-run propaganda organs at home.

By contrast, American media are not permitted to operate any television or radio networks in China, and the government partially or completely blocks the websites of most major US news organizations. The only American publications gener-

ally available focus on such topics as lifestyle and business, including *Vogue*, *Elle*, and special “China editions” of *Forbes* and the *Harvard*

The idea of “engagement” was that if the United States just kept interacting with China, the two countries would find common ground.

Business Review. The Chinese government also systematically blocks access to Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and Google.

As for life on the ground for US journalists, the veteran *Washington Post* correspondent and author John Pomfret, who has spent decades in China, told us: “I’ve been followed, tapped, taped, detained, and even expelled. . . . Visas are denied or held up, sometimes for years. Interviews are canceled at the last minute by ubiquitous ‘foreign affairs’ officers who work to impede, not facilitate, news coverage. Chinese translators and fixers are forced to report on all activities in their foreign bureaus or risk reprisals.”

Nor is this lack of reciprocity confined to the media, as we and a working group of top China specialists show in a new report addressing these issues.

American scholars in China too often find themselves denied visas and cut off from archives, libraries, fieldwork, and government officials, while no such restrictions impede the work of their Chinese counterparts in the United States, even those coming from think tanks sponsored by the government or the Communist Party. The Chinese government freely engages American audiences and spreads its propaganda by buying expensive advertising inserts in American newspapers, but it heavily constrains the public diplomatic outreach of the United States in China.

At the same time, Chinese scientists and engineers obtain visas for advanced study in the United States in fields such as semiconductors, robotics, artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and gene editing that will increasingly determine global economic leadership and military supremacy. There is no equivalent American access to China’s most sensitive research.

Winston Lord, a former US ambassador to China and a contributor to our report, suggested that the Chinese should heed a teaching from Confucius.



“DO NOT IMPOSE”: *A statue of the Chinese sage Confucius is polished before the opening of an exhibition hosted by the Confucius Institute for Scotland, based at the University of Edinburgh. The institutes are part of a worldwide campaign of public diplomacy by China, an effort Beijing does not allow in its own country.* [David Cheskin—ZUMA Press]

When asked, “Is there a single word that can serve as a guide to conduct throughout life?” the sage replied: “The one word is perhaps the word *shu* (meaning ‘reciprocity’ or ‘forgiveness’). Do not impose on others what you would not want them to impose on you.”

FOND HOPES FOR A “PEACEFUL RISE”

To a growing number of Americans, pushback against China’s lack of reciprocity is both justified and overdue. But how did we reach this point, and why has the United States accepted such unequal treatment across so many key areas of the relationship for so long?

Both of us came of age politically in the era after Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger made their breakthrough trip to China in 1972 and forged new relations with Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai. It allowed many of us to dare imagine that the United States and China could “peacefully coexist,” even cooperate, despite their different political systems, values, and cultures.

After Mao's death in 1976, Deng Xiaoping not only unexpectedly returned from political exile to lead China but soon went to Washington to normalize relations. At the same time, he pressed forward a tectonic agenda of pragmatic "reform and opening up" that gave rise to the notion of "engagement." The idea was that if the United States just kept interacting with China—doing more business, facilitating more educational and cultural exchanges—the two countries would find common ground, and China would slowly evolve into a more open society.

For as long as China was progressing toward a more rules-based and seemingly democratic future, Americans could justify staying engaged with a Marxist-Leninist one-party state. The bloodbath in Tiananmen Square in 1989 interrupted such dreams, but Deng and his successor, Jiang Zemin, still managed to rescue the economic reform project and even negotiated China's entry into the World Trade Organization in 2001.

China continues to keep whole sectors of its economy off limits to US businesses.

While the hope of China as a more responsible "global stakeholder" had life, American policy makers were willing to cut the country's communist leaders some slack on such issues as human rights, Tibet, and Taiwan. Progress might be slow, they rationalized, but as long as China was committed to a "peaceful rise," engagement still seemed like a sound bet.

What began upending this bargain was China's turn over the past decade in a more mercantilist, militarily aggressive, and politically authoritarian direction, a trend that has only gained momentum since the ascent of Xi Jinping in 2012. China continues to keep whole sectors of its economy off limits to US businesses, while expropriating American intellectual property and circumscribing the activities of American civil society organizations, religious groups, media outlets, think tanks, and academics. This glaring—and now growing—absence of reciprocity has caused a range of Americans involved in US-China relations to reconsider the viability of engagement.

The Chinese have long decried the "unequal treaties" forced on their country by Britain, France, the United States, and other colonial powers during the nineteenth century. One might think that this history would give their leaders greater sensitivity to the inequities now destabilizing relations with the United States. Yet they still seem far away from understanding the perilous nature of the unbalanced situation they have created.

HOW TO PUSH BACK

What to do? As a practical matter, if China is going to restrict visas for American journalists and scholars, the United States should take this into account when weighing visa access for Chinese media executives, and even for journalists and scholars. If CNN and the *Wall Street Journal* cannot freely

broadcast and publish in China, the ability of Chinese companies to invest in American media and cultural enterprises—

“I’ve been followed, tapped, taped, detained, and even expelled.”

including movie studios and theater chains—should be more closely scrutinized. If China heavily circumscribes US public-diplomacy efforts in China, it should have implications for the scope of travel and activities allowed to Chinese diplomats in the United States. Finally, America should redouble its resolve to find and fund innovative means of disseminating independent news and ideas in China.

Technology transfer in sensitive fields is now largely a one-way street. The United States needs to stop the bleeding away of its technological prowess by helping to defend American corporations against the appropriation of their intellectual property. Visa applications by Chinese scientists and engineers seeking advanced study and research in areas that touch on national security should be more closely examined. At a minimum, the United States can stop granting visas to Chinese scientists and engineers sponsored by or working for the People’s Liberation Army.

Getting China to agree to a new level of fairness and reciprocity may be exceedingly difficult and even create some risks, but it is the only path to a healthier, more durable relationship between the two countries. ■

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Stop, Thieves

“Trade war” is the wrong description for our clash with China. Instead, it’s a campaign to halt the stealing of American technology.

By Martin Feldstein

The current conflict between the United States and China is not a trade war. Although the United States has a large trade deficit with China, that is not why it is imposing high tariffs on imports from China and threatening to increase them further. The purpose of those tariffs is to induce China to end its policy of stealing US technology.

The Chinese government refers to the conflict as a trade war because it hopes that if it buys large quantities of American products, Washington will end the tariffs. The Chinese negotiators have recently offered to buy enough US products to reduce the trade deficit to zero by 2024. Tellingly, the US negotiators have rejected that as a way to end the dispute.

The United States wants China to stop requiring American firms that seek to do business in China to have a Chinese partner and to share their technology with that partner. That policy is explicitly forbidden by World Trade Organization rules, which China has been obliged to respect since it joined the WTO in 2001. The Chinese deny that they are violating the rule, arguing that US firms are not being forced to share technology: they do so voluntarily to access the Chinese market and Chinese production

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opportunities. But American firms regard China's behavior as a form of extortion.

The United States also wants China to stop using cyberespionage to steal technology and other industrial secrets from American companies. Chinese president Xi Jinping agreed to end such digital theft of US industrial tech-

nology after he met with President Obama in 2015.

Unfortunately, the agreement reached at the time was very narrow, refer-

US tariffs are clearly having an effect on China.

ring only to theft by both governments. Although the agreement did lead to a temporary reduction in cybertheft of industrial technology, cyberattacks on US companies, possibly carried out by Chinese state-owned industries and other sophisticated organizations, have increased again in recent years.

The Chinese use the stolen technology to compete with US firms in China and in other parts of the world. The US trade representative recently estimated that this technology theft costs the US economy \$225 billion to \$600 billion per year. And the FBI has asserted that China's theft of American technology is the most severe threat to US national security.

Likewise, a lengthy report on the US-China conflict by the US Chamber of Commerce and the American Chamber of Commerce in China emphasized the problem of technology theft. The report made no reference at all to the trade balance. That, no doubt, is because the authors understand the basic

economic fact that the overall US global trade imbalance is the result of economic conditions in the United States—the excess of investment over

The United States wants China to stop forcing US firms to share their technology with Chinese partners.

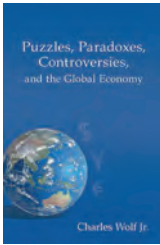
savings. If the Chinese bought enough US goods to eliminate the bilateral imbalance, the US imbalance would merely shift to other countries without reducing the overall imbalance.

The US tariffs are clearly hurting the Chinese economy. The Chinese stock market is down substantially and China's economic growth has slowed. Annual real (inflation-adjusted) GDP growth in the fourth quarter of 2018 dropped to 4 percent. The Chinese authorities are making statements signaling their eagerness to conclude an agreement with the United States to stop the economic slowdown and reverse the decline in the stock market. The White House has also made positive statements about the negotiations

because doing so appears to boost the US stock market, but no progress has yet been made in dealing with the fundamental problem of technology theft.

The US government has no desire to stop China's economic growth or the growth of its high-tech industries. But stealing technology is wrong. It has gone on for too long and should not be allowed to continue. ■

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The Door Is Already Open

A strong China can be a peaceable China.

By Elizabeth Cobbs

Today, China's success often prompts gloom in the West. Yet it shouldn't. In fact, it's what the West has always wanted, and reiterating this principle strengthens our hand.

Britain and the United States have long supported the development of a stronger, more prosperous China. This strategy has actually promoted a more peaceable world order in the past, and could serve us far better today than the confrontational approach to China that President Trump has adopted.

The tale begins with the Opium Wars in 1839 and 1856, the nadir of relations between East and West. With the invention of steamships, the Royal Navy took advantage of China's weakness to force open its famously closed market. It flowed opium and other products that allowed Western nations to improve their chronic trade disadvantage.

Great Britain did not then colonize the giant nation, an aberrant choice for a Western colonizer. China's size made it a lot to swallow and Queen Victoria already had a full plate. More important, the British did not want to take China. They wanted to trade with it.

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Economists like Adam Smith and David Ricardo had articulated theories of free trade that guided British policy away from mercantilism over the course of the nineteenth century. A functional, sovereign China could be a useful partner. So instead of creating a closed sphere, Britain devised the “open door” policy. It collected a low tariff from foreign traders in Chinese ports, scrupulously turned the receipts over to the imperial government, and advocated most-favored-nation treaties that encouraged equal access to China for all nations.

This was the beginning of the so-called “century of humiliation,” when foreigners meddled in the internal affairs of the Chinese. But with the alternative being a complete loss of sovereignty for China, it wasn’t a bad bargain. The “unequal treaties,” as they are known by historians, bought time for a government struggling to stay on its feet.

At the end of the nineteenth century, China again came under pressure, this time by France, Germany, Japan, and Russia, all seeking exclusive slices of China for themselves. Now it was the United States, a growing power, that stepped up and issued its own “Open Door Notes” in 1899 and 1900. The United States advocated a policy of free trade and a guarantee of Chinese sovereignty, reflecting an American tradition of opposition to further European colonization that dated back to the Monroe Doctrine.

The United States went further yet at the Washington Naval Conference in 1921, renouncing the unequal treaties with China and organizing a nine-power guarantee of sovereignty despite the

No Western nation has ever had a major war with China.

Chinese government’s continuing disarray. The complete loss of autonomy experienced by India and most of Africa never happened in China—until Japan tried to colonize its weak neighbor. In retaliation for British and American resistance to this brutal process, Japan attacked Hawaii and Hong Kong.

After World War II, the United States nominated China for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council with the hope that it would stabilize, strengthen, and become a great power. Today, that promise is fulfilled.

China has not become a democracy, but this is not something any country may impose on or require of another, although outsiders have hoped for this outcome. Even so, China has become strong enough to compete economically and defend itself militarily, which is an extraordinary improvement in its ability to serve its people compared with preceding centuries.



GREAT POWERS: A lithograph shows the 1900 attack on Beijing Castle during the Boxer Rebellion. Western and allied soldiers attacked Chinese forces who had been besieging foreigners in the citadel. The end of the nineteenth century was a time when France, Germany, Japan, and Russia all sought exclusive slices of China, while the United States pushed for an “open door” policy of free trade and Chinese sovereignty. [Library of Congress]

So instead of fretting about China’s growing dominance in manufacturing, envying the optimism of its people, or initiating a trade war over China’s rule-breaking, Western leaders should take credit for their historical support for China’s success while holding it to its agreements.

All nations act in ways others find objectionable. Today, many worry that admitting China into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001 was a mistake. They fret that multilateral institutions are increasingly useless for forcing strong nations like China to follow the rules of international commerce. But the mistake wasn’t admitting China to the WTO. Rather, it has been not using the WTO—and other multinational institutions—enough.

In fact, a recent study by the Cato Institute reveals China’s good record of WTO compliance. Since 2004, twenty-seven formal complaints have been

leveled against China. Five cases remain pending and twenty-two have been resolved. In all but one, where the matter wasn't pursued, China modified its behavior.

But, since Donald Trump became president, the United States has brought no new complaints against China in the WTO. Instead, the administration has tried to punish China unilaterally.

Although this technique is peaceable compared with the nineteenth-century methods employed in the Opium Wars, the impulse is the same:

to fix a problem with brute force rather than diplomacy. Today it hurts the economies of both nations.

Despite its enormous size, China is a country with which no Western nation has ever had a major war or needs to. Bully China, and it will bully back. Give respect, get respect.

Under Xi Jinping, China is more authoritarian than it was ten years ago. That's a pity, but it's not our problem to resolve. While progress is halting, only the Chinese can make it. When they do, we should applaud. Then pull out the rulebook. ■

After World War II, the United States nominated China for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council, hoping it would stabilize, strengthen, and become a great power.

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The Road from Damascus

The Trump administration's timing may be questionable, but the pullout of US forces from Syria is not.

By Thomas H. Henriksen

President Trump's abrupt announcement in December that he would yank US military forces from their fight against the Islamic State in Syria plunged the American foreign policy establishment into near-hysteria. The White House, apparently having second thoughts about a hasty withdrawal, extended the timetable. US military officials now project a withdrawal by the end of April.

There is no need to retreat Dunkirk-fashion from the Syrian quagmire. But withdrawal is inevitable.

The panicked reaction to Trump's approach from both sides of the congressional aisle, think-tank types, and the news media deserves brief comment before reflecting on the possible consequences of leaving the war-torn country. What made the anti-pullout reaction so noteworthy was the lack of irony among the usual pundits. The mainstream media, as always, were against Trump, no matter what his policy. Many foreign policy doves, however, abruptly assumed a hawkish, pro-war stance.

