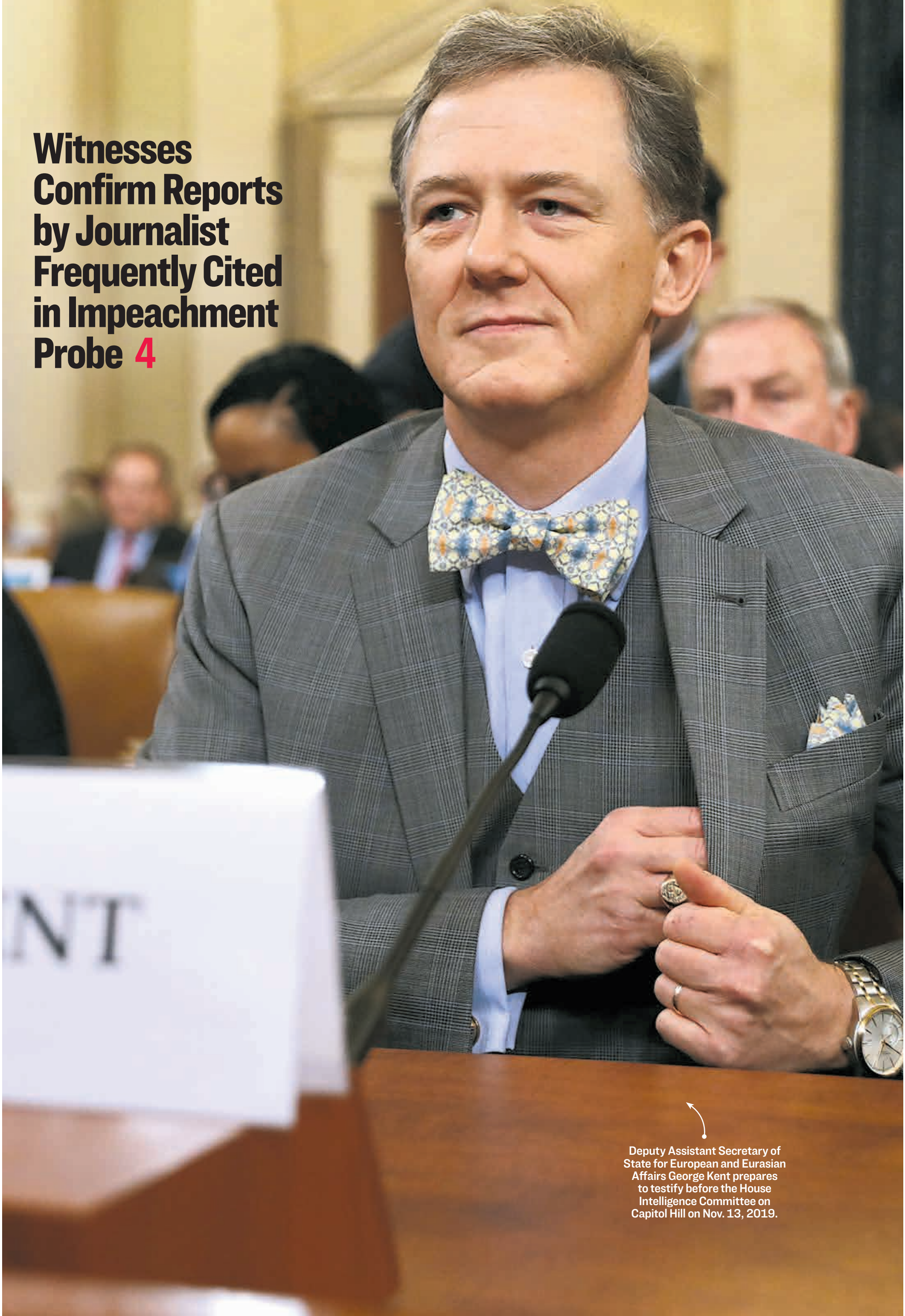


WEEK 47, 2019

THE EPOCH TIMES
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Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs George Kent prepares to testify before the House Intelligence Committee on Capitol Hill on Nov. 13, 2019.

Hearing Asks Federal Officials About Government Research Leaked to China

MARK TAPSCOTT

Five federal officials admitted at a hearing on Nov. 19 that they have a problem that had been missed for years, and even now, they aren't confident they know just how large it really is.

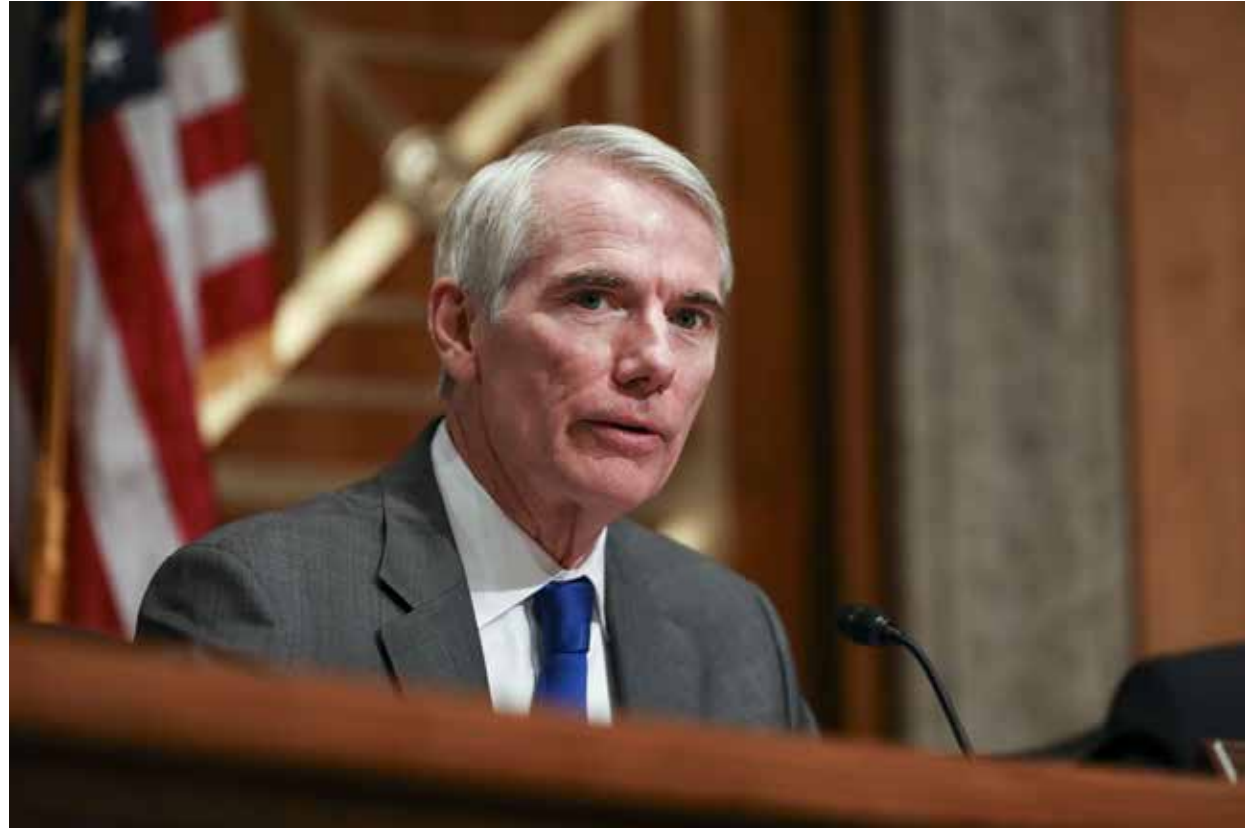
The hearing followed a Senate subcommittee report released Nov. 18 showing that thousands of U.S.-based scientists and other experts have been paid by China to hand over research and development, boosting Beijing's economic and military strength to the detriment of the United States.

The report criticized federal agencies for not doing enough to identify and weed out compromised researchers. It also questioned the FBI's lack of action, and the hearing was to examine the role of these agencies.

John Brown, assistant director of the FBI's Counterintelligence Division, agreed the FBI hadn't acted quickly enough on the problem.

"From my perspective, we absolutely should have been faster, without a doubt," Brown said. He said they didn't realize the importance of the problem in 2008, when China launched its Thousand Talents Program (TTP) to lure scientists and experts, using money and other incentives, into handing over their work. The TTP now involves about 7,000 scientists, and China has 200 such programs.

"In 2008, America didn't fully understand the threat we face today," Brown said. "As the threat evolved from 2008, you had folks working it, but it just wasn't clear the extent of it. Then once it crystallized in



have to improve its own economic and military status."

Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.), the panel's ranking Democrat, also asked the witnesses "how much may have been lost to China over the years, and how might we go about measuring" the loss.

Brown responded, "I don't know that you can measure it. It's significant, no doubt. ... It's a problem we have to continue to address, and it's not going to go away."

Christopher Fall, director of the Department of Energy's Office of Science, responded that "patents is one example, where you see a big change in the number of patents that are filed out of China. Some of those are based on U.S. appropriated research and some not."

