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DOJ Prevented FBI From Pursuing Gross Negligence Charges Against Clinton

In order for Hillary Clinton to be prosecuted, the DOJ required the FBI to establish evidence of intent. **4**

Speakers at Biggest Conservative Gathering Warn of RISE OF SOCIALISM

IVAN PENTCHOUKOV

Key figures in the conservative movement called out the Democratic Party's surging affinity for socialism on Feb. 28, criticizing the ideology as a failure and a threat to the United States in remarks at the Conservative Political Action Conference in Maryland.

In speech after speech, the biggest names among conservative activists, pundits, and officials pointed out the hard swing left toward socialism within the Democratic Party and positioned the fight against the ideology as one of the defining issues in American politics and the 2020 presidential election.

The annual conference, the biggest gathering of conservatives in the United States, opened with a video montage depicting the dan-

gers and failures of socialism. The montage featured footage of socialist Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) stating that breadlines are a good thing, socialist Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) admitting that she is a radical, and images of hunger and violence in socialist regimes.

A theme-setting opening panel featuring Reps. Jim Jordan (R-Ohio) and Mark Meadows (R-N.C.) targeted the "Green New Deal" proposal by Democratic socialist Ocasio-Cortez, suggesting that the policy is emblematic of the Democrats' embrace of socialism.

Meadows, taking a humorous approach, ridiculed one of the more bizarre proposals of the Green New Deal, which suggested that the United States would eventually need to get rid of "farting cows and airplanes." The language has since

“But you know what the biggest threat to America is? Not socialism in Moscow. Socialism here in America.

Sebastian Gorka, former deputy assistant to President Donald Trump

been scrapped from Ocasio-Cortez's website, but continues to fuel ridicule of the radical proposal.

"With this Green New Deal, they're trying to get rid of all the cows," Meadows said, referring to the conservative-owned fast food chain. "But I've got good news. Chik-fil-A stock will go way up because we're going to eat more chicken."

"We can laugh a little bit about it, but this is a serious thing," Meadows added. "They're trying to take away everything that is foundational to who we are."

Conservative television host Deen Borelli said that Democrats are openly embracing socialism, with 2020 presidential candidates "trying to 'out-left' " each other. Borelli criticized the socialist policies backed by the 2020 Democratic candidates, including the "Green New Deal" and "Medicare for All," as horrible.

"America will never be a socialist country," Borelli said, quoting President Donald Trump's State of the Union speech.

Trump's former deputy assistant, Sebastian Gorka, said that socialism endangers the world and warned that socialism's encroachment on the United States is an even bigger threat.

"But you know what the biggest threat to America is? Not socialism in Moscow," Gorka said, transitioning from remarks about Russia's malign activity around the globe. "[It's] socialism here in America."

Gorka pointed out that 52 percent of millennials would like to live in a socialist or communist America, citing statistics from the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation. Some 40 Democrats ran on an openly socialist platform during the 2018 midterm election, Gorka said, add-



Charlie Kirk, president of Turning Point USA, at CPAC in Oxon Hill, Md., on Feb. 28, 2019.

Facebook Engineers Share Strategies to Suppress Right-Wing Arguments, Leaked Documents Indicate

LOIC VENANCE/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



The logo of social network Facebook on a smartphone in Nantes, France, on Jan. 15, 2019.

PETR SVAB

Facebook engineers have proposed measures to suppress content on the platform that attempts to convince people to shift their viewpoints away from the left, as revealed by photographs of internal documents and messages obtained by Project Veritas. The photos show that several prominent right-leaning Facebook pages were marked with code that appears to have handicapped the pages.

Facebook has long faced accusations of left-leaning bias, underscored by the overwhelmingly leftist leanings of its staff. While the

company has maintained that personal biases do not seep into its content policing, the documents show the engineers repeatedly conflating right-leaning arguments, some perhaps crudely presented, with "hate speech" or "trolling."

'Red pill' or Trolling?

The photos were obtained by a Facebook contractor fired about year ago, according to Project Veritas, and include a September 2017 presentation by the company's Data Science Manager Seiji Yamamoto and Chief Data Scientist Eduardo Arino de la Rubia.

The presentation documents what

Facebook has long faced accusations of left-leaning bias, underscored by the overwhelmingly leftist leanings of its staff.

the authors consider "coordinated trolling" and how to counter it.

Trolling is a broad term that describes intentionally eliciting a negative response from someone, most commonly online.

The authors identified trolls with a variety of forms of conduct commonly deemed unacceptable online, such as harassment, doxing (revealing somebody's personal information), and falsely reporting content violations.

Yet one of the "destructive behaviors" described by the authors was also "red-pilling normies to convert them to their worldview."

"Red-pilling," a colloquialism commonly associated with the political right, originated as a reference to the 1999 movie "The Matrix" and describes a confrontation with shocking, hard-to-accept facts that force one to reevaluate one's beliefs.

"Normie" is a term used on some online discussion platforms like 4chan to describe "an individual who is deemed to be boringly conventional or mainstream by those who identify themselves as nonconformists," according to KnowYourMeme.com.

As an example of such "red-pilling," the authors posted a link to the YouTube video "Why Social Justice is CANCER | Identity Politics, Equality & Marxism" by Lauren Chen, also known as "Roaming Millennial."

In a video response to the document's release, Chen said she was confused by the authors' choice to single out her video, which she described as "super, super tame."

"Essentially, I'm arguing that social justice is toxic because it promotes tribalism over individuality and because it chips away at the concept of equality of opportunity for individuals," she said.

Chen acknowledged she picked a provocative title, yet she also started the video by explaining she doesn't literally equate "social justice" with cancer. "It is frustrating that I would even need to explain things like hyperbole and metaphor," she said.

It doesn't appear Chen's viewers have felt "trolled" either—the video had some 11,000 likes versus fewer

than 500 dislikes as of Feb. 28.

Punishments

Yamamoto and de la Rubia recommended developing a program that could "predict" whether a user is a troll by, among other things, scouring the user's language for words like "cuck, zucked, REEE, normie, IRL, lulz, Shadilay, etc.," some of which are common slang terms used by some online communities.

They also proposed targeting troll accounts with "drastically limited bandwidth for a few hours," which would slow down Facebook's functioning for the user, as well as logging the user out or redirecting the user to their Facebook home page every few minutes.

They also proposed to make it so that "comments and posts that [the users] spend time crafting will magically fail to upload."

'Action Deboost'

Other photographs from the insider show that some Facebook pages were marked with the code "SI (Sigma):!ActionDeboostLiveDistribution," which the insider believed was to suppresses the distribution of live stream videos posted by those pages. The code was seen on pages belonging to right-leaning author and filmmaker Mike Cernovich, conservative comedian and commentator Steven Crowder, and right-leaning news site The Daily Caller. The insider said she checked several pages belonging to left-leaning figures and entities, such as the Young Turks and Colin Kaepernick, and found that they didn't include the coding.

The insider's photos "seem legitimate," former senior Facebook engineer Brian Amerige told The Epoch Times via the Facebook Messenger app. He was hesitant to trust Project Veritas, a right-leaning nonprofit, as a source, and said he hadn't seen the "deboosting" technology with his own eyes. He opined, though, that "deboosting" is probably happening one way or another (for both good and bad reasons)."

Facebook didn't respond to a request for comment.

US Government Extends Contract for Mice 'Humanized' With Aborted Organ Tissue

PETR SVAB

A contract for a steady supply of mice implanted with tissue from aborted babies was extended by 90 more days in February by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

It was the second time in a row that the HHS opted for only a 90-day extension instead of a full-year one for the contract as the department reviews all research involving fetal tissue for moral, ethical, and other concerns.

The contract with the University of California-San Francisco (UCSF), dates back to 2013 and pays over \$2 million a year for a supply of about 100 mice a month, 90 of which are

implanted with human fetal thymus and liver tissue. The mice are used for testing HIV drugs.

HHS launched its review in September in response to media scrutiny of the Food and Drug Administration's contract with Advanced Bioscience Resources (ABR), a nonprofit referred by Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) to the FBI in 2016 (pdf) for allegedly selling body parts of aborted babies.

HHS terminated the ABR contract and committed to an audit of "all acquisitions involving human fetal tissue to ensure conformity with procurement and human fetal tissue research laws and regulations," the department stated in a Sept. 24

“HHS has initiated a comprehensive review of all research involving fetal tissue ... in light of the serious regulatory, moral, and ethical considerations involved.

Department of Health and Human Services



An ultrasound image of a baby in the 18th week of pregnancy.

release.

"In addition, HHS has initiated a comprehensive review of all research involving fetal tissue ... in light of the serious regulatory, moral, and ethical considerations involved."

The HHS also said it would look into potential alternatives to using fetal tissue. The review is still in progress, HHS told The Epoch Times via email.

HHS plans to spend \$95 million on fetal tissue research in fiscal 2019, down from \$103 million the year before.

Critics of such research, including anti-abortion advocates, point out that it creates a demand for late-term abortions of healthy babies.

Humanized Mouse

Scientists have crafted "humanized" mice for well over a decade using pieces of fetal organs, including the liver, gut, and thymus—two small lobes in front of the heart which are a crucial part of the immune system. The mice are implanted with pieces of tissue each about the size of a sesame seed as well as stem cells. The mice then develop bodily functions, such as an immune system, more similar to the human ones, helping scientists to predict how new treatments would work in humans.

Abortion providers must get women to consent if their fetuses are to be used in such research. It's not clear, however, whether the women know that the fetal tissue would be implanted into mice.

Late Term Connection

One 2015 research article (pdf) on experiments involving humanized mice specified that the fetal liver cells were obtained from babies aborted at 20-24 weeks of pregnancy.

Another article (pdf), published in 2017, described implanting mice with fetal gut tissues from babies aborted at 18-24 weeks "obtained from women with normal pregnancies before elective termination for nonmedical reasons."

At 18 weeks, unborn babies begin to hear and can roll and flip, exhibiting coordinated limb movement, according to the Mayo Clinic.

At 24 weeks, babies already have more than a 50 percent chance of survival if they receive hospital care upon birth.

ing that communism is taking over America under the guise of Democratic socialism.

The danger of socialism and communism is personal to Gorka, whose father was tortured by the secret police in Soviet Russia.

Like the other speakers, Gorka ridiculed the Green New Deal.

"It's a watermelon. Green on the outside, deep, deep communist red on the inside," Gorka said.

"They want to take your pickup truck, they want to rebuild your home, they want to take away your hamburgers," Gorka said, referring to the Green New Deal's call to get rid of all combustion-engine cars and rebuild all homes. "This is what Stalin dreamed about but never achieved."

According to an estimate by the American Action Forum, the Green New Deal could cost up to \$93 trillion over the course of 10 years, \$33 trillion more than the entire projected spending of the U.S. government in the same timeframe.

