

THE EPOCH TIMES

OUR NATION

Becoming a Mortarman: 97-Year-Old Veteran Recalls WWII

Stepping back on American soil after the war ended was indescribable for Bruno Stanga: 'No telling it really. You're just on air' **8**

A member of the U.S. Army Europe Band & Chorus stands among graves at the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial on the 75th anniversary of the World War II Allied D-Day invasion, in Colleville-sur-Mer, France, on June 6, 2019.



STR/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



Iranian students climb over the wall of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran on Nov. 4, 1979.

US Calls on Iran to Release Americans on 40th Anniversary of US Embassy Takeover

PETR SVAB

The administration of President Donald Trump urged the Iranian regime on Nov. 4 to release American citizens in its custody.

The call came on the 40th anniversary of the day that Iranian militants stormed the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, taking more than 50 Americans hostage for over 14 months.

The American captives "are a grim reminder that the regime is fundamentally exactly the same as it was 40 years ago," a senior administration official said during a Nov. 4 conference call with reporters, noting that the hostage crisis anniversary "is an excellent opportunity for the Iranian regime to renounce its current practice of hostage-taking, and immediately and unconditionally release all unjustly detained Americans on Iranian soil in a sign that they are truly ready to rejoin the international community."

Four Americans are known to be currently detained by Tehran: two on espionage charges, one for unknown reasons, and one for "collaborating with enemy states," according to the advocacy group Center for Human Rights in Iran.

In addition, former FBI agent Robert Levinson is believed to be held by Iran, although his circumstances are unknown. The administration announced an offer of up to \$20 million for credible information leading to Levinson's safe return, an administration official said during the conference call.

Levinson disappeared in Kish Island, Iran, on March 9, 2007. The last picture his family saw of him alive is from April 2011, the official said. Iran previously denied holding Levinson.

In 2009, the FBI, under Director Robert Mueller, asked Russian oligarch Oleg Deripaska to spend millions on an operation to locate and free Levinson, according to a 2018 report by investigative journalist John Solomon.

The mission, which uncovered photos indicating that Levinson was alive, was thwarted by the State Department, then led by Hillary Clinton, which was "uncomfortable with Iran's terms [for Levinson's release], according to Deripaska's lawyer and the Levinson family," Solomon wrote, saying Deripaska was still rewarded by repeatedly being allowed to travel to the United States, despite allegations of ties to organized crime.

The reward for information on Levinson, which was first set on \$1 million in 2012, was raised to \$5 million in 2015.

New Sanctions

Also on Nov. 4, the administration imposed sanctions on nine appointees and representatives of Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, including Ebrahim Raisi, who is responsible for thousands of extrajudicial killings, including executions of seven children by the regime, one official said.

Two of the sanctioned people have also been linked to the 1983 U.S. Marine barracks bombing in Beirut that killed 241 U.S. service members, and the 1994 bombing in Buenos Aires, Argentina, of the Argentine Israeli Mutual Association, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a Nov. 4 statement.

The sanctions add to an already extensive number imposed on Iran and its leadership by the administration upon Trump's withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal last year.

Violating the Deal

Iran announced on Nov. 4 that it's doubled the number of uranium centrifuges it operates, to 60 from 30, further violating the deal it made with world powers in 2015.

Iran has repeatedly announced actions in violation of the deal, trying to pressure its European signatories to make up for the economic impact of the U.S. sanctions since the United States withdrew from the deal.

Tehran has gone from producing about one pound of low-enriched uranium a day to 11 pounds a day, said Ali Akbar Salehi, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran.

Iran is currently enriching uranium to 4.5 percent, in violation of the accord's limit of 3.67 percent. At the 4.5 percent level, it's enough to help power Iran's Bushehr reactor, the country's only nuclear power plant, but not enough to develop a nuclear weapon.

Increased centrifuge capacity could allow Iran to cut the time it needs to produce a nuclear weapon sooner than the previously estimated one year. Salehi also announced that Iran is working on a prototype centrifuge, which would work 50 times faster than the ones allowed under the deal.

Trump has criticized the deal for only delaying Iran's nuclear ambitions by about a decade and leaving out a plethora of other grievances the United States has had with the mullah regime, including the development of ballistic missiles and supporting

The Iranian regime continues to target innocent civilians for use as pawns in its failed foreign relations.

Stephanie Grisham, White House press secretary



Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in Washington on Oct. 31, 2019.

terrorists and militants across the Middle East.

In September, Washington blamed Iran for an attack on oil facilities in Saudi Arabia that interrupted nearly 58 percent of Saudi oil production and more than 5.5 percent of the world's daily output. Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen claimed responsibility.

"The Iranian regime continues to target innocent civilians for use as pawns in its failed foreign relations," White House press secretary Stephanie Grisham said in a Nov. 4 release on the 1979 hostage crisis anniversary. "Until Iran changes this and its other hostile behavior, we will continue to impose crippling sanctions."

She said the regime "has a choice" between "being the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism" and putting "the Iranian people first."

"It can choose peace over hostage taking, assassinations, sabotage, maritime hijacking, and attacks on global oil markets," she said. "The United States seeks peace, and we support the Iranian people. It is time for the Iranian regime to do the same."

Khamenei: No Negotiations

The anniversary was marked in Iran by protests in multiple cities featuring the burning of U.S. flags and chants of "death to America."

"Our fight with America is over our independence, over not submitting to bullying, over values, beliefs, and our religion," army chief Maj. Gen. Abdolrahim Mousavi said in a speech at the rally outside the former U.S. embassy in Tehran.