Rebecca Kaiser, head of the National Science Foundation's Office of International Science and Engineering, told Carper, "It's challenging for NSF because we fund basic research and we require those outputs to be open. The challenge is if those research projects are taken to China before our U.S. investigators can actually make them open."

Sen. Josh Hawley (R-Mo.) told the hearing, "This problem is going to get worse."

Contact Mark Tapscott at Mark.Tapscott@EpochTimes.nyc

2015, that's when we said, 'Hey, we've got a problem here.'"

He said the FBI has doubled efforts in the past few years.

Michael Lauer, deputy director for Extramural Research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), was among the panel members. He told the hearing,

"We don't know the scope of the problem." It would be hard to measure overall, he said, but NIH currently has 140 known individuals "of concern."

China had previously posted a list online of participants in the TTP. But when U.S. law enforcement officials began looking at

the program, China removed all public references to the TTP.

Brown said all of the FBI's investigative work to date has been based on that list of TTP participants, but it isn't clear how such individuals will be identified now. The FBI has multiple active investigations of TTP participants underway, he said, and such cases represent "a significant percentage of the FBI's economic espionage cases."

Sen. Rob Portman (R-Ohio), chairman of the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, led the hearing. He said the result of the TPP and other such programs is that "the U.S. taxpayer funds China's research and development, so China doesn't have to pay for it. And, second, China then uses that research it wouldn't otherwise



FedEx CEO Challenges New York Times Publisher to Public Debate After Paper Publishes 'Factually Incorrect' Story

ZACHARY STIEBER

The CEO of FedEx challenged the publisher of The New York Times to a public debate after the paper published a story he asserted got basic facts wrong.

"The New York Times published a distorted and factually incorrect story on the front page of the Sunday, November 17 edition concerning FedEx and our billions of dollars of tax payments and billions of dollars of investments in the U.S. economy," CEO Frederick Smith said in a statement.

"Pertinent to this outrageous distortion of the truth is the fact that unlike FedEx, the New York Times paid zero federal income tax in 2017 on earnings of \$111 million, and only \$30 million in 2018—18 percent of their pretax book income. Also in 2018 the New York Times cut their capital investments nearly in half to \$57 million, which equates to a rounding error when compared to the \$6 billion of capital that FedEx invested in the U.S. economy during that same year."

Smith then issued his challenge. "I hereby challenge A.G. Sulzberger, publisher of the New York Times and the business section editor to a public debate in Washington, DC with me and the FedEx corporate vice president of tax. The focus of the debate should be federal tax policy and the relative societal benefits of business investments and the enormous intended benefits to the United States economy, especially lower and middle class wage earners. I look forward to promptly hearing from Mr. Sulzberger and scheduling this open event to bring further public awareness of the facts related to these important issues."



FedEx Corp. CEO Frederick Smith testifies before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee on Capitol Hill on Feb. 1, 2017.

A spokeswoman for the paper told CNBC that "FedEx's invitation is clearly a stunt" and called it "an effort to distract from the findings of our story."

Tax Cuts and Investments

The article in question stated that FedEx owed zero dollars in taxes in the 2018 fiscal year, citing financial filings. Writers said the company reaped more than \$1.5 billion from the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which the company lobbied for and which President Donald Trump signed into law in 2017.

The tax cut FedEx received didn't translate to increased capital investment promised by Smith, the article stated, noting that in fiscal year 2018, FedEx spent "\$240 million less on capital investments than

it predicted it would in December 2017" and the spending "declined by nearly \$175 million in fiscal 2019."

FedEx regularly undershoots or overshoots its capital spending forecasts by hundreds of millions. While it undershot its 2018 forecast, it hiked capital investment that year to nearly \$5.7 billion, up more than \$550 million from the year before. In 2019, it invested nearly \$5.5 billion. As its last sentence, the New York Times article quotes Matthew Gardner, an analyst at the left-leaning Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy as saying that "it's just impossible to know" whether a connection can be drawn between the tax breaks and FedEx's actions.

"FedEx invested billions in capital items

eligible for accelerated depreciation and made large contributions to our employee pension plans. These factors have temporarily lowered our federal income tax, which was the law's intention to help grow GDP, create jobs, and increase wages," FedEx responded in a statement.

One of the authors of the New York Times article, Ben Casselman, wrote on his Twitter account that it was "worth noting we repeatedly asked to interview Mr. Smith about exactly these issues for this story, and FedEx refused to make him available," in response to another user posting a screenshot of Smith's statement.

I look forward to promptly hearing from Mr. Sulzberger and scheduling this open event to bring further public awareness of the facts related to these important issues.

Frederick Smith, CEO, FedEx

But FedEx Public Affairs said Casselman was not being truthful. "Worth noting that is not true. We did not receive any requests to speak with Mr. Smith, but he will discuss exactly these issues when @nytimes agrees to debate," it stated.

Another reporter, Peter Eavis, noted the "strong response" to the article and said that "basically all the numbers came from companies' annual reports."

Petr Svab contributed to this report.

Space Command Chief Outlines Advances as Space War-Fighting Threats Mount

BOWEN XIAO

Gen. John Raymond, leader of the U.S. Space Command—a precursor to the yet-to-be-established Space Force—outlined on Nov. 18 the agency's "significant" advances, including the developing of "space warfighters," and said he was eager for Congress to pass the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) to work on the sixth military branch of the armed forces.

The four-star general, nominated by President Donald Trump, described an 11-word motto of sorts driving the advances made so far within the command: "Space is a warfighting domain, just like air, land, and sea." He made his remarks at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington-based think tank.

A growing number of U.S. officials and government commissions have warned about the growing threat from countries such as China and Russia that have been advancing military and warfighting objectives in space, including developing new anti-satellite weapons. Experts told The Epoch Times that these threats to the United States' national security, coupled with the potential loss of U.S. space-dominance, is why a U.S. warfighting space force is necessary.

Given that the U.S. depends on space for its critical infrastructure ... it poses grave national security risks if a country threatens those assets.

Dr. Namrata Goswami, independent analyst and author specializing in space policy

"Given that the U.S. depends on space for its critical infrastructure ... it poses grave national security risks if a country threatens those assets," Namrata Goswami, an independent analyst and author specializing in space policy, told The Epoch Times. Goswami says that establishing a dedicated space force is in the interest of the United States.

Raymond dedicated much of his opening remarks to giving a broad overview of his plans for growing and developing the command in the coming years. He said they started from a team of 10 people a year ago and have grown to a team of about 400. Over the next couple of months, he said the number will increase to 500.

"I'm really eager for Congress to pass this NDAA, so we can have a Space Force," said Raymond, who also serves as the commander of the Air Force Space Command. "The U.S. is looking to elevate space, to have an entity that's singularly focused on the space domain."

Goals for the command include expanding key allied and commercial partnerships as well as developing space warfighters, which Raymond called a "two-part problem." He said the command is already doing day-to-day space operations.

"That's growing space operators that understand joint warfighting, and it's building what you and I might consider more traditional joint warfighters that have a better understanding of space," he said.

Raymond said the "highest priority" for the command is developing operational plans exclusively for the space domain, for which it has started building the campaign plan that should be completed early in 2020. The command will then build a planning team to begin work on developing a complete proposal for conducting joint military operations.

The military committee at NATO has been briefed by Raymond as well, he said, adding that he had been attempting to create



Vice President Mike Pence speaks during the National Space Council meeting at the National Air and Space Museum in Chantilly, Va., on Aug. 20, 2019.

a more formal relationship with the alliance.

"NATO is about to declare space as an operational domain. And I think that's going to be very important, that we have that linkage," He said the command has published its first integrated priority list, so it's beginning to have more "influence" on the budget.

The budget for space national security is complicated, and scattered among a number of different agencies, according to the U.S. Government Accountability Office. A report from the office stated, "It involves a large number of stakeholders, and there is no single individual, office, or entity in place that provides oversight for the overall space program acquisition structure."

"We're building a fighting force to respond to the competitive, congested, and contested strategic environment that we face today," Raymond said in his remarks, without naming any country specifically.

"I'm convinced that in the future if we were to get into a conflict with a peer or near-peer competitor, we're going to have to fight for space superiority."

In August, Trump officially opened the U.S. Space Command to strengthen the military's focus on space operations. That includes launching satellites, providing communications, intelligence, missile warnings, and navigation services, as well as counterspace operations. The president first directed the Department of Defense and the Pentagon to begin the process of creating the space force in 2018.

Vice President Mike Pence, who also serves as chairman of the National Space Council, said in October that "Trump has directed our administration to work with bipartisan leadership in Congress. Soon we will stand up the sixth branch of our armed forces: the United States Space Force."

The chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee told The Hill recently that House Democrats have attempted to use Trump's Space Force as leverage in negotiations over the border wall in the annual defense policy bill. "Space Force is the thing that they think the president wants the most, therefore, they can say, use that as leverage," Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman James Inhofe (R-Okla.) said. "But it hasn't worked."