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Even former president Barack Obama had noted in 2013 that “this war (against terrorism), like all wars, must end. That’s what history advises. It’s what our democracy demands.”

So shrill were the Trump critics that one sensed a desire to reverse the intent of the original war powers resolution enacted at the end of the Vietnam War by Congress over President Nixon’s veto. That act seeks to curb presidential war making that lacks authorization from Capitol Hill. Over the years, members of the legislative branch have indeed challenged presidents for what they deem unauthorized military actions, such as President Reagan’s deployment of troops in Lebanon and Grenada, and President Clinton’s dispatch of sixteen thousand troops to Haiti to enforce its transition to civilian rule or twenty thousand peacekeeping soldiers to Bosnia.

In today’s man-bites-dog scenario, the president wants to pull out military forces while his critics want to persist in an unpopular and increasingly purposeless conflict.

WHY WE’RE IN SYRIA

Obama’s limited intervention into the complex Syrian civil war was premised solely on the mushrooming Islamic State threat. America’s forty-fourth president evinced little interest in advancing human rights or democracy in the fragmenting and ruined country.

Since then, the US incursion has erased the Islamic State’s territorial gains and brought it to the brink of extinction. The current Syrian configuration, with its rivalry

among the warring parties, will probably not endure as the conflict against the Islamic State winds down com-

pletely. Syria’s tyrant, Bashar al-Assad, will try to recover all the lands held by his local opponents. Turkey might invade Syria to destroy the Syrian Kurds who are linked to Kurdish terrorists inside Turkey. Iran will push for wider influence. The Pentagon’s two thousand troops cannot halt Iran from capitalizing on its singular role in buttressing Assad’s regime during its darkest days.

Which brings us back to an American military extraction from Syria.

The Pentagon is working to implement Trump’s call for redeployment out of Syria. Additionally, US commanders are seeking the White House’s

Our defense structure needs new weapons, stronger forces, and a hard look at priorities.

approval for a proposal to allow Kurdish militias to keep weapons that the Pentagon furnished. The military brass and civilian experts see an abandonment of Syria as an unnecessary betrayal of the Kurdish forces, which led the fight to destroy Islamic State in northeastern Syria. Realistically, regaining antitank rockets, mortars, and armored vehicles is impossible in a conflict zone.

Turkey, a North Atlantic Treaty Organization member and ally of the United States, considers the Kurdish militias merely an extension of a decades-old insurgency within its southeastern quadrant. Ankara yearns to destroy the Kurds and their independence cause.

Washington would be better served to maintain its alliance with the Kurds, for two reasons. First, it ill serves America's global standing to betray a long-time ally. Second, Washington needs bases in the region. Military hubs within the Kurdish populations inside Syria and even Iraq would afford the Pentagon the capability of striking back not only at terrorist elements but also at Iran—America's most implacable adversary in the greater Middle East.

The Kurds, the region's odd man out, are natural allies of the United States. Only the Israelis hold a similar distinction, and the two are aligned openly and secretly.

FOCUS ON THE BIG PICTURE

President Trump's instincts to lessen US military obligations among backwater wars—in the face of looming big-power threats from China and

Russia—are correct.

Deterring and potentially even fighting those two revanchist nations demands an American strategy different from the US counterterrorism

President Trump wants to withdraw military forces. His critics want to persist in an unpopular and increasingly purposeless conflict.

campaigns being waged in Syria, Afghanistan, and other countries. Our defense structure needs new weapons and strengthened forces. A pell-mell retreat from Syria, as well as Afghanistan, could of course result in chaos in the immediate term. Even so, this cannot postpone the inevitability of a pullback from distant insurgencies.

Competing interests in Syria render the neighborhood as stable as a house of cards. The United States lacks the resources to reconcile and democratize this violence-prone arena, as it did in post-World War II Germany and Japan—the dream examples of many in the international relations establishment.

It is possible that Moscow, Tehran, and Damascus will experience a falling out among their three cutthroat dictatorships, which managed to cooperate to preserve Assad's rule. With the American military presence gone, the sharks may turn on each other. But there is no guarantee.

Meanwhile, America will still have friends and allies in near proximity to Syria whom it must continue to keep secure. In the wake of a Syrian leave-taking, more effort will be needed for the defense and well-being of Israel, Jordan, Egypt, and the friendly Persian Gulf states against the machinations and subversion of Iran. ■

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Scorched Earth

Wildfires last year destroyed thousands of homes and cost dozens of lives, and California's environmental policies bear some of the responsibility. The Golden State needs less red tape and smarter land management.

By Richard A. Epstein

Last year, California was ravaged by two of the deadliest fires in its history: the Camp fire north of Sacramento and the Woolsey fire in Ventura and Los Angeles Counties. The toll from these disasters included dozens dead, the destruction of thousands of homes, and seriously unhealthy air even as far as the San Francisco Bay Area, where the pollution closed some schools and led to the postponement of many events, including the “Big Game” between Cal and Stanford, which was delayed by several weeks.

Former California governor Jerry Brown proclaimed that climate change deniers are “definitely contributing” to the onslaught of new fires. The best evidence, however, says otherwise. Global

Key points

- » Too much emphasis on fire prevention led, paradoxically, to far worse fires.
- » A series of legal rulings shifted the environmental movement in the wrong direction.
- » Focused, well-balanced policies are the antidote to the misguided environmental policies of fifty years ago.

Richard A. Epstein is the Peter and Kirsten Bedford Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution and a member of the steering committee for Hoover's Working Group on Intellectual Property, Innovation, and Prosperity. He is also the Laurence A. Tisch Professor of Law at New York University Law School and a senior lecturer at the University of Chicago.

temperature increase has been nil over the past twenty or so years, notwithstanding the increased levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Similarly, the repeated claims that we have had more unstable global climate patterns within that period is likewise false. According to Professor David B. South of Auburn University, “data suggest that extremely large megafires were four times more common before 1940” than today, even though carbon dioxide levels were lower.

Local variables have transformed California far more dramatically than climate change. Thanks to a large influx of new residents to California in recent years, more homes have been built close to wildlands, as happened in the now-torched town of Paradise, where the many homes burnt to the ground

When a court threw open the door to costly, misguided lawsuits, the judge looked forward approvingly to “a flood of new litigation.”

were quite literally in harm’s way. As explained in the *Wall Street Journal*, an accumulation of dead wood, coupled with too much new growth, stymied the efficient growth

of healthy trees that are better able to resist fires.

Every bit as important is the major change in the philosophy of land use management. Much of the forest land in California is now owned by the state and federal governments. These lands have proved far more vulnerable to forest fires than properties owned by private groups. Private lands are managed with the goals of conservation and production. The management of public lands, by contrast, has been buffeted by legislative schemes driven by strong ideological commitments. Writing last year, Republican congressman Tom McClintock noted that his air inspections revealed a distressing pattern: “The [privately] managed forests are green, healthy, and thriving. The neglected federal forests are densely overcrowded and often scarred by fire because we can’t even salvage the fire-killed timber while it still has value.”

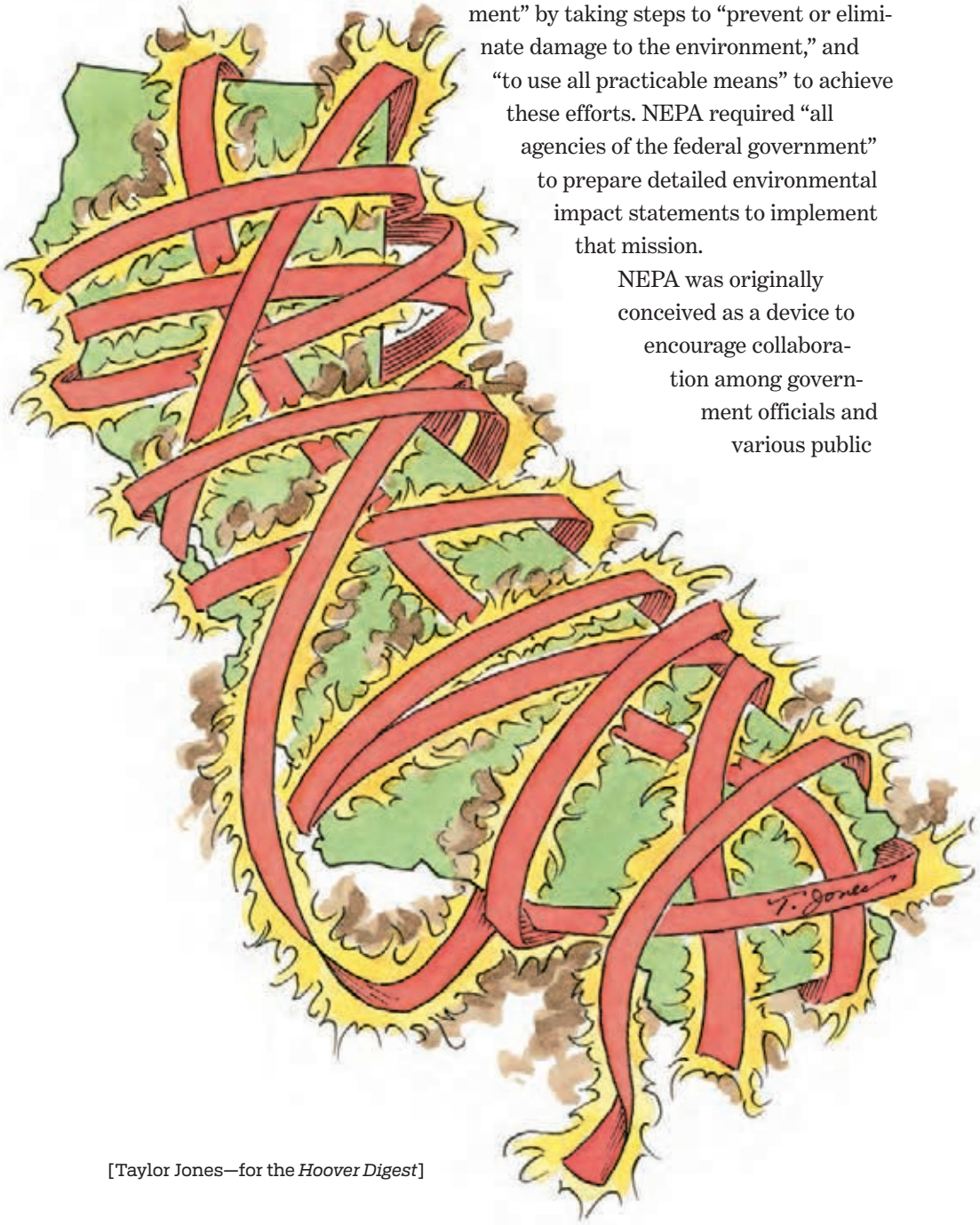
COLLABORATION PUSHED ASIDE

But why? The answer harks back to the onset of the environmental movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s. There was broad agreement that something had to be done about the rising threats of air and water pollution. But the means chosen to address this vital mission resulted in federal and state statutes that quickly went badly awry.

Two key federal statutes illustrate the dimensions of the basic problem: the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1970 and the Endangered

Species Act (ESA) of 1973. These statutes have overlapping purposes. NEPA has commonly been called a “procedural” statute whose main purpose is to “encourage productive and enjoyable harmony between man and his environment” by taking steps to “prevent or eliminate damage to the environment,” and “to use all practicable means” to achieve these efforts. NEPA required “all agencies of the federal government” to prepare detailed environmental impact statements to implement that mission.

NEPA was originally conceived as a device to encourage collaboration among government officials and various public



[Taylor Jones—for the *Hoover Digest*]

and private groups to achieve its ends. But in 1971, Judge J. Skelly Wright of the District of Columbia Circuit Court of Appeals added a new dimension to the equation in *Calvert Cliffs' Coordinating Committee v. United States Atomic Energy Commission*, which held that in light of NEPA's strong environmental mission, any private party could bring an action in federal court to review any administrative approval of a proposed project. He then celebrated this development in no uncertain terms: "These cases are only the beginning of what promises to become a flood of new litigation—litigation seeking judicial assistance in protecting our natural environment."

That judicial maneuver transformed the statute. Most parties did not want to sue to block projects. It was only the activist environmental groups with the strongest commitment that came forward. And when they did, there was no longer a collaborative process that involved parties on all parts of the political spectrum. Now the sole party before the court was the group most determined to see the project or activity stopped.

Delay was always on their side. The additional time could financially wipe out the private parties, whose projects were thrown into limbo. To make matters worse, the Supreme Court, in a 1983 case, *Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association v. State Farm*, insisted that in each case the reviewing court must take a "hard look" at the proposed project to see that it conformed in every respect with the substantive law. In most cases, any slip-up—a few of which are highly likely in any comprehensive assessment—meant the process had to be restarted with a supplemental environmental analysis. The whole mis-

guided process insisted that all negative aspects of a project be evaluated before any work on the project could be done; in so doing, environmental

Court decisions have scuttled the original ideas of cooperation and trade-offs in environmental law.

law departed from the far more sensible common-law rules that grant an injunction against certain activities only in the case of actual or imminent harm. This sound approach allowed for project defects to be repaired during the course of work, after all parties had acquired far greater knowledge of the source of environmental concerns and their possible remedies.

TOO MUCH LEGAL DEADWOOD

The aggressive reach of NEPA is compounded by the high-level ambitions of ESA, which requires all federal departments and agencies to "seek to conserve endangered and threatened species and . . . utilize their authorities

in furtherance of the purposes of this act,” often by the designation of “critical habitat.” Critical habitat designation creates a weak system of private property rights, and its validity as a matter of federal administrative law is in dispute.

The successful management of any complex environmental system requires complicated tradeoffs between various objectives like the preservation of diverse species, fire prevention, the construction of dams and waterways, and the harvesting of valuable timber. But any tempered approach of balancing costs and

benefits of environmental regulations was effectively scuttled by the Supreme Court in *Tennessee Valley Authority*

Since one key ruling, only the groups most determined to see a project stopped have been going to court.

v. Hill (1978), which took the position that the recent discovery of a new endangered fish species, the snail darter, took priority over the completion of the Tellico Dam, which was in the final stages of construction. The notion of trade-offs was pushed emphatically to the back burner.

The combination of ESA and NEPA shifted the environmental movement in the wrong direction. One result was, as Congressman McClintock noted, an 80 percent reduction in the number of trees that were harvested and sold on public lands in California and a reduction in the number of operating sawmills there from one hundred and forty-nine in 1981 to twenty-seven in 2017. The added layers of bureaucratic oversight introduced state and federal permit requirements before any new activity on land, such as logging, could begin. The upshot of this change was that management questions, especially on public lands, moved from managers who had local knowledge of the situation to bureaucrats in distant places who lacked it. Those bureaucrats also tended to think in the same absolutist terms that informed the interpretation of both NEPA and ESA in the courts: that preserving the environment was the foremost goal no matter how strong the competing interests.