"They [Americans] will continue their hostilities, like the proverbial

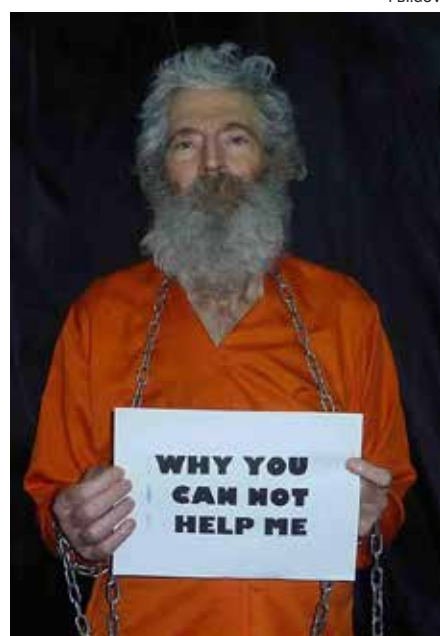
poisonous scorpion whose nature it is to sting and cannot be stopped unless it is crushed," Mousavi said in remarks carried by state TV.

On Nov. 3, Khamenei, who has the ultimate say on all state matters, renewed a ban on talks with the United States.

"Those who believe that negotiations with the enemy will solve our problems are 100 percent wrong," he said. Iran's parliament gave initial approval to a measure requiring school books to inform students about "America's crimes." Lawmakers also chanted "Death to America."

Both Saudi Arabia and the neighboring United Arab Emirates are believed to be talking to Tehran through back channels.

The Associated Press and Reuters contributed to this report.



Missing Retired FBI Agent Robert Levinson in one of the images emailed anonymously to Levinson's family in 2011.

Criticisms Mount to Warren's Medicare for All Plan

WASHINGTON—U.S. presidential

contender Elizabeth Warren's plan to provide health care for all Americans, which she estimates would cost just under \$52 trillion over 10 years, was attacked over the weekend by Republicans and fellow Democrats and parodied on NBC's "Saturday Night Live," the long-running television comedy show.

The "Medicare for All" proposal, which Warren's 2020 presidential campaign released on Nov. 1, calls for cuts in defense spending and passing immigration reform to increase tax revenue from newly legal immigrants, two steps that would face an uphill battle in Congress.

It would also be funded by cost-cutting, business contributions, and new taxes on Wall Street, big businesses, and wealthy individuals, all of which carry their own challenges.

Warren, a U.S. senator from Massachusetts, has emerged as a front-runner along with former Vice President Joe Biden in the race for the Democratic nomination to face Republican President Donald Trump in the November 2020 election.

Warren, a former law professor, has become known for a bevy of detailed policy proposals. But she had faced criticism for not detailing how she would pay for the Medicare for All plan. The proposal was introduced in the U.S. Senate by rival Democratic candidate Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.).

Her health care overhaul would replace private health insurance, including employer-sponsored plans, with full government-sponsored coverage, and individuals would no longer have to pay premiums, deductibles, co-pays, or other out-of-pocket costs.

It would extend Medicare, the U.S. government's health insurance program for people 65 years and older and the disabled, to cover all Americans.

Warren has said it would provide health care coverage for some 27 million Americans who are currently uninsured and that the taxes wouldn't affect the middle class, while saving American households \$11 trillion in out-of-pocket spending over the next decade.

She released letters from experts, in-

This my-way-or-the-highway idea, that either you're for kicking everybody off their private plans in four years or you're for business as usual, it's just not true.

Pete Buttigieg, Democratic presidential contender and mayor of South Bend, Indiana



SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES

Democratic presidential candidate and former Vice President Joe Biden speaks at the Liberty and Justice Celebration in Des Moines, Iowa, on Nov. 1, 2019.

cluding Mark Zandi, the chief economist at Moody's Analytics, supporting her calculations.

Biden took issue with Warren's explanation of who would pay for her proposal.

"Her plan would create a new tax on employers of almost \$9 trillion that would come out of workers' pockets, a new financial transaction tax that would impact investments held by middle-class Americans, and a new capital gains tax that would affect far more people than she stated tonight," Biden said in a statement on Nov. 2.

Another Democratic presidential contender, South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, said the plan's elimination of private insurance was too inflexible.

"This my-way-or-the-highway idea, that either you're for kicking everybody off their private plans in four years or you're for business as usual, it's just not true," Buttigieg said on ABC's "This Week" on Nov. 3.

Sanders told ABC News his Medicare for All approach "will be much more progressive in terms of protecting the financial well-being of middle income families." Sanders' campaign has not yet released a detailed plan explaining how he would fund the proposal.

'Not Going to Happen'

Rahm Emanuel, who was chief of staff for former Democratic President

Barack Obama and previously called Medicare for All a "pipe dream," said Warren's campaign would be forever associated with the idea in the future, to its detriment.

"This was Bernie's idea, and now, she owns the idea," he said. "His issue is not going to happen, and it is not the way you argue health care."

On Nov. 3, the Republican National Committee called the price tag of Warren's approach to health care "staggering" on Twitter.

"Elizabeth Warren's policies are so radical, the math doesn't even come close," Steve Bannon, a former adviser to Trump, said on Fox News on Nov. 3. Warren's plan was the focus of a nearly eight-minute-long opening skit on "Saturday Night Live" that was widely circulated on social media afterward.

"When Bernie was talking Medicare for All, everybody was like, 'Oh cool,' and then they turned to me and they said, 'Fix it, Mom,'" said Kate McKinnon, who plays Warren on the show. "I'll do it because that's what Moms do."