The command is tied with the U.S. National defense strategy and the priorities for that, which include rebuilding readiness, strengthening alliances and new partners, and reforming the department. Rebuilding the intelligence function is one of the key things the command is doing early on, Raymond said, as well as building integrated planning elements to embed with the other combatant commands. The gen-

eral said the goal of the command "is to deter any conflict from beginning or extending into space."

China and National Security

Acting Director of National Intelligence Joseph Maguire testified at the sixth meeting of the National Space Council this year that U.S. military, commercial, and scientific interests in space are "increasingly threatened as China and Russia developed and field destructive weapons, placing U.S. and allied space systems at risk."

"China has deployed a ground-based missile intended to target and destroy satellites in low-earth orbit," Maguire said. "China is pursuing weapons capable of destroying satellites up to geosynchronous Earth orbit."



Wing commanders and leaders meet during a commander's conference to discuss key initiatives to support the future standup of U.S. Space Command at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs, Colo., on May 7, 2019.

Maguire said China and Russia have already established their own dedicated space forces.

"Both countries view the capability to attack space systems and services as part of their broadened efforts to deter or defeat an adversary in combat," he said. "In short, the threat to U.S. and allied space systems continues to grow unabated."

China's communist regime has dedicated a significant number of economic and political resources to growing "all aspects of its space program, from improving military space applications to developing human spaceflight and lunar exploration programs," according to a 2019 report titled "Challenges to Security in Space" by the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency.

Beijing's People's Liberation Army (PLA) views space superiority as "the ability to control the information sphere and denying adversaries the same as key components of conducting modern 'informatized' wars," the report stated. Since 1991, the PLA has increased its efforts to "modernize weapon systems and update doctrine to place the focus on

using and countering adversary information-enabled warfare."

In 2015, as part of military reforms, China created the Strategic Support Force (SSF) to "integrate cyberspace, space, and EW [electronic warfare] capabilities into joint military operations." The SSF is the heart of China's information warfare force that supports the entire PLA, which reports directly to China's Central Military Commission, the defense report stated.

There has never been a military service focused solely on space activities, so a new force would ensure the domain is a priority, "while also creating a culture where recruitment, promotions, and education are centered on space," Goswami said. She described the space activities of China and Russia as a "concern."

Todd Harrison, director of the Aerospace Security Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, wrote in a commentary that a core problem is that current U.S. services have "inherent conflicts of interest when it comes to space," since the services are predominantly organized around their primary domain of responsibility while space is viewed more as a secondary or supporting function.

Goswami said the need for a service to enforce peace in space is essential, citing the domain of space changing from a simple support function for other services to becoming an independent domain where nations are envisaging mining of the moon and establishing a permanent presence there.

"China is constituting capabilities that create the future map to turn itself into the lead space power by 2045," she said. "Its 2007 ASAT [antisatellite] test meant that China now possesses the capacity to hold U.S. Space assets—especially military assets—vulnerable."

Goswami said it's critical that these military space activities are seen for what they are and "to develop capacity for asymmetric capacity, establish first presence entitlements, and then constitute norms for who has the capacity to create standard operating procedures."

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has specific plans to not just explore space but to "industrially dominate" the domain within the moon's orbit of the earth, a November report to Congress by the United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission stated. Next year, China plans to launch its first long-term station module.

The commission said China's goal is to establish a "leading position in the economic and military use of outer space," which the country calls its "space dream," a key component of its plan to realize what it calls the "great reju-

venation of the Chinese nation." Beijing has put a high level of attention and funding into space, so it can "eventually surpass other spacefaring countries in terms of space-related industry, technology, diplomacy, and military power," the report stated.

Economy

John Boyd, principal of The Boyd Co., a firm providing location and management counsel that has been active in the aerospace industry, told The Epoch Times that the company views the yet-to-be-established Space Force as a means for the United States to double down on its historic role as a leading-edge country, and said it was imperative to the nation's security and economic well-being, especially to lead advancements in the high-tech consumer economy.

Boyd said one of the most coveted economic development projects in recent times is the yet-to-be-chosen location of the new U.S. Space Force, which will emerge as a hub for space industry suppliers and manufacturers. His company's clients include Boeing, Pratt & Whitney, Safran Landing Gear, and the Aerospace Industries Association.

He said the new military branch will reignite talent into the space industry.

"The creation of the Space Force will be yet another catalyst for universities around the country to further promote STEM research and other high-tech academic programs like aerospace, avionics, medical technology, and others," he said.

The next frontier of warfare, according to Boyd, is data and data security.

"Information, or the lack of it, is power," he said. "GPS satellite systems critical to our national defense, along with maintaining and advancing virtually all segments of our consumer economy, are housed in space."

Citing his experience in the site-selection field and his work with space and technology clients, Boyd expects the leading aerospace industry states such as Florida, Texas, Colorado, and Alabama to be major benefactors of these new high-tech, space-related investments in new equipment and manufacturing facilities, referring to the new federal spending associated with the Space Command and satellite security.

"Federal spending and private sector partnerships will be analogous to the early days of the internet when the federal government helped subsidize the cost of R&D and building the internet backbone or going back even further to the infrastructure spending associated with the development of our nation's interstate highway system in the 1950s, under President Eisenhower," he said.

I'm convinced that in the future if we were to get into a conflict with a peer or near-peer competitor, we're going to have to fight for space superiority.

Gen. John Raymond, leader, U.S. Space Command

Raymond, in his speech at CSIS, said he sees partnerships with the commercial industry in relation to the Space Command and Space Force as a "big growth area going forward" and that they have a commercial integration cell on the floor of the Combined Space Operations Center.

He said he's also working on reducing the classification on some issues so he can more easily have meetings with industries. Raymond said the commercial industry is heading toward autonomous ranges.

Witnesses Confirm Reports by Journalist Frequently Cited in Impeachment Probe

IVAN PENTCHOUKOV

In his opening statement at the Nov. 19 impeachment hearing, House Intelligence Committee ranking member Devin Nunes (R-Calif.) recommended that the American public read an article by investigative reporter John Solomon titled “Debunking Some of the Ukraine Scandal Myths About Biden and Election Interference.”

The recommendation by Nunes is the latest mention of Solomon during the impeachment hearings. Solomon’s name or work has been cited in all but two of the 10 impeachment deposition transcripts released to date.

Solomon’s reporting is inseparable from the impeachment proceedings because President Donald Trump’s requests to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky during a July 25 phone call can all be traced back to articles that Solomon wrote for The Hill, an online newspaper. In several columns over the course of two years, Solomon exposed an appearance of a conflict of interest on the part of former Vice President Joe Biden, detailed actions taken by Ukrainian officials to interfere in the 2016 U.S. presidential election, and chronicled a tense relationship between the U.S. Embassy in Kiev and Ukraine’s prosecutors due to pressure from American officials to back off from prosecuting select individuals and groups.

Once the impeachment inquiry catapulted Solomon’s work to the national spotlight, Democrats and their media allies sought to discredit the reports, referring to them as debunked conspiracy theories. While House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) has referred to Ukraine’s interference in the 2016 U.S. election as a “discredited conspiracy theory,” witnesses in the impeachment inquiry have so far told a different story.

In sworn testimony, several current and former officials have validated and further confirmed Solomon’s reporting, a turn of events the reporter referred to as “an impeachment surprise.”

The July 25 call between Trump and Zelensky is at the core of the impeachment inquiry. The Democrats allege that Trump sought to boost his 2020 reelection campaign by asking Zelensky to “look into” Biden and his son Hunter Biden. According to the official call transcript, Trump also asked the Ukrainian leader to “find out” more about a server tied to CrowdStrike, the cybersecurity firm that examined the alleged hacking of the Democratic National Committee in 2016 by Russian operatives. Zelensky, in the meantime, asked Trump for more information to assist with an investigation into Marie Yovanovitch, who was the U.S. ambassador to Ukraine until shortly after Zelensky’s election victory.

All three requests relate at least in part to Solomon’s reporting, placing him in the midst of the political firestorm surrounding the impeachment inquiry. In what appears to be a veiled attempt to paint Solomon into a partisan corner, The New York Times, among other media, has focused on his work as a “Fox News personality,” while dismissing his decades-long career with The Associated Press, The Washington Post, The Washington Times, and The Hill.

In an email to The Epoch Times, Solomon said the sources who originally came forward to him about Ukraine included Democrats, Justice Department officials, and State Department officials, none tied to the Trump administration or Rudy Giuliani. The sources alleged “there was unusual interference by U.S. embassy Kiev in a handful of law enforcement cases,” Solomon said.

“This interference allegedly had created a dysfunctional relationship between our embassy and Ukraine prosecutors.



Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs George Kent prepares to testify before the House Intelligence Committee on Capitol Hill on Nov. 13, 2019.

Months of reporting and document gathering confirmed the stories I eventually wrote,” he added.

In one of the first articles, Solomon reported that Yovanovitch gave Ukrainian Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko a do-not-prosecute list in 2016; Solomon quotes Yovanovitch as denying Lutsenko’s claim. While there was some confusion about whether a physical list exists, Lutsenko confirmed to The New York Times that Yovanovitch “had in fact asked him not to target certain politicians and activists,” the newspaper reported.

