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OUR NATION

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US Student Visa Policies Encourage Chinese Spying, Expert Says

MARK WILSON/GETTY IMAGES

Sen. Mark Warner (D-Va.) on Capitol Hill on June 4, 2019.

MATTHEW VADUM

WASHINGTON–The People's Republic of China and other hostile powers are exploiting the United States' international student visa policies to conduct industrial and military espionage against U.S. targets, according to a panel discussion at the National Press Club in Washington on Aug. 20.

Temporary visitors to the United States can get visas for 90 days or six months, but foreign students and research scholars can stay six to eight years and operate undisturbed in America's most open environment–namely, its institutions of higher learning–said Dan Cadman, a fellow at the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS), a nonpartisan think tank.

The discussion came as CIS released a report written by Cadman titled "How U.S. Foreign Student and Exchange Visitor Policies Undercut National Security."

Hosting foreign students and international scholars can be a good thing for the United States, Cadman said at the event, "but the reality for government security officers is that it creates, as Mao Zedong once said, a sea in which fishes can swim."

"Although Mao was speaking about guerrillas among the people, it's equally true that foreign student and exchange scholar populations, by virtue of their size, their diversity, and the openness of the campus environments, act as a perfect place in which people who are engaged in espionage or people who are of malintent can conceal themselves without any real serious possibility that they're going to be detected at least not until in the fullness of time," he said.

"There are just too many people for government officers and government intelligence agents and counterintelligence agents and law enforcement to keep up with."

From 2013 to 2017, there were more than 2 million admissions at ports of entry of nonimmigrant students and exchange scholars, Cadman said, adding that many of these individuals come from countries that are openly hostile to the United States or in fierce competition with it.

Cadman cited the International Institute for Education showing that in the 2017–2018 academic year, there were 363,341 Chinese students, excluding exchange scholars, enrolled in the United States.

In addition to students from China, there were 44,000-plus Saudis, 18,000-plus Venezuelans, almost 13,000 Iranians, 10,000 Turks, 7,500 Pakistanis, 5,500 Russians, and 726 Syrians, he said, adding there were also students from Afghanistan, Cuba, and North Korea.

> The Chinese spy services are literally threatening Chinese families.
>
> Sen. Mark Warner

Although the vast majority of visiting students and academics are not spies, many governments "seed" their student diasporas here with students sympathetic to their regime's aims, he said.

Communist China, for example, "is very focused on where it wants to go, what it wants to achieve, where it wants to be with its global dominance," Cadman said.

"And for the Chinese government espionage is, you might say, a family affair. Everything is geared toward accruing technological advantage, and if that means they can short-circuit the time and money on research by stealing secrets, whether that's in the defense and military sector, or in the trade secret sector, they're going to do it."

In addition to state-directed spies, there are also "spies of opportunity" who come to the United States to study, but once here "fit themselves into niches" so they can obtain "those secrets that they can pass back home."

Cadman's remarks came two months after Senate Intelligence Committee Vice Chairman Mark Warner (D-Va.) warned that Beijing is pressuring its students in the United States to carry out espionage. FBI Director Christopher Wray has issued similar warnings.

"The overwhelming number of counterintelligence cases in our country now involve Chinese nationals," Warner said.

"The Chinese spy services are literally threatening Chinese families," telling families that if their children don't bring back illicitly obtained intellectual property from the United States, "the family will be put in jeopardy."

Cadman also said that schools stateside find it hard to resist the extra money that comes with students from abroad, which provides a strong economic incentive to attract those students.

This has a "de facto effect of, over the course of time, squeezing native born citizens out of a lot of positions and this is particularly of concern where STEM–science, technology, engineering, mathematics subjects–are concerned," he said.

ROBYN BECK/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The University of California–Los Angeles campus in Los Angeles on June 1, 2016.

Mifsud's Lawyer: Former Italian Minister Nudged Mifsud to Introduce Trump's Aide to Russians

MICHAL CIZEK/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Vincenzo Scotti, former Italian interior minister, in Prague on May 13, 2009.

PETR SVAB

Joseph Mifsud, an academic who's been rubbing shoulders with Western intelligence and security officials, was prompted in the spring of 2016 to introduce George Papadopoulos, then a junior aide to the Trump campaign, to Mifsud's contacts in Russia.

According to Stephan Roh, Mifsud's lawyer, the suggestion came from Mifsud's longtime associate and former Italian interior minister, Vincenzo Scotti, as well as Nagi Idris, a lawyer of Sudanese origin who at the time was Papadopoulos's boss at the London Centre for International Law Practice (LCILP).

Information stemming from the Mifsud–Papadopoulos contacts was cited by the FBI as the reason why the bureau launched a counterintelligence investigation into several members of the Trump campaign.

Roh's account comes at a time when the Trump administration, as well as some Republican lawmakers, seeks to determine how the snooping on Trump campaign aides under the Obama administration was started and justified.

Attorney General William Barr told Congress in April about his intent to review "both the genesis and the conduct of intelligence activities directed at the Trump campaign during 2016." He's delegated part of the task to U.S. Attorney John Durham.

Roh said he provided to Durham's team a May 2018 recorded deposition of Mifsud's, together with other information. He also provided the deposition to some members of Congress.

Roh said he lost contact with Mifsud a few months ago.

Russia Dud

Mifsud was portrayed in the final report of special counsel Robert Mueller as a person who "maintained various Russian contacts."

It was Mifsud who, on April 26, 2016, told Papadopoulos that Russia had "dirt" on former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in the form of thousands of emails, Papadopoulos later told the FBI.

In the spring of 2016, the FBI was still investigating whether Clinton mishandled classified information by using a private email server for State Department business.

Weeks after the FBI closed that investigation without charging Clinton, much of the same counterintelligence team learned of what Mifsud told Papadopoulos and promptly opened the Trump–Russia probe, according to the official narrative.

Mueller took over the probe in 2017 and, in March, concluded that "the investigation did not establish that members of the Trump Campaign conspired or coordinated with the Russian government in its election interference activities."

ALEX WROBLEWSKI/GETTY IMAGES

Former Trump campaign aide George Papadopoulos leaves the U.S. District Court in Washington on Sept. 7, 2018.

Mifsud denied to the FBI telling Papadopoulos anything about Clinton's emails or Russians having damaging information about her. Unlike several others, including Papadopoulos, Mifsud wasn't charged by Mueller with lying to the FBI.

Mifsud or Scotti?

If Roh's representations prove accurate, they would deal another blow to the FBI's justification for starting the probe, undermining its portrayal of Mifsud as a cut-out between the Russian government and Papadopoulos.

In his deposition, Mifsud said it was Scotti who asked him to co-host a table at an upscale restaurant in Rome in March 2016. At the table was Papadopoulos, Idris, and others from the LCILP. Mifsud was listed on LCILP's website as a board adviser and, after July 2016, director of international strategic development. The LCILP website later disappeared from the web.

After the dinner, as they were leaving the restaurant, Mifsud continued to chat with Papadopoulos and learned that "he was going to join ... Mr. Trump's campaign," he said. In fact, it was about a week or two after Papadopoulos joined the campaign.

The two kept in contact, and at some point, "Scotti and Nagi Idris suggested that Mifsud should introduce Papadopoulos to his Russian contacts," Roh said, referring to "declarations of Mifsud made in front of our team" and not the deposition itself.

> Mifsud was portrayed in the final report of special counsel Robert Mueller as a person who 'maintained various Russian contacts.'

Papadopoulos "was pushing very much to be introduced to Russians," Roh said.

Papadopoulos previously acknowledged he was eager to prove himself to the campaign and envisioned organizing a high-level meeting with Russian officials.

On March 24, 2016, Papadopoulos met with Mifsud in London and Mifsud introduced him to Olga Polonskaya. Papadopoulos got the impression that she was "Putin's niece" and that she and Mifsud "had the wherewithal to set up a meeting between the Trump campaign and Russian government officials," according to court documents.

Mifsud later said it was Idris "who proposed that she was 'Putin's niece,'" according to Roh.

Idris didn't respond to a request for comment.

In mid-April 2016, Mifsud introduced Papadopoulos to Ivan Timofeev, an academic with a think tank tied to the Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry. Papadopoulos kept pressing for a meeting with Russian officials, but it never materialized.

Papadopoulos was sentenced to two weeks in prison in September 2018 for lying to the FBI.

Mifsud called Papadopoulos an "Agent Provocateur," according to Roh, though it's not clear whom he was supposed to provoke, for what purpose, and on whose behalf.