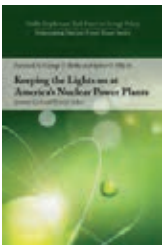
So began the restraint on the cutting of trees and the clearing of deadwood and underbrush. At no point was the process guided by the insight that prophylactic measures today might prevent greater environmental destruction tomorrow. So, by preventing, for example, strategic burns that might protect vulnerable sites, environmental policies created a situation in which minor events, such as a spark from a power line or a stray cigarette butt, could cause disasters in the form of large-scale loss of life and destruction of property, coupled with thick blankets of pollution that endanger health even many

miles away. Meanwhile, California and the federal government take immense steps to stop tailpipe emissions, which at their worst did not cause a fraction of the pollution that the forest fires have been creating throughout the state.

By preventing strategic burns, environmental policies created conditions in which even minor events—a spark from a power line or a stray cigarette butt—could cause large-scale disasters.

and substantive mistakes that should be rethought from the ground up, with a suitable dose of modesty. Go after pollution; introduce sound management policies; pay for the condemnation of critical habitat; don't fret about global warming. Focused, well-balanced policies are the effective antidote to the grandiose, but misguided, environmental policies of fifty years ago. ■

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Red Ink in the Golden State

California owes hundreds of billions of dollars in pension obligations it can't meet. Hoover fellow **Joshua D. Rauh** says the overpromising needs to stop—now.

By Clifton B. Parker

Joshua Rauh, a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and a professor of finance at the Stanford Graduate School of Business, suggests that governments in California need to either offer more modest pension benefits—and fund those much more conservatively—or start putting public employees into defined-contribution plans.

An economist, Rauh studies corporate investment, business taxation, government pension liabilities, and investment management. He recently wrote about California's pension situation for a Hoover Institution white paper and discussed the subject in a *PolicyEd* video (<https://policyed.org>).

Rauh was recently interviewed about the issue.

Clifton B. Parker: How critical is the pension situation in California?

Joshua D. Rauh: The gap between what public pension funds in California have saved up for public-employee pensions and the value of what is owed

Joshua D. Rauh is a senior fellow and director of research at the Hoover Institution, and the Ormond Family Professor of Finance at Stanford University's Graduate School of Business. Clifton B. Parker is director of public policy communications at the Hoover Institution.

to public employees is \$769 billion, or more than \$60,000 per California household.

It is as though each household is carrying around a credit card balance of \$60,000 that is growing each year. At some point in the future, the government will make us pay, because the public-employee pensions must be paid. How will the government make us pay? Either through higher taxes or through the cutting of core public services.

Think about the essential public services that citizens pay for through taxes and fees—like safety and education. Going forward, we'll have fewer resources available to pay for those actual services because taxpayer money will increasingly be burdened with paying the pensions of the people who performed those jobs in the past.

Another way to see the problem is that as of now, around 10 percent of all public revenue generated in the state of California and its municipalities goes to fund public-employee pensions. That sounds like a lot, but the real problem is that even this amount is not adequate to stabilize the \$60,000-per-household debt to the public employees! A contribution rate that would keep the debt from rising would amount to more than 21 percent of every dollar of public revenue generated within the state of California.

Parker: Why are assumptions about future pension returns often highly uncertain?

Rauh: They used to be much more certain because pension funds used to invest primarily in safe securities such as government bonds. US Treasury bonds in the 1990s could generate 6 to 7 percent per year returns with a high degree of safety. Now they generate less than 3 percent per year. State and local governments have responded to this change over time by shifting their asset allocation increasingly to riskier securities—the stock market, for one, but also alternative assets such as private equity, venture capital, real estate, and hedge funds. Overall, around 75 percent of every dollar in public-employee pension portfolios is invested in one of these risky asset classes. While the pension funds typically assume they're going to earn around 7.5 percent per year in these investments, the fact is that the returns that might be earned on these securities are highly uncertain, even over long periods of time.

Some people say, "Everything will be fine—the stock market and professional investors always do well enough over the long term." That's not what the principles of finance say. We know that in eras where the stock market has done well, it is because those returns were compensation for risk—for the possibility of bad outcomes that we got lucky and avoided. Right now,

pension funds are taking a great deal of risk in order to keep their return targets up. There's no guarantee that it will go well, and in fact the funds are more likely to fall substantially short of their targets than to achieve them.

Parker: What should the state and other entities in California do about their pension problems?

Rauh: This problem is so blocked by political special interests and public-employee unions. That said, I like to think about what I would advise a friend who has racked up \$60,000 in credit card debt that keeps growing every year because he's investing in risky assets that aren't generating the returns he's hoping for. I would tell my friend that the first thing he needs to do is stop the behavior that is leading to the growth in the credit card debt. In this case, that behavior is promising public employees pensions without setting aside sufficient funds to pay for them, and hoping that the stock market or private equity investments will bail everyone out. That has to stop.

So governments need to either begin promising more modest pension benefits that they fund much more conservatively or, failing that, they need to put public employees into defined contribution plans, which are more like the benefits private economy employees have. This won't make the \$769 billion debt go away, but it will stop it from growing, and for a state like California it is the explosive growth of this debt that should be more frightening than its absolute level.

Parker: Is pension reform under way or being considered in California?

Rauh: Our previous governor, Jerry Brown, knew that pensions were a big problem. In 2011, the first year of his second turn as governor, he proposed a twelve-point pension overhaul. The California state legislature passed some of these points, particularly those that affect new hires. These new members of the workforce will face higher retirement ages, and there will be more sharing of costs between them and their municipal employers. Unfortunately, the true pension costs are far higher than the costs as reflected in current budgets, which is the part that would be shared. It's like my offering to share costs with you in advance of your taking me out to dinner at a very fine restaurant—but my contribution is based only on the expected cost of a hamburger at a fast-food joint.

Other points in Governor Brown's plan were passed but are currently being litigated, such as the limitations against pension spiking—the practice under which some public employees artificially inflate compensation in the years before retirement to set themselves up for a higher lifetime payment on

the taxpayer dime. Believe it or not, many public employees assert that they have a right to such practices.

These employees contend that the body of precedent informally called the California Rule gives public employees a right to whatever benefit was available to them on their initial day of employment, including the right to manipulate the compensation that determines their lifetime pension benefit. Recent appeals court decisions have upheld employees' right to spike, but the California Supreme Court has now taken up the issue.

While these attempts are better than nothing, they fall far short of what is needed to stop the looming fiscal crisis that faces the state. ■

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Newsom Laces Up His Shoes

California's new governor is chasing a national profile. By taking the lead on immigration, he could earn attention and praise—or fail miserably.

By Bill Whalen

If you're Gavin Newsom and fresh off a landslide victory in the Golden State, you make staff choices, get cozy with the new crop of lawmakers, and “get under the hood” of the budget process. Unlike in Washington, where a new president walks into a federal fiscal cycle that's begun a month before the election, Governor Newsom got to introduce his own state spending plan, with a fiscal deadline of summer.

The governor has kept making campaign promises—for example, visiting more-conservative Fresno to convince the locals that he won't turn his back on that less-welcoming stretch of California's electorate. (Despite earning nearly 62 percent of the November vote, Newsom lost six of the eight counties that make up the Central Valley.)

There are hints about how the incoming governor will handle matters differently from his predecessor. Newsom dropped one such hint during his Fresno visit, suggesting he might get more involved than former governor Jerry Brown in the nation's immigration conversation. (Newsom's exact

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[Taylor Jones—for the *Hoover Digest*]

words: “I think this state has been missing in action a bit. . . . We need to assert ourselves.”)

CHOICES THREE

Here, Newsom has at least three options, if he wants to depart from the norm of the previous eight years. First, Newsom can draw more attention to the choices being made by California’s government that constitute thumbs in the eye to the Trump administration. Just as Brown had to decide whether to be the first governor to sign a “sanctuary state” law (he did so), one of Newsom’s early signature moves could be making California the first state to expand Medicaid to illegal immigrants. But unlike Brown, whose PR machine was the equivalent of a child’s scooter, Newsom thrives on earned media. He could easily ramp up his print and electronic appearances—at home and on the East Coast—to highlight the California difference.

Newsom’s second option, also along the lines of demonstrating differences between Democrats and Republicans, would be to establish himself as the

most prominent of the nation’s twenty-three Democratic governors (seven newly elected late last year). This would be interesting to watch. It would potentially pit Newsom against the incoming chair of the Democratic Governors Association, Rhode Island’s Gina Raimondo. She’s that rarest of political creatures: a pro-growth Democratic moderate.

And that takes us to Newsom’s third option: as leader of the state with the nation’s largest population of undocumented immigrants, he could attempt to build a bipartisan coalition of governors to pressure a reluctant Congress and White House into an immigration fix. The closest parallel to this occurred twenty-five years ago, when seven states turned to Washington for relief from the costs of illegal immigration such as education, health care, and incarceration.

Early in 1994, the Clinton White House hosted a governors-only meeting with the heads of Arizona, California, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, and Texas (New York sent a representative). At the time, Arizona, California, Illinois, and New Jersey were governed by Republicans; Democrats governed Florida, New

For Newsom, immigration reform could be a springboard to establishing himself as a policy-centric, non-Washington problem solver. It worked for Bill Clinton.

York, and Texas. That was too much bipartisan firepower for a first-term president to ignore—well, that and the realities of the political map. Bill Clinton carried all of those states, except for Texas, in 1996; they accounted for 157 of his 379 electoral votes.

For the White House, the meeting was a no-brainer. The Clinton administration could sympathize with the governors, knowing that the aid request would die on Capitol Hill. The previous year, the White House had asked for \$400 million in immigration relief; the House passed the measure; it was eliminated in a Senate compromise.

This year, Newsom could explore the feasibility of a bipartisan coalition

A bipartisan coalition of governors might cooperate to pursue an immigration “bill of rights.”

of the governors of the nation’s border and most populous states working on, for lack of better words, an immigration “bill of rights.” Among

the articles: pathway to citizenship, workforce participation, access to public services, and border security. Such an endeavor should include the governors of California, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, and Texas—collectively about three-fifths of the nation’s unauthorized population. Add Arizona and New Mexico, for border consideration. And also include Louisiana, Maryland, and Massachusetts—three states whose undocumented populations rose over the past decade.

Look closer: those eleven states have six Democratic and five Republican governors, fifteen Democratic and seven GOP US senators, and nearly half of the seats (208) in the US House of Representatives. In addition, four states—Arizona, Louisiana, Maryland, and Massachusetts—qualify as “purple” (having a blend of Democratic and Republican governors and senators).

TAKE THE LONG VIEW

Would Newsom undertake such an effort? A cynic might call it a fool’s errand, given the failed experience of the US Senate’s “Gang of Eight” and its bipartisan approach to immigration reform. On the other hand, it might serve a very practical purpose for a governor presumed to have national aspirations.

For Newsom, immigration reform could serve as a springboard to establishing himself as a policy-centric, non-Washington problem solver. That approach worked well for then-governor Bill Clinton, who spent a good portion of 1991 touring the nation as the chair of the Democratic Leadership

Council, giving speeches about how to rejuvenate the Democratic Party after three crushing presidential losses. And it paid off handsomely for Clinton in the 1992 election.

The choice for Newsom, assuming he also covets presidential glory, is to lead on immigration, follow another governor's lead, or get out of the way of a problem that seemingly punishes those who offer solutions.

One wonders what they think in Fresno. ■

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Loners and Lost Tribes

In war or in peace, who has your back? Author Sebastian Junger explores the tension between freedom and the ancient longing for community.

By Russell Roberts

Russell Roberts: My guest is journalist and author Sebastian Junger. His latest book, from 2016, is *Tribes: On Homecoming and Belonging*. It's a very short book, but it really is powerful and extraordinary, and I recommend it to everybody.

At the end of the introduction to your book, you write something that I found very thought-provoking: "Humans don't mind hardship, in fact they thrive on it; what they mind is not feeling necessary. Modern society has perfected the art of making people not feel necessary." And certainly, in primitive, less-developed societies, everybody was pretty necessary.

Sebastian Junger: Yeah. And you can see that in modern Western societies that experience a crisis, a catastrophe. All of a sudden, the hurricane, the tornado, the 9/11 attack, whatever it may be: a few things almost always seem to happen. People very quickly come together and share their resources. They offer cooperation and help to the group. They depend on the group for their own survival. And very instinctively, they start putting other people first. They

*Sebastian Junger is the author of **Tribes: On Homecoming and Belonging** (Twelve, 2016). Russell Roberts is the John and Jean De Nault Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution.*

stop thinking about themselves. And there's a very good evolutionary reason for that. Humans are social primates. Humans do not survive alone in nature; they die almost immediately. The reason we survive and thrive is because we work in groups, where the individual contributes to the common good and the group ensures the safety of the individual. And that basic reciprocal arrangement has allowed humans to thrive for hundreds of thousands of years.

So, in a crisis, whatever the crisis may be—and I would argue that the hunter/gatherer economy is an ongoing low-level crisis of survival—people put others first because their survival depends on the goodwill of others. I've seen this in combat with soldiers. There is no survival without the group. So, all of a sudden, everyone is thinking in group terms. And you can see that in crisis after crisis in this country. White, black, rich, poor—all those distinctions fell away in Manhattan right after 9/11. As a result, the suicide rate went down and the violent crime rate went down. People really stuck together, and they stopped making those ghastly distinctions of affluence and race that are such a curse on our society today.

Roberts: Also, taking physical risks to enhance the group's security or the safety of individual members—economists might call this irrational, if they are bad at defining what *rational* really is, and I think that's a big problem for our profession. You know, acting in a self-interested way is often equated with rationality. And there are many times in life that doing what's self-interested is wrong. It might be better for you in the short run—it might even be better for you in the long run—but it's immoral in certain settings. I think the ability to recognize that, especially in a crisis, and do what's "right" is deeply fulfilling.

Junger: I think there are two things going on here in evolutionary terms. It's clearly adaptive to think in group terms because your survival depends on the group. And the worse the circumstances, the more

“The individual contributes to the common good and the group ensures the safety of the individual. And that basic reciprocal arrangement has allowed humans to thrive for hundreds of thousands of years.”

your survival depends on the group. And, as a result, the more pro-social the behaviors are, the worse things are, the better people act. But, there's another adaptive response, which is self-interest. So, if things are OK—if the enemy is not attacking; if there's no drought; if there's plenty of food; if everything is fine—your need for the group subsides a little bit, and it's adaptive to



CONNECTION: Bestselling author Sebastian Junger says, “What you have in our species is this constant toggling back and forth between group interest—selflessness—and individual interest and autonomy.” [Lauren Gerson—National Archives]

attend to your own interests and needs. And all of a sudden, you’ve invented the bow and arrow, the iPhone, or whatever. Having the bandwidth and the safety and the space for people to sort of drill deep down into an idea—a religious idea, a philosophical idea, a technological idea—clearly also benefits the human race.