In her testimony on Oct. 11, Yovanovitch denied that she provided any list to Lutsenko and argued that she was pushing Ukrainian prosecutors to apply the law consistently, instead of selectively prosecuting political opponents.

In testimony as part of the impeachment inquiry on Oct. 15, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State George Kent told lawmakers that the U.S. Embassy pushed back against the prosecution of four of the people on Lutsenko’s list, directly confirming Solomon’s report.

Kent acknowledged signing a letter in April 2016, in which he called an investigation into Ukraine’s Anti-Corruption Action Center (AntAC) “misplaced.” AntAC is partly funded by George Soros, a billionaire who has contributed millions of dollars to left-wing causes, and the U.S. State Department.

Kent also confirmed that U.S. authorities pushed back against the prosecutions against Vitali Shabunin, a journalist who helped found AntAC, Sergey Leschenko, a member of the Ukrainian parliament who helped release the so-called “black ledger” of damaging information on then-Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort, and Artem Sytnyk, who also played a role in the release of the “black ledger.”

“We warned both Lutsenko and others that efforts to destroy NABU as an organization, including opening up investigations of Sytnyk, threatened to unravel a key component of our anti-corruption cooperation,” Kent said on Oct. 15.

In addition to backing up Solomon’s reporting about the do-not-prosecute list, Kent confirmed the reporter’s columns that shed light on the appearance of a conflict of interest created by Joe Biden when he, as vice president, forced the ouster of the top Ukrainian prosecutor at the time. The prosecutor was investigating Burisma, the company that paid Hunter Biden to sit on its board of directors.

Kent told lawmakers that he became aware of Hunter Biden’s involvement with Burisma in early 2015 and relayed his concerns to the office of the vice president. Biden’s office told Kent that the vice president had no “bandwidth” to deal with the issue, as his other son, Beau, was struggling with cancer at the time. Neither Joe nor Hunter Biden took any steps to alleviate the perception of a conflict of interest.

But Kent went further and revealed that a prior investigation into Burisma was allegedly shut down after an official at Ukraine Prosecutor General’s office accepted a \$7 million bribe in May 2014. Hunter Biden joined Burisma the month before, in April 2014, weeks after prosecutors in the United Kingdom seized \$23 million belonging to the owner of Burisma, Mykola Zlochevsky.

While the timing may be mere coincidence, it appears similarly problematic to the sequence of events in February 2016, when Joe Biden forced the firing of Ukrainian Prosecutor General Viktor Shokin by threatening to withhold \$1 billion in U.S. loan guarantees. Earlier that month, Shokin’s office seized Zlochevsky’s assets.

Later in February, before the Ukrainian parliament voted to approve Shokin’s forced resignation, a U.S. representative reached out to the State Department in Washington and leveraged Hunter Biden’s name alongside a request to snuff out the allegations against Burisma.

Like Kent, a number of witnesses told the impeachment inquiry that Biden’s involvement in Shokin’s firing created at least the appearance of a conflict of interest.

Nunes noted during the Nov. 19 impeachment hearing that a Democratic member of the House Intelligence Committee had threatened to no longer talk to The Hill because the outlet published Solomon’s articles. While the outlet had earlier announced that it would be reviewing Solomon’s work, it’s unclear if the Democrat’s request prompted the audit. Solomon announced in September he was leaving The Hill to start his own media firm.

“I don’t know what prompted The Hill to review my work. But I encouraged them to do that more than a month ago, because I have nothing to hide and all my facts and evidence backing up every claim are linked in the columns. I have a high degree of confidence every fact is accurate. And every news article and column I wrote for The Hill went through the normal editing and rigorous review process,” Solomon said.

Solomon’s reporting on Ukraine’s interference in the 2016 presidential election is the subject of the most pointed attacks. Notably, Politico had reported some of the same concerns before Solomon did in an investigative feature. Multiple witnesses acknowledged being aware of the instances of alleged interference cited by Solomon and Politico, including the release of the “black ledger” that appears to have forced Manafort to step down from Trump’s campaign.

Solomon has been reporting on the impeachment inquiry as it unfolds, even as his work has arguably figured in events that triggered the inquiry.

“I simply try to stay focused on the facts, giving the American public information to make up their own minds,” Solomon said.

I have nothing to hide and all my facts and evidence backing up every claim are linked in the columns. I have a high degree of confidence every fact is accurate.

John Solomon, investigative reporter



Investigative reporter John Solomon speaking at the Conservative Political Action Conference in Washington.

GAGE SKIDMORE

House Intelligence Committee ranking member Rep. Devin Nunes (R-Calif.) questions witnesses during the third day of open hearings in the impeachment inquiry against President Donald Trump on Capitol Hill on Nov. 19, 2019.



SHAWN THEW - POOL/GETTY IMAGES

Seattle Landlords Fight for Right to Refuse Criminals Tenancy

MATTHEW VADUM

Landlords in Seattle are fighting a local housing ordinance that forces them to accept potentially violent criminals, including sex offenders, as residential tenants. They are preparing to take their legal challenge all the way to the Supreme Court.

Pacific Legal Foundation (PLF), a Sacramento-based public interest law firm that represents the landlords, is optimistic about the case’s chances. The organization argues that “government bureaucrats cannot deprive property owners—who have no track record of discrimination—of their constitutionally protected right to choose their own tenants.”

The move comes after the Washington Supreme Court ruled against property owners across the state Nov. 14 in two lawsuits collectively cited as *Yim v. City of Seattle*.

The laws are “trying to turn private housing into a public utility by taking away property rights such as the right to select a tenant,” said Brian T. Hodges, a senior attorney at Pacific Legal Foundation.

The laws are “not about protecting citizens, but about making criminals a protected class,” he said.

Landlords also have a responsibility to protect existing tenants from foreseeable harms, and Seattle’s laws make that duty difficult to carry out, he said.

Fair Chance Housing Ordinance

The theory behind the ordinances is that they will combat subconscious racial bias among the city’s landlords.

A “first-in-time” ordinance forces landlords to rent to the first financially-qualified tenant to apply, even if landlords have

good reasons to choose someone else. If the first applicant refuses to rent the property, the landlord must continue down the list in chronological order.

The “Fair Chance Housing Ordinance” of 2017 prevents landlords from considering applicants’ criminal histories. That ordinance declares that, subject to certain exceptions, it is an unfair practice for landlords and tenant screening services to “require disclosure, inquire about, or take an adverse action against a prospective occupant, a tenant, or a member of their household, based on any arrest record, conviction record, or criminal history.”

The landlords say this inhibits their ability to base rental decisions on factors such as personal safety or concerns about sex

The court’s decision holds that property rights deserve less protection than all of the other rights enshrined in the Bill of Rights.

Brian T. Hodges, senior attorney, Pacific Legal Foundation

People on a high-rise apartment in Seattle on March 24, 2018.

LINDSEY WASSON/GETTY IMAGES



Judge Restricts Searches of Electronic Devices at Border

MATTHEW VADUM

Officials at U.S. ports of entry may not search international travelers’ electronic devices in the absence of suspicion that they have committed a crime, a federal judge has ruled.

The legal proceeding addresses the growing tension between the needs of law enforcement and individual privacy rights at a time of increasing personal reliance on technology. It also scrutinizes what officials do at ports of entry, weighing the free speech and privacy rights of travelers against the government’s mission of keeping the country and its inhabitants safe.

In a case cited as *Alasaad v. Nielsen*, Boston-based U.S. District Judge Denise J. Casper ruled Nov. 12 that Fourth Amendment guarantees against unreasonable search and seizure require border agents to harbor at least a reasonable and individualized suspicion of criminal behavior before searching smartphones and computers without a warrant. Casper was appointed by then-President Barack Obama in 2010.

The Trump administration had argued in the proceeding that searches of electronic devices at ports of entry have “successfully uncovered threats to national security, illegal activities, contraband, and the inadmissibility of people and things.”

At the same time, the judge wasn’t receptive to

the argument that border officials must first have probable cause—a higher evidentiary standard required for search warrants for believing a traveler’s device contains proof of contraband before searching it.

Searches of electronic devices have to be dealt with differently from the usual document examinations and physical pat-downs that are deemed to be acceptable invasions of privacy, Casper found.

“Even under the border search exception, it is the privacy interests implicated by unfettered access to such a trove of personal information that must be balanced against the promotion of paramount governmental interests at the border,” Casper wrote in the ruling.

The groups that brought the lawsuit were pleased with the result.

“This ruling significantly advances Fourth Amendment protections for millions of international travelers who enter the United States every year,” Esha Bhandari, staff attorney with the ACLU’s Speech, Privacy, and Technology Project, said in a statement.

“By putting an end to the government’s ability to conduct suspicionless fishing expeditions, the court reaffirms that the border is not a lawless place and that we don’t lose our privacy rights when we travel.”

“This is a great day for travelers who now can cross the international border without fear that the government will, in the

absence of any suspicion, ransack the extraordinarily sensitive information we all carry in our electronic devices,” said Sophia Cope, a senior staff attorney at the Electronic Frontier Foundation.

