

EPOCH INSIGHT

THE HIDDEN BORDER CRISIS

GOTAWAYS



By Charlotte Cuthbertson



WEEK 30, 2023

The Gotaways, the Hidden Border Crisis

NO ONE KNOWS WHO THEY ARE, where they’re from, or where they’re headed. But there are millions of them in the United States. They are known as “gotaways”—illegal immigrants who evade U.S. Border Patrol and law enforcement by any means necessary and end up all over the United States. “You can safely assume that anybody that went through the extra effort to avoid U.S. Border Patrol was not an asylum-seeker by default,” former Border Patrol chief Rodney Scott told The Epoch Times.

“We have no clue who they are, or where they’re going. That’s the scary part,” said Sheriff Brad Coe of Kinney County, Texas. “The odds are with them that they’re not going to get caught.” U.S. citizens are traveling to the border in droves—enticed by ads on social media that promise wads of cash—to pick up illegal immigrants and smuggle them farther into the United States.

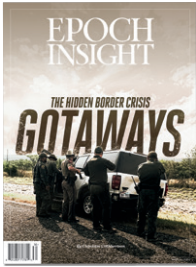
Thousands of gotaways walk through ranchland to evade law enforcement, cutting fences, breaking into houses, and rendering large swaths of land unusable.

Senior Epoch Times reporter Charlotte Cuthbertson spent two years living in a small Texas county on the U.S.–Mexico border to understand the impact of the gotaway population on ranchers, local and state law enforcement, and even the local ambulance service and schools.

Read this week’s cover story to understand the reality of life in a small border county in Texas and watch

Ms. Cuthbertson’s new documentary, “Gotaways, the Hidden Border Crisis,” now streaming on EpochTV.com.

JASPER FAKKERT
Editor-in-chief



ON THE COVER
Millions of illegal immigrants who evade U.S. Border Patrol are causing issues for ranchers and stretching local law enforcement thin.

THE EPOCH TIMES

EPOCH INSIGHT

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CHRIS DELMAS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

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Theme parks require adherence to unique etiquette rules.

SPOTLIGHT

Raging Flames

A FIREMAN RESCUES A CAT AND TWO RABBITS
from a wildfire between the villages of Kiotari and Gennadi, Greece, on July 24. Tens of thousands of people have fled blazes on the island of Rhodes, in what has become the country's largest-ever wildfire evacuation.

PHOTO BY SPYROS BAKALIS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES





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NATION • WORLD • WHAT HAPPENED THIS WEEK

Week 30

The Week

Attorneys for Jan. 6 prisoner Edward Jacob Lang have filed a document that warns the U.S. Supreme Court that “dozens of convictions” on violations of Title 18 U.S. Code Section 1512(c)(2) are “headed to this Court,” all arising from the Jan. 6 U.S. Capitol breach.

PHOTO BY MADALINA VASILIU/THE EPOCH TIMES

Jan. 6 Prisoner Takes Charge to Supreme Court 30

‘Just Cause’

Landlords say that eviction policies make it difficult to get rid of problem tenants. 36

Digital Censorship

Censorship on social media has sapped the life out of the American spirit, a journalist says. 40

Controversial Remdesivir

The FDA has approved remdesivir for COVID-19 in people with kidney problems despite data showing a risk of adverse effects. 52

INSIDE

“Our government must take extreme caution to prevent sponsoring research that gives any sensitive materials and intellectual property to the Chinese Communist Party.”



Sen. Roger Marshall (R-Kan.),
in a letter to Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack about the Department of Agriculture’s partnership with Chinese biotech firm BGI, which has been blacklisted by both the Defense and Commerce departments over national security concerns

“American citizenship is a privilege—not an automatic right to be co-opted by illegal aliens.”

Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-Fla.),
about his proposal that calls for an end to birthright citizenship for U.S.-born children of illegal immigrants



\$400 MILLION

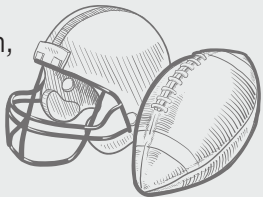
The United States says it will **provide Ukraine with an additional \$400 million worth of weapons to help Ukraine in its ongoing fight against Russian aggression.**

\$3.64

The average national gas price on July 26 rose by 4 cents to **\$3.64**, the biggest one-day increase since June 7, 2022, according to AAA.