So, what you have in our species is this constant toggling back and forth between group interest—selflessness—and individual interest and autonomy. When things are bad, you’re way better off investing in the group and forgetting about yourself. When things are good, in some ways you’re better off spending that time investing in yourself; and then it toggles back again when things get bad. In a traditional, small-scale tribal society, in the natural world, that toggling back and forth happened continually. There was a dynamic tension between the two that had people winding up more or less in the middle.

The problem with modern society is that we have, for most of the time, for most people, solved the direct physical threats to our survival. So, what you have is people—and again, it’s adaptive: we’re wired for this—attending to

their own needs and interests, but almost never getting dragged back into the sort of idea of group concern that is part of our human heritage. The irony is that when people are part of a group and doing something essential to a group, it gives an incredible sense of well-being. We have this great autonomy from the group and from the needs of survival, and that has a lot to say for it. But what we lose is this basic human experience: “Wow, I’m needed. And I would do anything for these people. These are my people.” That feels very, very good. When you deprive people of the chance and the necessity of acting heroically and generously for other people, you deprive them of a fundamental part of what it means to be human and to have a meaningful life—a fundamental way of feeling content and happy in your life.

Roberts: I would phrase it as we have a longing to belong. That’s adaptive in a crisis, but it’s still there even when there’s not a crisis. And we ignore that, I think, at our peril. So, it’s not just that in crisis people get along better. They have more meaningful lives. Which is ironic. I heard this great proverb recently. I’m not going to do it well in English; it’s Chinese, evidently: “No food, one problem. Lots of food, many problems.”

Junger: That’s great.

Roberts: That’s our Western dilemma, I think, to some extent. I think we have lots of problems. That’s the good news. But we don’t have one problem. When you have one problem and it’s food, then life is very hard. But crisis, challenge, and hardship bring a vividness to life that we’ve lost. And, of course, we seek it in many ways outside of our normal schedule of life, because we miss it.

Junger: Absolutely. And you can see that sort of grouping behavior in sports fans, neighborhood committees and watch groups, or whatever. People instinctively do it all the time; they long for it. If you go to a coffee shop, the seats are not pointed towards the wall—that’s where you can have your privacy—they’re all pointed towards the middle. Because people go out partly to encounter other people and have even a fleeting sense of, “Oh, OK, we’re here right now. I don’t know who these people are, but we’re all having coffee in the same place and maybe I’ll meet someone nice.” That’s just wired into us.

And I’ve got to say, the most connected and part of a group that I’ve ever felt was in the most dangerous circumstances I’ve ever been in, which was in combat, in war. I wasn’t a soldier; I was a journalist. I was with an American platoon of combat infantry in a remote outpost in eastern Afghanistan called Restrepo, and the closeness, both emotional and physical, in that little

outpost was amazing. It was twenty or so men and we were in combat constantly—you were never farther than a few feet from another human being. Ever. So, it was this wonderful feeling of closeness and belonging and being needed, and needing, and all that good human stuff. But one thing I longed for in those circumstances was just to be alone for a while. Like, “Just give me half an hour, guys.” But, of course, to be alone in that environment means you were in mortal danger. You just can’t go for a nice walk up the mountainside.

“We have a surplus of everything. So our wiring will have us continue to acquire and consume and acquire and consume.”

It’s a Wonderful Life captures that beautifully. But most of us don’t want to live there, or we struggle to want to live there. And small-town life can be oppressive. People know all your business. You don’t have privacy. It can be very hard for lots of people.

Junger: Absolutely. Let’s not romanticize group life. My point is that, as a species, as social primates, our evolutionary heritage is that we evolved to live in small groups of thirty or forty individuals—exactly the size of a chimpanzee troop, by the way. And we are clearly adapted to feel at our safest and arguably most meaningful and content in the close proximity of others. That doesn’t mean there aren’t stresses that come with that—of course there are. I would argue that there are even greater stresses that come with being isolated. We know that as affluence rises in a society, the suicide rate tends to go up; the depression rate tends to go up; post-traumatic stress disorder rates tend to go up; child abuse rates tend to go up; addiction rates tend to go up. All these things that are bedeviling America right now are partly a function of affluence. And affluence brings great things, too. So, the point is, you cannot actually have it all. You have to be cognizant of what you’re giving up and getting for whatever level or kind of life in society that you’re in.

Roberts: Yeah. We want to be careful not to romanticize some of the nature of primitive-crisis situations. Also, small-town life has that feeling of connection. The movie

THE PROBLEM OF PLENTY

Roberts: So, what does economics have to say about this? I think the answer right now in this discipline is: precisely nothing. We have these strange models where people get *utility*—which is a vague term to mean satisfaction,

pleasure, delight, or meaning—out of stuff. And I think if you're not careful, you might study that and think it's right. It's true that people strive for things. They do generally take jobs that pay more than jobs that pay less. But this human connection idea, and the need to have social connection, I think is the weak spot of economics. Adam Smith was really interested in it. And around 1759 it was a big part of our field, but it seems to have gone away. So, I hope some people think about that. In terms of what people care about, I think it belongs in our utility function, but I don't think necessarily that's the right way to deal with it.

Junger: In an environment of scarcity, which of course is the environment that the human race spent most of its history in, that sort of compulsively acquiring, hoarding behavior of resources makes perfect sense. Likewise, eating as much sweet stuff or as much fat as you can makes perfect sense in an environment where there's not often a lot of food or resources. While it's there, consume as much as you can, because you don't know when you're going to eat again. It's adaptive. The problem with modern society, I think, in that sense, is that we have these adaptive behaviors that are attuned to a low-resource, high-activity, high-intensity environment. Our metabolisms, as it were, are attuned to that. And now we have a surplus of everything. So our wiring will have us continue to acquire and consume and acquire and consume. What we're not adapted to is a situation where there are infinite resources and we don't know how to stop. That sort of utilitarian principle of "get as much stuff as you can" has great evolutionary roots; it got us here. But we're not a slave to our wiring. We have to understand that's a trait

that was adaptive and useful, and we have to know when it must be overridden, or it's actually going to start damaging us. That's true for material goods, for sort of commercial culture, but it's also true for food. At the end of the day, if that's where your energy's going, it's probably not going towards other people. And we know—psychologists will tell you—it's our connection to others that makes people live longer and have more meaningful, happier lives.

"No one wants to sleep in a barracks for the rest of their lives with a bunch of other people, right?"

WHAT'S NEXT FOR US?

Roberts: Religion historically has played some role in tamping down and tempering both the self-interested urge and the pursuit of material things.

And yet, we live in a time when religion is, I think, very much on the wane and getting less persuasive to most people. And I think about David Foster Wallace's fabulous line: "Everybody worships." He says there's no atheism, and I think that's correct. We all worship something. It may not be God. It may be beauty, art, your looks, or money. It may be various forms of addic-

"When you deprive people of the chance and the necessity of acting heroically and generously for other people, you deprive them of a fundamental part of what it means to be human."

tion that we find ourselves in. We're sitting here complaining, to some extent, about the flaws of modern Western society. No one's in charge of Western society. It has

emerged through the Enlightenment, through our creativity, through free market capitalism, most of which I think has been phenomenal in eliminating poverty. And at the same time, we've had trouble maintaining our connection to something larger than ourselves traditionally, which was religion. And we've looked for other things. Sports is one of them. You mentioned it earlier. People are into sports in a way that even fifty years ago would have struck most people as unhealthy or odd. So, what's next for us? Is there anything we can do about it? Anything positive we can say?

Junger: To return modern society wholesale to a more communal, small-scale, connected society, you'd have to turn off the Internet and ban the car, basically. And, essentially, it would be a natural disaster that wiped out the grid, and the grid stayed wiped out. And eventually we'd blunder our way back to a more human and connected—and much poorer—way of living.

Roberts: And shorter life spans. Lots of negatives—that's the challenge here. We'd have a lot of meaning in our life, but a lot of suffering.

Junger: Exactly. Like I said, no one gets to have it all. But I think what we can do as a modern, wealthy society is understand the dangers of modernity and wealth, and work very hard to counteract them. So, for example, Japan evidently can be pretty hard on the elderly, and some older women are shoplifting so they can be put in prison and have the company of other older women. That's an awful solution to a problem. But, also in Japan, they've started putting schools and child care centers next to old folks' homes. So, the people in the old folks' homes go visit the schools, and vice versa. Young children don't make distinctions of race, age, or anything; it's just how you

treat them. That's wonderful. So, that sort of cross-pollination of youthful and older energy was great for both groups.

I think society is starting to come up with small-scale solutions that actually work for people. There are now, I think, in San Francisco and New York buildings you can buy into, where you can get a bedroom in a building that's basically a huge collective space with shared kitchens and living areas and your own bedroom. You're basically buying into a concrete village—a village of thirty or forty people, which is a typical human group in our evolutionary past. It's a village with common areas but your own privacy. People are actually starting to develop buildings and projects that attend to that basic human need of balancing privacy and communality. You do have to balance them. No one wants to sleep in a barracks for the rest of their lives with a bunch of other people, right? But, having those common spaces where you can interact with other people—not just people that you know really well but people that you just kind of recognize. Like, “Hey, how're you doing? What's your name again? Oh, yeah. Nice to see you.”

That kind of connection with someone that you know is part of your group but you don't know them really well—people love that. That's why people go to coffee shops. I mean, everyone can make coffee at home. But they don't. They pay \$5 for a coffee at Starbucks. It's partly so they can be in a brief, small community.

Roberts: One of my sources of optimism is the way that culture and free markets give us what we want. And if we want to live with other people and interact with other people, we'll find ways of doing that, whether it's that developer who develops a building that's a little bit different or where we choose to live. Do you see any examples of that in terms of cultural norms emerging that recognize the importance of our tribal past and that help us connect to other people? Are things changing that might be a little source of optimism?

“Everyone can make coffee at home. But they don't. They pay \$5 for a coffee at Starbucks. It's partly so they can be in a brief, small community.”

Junger: I see it all over the place. I think the whole mirage of social media is that if we follow it, it will lead to a sort of blissful community we can all be part of. I think it's a mirage and a lie. But we clearly are—at least we think we are—pursuing something healthy. You know, you see in advertising groups of

people having a good time, being nice to each other, drinking a beer around a barbecue, and so on. It's just this constant re-enacting of ancient human behaviors of communal life. And clearly, the point of the ad is: whatever it is people are eating or drinking while they are having a good communal time, people will go buy it, because they want to be part of that experience. So, we see it all the time. And I think we see it because it's so lacking in a substantive form in our society. So, you just have to go the next step and say, "Oh, this is actually something, and I don't need Coca-Cola to give me this." You don't need Facebook to give you this. You can get this, but you have to know it's something you want. And you have to deliberately set out to try to create it, to try to make it happen.

We're not going to completely restructure modern society back to some sort of small-scale tribal norm. It's not happening. We'd have to give up too much good stuff. But within our society, if we are at least aware of what's paining us—of what we're missing, what we're lacking, what we're longing for—at least understand it and bring it to our conscious mind, we can seize on these opportunities where the chance presents itself to act like that, to experience that, to hold on to it, and to develop it. And I think if we do that, like the genius in Japan who is putting a nursery school next to an old folks' home, I think these things will happen. And as they become norms in our society, our society will change incrementally. I really think that not only *can* it happen, I think it must happen. Because clearly our society is in an enormous amount of pain. Look at the addiction rates and murder rates and suicide rates, and mental health generally. We are in agony as a society. We need to save ourselves. And we're only going to do that by connecting to each other. ■

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Churchill: Walking with Destiny

Biographer and historian Andrew Roberts, granted exclusive access to archives about Winston Churchill (including the diaries of King George VI), paints a portrait both familiar and fresh.

By Peter Robinson

Peter Robinson, Uncommon Knowledge: Historian Andrew Roberts is the author of more than a dozen major works of history, including *Masters and Commanders: How Four Titans Won the War in the West, 1941–1945*; *Napoleon: A Life*; and *The Holy Fox: The Life of Lord Halifax*. His new book is *Churchill: Walking with Destiny*. Welcome, Andrew.

Andrew Roberts: Thank you. It's great to be back on the show, Peter.

Robinson: A mandatory first question. Hundreds of Winston Churchill biographies are already in existence. You have pulled it off—your book is getting rave reviews. But before you began work, what on earth were you thinking? What did you see that led you to believe there was an opportunity for something fresh?

Andrew Roberts is the Roger and Martha Mertz Visiting Fellow at the Hoover Institution and a professor at King's College London. Peter Robinson is the editor of the Hoover Digest, the host of Uncommon Knowledge, and a research fellow at the Hoover Institution.

Roberts: You're quite right. There are, in fact, 1,009 biographies. I've counted them. This is the 1,010th. Actually, what I realized four years ago when I started to write this book was that in the previous six years or so—so for the last decade from now—there has been an avalanche of new sources about Churchill, which one wasn't really expecting. The queen allowed me to be the first Churchill biographer to use her father's diaries.

Robinson: He kept good diaries?

Roberts: Very good diaries. The king had lunch every Tuesday of the Second World War with Churchill, who trusted him with everything: the nuclear secrets, the Ultra decrypts, and so on. He wrote down everything Churchill said, so we've got a fantastic cornucopia of new stuff: Churchill's hopes, fears, aperçus, and jokes, every Tuesday of the Second World War.

I was also very fortunate that since the last major biography of Churchill, no fewer than forty-one sets of papers have been deposited at the Churchill Archives in Churchill College, Cambridge. I used all of them.

The diaries of Ivan Maisky, the Soviet ambassador from 1932 to 1943, are available now. Also, the verbatim accounts of the War Cabinet, which I discovered seven years ago. I knew that I would be able to use those quite heavily.

Robinson: No one else had made extensive use of those?

Roberts: Nobody had made *any* use of those. Quite extraordinarily. There was something on pretty much every page of this book that's never appeared in a Churchill biography before.

Robinson: The sheer size of this book—a thousand pages—implies the mastery of tens of thousands of pages of documents. How many research assistants?

Roberts: I've never used one.

Robinson: That is just unbelievable. You're at the studio of Rubens with only Rubens.