Government policy has allowed officials to search travelers’ electronic devices without a warrant or individualized suspicion of wrongdoing by a traveler. Sometimes, officials have been allowed to confiscate such devices without probable cause, keeping them from their owners for months at a time.

The U.S. Constitution is thought to afford little protection at border crossings and ports of entry on the theory that protecting the nation from potential national security risks, criminals, and contraband supersedes the individual rights of travelers. In general, inside the United States, motorists, homeowners, and pedestrians have a stronger claim to the constitutional protections such as the requirement of a warrant or probable cause.

The lawsuit was brought on behalf of a group of plaintiffs by the ACLU and EFF. The two organizations sued the Department of Homeland Security on behalf of 11 travelers whose smartphones and laptops were searched without warrants at the U.S. border.

The ACLU said U.S. agents carried out suspicionless searches of smartphones that contained sensitive records such as attorney-client communications and

intimate photographs.

According to the ACLU, the number of electronic device searches at the border has increased significantly since President Donald Trump was inaugurated in 2017. U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers carried out in excess of 30,000 electronic device searches in fiscal 2018, over three times the number from fiscal 2015.

The Department of Justice hadn’t responded to the request for comment from The Epoch Times as of press time.

Customs and Border Protection agents check pedestrians as they exit Mexico into the customs area of the United States in Tijuana, Mexico, on Nov. 19, 2018.



CHARLOTTE CORBIERSON/THE EPOCH TIMES



CHARLOTTE CORBIERSON/THE EPOCH TIMES



U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper (L) shakes hands with South Korean Defense Minister Jeong Kyeong-doo during a press conference at the Defense Ministry in Seoul, South Korea, on Nov. 15, 2019.

US, South Korea Postpone Military Drills in Push for Peace With Pyongyang

BOWEN XIAO

The United States and South Korea said they would postpone upcoming joint military drills in a bid to bolster peace efforts with North Korea, while also assuring that military readiness would remain at high levels.

U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper said on Nov. 17 that the decision wasn't a concession to Pyongyang, but part of a "good faith effort" to reignite peace talks that have been stalled in recent months.

"I don't see this as a concession. I see this as a good faith effort ... to enable peace," Esper told reporters as he announced the decision alongside his South Korean counterpart, Jeong Kyeong-doo, in Bangkok, where Asian defense chiefs are gathered for talks.

"I think creating some more space for our diplomats to strike an agreement on the denuclearization of the peninsula is very important," he said.

The drills, known as the Combined Flying Training Event, were slated to begin in the coming days. The event would have involved simulated air combat scenarios as well as an undisclosed number of warplanes from both the United States and South Korea. While the exercises had already been previously limited in scale and scope over the past few years, North Korea still had issued objections.

Earlier this month, a top U.S. State Department official described in a speech that building a successful peace regime on the Korean Peninsula must be negotiated in talks with North Korea

I think creating some more space for our diplomats to strike an agreement on the denuclearization of the peninsula is very important.

Mark Esper, U.S. defense secretary

and said it can be achieved if negotiation efforts are successful.

Alex Wong, an official who serves as both the deputy assistant secretary and deputy special representative for North Korea, made his comments during a forum at the Washington headquarters of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a nonprofit think tank.

Wong said building a "stable peace regime" is a key pillar of the Singapore summit joint declaration that President Donald Trump signed with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in June 2018. He said it was an integral part of the president's vision for "a bright future for the DPRK [North Korea]."

The peace regime concept would create a strategic shift throughout the Korean Peninsula that would advance the interests of all stakeholders, Wong said in his remarks. "[It would] make even more clear than it is today that the DPRK's weapons of mass destruction programs, rather than being a source of security for the DPRK—are a key driver of the DPRK's insecurity," he said.

In October, negotiations in Stockholm between U.S. and North Korean officials broke down, with the two countries leaving without any progress or deal made. It was the first round of talks between the countries in more than seven months.

It remains unclear whether the move to delay the drills will kickstart talks with Pyongyang. Although the talks would involve pressing the reclusive communist regime to give up its nuclear weapons program, Esper expressed hope that the ges-

ture would garner a positive response.

"We encourage the DPRK to demonstrate the same goodwill as it considers decisions on conducting training, exercises, and testing," he said. "We also urge the DPRK to return to the negotiating table without precondition or hesitation."

Since the breakdown in talks, North Korea has tested the limits of engagement with a string of missile launches.

KCNA, North Korea's state news agency, said on Oct. 31 that Pyongyang conducted successful tests of "super-large multiple rocket launchers," which drew protests from neighboring Japan and South Korea. The tests were the first since the talks in Sweden.

Asked when the United States and South Korea would hold the postponed drills, Jeong said only that it would be decided through "close coordination" with Washington.

North Korea said on Nov. 17 that it tried to interpret the U.S. adjustments to joint drills positively, but it said the recent U.N. resolution criticizing its human rights record had shaken that.

At the start of the talks of the three-way meeting with Esper and Jeong in Bangkok, Japanese Defense Minister Taro Kono cautioned against optimism and called for the three nations to ensure military readiness.

Trump became the first sitting U.S. president to set foot in North Korea when he met with Kim in June at the Demilitarized Zone between the two Koreas.

Reuters contributed to this report.

Democrat Who Voted Against Impeachment Says Process Reminds Him of 'Third-World Nations'

ALEX WONG/GETTY IMAGES



Rep.-elect Jeff Van Drew (D-N.J.) speaks to members of the media on Capitol Hill on Nov. 28, 2018.

ISABEL VAN BRUGEN

Democratic congressman has denounced the process of the impeachment inquiry against President Donald Trump as akin to "something you would see in Europe or third-world nations."

Rep. Jeff Van Drew (D-N.J.) is one of two Democrats who voted in October against the impeachment process resolution, which no Republicans voted for.

During an appearance on Fox Nation's "Maria Bartiromo's Insiders," Van Drew said his decision to vote against the House impeachment inquiry is not related to Trump, but rather, is about "not misusing" the institution of impeachment.

"We have to understand; impeachment is something that's supposed to be exceptionally unusual. It is supposed to be bipartisan. It is supposed to be fair," Van Drew said on Nov. 18.

"This has nothing to do with whether you like Donald Trump, or don't like him, or want to see him have a second term or win in an election. This has to do with the institution of impeachment itself and not misusing it."

The resolution Van Drew voted against passed 232-196 and also lacked a vote from Rep. Collin Peterson (D-Minn.).

Van Drew referred to a piece written more than 150 years ago by French political thinker and historian Alexis de Tocqueville on the subject of impeachment, alluding to the probe against Trump as reflecting the decline of the nation.

"You know, De Tocqueville in 1853 wrote that if a nation was more and more often using ... impeachment as a way of actually removing its leaders, it would show the deterioration of the nation," he said.

"It is so rarely used, should be rarely used. And as I've mentioned to you before, it is something that during the hundreds of years of American history has never been successfully used."

The congressman then compared the impeachment process to "more like something you would see in Europe or third-world nations," and suggested House Speaker Nancy Pelosi should instead focus on "real issues."

"So wouldn't it be wonderful at the end of this presidency, to the benefit of both political parties,

This has nothing to do with whether you like Donald Trump, or don't like him, or want to see him have a second term or win in an election. This has to do with the institution of impeachment itself and not misusing it.

Rep. Jeff Van Drew (D-N.J.)

but most of all, to the benefit of Americans, if we actually got some of these very important issues finished and taken care of instead? It will not happen in this toxic atmosphere," Van Drew said.

He also said during an appearance on Fox's "Sunday Morning Futures" that his House colleagues have expressed concern about the impeachment inquiry.

"There is some discussion among some of them, quietly, privately, of concern, certainly," he said.

"I mean, what I'm hearing out in the street is they're kind of tired. They're kind of worn out. They're kind of bored, most folks. And they really want to move on unless there's something new and amazing. We know the end game here."

Van Drew said that he would probably vote "no" if the House votes to impeach Trump but said he's not sure how other members of Congress will vote.

Three witnesses testified in public last week, primarily conveying secondhand or even thirdhand information about the actions of Trump relating to Ukraine. Democrats argue that Trump effectively committed "bribery" by reviewing military aid approved by Congress as he requested Ukraine look into former Vice President Joe Biden and his son

Hunter Biden as well as Ukrainian efforts to interfere in the 2016 election.

Ukrainian officials and U.S. State Department personnel have said Ukraine wasn't aware the aid was put on hold for a review, undercutting the claim.

Vice President Mike Pence's national security aide, Jennifer Williams, and David Holmes, a U.S. embassy official in Kyiv, were among those testifying behind closed doors last week, as secret depositions continue to take place alongside open hearings.

The next open hearings are slated for Nov. 19 and 20, with former U.S. special envoy to Ukraine Kurt Volker, Williams, National Security Council Ukraine specialist Alexander Vindman, and Tim Morrison, a former National Security Council expert, testifying on Nov. 19.

Gordon Sondland, the U.S. ambassador to the European Union, was scheduled to answer questions on Nov. 20, followed by Laura Cooper, a deputy assistant secretary at the Defense Department, and David Hale, the undersecretary of state for political affairs at the State Department.