Charlie Kirk, a conservative activist and president of Turning Point USA, positioned the fight against socialism as the defining issue in what he called a "culture war" leading up to the 2020 presidential election.

"There is a culture war brewing right now and it's a culture war different from the '80s and '90s. It is one fundamental question. What is America? Is America a place for victims or victors? Is America a place where you can achieve your dreams or dwell in mediocrity? Is America a socialist place or is America a place that embraces freedom?" Kirk said.

"That will be the question of the 2020 election. It will be the most important culture war in American history. And we will win."

DOJ PREVENTED FBI

From Pursuing Gross Negligence Charges Against Clinton



Former FBI Director James Comey after testifying to the House Judiciary and Oversight and Government Reform committees on Capitol Hill on Dec. 7, 2018.

JEFF CARLSON

Early in the Hillary Clinton email case, the Department of Justice reached a decision that would have far-reaching implications for the FBI's investigation into Clinton's use of a private email server.

The Justice Department (DOJ), under then-Attorney General Loretta Lynch, decided to set an unusually high threshold for prosecuting Clinton, effectively ensuring from the outset that she would not be charged.

In order for Clinton to be prosecuted, the DOJ required the FBI to establish evidence of intent—even though the gross negligence statute explicitly does not require this.

This meant that the FBI would have needed to find a smoking gun, such as an email or an admission made during FBI questioning, that revealed Clinton or her aides knowingly set up the private email server to send classified information.

Clinton was famously exonerated by FBI Director James Comey in a July 5, 2016, press conference, which immediately became the subject of controversy.

Notably, Comey had been convinced to remove the term "gross negligence" to describe Clinton's actions from his prepared statement by, among others, FBI lawyer Lisa Page, FBI agent Peter Strzok, senior legal counsel Trisha Anderson, and FBI analyst Jonathan Moffa.

Because of Comey's statement, many have mistakenly concluded that the FBI acted independently from DOJ influence in its investigation of Clinton. Congressional testimonies by high-ranking FBI officials involved in the investigation reveal, however, that this was not the case.

The testimonies, which were conducted last year behind closed doors, have not been publicly released, but were reviewed for this article.

DOJ Involvement in Clinton Case and Requirement of Intent

Lisa Page, an FBI lawyer who served as special counsel to FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe during the time of the Clinton investigation, noted during her testimony in July 2018 that the DOJ was intimately in-

volved in the investigation.

"Everybody talks about this as if this was the FBI investigation, and the truth of the matter is there was not a single step, other than the July 5th statement, there was not a single investigative step that we did not do in consultation with or at the direction of the Justice Department," Page told congressional investigators on July 13, 2018.

Comey had also hinted at the influence exerted by the DOJ over the Clinton investigation in his July recommendation, stating that "there are obvious considerations, like the strength of the evidence, especially regarding intent."

Intent is a requirement of several statutes the FBI was looking into, but it is specifically not a factor under the charge of gross negligence—contained within 18 U.S. Code § 793(f)—a fact that was brought up by Rep. John Ratcliffe (R-Texas) during Page's testimony:

REP. RATCLIFFE: "Okay. And that's—I think, when you talk about intent, that's certainly true under part of 18 793(f), but it sounds like you all just blew over gross negligence."

MS. PAGE: "We did not blow over gross negligence. We, in fact—and, in fact, the Director—because on its face, it did seem like, well, maybe there's a potential here for this to be the charge. And we had multiple conversations with the Justice Department about charging gross negligence."

Page made clear during her testimony that the DOJ had decided that, due to "constitutional vagueness," a charge of gross negligence would not be supported without accompanying proof of intent—a seemingly oxymoronic position:

REP. RATCLIFFE: "Okay. So let me if I can, I know I'm testing your memory, but when you say advice you got from the Department, you're making it sound like it was the Department that told you: You're not going to charge gross negligence because we're the prosecutors and we're telling you we're not going to—"

“Let’s assume things are going swimmingly and, in fact, all 17 of those witnesses admit, ‘We did it, it was on purpose, we totally wanted to mishandle classified information,’ gross negligence would still have been off the table because of the department’s assessment that it was vague.”

Lisa Page, former FBI lawyer



Lisa Page, former legal counsel to former FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe, arrives to speak before the House Judiciary and Oversight committees on Capitol Hill on July 16, 2018.

ANDREW CABALLERO-REYNOLDS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

MS. PAGE: "That is correct."

REP. RATCLIFFE: "— bring a case based on that."

Trouble Defining Intent

The word "intent" drove the entirety of the FBI's investigation of the Clinton email server.

It appears, however, that there were differing understandings of the word "intent" within the FBI. Trisha Anderson, the No. 2 lawyer at the bureau, told investigators that what she viewed as intent was "an email that the Secretary sent saying, I set up this server for the purpose of sending unclassified information for my convenience, even though I know it's not a secure system."

Page viewed the situation somewhat differently, agreeing they were looking for "an intent to do an act which is in violation of the law's central command." As she told investigators, the FBI "couldn't find any indicia of knowledge that she knew that these [classified emails] shouldn't be traversing her server."

In Anderson's understanding, she was looking for a prosecutable reason behind the establishment of the server itself. Page, however, was looking at whether Clinton knew which emails should not have traveled through the private server.

Meanwhile, Bill Priestap, head of the FBI's counterintelligence division and who was officially in charge of the Clinton investigation, said during testimony that he thought the "number of instances is absolutely a proper consideration" in establishing intent.

According to Ryan Breitenbach, who was the House majority counsel at the time of Priestap's interview, the State Department had identified 22 top-secret emails and 1,300 classified emails on Clinton's email server. As Breitenbach noted to Priestap during testimony, "I think there might be many who would question whether people in this room would still be in this room if we had hit 1,300 emails on our personal Gmail service."

'DOJ Not Willing to Charge This'

Priestap was shown an email sent

standard had not been met—as opposed to not pursued—in the Clinton case. As Priestap noted, "If I understood from the department that they would never charge a particular statute, I would want to know that before I'm going to dedicate resources to a particular topic. I didn't know that."

But Lisa Page, a lawyer by training, seemed to have a very different understanding of what would be allowed by the DOJ. Page appeared to indicate during her testimony that because of the DOJ's position, there was no reason for the FBI to even pursue evidence related to the specific statute of gross negligence.

"Let's assume things are going swimmingly and, in fact, all 17 of those witnesses admit, 'We did it, it was on purpose, we totally wanted to mishandle classified information,' gross negligence would still have been off the table because of the department's assessment that it was vague. We would have other crimes to now charge, but gross negligence would not have been among them," Page said in her testimony.

FBI General Counsel James Baker, who called Clinton's behavior "alarming, appalling," told congressional lawmakers, "I thought these folks should know that this stuff is classified, that it was alarming what they were talking about, especially some of the most highly classified stuff."

from an unknown individual in the FBI general counsel's office to Priestap's former boss, Michael Steinbach, which contained a chart of "available statutes for prosecuting the former Secretary of State." Gross negligence was specifically excluded from the chargeable statutes available to the FBI. Priestap, who had not previously seen the document, expressed concerns that this might have hindered the work of FBI investigators.

MR. BREITENBACH: "We see in this chart that DOJ is not willing to charge this, meaning 18 U.S.C. 793(f). My question is going back to those draft affidavits. If DOJ is not willing to charge this statute, why would the FBI in an affidavit use this statute as predication to obtain a search warrant if this statute is never going to be prosecuted?"

MR. PRIESTAP: "So I—I don't know who put this together and used this language."

MR. BREITENBACH: "Well, someone in the FBI general counsel's office."

MR. PRIESTAP: "Yeah. No. No. I trust you. But I don't know why they, again, put it together. I don't know why they used this language, 'DOJ not willing to charge this:'

"My attitude is that if there is a Federal criminal statute still on the books, then, you know—and we think there may or might be a violation of that, we still have to work to uncover whether, in fact, there was.

"The prosecutive history of a particular statute isn't going to affect—I sure hope it does not affect the fact-finder's work."

Priestap said that it was his understanding that the gross negligence

Congress Makes the Laws

Page, Baker, and Anderson all testified that the gross negligence statute was rarely if ever used, as part of their explanation for the DOJ's unwillingness to pursue it, but this logic was repeatedly challenged by then-majority House counsel Breitenbach:

"If part of that rationale was that it had never been used, then, by extension, one might presume that other statutes that are on the books, if they aren't being used, should not be ever considered as predication for a prosecution."

Breitenbach was providing a less-than-subtle reminder that it is Congress, not the DOJ or the FBI, that creates laws. The DOJ, as part of the executive branch, has an obligation to enforce the statutes put in place by Congress, not to pass legal judgment on them.

Anderson had no material response to this rebuttal, only noting, "That

Baker said that he "argued with others about why they thought she shouldn't be charged." However, Baker said he was eventually persuaded by other senior FBI personnel, including Comey, "that charging her was not appropriate because we could not establish beyond a reasonable doubt that—ve, the government, could not establish beyond a reasonable doubt that she had the intent."



Then-President Barack Obama during a meeting with Attorney General Loretta Lynch and FBI Director James Comey at the White House on Jan. 4, 2016.

was not the intent of my statement."

FBI Ignored Both Volume and Sensitivity of Clinton's Email Violations

Included within Clinton's emails was "classified information up to the Special Access Program level." SAPs, as they are known, are established to "control access, distribution, and provide protection for sensitive classified information beyond that normally required" on a need-to-know basis with only a small number of individuals cleared to view the information.

The classification level of SAPs is so high that Anderson actually refused to define her understanding of an SAP in the unclassified interview setting before congressional investigators, which led to an obvious question: In addition to considering the frequency of violation, would not the sensitivity of the emails also be a factor? Anderson's answer was eye-opening:

MR. BREITENBACH: "[I] proposed that frequency of emails could be considered an element of the offense. And now what I'm proposing is, and I'm asking you, could the sensitivity of emails also be considered an element of an offense when considering intent, or even gross negligence?"

MS. ANDERSON: "I don't know. In this particular circumstance, our—the testimony of these witnesses was that they believed that there was—they did not believe the information to be classified. They believed themselves to be talking around the classified information and, therefore, not to actually be transmitting any classified information. So the facts that you're presenting were simply not present in this particular case."

In other words, under Anderson's understanding of the DOJ's standard, the extreme volume of emails was not a factor, nor was the classification level of the emails, as long as those being investigated were able to say they simply didn't know any documents were actually classified—even if the primary subject of the investigation, the secretary of state, should have been qualified to discern between classified and unclassified information.

FBI Never Looked for Evidence of Negligence

Anderson was asked about her understanding of the difference between gross negligence and extreme carelessness. She answered that she didn't "know exactly what the pre-



Then-Attorney General Loretta Lynch at the Justice Department on May 8, 2015.