To fund the plan, "we're going to cut military spending, so ... immediately dead in the water," the actor said. The plan also requires that the United States tax billionaires like Jeff Bezos and big banks, she added. "All we have to do is convince JPMorgan to operate like a non-profit," McKinnon said.

By Heather Timmons

From Reuters



SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES

Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) speaks to the press before the start of the Liberty and Justice Celebration in Des Moines, Iowa, on Nov. 1, 2019.

Russia Probe Was Watergate-Like Breach of Trump Campaign, Investigative Journalist Says

PETR SVAB

Investigative journalist Lee Smith says the story of the origins of the FBI investigation into Trump campaign aides can be likened to the Watergate scandal, in the sense that it was a break-in—an electronic one—to rummage through the campaign's communications.

"If you think about it in terms of Watergate, it's easy to understand," he told Epoch Times senior editor Jan Jekielek on the Nov. 4 episode of "American Thought Leaders."

"It was an electronic break-in. The Clinton campaign wanted to find an October surprise to dump on Donald Trump."

Smith, a senior fellow at the conservative Hudson Institute, recently released a book, "The Plot Against the President," in which he lays out an argument that the presidential campaign of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton had the FBI probe the campaign of her opponent, Donald Trump, for damaging information.

He further argues that the Obama administration ran an operation targeting Trump possibly since late 2015, long before the FBI officially opened its counterintelligence probe on July 31, 2016. After the election, he suggested, the operation switched gears, and has since focused on undoing the election result.

Dossier Origins

A part of Smith's work was to try to retrace the origins of the Steele dossier, a collection of unsubstantiated claims that the Trump campaign colluded with Russia to sway the election.

No such collusion has been substantiated after nearly three years and multiple investigations.

The dossier is commonly believed to have been created by former British spy Christopher Steele, who was paid for the job, through intermediaries, by the Clinton campaign and the Democratic National Committee (DNC).

The dossier was used by the FBI to obtain a FISA spying warrant on former Trump campaign aide Carter Page—an event subject to a Justice Department's review that has reportedly turned into a criminal investigation.

Smith believes that the dossier wasn't actually written by Steele, but that it was a collective effort on behalf of the Clinton campaign to write a document for the express purpose of enabling spying on the Trump team.

"We have the order wrong, right? It starts with people who know how to write something, how to write a document to get a spy warrant," he said. "It's not like it comes out of the blue from Christopher Steele, who's finding all this marvelous stuff and has to go to the FBI. It's the other way around."

In Smith's view, Steele was a "salesman" of sorts, whose job was to use whatever reputation he had from his previous work with the FBI to market the dossier to the bureau as well as the press. Smith further suggested that the FBI itself may have had a role in composing the dossier.

He gave the example of Vladimir Trubnikov, a former director of Russian intelligence, who was allegedly one of Steele's sources.

Trubnikov was, in fact, a source for Stefan Halper, a Cambridge professor who was de facto outed as an FBI informer used to snoop on Trump campaign aides.

Halper listed Trubnikov as a source for a document he prepared for a secretive Defense Department think tank in 2015–2016. He also invited Trubnikov to teach at the Cambridge Intelligence Seminar (CIS) at least twice—in 2012 and in 2015—and Trubnikov obliged him both times, according to a defamation lawsuit filed against Halper by former CIS participant Svetlana Lohkova.

Lohkova, a UK-based historian of Russian origin, alleged that Halper fed lies to the media that led to the public gaining a misimpression that she had approached former Trump adviser Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn and engaged him



Investigative journalist Lee Smith, author of "The Plot Against the President," in New York on Nov. 2, 2019.

Certainly, no American wants to be governed by the intelligence community.

Lee Smith, investigative journalist and senior fellow, Hudson Institute

Then-FBI Director James Comey at bureau headquarters in Washington on June 23, 2014.



Then-FBI Director James Comey at bureau headquarters in Washington on June 23, 2014.

in a relationship, or possibly an affair, on behalf of Russian intelligence.

Michael Flynn

It was a major part of the anti-Trump operation, according to Smith, to paint Flynn, a three-decade Army veteran and former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency, as compromised by Russia.

The main reason was that Flynn talked about reforming U.S. intelligence, Smith said.

"Gen. Flynn wanted to find out what the intelligence community was doing. To what extent it was serving the American people and to what extent it was filling their own wallets and entertaining their own political desires and fantasies, how they wanted to see the bureaucracy shape up on behalf of their interests, not on behalf of the American people."

Flynn went as far as entertaining an audit of the intelligence community.

"Flynn was talking about asking the senior intelligence service, hundreds of people across the beltway, for their resignations," Smith said.

That doesn't necessarily mean the of-

ficials would have been fired, he said, "but they were going to have to justify what they were doing, and many of them wouldn't have made the cut."

"We see, therefore, how important it was for these people to flush out Gen. Flynn, to get Flynn out of the way," he said. "Conversely, we also see how important Gen. Flynn's work was."

Flynn was one of the Trump aides probed by the FBI for an alleged relationship with Russia.

He pleaded guilty on Nov. 30, 2017, to one count of lying to the FBI, but recently went on a legal offensive and expects to file a motion asking a federal judge to dismiss the case against him, his lawyer, Sidney Powell, said in a recent court filing.

Powell accused the government of withholding exculpatory information from Flynn and lacking a proper reason to investigate Flynn in the first place. The prosecutors disagreed.

New Look at Intelligence Community

Smith sees the anti-Trump operation fundamentally affecting U.S. intel-

ligence agencies down the road.