Fiona Hill, a former Russia expert on the National Security Council, is scheduled to speak on Nov. 21.

Zachary Stieber contributed to this report.



Former U.S. Special Envoy for Ukraine, Kurt Volker (L), and Tim Morrison, the top Russia and Europe adviser on President Donald Trump's National Security Council, prepare to testify during the House Intelligence Committee hearing on Capitol Hill on Nov. 19, 2019.

ANDREW CABALLERO-REYNOLDS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



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

FBI Mismanaged Its Use of Informants: IG Horowitz Report

PETR SVAB

The FBI's use of informants has multiple problems, according to a report by the Justice Department's inspector general (IG) released on Nov. 19. Some of the major issues highlighted by Inspector General Michael Horowitz are delays in properly vetting the informants and a lack of record-keeping when there are problems with them.

"The FBI's vetting processes for confidential sources, known as validation, did not comply with the attorney general guidelines, particularly with regard to long-term sources," Horowitz said in a video accompanying the release of the report.

He went on to say that "ineffective management and oversight of confidential sources can result in jeopardizing FBI operations and placing FBI agents, sources, subjects of investigation, and the public in harm's way."

The FBI spent an average of \$42 million annually on payments to its informants between fiscal 2012 through 2018, the report stated.

The number of informants, officially called Confidential Human Sources (CHS), is redacted in the report, but from context, it appears the number may at least be in the thousands.

The FBI is required to vet the informants before they're used, and then annually. The review includes vetting their credibility as well as "assessing the veracity of the information they provide," the report stated.

FBI employees were sometimes discouraged from documenting conclusions and recommendations about sources.

Michael Horowitz, inspector general

FBI field offices don't want any negative information in informants' files because of concerns that it may undermine their use during trial.

Additional "enhanced reviews" are required for "certain special categories" of informants, such as long-term informants (those used continuously for more than five years) as well as those in high-level government positions, those in labor unions, and those in the media.

Backlog

As the report noted, vetting of the long-term informants has been lacking for years. They're supposed to receive an "enhanced review" every five years, but half of them were waiting in a backlog for such a review, as of May.

The backlog had already been highlighted in 2015, the report stated, but "has continued to persist." The backlog matters because it means the FBI may be using problematic informants long after the problems should have been discovered.

The reviews of long-term informants are supposed to be approved by an 11-member committee. But the committee has always been incomplete, and usually just two officials handled the approvals while the rest "did not actively participate," the report stated.

The approval isn't just a rubber stamp. Nearly a third of the informants were requested by the committee to be dropped or were approved only with various caveats, questions, or recommendations, between February 2016 and November 2018.

In one instance, the committee requested the bureau to stop using an informant who was a child sex offender, because the committee "did not believe the benefits of using the CHS outweighed the asso-

ciated risks," the report stated. In another instance, the committee approved an informant but added a caveat that the informant's file should be checked for "unauthorized illegal activity."

Part of the reason for the backlog is that the FBI doesn't have enough people at the headquarters to do the reviews. In 2010, it had 213 analysts at the headquarters vetting informants, but it slashed that number to just 29 by March 2019.

The FBI assistant director for the Resource Planning Office told the IG that the bureau slashed the personnel in 2013 anticipating budget sequestration and never put the resources back even though the "sequestration did not come to pass as expected," the report stated.

Lack of Documentation

"FBI employees were sometimes discouraged from documenting conclusions and recommendations about sources," Horowitz said.

The IG staffer was told that FBI field offices don't want any negative information in informants' files because of concerns that it may undermine their use during trial.

One FBI official said that prosecutors won't use at trial an informant who has negative information documented.

But the lack of documentation is a problem, another official said, because handlers of the informants change, and the incoming handler won't know there were issues if those issues weren't documented.

The IG issued 16 recommendations to address problems discussed in the report. The FBI agreed with all of them.

How Elizabeth Warren Enriches Wall Street

DAVID WILLIAMS



Commentary

A new report from the progressive economic organization Groundwork Collaborative shows that U.S. poverty figures have been undercounted by 3 million due to "inflation inequality," which occurs when prices rise higher for those on the bottom of the income distribution than they do for everyone else.

It appears that much of the blame lies on the inflation created by America's central bank—the powerful, nontransparent Federal Reserve. This isn't news to many in the White House, especially acting Chief of Staff and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Director Mick Mulvaney, who, while in Congress, frequently pointed out how the Fed's policy of constant inflation is a devastating, hidden tax on working-class Americans.

Inflation erodes savings and undermines workers' wages, forcing them to work more hours for less money. Conversely, inflation benefits the most affluent Americans, whose assets (especially riskier business investments) rise in value. However, as millions of Americans learned during the 2008 housing bubble, the central bank's policies make life harder on working families, fueling the inflation inequality identified by the Groundwork Collaborative study.

Although he sometimes advocates for the wrong monetary policy solutions, President Donald Trump recognizes the Fed for what it is—a bureaucratic disaster. And yet, for all the rhetoric Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) espouses on income inequality, the Democratic presidential candidate is currently advocating for emboldening this very institution that stymies the aspirations of the working class.

Warren recently released the Payment Modernization Act, which would make the Fed create a real-time payments system. She claims that she introduced the legislation to stick up for the little guy—to stop delays in bank payment-processing times so consumers who need to pay for childcare and groceries can avoid

Plenty of private sector real-time clearing services already connect the majority of the public without relying on new bureaucratic spending.



A Wall St. sign next to the New York Stock Exchange, in this file photo.

delays that lead to the use of payday lenders.

But in actuality, there's no need for Fed action, which will likely cost close to \$1 billion and delay thousands of left-behind Americans' real-time connectivity until at least 2023. Plenty of private sector real-time clearing services already connect the majority of the public without relying on new bureaucratic spending.

Warren's repeated push for an emboldened Fed may not help working Americans much, but it does offer a tremendous boon to Wall Street.

Well-heeled financiers don't particularly like the existing private-sector options, due to these services' full commitment to offering flat pricing, a pledge that ensures Wall Street banks don't receive special discounted pricing to connect in real-time. This policy paves the way for all Americans—not just those in the big financial centers—to utilize real-time payments. It guarantees that the service remains affordable and accessible to all banks, regardless of size or location—maximizing connectivity while preventing costs from shuffling onto the less well-to-do.

But Warren's policies would unravel that status-quo, inevitably bolstering big banks while leaving Main Street with the billion-dollar bill. This is hardly surprising, given the presidential hopeful's history of shielding the Fed from any scrutiny or accountability.

Warren consistently votes against

Sen. Rand Paul's (R-Ky.) Audit the Fed legislation, despite knowing that the last audit uncovered the Fed's provision of more than \$3 trillion in corporate welfare to big banks and corporations. Unfortunately, Warren may see her pro-Fed policies implemented without her having to lift a finger. The Fed is actively trying to pursue a real-time payments system without Congress's say-so.

Fortunately, the White House doesn't have to sit idly by. The Regulatory and Planning Review executive order of 1993 requires OMB's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, now headed by Russ Vought, to review all significant regulatory actions before they take effect. The Fed's real-time payments system is certainly significant, yet moves forward without the OMB completing the cost-benefit analysis required of such rule-making.

If the Fed continues to move on this disastrous policy, the White House must act and demand a proper regulatory process. And if the issue gets punted to Congress, lawmakers must stand firmly against Warren's disastrous ideas. U.S. leadership can't let a new, stealth bank bailout become the law of the land. Working Americans suffer enough, and deserve an affordable payments system.

David Williams is the president of the Taxpayers Protection Alliance.

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

Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) addresses the audience at South Carolina State University in Orangeburg, S.C., on Nov. 8, 2019.



The Federal Reserve in Washington May 2, 2018.



A woman kneels to light a candle during a mass memorial meeting at the Holodomor victims monument in Kyiv, Ukraine, on Nov., 24, 2007.



A mural depicting British novelist George Orwell with the words "Freedom is the right to tell people what they do not want to hear," in Belgrade, Serbia, on May 8, 2018.

Educational Earthquake: The 'Disappearing' of Great Writers From Schools

Orwell's warning in '1984' is as relevant today as during the Cold War

One Hundred Years of *De-platforming*

DIANA WEST



Commentary

I recently picked up and was quickly hooked by "Not Seeing Red: American Librarianship and the Soviet Union (1917-1960)," a 2002 book by Stephen Karetzky. Sure, the topic sounds esoteric, but in this era of "de-platforming" and social media censorship, it's hotly relevant.

Lauded by Paul Hollander and M. Stanton Evans, this is a book that might turn out to be a sort of early history of de-platforming and its enablers.

Tackling decades of what we might call collusion between American librarians and the Soviet Union, pairing guardians of the free exchange of ideas with jailers and banishers of non-Marxist ideas, "Not Seeing Red" opens with an overview of nonpartisan librarianship in pre-Revolutionary Russia and its tragic transformation into repressive "Communist librarianship" under Lenin and his wife Krupskaya.