MARK WILSON/GETTY IMAGES

cise difference is between extremely careless and gross negligence."

In her testimony, she was forced to admit that the team working on the case should have tried to better understand the difference between the two:

"Obviously, the use of the phrase 'extremely careless' has been open to interpretation and confusion after the fact. So, perhaps, that issue is something we should have more carefully considered, we as a group. I'm not saying, you know, there was anything that I did incorrectly here, but—so I don't know that there is a single meaning of extremely careless."

Which begs the question of why Anderson, among others, felt compelled to push Comey to change the language within his statement from the legal term of gross negligence to the non-legal term of extremely careless.

Anderson, who told congressional investigators that the phrase "extremely careless" had been the subject of competing interpretations, was quickly countered by Breitenbach, who noted, "It's competing, because it has no legal effect, whereas gross negligence does."

"I think you would agree with me that negligence is different than intent," he told Anderson.

But according to Anderson's testimony, the FBI never even looked into negligence due to the DOJ's legal position:

MR. BREITENBACH: "So there was no review as to whether there was negligence in this case?"

MS. ANDERSON: "It was legally irrelevant because the Department of Justice would not have brought a prosecution in a circumstance in which there was simply negligence."

The issue at the heart of the Clinton email investigation was summarized by Breitenbach, who said that "the Department of Justice made a decision that intent was required, even though we have a statute on the books that does not require intent that [only] requires gross negligence."

Gross negligence is different than willfulness and intentional conduct. But with the decision to require evidence of intent on the part of Clinton in order to prosecute, the DOJ managed to circumvent and in effect neutralize the entire FBI investigation from the outset.

This could have been why Comey and the hierarchy of the FBI felt comfortable in drawing up an ex-

Priestap was shown an email sent from an unknown individual in the FBI general counsel's office to Priestap's former boss, Michael Steinbach, which contained a chart of 'available statutes for prosecuting the former Secretary of State.'

oneration statement in advance of Clinton's actual interview. No actual evidence of intent, such as an email in which Clinton overtly admitted she established her knowingly insecure server for the purpose of sending classified information for convenience, had been found. Clinton was almost certain not to admit to this during her own FBI interview.

Absent a slip-up on her part, Clinton was effectively in the clear from the outset of the FBI investigation due to the DOJ's decision to require intent.

DOJ's National Security Division Required Evidence of Intent

It was Page that testified as to whom was responsible for the decision within the DOJ to require intent as part of a gross negligence charge—Richard Scott and, secondarily, David Laufman.

Scott, the deputy chief of the Counterintelligence and Export Control Section (CES) of the Justice Department's National Security Division (NSD), was involved in the investigation into Clinton's private email server and reported to Laufman.

Laufman, chief of CES and Scott's direct supervisor, was cited by Page as the individual responsible for altering the FBI's normal policy of interviews by insisting on being personally present for the interviews of "not just Mrs. Clinton but also Huma Abedin, Cheryl Mills, Jake Sullivan, and her sort of core team."

Both men were overseen by George Toscas, who was selected by the DOJ's head of the NSD, John Carlin, to oversee the entirety of the Clinton investigation from the DOJ's perspective. Working alongside Toscas were Stu Evans and Adam Hickey—both deputy assistant attorney generals like Toscas. According to Toscas, Evans, as the DOJ's point person on the FISA application on former Trump campaign adviser Carter Page, was responsible for managing—and reading—not only the original Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) application on Carter Page, but also the three subsequent renewals.

Notably, with the exceptions of Moffa, Evans, and Hickey, every individual from the FBI and DOJ mentioned has either been fired or has resigned. Most have been the subject of congressional interviews.

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OPINION

China’s Ploy to Establish a GLOBAL DNA DATABASE

The first in a 2-part series on the regime’s DNA collection project

STEVEN W. MOSHER

The Chinese Communist Party’s three “magic weapons,” as Chinese leader Xi Jinping reminded us in a September 2014 speech, are “the PLA [People’s Liberation Army], propaganda, and United Front tactics.”

To this, we may now have to add a fourth magic weapon: DNA.

Like the other three, this fourth magic weapon is deployed not only domestically, but internationally, as well. That is to say, China is not only collecting, analyzing, and storing the DNA of massive numbers of its own citizens; it’s collecting the DNA of many other peoples from around the world, including millions of Americans (this will be explored further in the forthcoming second part of this series).

The China program alone is breathtaking in its scope and seems designed to encompass the country’s entire population—currently some 1.4 billion people—over time. There are a number of DNA collection projects that have already been completed, while others are currently underway. For example, there is a national DNA collection project focused exclusively on men, another regional project targeted on “troublesome” minorities like the Uyghurs and Kazakhs, and still others focused on the general population.

We know a lot about the DNA project targeting men, because The Epoch Times recently obtained a copy of the Ministry of Public Security directive that established it. Issued on Nov. 7, 2017, the internal document announced the establishment of a “National Y-STR DNA Criminal Investigation and Information Database.” STR stands for “short tandem repeat,” or small units of repeated DNA sequences, on the Y chromosome. The directive also described, in great detail, how to collect, analyze, and store Y-chromosome DNA data from millions of men.

Because the Y chromosome—found only in men—is passed down from father to son virtually unchanged, the Y chromosome in any group of closely related men is nearly identical. That’s why the first step in the DNA collection process of the program at the village and town level is the creation of a genealogy. Officials are instructed to draw up a family tree for every family in the community they survey. Once every independent male line has been identified, one or more of the men in it are required to give a blood sample for analysis.

The (evil) genius of the Y DNA database thus created is this: Any male DNA gathered in the course of an investigation can immediately be traced back to a small group of related men. At that point, it will be relatively easy for Ministry of Public Security investigators to identify the exact man that the state wants to question, arrest, imprison, or execute. Given the enormous utility of the database from the point of view of the state, it’s perhaps no surprise that it has been fast-tracked. The directive called for it to be completed and in operation by the end of 2019.

It is important to understand that the focus of China’s Y DNA program—or any one of its other DNA collection programs, for that matter—is not merely crime solving. In the United States, because the DNA database is used exclusively for fighting crime, DNA is gathered only from criminals and those suspected of a crime. Not so in China, where DNA is gathered from tens of millions of people who are innocent of any wrongdoing, and where the DNA database that is being constructed is conceived of as a tool for controlling dissent.

This is openly stated in the directive’s “guiding ideology” section; there, we learn that the Y DNA database has two purposes. It’s intended to be used not only to “fight against crime” but also to “control society.” Of course, in the view of the Party-state apparatus that currently rules China, a “crime” can be virtually anything, including questioning the current Party line, while a “criminal” can be anyone, from a human rights attorney to a religious practitioner. The so-called “five new black categories” (“xin hei wulei” in Chinese) are, in fact, defined as human rights attorneys, underground churchgoers, dissidents, leading commentators on the internet, and members of disadvantaged sectors in society. These five categories have been a particular obsession of Party leadership since 2012.

One final point about those whose Y DNA will be collected for the database. Aside from the general male population (who are euphemistically called “people who voluntarily pro-

vide DNA”), the directive also mandated that samples be collected from all those under arrest, detention, or criminal investigation.

This is more or less in line with international practice. But then, the directive ordered all policemen and detectives, and all government personnel involved in health and social programs, to provide DNA samples as well. In other words, the Party is taking advantage of its nationwide Y DNA program to gather genetic material from those men who enforce its policies on the wider population.

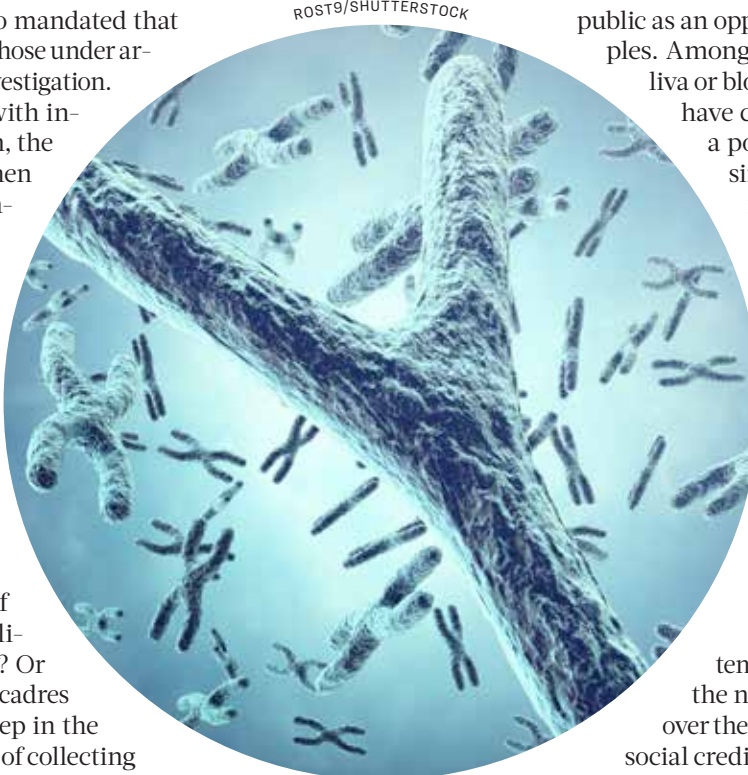
Is that a sign that the Party and its core leadership are worried about the loyalty of those who enforce their policies on the wider population? Or is the inclusion of communist cadres at this point just a natural step in the direction of the ultimate goal of collecting everyone’s DNA? At the end of the day, as Minister of Public Security and Politburo member Zhao Kezhi said on Jan. 24, it’s all about the “prevention and control of social [upheavals].”

China’s master DNA database, which includes not just Y DNA, but male and female “autosomal” DNA as well, is also being rapidly expanded. The first Chinese province to demand DNA not just from criminals or cadres but from everyone was Xinjiang, with its large minority population of Muslim Uyghurs and Kazakhs. The program, known as “Physicals for All,” was not optional. Anyone who resisted received an unfriendly visit from the police. Once at the clinic, they were not given a “physical” at all, but something more akin to the in-processing that criminals undergo. Their blood was drawn, their fingerprints were taken, and they were given a retinal scan.

According to state-run media Xinhua, such “physicals” were given to nearly 36 million people from 2016 to 2017. Since Xinjiang has a population of only 24.5 million, I suspect this means that millions of Muslim and other minorities in neighboring provinces were also required to provide samples of their DNA, fingerprints, and retinal scans.

China’s master DNA database is being expanded among the general Han Chinese population, as well. For example, the Wall Street Journal reported on Dec. 26, 2017, that hundreds of male students from kindergarten to high school in Qianwei County, Sichuan Province, were ordered to provide saliva specimens. Like blood, saliva can be used to extract DNA for analysis. There is a significant Yi minority living in the area, which may have been another reason why the region was targeted.