"I don't see how the intelligence community comes out of this looking the way it does now. There will have to be a profound, thoroughgoing reassessment of what purpose the intelligence community is meant to play," he said.

"Certainly, no American wants to be governed by the intelligence community. ... We don't want to be governed by unelected officials. We don't want to be spied on by unelected officials. And we don't want unelected bureaucrats trying to take out the president that has been elected by the American public."

Media Involvement

Smith portrayed much of the legacy media as complicit in the operation, even indispensable to it.

By subscribing to what Smith called a "conspiracy theory" of Trump-Russia collusion, the legacy media has caused "serious" damage to its credibility and its survival.

"It's an extinction-level event," he said.

BRENDON FALLON/THE EPOCH TIMES

Trump Proposes 'War' on Cartels After 9 Americans Killed in Mexico

PETR SVAB

President Donald Trump has extended an offer to help Mexico wage a "war" to eliminate drug cartels, after at least nine Americans were killed during a cartel shooting in the Mexican border state of Sonora.

"A wonderful family and friends from Utah got caught between two vicious drug cartels, who were shooting at each other, with the result being many great American people killed, including young children, and some missing," Trump wrote in a Nov. 5 tweet.

"If Mexico needs or requests help in cleaning out these monsters, the United States stands ready, willing & able to get involved and do the job quickly and effectively. The great new President of Mexico has made this a big issue, but the cartels have become so large and powerful that you sometimes need an army to defeat an army!"

A few minutes later, he added:

"This is the time for Mexico, with the help of the United States, to wage WAR on the drug cartels and wipe them off the face of the earth. We merely await a call from your great new president!"

Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said he would speak with Trump about possible cooperation on security, provided Mexico's sovereignty was upheld.

"I'll speak with President Trump to thank him for his support, and to see if, in cooperation agreements, there's the possibility of getting help," he told a news conference. "I don't think we need the intervention of a foreign government to deal with these cases."

Trump spoke to López Obrador on Nov. 5, "to discuss the recent violence in Mexico and efforts to combat the growing violent behavior of cartels and criminal groups in the region," White House deputy press secretary Hogan Gidley said in a release.

Three women and six children were gunned down, with others injured on Nov. 4, when cartel members attacked their vehicles

A wonderful family and friends from Utah got caught between two vicious drug cartels, who were shooting at each other.

President Donald Trump

If Mexico needs or requests help in cleaning out these monsters, the United States stands ready, willing & able to get involved and do the job quickly and effectively.

President Donald Trump

on a dirt road between the states of Chihuahua and Sonora, both bordering the United States. The deceased were members of the LeBaron family, a breakaway Mormon community that settled in the hills and plains of northern Mexico decades ago.

Mexico Security Minister Alfonso Durazo said there was a possibility of mistaken identity, given the high number of violent confrontations among warring drug gangs in the area.

"The convoy made up of suburban vans could have been confused with criminal groups that fight for control in the region," Durazo said, alongside López Obrador.

Runaway Violence

While Mexico has used its military to fight cartels for more than a decade, drug violence hasn't abated.

The government has recorded more than 250,000 homicides in the past dozen years, including more than 30,000 in the first seven months of 2019, most of them related to the drug war. And that excludes an unknown number of disappearances.

The violence spills over to the United States, with a large part of shootings and murders across the country related to drug-dealing gangs.

On top of that, the drugs smuggled from Mexico are a major driver behind the overdose epidemic in the United States that cost almost 70,000 lives in 2018.

The drug trade proceeds from the United States are then funding the cartel operations, allowing them to procure heavy armaments.

"We're talking about surface-to-air missiles, grenades. They have armored vehicles. They have big machine guns on the top of the vehicles," Derek Maltz, former head of the Drug Enforcement Administration's special operations division, previously told The Epoch Times.

'Massacre'

A video posted on social media showed the charred and smoking remains of a vehicle riddled with

bullet holes that was apparently carrying the victims when the attack happened.

"This is for the record," says a male voice off-camera in an American accent, choking up with emotion. "Nita and four of my grandchildren are burnt and shot up."

A family relative, Julian LeBaron, called the incident a "massacre" and said some family members were burned alive.

In a text message to Reuters, he wrote that four boys, two girls, and three women were killed. Several children who fled the attack were lost for hours in the countryside before being located, he said.

He said it was unclear who carried out the attack.

"We don't know why, though they had received indirect threats. We don't know who did it," he told Reuters.

"My cousin was murdered with her children in the truck," said Alex LeBaron, another relative in one of the villages inhabited by the extended family. He said all the victims were U.S. citizens, and most also held dual citizenship with Mexico.

Five children injured in the attack were transferred to hospitals in the United States, U.S. and Mexican authorities said.

Mormons versus Cartels

Mormons set up a colony in Chihuahua, Mexico, some 150 years ago when the United States outlawed their practice of polygamy.

The colony has had run-ins with the cartels for years, facing murder, kidnappings, and other crimes.

In 2010, two members of the Mormon community, including one from the LeBaron family, were killed in apparent revenge after the Mormons pressured authorities to secure the release of another member of their community kidnapped by the cartels.

The situation was so serious that the Mormons eventually broke Mexican laws and armed themselves for defense, Vice reported in 2012.

Reuters contributed to this report.

REUTERS/YURI GRIPAS



President Donald Trump walks out from the White House in Washington on Nov. 2, 2019.

MARK WILSON/GETTY IMAGES



National Security Council Director for European Affairs Alexander Vindman arrives for a closed-door deposition at the U.S. Capitol on Oct. 29, 2019.