What may surprise readers is the flourishing nature of the old Czarist public library system and its adherence to principles of nonpartisan book selection and other library activities. After Lenin came to power, this would all be lost in the "nationalization" of public and private libraries (read: seizure) by the Bolsheviks.

It was around this point in my reading that I noticed that my used copy of the book carried a stamp across the top of it: **WITHDRAWN from The New York Public Library.**

Reading about the systematic purge of books and authors from public access in Russian libraries executed by the communist dictatorship from its highest levels, I was put in mind of the systematic purges of voices and ideas from mainstream public access today, whether by faceless tech titans, campus censors, or media elites.

On considering this very Marxist drive to control thought and gain power, then, we may be looking back on 100 years of de-platforming. And I haven't even read very far into the U.S. side of the story. In fact, I had to stop reading to report on a painful irony I discovered about the history of my own used copy of the Karetzky book.

In a nutshell, "Not Seeing Red" seems to do for U.S. librarianship something at least somewhat akin to what "American Betrayal" does for the federal government, news media, and wider culture: That is, expose Soviet and pro-communist links and perfidies.

To wit: Whereas The New York Times is infamous for Walter Duranty's Pulitzer-Prize-winning cover-up of the Ukraine Terror Famine, Karetzky makes plain that Library Journal should be infamous for publishing an unceasing stream of disinformation about Soviet libraries and the fate of freedom of speech therein. Karetzky says:

"In the first decade after the Bolshevik putsch, the premier American periodical in the profession, Library

Journal, provided its readers with numerous editorials, news items, and articles on library developments in the USSR. The overwhelming thrust of these was that much progress was being made in the Soviet Union, that a great social and political experiment was proceeding nicely, and that American librarians should assist their beleaguered, idealistic colleagues there with food as well as materials ... There was no indication that the communist regime was in any way responsible for the disastrous economic and social conditions that beset these librarians. Similarly, there was no mention of the fact that a totalitarian regime was destroying a progressive library profession and perverting the institutions in which it had been based.

"The person most responsible for this misleading campaign was the journal's editor and publisher, Richard R. Bowker. ..."

All hail the founding father of Soviet propaganda in U.S. library-dom. Throughout the 1920s, Karetzky writes (and details) how Bowker "used his editorial pages to support the communist regime."

The 1924 Library Journal article was, Karetzky writes, "highly favorable to the new communist system." (Bonus: It referred to librarians in eastern Europe as "our fellow workers.") There was no mention, Karetzky notes, of the "widespread destruction of libraries and their collections, the confiscation of private libraries open to the public, and the massive purging of library shelves" underway at the time.

The Library Journal whitewash couldn't be clearer than in this declaration: "The world of learning will be glad to know that the public libraries throughout Russia have not suffered

during these these years, suffered physically, that is to say. Their collections are intact."

No, to say the least, they were not, and things only got worse.

Karetzky reveals that Lydenberg and Yarmolinsky both were more critical of the Soviet dictatorship in private. "For some reason," Karetzky writes about Lydenberg, "this very productive author and internationally esteemed librarian never wrote an article or gave a speech presenting his impressions of Soviet libraries and society."

"Never" is a long time, especially for someone who racked up more than four decades at The New York Public Library, also serving at the Library of Congress, the American Library Association, and its board on international relations. Lydenberg died in 1960.

Yarmolinsky did write two articles strongly critical of the repressive nature of the Soviet Union in 1925. However, he added nothing for the rest of his life, Karetzky writes, except for a "pedestrian" half-pager on wartime library conditions in the USSR in 1944. Yarmolinsky died in 1975.

It was around this point in my reading that I noticed that my used copy of the book carried a stamp across the top of it.

Withdrawn from The New York Public Library? But surely they had other copies of this highly original book on hand? I went online to see if I could find a copy listed in its catalog. Here's what I found:

Perhaps there's a perfectly good explanation for why, amid the 53 million items The New York Public Library boasts of in its holdings, there is not one inch of shelf space for this groundbreaking history of the library profession's apologetics on behalf of the most repressive and murderous government censors the world has ever known.

I just can't think of 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.

BARBARA KAY



Commentary

The Greater Essex County district school board in Ontario, Canada, is supplanting its 11th-grade literature curriculum, which up to now has featured great writers of the Western canon such as Shakespeare and George Orwell, with a year-long program of indigenous writers. The change has already been effected in eight of the district's 15 schools.

In the Peel district, I am informed by a reader, the same transformation is in progress. It would be naive to assume that these schools will remain anomalies for long. The "disappearing" of dead white European male writers, however magnificent their achievements, may well be normalized across Canada before long.

It's hard to overstate the alarming implications of this educational earthquake. Deliberately withholding Shakespeare from young minds is a form of aesthetic starvation, but depriving them of Orwell is a moral crime. It's from Orwell's "Animal Farm" that young minds first grasp the nature of totalitarian evil, whether it arises from the left or the right, and understand the preciousness of their freedoms.

Evil arising from the right today, such as the neo-Nazi movement, is instantly recognizable and universally deplored. But the collapse of the Soviet Union didn't shame left-wing intellectuals into embarrassment for their ideology. The utopian dream of human perfectibility and equality of outcome under an all-powerful state persists and grows in the West. Today, on the 70th anniversary of its 1949 publication, Orwell's novel "Nineteen Eighty-Four," which exposes the inherent perils of Marxist ideology, is as worthy of study as it was at the height of the Cold War.

"Nineteen Eighty-Four" wasn't meant as prophecy, but as warning.

"I do not believe that the kind of society I describe necessarily will arrive," Orwell said, "but that something resembling it could arrive." Has "something resembling it" arrived in the West? Is progressivism that "something"?

Famous Soviet dissident Nathan Sharansky distinguished between

The utopian dream of human perfectibility and equality of outcome under an all-powerful state persists and grows in the West.

"free" societies and "fear" societies. In a free society, even though they may be ridiculed by individuals or non-state groups, opinions that contradict widely held beliefs will not be suppressed, nor will those holding the opinions be subjected to material consequences. In a fear society, the state punishes those holding opinions that run counter to state ideology.

The universities, which function as mini-states, are ground zero for the conditions that stifle free inquiry and exchange of ideas. Their mission should be the search for truth through the clash of ideas, but they have instead become recruitment and training centers for the advancement of progressive ideologies.

One only has to Google "cancel culture" or "call-out culture" to see, from a cornucopia of examples, that most large campuses are fear societies, in which dissidence is systematically suppressed. As their most inspired student acolytes make their way through the ranks to leadership of our nation's most influential educational, legal, media, and social institutions, they perpetuate the dogmas and cultural ecology of their ivory-tower training.

Velvet Totalitarianism

The late psychology professor John J. Furedy coined the term "velvet totalitarianism" to describe the deleterious state of affairs regarding academic freedom in Canadian universities, which began in the 1980s, and which has metastasized in the 2000s. Universities went from truth-seeking institutions, he observed, to institutions in which the comfort of official victim groups is the litmus test for permitted speech and thought.

Furedy specifies five components that combine to create a velvet-totalitarian environment.

First is the "presence of uninterpretable laws." Microaggressions—tone of voice, a neutral question that gives offense, or having "privilege" or "implicit bias"—may be adjudged as racism or homophobia or misogyny on the basis of an accuser's discomfort. Speech codes are deemed necessary to protect those of a victim class from vague harms that are not objectively definable.

The second feature is "the presence and power of unqualified pseudo-experts." Equity officers give advice and orders about matters they have

no authority or expertise in, such as the nature of curricula or what criteria should govern faculty hiring. These equity "commissars" may not even have a graduate degree, but are well-versed in the thought crimes they have been hired to police.

Third is "status-defined ethics." Heterosexual white males have replaced the "crypto capitalists" of Soviet times, but the essence—judgment on the basis of one's official compassion-worthy or hate-worthy group—is the same.