The Journal report revealed that the PRC police use almost every encounter with the



ROSTO/SHUTTERSTOCK

A 3-D illustration of the Y chromosome.

The DNA database that is being constructed in China is conceived of as a tool for controlling dissent. This is openly stated in the directive.

public as an opportunity to collect DNA samples. Among those required to give a saliva or blood sample include those who have criticized the Party on Weibo, a popular social-media platform similar to Twitter, or who have forgotten to carry their identification card. Also targeted are members of groups that the police believe “endanger social stability,” such as migrant workers, coal miners, and apartment renters. Note that none of those targeted have been accused of having committed a crime, and that none of these pretexts for DNA collection would be allowed in the United States. As China’s social credit system is implemented, I predict that the next group to be forced to turn over their DNA will be those with a low social credit score.

As a result of these ongoing DNA collection efforts, an estimated 100 million DNA samples have been collected, analyzed, and added to the government’s huge database. Millions more are being added each month. By way of comparison, the FBI currently has DNA data for 13 million convicted persons and DNA data for 3 million arrested persons.

As U.S. Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) recently warned, “the Chinese government is spending tens of billions on facial recognition software, electronic spying, and coercive DNA collection to create a database capable of tracking a person’s every move. This is the definition of a totalitarian system—one that exercises total control of your person, down to the very strands of your DNA.”

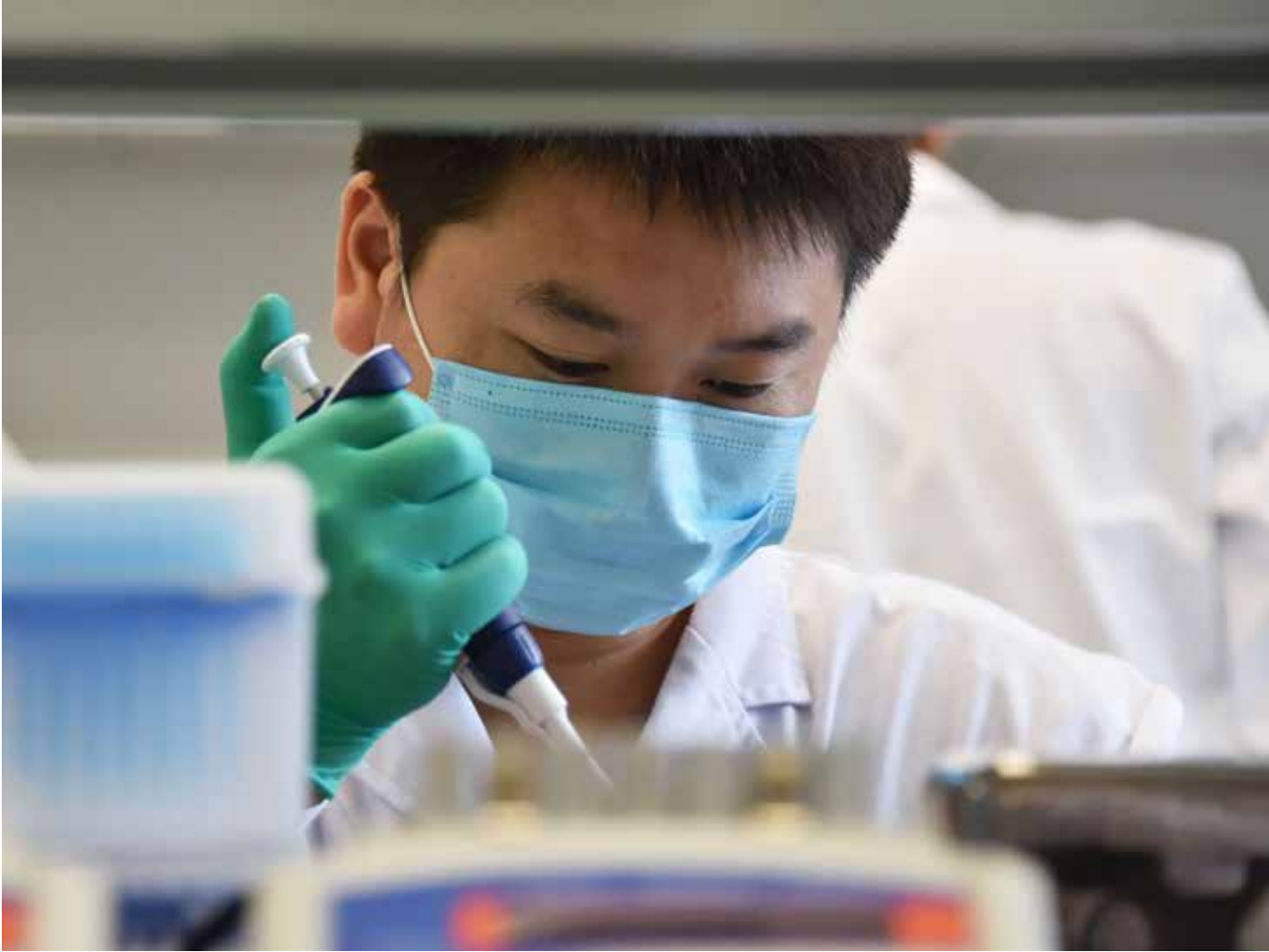
The iron curtain that is descending upon the Chinese people is chilling enough, but what should make every American sit up and take notice is that American companies have been—largely unwittingly—enabling China’s rise as a digital totalitarian state. And that China is assembling a huge DNA database for people outside of China as well, a database that includes the private DNA code of millions of Americans.

To be continued in Part Two: Does China Have Your DNA?

Steven W. Mosher is the president of the Population Research Institute and the author of “Bully of Asia: Why China’s Dream is the New Threat to World Order.” He studied human biology at Stanford University under famed geneticist Luigi Cavalli-Sforza.

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

GREG BAKER/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



A technician works at a DNA tech lab in Beijing on Aug. 22, 2018.

THE EPOCH TIMES WEEK 10, 2019



WIN MCNAMEE/GETTY IMAGES

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 29, 2019.

Dems Throw Key Senate Roadblock at Trump Nominees 10 TIMES AS OFTEN as GOPers Did Obama

MARK TAPSCOTT

WASHINGTON—Senate Democrats have forced cloture votes 128 times on President Donald Trump nominees to the federal courts and executive branch positions, 10 times as many times as Republicans did during his predecessor’s first two years in the Oval Office.

By comparison, during the first half of President Barack Obama’s initial term, there were only a dozen cloture votes on the president’s nominees, according to data compiled by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.).

There were only 42 Senate Republicans during Obama’s first two years, compared to 45 Democrats, plus two independents

who caucus with them, under Trump.

The comparison is even starker when Trump’s first two years are compared with those of presidents George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George H.W. Bush, Ronald Reagan, and Jimmy Carter.

There were no such cloture votes on nominees by Carter, Reagan, or the first Bush, while Clinton faced a total of only eight and the second Bush a mere four.

McConnell and other Republican leaders have been vociferously blasting Democratic delaying tactics against Trump nominees in recent days.

“I offered the Democratic Leader [Sen. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.)] a package of 150 non-judicial executive branch appointments that came out of committee sup-

ported by both Democrats and Republicans. ... And he rejected it,” McConnell told a Feb. 13 Senate Rules Committee meeting.

Sen. James Lankford (R-Okla.) introduced a proposal earlier this month, with McConnell’s blessing, to reduce sharply the time for debate on most nominees after cloture is invoked.

“In the past, every president was essentially able to select their staff and begin serving the American people right after inauguration, until President Trump,” Lankford said at the time.

“In the past two years, Democrats have slowed the confirmation of more than 100 nominees, which has created a new low standard for how all future presidents will be treated. ... Post-cloture debate time

Tornado Kills 23 in Alabama as Severe Storm Ravages Southeast

IVAN PENTCHOUKOV

A tornado killed at least 23 people in southeast Alabama on March 3, as a powerful storm system ravaged the Southeast and unleashed several other tornadoes.

“Unfortunately our toll, as far as fatalities, does stand at 23 at the current time,” Lee County Sheriff Jay Jones told WRBL-TV, adding that two people were in intensive care.

Rescue personnel flew drones with heat-seeking sensors to scan the area for survivors but the operation was cut short as conditions grew more perilous. A ground search was to resume March 4, according to Jones.

“The devastation is incredible,” Jones said. The tornado tore down a country road in the rural community of Beauregard, destroying single-family and mobile homes along a path half a mile wide, Jones said, adding that some homes were reduced to slabs.

Lee County Coroner Bill Harris said he had to call in help from the state after his four-person team was overwhelmed.

The National Weather Service (NWS) confirmed late March 3 that the deadly Alabama tornado was rated F3, a category with wind speeds of 158–206 mph. The tornado crossed the area near Beauregard shortly after 2 p.m., according to NWS.

“It appears it stayed on the ground for at least a mile and maybe longer,” Jones said.

The powerful storm system also roared across parts of Georgia, South Carolina, and Florida.

The rain stopped after nightfall on March 3. In Beauregard, metal debris and tree branches littered the roadways. Power appeared to be out in many places.

President Donald Trump offered support on

Twitter to those affected by the storm: “To the great people of Alabama and surrounding areas: Please be careful and safe. ... To the families and friends of the victims, and to the injured, God bless you all!”

Some 150 first responders joined the efforts to search the debris after the storm hit in Beauregard, according to Rita Smith, spokeswoman for the Lee County Emergency Management Agency.

Numerous Warnings

No deaths had been reported on March 3 from other storm-damaged Alabama counties, according to Gregory Robinson, spokesman for the Alabama Emergency Management Agency. Crews were still surveying damage in several counties in the southwestern part of the state, Robinson said.

Numerous tornado warnings were posted across parts of Alabama, Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina on March 3 as the powerful storm system raced across the region. Weather officials said they confirmed other tornadoes around the region by radar alone and would send teams out early on March 4 to assess those and other storms.

In rural Talbotton, Georgia, about 80 miles south of Atlanta, a handful of people were injured by either powerful straight-line winds or a tornado that destroyed several mobile homes and damaged other buildings, said Leigh Ann Erenheim, director of the Talbot County Emergency Management Agency.

Televised broadcast news footage showed smashed buildings with rooftops blown away, cars overturned, and debris everywhere. Trees all around had been snapped bare of branches.

“The last check I had was between six and



KARA COLEMAN FIELDS/OPELUKA-AUBURN NEWS VIA AP

A vehicle is caught under downed trees along Lee Road 11 in Beauregard, Ala., after a powerful storm system passed through the area March 3, 2019.

eight injuries,” Erenheim said in a phone interview.