Questions for Lt. Col. Vindman

DIANA WEST



Commentary

Halloween is over, but Lt. Col. Alexander Vindman's mask is still on. That's because his media and political patrons are doing everything they can to keep it from slipping.

They hold up his uniform, his ranger tab, his Purple Heart, his immigrant status, to create a facade that isn't only impervious to questions but withering to them. How dare anyone question Vindman's commitment, his loyalty to this country? Look at his uniform, his ranger tab, his Purple Heart, his immigrant status.

It's a thin disguise. There are grave reasons to scrutinize and question Vindman's behavior, regardless of whether he's a decorated veteran, an openly partisan Obama holdover, an immigrant from the old USSR, or all of the above.

The questions begin with Vindman's activities as a staffer on the president's National Security Council. Alarming reports indicate Vindman served as a source for the Ukrainian government inside the White House. This news may be padded by his protectors and muted by our general ignorance of the intelligence wars waged against this country, typically masterminded by the Kremlin, but it's nonetheless deeply concerning.

Further, given the sophisticated penetration talents of the Russian intelligence services, it's the height of foolhardiness to assume that Vindman's Ukrainian connections end in Kyiv.

The New York Times first reported the news about Vindman's Ukrainian communications by rationalizing them:

"Because [Vindman] emigrated from Ukraine along with his family when he was a child and is fluent in Ukrainian and Russian, Ukrainian officials sought advice from him about how to deal with Mr. Giuliani, though they typically communicated in English."

I'm sorry. "Because" the Ukrainian- and Russian-fluent Vindman and family (including twin brother Yevgeny, also an Army lieutenant colonel on the National Security Council) emigrated from Ukraine in 1979 isn't

If The New York Times is accurate, Vindman's loyalties are divided between two governments.

sufficient reason for Ukrainian officials to tap Vindman as their source for "advice" about the interests of the U.S. president.

We need more information about Vindman, his relationship to the Ukrainian government, and whatever "advice" he may have offered it, whether "typically communicated" in English or any other language. That's because, if The New York Times is accurate, Vindman's loyalties are divided between two governments. At a minimum, this disqualifies Vindman from serving the American people in the sensitive field of national security ever again.

Doubtless, such an attitude is shocking to the "Old Gray Lady." A globally oriented organization like The New York Times—ironically, while reporting on Vindman, also explaining to readers the potential for controversy in playing "The Star-Spangled Banner" on TV—is institutionally incapable of perceiving anything negative about a White House staffer with divided loyalties, so long as one of them is anti-Trump.

Indeed, a second New York Times report on Vindman further rationalized the Vindman-Ukrainian communications as being a logical result of his "heritage" (see "unique insight," also "Mr. Trump's pressure campaign"): "His heritage gave Colonel Vindman, who is fluent in both Ukrainian and Russian, unique insight into Mr. Trump's pressure campaign; on numerous occasions, Ukrainian officials sought him out for advice about how to deal with Mr. Giuliani."

On "numerous" occasions? But the uniform, the Ranger tab, the Purple Heart, Vindman's protectors will chant. Yes, indeed, I would reply. Wearing the uniform of the United States compounds the gravity of the security scandal unfolding as the unasked questions mount.

We are told that on these "numerous occasions," Ukrainian officials sought Vindman's advice. What, pray tell, was his response? Did the White House staffer and U.S. Army officer on these "numerous occasions" tell these Ukrainian officials (names, please) that, as a member of the president's national security team and an officer of the U.S. Army, he offered advice only to the president of the United States?

If that wasn't his reply, Lt. Col. Vindman should be fired ASAP.

I am going to be very clear in case any #FakeNewsies are listening: It isn't the role of any White House adviser to strategize with officials of a foreign government against the president of the United States. Foreign governments have their own nationals for that.

This isn't to say that foreign governments don't go to great trouble to acquire sources such as National Security Council staffers to advance their interests. This comes under the rubric of espionage.

Espionage and 'Agents of Influence' In the context of espionage, as the New York Times reports imply, this officer may well have strategized with a foreign power against his commander-in-chief. That would make Vindman, in the most generous reading of events, a patsy or "dupe." Depending on what else he did, he may also be some type of a foreign intelligence asset.

Categories vary widely. Many are familiar with paid agents, such as former Navy Chief Warrant Officer John Walker, who supplied the Soviets with military secrets, but there are other types of agents, including "agents of influence," whose mission is to influence policy-making on behalf of foreign interests.

Top FDR adviser Harry Hopkins, for example, appears to have been one such agent of influence (my book "American Betrayal" sets forth the evidence for consideration). The Russians have a category they call "special, unnumbered contact" into which, according to defector Sergei Tretyakov, they placed Bill Clinton's top Russia adviser Strobe Talbott (also Raul Castro).

The terrible fact is, the history of our government, including our White House, is jam-packed with these vari-ous, rampaging national security threats, even if our history books fail to make note of them.

In consideration of the obstacles currently being thrown up against any questioning of Vindman, it becomes relevant to note that such bad actors in our past include decorated Army officers, brothers, and immigrants.

Take Gen. Philip Faymonville, known in military circles as "the Red colonel" for his communist sympathies at the time of World War II. That's when Harry Hopkins, over the objections of Army intelligence among others, placed Faymonville into a key position at the sluice-gate of Soviet

military aid under the program of Lend Lease.

About Faymonville and Gen. James Burns, the other Army officer Hopkins elevated to oversee Lend Lease in Moscow, U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union Adm. William H. Standley would write, "General Burns is of the same beliefs as Faymonville; Russian interests come first, last and all the time."