Roberts: Having said that, I have got five million words of notes that I've taken. This is the fifth book that I've written with Churchill in the title or the subtitle. I've written literally hundreds of reviews and articles about him over the past thirty years. So, if I don't know it by now, I really shouldn't be undertaking this.

Robinson: But still. You read all these new materials. I don't know quite how you got from one place to another. The Churchill Archives are in Cambridge?



HELMSMAN: Winston Churchill walks the deck of HMS Prince of Wales during the August 1941 Atlantic Conference with President Roosevelt. Churchill, says historian Andrew Roberts, “was irrational and romantic, and he was not a sort of dry-as-dust Victorian aristocrat with a stiff upper lip. He actually was a passionate, romantic figure driven by his emotions.” [Library of Congress]

Roberts: Yes.

Robinson: I’m assuming that the king’s diaries are in Windsor.

Roberts: Yes. They’re in the Round Tower at Windsor Castle.

Robinson: And one isn’t permitted to make photocopies, I suppose.

Roberts: No. Actually, if you want to go to the lavatory, you have to have somebody escort you there and back again. They don’t let you wander around the Royal Archives.

Robinson: What are your working methods?

Roberts: I’m a great believer in getting all the evidence before you write a word of the book, because what happens if you discover something that

undermines your thesis? So, I bring it all together in note form, work out in each of the chapters where I want my themes to fit into the overarching narrative. I stick with chronology, of course, because that's how the life was lived and also the way in which we look at it. And it's also, I think, impossible to understand a life any other way. And then I fit in the themes, which will be in different files than the chronological files. It's a pretty straightforward process. It just requires an awful lot of time getting up very early in the morning.

Robinson: So, you're a very hard worker.

Roberts: I am when I'm writing a book. I wrote that book in one hundred days, averaging 5,500 words a day.

Robinson: And do you write or rewrite or both?

Roberts: Yes. Once it's done, then there's another three weeks in which I slimmed it down massively.

Robinson: You only took three weeks to rewrite and edit?

Roberts: Yes. Luckily, I can't get writer's block because: (a) I'm a historian; and (b) I have a mortgage.

ENTITLEMENT AND EMPIRE

Robinson: You write: "Churchill was the last aristocrat to rule Britain. He possessed the unconquerable self-confidence of his caste background." Make an American audience understand that. What did it mean to have been born in Blenheim Palace as the grandson of a duke?

Roberts: Blenheim is the greatest of all the British palaces. Even the royals envy the Dukes of Marlborough for Blenheim. And Churchill was the grandson of not any old duke but the Duke of Marlborough, one of the greatest and grandest people in the country. Therefore, he had what today we would call a sense of entitlement that was massive, and he didn't care what people thought of him. This turned out to be an extraordinarily useful asset, because the attacks that were made on him throughout his life, really, you needed to have a rhinoceros hide. The reason he did have that was partly because of his age, class, and background. He really didn't mind what other people thought of him because he was so grand.



TALENT AND DRIVE: Historian and author Andrew Roberts points out Winston Churchill's recognized mastery of public speaking: "Understanding audiences—noticing the way that certain words will work with certain audiences—was absolutely second nature to him. . . . He practiced his ad-libbing."

[*Uncommon Knowledge*—Hoover Institution]

Robinson: To have been born an aristocrat in the last third of the nineteenth century (1874) is to have been born into a world of utter self-confidence.

Roberts: That's right. But it was also, of course, a world where your privilege imbued you with a responsibility to give back.

Robinson: Another vital piece of background that takes a bit of explaining for an American audience is the British empire. Here's a 1941 diary entry from Ivan Maisky, the Soviet ambassador in London. Churchill saw him almost as much as he saw the king. It was a close friendship.

Roberts: It absolutely had to be, especially after the invasion of Russia by Germany.

Robinson: OK, so here's Maisky: "Churchill has told me more than once over the years, and I have no grounds to disbelieve him, that the British empire is his alpha and omega." (Shrewd old communist there—is it true or not?) Now, today, even in Britain, speaking well of the empire is just a nonstarter. How are Americans to understand this man whose alpha and omega was the defense of the empire?

Roberts: Because the empire he wanted to defend was not some evil, sinister, imperialist construct that 1960s Marxist professors talk about. It was, in fact, a paternalistic concept—something that for 90 percent of the history of the empire, for 90 percent of the native peoples of the empire, was a good thing.

Churchill saw that himself in the North-West Frontier when he was pro-

tecting the empire from the Pathans and the Afridi and the Talib tribes. He saw an empire which had given so much to the people of India that it was

“The king had lunch every Tuesday of the Second World War with Churchill, who trusted him with everything.”

an entirely different concept from the kind of thing that we're taught in our schools today about the empire. It was something that had brought internal peace for the longest period of time. It had doubled the life expectancy. It had multiplied by eight times the amount of land under cultivation. It had given a Western-style politics, which it still has to this day, and the English language that is invaluable for India as the first-world language. It abolished evil and sinister things like the *sati*, the throwing of widows onto funeral pyres, which probably now would count as unacceptable interference in local culture. We created railways, universities, and entirely new industries. To Churchill, that seemed to be a good thing and something worth defending all his life, which is what he did.

MAN OF DESTINY

Robinson: Particularly to Americans, Churchill seems to simply emerge in the Second World War, fully formed. But where did all this come from?

Roberts: He was irrational and romantic, and he was not a sort of dry-as-dust Victorian aristocrat with a stiff upper lip. He actually was a passionate, romantic figure driven by his emotions. During the war, he often burst into tears, sometimes in the House of Commons. It must have been

tremendously off-putting for the prime minister to burst into tears, yet people knew that was an aspect of Churchill. He was not about to make peace with Hitler.

Robinson: One of the things that's so striking about Churchill is he's constantly working the memorandum. He has a detailed knowledge of the military situation every single moment. And one of the things that enables him to bring the country with him is that he's reporting on the military situation in the House. And yet, for all that, he's not calculating in the end.

Roberts: No. He's driven, as I say, by his emotions. But, of course, when it comes to the Defense Committee of the War Cabinet, when he talks to them, to the generals in particular and the

“He had what today we would call a sense of entitlement that was massive, and he didn't care what people thought of him. This turned out to be an extraordinarily useful asset.”

staff, he does go into the granular detail of where every battalion is. But when it comes to politics, when people want to try and make peace with Hitler, however bad the situation got, he managed to maintain a wonderful sense of humor. He's constantly making jokes throughout May and June 1940. I think that comes from his personal sense of destiny, which I refer to in the book's subtitle, and it's an incredibly powerful aspect of Churchill.

Robinson: Let me quote you again: “Churchill was indispensable during the Second World War because he exuded a confidence in victory that no other senior figure did, and was able to provide something that Neville Chamberlain could not: hope.”

And this brings us to the speeches. To this day, you listen to these speeches—they're available on YouTube—three-quarters of a century after he delivered them, and it's still very difficult to avoid a certain emotional pull.

Roberts: Certainly. My back tingles and tears just come unbidden to my eyes pretty much into the third sentence in some of the great speeches.

Robinson: The ear, the cadences, the sense of showmanship—but also this amazing ability to combine the showmanship and the memorable phrase with deep substance.

Roberts: Well, you're right. He wrote in the last paragraph of the first volume of his war memoirs, talking about the day he became prime minister: “I felt

as if I were walking with destiny and that all my past life had been but a preparation for this hour and for this trial.”

When it came to his speeches, it was indeed a preparation. His love of Shakespeare was highly influential in him. And the way in which he had mastered the English language, as he called it, that noble thing: the English

“The empire he wanted to defend was not some evil, sinister, imperialist construct that 1960s Marxist professors talk about.”

sentence. The importance he put on clarity: short words, short sentences, Anglo-Saxon words that could be understood going back a thousand years. These were things that he used in his morale-boost-

ing speeches. But they, fascinatingly, all go back to an article that he wrote back in 1897 when he was a twenty-three-year-old soldier who had never given a speech before in his life. And yet he wrote out the five things you need to do to bring over audiences. And then he followed them, and his actual collection of speeches is eight thousand pages long. So, he had given hundreds of speeches before the Second World War broke out and, therefore, it really was a preparation for his hour and his trial.

Robinson: Radio came along when he was already in middle age; television at the very end of his life. But speech after speech he’s giving to a crowd. There’s a human contact. He can see their faces. He can hear them laugh. Likewise, in the Commons, and the Commons is a very intimate atmosphere. You have people facing you on the opposite benches. This is years and years of actual training—finding out what works.

Roberts: Understanding audiences—noticing the way that certain words will work with certain audiences—was absolutely second nature to him.

Robinson: So, it was easy. He was born with a gigantic talent and worked on it all his life.

Roberts: Actually, he didn’t think he was born with it. He had a slight sibilant “s,” of course, and he had to work hard to get rid of that. He also didn’t believe that he could, as he said, fly on the unopinioned wing. He always needed notes, on six-by-four-inch cards. He wrote out in what he called “Psalm form” what he was going to say. Even in the easiest speeches just to his local constituency association, for example, he would still have it all written out.

Robinson: It stayed with him. Very little ad-libbing?

Roberts: He practiced his ad-libbing.

BREXIT: WOULD HE STAY OR WOULD HE GO?

Robinson: You also write on contemporary British politics. You're a Brexiteer: you want out of the European Union. You supported the vote, which passed narrowly, and now Britain is hung up and in chaos and so forth. I'd like to quote Nicholas Soames, a prominent member of Parliament and one of Churchill's grandsons: "If you were to put . . . Winston Churchill here today, does anyone really believe . . . with all his experience, that looking out over a very unstable, fragile, uncertain world, he would think this was a good idea for Britain to cut itself loose from the Continent?" Churchill himself implores you to reconsider?

Roberts: No, Churchill doesn't at all. This is an area where Nicholas and I disagree. Of course, Churchill was one of the founders of the European movement and said, "Let Europe arise." He wanted to teach them never again to fight Gaul, as he put it with regard to France and Germany.

But when it actually comes to it—and he was prime minister from October 1951 to April 1955, so just before the actual Treaty of Rome in 1957 that created the European Community—he did nothing at all to bring Britain toward that. He didn't join the European army. He put out minutes, some

of which are quoted in my book, saying that he didn't want to get Britain involved. He very much wanted it to be a success, and he just didn't want to threaten what he saw

"Clarity: short words, short sentences, Anglo-Saxon words that could be understood going back a thousand years."

as our connections with the United States—the "special relationship"—and the Commonwealth, and our ability to do trade deals with every other country in the world. Which was, of course, ultimately to end when we did join the Common Market.

Robinson: And what about this notion that the "remainers" have? I don't want to put words in their mouths, but I think it would be the Cameron and Osborne argument: this is bad economics. To which some of the Brexiteers, and here I don't want to put words in your mouth, say: "No, it's not just a matter of economics. By the way, we disagree with you on economics. We

can trade with the rest of the world more easily. It's about much more than that. It's about sovereignty. It's about our national sense of identity. It's about whether we will rule ourselves or be ruled from Brussels." And "remainers" retort: "Ah, that's Edwardian romantic nonsense."

Roberts: I don't have any problems explaining this to America. How would you feel if a foreign body had the right to go over the heads of the Supreme Court and over the heads of your Congress and decide your laws for you? It's something that I don't think any American would put up with for ten seconds. So, I never have any problem explaining why I'm a Brexiteer.

Robinson: Now explain to me why highly intelligent people such as David Cameron, Nicholas Soames, and George Osborne would be "remainers"?

Roberts: Because they, obviously, don't get too hot under the collar about the European Court of Justice and the way in which Brussels, in my view, impinges on British sovereignty.

"NEVER GIVE IN"

Robinson: Another quote from your book: "At the end of his life he considered his career a failure for not having defended the British empire successfully." I think you argue that this was an error in his judgment.

Roberts: Well, we go back to this sense of it being the alpha and omega of his career. He had, as a young man, defended it physically in war after war. He had proselytized for it. He believed in it. He had nearly thrown away his career in the 1930s by opposing self-government for India. He had said

"However much we might think of him as one of the great, successful politicians of all time, he thought of himself as having failed."

in 1942 that he had not become the king's first minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British empire. And when he then became prime minister again in

peacetime in the 1950s, he didn't give back any of the colonies at all. So, he had done his best for the empire, but by the time he was entering his last years in the 1960s, the empire had been given away. Not just India in 1948, but also the African colonies and other Asian colonies. So, he considered, despite having been instrumental in helping win the Second World War, that the thing that mattered most to him, which was the empire, having been lost,

meant that his career had been a failure. So, as he slipped into senility—however much we might think of him as one of the great, successful politicians of all time—he thought of himself as having failed.

Robinson: We've discussed what a thorough aristocrat he was and how deeply committed he was to the British empire. The aristocratic order is no more. There are titled people tottering around desperate to keep their big houses in operation. Blenheim is now a working museum—you can tour it for fifteen quid. The House of Lords is filled with opportunists who have been given life peerages. It's over. The British empire is gone, and it's unfashionable to say a good word on behalf of it, even in Britain.

Your book is a wonderful story, and every single review says so. But what relevance does Churchill have for us today?

“He made lots of mistakes, but he learned from each of them in a different way. He learned from every single one of them.”

Roberts: He has more relevance today probably than ever before. He is a figure who transcends all of the things you just mentioned like the British empire and the aristocracy, because his story is one of extraordinary physical courage combined with moral courage. He didn't change his stance when he was being attacked and shouted down in the House of Commons, nearly deselected from his seat by the Conservative Party, ridiculed and lampooned in the press, and so on. He carried on telling some truths about Hitler and the Nazis in the 1930s, and many other examples.

He had extraordinary foresight, such as within thirteen months of Yalta being able to warn the world about the true nature of Stalin and Soviet communism. To have seen it, not to have cared what people said, and to have told the truth. That is something. That's a value in politics that isn't going to have a sell-by date. He also had, as well as this foresight, the extraordinary eloquence we were discussing earlier. That again, I don't think is something that we have terribly much of today in our politics. And sometimes I really do think that we need it. More politicians should read the five things in his scaffolding of rhetoric—examples of how to win over an audience.

And I think, finally, this whole idea of a figure who didn't just have the foresight but also was able to learn from his mistakes. He made lots of mistakes, but he learned from each of them in a different way. He learned from every

single one of them. And that, too, is a true quality in a politician that I don't think is going to ever be out of fashion, any time in our lifetimes.

Robinson: Clare Boothe Luce used to say that in the end, history is only going to have time for one sentence for every great man. Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves. What is the one sentence that your great-great-grandchildren will need to cling to about Winston Churchill?