Henry Wilson of the Peach County Emergency Management Agency near Macon in central Georgia said a barn had been destroyed and trees and power poles had been snapped, leaving many in the area without power.

Authorities in southwest Georgia are searching door-to-door in darkened neighborhoods after a possible tornado touched down in the rural city of Cairo, about 33 miles north of Tallahassee, Florida, on the evening of March 3. There were no immediate reports of serious

should be used for debate, not meaning- less delay on an empty Senate floor.”

Similarly, Senate Rules Committee Chairman Roy Blount (R-Mo.) said: “Senate Democrats have abused the rules to the point where the president can’t put his team in place and the Senate can’t do its work. The degree of obstruction we’ve seen during the first two years of the Trump Administration is totally unacceptable.”

But Republicans have previously used cloture votes on presidential nominees even more effectively than the Democrats.

During 2013 and 2014, for example, there were 168 cloture motions on presidential nominees, by far the most since President Jimmy Carter, according to Senate data examined by The Epoch Times.

Thus, cloture motions on Obama’s nominees in 2013 and 2014 represented 77 percent of the total, compared to 68 percent under Trump to date.

Cloture is a procedure to end debate on a nominee that until 2013 required 60 votes. Frustrated by Republican filibustering of Obama’s nominees, Senate Democrats invoked the so-called “nuclear option” to require only a simple majority instead of 60 votes.

But with narrow majorities in the seven years since, getting simple majorities to invoke cloture is not always easy, especially for Senate Republicans, as many as six of whom can’t be assumed to vote with their party’s leaders.

Once cloture is invoked, debate is limited to no more than 30 hours and a final vote on the nomination must then be scheduled. Confirmation requires only 51 votes.

The ability of Senate leaders to overcome cloture obstacles has varied greatly from one Congress to another in recent years. McConnell has won 90 percent of the 186 cloture vote total since Trump took office.

There were 52 Republicans in the Senate at the outset of the 115th Congress (2017–2018), but vacancies often reduced the majority to only one. There are 53 Senate Republicans in 2019.

But during the 114th Congress (2015–2016), McConnell won only 60 of 123, or 49 percent. Only two of those cloture votes concerned Obama nominees.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) saw cloture invoked 187 of the 218 occasions the motion was voted on by the Senate, or 85 percent of the time, during the 113th Congress (2013–2014).

During the 112th Congress, covering the years 2011–2012, 33 of the 73 cloture votes concerned Obama nominees. Reid won 41 of the 73 cloture votes for a 56 percent rate.

There were 51 Democrats and two independents who caucused with them, and 47 Republicans in the Senate during the 112th and the 113th Congress.

Obama’s first two years included a Senate with 56 Democrats and two independents who caucused with them, plus the 42 Republicans. There were 91 cloture votes, with 63 being won by the Reid-led Democrats, for a 70 percent rate.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Smugglers Force THOUSANDS OF CHILD MIGRANTS Into Prostitution

CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON

WASHINGTON—Hundreds of thousands of people head to the United States every year in search of a better life, many by paying a smuggler thousands of dollars to get them in the back door—across the southwest border illegally. Others, as in the recent bust of a sex-trafficking ring in Florida, are lured by temporary work visas and then forced into servitude.

A smuggler often promises a better life in the United States, a job, or maybe even a love interest, said Greg Nevano, assistant director of ICE Homeland Security Investigations’ investigative programs.

“Many times, you’ll see parents [who] want their children to have a better life ... send their child along with a friend, a cousin,” he said.

“And along the route—which is a long journey to the United States—the smugglers will then exploit the children. They’ll say, if you don’t pay us additional money, or if you do not perform these types of activities—some of which are sexual activity, some of them could be forced labor—we will kill your family back home.”

The scope of the problem is mind-boggling, going by a recent estimate by expert Timothy Ballard.

Ballard, founder of the anti-trafficking organization Operation Underground Railroad, said that as many as 10,000 children are trafficked into the United States every year to be used as sex slaves. Nevano concurs with Ballard’s estimate.

Previously, Ballard spent more than 12 years working as a special agent for Homeland Security Investigations in its child trafficking unit.

He recounted a story of a 13-year-old girl from Central America who was kidnapped from her village, then trafficked into the United States across an unpatrolled part of the southwest border.

She was taken to New York City. “This little girl—and this is very typical—was raped for money every day, 30 to 40 times a day,” Ballard said during a White House roundtable on Feb. 1.

Last year, the number of Border Patrol apprehensions along the southwest border almost hit 400,000. This year, it’s on track to pass 600,000 illegal crossers. The vast majority hail from Central America.

“She had to pay with her own body, and have sex with all the people in the group. ... They forced her to have sex 20, 30 times until Border Patrol rescued her.”

Alma Tucker, founder and president, International Network of Hearts

More than 48,000 unaccompanied minors were apprehended by Border Patrol in fiscal year 2018. Almost half were from Guatemala, and the rest were from Honduras, Mexico, and El Salvador.

Marlene Castro, a former supervisory Border Patrol agent in the Rio Grande Valley sector in Texas, said no one crosses the Rio Grande into the United States without paying something.

“It could be cash, it could be jewelry, some possession of yours, or whatever, but you’re going to pay,” Castro said in a 2017 interview.

“They hire this smuggler, someone they don’t even know, and they trust him on this 800-, 1,000-mile journey. Even if they’re paid with cash upfront or whatever, lots of times these people risk being assaulted, beaten, robbed by these people.”

“There are cases where the women—with the expectation of getting raped—prepare themselves by getting on birth control, or taking birth control, for the purpose of the journey.”

Young Victims

Alma Tucker has seen the devastation that



Illegal border crossers get stuck halfway across the Rio Grande from Mexico to Eagle Pass, Texas, on Feb. 16, 2019.

victims of sex-trafficking endure. She is the founder and president of International Network of Hearts, an organization dedicated to helping children recover from human trafficking.

But it was while she worked as the Mexican consul general in San Diego that her life was impacted forever.

“[The girl] was only 14 years old, and the smuggler—the parents paid the smuggler to bring her undocumented to the mountains, to this country. But the smuggler told her that her parents didn’t pay a full amount for her transportation, and she had to pay,” Tucker said at the White House on Feb. 1.

“She had to pay with her own body, and have sex with all the people in the group. Then go through this journey. And they forced her to have sex 20, 30 times until Border Patrol rescued her, and they transferred her our way to the hospital. And I was there; they called me.” Tucker said she stayed with the girl through everything: the medical examinations, the interviews, and the search for her parents.

Close Call

The problem isn’t new, and it happens many different ways. Nevano shared a story from two decades ago, when he was an airport customs inspection agent. He encountered an 18-year-old attempting to enter from China on someone else’s passport.

“At the time, we had more challenges with technology. There wasn’t biometrics,” Nevano said. “He finally admitted to me the truth—his family paid \$40,000 for that U.S. passport in 1996, and they sold everything that they had to have their child come to the United States for a better life. The challenge was, they only made a down payment of like \$10,000, so this individual owed \$30,000.”

“We know what would have happened to that individual. ... He would have been trafficked, prostitution; he could have been involved in gangs; he could have been involved in the sale of narcotics—all to repay his smuggling debt.”

Instead, Nevano said the man claimed political asylum and still lives in the United States.

“We have seen cases where children have been posed as family members coming in a familial relationship,” he said. “And it turns out that person is trafficking that child to the United States and bringing them for the illicit purposes of human trafficking.”

Community Approach

The National Human Trafficking hotline

Greg Nevano, assistant director of ICE Homeland Security Investigations’ Investigative Programs, in Washington on Feb. 5, 2019.

CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES



There are cases where the women—with the expectation of getting raped—prepare themselves by getting on birth control, or taking birth control, for the purpose of the journey.

MARLENE CASTRO, FORMER SUPERVISORY BORDER PATROL AGENT, RIO GRANDE VALLEY

has received reports of 45,308 human-trafficking cases since 2007. California, Texas, and Florida are identified as the worst three states for human trafficking.

ICE made 1,588 human-trafficking arrests in fiscal year 2018—almost all for sex trafficking—and saved 308 victims who were trafficked to the United States.

Nevano said traffickers use all means of coercion and false promises to control their victims.

“They beat the children, the women, if they don’t continue to perform, if they don’t earn money, if they try to flee,” he said. “If they’re here undocumented, they take their documentation. They basically will extort them by saying that if you don’t perform these acts, we will call ICE, and ICE will come and arrest you.”

Nevano said despite sex trafficking being so pervasive in American society, finding and investigating cases is challenging. But a community approach would make a bigger impact.

Dr. Jordan Greenbaum, medical director of the Child Protection Center at Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta, said the medical community is on the front line.

Greenbaum said in one study of adults and adolescent girls who were sex-trafficking survivors, 88 percent said they had seen a health care provider while they were being exploited, yet none of them had been identified in the health care setting.

“What does that say to us? It says that victims are coming to get health care, but we’re not recognizing them,” she said last year. “We have yet to see a victim come in and say, ‘My chief complaint, my concern, is human trafficking.’ They don’t self-disclose spontaneously.”

Nevano said that deportation protection is available for those victims who are in the United States illegally.

“We need to make the victims aware that we’re here to help them. We also have to be able to help them, getting them the services that they need: the NGO assistance, clothing, food, shelter,” he said. “At the same token, we also want to prosecute the traffickers who are involved in this heinous act.”

For Help

The National Human Trafficking Hotline is confidential, toll-free, and available 24/7 in more than 200 languages.

Call: 1-888-3737-888

Text: “Help” or “Info” to 237373

Chat: humantraffickinghotline.org

Oral Arguments to Begin on Unsealing Epstein’s Court Documents

WILLIAM PATRICK

Oral arguments about whether to unseal documents from a past court case involving accused sex trafficker Jeffrey Epstein will begin March 6 at the U.S. District Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in New York City.

The case, *Giuffre v. Maxwell*, was a defamation lawsuit brought by one of Epstein’s alleged victims, Virginia Roberts Giuffre. The suit was settled in May 2017, but unsealing related court records could introduce volumes of new information regarding Epstein’s alleged activities, and those of his powerful alleged co-participants.

Epstein, a wealthy financier, has been accused of molesting dozens of underage girls at his Palm Beach, Florida, mansion and his 72-acre private island estate in the Caribbean. The Department of Justice is currently investigating a 2007 plea deal that allowed him to only serve 13 months in a private area of a Palm Beach County jail, and work unsupervised at his downtown West Palm Beach office 12 hours a day, six days a week, during that period.

In 2015, Giuffre sued Epstein’s partner, Ghislaine Maxwell, after Maxwell publicly challenged her claims of abuse.