Papadopoulos didn't respond to a request for comment.

Russian Links

Mifsud's Russian contacts appear mostly in academic circles. The Mueller report said Mifsud knew "a one-time employee" of the Internet Research Agency (IRA), the entity Mueller indicted for running a social media campaign aimed at stoking division among Americans before the 2016 election.

The report seems to show that Mifsud in January and February 2016 discussed potentially meeting that person in Russia, though the investigation found no evidence that the meeting took place.

Mueller's indictment didn't allege that the IRA acted on behalf of the Russian government. In May, a federal judge ordered the Justice Department "to refrain from making or authorizing any public statement that links the alleged conspiracy in the indictment to the Russian government or its agencies."

Link Campus Connection

Mifsud has been a man of many titles, but the only gig that stayed with him through nearly all of his career was at the Link Campus University in Rome.

He helped to found the institution in 1999, together with Scotti, who became its president. Mifsud acted as a "director of international relations" and recruited foreign students for Link. Its campus became a mingling place for Western intelligence and security officials.

Link supposedly cut ties with Mifsud after his conversations with Papadopoulos came out in late 2017.

"I can't afford to have the university embroiled in shady situations," Scotti told The Washington Post.

But Mifsud was still living in Rome until May 2018 in an apartment apparently provided by Link, according to an April 18 report by Italian list Il Foglio.

A request for comment from Scotti, emailed to Link Campus, went unanswered.

Justice Is Often Elusive for Families of Loved Ones Killed by Illegal Aliens

> The illegal alien got out of the car, and he watched Brandon take his last breath, and he did nothing to try to help him. He did nothing to try to get him help.
>
> Kiyan Michael, Angel mom, Florida

CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON

SAMIRA BOUAOU/THE EPOCH TIMES

A photo of Aileen Smith after a car crash with an illegal alien. She was 7 months pregnant, and had just given birth to Dimitri, who immediately died.

WASHINGTON—Getting justice after someone kills a loved one can be an empty process at the best of times. But for those whose loved ones were killed by illegal aliens, justice is often scarce and weighted toward the perpetrators. And the porous southwest border doesn't guarantee that those who get deported, stay deported.

Aileen Smith has no idea if the man who killed her baby and debilitated her is back in the United States. She said Ramon Hernandez, a Honduran national, had lived here illegally for years after overstaying his visa.

"Prior to his deportation, while in litigation with us, he made it very apparent—he said it openly—that he had no intention of staying gone, that he would just come right back," Smith said.

Hernandez's driver's license had been revoked 12 years prior to the crash and he had seven DUIs, three of which occurred after his license was revoked.

On June 10, 2012, Smith, who was seven months pregnant, and her husband were driving from Colorado Springs to San Diego for the baby shower for their first child. The crash happened on a New Mexico highway, when Hernandez cut across the road in front of the Smiths.

Smith bore the brunt of the impact and was pinned inside the vehicle.

"I broke my sternum in two places, had mass internal bleeding, I shredded my kidneys, my abdominal wall, my uterine wall, of course, being seven months pregnant, and my water broke," Smith said. "I was rushed to Saint Vincent Hospital in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where my son, Dimitri, was born alive and died a minute later due to massive head injury and bleeding on the brain."

Smith was told she, too, almost died and that it was unlikely she'd have more kids.

"I'm thoroughly disabled from the crash. I mean, just this last year, my internal organs collapsed and I had to go have reconstructive surgery for that. And I'm still dealing with the effects of what happened," she said.

Smith, who is now 32, said the litigation process went on for 5 1/2 years, and she had to alert ICE every time Hernandez appeared in court, in case he was let go for any reason.

> These illegal aliens still seem to be almost like a protected class, and they escape the fullest extent of the law. And the victims, meanwhile, have to work overtime to try to make sure that the perpetrator stays in jail.
>
> Aileen Smith, Angel mom, Colorado

"New Mexico had a horrible problem of just throwing out cases on the spot and saying, 'All right, ICE will come pick you up on Tuesday, just make sure you answer the door.' And of course, no one was there to answer the door," she said.

No roadside sobriety test was taken at the time of the crash, as Hernandez told police he was the passenger, not the driver—after the actual passenger ran off after the accident.

"So that became the hinge point of a lot of our trial," Smith said. But it didn't end at the completion of a trial that found Hernandez guilty of vehicular homicide. He appealed on grounds that the judge was prejudiced. The appellate court sided with him, and the Smiths were facing a second trial.

"And so instead of going through another jury trial for it to potentially be ruled as not guilty, we agreed to credit for time served followed by deportation," Smith said. Hernandez spent about 5 1/2 years in jail.

She said she believes he is back in the country, but she is reluctant to find out what ICE knows.

"I'm afraid it would drive me insane," she said. "It's terrifying. Especially thinking that this kind of thing—nothing's stopping this kind of thing from happening again."

Meanwhile, Smith is preparing for her third reconstructive surgery.

"I'm 32 looking at a possible colostomy bag, and it's awful. It's awful," she said.

"The inequality between the victims of these situations and the illegal aliens is just astounding. Attorneys will jump out of the woodwork to represent these people. But these illegal aliens still seem to be almost like a protected class, and they escape the fullest extent of the law. And the victims, meanwhile, have to work overtime to try to make sure that the perpetrator stays in jail."

CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES

Kiyan and Bobby Michael, whose son, Brandon, was killed by a illegal alien, stand near the U.S. Mexico border in Rio Grande City, Texas, on April 26, 2019.

Brandon Michael

For the last year, Kiyan and Bobby Michael have been on the front line in Florida's legislature, fighting for the state to pass legislation banning sanctuary policies that shield illegal aliens from immigration authorities. They won, and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis signed it into law on June 14.

For the Michaels, the fight was personal. Their 21-year-old son, Brandon, was killed by a twice-deported, unlicensed illegal alien in a 2007 car crash.

"The illegal alien got out of the car, and he watched Brandon take his last breath, and he did nothing to try to help him. He did nothing to try to get him help," Kiyan said.

She said Mario Tellez, a Mexican national, refused to admit that he was driving, although no one else was in the car with him. But it forced the state to have to prove that he was behind the wheel.

"So now we're not only grieving the sudden loss, unexpected loss of our child that [had] left our home happy in one piece, healthy—to now we have to go through a lengthy trial," Kiyan said. "And we also had to go back to the scene of the crash and beg for witnesses to come forward."

Tellez was arrested three weeks after the crash, after Kiyan made countless calls. "We had to make calls and keep calling and keep begging and keep pleading in order for him to be arrested," she said.

He was sentenced to two years and then deported.

"We do not know if he's back in this country. We don't know if he's back in this city," Kiyan said, referring to her home city of Jacksonville.

"It's a terrible feeling and it's what drives us today—it's one of the things that drives us today—because we did not receive justice in our son's case.

"He was driving without a license and a few months before he killed our son, he had been stopped by local law enforcement with no driver's license and they just gave him a ticket and sent him on."

Bobby Michael said he spent 20 years in the U.S. Navy. "Part of our responsibilities was to keep our nation safe," he said. "I was let down by our government because of the lack of enforcing the laws that were already on the books at the time that our son was killed."

Sarah Root

For Michelle Root, it is an ongoing nightmare. Her daughter, Sarah, was at a stop light on Jan. 31, 2016—the night of her college graduation—when a drunk, unlicensed driver, who was traveling almost 70 miles per hour in a 35 zone, slammed into her vehicle. She didn't stand a chance.

Beyond trying to wrap her head around the sudden, tragic loss of her daughter, Root had to grapple with the fact that the man who killed her was in the United States illegally.

Then, as she was planning her daughter's funeral, she was told the driver, Honduran Edwin Mejia, had posted $5,000 bail and was free. He never showed up to court and is now on ICE's most wanted list.

"As it stands right now, there's nobody accountable for Sarah's death," which makes it even worse, Root said.

"Because even though it's not going to bring Sarah back, at least it would have felt like some justice was served. And that her death wasn't in vain."

No one knows whether Mejia escaped across the U.S.–Mexico border or is still in the United States.

SAMIRA BOUAOU/THE EPOCH TIMES

Michelle Root, whose daughter Sarah Root was killed by an illegal alien, speaks at an Angel Families event in front of the Capitol in Washington, on Sept. 7, 2018.

Agnes Gibboney, whose son, Ronald, was killed by an illegal alien, stands near the U.S. Mexico border in Rio Grande City, Texas, on April 26, 2019.