Standley was more right than perhaps he knew. Fifty years later, documentary evidence from Soviet archives indicate that in 1942, the same year the pro-Soviet Faymonville was promoted to become a U.S. Army general, he became a recruited agent of Soviet intelligence.

It's surely an odd detail of the Vindman case that Alexander's twin, Yevgeny, also works on the National Security Council. History tells us of brothers-in-espionage, too. There was the infamous duo of Alger and Donald Hiss, both State Department officials in the 1940s while working on behalf of the Kremlin. As for immigrant-spies, among the many Kremlin agents secretly embedded inside the Roosevelt White House were Canadian-born Lauchlin Currie, who had immense powers as a special assistant to the president, and Currie's British-born assistant Michael Greenberg.

In other words, it—the infiltration of the U.S. government by secret agents—can and did happen here, through the covert exertions of many Americans who, on the surface, appeared to be patriots. The incalculable damage they caused to this country and the wider world cannot be relegated to historical footnotes. This is what makes the reflexive taboo against even questioning Alexander Vindman so dangerous.

When it comes to the loyalty of government officials entrusted with our national security, in uniform or not, the stakes can't be higher. The American people are not only entitled to ask questions, they are bound to do so. Our nation's survival depends on it.

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 BROWN



Commentary

The National Center for Health Statistics has released its report on teen deaths by suicide and homicide. The numbers il-

lustrated in the report and by the Center for Disease Control are staggering.

Between 2007 and 2017, the suicide rate among individuals aged 15 to 24 rose by 50 percent. While the causes for this dramatic rise are being widely debated in the media, many media outlets are focusing specifically on the rise in minority and female suicides, as well as the elevated risk that LGBTQ-plus teens face.

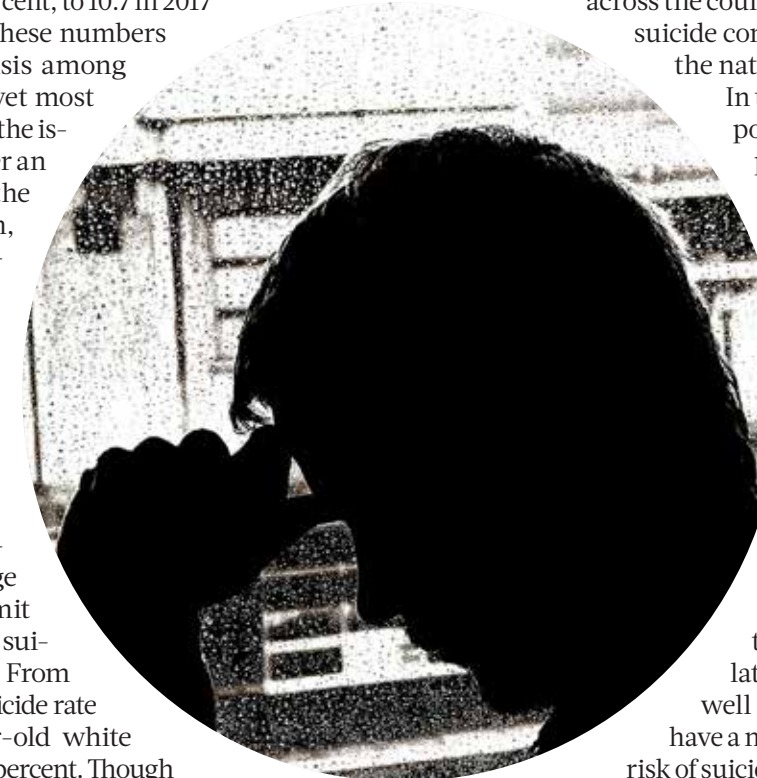
The suicide rate for women aged 15 to 24 during this period rose 87 percent, to 5.8 per 100,000 people in 2017 from 3.1 in 2007. The suicide rate for African Americans of the same age group rose by 75 percent, to 10.7 in 2017 from 6.1 in 2007. These numbers demonstrate a crisis among American youth, yet most of the reporting on the issue has glossed over an even larger crisis: the suicide rate for men, primarily non-Hispanic white men, and American Indian and Alaskan Native men.

Nationally, men commit suicide at a rate of almost four times that of women. Across every ethnic and age range, men commit significantly more suicides per 100,000. From 2007 to 2017, the suicide rate for 15- to 24-year-old white men jumped by 46 percent. Though a smaller increase than other groups, the per-100,000 number reached an astonishing 27.2, compared to 5.8 for all women nationally.

Suicide is the second-leading cause of death for white males between the ages of 5 and 34. The rate at which

In the current political climate, proposing policies specifically aimed at white and male Americans is a nonstarter.

Recent statistics indicate a growing rate of suicide across all groups of people, in particular men.



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white men commit suicide continues to increase until briefly leveling off at 39.5 per 100,000 at 45 to 54 years old, before spiking to 58.8 over the age of 85.

In an equally depressing contrast, American Indian and Alaskan Native males have the highest suicide rate at 5 to 44 years old, peaking at 62.9 suicides per 100,000. While the suicide rate for white males remains high and even increases in later years, American Indian and Alaskan Native men see a steep decline as they age.

Even in comparison to groups that have widely been reported on for their disturbingly high rates of suicide, white and Native American men have significantly higher levels.

Active duty military personnel commit suicides at a rate of 24.8 per 100,000, while veterans take their own lives at a rate of 30 per 100,000. Both of these figures receive coverage from media outlets and politicians across the country for having a rate of suicide considerably higher than the national average of 14.5.