According to an August 2017 lower court ruling, Giuffre alleged that she was a “victim of sexual trafficking and abuse while she was a minor child,” and that Maxwell helped facilitate the abuse, which allegedly occurred over a decade at numerous locations “around the world,” and “with prominent and politically powerful men.”

The lawsuit asserted that Giuffre was subjected to “public ridicule, contempt, and disgrace” when Maxwell publicly denied her allegations.

The two-year dispute involved what Judge Robert Sweet of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York called “a lengthy and tumultuous discovery process” with “extreme sensitivities and privacy interests.” As a result, he placed a protective order on discovery documents and other items spanning 18 hearings and 15 related decisions.

Famed Harvard professor Alan Dershowitz, who co-represented Epstein during the controversial 2007 plea agreement, unsuccessfully attempted to have three case documents unsealed in August 2016. Prominent blogger, journalist, author, and filmmaker Mike Cernovich filed a motion to unseal case materials in Jan. 2017, but was denied.

Giuffre and Maxwell settled four months later, and on April 9, 2018, The Miami Herald filed a motion to unseal all case documents on First Amendment grounds. The Herald’s court filing was then joined by Dershowitz, who requested to be advised of any unsealed records, so he could seek additional documents to be unsealed if needed.

Giuffre and another women, Sarah Ransom-me, have accused Dershowitz of abusing them in association with Epstein and Maxwell, which he vehemently denies.

The Herald lost its initial attempt to unseal the documents, but has since garnered the support of 32 media organizations for its appeal on March 6, including The New York Times, Washington Post, Fox News, and the Associated Press.

The district court ruled that discovery records and other sought items weren’t covered by First Amendment presumptions of access. But according to a media coalition’s amici brief, the court “severely undervalued the powerful public interest in this case and vastly overstated the asserted countervailing interests in favor of secrecy.”

“It further argues that the district court should have done an individualized right of access analysis on each judicial record, rather than authorizing blanket sealing and redaction,” the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press said in a statement.

Dershowitz asked the appeals court last week if the media should be prohibited from hearing his attorney’s arguments about the case, since it could reveal sealed information.

The letter prompted an article from Julie K. Brown, an award-winning investigative journalist for The Miami Herald, whose groundbreaking three-part series “Perversions of Justice” spurred national interest in the Epstein affair more than a decade after his guilty plea.

Dershowitz took exception, and defended himself through a series of tweets. “Let me be crystal clear. I want the hearing to be open to the press. But I also want my lawyer to be able to tell the court what’s in the sealed emails that prove I was framed for \$.

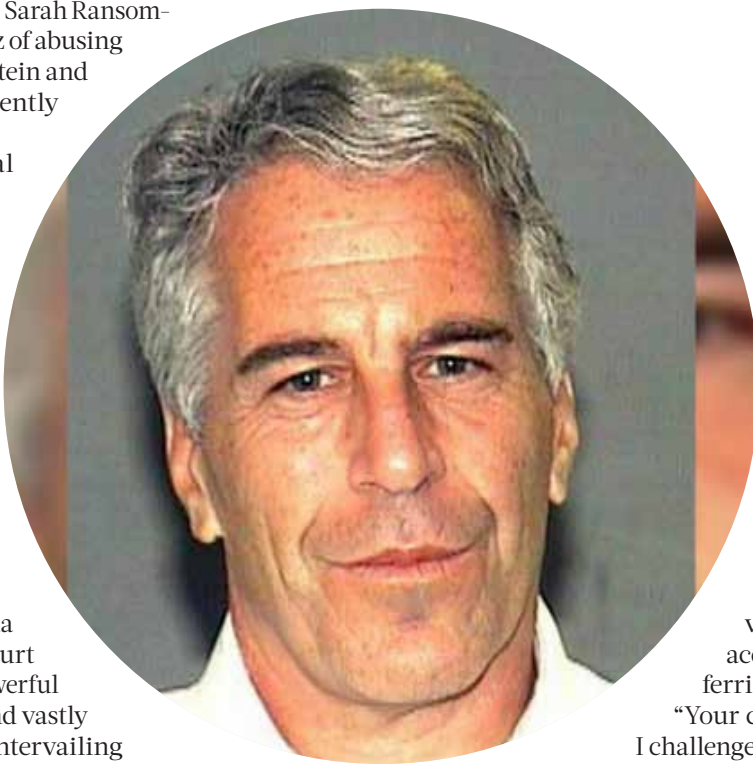
Its the other side that’s sealed the material. Let them unseal it so the world can see the truth,” he wrote on March 2.

He also accused Brown of deliberately distorting the truth, to which she responded, “Why not ask for everything to be unsealed then? And why are your motions so redacted?”

“We want everything unsealed,” Dershowitz tweeted back. “Why didn’t you try to reach me before publishing your error-filled screed?”

Dershowitz also said Democratic super-lawyer David Boies was representing both of his sexual abuse accusers and that Boies admitted in private that Dershowitz was falsely accused.

“David Boies, the lawyer for both of my false



Jeffrey Epstein.

PUBLIC DOMAIN

accusers, has admitted in private that his client has falsely accused me: “Your belief”—referring to his client—“is wrong.” “Your conclusion is simply wrong.”

I challenge Boies to deny this admission under oath,” he wrote on Twitter, adding that “They made up their false stories about me only after being ‘pressured’ by their lawyers.”

On March 3, Brown weighed in again: “To be clear: Mr. Dershowitz’s motion pertains to select documents in the Epstein-related case that pertain to him. The Miami Herald’s motion is to unseal EVERYTHING w the exception of social sec nos, medical info & other personal info.”

A separate court case unfolded Feb. 21, when a federal judge for the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida ruled that prosecutors broke the law when devising Epstein’s controversial plea deal.

Two of Epstein’s alleged underage victims, known as Jane Doe 1 and Jane Doe 2, filed a lawsuit after the 2008 surprise sentencing, on the grounds that they were never given an opportunity to express their opposition to the lenient plea. Judge Kenneth Marra ruled in their favor, albeit 11 years later.

Should documents ultimately be unsealed in the defamation case and reveal details about prominent individuals who have thus far gone unnamed, the implications could be staggering.

According to Marra’s 33-page opinion, Epstein and his co-conspirators “knowingly traveled in interstate and international commerce” to commit sexual abuse and other “violations of not only Florida law, but also federal law.”

“In addition to his own sexual abuse of the victims, Epstein directed other persons to abuse the girls sexually,” and he “worked in concert with others to obtain minors not only for his own sexual gratification but also for the sexual gratification of others.”

Trump Calls New House Probe a ‘POLITICAL HOAX’

IVAN PENTCHOUKOV

President Donald Trump called a new investigation into his conduct by Democrats on the House Judiciary Committee a “political hoax” on March 4, while saying he will cooperate with a document request from committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler (D-N.Y.).

“I cooperate all the time with everybody. You know the beautiful thing—no collusion. It’s all a hoax,” Trump said at the White House, while hosting the 2018 Division I Football Championship Subdivision champion North Dakota State University Bison.

“You’re going to learn about that as you grow older,” Trump said as several football players chuckled. “It’s a political hoax. There’s no collusion.”

The House Judiciary Committee is looking into “alleged obstruction of justice, public corruption, and other abuses of power” by the president. The committee’s press release offered no evidence for any of the allegations. The panel sent document requests to 81 people and entities, including Trump’s family, campaign staff, current and former White House officials, and government agencies.

“We have sent these document requests in order to begin building the public record,” Nadler

said in a statement. “We will act quickly to gather this information, assess the evidence, and follow the facts where they lead with full transparency with the American people.”

Shedding light on how partial the investigation would be, Nadler told ABC News before he issued the document requests that he’s convinced that Trump has obstructed justice.

Large-scale investigations led by the FBI, Congress, and special counsel Robert Mueller haven’t yielded any evidence of wrongdoing by Trump. The House and Senate intelligence committees found no evidence of collusion between the Trump campaign and Russia. Meanwhile, Mueller, who took over the FBI investigation in 2017, isn’t expected to charge Trump with any misconduct in a forthcoming report.

“The House Judiciary Committee’s letter has been received by the White House,” White House press secretary Sarah Sanders said in a statement. “The Counsel’s Office and relevant White House officials will review it and respond at the appropriate time.”

Democrats secured the majority in the House of Representatives in the 2018 midterm election, and with it, the power to launch investigations. Republicans see the probe by the judiciary committee as part of a larger effort by



President Donald Trump at the White House on March 4, 2019.

OLIVER CONTRERAS/SIPA USA

I cooperate all the time with everybody. You know the beautiful thing—no collusion. It’s all a hoax.

President Donald Trump

House Democrats to use investigative powers to hamstring Trump and his 2020 campaign, a tactic the president calls “presidential harassment.”

“Presidential Harassment by ‘crazed’ Democrats at the highest level in the history of our Country. Likewise, the most vicious and corrupt Mainstream Media that any president has ever had to endure, yet the most successful first two years for any President,” Trump wrote on Twitter.

“We are WINNING big, the envy of the WORLD, but just think what it could be?”

A committee lawyer told reporters the immediate aim is to amass a large trove of evidence to guide the investigation and help decide which witnesses to approach. The panel is prepared to use its subpoena power if needed, the lawyer said.

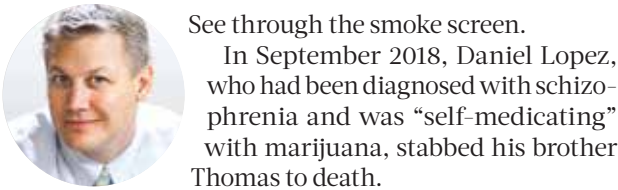
Republicans in Congress said that Democrats are pursuing an impeachment agenda against Trump as part of a political strategy to reclaim the White House in the 2020 election.

Reuters contributed to this report.

OPINION

Sen. Booker Hides Behind Pot’s Smoke Screen

CHRISTOPHER C. HULL



See through the smoke screen. In September 2018, Daniel Lopez, who had been diagnosed with schizophrenia and was “self-medicating” with marijuana, stabbed his brother Thomas to death.

On Feb. 28, Sen. Cory Booker (D-N.J.), a Democratic candidate for president of the United States, rolled out the Marijuana Justice Act, which would legalize pot nationwide.

No matter where you stand on this issue, this is a bad idea. Here’s why.

Specifically, the bill would remove marijuana from the U.S. list of controlled substances, legalizing it on the federal level. It also would retroactively expunge criminal records of those charged with marijuana possession. Finally, it would allow those serving time for possession to petition for re-sentencing and provide them with resources like job training.

This is not the first time Booker has experimented with drug legalization. Two years ago, when he introduced a so-called “racial justice” bill, he put marijuana legalization at its center. Booker’s prior measure would have penalized states with racially-disparate arrest or incarceration rates for marijuana-related crimes, even if offenders were in fact racially disparate.