Ronil Singh

The illegal alien charged with police officer Ronil Singh's murder almost got away.

Gustavo Perez Arriaga, a Mexican national, is charged with fatally shooting Singh during a routine traffic stop in California during the early hours of Dec. 26, 2018.

He was captured while trying to flee to Mexico, after a two-day manhunt. He had two prior DUI arrests.

Kate Steinle

Jose Ines Garcia-Zarate, the felon and five-time deported illegal alien who shot and killed Kate Steinle on a San Francisco pier in 2015, was acquitted of murder charges in 2017 after a jury decided he wasn't responsible for the bullet he fired, which fatally struck Steinle while she was with her father.

Garcia-Zarate was instead sentenced to three years in prison—reduced for time served—for felony possession of a firearm.

He still faces federal firearms charges, which would bring another 10 years if he is convicted. Immigration officials said they plan to deport him for the sixth time.

Meanwhile, Steinle's parents have been blocked from suing San Francisco officials over sanctuary policies that saw the release of Garcia-Zarate from jail three months before the shooting despite a request from Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials to hold him for deportation.

On March 25, a three-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in a unanimous ruling refused to reinstate a lawsuit that Steinle's parents filed against San Francisco and its former sheriff, Ross Mirkarimi.

Ronald da Silva

Illegal alien Luis Humberto Gonzalez shot Ronald da Silva in California in April 2002.

Da Silva's mother, Agnes Gibboney, has been outspoken about illegal immigration ever since. But she is afraid for her safety, as Gonzalez is set to be released from prison this November, earlier than the original February 2020 date she'd been given.

She recently learned that he may not be handed over directly to ICE.

"They told me that he has an ICE hold ... but if he has a medical condition, they would not turn him over to ICE, they will release him so that he can get medical care, and then he would turn himself over to ICE. Really? I mean, duh? Do you think he's going to turn himself over to ICE?" Gibboney said.

"Any crime is not OK—perpetrated by anybody, a citizen or not. But what makes a crime by an illegal alien—especially the ones that were previously deported—more serious, is that they were already removed because they did not fit in our country, did not follow laws, and they were committing crimes, victimizing citizens of this country. And it's an insult to know that they so freely can come back, return, to continue with their life of crime."

Pierce Corcoran

Pierce Corcoran, 22, was killed on Dec. 29, 2018, when illegal alien Francisco Eduardo Cambrany Franco swerved into oncoming traffic and struck his car head-on near Knoxville, Tennessee.

Franco, 44, faced charges of criminally negligent homicide and driving without a license or insurance, but instead was deported to Mexico before standing trial.

Franco's public defender had argued in court in January that there was "nobody in this courtroom who [had] more to stay [sic] in this community" than Franco, according to Knox News.

Corcoran's mother, Wendy Corcoran, said her family knows that there's nothing they can do to bring Pierce back.

"But don't tell me my son, who lived in this country and followed its rules, doesn't deserve better," she wrote on the website Justice for Pierce Corcoran.

"For God's sake, out of respect for the men and women who fought and fight to make this country such a desirable place to live, DO THE RIGHT THING and come here legally and become a responsible citizen."

Illegal Alien Crime

No federal database exists for tallying the crimes that illegal aliens are charged for, but the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) collects data for its state crimes.

The DPS data shows that more than 202,000 illegal aliens were booked into local Texas jails in the eight years ending July 31.

The data doesn't include the number of DUI charges, but the 202,000 illegal aliens were charged with more than 317,000 criminal offenses during the eight-year period, including 570 homicide charges, almost 40,000 drug charges, and more than 8,700 sexual assault and sexual offense charges.

"These figures do not attempt to allege that foreign nationals in the country illegally commit more crimes than other groups," the report states. "It simply identifies thousands of crimes that should not have occurred and thousands of victims that should not have been victimized because the perpetrator should not be here."

The data doesn't include federal criminal charges.

CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES

CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES

Migrants break through the U.S. border fence just beyond the east pedestrian entrance of the San Ysidro crossing in Tijuana, Mexico, on Nov. 25, 2018.

Trump's Recognition of **Political Memes** Boosts Creator Community

IVAN PENTCHOUKOV

A small community of anonymous video meme makers has grown after two of its members met with President Donald Trump at the Oval Office on July 3. Newcomers are reaching out for help, old-timers are coming back, and a new website now centralizes content from prominent creators.

Memes are a form of modern visual humor that provides a commentary on current events by editing, collaging, and remixing photos and videos. Some of these images and short videos reach vast audiences in a short time, creating a cultural shockwave as people share the content on social media. Trump regularly shares memes with millions of his followers on Twitter, elevating this form of humor to the forefront of political discourse.

The president's White House meeting with two prominent meme creators, who go by the nicknames Carpe Donktum and Mad Liberals, affirmed that the Trump team is aware of the impact of memes and recognizes the memesmiths as valuable allies.

The Oval Office meeting has also helped boost the meme-making community, according to several prominent memesmiths interviewed, including Carpe Donktum, Mad Liberals, Something Wicked, and Sol Memes.

All four prefer to remain anonymous. Carpe Donktum has been identified in other reporting and confirmed his name to The Epoch Times, but prefers privacy, to shield his family from danger in the face of constant threats.

"Things felt amplified after Trump retweeted some of Carpe Donktum's memes, and then again after he met with Trump," Something Wicked told The Epoch Times.

"At a minimum, people had this new sense that Trump and his team are aware of meme culture and pay attention to it, and there's a non-zero chance that Trump or his team might actually see and share one of your memes."

According to Mad Liberals, the loosely knit community of meme makers on Twitter has grown to 14 people from nine since the White House visit. The members chat to each other individually and actively promote each other's content.

"Three new memers have contacted me since then and wanted to learn how and a few came back that had left," Mad Liberals said.

Carpe Donktum said the community has been steadily gaining momentum for the past two years.

"White House recognition certainly helps," he said.

The president also invited Carpe Donktum to the social media summit at the White House, which included pro-Trump influencers such as former Trump adviser and current radio host Sebastian Gorka and YouTube personality Mark Dice. Something Wicked described the gathering as a "force multiplier" for the meme community.

"It was branded by the media as a gathering of misfits. Whatever your opinion on that, it was a giant networking opportunity for the personalities and alternative media channels who traffic in political memes," he said.

On Aug. 20, Carpe Donktum launched Meme World, a website that brings together the meme creations from 14 prominent meme makers.

"I created the site to safeguard deplatforming and also to give other creators a space to post as well," Carpe Donktum told The Epoch Times.

Trump shared two of Carpe Donktum's memes on Twitter prior to the White House visit, inspiring the makers with the possibility that their work might be spotlighted by the president.

WHITE HOUSE

President Donald Trump meets with meme makers known as Carpe Donktum and Mad Liberals at the White House in Washington, on July 3, 2019.

> Trump regularly shares memes on Twitter.

"Carpe getting retweeted by the POTUS was just amazing. I think it made us all better and more serious because if he can do it, we all can," Sol Memes told The Epoch Times. "There are new meme makers popping up daily and its great to see."

All four of the meme makers interviewed for this article identify as Republicans and voted for Trump. Political memes surged in popularity on the heels of Trump's election victory on Nov. 8, 2016, according to a Priceonomics review of data from Me.Me, a website that archives and categorizes memes.

Memes using the acronym MAGA topped the list, growing 1.2 million percent from January 2016 to January 2017. MAGA stands for "Make America Great Again," Trump's presidential campaign slogan in 2016. Terms associated with support for Trump and conservatism dominate the growth chart, with even the term "libertarian" placing above "liberal" in the analysis.

Likewise, Trump dominates the list of political figures based on the number of memes about him, with nearly 100,000 memes tracked in January 2017, more than double that of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and former President Barack Obama. The gap has widened even more since 2017. As of Aug. 21, Me.Me has tracked 435,535 memes about Trump, four times more than the number of memes about Obama and seven times more than the number of memes about Clinton.

"There aren't very many effective meme masters on the left," Ben Garrison, a cartoonist who drew a strip featuring the meme makers interviewed for this article, told The Epoch Times. "They lost the battle in 2016 and they now realize they're in trouble in 2020."

"That's why Silicon Valley is helping their cause by de-platforming conservatives. They're engaged in outright censorship and it will probably grow worse as the next presidential election approaches."

Garrison, who still draws cartoons by hand with an ink brush, says that cartoonists have been using memes for generations.