In the Annual Suicide Report released by the Department of Defense, the Pentagon states that these figures are misleading.

According to the report: "On the surface, suicide in the military appears to be markedly higher than the U.S. population. ... Nevertheless, the direct comparison of military suicide rates and the U.S. military population is misleading. It is well established that males have a nearly four times higher risk of suicide death than females."

What the report fails to expand upon, beyond a brief acknowledgment, is that more than 70 percent of suicides in the military are committed specifically by white males.

The vast discrepancy between male and female suicides exists across

the globe. In almost every country, from Ireland to Japan, from Russia to Bahrain, men kill themselves 3 to 5 times more often than women. The reasons for this are complex, widely debated, and further muddled by what is known as the Gender Paradox of Suicide.

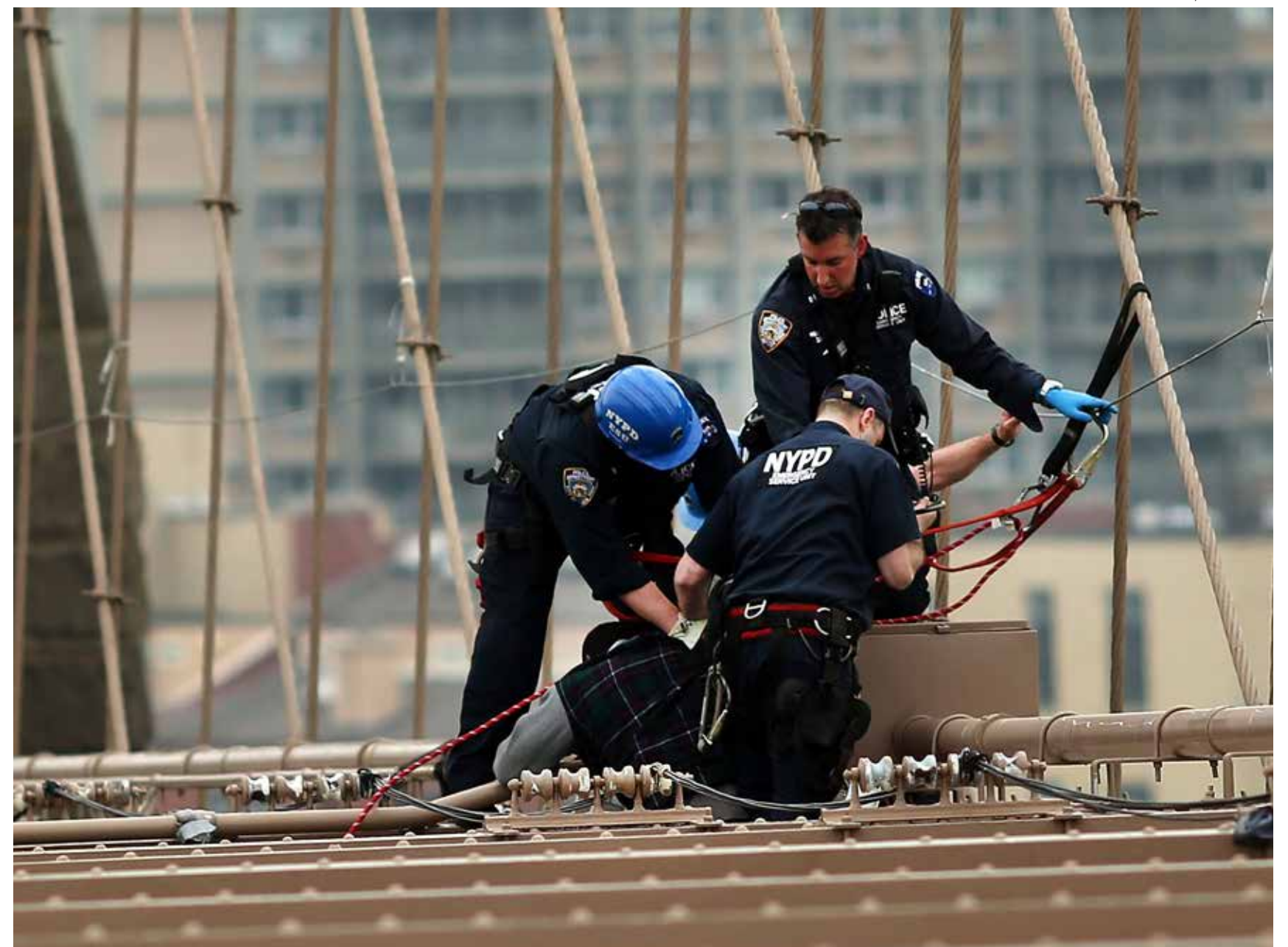
Women across the globe attempt suicide at a rate of three to five times more than men, despite men successfully committing the majority of suicides. Men are less likely to seek mental health treatment than women, less likely to ask friends and family for help, face different societal pressures, and are more likely to use methods of suicide that have a greater chance of success, such as firearms.

Irrespective of the exact causes for the disparity in gender and race, more needs to be done to address this endemic issue. In the current political climate, proposing policies specifically aimed at white and male Americans is a nonstarter. Even acknowledging issues specific to "privileged" groups can lead to a caustic backlash. The rate of suicide is growing at an alarming rate across almost every demographic in the United States, all of whom deserve to be acknowledged and helped.

In 2017, more than 47,000 Americans intentionally took their own lives: 37,000 were men, and 30,000 of them were non-Hispanic white men. The increased rate of suicide among minorities and women is a burgeoning crisis, but the suicide rate among men, particularly white men, American Indians, and Alaskan Natives, is already a crisis, one that has been ignored for decades.