At the time, Kevin Sabet of Smart Approaches to Marijuana, a group opposed to pot legalization, argued, “Given the opioid epidemic, [Booker’s] legislative energy would be much better spent implementing solutions to that crisis. But the Big Marijuana lobbyists are probably very happy.”

Overdoses

Last year, the number of Americans who died from drug overdoses topped 70,000 for the first time, a nearly 10 percent increase over the previous year, driven by the opioid epidemic.

In particular, the Center for Disease Control’s National Center for Health Statistics reported a 45 percent spike in deaths from synthetic opioids such as fentanyl and tramadol in particular.

Coupled with a soaring suicide rate—more on that below—such overdoses lowered U.S. life expectancy for the second year in a row.

Though pot enthusiasts claim legalization is a way to reduce such deaths, Keith Humphreys wrote in The Washington Post that “studies of individuals show that using medical cannabis is correlated with higher rates of using and misusing opioids.”

For instance, according to a 2018 study, those who used marijuana were almost three times as likely to use opiates three years later.

Likewise, a JAMA Internal Medicine study found that states legalizing marijuana had 55 percent higher overdose rates. Data associated with the study demonstrate that an avalanche of deaths in legalizing states buried early findings that marijuana legalization might slightly help with opioid overdoses.

Legalization and Teen Use

While marijuana advocates tout studies finding legalization does not lead to increased teen marijuana use, a 2018 study found a 26 percent increase in frequency of use for teens who were already marijuana users.

Marijuana legalization leads to a loss of awareness of its risks, according to one study of perceptions of pot among eighth- and 10th-graders following recreational marijuana legalization in Washington state.

Beginning in the mid-2000s, the percentage of high schoolers who reported having smoked marijuana began to increase, accompanied by a sharp decrease in the percentage of 10th- and 12th-graders who view regular marijuana use as risky.

In fact, Colorado, an early adopter of legal marijuana, is now the No. 1 state in America for marijuana use among both pre-teens and those 12 to 17 years old.

The Colorado Department of Education likewise found that “drug-related school suspensions, expulsions, and law enforcement referrals increased dramatically from 2008 through 2011.”

It’s not just Colorado. One national addiction treatment network reported, “90 percent of adolescents seeking treatment are admitted with marijuana being their primary drug of choice.”

Such adolescent use of marijuana is linked to use of alcohol and cocaine—which together all help predict opioid addiction—as well as mental health problems, risky sexual behaviors, and poor school performance.

In fact, according to one expert, teen use can cause a permanent IQ drop of six points, “similar to the consequences of lead poisoning.”

A 2012 study found that “the most persistent adolescent-onset cannabis users evidenced an average 8-point IQ decline from childhood to adulthood,” and shows persistent use beyond



The haze of marijuana smoke looms over a crowd of thousands at the University of Colorado in Boulder, Colo., on April 20, 2010, the “National Weed Day.”

‘Diagnosable cannabis use disorder’ accounts for 11 percent of all psychosis cases in emergency rooms, reaching 90,000 cases, about 250 a day.

adolescence is associated with an IQ drop of as much as 10 points.

Pot Use Exploding

It gets worse.

According to Alex Berenson, former New York Times reporter and author of the new book “Tell Your Children: The Truth About Marijuana, Mental Illness, and Violence,” “almost everything you think you know about the health effects of cannabis, almost everything advocates and the media have told you for a generation, is wrong.”

Berenson reported that marijuana and its active ingredient THC are most commonly prescribed for pain relief, but in July 2018, “a large four-year study of patients with chronic pain in Australia showed cannabis use was associated with greater pain over time.”

In fact, even Rob Kampia, the co-founder of the Marijuana Policy Project, acknowledged to Berenson he “always viewed medical marijuana laws primarily as a way to protect recreational users.”

Yet, as legalization measures like Booker’s proliferate, and the disinformation campaign in which he participates takes hold, the number of heavy pot smokers is exploding.

Berenson reports the number of Americans who smoked marijuana at least 300 times a year, the definition of “daily use,” nearly tripled from 2006 to 2017, approaching the number who drink alcohol every day.

Mental Illness

Contrary to drug dealer deceptions, there is such a thing as marijuana abuse or addiction.

Its technical name is “diagnosable cannabis use disorder,” and from 2006 to 2014 it tripled. It accounts for 11 percent of all psychosis cases in emergency rooms, reaching 90,000 cases, about 250 a day.

One potential reason: The potency of the drug has exploded as well. Between the 1970s and today, as farming and cloning technologies evolve, marijuana’s THC content has increased about 10-fold.

Which leads to even worse news: Berenson found “a mountain of peer-reviewed research in top medical journals” shows marijuana can cause or worsen mental illness.

For example, teens who smoke marijuana regularly approximately triple their risk of schizophrenia.

More generally, the National Academy of Medicine in 2017 reported that “cannabis use is likely to increase the risk of developing schizophrenia and other psychoses; the higher the use, the greater the risk.”

Likewise, a 2010 study found a towering 27 percent of schizophrenics had been diagnosed with cannabis use disorder.

Violence

And on average, along with mental illness comes violence.

In a 2017 speech that called for legalizing pot, Booker claimed states that have done so “are seeing decreases in violent crime.”

Well, actually, no.

The first four states to legalize marijuana for recreational use saw a five-year increase of 37 percent for murders and 25 percent for aggravated assaults, far greater than the national increase.

This is not a surprise. For instance, Berenson reported that a 2013 journal article studying

1,600 psychiatric patients in southern Italy found marijuana use was associated with a 10-fold increase in violence.

Likewise, a 2007 study of defendants who had committed homicide during psychotic episodes found almost two-thirds reported misusing marijuana—“more than alcohol and amphetamines combined.”

There’s more.

According to a 2012 study in the Journal of Interpersonal Violence of more than 9,000 adolescents, “marijuana use was associated with a doubling of domestic violence.”

One in 2017 found that drug use, nearly always being marijuana, “translated into a five-fold increase in violence,” Berenson said.

The deaths are not always deliberate. Marijuana is associated with more child deaths from abuse and neglect than alcohol, and “more than cocaine, methamphetamines, and opioids combined” according to reports from Texas, one of the rare states that tracks perpetrators’ drug use.

Berenson dug up a 2009 study by an Oxford University psychiatrist and epidemiologist finding that schizophrenics in particular “are five times as likely to commit violent crimes as healthy people, and almost 20 times as likely to commit homicide.”

Not only are schizophrenics 20 times more likely to kill you, they are also more likely to kill themselves.

For instance, a 2006 study found that after the first release for a schizophrenic episode, “not taking any regular antipsychotic medication was associated with a 12-fold increase in the relative risk of all-cause death and a worrying 37-fold increase in death by suicide.”

Another study found schizophrenics’ lifetime suicide risk is 4.9 percent, 350 times America’s overall age-adjusted suicide rate in 2017.

And to reiterate: Teens who smoke pot about tripled their risk of schizophrenia in one study, and 27 percent of schizophrenics had been diagnosed with cannabis use disorder in another.

In sum: More marijuana, more mental illness, more murder.

Drug Dealers

Booker claimed, “The war on drugs has not been a war on drugs, it’s been a war on people.”

Actually, the war on drugs has been a war on drug dealers.

And even when states legalize drug dealers, the evidence suggests that drug dealers are not only still drugging people, but statistically speaking, still killing them as well.

Now they want to kill many, many more, not to mention ruining lives and burning away intellect.

Remember Daniel Lopez, and his brother Thomas, whom they helped kill.

As recently as 2015, Booker declined to support marijuana legalization in a Vox interview. He was right then, and he’s wrong now.

See through his smoke screen.

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

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Signs placed by the Job Creators Network on Times Square on Feb. 23, 2019, calling out Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) for the role they say she played in the recent termination of Amazon’s second headquarters.

OPINION

The New Face of TYRANNY

The left’s tack toward traditional redistributive communism recalls 1960s New Left movement

MARC RUSKIN

Young lawmakers are advancing old ideas.

A shift to an old-style left—traditionally Marxist with modern garb—has perhaps been in motion for decades. Now, the movement has accelerated.

Freshman Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) has repeatedly demonstrated a Soviet concept of equality. Her successful disruption of the Amazon HQ2 proposal in New York can best be interpreted as an attack against prosperity as personified by Amazon founder and CEO Jeff Bezos—a vilification of the successful and a desire to penalize the wealthy at the expense of the masses.

The new New Left’s move toward traditional redistributive communism is evidenced by the proposed confiscatory tax rates proposed by Ocasio-Cortez.

Who cares about those thousands of jobs that Amazon’s presence would have generated—the small businesses, bodegas, barber shops, dry cleaners, and the like—that now will never come into being? This is apart from those who would have been employed directly by Amazon, but who will now be employed in another congressperson’s district.

To the Marxist lawmaker, what really matters is the “greater good,” or in Ocasio-Cortez’s case, principles unhampered by a lack of understanding of the basic economic concepts involved, as exemplified by her statements concerning alternate uses for the \$3 billion that Amazon would have received in tax breaks.

The new New Left’s move toward traditional redistributive communism is evidenced by the confiscatory tax rates proposed by

Ocasio-Cortez and other young, recently elected lawmakers, such as Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.). The ultimate objective is to drag down those who have achieved and earned the rewards that are the fruits of initiative and hard work, as if they were ill-gotten gains.

Are there wealthy individuals who have exploited others? No doubt. However, the best tool for righting those wrongs is a scalpel, not a machete.

Abuse of the system for truly unfair gain should target those who are, in fact, abusers. Expropriating the profits of all those who are successful is indicative not of a desire to limit economic exploitation, but rather of an intent to drag all who are successful down to the lowest common denominator, so that all may “equally” share the same squalor, to create a classless society. Except, of course, for the lawmakers, who will require some degree of privilege to create an environment that facilitates the exercise of their decision-making on our behalf.

The result: a truly classless society. And just as in Soviet Russia, communist China, and “socialist paradise” Cuba, there will be those who are lower-classless, others who are middle-classless, and the commissars, who will be upper-classless.

A chilling example of the Soviet-style manner of conducting a public hearing occurred during the Feb. 13 questioning of the U.S. special envoy to Venezuela, Elliott Abrams. As reported by Gideon Resnick in the Daily Beast, Omar stated during the congressional hearing, reading from notes:

“In 1991, you pleaded guilty to two counts of withholding information from Congress regarding your involvement in the Iran-Contra affair, for which you were later pardoned by President George H.W. Bush. I fail to understand why members of this committee, or the

American people, should find any testimony that you give today to be truthful.”

Abrams quickly replied, “If I could respond to that,” at which point, Omar shot back, “That wasn’t a question.”