Roberts: That's such a difficult question because there are so many sentences. If I was to come up with one, I would say the thing that he told the Harrow schoolboys: "Never give in. Never give in. Never, never, never . . ." And that, thank God, is what he said in 1941. And it's the reason I'm not speaking German today. And it's the reason that so much of the world is still democratic. ■





Siberian Quagmire

As the First World War drew to a close, the victorious Allies suddenly found themselves clashing with Bolsheviks in Russia. How that intervention went astray is a tangled, and cautionary, tale.

By Kyle Duchynski

In recent decades, the American public has become increasingly acquainted with, and opposed to, the idea of foreign intervention. From Vietnam to Libya to Iraq, US forces have become stuck in military quagmires. However, this pattern of American foreign intervention is not new. In fact, one of the most prominent examples of the perils of intervention, one that has largely been forgotten, took place a hundred years ago when the Allies intervened in Siberia after Russia's withdrawal from World War One.

The intervention had two publicly stated goals: safeguarding Allied war material from the Bolshevik revolutionaries and ensuring the safe transit of the forty thousand members of the Czechoslovak Legion out of Russia. Initially formed in 1914 to fight alongside the Entente powers (originally France, Britain, and Russia), the Czechoslovak Legion hoped to garner support from the wartime Allies for the independence of Czechoslovakia from

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the Austro-Hungarian empire. The Czechoslovaks fought valiantly along the Eastern Front with the Russian Imperial Army for the first three years of the war, but then the Russian armistice with Germany in December 1917 left them stranded in Bolshevik-controlled Ukraine. Eventually, the Czechoslovak National Council negotiated with the Bolsheviks for safe passage of the legion from Ukraine to Vladivostok in the Far East, one of the few remaining open

Russian ports, with the eventual goal of sending the legion to France to continue to fight against the Central Powers. How-

The “rescue” of the Czechoslovak forces proved unnecessary.

ever, the actual evacuation was fraught with delays and skirmishes with the Bolsheviks. Thus, the Allies felt compelled to send soldiers to help escort the Czechoslovaks out of Russia.

While the Allied intervention supposedly accomplished both of its stated objectives, to call it a success would be misleading and inaccurate. Indeed, examining the intervention from a broader perspective, its failures become clear. Not only did the intervention anger the burgeoning Soviet government and sow the seeds of distrust between the USSR and the West, but it also failed to provide any effective help to Admiral Aleksandr Kolchak (1874–1920), leader of the anti-Bolshevik White movement, in his resistance against the Reds. The failings of the Allied intervention in Siberia run deeper than a purely ideological conflict, and documents from the time illustrate a host of other problems, including a war-weary public, competing ulterior motives among Allies, and Allied soldiers more preoccupied with entertainment than fighting the Bolsheviks.

While the story of the Allied intervention is not a new one to be told, the goal of this article is to tell the story of the intervention through the lens of those who lived it. This goal was made possible only thanks to the extensive collections about the Allied Expeditionary Forces at the Hoover Institution Library and Archives. From the papers of YMCA secretary Marmaduke R. Clark to the collections of the American commander, General William S. Graves (1865–1940), the papers at Hoover offer an excellent survey of the experiences of people from all echelons of the Allied forces in Siberia.

A FATAL CONTRADICTION

The Allied forces were set up for failure from the very beginning. They arrived in Siberia in August 1918 without a clear mission, amidst a deeply fractured military and political landscape. In March 1917, the first revolution



AWAITING ORDERS: Soldiers of the Czechoslovak Legion gather in a Siberian forest. Initially formed to fight alongside the Allied forces in World War I, the legion found itself stranded in Ukraine after Russia signed an armistice with Germany. Protecting the Czechoslovak Legion's evacuation was the ostensible motivation behind Allied intervention in Russia. [William S. Graves Papers, 1914–1932—Hoover Institution Archives]

in Russia resulted in the abdication of Czar Nicholas II and the establishment of the Provisional Government and the Petrograd Soviet in Russia. In November 1917, amidst increasing unrest, a second revolution took place in Russia, which culminated with the Bolshevik overthrow of the Provisional Government and the beginning of the Russian Civil War. A month later, in December 1917, the Bolshevik government signed an armistice with Germany, and on March 3, 1918, agreed to the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, which gave large swaths of territory to Germany and marked the official withdrawal of Russia from World War I.

In April 1919, nine months after American forces were sent to Vladivostok by President Woodrow Wilson, US Army Captain Laurence Packard penned

a classified report detailing the state of the Allied intervention on behalf of General Graves, commander of all American forces in Siberia. According to Packard, the American public was told that the main purpose of the intervention was twofold: “the ‘rescue’ of the Czecho-Slovak troops which were . . . enroute [sic] to the European battle front” and the protection of “the large quantities of materials . . . destined for the use of former Russian establishments.” In reality, Packard writes, nearly half of the Czechoslovak soldiers had already safely arrived in Vladivostok months before American forces came, and “the remainder . . . were in no serious danger.” By July 1918, the Czechoslovak soldiers had “abandoned any genuine effort to withdraw from Eastern Russia” and instead were going about securing the Trans-Siberian Railroad.

Concerning the protection of military supplies, Packard contends that deploying soldiers was not necessary because “the presence of Allied warships” alone was sufficient to prevent the supplies from falling into the hands of the Bolsheviks or the Central Powers. In effect, the publicly stated mission of the Allied intervention was thus already accomplished months before any Allied soldiers even landed in Siberia. Packard argues that instead, the true objectives of the Allied intervention were to support the Czechoslovak forces in their attempt to gain control of the Trans-Siberian Railway and to ensure “the retention of as much Russian territory as possible under anti-Bolshevik authority.” The Allied forces, however, failed to develop any coherent long-term plan for establishing a stable opposition government and neglected the fact that anti-Bolshevik forces were by no means unified.

From the moment they arrived in Siberia, the Allies faced the impossible task of supporting anti-Bolshevik forces while keeping up a public face of

noninterference and impartiality with respect to Russia’s internal affairs. Allied commanders were initially given an alarmingly small number of soldiers: eight hundred

The Siberian intervention angered the new Soviet government and sowed the seeds of long-lasting distrust between the USSR and the West. It also failed to help the anti-Bolshevik forces.

British soldiers, twelve hundred French soldiers, five thousand American soldiers, and three thousand Japanese soldiers. In practice, this led to some of the Allies, especially the Americans, providing more indirect support to anti-Bolshevik forces rather than directly fighting the Bolsheviks.



PORT IN A STORM: Ships lie at anchor in Vladivostok, the Far Eastern port from which troops of the Czechoslovak Legion were to be evacuated from Russia—originally to continue fighting in France. Instead, the Czech troops shifted to guarding the Trans-Siberian Railway and ran afoul of revolutionary forces, at one time seizing Vladivostok and skirmishing frequently with the Bolsheviks. [William S. Graves Papers, 1914–1932—Hoover Institution Archives]

ESCALATION

Upon arriving in Vladivostok in April 1918, the Czechoslovak soldiers were well received by the Soviets in control of the area, but relations worsened as more members of the legion arrived. According to Packard, news came about “clashes between the Soviets at Irkutsk and elsewhere, and the Czechoslovak echelons” and the Soviets decided to take “a series of unfriendly acts” against the Czechoslovaks in response. Consequently, the Czechoslovaks decided to take Vladivostok. Emboldened by their successful capture of the port city, the Czechoslovaks advanced as far north as the Ussuri River until the Bolsheviks regrouped and forced them to retreat to the south of Shmakovka. Simultaneously, there was growing “unrest among the supporters of the Soviet in Vladivostok” over Czechoslovak rule. The Czechoslovaks began to look vulnerable, and not coincidentally, the Allied intervention began shortly thereafter.

Packard's description of the evolution of the situation in Siberia emphasizes that the Czechoslovaks' deliberate decision to fight the Bolsheviks is what ultimately compelled the Allies to intervene. Given that the Soviets initially had "practically no effective troops" in Vladivostok, Packard believes that the Czechoslovaks should instead have ignored the Soviets' "unfriendly" acts and not started a conflict. However, given the sheer size of the contingent, clashes between the Czechoslovaks and Soviets were likely to occur no matter which side instigated them. The ideologies of the Czechoslovaks and the Soviets also were too opposed for conflict not to arise.

While Packard's report has immense historical value, it exhibits a bias towards the centrality and importance of the American Expeditionary Force.

The Allies faced an impossible task: supporting anti-Bolshevik forces while keeping up a facade of noninterference and impartiality.

For instance, Packard conveys how well-received the Americans were "by all parties and all Allies." These groups, he laments, just could not see that the Americans "might

actually intend to act unselfishly, ingenuously, and without prejudice," and were subsequently disappointed as the Americans remained impartial. While there might be some truth to this claim, the degree to which Packard suggests that the Americans were unbiased is exaggerated.

The fact that he wrote the report on behalf of Graves cannot be ignored. Though not explicitly stated, the report appears to be an attempt to justify the actions taken by Graves for the historical record as opposed to an objective report to the War Department on the state of the intervention. In one instance, Packard praises "the conscientious efforts and good judgment of men of understanding and ability" in guiding American forces, a not-so-subtle nod toward his commander. Additionally, Packard himself clearly states that his report should not be taken as authoritative because it ignores "such matters as the negotiations for the operation of the Russian railroads, the conduct of the Expeditionary forces of other powers . . . and the relations of the American and Japanese forces." Lastly, the report was written before the intervention's end, thus leaving out key developments such as the downfall of Kolchak's government.

A TRUST DEFICIT

As Packard begins to suggest in his report, infighting among the Allies made a complicated situation even worse and contributed to the failure



MISSION UNCLEAR: *French troops line up on the docks of Vladivostok. Some twelve hundred French soldiers initially were deployed to Siberia, a small force that, even combined with other Allied contingents, proved unable to significantly affect events in Russia. Friction among forces also contributed to the failures of the Allied intervention.* [Marmaduke R. Clark Papers, 1914–1975—Hoover Institution Archives]

of the intervention. Chief among these conflicts were those between the Czechoslovaks and the Americans and the Japanese and the Americans. Though the Czechoslovak forces were the first to actively fight the Bolsheviks, they were also the first among the Allies to withdraw from Siberia.

In mid-November 1919, Dr. V. Girska, the Czechoslovak high commissioner in Siberia, wrote a letter to the Inter-Allied Railway Committee outlining the Czechoslovaks' reasons for withdrawal. Although the Czechoslovak army, according to Girska, "was ready to protect the railway in the sector which was assigned to it," continuing to do so would require the Czechoslovaks to betray their democratic beliefs and support the "arbitrary, absolute power" of the Kolchak government. While others in this position might have elected to oppose the Kolchak government rather than withdrawing, Girska argues that the Czechoslovaks did not have this option because of their steadfast commitment to "neutrality and non intervention [sic] in Russian internal affairs."

This argument, however, is riddled with contradictions. First, the Czechoslovaks were in their “intolerable situation” because they violated their supposed commitment to neutrality by attacking the Bolsheviks and taking Vladivostok. Second, by withdrawing, the Czechoslovaks increased the Bolsheviks’ chances of gaining control of Siberia. In light of the Czechoslovaks’ commitment to democracy, this was a strange move, as the Bolsheviks were no more concerned with the democratic process than was Kolchak’s government.

The armistice signed on November 11, 1918, no doubt influenced the Czechoslovak decision to withdraw. After all, without an ongoing world war, the Czechoslovaks had little reason to continue expending lives in faraway Siberia.

The Czechoslovak withdrawal frustrated the Americans, especially General Graves. In a letter to Colonel George Emerson, commander of the Russian Railway Service Corps, Graves orders the American railroad inspectors to leave their posts since “it is not safe for Americans to remain in” the railway sector that the Czechoslovaks had previously protected. A second letter by Graves to the adjutant general of the War Department describes a series

The ideologies of the Czechoslovaks and Soviets were too opposed for conflict not to arise.

of committees in the Czechoslovak army that must approve officers’ orders before the soldiers follow them. Though such committees are reminis-

cent of the Russian soviets, Graves does not explicitly make this connection, suggesting that a deep opposition to communist ideas had yet to take hold. Graves also writes in this letter that “the Czechs do not constitute a dependable force for use against the Bolsheviks,” illustrating a lack of the mutual trust that is key to a strong alliance.

The Japanese and the Americans had even worse relations than did the Czechoslovaks and the Americans, and from their disparate views on Russia arose conflicting intervention strategies. Japan had defeated Russia in the war of 1904–5. Packard’s report suggests that the foundational problem between the two allies was that the Japanese saw any strong Russian government as a threat. The American forces under Graves were ordered to remain apolitical, while a declaration by Japanese Major General Yamada ordered that “all villages, irrespective of the size and number of inhabitants, in which Red Guards will be found, will be burned down and destroyed by the Japanese troops.”



IN A HARD PLACE: General William S. Graves, shown with his wife, Katherine, commanded the American Expeditionary Force dispatched to Russia. Graves, whose collected papers are housed in the Hoover Institution Archives, mistrusted the Czechoslovak soldiers he was supposed to support, saying they did not “constitute a dependable force for use against the Bolsheviks.” He also disliked Admiral Aleksandr Kolchak, leader of the anti-Bolshevik movement.

[Marmaduke R. Clark Papers, 1914–1975—Hoover Institution Archives]

It was no empty threat. The Japanese actively searched for and destroyed villages that they thought harbored Red Guards. This destruction prompted grave concerns and complaints from Russian groups such as the Primor Provincial Zemstvo Board. A complaint written by this board outlined the “illegal actions on the part of the Japanese troops in the village of Ivanovka,” which included killing many suspected Bolsheviks and razing property. Though the complaint singled out Japanese soldiers as the perpetrators, it was addressed to “the Staff of the Allied Command,” suggesting there was a strong risk that the actions of the Japanese would harm the Russians’ opinion of the Allied forces more broadly.

Incidents like these led to resentment between the Japanese and Americans that at times boiled over into conflict. The epitome of such conflict was

a brazen assault of American troops by the Japanese in November 1918. In a sworn deposition, American Private Frank Werkstein recounts how Sergeant Baelskiwith, his commanding officer, “was arrested by the Japanese soldiers at Viazimska [sic]” after a Japanese civilian wrongfully accused him of battery. Surrounded by bayonets, Baelskiwith had no choice but to comply, even

Morale was low among US troops, a reflection of not only the harsh Siberian climate but also a lack of belief in the mission.

Japanese forces, to “request that the matter be investigated by Japanese authorities.” Though Graves no doubt believed his soldier’s account, he also recognized the importance of the Japanese-American alliance and thus asked for the Japanese side of the story before leveling any accusations.

These documents about American-Japanese relations cover a range of dates that span almost the entire Allied intervention, showing that the friction in Japanese-American relations was never fully addressed. Preoccupied with settling disputes among themselves, the Allies had a drastically reduced ability to effectively oppose the Bolsheviks and complete their assigned objective.