"Uncle Sam is a meme. Thomas Nash created the donkey and elephant memes—representing the Democratic and Republican parties. Nash nearly single-handedly brought down the corrupt Tammany Hall and Boss Tweed with his scathing cartoons. That's the power of memes," he said.

Measuring the power of memes is nearly impossible due to their very nature. Like a good joke, memes are borrowed and re-shared without reference to their author.

For example, a meme by Mad Liberals titled "Hillary's Grant a Wish Football Game" has 74,000 views on YouTube. Meanwhile, he has seen a version of his video reposted on Facebook that drew 20 million views. His most popular meme, "Peshwa Warrior Trump," has 1.5 million views on Twitter, but became so wildly popular in India that it was played on national television.

Similarly, Carpe Donktum's meme about the technical difficulties at the Democratic debates drew 282,000 views on his own account as of Aug. 21, while the version reposted by Trump had 4.6 million views on the same date.

Humble Beginnings

All of the memesmiths interviewed for this article started out without the technical skills required to make meme videos. Carpe Donktum stitched his first video out of images edited in a free image-editing software, and Mad Liberals has a background in computer programming but had no video-editing skills when he started.

"I had no skills whatsoever and had never used a video editor so I spent the last few years learning with HitFilm Pro. I'm still a hack, but I love it!" said Sol Memes.

Three of the four became interested in making memes after Trump shared one in which the CNN logo is substituted for the head of his opponent in a WWE wrestling match. CNN went on to hunt down the maker of the meme and threatened to release his personal details to the public. Infowars added fuel to the fire by announcing a $10,000 meme contest.

"The CNN thing, I was upset about that—that just some normal guy could be doxxed," Mad Liberals said. "And the Infowars contest was a big part of that. Hey, $10,000, sure, that got me in—that got me excited."

"I've never done art before. You know, I never edited graphics. I never did, you know, Adobe AfterEffects or any of those things," he added.

Without exception, the meme makers said the primary intention for their creations is to get people to laugh.

"Well, first and foremost, it's always about making people laugh," said Carpe Donktum.

"I'm not a guy who takes myself seriously. I make funny videos," Something Wicked said. "It makes my kids laugh. And to the degree that it makes other people laugh, I'm happy to do that."

The memesmiths are becoming increasingly sophisticated, using increasingly refined editing techniques and employing voice talent for their videos. Something Wicked hired a voice actor for his "Real Stable Genius" meme series. His "Trump Ford Commercial Parody" employs sophisticated graphics and voice acting.

"I am blown away by that. That was just incredible," Mad Liberals, who considers the Ford parody the best meme to date.

Meeting Trump

As they sat in the basement of the White House, Mad Liberals and his mother fumed that they had to wait so long for their official tour. Both were unaware that Carpe Donktum, who had invited them to come along, was about to be ushered into the Oval Office for a meeting with the president.

"They took us upstairs and we waited another 30 minutes and the kids started getting a little rowdy. My mom and I were both sitting there going, 'This tour guide is just terrible,'" Mad Liberals said.

The White House staffer who helped entertain Carpe Donktum's children asked them if they were excited to see the Oval Office. A few minutes later, the staffer asked the children if they were excited to see President Trump. Mad Liberals and his mother looked at each other and mouthed the words "President Trump" in surprise. A few minutes later, the group was ushered into the Oval Office.

"I didn't have any time to prepare for this. I am just floored," Mad Liberals said. "Then you saw Trump walking down from the hallway and I'm sitting there and just I have the stupidest grin on my face."

"He was really gracious. He was smiling the whole time," he added, describing the president.

Censorship Fears

Carpe Donktum created the Meme World website, in part to create a space meme creators can turn to in case they are removed from social media platforms. He's been suspended from Twitter on more than one occasion.

The fears are stoked by reports of bias and censorship against conservatives and Trump supporters. In undercover video footage released in 2018, Twitter employees admitted to censoring and shadow-banning conservatives. When the same undercover journalism group, Project Veritas, exposed bias and censorship at Pinterest, Twitter and YouTube removed the video of the report.

Last week, a Google whistleblower released more than 1,000 pages of internal documents exposing a corporate culture replete with left-wing bias. The reports have triggered congressional inquiries and Trump is believed to be preparing an executive action to address the issue.

When he drew the memesmiths in his comic strip, Garrison portrayed them as the stuff of nightmares for the establishment media, including CNN, The New York Times, Twitter, and Google. Like Carpe Donktum, he's concerned that the media giants will strike back.

"They are authoritarian control freaks who are no longer able to control minds—and that frustrates them," he said. "It's a meme war and the lefties have lost the first round. That's why they've brought out their big, censorious guns to destroy our First Amendment right of free speech."

Carpe Donktum, a stay-at-home dad, plans to continue making memes, even if he is removed from social media.

"I plan to continue to do it as long as I have an audience. If I get taken off of social media or something like that, I'll have to have to figure out what I'm going to do to continue," he said. "But I think there's only going to be more demand for the type of stuff that I do."

Former Sen. Reid Warns Democrats on Medicare for All

MARK TAPSCOTT

WASHINGTON—Harry Reid retired from the U.S. Senate in 2017, and a more recent diagnosis of pancreatic cancer may make the 2020 election his last, but that isn't stopping the Nevada Democrat from warning his party's presidential contenders they are making two huge mistakes.

Reid left no doubt about where he stands, when he was asked during a lengthy telephone interview with Vice News if he views as "problematic" the Medicare for All proposals being pushed by most of the more than two dozen Democrats contending for their party's 2020 nomination to oppose President Donald Trump.

"Of course it would be," said Reid, who was Senate majority leader from 2007 until 2015, when Republicans, led by Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), retook majority control of the upper chamber in Congress. "How would you get it passed?"

Reid was the top Senate power in 2010 when Congress approved President Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare"), and he told Vice News that he believes Democrats should instead "focus on improving Obamacare. We can do that without bringing something that would be much harder to sell."

The reason he favors keeping the focus on "improving Obamacare" rather than going for Medicare for All is that "people understand that. They would appreciate that. It locks in many important things."

Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), and Sen. Kamala Harris (D-Calif.) have introduced Medicare for All proposals that would make the federal government virtually the only source for health care coverage. But former Vice President Joe Biden wants to expand Obamacare.

It's no coincidence that Reid and Biden appear to be on the same wavelength regarding Medicare for All, as the Nevadan told Vice News that the two men had only "very minor disagreements" when they served together.

Reid and Biden were Senate colleagues from 1987 until the latter left the Senate to serve as Obama's vice president. Reid led the Senate Democratic Conference from 2005 until his retirement.

Reid was similarly unenthusiastic about the growing wave of enthusiasm among Democrats for decriminalizing crossing the United States border from Mexico or Canada without permission.

"There are so many more important things to do," Reid told Vice News. "Decriminalizing border crossings is not something that should be at the top of the list. It should be way, way down at the bottom of the list."

Most people, Reid said, "want a fair immigration system" but they don't want "an open-door invitation for everybody to come at once."

> Fighting over the legacy of Obama and the ACA and, of course, the border allows Trump to define the Democratic field on his terms, something that everyone running in 2020 should be looking to avoid.
>
> Christian Hanley, Democratic campaign strategist

ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

Former Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) in Las Vegas on Oct. 23, 2016.

Former Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Julián Castro was the first Democratic presidential aspirant to support decriminalization of border crossings. Sanders, Warren, and Harris followed suit, but Biden hasn't yet taken a position on the issue.

Democratic campaign strategist Christian Hanley told The Epoch Times on Aug. 21 that although Reid "had a distinguished Senate career," he's "not sure his words will carry much weight among primary voters in 2020."

Hanley, who hosts the "Keep It In Perspective" podcast, said Reid's "words on health care and the border seemed to be aimed at the field of candidates, not voters.

"Fighting over the legacy of Obama and the ACA and, of course, the border allows Trump to define the Democratic field on his terms, something that everyone running in 2020 should be looking to avoid."

Republican campaign strategist Brian Darling, however, told The Epoch Times that Reid's comments make him "one of the sane voices in the Democratic Party who is trying to keep Democrats from fully embracing a far left-wing socialist agenda."

Darling, who was a key adviser to Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) during the latter years of Reid's tenure as majority leader, said the United States is "a center-right nation that embraces personal freedom and free markets, yet the Democrats are pushing for ideas that will put government front and center in the economy and take away individual rights."

That means, Darling continued, that "Reid is firing a warning shot that the inclination for Democratic candidates for president to 'out-woke' each other will lead to electoral defeat."