The testy exchange ended after some more back and forth. “Members of this committee can’t attack a witness who is not permitted to reply,” Abrams said.

As for the Soviet police state? The pre-



Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.).

JIM WATSON/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

down knock at the door by the KGB could never happen here, of course. Just ask Paul Manafort and Roger Stone.

Rise of Anti-Semitism

The rise of Soviet-style anti-Semitism seems

similar to that seen in the days of Vladimir Lenin, Josef Stalin, and Nikita Khrushchev. In Russia, the evolution was from Jewish philosophical leaders at the forefront of the new Soviet state—like Karl Marx and Leon Trotsky—to institutionalized anti-Semitism. Witness the victimization of Anatoly Shcharansky and his long prison term before being released to immigrate to Israel.

Now, the left wing of the Democratic Party has commenced its evolution toward a new anti-Semitism, informed as well by radical Islamic ideology combined with classical Marxist philosophy.

Anti-Semitic leaders have co-opted the women’s movement, with leaders such as Tamika Mallory openly supporting Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan. In the House of Representatives, Omar does little to hide her beliefs, as seen in her well-publicized tweets: “Israel has hypnotized the world,” “It’s all about the Benjamins,” and more. As reported in The Times of Israel on Jan. 19, the Simon Wiesenthal Center denounced both Omar and fellow newly elected Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.) for repeated “anti-Israel and anti-Semitic statements.”

Tolerance toward anti-Jewish violence is on the rise. The Jerusalem Post on Jan. 29 documented several assaults on identifiably Jewish victims—violent assaults and unprovoked beatings that received virtually no domestic media coverage. However, on the date of a most violent anti-Semitic attack, an allegedly self-orchestrated “homophobic and racist” assault on actor Jussie Smollett received nationwide media coverage, and immediate tweets from Hollywood celebrities and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi condemning the “attack.”

Presidential aspirants Sen. Kamala Harris of California and Sen. Corey Booker of New Jersey—both of whom have been silent on anti-Semitic rhetoric and incidents—issued near-identical responses, with Booker tweeting that “[t]he vicious attack on actor Jussie Smollett was an attempted modern-day lynching. I’m glad he’s safe.”

No accusations of lynching are voiced when the victims are merely Jewish.

Not long ago, institutionalized anti-Semitism in the United States was unimaginable, as was a shift toward the tyranny of the left. When I graduated from law school as a young Jewish attorney, I asked my father if I should have my diploma mounted on a wooden plaque. He advised against it, saying I should be prepared for the day when I would need to stick it in my back pocket for a quick departure. Now, I know just how wise his advice was.

With the old Soviet-style tyranny, power was retained by prohibiting individuals from crossing borders in an outward direction. In the new tyranny, unlike the Soviet and Cuban practices, power is retained by refusing to prevent any individuals from crossing the borders inward. The more who do manage to enter, the larger the power base for the socialist elite. But have no doubt, once the left has successfully reduced the standard of living for the masses, the barriers to exodus will be raised. Then, to consolidate their power, they will have to evolve along traditional communist lines and prevent free emigration.

For those with lingering doubts about the tectonic shift this country is undergoing, the Green New Deal is revelatory. That it could be taken seriously by lawmakers wouldn’t have been a surprise to George Orwell—his only error was one of timing, because he expected the transformation to have been completed by 1984.

This benignly named Green New Deal is summarized this way by CNN (not a right-wing media outlet) analyst Zachary Wolf: “What was entered as official legislative language on Capitol Hill declares the government should take a stronger position on everything from cutting carbon emissions, to giving every American a job, to working with family farmers to retrofitting every building in the country.”

Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas warned: “As nightfall does not come all at once, neither does oppression. In both instances, there is a twilight when everything remains seemingly unchanged. And it is in such twilight that we all must be most aware of change in the air—however slight—lest we become unwitting victims of the darkness.”

It’s time to turn on the light.

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OPINION

Egalitarians' Neurotic Obsession With Comparisons

DREW ANGERER/GETTY IMAGES



Democratic Socialists of America and other activists who opposed Amazon's plan to move into Queens rally in celebration of Amazon's decision to pull out of the deal, in Queens, New York, on Feb. 14, 2019.

MARK HENDRICKSON



One of the most famous malapropisms in literature is “comparisons are odorous,” uttered by Shakespeare’s character Dogberry in “Much Ado About Nothing.” Dogberry was mutilating the well-known phrase “comparisons are odious.”

Well, some of the comparisons drawn by writers infected with the virus of egalitarianism are both odorous and odious—and obnoxious, too.

Egalitarianism is the normative notion that individuals should be economically equal—or at least much less unequal than we currently are. Consequently, those under the influence of egalitarianism obsessively compare the economic fortunes of Americans. Any economic disparities, gaps, differences, etc., that exist between Americans are offensive to egalitarians.

Well, that isn’t completely accurate. Some disparities bother egalitarians; others don’t. One disparity that doesn’t bother them in the slightest is that the top-earning 1 percent of U.S. taxpayers pay more than 39 percent of the country’s income taxes, while the bottom 90 percent only pay roughly 29 percent. That is a disparity in which the rich get the short end of the stick, and that kind of disparity is fine with egalitarians.

One startling fact about egalitarians is that they’re not content with the good news that our society has attained unprecedented affluence, and that the long-term trend has been for every income quintile to enjoy rising standards of living. Indeed, egalitarians view our society in which the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting richer as scandalous and unacceptable.

They aren’t placated by the fact that the average poor American has long enjoyed a standard of living comparable to the average middle-class standard of living in the 1950s. They ignore the absolute rise in prosperity across the board, and, instead, obsess about relative standards of living; hence, they constantly draw comparisons that reflect this bias and end up making them look silly.

Two examples of rather pointless comparisons in the news recently have been articles in major publications that lament the split between high-paying jobs and low-paying jobs, and the fact that Amazon chose to add new satellite headquarters in rich areas of the country.

Wage Differences

The high-wage versus low-wage jobs article appeared in The New York Times last month. It was entitled, “Tech is splitting U.S. work force in two.” It was well-researched and well-written. But what was the point? After all, the fact that some jobs pay much better than others is hardly a stop-the-presses scoop. It’s been going on for centuries.

Hatred and rejection of the natural order of things impels egalitarians to extol governments that promise to ‘fix’ natural differences by wielding enormous power over our lives.

A demonstrator, protesting Illinois’ budget stalemate, blocks an entrance to the Chicago Board of Trade building in Chicago on Nov. 2, 2015.

SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES



Only viewing the world through the ideological lens of egalitarianism renders wage differentials objectionable. Some Americans may gripe about the megabucks that professional athletes, movie stars, and rock bands command, but nobody wants the government to reduce that gap. It isn’t unjust that I can’t play basketball as well as LeBron James, nor be as funny as Jerry Seinfeld, nor do—well—whatever it is that Mick Jagger does.

Nor have Americans rebelled against the wage structure that pays physicians more than high-school gym teachers, engineers more than construction workers, or tax lawyers more than clerks. So now, high-tech jobs pay more than low-tech. So what? That’s just the way the world has always worked; indeed, economically, it’s how the labor market naturally works: the individuals who acquire the most highly valued skills get the most highly compensated jobs. Duh. Why envy them? They are simply reaping the rewards of their excellence.

The average American doesn’t resent people who are highly skilled and profit from those skills. Such disparities occur naturally, and we accept them. The real injustice lies with artificial disparities. By “artificial,” I mean those that governments create by bestowing privileges on select special interests, rather than economic differences that result from the natural differences between people.

Beyond cronyism, which I denounced in a previous column, the federal government has created an economic gap between unionized and nonunionized workers, and between government workers and their private-sector counterparts.

Dating back to the Clayton Antitrust Act of 1914, labor unions have enjoyed a legislative privilege: They are allowed to operate as monopolies. For decades, they used their monopoly privilege to extract wages from employers that were higher than those received by other similarly skilled workers, becoming a sort of blue-blood, blue-collar aristocracy. (Note: I am not anti-union. I simply oppose government-created monopolies.)

It amazes me that egalitarians never seem to complain about the enormous gap between what federal employees make versus equally skilled private workers. Truly, if there is an unjust economic class difference in the United States today, it was created in Washington, in a phenomenon that I describe as “the governing elite vs. the rest of us.”

Amazon Choice

The egalitarian-influenced article lamenting Amazon’s choice of northern Virginia and the since-withdrawn New York City appeared last fall in The Christian Science Monitor. It appeared under the melodramatic title, “Amazon and the troubling rise of superstar cities.”

Explaining why they wrote it, the Monitor stated, “By picking New York and Washington as its new HQ cities, is the retail giant missing

an opportunity to help the parts of America that are left behind?” Excuse me? Since when is it the duty of a corporation to pick not the location that best serves its stakeholders (shareholders, employees, and customers), but to pick a location that could use an economic shot in the arm?

Even an egalitarian should see the problem with this suggestion, namely, that no matter which of the many less-prosperous cities Amazon might pick, it would still be “unfair” to all the other cities that it didn’t pick.

Furthermore, the author lamented that for Amazon to avail itself, as other businesses do, of location-specific advantages, such as the availability of a cluster of workers possessing the skills that Amazon is seeking, evinces “the tendency of geography to become economic destiny.” So? This is another case of reporting something that isn’t news, but is as natural as the sun coming up in the morning.

Since the beginning of human civilization, geography has been a major determinant of where human beings settle. All one has to do is look at a map of the United States to see this tendency: Most major cities developed on the shores of oceans and lakes and at the mouths and along the banks of major rivers.

Cities arise where it makes the most economic sense, that is, where access to needed resources is better. And cities thrive as long as economic production remains viable in that location. If the economic *raison d’être* of a human settlement ceases to exist, so does the settlement (for example, ghost towns in the Old West, and to a lesser degree, hollowed-out communities in the Rust Belt in the past 50 years).

Writers who fret about economic comparisons that arise in the natural order of things are unhappy people, and, as the old saying goes, “Misery loves company.” What makes egalitarians miserable is economic inequality between individuals and areas, even when the reasons for such disparities are entirely natural (as opposed to being artificially created by government).

To lament the uniqueness of each human being and to condemn our differences is a form of hatred for humankind. It’s a hatred of individuality and also a hatred of nature itself, whether nature is a product of evolution or the Deity.

Can you imagine going through life believing that the creator of the universe totally blew it and needs to be corrected? This hatred and rejection of the natural order of things impels egalitarians to extol governments that promise to “fix” natural differences by wielding enormous power over our lives, suppressing individual rights, and radically redistributing wealth.

Sound familiar? Egalitarianism is one of the ideological underpinnings of socialism. That’s what makes their obsession with comparisons dangerous to us all and not just a sad type of individual neurosis.

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