POOR MORALE AND MISSION CREEP

Equally problematic were the American soldiers who were more concerned with group activities and leisure time than fighting the communist threat. The correspondence of Marmaduke R. Clark, senior secretary for the Young Men’s Christian Association, during his time with the American Expeditionary Force is particularly insightful.

In a July 1919 letter to fellow YMCA secretary Ralph Hollinger, Clark mentions that the 27th American Infantry are “intrenching alongside railroad. Attack imminent. Controversy over Seminoff’s Car.” Three lines later, Clark urges Hollinger to accept his request for supplies for an upcoming “Athletic and Military tournament on July 19th and 20th. 1000 men competing.” The fact that matters of war and recreation are mentioned so closely to one another is an alarming reflection of the little importance that the Americans actually placed on their military mission.

In another letter to Captain Waite of American Infantry Company K, Clark writes that he is sending “two men, one a carpenter and the other a painter

though the accusation was entirely made up.

News of the arrest spread quickly. Graves himself was so alarmed that he wrote to General Kikuzo Otani, commander of all



DISTRUST: Japanese forces in Siberia pursued their own national interests, at times in conflict with US goals. The Japanese, for instance, actively searched for and destroyed villages that they thought harbored Red Guards, provoking complaints from the Russians. Friction in Japanese-American relations was never fully addressed. [Marmaduke R. Clark Papers, 1914–1975—Hoover Institution Archives]

and decorator,” to help spruce up a YMCA hut for Waite’s men. Moreover, Clark attempts to assure Waite that he is “trying [his] damdest [sic] to get you a piano and also [an] electric lighting plant and a movie machine.” If the fighting had been more intense or the mission perceived as more significant, Clark’s job would no doubt have been to acquire medical supplies and food rather than arranging athletic competitions or acquiring a piano for the soldiers’ enjoyment.

Clark’s correspondence with friends back home is also quite revealing. Writing to his “Old Pal Jake,” Clark notes how the colonel “details to me as many men as I ask for” to help plan activities for the troops. At the same time, Clark observes that “we have the toughest morale situation to face here that an expedition ever faced in the history of the US Army.” Indeed, the low morale likely reflected not only the harsh Siberian climate but also a lack of belief in the mission. Not once does Clark mention anything related to fighting the Bolsheviks or supporting the Russian people—his primary concern is the beleaguered state of the American forces. In turn, this suggests a lack

of recognition by the American soldiers as to exactly how dangerous the Bolsheviks and their communist ideas could become.

The poor morale of the American soldiers was certainly one reason why the intervention failed to help Admiral Kolchak in his fight against the Bolsheviks, but it was not the only reason. By late May 1919, the Allied countries had realized they needed a new policy towards Russia.

In an official dispatch to Kolchak, the Allied heads of state remarked that “it has always been a cardinal axiom of the Allied and Associated Powers to avoid interference in the internal affairs of Russia.” And while the Allies still supported Russian self-determination through a democratically elected Constituent Assembly, they believed reaching this goal was not possible by cooperating with the Soviet government. As such, the Allies were prepared to fully support Kolchak “with munitions, supplies, and food,” so long as he agreed to hold democratic elections after defeating the Bolsheviks.

However, the less prominent parts of the agreement demanded “that the independence of Finland and Poland be recognized,” that the Russian national debt be honored, and that a “solution of the relations between Esthonia [sic], Latvia, Lithuania, and the Caucasian and Transcaspian territories and Russia” be found. Moreover, the Allied heads of state did not offer the support of their intervention forces in Siberia to Kolchak. In light of these conditions, the agreement from the Allies appears to come more from a desire to reap the benefits of stability in Russia rather than from any firm belief in Russian self-determination.

Kolchak nevertheless immediately accepted the Allied nations’ offer of support. While Kolchak promised that he “shall not retain . . . power one day longer than is required by the interest of the country,” in reality he ruled like a dictator.

The publicly stated mission of the Allied intervention was thus already accomplished months before any Allied soldiers even landed in Siberia.

Admiral Kolchak’s subsequent fall from power is best chronicled by Constantin Pertzoff in a letter he wrote to former Stanford professor Harold Fisher. Pertzoff was a sol-

dier attached to Kolchak’s train convoy in December 1919, just as “the whole Central Siberia . . . was in a state of rebellion against” Kolchak’s government over its authoritarian practices. Czechoslovak forces stopped the convoy “a few miles west of Nijne-Oudinsk [sic],” and Kolchak was forced into negotiations with the Allied High Commission. After these negotiations, Kolchak



SIBERIAN EXILE: Allied flags hang in a recreation center in Russia, where soldiers make music and play billiards. Low morale plagued the American forces. Correspondence indicates an emphasis on leisure activities and recreation, and a lack of focus on the Americans' military mission. [Marmaduke R. Clark Papers, 1914–1975—Hoover Institution Archives]

“resigned his office of Supreme Ruler and Commander in Chief” in exchange for the Allied guarantee of his safe passage out of Russia. The Allies assigned Czechoslovak soldiers to escort Kolchak to safety—the very same soldiers who so despised him were then responsible for his life.

The journey began smoothly. When the convoy reached Innokentievskaya, however, Pertzoff saw “the Czech guards being withdrawn and two lines of numerous Red Guards taking their place.” Pertzoff himself escaped capture but was furious, stating that the Allied surrendering of Kolchak to the Reds “was an act without parallel in history.” In the letter he speculates that “the admiral’s surrender was caused by strategic reasons and not by local conditions,” remarking that it took place—suspiciously—the morning after an armistice had been signed between the Reds and the Allies. Pertzoff’s recollection is evidently biased by his role as a soldier for Kolchak, but his analysis is consistent with evidence presented by earlier documents. Indeed, both Pertzoff’s story and the correspondence between the Allied heads of state and Kolchak underscore that although the Allies were willing to offer nominal support to Kolchak, they were only interested in doing so for their own



“STRANGE ADVENTURE”: Czechoslovak forces hold positions along the Perm front. Years later, writers expressed lingering misgivings about US involvement in Russia’s affairs, with war correspondent Guy Murchie Jr. referring to it as “a war to please our allies.” [William S. Graves Papers, 1914–1932—Hoover Institution Archives]

benefit. Once the cost of supporting Kolchak—a fight with the Reds—became greater than the value of his promises to the Allies, the Allies willingly turned him over.

Moreover, after World War I had ended, justifying a foreign intervention in Siberia to a war-weary domestic public became far more difficult for Allied leaders. In the end, not only was the Allied intervention ineffectual in helping Kolchak’s resistance, but it actively brought about his downfall and execution at the hands of the Reds.

LOOKING BACK IN ANGER

Even though the Allies gave in to the Reds’ demands for Kolchak, the intervention still greatly angered the Soviet government. After all, the Allies’ supposed policy of nonintervention was essentially abandoned when they deployed troops in Siberia and recognized Kolchak as head of state.

Regardless of their true mission, however, the mere presence of the Allies' capitalist forces in Siberia was an existential threat to the Soviets. The last American soldiers left Siberia in 1920.

Soviet anger over the intervention appears in the communist propaganda of the day. One piece in particular, directed at the proletariat of the Allied countries, called for them to oppose their governments' intervention in Russia or "become the executioners of the Workers' Revolution." It warns that "like a ferocious dog freed from its chain, the entire capitalist press of your countries yowls at the intervention of your governments in Russian affairs and hoarsely cries, 'now or never'!" To the Soviets, the Allied governments had no motivations for intervening except to wage "a campaign against the Russian workers and peasants."

While the Soviets were clearly exaggerating to goad workers into revolt, they were not wrong in claiming that the Allies had ulterior motives for intervening. This was later made abundantly clear to the American public by Guy Murchie Jr.'s article about the intervention on the front page of the *Chicago Tribune* on April 1, 1939. Even though it was written almost twenty years after the end of the Allied intervention, its title, "A.E.F.'s Strange Adventure: A War to Please Our Allies," suggests an ongoing frustration. Murchie repeats the idea reflected in other documents that there was a lack of clarity on the mission's purpose, claiming that "many even of those who took part [in the intervention] have little

idea of what were its objectives." Murchie also quotes Secretary of War Newton Baker as saying that "the reasons moving the president [to support the intervention]

were diplomatic," and that such support went against the advice of the War Department. Thus both Murchie's article and the earlier Soviet propaganda agreed that the publicly stated reasons for the intervention were lies, but disagreed about the true motives.

Though often forgotten, the Allied intervention and its failure reveal a basic pattern with foreign intervention that is useful for historical and contemporary foreign policy analysis. The Allied intervention in Siberia suggests that foreign intervention for the sake of stability and self-determination is full of contradictions from the start. To allow for self-determination, the intervention forces must remain impartial, but to promote stability and

In the end, the Siberian misadventure suggests that foreign intervention for the sake of stability and self-determination is full of contradictions from the start.

protect strategic interests they often have to take sides. Since the intervening countries generally stand to gain only small benefits from the stability of a foreign country, they are often quick to pull support once the situation inevitably becomes more complicated and the costs of their intervention rise. Foreign intervention can thus make the situation worse off than if it had not occurred at all.

Primary sources from the time of the Siberian intervention indicate that the mission was likely to fail merely because of these fundamental contradictions. And this lesson remains immensely valuable to American policy makers. ■

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A Stitch in Time

Belgian women, backed by US aid during World War I, thanked Americans by sending messages made from traditional lace and needlework. Lou Henry Hoover gathered those fragile reminders of a historic humanitarian moment.

By Jean McElwee Cannon

The centenary of the First World War—and with it, this year’s centenary of Herbert Hoover’s founding of a library at Stanford dedicated specifically to the study of war, revolution, and peace—has brought a great deal of attention to the trove of items held in the Hoover Institution Library & Archives that relate to the world’s first experiences of global diplomatic crisis, industrialized warfare, mass humanitarian aid efforts, and the controversial treaty-making process that brought fighting to a (albeit temporary) standstill in 1919. As many scholars and patrons learn during their visits to Stanford, the cornerstone of the Hoover Library and Archives’ collections on the Great War consist of records kept by the Commission for Relief in Belgium (CRB), a relief agency run by Herbert Hoover that fed more than nine million citizens in occupied Belgium and northern France during the war, and pamphlets created and distributed by almost all the nations and interest groups that came to the bargaining table during the Treaty of Versailles.

Hoover, part of President Woodrow Wilson’s delegation to the global summit, immediately realized himself to be in the midst of one of history’s

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most significant negotiations—a historic event for which supporting documents and ephemera should be preserved and studied. In April 1919 he cabled Stanford to announce his donation of \$50,000—perhaps a pittance by today’s Palo Alto standards, but nearly twice the operating budget of the entire Stanford library system at that time—with instructions to “collect material on war.” From this telegram grew the astoundingly large archival collection that is now a destination for those studying social, political, and economic change in the twentieth century, particularly as it relates to the First World War and its dramatic effect on the geographic, ethnic, and cultural landscape we live in today.

In preparation for the centenary of the founding of the institution and a forthcoming exhibition of materials that document one hundred years of the research center’s development, staff members have investigated the World War I-era collections at Hoover with a keen eye for undiscovered stories, infrequently discussed events, or rarely viewed artifacts that illuminate the lived experience of the conflict and our library founder’s contribution to negotiating aid and peace in a bitterly divided world.

The collections of two women involved in the CRB’s aid efforts in Europe bring to light one of the most interesting, and rarely studied, aspects of the CRB’s activities: in addition to negotiating to bring food and clothing to the

starving populace of German-occupied Belgium, the CRB also brokered a deal with the Allies and the Central Powers that allowed nearly fifty

Sympathetic women in positions of power went to work for the crippled lacemaking industry.

thousand lace makers in Belgium to continue practicing their craft despite wartime blockades that threatened to limit the supplies necessary to make the world’s most revered needlework.

The collections of Herbert Hoover’s industrious wife, Lou Henry Hoover, and also Charlotte Kellogg, a friend of the Hoovers’ and the sole female delegate of the nearly two hundred delegates of the CRB, include accomplished, hundred-year-old pieces of lace needlework such as fans, doilies, tablecloths, shawls, and flour sacks that were given as gifts to the two women who rallied to the cause of lace makers in 1915–17. The tributes tell the tale of thousands of women in Belgium sending gratitude to the American women who helped them continue working despite the shells and gunfire devastating northern Europe.



NATIONAL PRIDE: World War I brought hunger and privation to occupied Belgium. Lace makers saw their supplies cut off and their livelihoods threatened. Belgian lace had undergone a revival just a few years before the war began, alongside a movement for improved working conditions and better wages for lace makers. [Lou Henry Hoover Collection—Hoover Institution Archives]

THE SYMBOL OF BELGIUM

Long before the gunfire of August 1914 was unleashed on the Western Front, the making of lace, a time-intensive combination of weaving and embroidery that can be created by either a single needle and thread or by multiple threads held in place by bobbins, was an iconic component of national identity in Belgium, particularly Flanders. Dating from the fifteenth century, lace making served as a consuming task (sometimes a pastime; often a livelihood) during the region's long, cold, and rainy winters—the same winters which, during 1914–18, would make fighting on the Western Front such a frigid, muddy affair.

In fashion, lace reached its height of popularity during the Renaissance, when aristocrats across Europe pined for collars, ruffles, caps, and cuffs made of delicate lace from Belgium. During the seventeenth century Flanders would become the international hub of lace production. Though most lace was produced by peasants in villages far from the distractions of urban cafes and theaters, cities such as Bruges, Turnhout, and Ypres (the latter of which would nearly be destroyed during World War I) were known as

pilgrimage points for lace consumers; merchants flocked to these cities from all over the world, keen to acquire fine needlepoint to sell at inflated prices in their home countries.

Despite a craze for lace during the Renaissance, the needle art was destined for a tumultuous future, as was the rest of Europe. “The French Revolution killed lace!” exclaimed Jules Kliot—lace collector, expert, and director of the Lacis Museum of Lace and Textiles in Berkeley—during a recent interview. As Kliot explained, late eighteenth-century subversives in Paris revolutionized not just politics but fashion—as monarchy went out of vogue, so did all the sartorial vestments of nobility, including lace. Long a staple trim of aristocratic outer wear, the finery was particularly despised by the populist *sans-culottes* (“without breeches”), a political party whose adopted name identified with defiance against the dandified (and frequently lace-trimmed) knee breeches of noble lords.