Washington-based communications strategist Beverly Hallberg told The Epoch Times on Aug. 21 that "Reid has always been a stealth politician and for him, this is calculated. He's trying to do what he can to right the Democratic ship before they veer too far away from working-class Americans."

Hallberg compared Reid's comments to Dr. Jill Biden's similar but much more "clumsily" delivered warning on Aug. 19, and said they reflect the reality that "many Democrats are willing to put specific issues aside for a candidate that can beat Trump."

Reid said he won't make such an endorsement decision until after his state's Feb. 22, 2020, Democratic caucuses, but he may have offered a hint in the interview:

"I've been impressed with Elizabeth [Warren]. She is not hiring a bunch of pollsters and consultants. Everything she's doing is in-house. I'm not going to endorse anyone until after the caucuses, but everyone has to be impressed with what she's doing."

SANDY HUFFAKER/GETTY IMAGES

Honduran migrants climb over the U.S.–Mexico border fence from Tijuana, Mexico, on Jan. 6, 2019.

Clinton Emails With Classified Info Sat in Gmail Account for Years

Former FBI Director James Comey (C) walks to a closed hearing before the Senate Intelligence Committee on Capitol Hill on June 8, 2017.

CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES

PETR SVAB

Hundreds of Hillary Clinton's emails that included classified information from her tenure as secretary of state sat in a private Gmail account for more than two years and were still there about two weeks before then-FBI Director James Comey cleared Clinton in a 2016 statement of criminal responsibility for mishandling the country's secrets.

The Gmail account drew the scrutiny of Republican lawmakers because its name—"carterheavyindustries@gmail.com"—mirrored that of a Chinese company, Shandong Carter Heavy Industry Machinery Co. Ltd. The similarity raised concerns that a foreign actor had gained access to Clinton's emails.

Platte River Networks (PRN) employee Paul Combetta, who managed Clinton's email server between 2013 and 2015, said he made up the name of the email address and used it in February 2014 to transfer an archive of Clinton's emails to a new server. The emails seem to have covered a period from about 2009 to mid-2013—including most, if not all, of Clinton's time at the State Department.

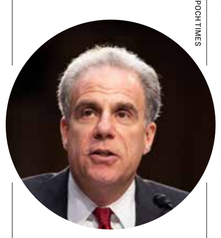
But Combetta apparently failed to delete all of the emails from the Gmail account after the transfer.

"The FBI determined that 820 of Clinton's emails, dated between October 25, 2010, and December 31, 2010, remained in the ... email account," stated a June 2018 report on the Clinton investigation by the Justice Department's Inspector General (IG) Michael Horowitz.

It wasn't until June 20, 2016—about two weeks before Comey's July 5 statement—that the FBI sought a search warrant "to view the content of these emails and search for other emails relevant to the investigation," the report said, also stating that "the FBI was able to confirm that classified information continued to reside in ... the account belonging to Combetta."

The IG report didn't specify that Combetta's account was a Gmail account. That fact was only confirmed by the IG recently in response to the lawmakers' inquiry.

> The FBI was able to confirm that classified information continued to reside in ... the account belonging to Combetta.
>
> June 2018 report on the Clinton investigation by Inspector General Michael Horowitz



SAMIRA BOUAOU/THE EPOCH TIMES

Michael Horowitz, inspector general at the Department of Justice, at a Senate hearing in Washington on June 18, 2018.

Who Had Access?

Gmail is a free email service provided by Google, which scans the contents of users' mailboxes to personalize its services, according to a 2017 Variety report. That opens the possibility that Google had scanned the entire content of Clinton's email archive.

Horowitz had promised Congress in 2018 that he would look into what the FBI did to investigate the Gmail account matter. Horowitz reported back in an April 9 letter to Sens. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) and Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) with his office's findings.

The IG "did not identify any information obtained by the FBI during the ... investigation reflecting that Combetta's ... email account was associated with a Chinese company or the Chinese government," the letter said.

"In addition, based on the evidence the DOJ OIG reviewed, the FBI did not find evidence during its ... investigation that Combetta (or anyone else) forwarded classified emails from the ... email account to a foreign or domestic entity."

The FBI got a court order to obtain "business records concerning the Combetta ... email account," the letter read.

The IG reviewed the records and determined that Combetta set up the account in 2012.

"Subscriber and login information obtained by the FBI confirmed that the ... email account was Combetta's," the letter said, noting the records showed the account was created by a "subscriber whose phone number was registered to Combetta."

The letter also states that "logins in 2015 and 2016 [to the account] were from an IP address linked to the location where Combetta lived and worked remotely for PRN."

It's not clear, however, how far back the FBI was able to obtain the login data. The letter doesn't address whether somebody accessed the account prior to 2015.

Given the sensitivity of Clinton's emails, apparently amid the Benghazi scandal at the time, it's unclear why Combetta would choose to use a Gmail account to transfer the emails, why he didn't set up a new account for the purpose, and why he failed for years to delete all of the emails from the account.

He declined to be interviewed by the IG.

Second Archive

The way Combetta obtained the email archive in the first place could raise more questions still.

He took over the management of Clinton's emails in mid-2013 from Bryan Pagliano, former IT director for Clinton's 2008 presidential campaign and later State Department employee.

It was Pagliano who infamously set up the private email server in the basement of Clinton's house in Chappaqua, New York.

Combetta set up a new server at a facility in Secaucus, New Jersey, and around June 30, 2013, transferred all of the email accounts from the old server to the new one.

"At around the time of the transition to the PRN server in the spring of 2013, Clinton's former aide, Monica Hanley, created two archives of Clinton's emails from the Pagliano Server, one on a thumb drive (Archive Thumb Drive) and one on a laptop computer (Archive Laptop)," the 2018 IG report states.

"In early 2014, Hanley mailed the Archive Laptop to Combetta to transfer Clinton's archived emails to the PRN server. She further directed him to 'wipe' the Archive Laptop and mail it to Clinton's office assistant at the Clinton Foundation after he completed the transfer."

It's not clear what compelled Hanley to ask Combetta to transfer the emails to the PRN server half a year after all of the emails had already been successfully migrated to it. She just told the FBI she "realized she still had" the laptop and contacted PNR "on her own accord."

Lost Laptop, Lost Thumb Drive

The laptop was an Apple MacBook, Combetta told the FBI in a Sept. 15, 2015, interview. Hanley told the FBI she used the built-in email application on the laptop to access the emails. That suggests she archived them in the Apple file format, which would have been incompatible with the Microsoft Exchange system on the PRN server. There are generally two ways to solve such an incompatibility. One is to purchase a software that converts the archive's format from Apple to Exchange. The other is to use a "dummy" account, such as Gmail. The emails are first copied from the Apple device to the Gmail account and then copied back into an Exchange mailbox.

Combetta told the FBI he used a "dummy" email to transfer the emails, then deleted the emails from the laptop, and mailed the laptop to Clinton's office assistant.

He said he didn't "wipe" the laptop, however, which leaves the possibility that the emails could still be recovered from the laptop's hard drive.

"Email records obtained by the FBI showed that Clinton's office assistant sent emails to Combetta in both March and April 2014 asking when she should expect to receive the 'wiped laptop;' however, Clinton's office assistant told the FBI that she did not recall ever receiving it," the IG report states.

"An analyst told us and FBI records show that the team sought and obtained records from multiple mail carriers in an effort to locate the Archive Laptop. Based on these records, the FBI was able to confirm that the laptop was delivered to Paul Combetta on February 24, 2014; however, the FBI found no records showing that Combetta mailed the Archive Laptop to Clinton's office assistant as requested."

The laptop is apparently still missing, but that still leaves the thumb drive.

The FBI "attempted to obtain" it from Hanley, "but she stated she could not recall what happened to it." She told the FBI she may have given it to Clinton's long-time aide Huma Abedin.

The thumb drive, it seems, is still missing today.

The IG and FBI didn't respond to requests for comment.

The American Left Goes Increasingly Stalinist

ROGER L. SIMON

Commentary

It may seem, well, Stalinist to accuse the American left—in essence, a fair portion of the Democratic Party—of going Stalinist or using Stalinist tactics, consciously or unconsciously (usually, let's hope, the latter), but events of the past few years give us little choice.

Calling nearly all their opponents "racists," as so many "progressive" Democrats do, whether they are or not—and not even seeming to care if this is so—is straight out of Stalin's NKVD secret police disinformation playbook.