After graduating from the University of Florida in 2014 and from Florida State University in 2017, David Brown spent several years working at the Government Accountability Institute, where he researched corruption in politics, Brown specializes in health care, economics, and foreign policy.

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



A man is lowered down by police after he threatened to jump off the Brooklyn Bridge in New York on May 22, 2014.

ALEX WROBLEWSKI/GETTY IMAGES



House Intelligence Committee Chairman Rep. Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) is followed by reporters as he exits a closed session on Capitol Hill on Oct. 23, 2019.

Security Risks: Why President Trump Is Right Not to Trust Adam Schiff or the House Intelligence Committee

TREVOR LOUDON



Commentary

Many Congress members simply cannot be trusted to keep the United States' important national security secrets. Let that sink in.

After U.S. forces killed Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the founder of ISIS, during a midnight raid on Oct. 26, House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) complained that he hadn't been notified of the operation.

President Donald Trump told reporters in Washington on Oct. 28 that the White House didn't notify the House Intelligence Committee about the raid due to a concern that the information would be leaked by Schiff.

The Hill reported Trump as saying: "Well, I guess the only thing is, they were talking about why I didn't give the information to Adam Schiff and his committee. And the answer is, because I think Adam Schiff is the biggest leaker in Washington."

The president certainly has a valid point. And it doesn't just apply to Schiff. The House Intelligence Committee shouldn't be entrusted with the White House grocery list, let alone the details of a highly sensitive military operation that could put many American lives at risk.

There are virtually no serious security protocols in Congress. There are no background checks for Congress members serving on any committees, let alone the especially sensitive armed services, Homeland Security, or Intelligence committees. Is it possible that the United States' enemies may be aware of this glaring weakness in the United States' national security network? Is it likely that they might try to exploit it?

Many U.S. Congress members receive money from Iranian-backed entities. Some work closely with Chi-

The House Intelligence Committee, like every other committee in Congress, is shot through with 'security risks.'

President Donald Trump announces that ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi has been killed in a military operation in Syria, at the White House on Oct. 27, 2019.

nese-supported organizations. Many have close ties to Marxist groups such as the Democratic Socialists of America or pro-China groups Communist Party USA and Liberation Road. Many Congress members are sympathetic to the United States' enemies such as Cuba, China, or Venezuela. Some on both sides of the aisle have ties to front groups for known terrorist organizations such as Hamas.

There are several currently serving members of the House Intelligence Committee with problematic ties. Many of them would probably struggle to get a security clearance to drive a school bus or sell stamps at the post office. But that doesn't prevent them from serving on a congressional committee with oversight of the FBI, CIA, Drug Enforcement Administration, National Security Agency, and a dozen other national security organizations.

Schiff, for example, has close ties to the Committee of 100 (C100), which essentially runs "influence operations" for the communist Chinese regime. Schiff attended C100 conferences in 2009 and 2016 and has also met with high-ranking Chinese Communist Party officials C.H. Tung, now vice-chair of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, and former mayor of Shanghai and president of the Chinese Academy of Engineering Xu Kuangdi, all arranged through C100 contacts.

During the 2018 election cycle, Schiff also received funding from the Iranian American Political Action Committee, reportedly a front for the Iranian government.

The second-ranked Democrat on the Intelligence Committee, Jim Himes of Connecticut, traveled to pro-Soviet Nicaragua in the late 1980s to research his undergraduate thesis "The Sandinista Defense Committees and the Transformation of Political Culture in Nicaragua." Himes essentially white-washed these civilian spy networks for the Marxist-Leninist regime:

"If the CDSs [Sandinista Defense Committees] maintain and advance their autonomy and continue to serve the role they have served they will help insure that the people of Nicaragua may have the kind of participatory role in their own destiny they were promised under sandinismo."

Himes was elected to Congress in 2008 with help from the Communist Party USA and has worked closely with a Party front, the Connecticut Alliance for Retired Americans, ever since.

The fourth-ranked Intelligence Committee Democrat, André Carson of Indiana, is one of three Muslims currently serving in the House of Representatives.

Carson received money from the Iranian American Political Action Committee during the 2018, 2016, and 2014 election cycles and was an early backer of President Barack Obama's failed "nuclear deal" with Iran.

Carson has long worked closely with the Council on American Islamic Relations and its founder and current spokesman Nihad Awad.

In 1994, Awad revealed at a forum at Florida's Barry University that he had once supported the pro-Soviet terror group the Palestine Liberation Organization. When the Soviet Union "collapsed," Awad switched his allegiance to Hamas.

In February 2017, three Pakistani American brothers, the Awans, who managed office information technology for members of the House Intelligence Committee, including Carson and other lawmakers, were abruptly relieved of their duties. The brothers were suspected of accessing congressional computers without permission. It was later revealed that the three brothers had access to the computers of more than a dozen congressional Democrats, some for more than a decade.

According to the Daily Caller, the father of the brothers allegedly "transferred a USB drive to a Pakistani senator and former head of a Pakistani intelligence agency."

However, no espionage charges were ever brought.

The House Intelligence Committee, like every other committee in Congress, is shot through with "security risks."

Is it any wonder that Trump is unwilling to share sensitive information with Schiff and his junior committee members?

Trevor Loudon is an author, filmmaker, and public speaker from New Zealand. For more than 30 years, he has researched radical left, Marxist, and terrorist movements and their covert influence on mainstream politics.

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