While at sporadic times before the revolution lace had been restricted by law to the nobility (French history is rife with anecdotes of commoners being punished for embellishing their ensembles with spuriously obtained bits of lace), lace trim was entirely outlawed by the *sans-culottes*, who preferred the tri-color cockade as a symbol of social, economic, and political equality. Sporting simple, short jackets (the forerunners to the modern suit jacket), red Phrygian caps (still the symbol of French liberty), and clogs (worn in camaraderie with peasantry), these trouser-wearers stood in sartorial defiance to the decadence of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, the fashion of whom included silk, satin, damask—and enormous amounts of lace made by poorly paid laborers.

Kliot emphasized, however, that French revolutionaries were perhaps not the primary enemies of handmade lace: the most formidable foe of the art was the Industrial Revolution. While handmade lace enjoyed a brief resurgence of popularity under Napoleon and his ever-extravagantly-attired Empress Josephine, factory-made lace flooded the market by the mid-1800s. By 1900 handmade lace, both as an art and an industry, was nearly obliterated.

ENTER QUEEN ELISABETH

Five short years before the outbreak of the Great War in Europe, Bavarian-born Queen Elisabeth ascended the Belgian throne alongside her husband, King Albert I. Hailing from an artistic family and the daughter of a medical doctor, Elisabeth was known for both her appreciation of aesthetic beauty and her advocacy for alleviating the sufferings of the poor. Immediately upon being crowned she went to work to champion the causes of lace



DIGNITY IN ART: Queen Elisabeth of Belgium was a champion of lace makers such as this woman. Elisabeth, who hailed from an artistic family, was known for both her appreciation of aesthetic beauty and her advocacy for helping the poor. The queen's Amies de la Dentelle ("Friends of the Lace") led a movement before the war for improved working conditions and better wages. [Lou Henry Hoover Collection—Hoover Institution Archives]

makers in Belgium—forming schools, creating archives of traditional pieces of lace, establishing libraries to collect lace making instruction books, and collecting important “prickings,” designs from which lace is made. She sponsored competitions with prizes for the best new lace designs, and organized exhibitions to show the designs to the public. Attentive to the exploitation of lace makers, Elisabeth established a committee of prominent women in Belgium, called the Amies de la Dentelle (“Friends of the Lace”), who led a movement for improved working conditions and better wages for Belgian lace makers.

After war broke out and Belgium was occupied by Germany, the Belgian lace trade was thrown into crisis: as the Allies surrounded the continent in a choking naval blockade, lace makers were both kept from importing the English and Irish needles and fine linen threads they needed to make lace,

and denied the ability to export lace to their primary markets, England and America. Nearly immediately, sympathetic women in positions of power went to work for the crippled lace making industry. Lace committees sprang up across Belgium, intent on helping starving lace workers.

Leading the charge was the Brussels Lace Committee, led by Comtesse Elizabeth d'Oultremont (lady-in-waiting to Queen Elisabeth); Vicomtesse de Beughem (the American-born wife of a Belgian aristocrat whose oral history about her wartime experience is housed in the Hoover Archives); Madame Josse Allard (wife of a Belgian banker); and Madame Kefer-Mali (a relation of the Belgian consul general of New York). They were assisted by Lou Henry Hoover and Nell Brainerd Whitlock (wife of the American ambassador, Brand Whitlock), who was named honorary president of the committee. Also central to the effort of helping lace makers was Charlotte Kellogg, CRB delegate and the wife of Vernon Kellogg, a Stanford professor and former teacher of Herbert Hoover's who served as director of the CRB during 1915–16. Charlotte Kellogg, a lace enthusiast and tireless worker, was requested by Herbert Hoover himself to travel to Belgium to document the struggles of women in the war-torn region; in 1917 she published *Women of Belgium: Turning Tragedy to Triumph* and in 1920 *Bobbins of Belgium*, perhaps the most extensive eyewitness viewpoint of the lace trade in Belgium during wartime.

In 1915, after difficult negotiations with both the Allies and the Central Powers, Herbert Hoover and the CRB forged the arrangement to import lace making supplies and export finished lace pieces that would be sold abroad.

For every kilo of thread imported, the same weight of finished lace would be exported, not more or less. The Germans demanded that no patriotic themes

One tribute tablecloth would have taken “as many as thirty women at least three months to make.”

be included in the lace designs—a restriction that was soon artfully subverted by a new visual rhetoric of animal symbolism: lions for Belgium, unicorns for the United Kingdom, roosters for France, bears for Russia, eagles for America.

Evelyn McMillan, a lace expert and Stanford librarian whose recent article “Gratitude in Lace” in *PieceWork* magazine is one of the most extensive studies of Belgian war lace to date, notes that the Lou Henry Hoover Collection at the Library & Archives houses an outstanding example of animal imagery worked into war lace: a fan-leaf of Point de Gaze needle lace designed by artist Lucie Rothschild-Lambert. In addition to symbolic Allied animals, the fan-leaf depicts the instruments of war: rifles, swords, battle kits, grenades, a



DEFIANT: Lacework depicts the American eagle and the slogan “E pluribus unum.” German occupiers demanded that no patriotic themes be included in the lace designs—a restriction that often was artfully subverted. [Lou Henry Hoover Collection—Hoover Institution Archives]

gas mask. The representation of such modern war accouterments, according to McMillan, is quite rare in war lace. (See following pages.)

The collection houses another “magnificent piece” that McMillan estimated would have taken “as many as thirty women at least three months to make”—a large and complex needle-lace tablecloth with design elements created by Belgian sculptor Isidore de Rudder and his sister Maria de Rudder



WAR STORY: This 1914 masterpiece in lace interweaves national symbols, such as Belgium's rooster and lion, with real and mythical animals, angelic figures, flowers, and vines. The artist also has included unusual images such as burning buildings (center) and modern weapons.





Belgian Lace
is not a luxury

and executed by Belgian women as a tribute to Lou Henry Hoover for her patronage during wartime. The tablecloth, executed in Point de Venise, features not only symbolic animals (eagles and lions) but the coat-of-arms of Belgium, with the lion enchained. Such blatant defiance against the exist-

ing German censorship

of patriotic themes invites questions as to its provenance: perhaps it was made beyond the watchful eyes of occupiers? Patriotic pieces of

needlework were sometimes created and smuggled out of the country for sale or as gifts, but lace makers learned to be careful—their German occupiers often planted spies in lace villages and schools to monitor the products that left the country.

After the cease-fire in November 1918, lace “armistice blouses” and “armistice collars” became popular for a time.

A SUCCESSFUL WARTIME CAUSE

Despite the immense time and complexity involved both in making lace and exporting it during wartime, the CRB quickly began to experience success in their support of lace makers. As Herbert Hoover tirelessly opined to lawmakers and diplomats of the time, the problem of hunger in Belgium was linked to the problem of unemployment—the more people the CRB could employ, the fewer the mouths that would be entirely dependent on food shipped from abroad and distributed at canteens. Thus lace, reinvented as a patriotic fashion, underwent a remarkable renaissance—and the culture of lace making did as well. As sales abroad rose, the CRB and lace committees established new rules and regulations: no lace worker was allowed to work more than thirty hours a week and apprentices (usually teenage girls) received a wartime subsidy of 20 percent to their wages. The new restrictions on hours not only curtailed exploitation but helped to spread work opportunities to as many individuals as possible.

ART AND SURVIVAL: This British poster (opposite page) reminded civilians in Allied countries that Belgium, once the international hub of the handmade lace trade, was now a war zone. It encourages Allied consumers to consider buying lace an act of patriotism. The artist, Lawrence Sterne Stevens (1884–1960), was an American who had moved to Belgium before the war to study fine arts. In later years he was known for vivid illustrations for pulp magazines such as Argosy, Amazing, and Fantastic Novels. [Poster Collection—Hoover Institution Archives]

Soon, sympathy and support for the lace makers of Belgium became global among Allied nations: CRB retail shops for fine tablecloths, linens, fans,

As Herbert Hoover tirelessly pointed out, hunger in Belgium was linked to unemployment.

gloves, lampshades, and collars opened in Paris, London, and New York. Large department stores and fine linen and fabric shops carried Belgian

war lace, marketing their inventory with patriotism. Exhibitions of lace were arranged in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and San Francisco. Well-known European artists contributed designs for lace; in all, close to two thousand new designs were made during wartime. After the cease-fire was announced in November 1918, lace “armistice blouses” and “armistice collars” (an excellent example of which can be found in the fascinating Lace Museum in Sunnyvale, California) became popular emblems of Allied victory.

Who made these works of art? The provenance of the maker is almost always impossible to know: pieces are hardly ever signed by the makers and a single piece, depending on its complexity, might be constructed by multiple makers of differing expertise.

Needlework artists in Belgium also often redesigned flour sacks imported to the country by the CRB, embellished them with embroidery stitches and sometimes with lace, and returned them to the donors and institutions

Large department stores and fine linen and fabric shops carried Belgian war lace, marketing their inventory with patriotism.

who supported them in wartime; dozens of these touching tributes can be found in the Hoover Archives and the Hoover Presidential Library in West Branch, Iowa. Lace

expert Evelyn McMillan estimates that in all Herbert Hoover was given nearly five hundred decorated and repurposed flour sacks as gifts of appreciation for the food sent to Belgium.

Sadly, the renaissance of Belgium’s national symbolic art was short-lived after the war, though it cannot be denied that the patriotic popularity of lace and the sale of lace abroad helped Belgium to recover from wartime devastation and famine. Often fine lace contains nearly ten thousand stitches per square inch, making it one of the most demanding and time-consuming of all textile arts and economically out of reach for the modern consumer of fashion that is not couture.

The pieces of war lace housed at the Hoover Archives speak strongly to the perseverance of Belgian women to survive under the most miserable conditions of occupation. Additionally, the tributes embedded in several of the pieces attest to the compassion and organizational skills of the women associated with the lace committees. Historian Jeffrey Miller, writing in a recent study of the CRB titled *WWI Crusaders*, notes, “Unfortunately, most of the CRB delegate stories have been long forgotten, innocent victims swept away by the tidal wave of negative public opinion surrounding Hoover’s later efforts as president. . . . Their stories deserve to be told.”

Complex and beautiful, lace emerges as one of the most surprising stories of the relief effort that became a model for humanitarian aid in the twentieth century—an ongoing remembrance of the women who chose to stitch instead of starve, and a tribute to the female organizers who supported them. ■

Special to the Hoover Digest. Evelyn McMillan provided extensive comments for this article.



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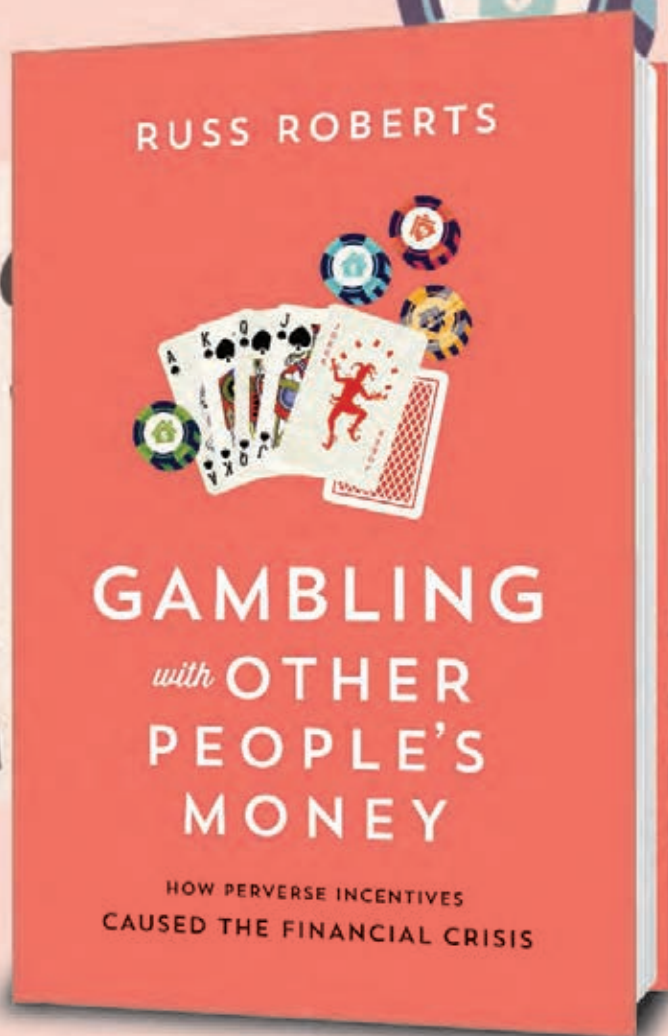
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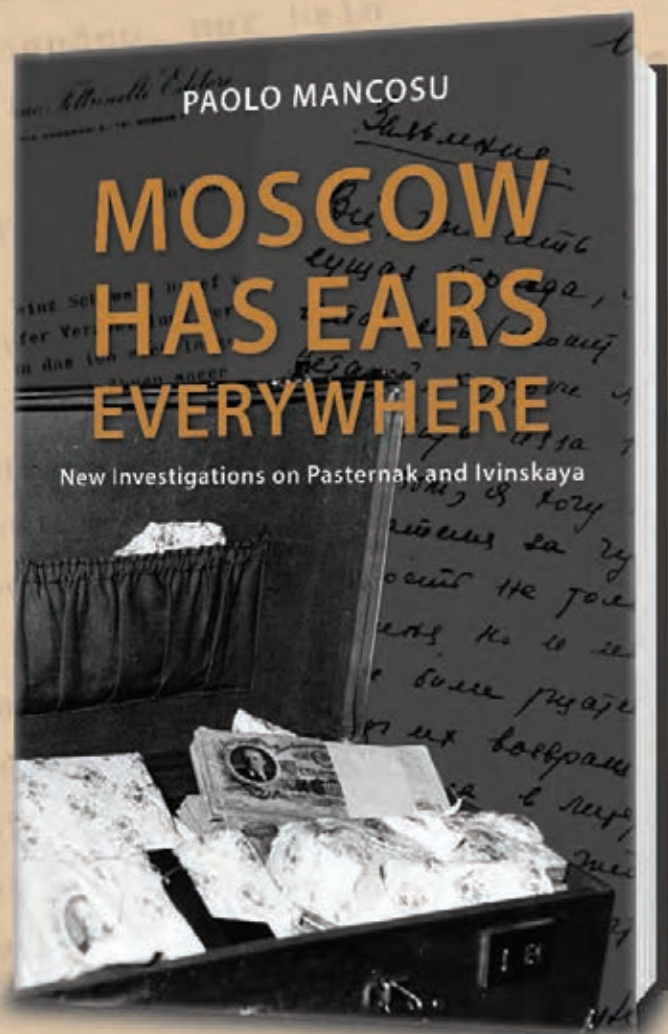
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