Lying or, equally bad, purposefully ignoring the obvious truth is another similar technique, as virtually all leftist and liberal media have done regarding the Dayton, Ohio, gunman. He was an avowed supporter of leftist presidential candidate Elizabeth Warren, although we hear almost no mention of that in "progressive" or even "liberal" quarters (they're melding), only endless repetition that the El Paso, Texas, shooter was inspired by President Donald Trump, even if he wasn't.

Missing, too, and equally obvious is that the motivations of such killers are considerably deeper than anybody's politics. More often than not, they stem from issues far more complex and intractable than the to-and-fro of daily events.

None of this stops the left because, after all, the ends justify the means.

As we draw closer to the truth via the inspector general's report and, even more, the conclusion of the Department of Justice investigation being conducted by U.S. Attorney John Durham, we'll find this Stalinism on a higher, indeed national, plane that strikes at the very core of our republic. Although the full extent isn't yet known, we're likely to see the whole Russia probe to have been a plot to prevent Trump from becoming president or, failing that, to tarnish his presidency irrevocably.

House Judiciary Committee Chairman Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-N.Y.) listens to Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) in New York on March 20, 2019.

DREW ANGERER/GETTY IMAGES

> As Lavrentiy Beria, Stalin's notorious chief of secret police, famously put it, 'Show me the man and I'll show you the crime.'

A protester holds a sign reading "Make Racists Afraid Again" following a mass shooting that left at least 22 people dead in El Paso, Texas, on Aug. 7, 2019.

How Stalinist is that! As Lavrentiy Beria, Stalin's notorious chief of secret police, famously put it, "Show me the man and I'll show you the crime." In this case, our president was the man and the bogus claim of Russia collusion was the invented crime.

This clandestine approach to—or should we say sabotage of—the foundations of American life and politics didn't begin with Trump. It began long ago, even before the Roosevelt years, and has ebbed and flowed since. This recent rise can be dated from 1991, when then-Vermont congressman, and now presidential candidate, Bernie Sanders helped found the Congressional Progressive Caucus along with Rep. Maxine Waters (D-Calif.) and a few others. Sanders, at that point, was just back from spending his honeymoon in the Soviet Union.

Joining shortly thereafter was Rep. Jerry Nadler (D-N.Y.), who now leads the impeachment chorus against Trump. Sanders, as almost everyone knows, was an avowed socialist, but so also, although it's lesser-known, was Nadler. The New York congressman was a member of several socialist organizations and was the one who convinced President Bill Clinton to commute—during his last days in office—Susan Rosenberg's sentence.

In 1981, Rosenberg allegedly drove a getaway car for the left-wing terror groups the "Weather Underground" and "Black Liberation Army" after they had robbed a Brink's truck, killing two policemen and a security guard in the process. Rosenberg got away, but they caught her three years later, this time unloading 740 pounds of explosives and an arsenal of weapons from a car. But 16 years later, she had reformed enough for her to go free, according to Nadler.

Of course, there's a bit of guilt-by-association here but, considering the endless impeachment accusations toward Trump by Nadler and others for nothing even approaching "high crimes and misdemeanors," assuming they're real at all, this use of Stalinist tactics must be exposed and ended.

It won't be easy. With a youth who know little of history, let alone left-wing history and its incomparably murderous past, our culture is infected. Yet, it must be done. We're at a crunch point.

Roger L. Simon, co-founder and CEO emeritus of PJ Media, is an award-winning author and an Academy Award-nominated screenwriter. His new novel, "The Goat," is available on Amazon Kindle. Paperback and hardcover to follow on Sept. 1.

Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.

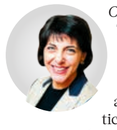
MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES

The Brain-Washing War on America's Mind and Soul

CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES

Attendees recite the Pledge of Allegiance at a Make America Great Again rally in Charlotte, N.C., on Oct. 26, 2018.

DIANA WEST



Commentary

There is a sinister war underway, a war of mental conditioning, as a new united front of communists, socialists, and liberals in media and politics attacks the American mind and soul as something immoral and hateful–something to be reviled as "racist" in every tweet and every news story, and demonized as "white nationalist" over every airwave, all to a point of reflexive consensus in the public square.

The ravages of history bear witness to the heinous results of eerily similar campaigns of public revilement in the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, and other totalitarian echo chambers. Should the tens of millions of Americans today and every day lashed as "racists" and "white nationalists"–that is, Republicans, Democrats, and Independents who support Donald Trump–be worried?

To be honest, it never before occurred to me to pose such a question. After all, this brainwashing war on the American mind and soul isn't new. In fact, it's over 100 years old, advanced in a highly organized way on the emergence of communist powers after the Russian Revolution of 1917. These powers have been used to destroy our nation from within by undermining religion and morals, breaking down the family, and subverting the educational system.

While a succession of presidents and generals "went that-a-way" to fight wars against communist armies everywhere else in the world, a very different kind of army of communists, socialists, and liberals never stopped their "boring from within," hollowing out and crashing the American mind and soul at home. After a century of massive, mainly masked communist victories, America languished in a twilight sleep, ignorant and deceived about its approaching expiration, when there was that unexpected call from that unlikely candidate to "build a wall."

The rest isn't history, because this last American gasp–"build a wall" and what went with it in President Donald Trump's counter-revolutionary agenda to restore America as a nation-state–triggered a pitched battle that continues to rage, and will continue to rage all the way to Election Day 2020.

Hence, an ever-intensifying invective against the very existence of the American mind and soul as "racist" and "white nationalist." What is troubling with regard to the potential for state violence or coercion against this large, relentlessly demonized stratum of America is that the primary source of the invective is not "the street" or "radical fringe," but the top leaders and most influential figures in the Democratic Party.

What if they win?

It's no exaggeration to observe that Democratic politics today are all about whipping up rage against America: rage against borders, against immigration control; rage against Americans who support borders and immigration control. If it was bad in 2016, it's out of control today and will worsen tomorrow.

The ravages of history bear witness to the heinous results of eerily similar campaigns of public revilement in the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, and other totalitarian echo chambers.

That's because the spur to this rage is nakedly racial, brutally divisive, and, most important, purposefully so. As a matter of strategy, Democrats have inverted the national motto, E pluribus unum, to pit many races against "white America," harnessing the currents of a race-hatred they promulgate to propose "open borders" as the solution, or taxpayer support for aliens by the tens of thousands as the means to atone.

An attendee stands during the Pledge of Allegiance at the CPAC Conference in National Harbor, Md., on Feb. 22, 2018.

ANDREW HARRER/BLOOMBERG VIA GETTY IMAGES

Shocking as it may seem, since such policies, even at this late, nearly post-America date, remain a hard sell on a national ticket, the only way for Democrats to lock up one-party rule through the uninterrupted flow of big-government-supporting aliens is to foment hatred of their own country, from its founding (read: "White America") to its majority population (read: "White America"). If that's not playing with revolutionary fire, what is?

Thus, according to every anti-America Democrat vying for presidential power, the Nation of Islam's Louis Farrakhan was right all along about the "blue-eyed devils." "White America," they tell us each and every day, is "racist." "White America," they repeat 24/7, is "white nationalist." It doesn't take a whiz kid to see that Democrats believe "White America" is evil, and everyone knows evil must be fought–and eradicated.

The question then becomes, should the cataclysm come upon us and Trump not win re-election, how, in a Democratic administration of a President Kamala Harris, Elizabeth Warren, or Cory Booker et. al., do millions of American patriots not become the new kulaks of Stalin's USSR, the new Jews of Hitler's Germany?

It's quite clear that in the Democrats' cold, hard eyes, it is not only "racist" and "white nationalist" to build a wall, it's "racist" and "white nationalist" to survive.

Diana West is an award-winning journalist and author, whose latest book is "The Red Thread: A Search for Ideological Drivers Inside the Anti-Trump Conspiracy."

Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.

DAVID MCNEW/GETTY IMAGES

Protesters hold placards by the Party for Socialism & Liberation, in Long Beach, Calif., on April 28, 2019.

In US History, the Right to Arms Is Associated With Liberty, Legal Equality; **Gun Control Isn't**

HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES; ARTWORK: WILLIAM BARNES WOLLEN

The Battle of Lexington on April 19, 1775, which marked the beginning of the American War of Independence.

DAVID KOPEL

Commentary

The New York Times has recently unveiled a "1619 project" that will, in the words of New York Times editorial board member Mara Gay, demonstrate "that nearly everything that has made America exceptional grew out of slavery."