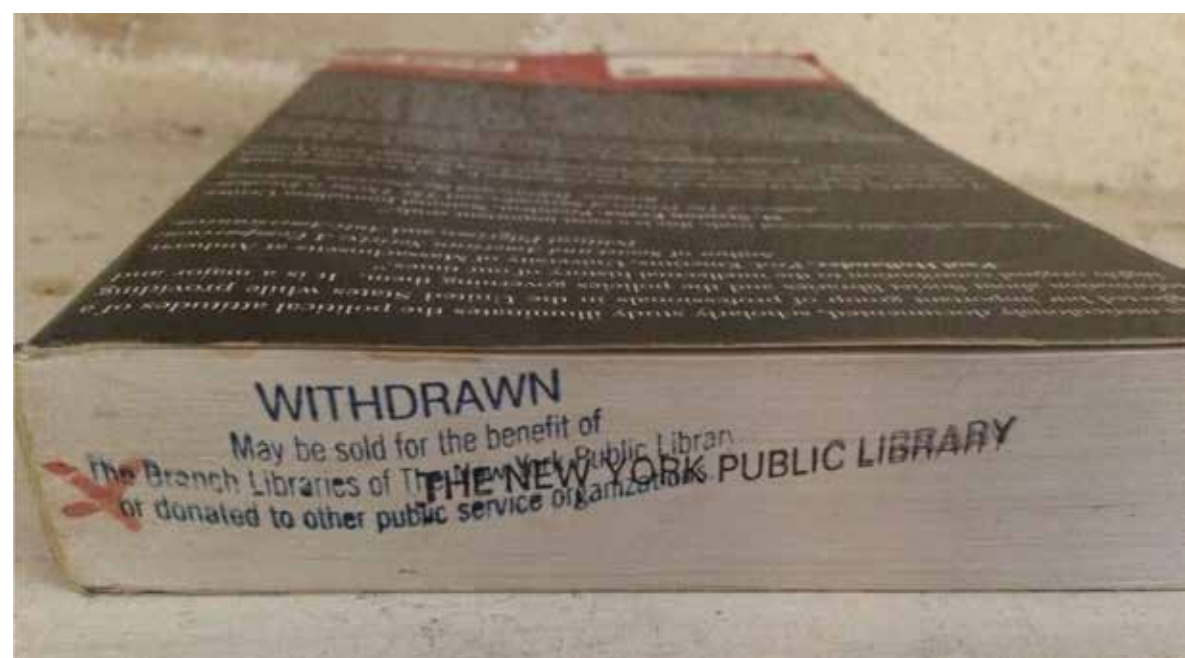
Fourth is the "freezing fear of engaging in public discussion of controversial but fundamental issues," leading to the fifth component, the "demonization of dissidents." For example, questions of gender cry out for discussion because demonstrably false gender dogmas have a profound, even existential impact on children, women athletes, and parental rights.

Most of us agree with Jordan Peterson that the compulsion to assent to opinions we hold ridiculous is a form of totalitarianism. But only the most intrepid of citizens dare to dissent from the incoherence of the hegemonic definitions in play presently. Orwell's "two-minute hate," conceived as satire, has achieved eerie verisimilitude on Twitter. Velvet totalitarianism replaces bullets to the back of the head with bullets to career and reputation.

Orwell wrote, "[Totalitarian] ideas have taken root in the minds of intellectuals everywhere, and I have tried to draw these ideas out to their logical consequences." Five years ago, there were China-style "free speech walls" on Canadian campuses, pathetically tiny spaces for anonymous dissent from the monolithic doctrines governing the rest of the campus, and a sign in themselves of a fear society. Even those seem to have disappeared.

Barbara Kay has been a weekly columnist for the National Post since 2003, and also writes for other publications including the postmillennial.com, Canadian Jewish News, Quillette, and The Dorchester Review. She is the author of three books.

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



A copy of "Not Seeing Red: American Librarianship and the Soviet Union (1917-1960)" by Stephen Karetzky.

TIM SLOAN/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



The Nation Must Be Re-Educated!

MARK BAUERLEIN



Commentary

Why is it that more Americans don't bristle when they hear leading Democrats advocate pro-

found changes in our system of government? Why do reporters and news anchors convey radical revisions in longstanding forms and procedures put forward by liberal politicians without batting an eye?

These aren't just policy adjustments. They are concrete, specific plans to carry out then-President Barack Obama's aim of "fundamentally transforming the United States."

They include: abolishing the Electoral College, packing the Supreme Court, removing tax-exempt status from churches, eliminating national borders, and suspending basic rules of due process in personnel decisions (many Democrat senators declared Judge Brett Kavanaugh guilty before he even spoke in his own defense).

Reading over these exhortations, one would think that the government is so broken that only wholesale restructuring can fix it. The alarm verges on hysteria, as we saw in reactions to the election of Trump and the confirmation of Kavanaugh.

The Democrats don't do ordinary politics, not at this point. The "Squad" are proudly revolutionary, and they have a compliant media and a potent bloc of voters backing them up (Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has 5.7 million Twitter followers; Sen. Bernie Sanders has 9.9 million).

The more bold and far-reaching the idea, the more it gets amplified. You can hear the excitement in liberal circles when municipalities refuse to cooperate with federal authorities on immigration enforcement. How daring, edgy, confrontational! Making churches pay property taxes, a 13-member Supreme Court with four justices quickly installed by the next Democrat president, and a Democrat-controlled Senate ... can you feel the thrill of insurgency?

Ask a young leftist about overturning capitalism and a tone of religious fervor enters his voice. Why not do it? Let's have no more tinkering with policy. We must "think big."

You see them on MSNBC, on Twitter, and in campus protests. And way too many Americans nod their heads, as we can see from the number of young Americans who favor socialism. Why? Why would a good portion of the populace accept radical proposals to alter the form and function of the greatest national success in modern times?

Because they don't believe the old America is worth preserving. Fifty years of revisionist history, multiculturalist literature and art classes, "Hey, hey, ho, ho, Western Civ has got to go!" Women's Studies, Ethnic Studies, Black Studies, Native American

Studies, Critical Race Theory, and Queer Theory have done their job. They have created a different America, a wicked one.

They don't speak of the "Miracle at Philadelphia," as the Constitutional Convention was once labeled. They don't appreciate the fact that in 1800 and in 1900, the United States was the most diverse country in the world, nor do they honor the United States for fighting Germany and Japan, the most venomously ethnocentric nations at that time.

The American past is, instead, a ledger of national crimes. America itself began in 1619 with an act of enslavement, and Wounded Knee and Manzanar were characteristic acts of U.S. policy; Vietnam was just the culmination of a rising imperialism that victimized Mexico, the Philippines, Cuba, Argentina ... In that case, who would say no to progressive visionaries who want to end this unjust empire?

One more example: Remember the Great American Novel? It used to signify a national lineage from Hawthorne and Melville through Twain and James and Cather, to Fitzgerald and Faulkner and Ellison. You read those works in school as a lineup of American Greatness in the literary vein. No more. In the holy name of diversity, the educators have diversified the syllabus to the point that the American literary tradition doesn't mean anything anymore.

Today, in the public high school English classroom, Melville is no more significant than any number of con-

temporary novelists of color. Besides, Hawthorne didn't like female competitors (he called them a "damned mob of scribbling women"), "Huckleberry Finn" has the N-word, and Laura Ingalls Wilder was insufficiently sensitive to the plight of the Indians. You want to defend them?

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This was the kind of cultural groundwork leftists began to lay more than a half-century ago. The strategy wasn't complicated. If schools and teachers ignore a country's traditions, the students grow up not realizing there is any tradition to maintain. Or, better, if you can make your country guilty, people will accept that it needs a do-over. If you can make citizens feel guilty, they will submit to re-education. This was the plan,

and it came to final fruition with the presidency of Barack Obama.

It's a mistake, then, to judge the most brash "transformers" on the left as beyond the pale. Conservatives look at Ocasio-Cortez as a bizarre character, but that's a misjudgment. They make fun of her wacky sense of history and her promiscuous judgment, for instance, claiming the U.S. government is running "concentration camps" at the border. (Note the story in Newsweek on how academics defended her remarks.)

But it isn't her role to be knowledgeable and circumspect. She is a product of post-1990 higher education, exactly the outcome progressive educators envision. No longstanding civic norms for her, and no cultural inheritance, either. She wasn't trained to respect them. She was trained to disrespect them.

The phenomenon of trampling old-school assumptions is now a regular feature of liberal politics. The Democrat senators who turned the Kavanaugh hearings into a circus felt no need to observe restraints on politicizing the judicial branch, which, in the past, prompted the Senate to confirm certified leftist Ruth Bader Ginsburg by a vote of 96-3.

And all the people who march under the current banner "RESIST" don't seem to care that they violate the most basic practical element of democracy: the willingness to accept election results.

Again, all of this passes muster with a notable segment of the population because decades of schooling, movies, books, scholarship, art, and news coverage have undercut their patriotism. The final goal of the transformers wasn't to alter citizens' understanding of the past, to make them less naïve and more critical and enlightened. It was, instead, to make them more receptive and pliable. A proud people is too loyal to the nation to listen very long to adversarial teachers and intellectuals tear it down.

In the 1980s, when I was a graduate student in English and a committed liberal, too, I looked at the hard leftists on the faculty and among the doctoral candidates as harmless and a bit clownish. They were obnoxious and righteous, but there weren't that many of them. It looked as if they would never become a real force in academia. They couldn't get past the contradiction of talking radical this and egalitarian that, while occupying one of the most hierarchical spaces on earth.

Boy, was I wrong. Their outlook is now the heart of the Democratic Party. Worse, it grips enough Americans to put this country in peril for the foreseeable future. They may win.

Mark Bauerlein is a professor of English at Emory College. His work has been featured in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Weekly Standard*, *The Washington Post*, *TLS*, and *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

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

(Top) A young boy stares at the life-sized statue of Abraham Lincoln at the Gettysburg National Military Park Museum in Gettysburg Pa., on Aug. 11, 2010.

(Middle) "Writing the Declaration of Independence, 1776" by Jean Leon Gerome Ferris. (L-R) Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson meet at Jefferson's lodgings in Philadelphia to review a draft of the Declaration of Independence.

(Right) Activists rally outside the ICE offices in New York on June 29, 2018. The Democratic Socialists of America organized the rally to call for the full abolition of ICE.



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