If The New York Times' project is historically accurate, then it will explain that America's unique arms culture predates slavery, and historically developed in opposition to slavery. By contrast, American gun control had a close connection with slavery and the maintenance of a racial caste system.

Throughout U.S. history, the right to bear arms has been associated with liberty and legal equality, and gun control with the opposite.

The New York Times chose the "1619" name because that was the year the first slaves were imported into British North America, in Virginia. That's the founding year for gun control in America, with a Virginia statute forbidding blacks and Indians to have arms, unless they were issued a license "to keep and use guns, powder, and shot."

By contrast, gun rights in America were solidly established before 1619–indeed, before the first colonists landed at Jamestown. When the Virginia colonists set sail from England in 1606, they brought with them the first express written guarantee of arms rights in the English-speaking world, the Virginia Company charter granted earlier that year by England's King James I.

The king, binding his "Heirs and Successors," gave "full Power and Authority" to the leaders of the Virginia company and "so many of our subjects as shall willingly accompany them," for all of them to bring "Armour, Weapons, Ordinance, Powder ... for their Use and Defence there." Virginians were guaranteed a perpetual right to import "Armour, Munition," and other items for "Defence or otherwise." The New England Company's 1620 charter contained a similar guarantee. The territorial bounds of the Virginia and New England charters covered all of what would become the continental United States.

The American colonists' political association with the English king ended when the king stopped adhering to those principles. In October 1774, King George II embargoed the shipment of firearms or gunpowder to the American colonies and ordered royal governors to begin confiscating arms and ammunition. Coercive disarmament set off the American Revolution, when confiscation was met with armed resistance at Lexington and Concord, in Massachusetts, on April 19, 1775.

Gun rights in America were solidly established before 1619—indeed, before the first colonists landed at Jamestown.

A portrait of Civil War 'contrabands,' fugitive slaves who were emancipated upon reaching the North, sit outside a house in mid-1860s Arlington, Va.

A Change of Culture

Almost as soon as the English colonists had landed in Virginia and New England, their arms culture began to change. As of the early 17th century, most Englishmen couldn't shoot a firearm accurately, nor did they need to. European battles were fought by two armies lining up opposite each other, and just shooting volleys in the general direction of the closely packed troops of the enemy.

By contrast, American Indians were outstandingly accurate with their bows, and quickly applied the same skills to firearms, which were their favorite good to obtain in trade with the colonists. Unlike Englishmen, Indians could shoot while moving and could hit mobile targets. Instead of open-field battles, Indians fought with quick raids and ambushes.

To survive Indian attacks, the colonists had to master the same skills. The colonists also needed to learn accuracy and mobility for hunting. While hunting in England was allowed only for the aristocracy, hunting in America was legal for everyone, and often necessary to put food on the table.

By necessity, early Americans began to shift from the most common firearm type, the matchlock, which is ignited when the trigger lowers a slow-burning cord of hemp rope to touch a pan of gunpowder. The matchlock was impractical to keep in a constant state of readiness for defense against a surprise attack. The burning cord also revealed the location of the matchlock user. That didn't matter in European infantry battles, but was a fatal flaw in America, where fighting often took place in the woods, with both sides hiding behind natural cover. Concealment problems also made the matchlock inferior for hunting.

So Americans in the 17th century replaced their matchlocks with a more expensive gun, the flintlock. It's ignited by sparks from flint striking steel. The flintlock could be kept loaded and ready 24/7, and it didn't reveal the user's location until it was fired. The most famous early adopter of a flintlock was Captain Myles Standish, a former professional soldier who was a military leader of Plymouth Colony in 1620. There were no slaves in Plymouth then.

In the early 18th century, German immigrants in Pennsylvania invented the first distinctively American firearm, the Pennsylvania-Kentucky rifle. It was longer and much more accurate than a musket, and perfect for frontiersmen in the dense American woods. Thus grew what "American Rifle: A Biography," by Alexander Rose, calls the American "cult of accuracy." Quite a contrast to England, where one newspaper derided the English militia, who "wink with both eyes at their firing their musquets." (The Crisis, Sept. 21, 1776.)

In short, American gun culture originated as an Anglo-Indian hybrid. The English brought the guns, and the Indians demonstrated the gun-wielding skills that the colonists had to learn to imitate.

The cult of accuracy was maintained by superior American marksmanship in the many colonial wars–against the French, in the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Texan War of Independence, and the constant frontier struggles with the Indians.

During the Civil War, the urban soldiers of the Union were far inferior in marksmanship to the Confederates, most of whom were familiar with firearms because they were farmers. So in 1871, the National Rifle Association (NRA) was formed to promote good marksmanship by all Americans. Unlike most sporting organizations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the NRA was always open to people of all colors. As of the 1950s, the NRA range in Washington was one of the very few places of public amusement in the city that wasn't racially segregated.

Racist Gun Control

Unlike American gun culture, gun control in America did grow out of slavery. Most colonies at one time or another attempted to limit arms sales to hostile Indians, which were, legally speaking, foreign nations. None of these gun controls had much success.

But gun controls for blacks were a different matter.

The colonies with large slave populations also had significant populations of free blacks. South of the Mason-Dixon line, various laws were enacted against unauthorized arms possession by slaves, and sometimes against free blacks as well. In the South, slave patrols searched slave quarters to look for unauthorized arms.

Today, some people believe a bogus theory that the Second Amendment was created for the sole purpose of suppressing slave insurrections. But this can't explain the ardent support for arms rights in Massachusetts, where slavery had already been abolished by 1791, or in Pennsylvania, where slavery was rare and already on its way to extinction.

In fact, American abolitionists such as Joel Tiffany and Lysander Spooner later used the Second Amendment to argue that slavery was unconstitutional: The distinction between a free person and a slave is that the latter is forbidden to possess arms. Because the Constitution guaranteed all persons the right to keep and bear arms, it thereby implicitly forbade slavery.

Soon after the Confederacy surrendered in 1865, Frederick Douglass warned that even after slavery was abolished (as it would be, by the Thirteenth Amendment later that year) the slave states would try to keep the ex-slaves in de facto servitude. Douglass explained the need for federal law to stop state and local governments from infringing the freedmen's rights. Until there was a new constitutional amendment to make states obey the Second Amendment, "the work of the Abolitionists is not finished."

Douglass was right. The former slave states quickly enacted laws banning firearms possession by blacks, or allowing such possession only with a government license. The Reconstruction Congress responded vigorously. The Second Freedmen's Bureau Bill, the Civil Rights Act, and then the Fourteenth Amendment were all enacted with the express purpose of wiping out southern gun control.

Once racially explicit gun laws were forbidden by the Fourteenth Amendment and other federal laws, devious white racist legislatures took an indirect approach. In South Carolina, the law against concealed carry was often ignored for whites, and ruthlessly enforced against blacks. Tennessee and Arkansas outlawed all handguns except the "Army & Navy" models. So former Confederate soldiers could keep their large and expensive handguns, while poor blacks were deliberately priced out of the handgun market.

After blacks started using repeating rifles to resist lynch mobs, Florida in 1893 enacted the first American gun control specific to firearms types. It required a government license to possess "a pistol, Winchester rifle, or other repeating rifle." As a Florida Justice acknowledged in 1941, "The statute was never intended to be applied to the white population and in practice has never been so applied ... because it has been generally conceded to be in contravention of the Constitution and nonenforceable if contested."

In the early 20th century, Southern-style racist gun control spread north, now aimed at recent immigrants. A New York Times editorial of Jan. 27, 1905, urged the adoption of handgun licensing as "corrective and salutary in a city filled with immigrants and evil communications, floating from the shores of Italy and Austria-Hungary."

If The New York Times' "1619 Project" is accurate, it shows that America's exceptional culture of gun rights grew independently of slavery, whereas American gun control started with slavery in 1619. Like many arms controls around the world, from ancient times to the present, the controls were to ensure that subservient populations stayed subservient.

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Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.

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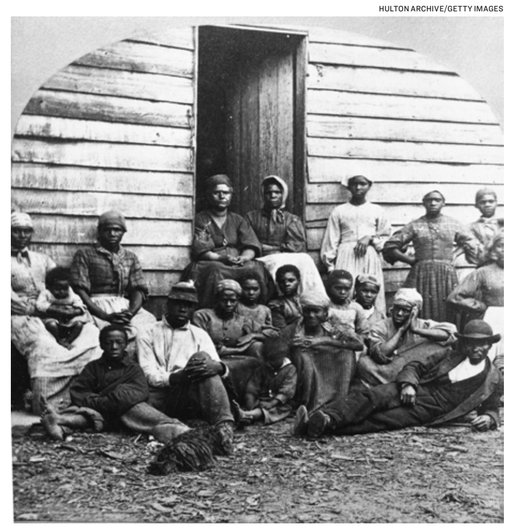

DSA Channels Stalin, Pulls Off Crafty Move With Exclusive Sanders Endorsement

TREVOR LOUDON

Commentary

The Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) pulled off a deft move at its biennial National Convention in Atlanta in early August.

The United States' largest Marxist organization passed a resolution declaring that it wouldn't endorse any Democrat except Bernie Sanders in next year's presidential election.

Many commentators, including some less-sophisticated DSA comrades, saw this as a bad move. One opposing delegate summed up the argument of many when he or she said, "Trump is too dangerous to take cards off the table right now"; that side narrowly lost the resolution battle.

The argument is that the DSA has backed itself into a corner. If Sanders loses, they reason, the DSA will be unable to endorse the winner. That will mean that the DSA will be sidelined, marginalized from the anti-Trump opposition that will coalesce around the Democratic nominee—which this author believes will be Sen. Kamala Harris from California.

In a move likely designed to heal post-conference divisions over the Sanders endorsement, decadeslong DSA comrade Harold Meyerson wrote an essay for The American Prospect, titled "What the Socialists Just Did—and Why," explaining why the DSA has done a very clever thing.

Meyerson, a professional journalist who has worked for The Los Angeles Times and The Washington Post, starts by summing up the failed faction's fears:

"It's a good thing that organizations don't have children or grandchildren. If they did, you could envision little tykes (well, little infant prodigies) 50 years from now asking their grandparent—the Democratic Socialists of America—'What did you do in the war against the neofascist Donald Trump?' only to be met by an awkward pause."

Meyerson understands that fear well, but his lifetime of experience on the far-left has taught him to think more strategically. He understands full well that even without a formal endorsement, DSA comrades will work hard for almost any anti-Trump candidate—just as they did for Hillary Clinton in 2016.

Meyerson continues:

"The vote on the resolution was actually fairly close, though support for Sanders in the primaries is overwhelming within the organization. And its proponents provided a number of qualifications and caveats, making clear that DSA members are free to campaign for the eventual Democratic nominee if they so choose, and that in 2016, DSA locals did campaign against Trump (and members for Hillary) in swing states."

But here's the real deal. Meyerson harkens back to World War II, when the Communist Party USA (CPUSA)—then at the height of its power and influence—dissolved itself on the seeming orders of party Chairman Earl Browder. The dissolution of a mighty, disciplined party into a loose collection of "Communist Political Associations" shocked many at the time. Why would a powerful growing party dissolve itself voluntarily into some vague loosely knit "association" when so much was going in its favor?

Meyerson tells us why. It's the first time I've seen the real reason publicly admitted:

"In 1944, the U.S. Communist Party effectively, if temporarily, self-abolished so its members could support Franklin Roosevelt's re-election bid, as part of the fight against fascism. To be sure, that move came at the behest of Joseph Stalin, whose nation was allied with ours in the existential battle against Hitler. ... [The] U.S. Communist Party understood the gravity of the fascist threat. Why not DSA?"

It was all a ruse, you see. After President Franklin D. Roosevelt won reelection, the CPUSA reconstituted itself and carried on just as before. In other words, Stalin told the CPUSA to (temporarily) dissolve so the "communist" issue wouldn't interfere with Roosevelt's reelection chances. The CPUSA was intimately interlocked at every level with Roosevelt's administration and the Democratic Party. This was worrying to millions of American voters and was a real liability for the Democrats.

BILL PUGLIANO/GETTY IMAGES

Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) participates in a Presidential Candidates Forum in Detroit on July 24, 2019.

In 1944, Robert R. McCormick, publisher of the Chicago Tribune, expressed many voters' concerns when he claimed that the communist-dominated Council of Industrial Organizations (CIO) was leading Roosevelt by the nose:

"They call it the Democratic national convention but obviously it is the CIO convention. Franklin D. Roosevelt is the candidate of the CIO and the Communists because they know if elected, he will continue to put the government of the United States at their service, at home and abroad. ... The CIO is in the saddle and the Democrat donkey, under whip and spur, is meekly taking the road to communism and atheism. ... Everybody knows that Roosevelt is the Communist candidate."

So to help Roosevelt get elected, Stalin took the "communist" card off the table. Moscow has been manipulating U.S. elections for more than 70 years now—almost always in favor of Democrats.

History repeats. Now, socialism is the "bogey" of the day, and Democrats don't want to be tarred with that brush—although they richly deserve it.

Now, socialism is the 'bogey' of the day, and the Democrats don't want to be tarred with that brush.

Comrade Meyerson explains:

"[I] seem to have a political-consultant mind. And that mind tells me that the eventual Democratic presidential nominee needs the formal endorsement of DSA like a hole in the head."

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Meyerson acknowledges that a DSA endorsement can be great for a local candidate in a left-leaning area, but it could play disastrously on a national stage:

"Where DSA is strong and where socialist and progressive candidates can win—generally, in cities with substantial populations of millennials, immigrants, and minorities—a DSA endorsement can make all the difference, producing scads of the most tireless precinct walkers and dedicated phone-bankers. It has made that difference in New York, Chicago, and any number of smaller cities."

But here's the kicker:

"In nearly every state, and certainly in the nation at large, however, a DSA endorsement would be one more item on the bill of particulars the Republicans would hurl at the Democratic nominee in hopes of revving up more of their right-wing base. In every encounter with reporters, the nominee would be pressed about DSA's endorsement."

In other words, a DSA endorsement would give President Donald Trump ammunition against the Democratic nominee. The DSA will use Sanders's doomed campaign to build DSA membership and further the mainstreaming of socialism. By not officially opting to get behind the Democratic nominee, potential DSA recruits will admire how staunch and principled they are. A DSA endorsement wouldn't hurt Sanders, but it would surely hurt Harris or any other Democratic candidate and may even cost the election.

When Sanders inevitably fails, better to not publicly endorse the winner, but work for her quietly behind the scenes instead.

Meyerson gets pretty explicit about this strategy—in case some of the slower comrades don't catch on. He invokes the tactic that Atlanta DSA pursued when pressed to endorse far-leftist Stacey Abrams during her very tight race for the Georgia governorship in 2018:

"I think DSA's national political committee might take a leaf from the group's Atlanta local during Stacey Abrams's 2018 campaign for governor. At the time, the local wasn't endorsing nonsocialists, and some of its members likely believed—rightly, I'd say—that a DSA endorsement would be one more cross Abrams would have to bear in her bid to carry Georgia. Nonetheless, every other progressive group inside and outside the state was enthusiastically backing her, and many DSA members were eagerly working on her campaign. Here's what the local said:

"'For many reasons, we cannot endorse Abrams ourselves, but neither can we stand aside while our friends and allies fight for something they know will make their lives better. We voted to encourage our members, if they feel so moved, to stand up and fight in this election cycle.'"

Which is exactly what they did. Many DSA comrades were involved in the Abrams campaign, which came within a whisker of success. However, there was no formal DSA endorsement for the Republicans to hang around Abrams's neck. Abrams got all the socialist support she needed—with none of the stigma of being supported by Marxists.

Sophisticated DSAers know their endorsement won't hurt Sanders and may even help him slightly. They can use the Sanders movement to build their numbers, and if by some miracle he wins the Democratic primary, the DSA can take the credit.

If he loses—which he almost certainly will—the DSA will be spared a divisive battle over endorsing the eventual nominee—who won't want their endorsement. The Democratic leadership wants to distance themselves from DSAers Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Rashida Tlaib, not give them center stage. The DSA may then get behind whomever is up against Trump, without embarrassing either themselves or the Democratic nominee.

Confirms comrade Meyerson:

"In 2020, DSA's friends and allies—in immigrant communities and communities of color, in groups seeking to combat the climate crisis and save the planet, in organizations of working people seeking a radically more equitable economy and society—will be fighting for their lives to replace Trump with a Democrat. It won't be a battle between socialism and barbarism, but it will be a battle against barbarism, and the Atlanta statement offers a way that DSA can join it."

Sounds like a win-win all around—for everybody, that is, except the U.S. voter.

(L–R) British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Secretary General of the Soviet Communist Party Joseph Stalin pose at the start of the Conference of the Allied powers in Yalta, Crimea, on Feb. 4, 1945.

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