\$262.5 MILLION

Los Angeles Chargers quarterback Justin Herbert has agreed to a five-year contract extension valued at \$262.5 million, according to several outlets, earning him the title of “**highest-paid player in NFL history.**”



\$150 BILLION

The recurring annualized taxpayer cost of illegal immigration into the United States has been pegged at **\$150 billion**, according to a study by the Washington-based Federation for American Immigration Reform.

\$10 MILLION—Rep. Stephanie Bice (R-Okla.), in a letter to IRS Commissioner Daniel Werfel, cited her “growing concern” over a report that stated the tax agency has spent nearly \$10 million to stockpile weapons, ammunition, and gear since 2020.

TRAVEL

Americans Will Soon Need Visa-Style Travel Permits to Enter Europe

U.S. CITIZENS who for years have enjoyed visa-free travel to Europe are in for a rude awakening in 2024, when the European Union rolls out new entry rules that will require Americans to obtain an authorization document in order to be allowed into most European countries.

Starting next year, U.S. citizens will have to get an entry permit—similar to a visa—through the European Travel Information and Authorization System before being permitted to enter 30 countries in Europe.

The nations covered by the rule include all 27 European Union member states, as well as nonmembers Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland.



The rule change will affect some 1.4 billion people from more than 60 visa-exempt countries.

ECONOMY

Fed Raises Interest Rates to Highest Level in 22 Years

THE FEDERAL RESERVE boosted the federal funds rate by 25 basis points at the July Federal Open Market Committee policy meeting, lifting the target range to 5.25 to 5.50 percent. Committee members voted unanimously for the policy decision.

Interest rates are now at their highest levels since March 2001.



The IRS building in Washington on Sept. 28, 2020.

TAXES

IRS Ends Most Unannounced Agent Visits to Taxpayers’ Homes

THE IRS has announced a major yet “common-sense” policy change that will end most unannounced agent visits to taxpayers’ homes, mostly because of security concerns.

The move, effective immediately, reverses decades of policy that saw IRS revenue officers knock on the doors of taxpayers’ homes without forewarning in attempts to resolve delinquent tax matters.

The reason for the change, according to a statement by the agency, is to lower the risk that anxiety-provoking surprise home visits by tax enforcement agents could spiral out of control, posing a hazard to both taxpayers and agency field officers.

CRIME

Hunter Biden Pleads Not Guilty After Plea Deal Falls Apart

PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN’S SON Hunter Biden has entered a not guilty plea on federal tax and gun charges after the presiding judge objected to an earlier plea agreement that linked the two alleged crimes.

At the July 26 hearing, U.S. District Judge Maryellen Noreika expressed “concerns” that Mr. Biden’s earlier plea agreement linked tax crimes to resolving felony gun charges, with the judge saying she couldn’t accept the agreement in its current form.



Hunter Biden departs the federal courthouse in Wilmington, Del., on July 26.



Demonstrators march from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem to protest the government's judicial overhaul bill ahead of a vote in the parliament, on July 22.

ISRAEL

Protests, Strikes Spread Across Israel Over Judicial Reform

LARGE PROTESTS AND STRIKES broke out after Israel's parliament ratified legislation to limit the Supreme Court's ability to challenge parliamentary decisions.

The Knesset passed an amendment on July 24 that prevents the Supreme Court from voiding some government decisions that it deems “unreasonable.”

Demonstrations against the amendment began ahead of the vote with police dragging away protesters who had chained themselves to posts and blocked the road outside parliament. By evening, thousands of protesters blocked highways and scuffled with police. Israeli police said at least 19 people had been arrested on July 24.

An Israeli police spokesperson said 12 police officers had been injured. In addition, 32 demonstrators had been given medical treatment, including 19 who needed to be evacuated.

CHINA

China Replaces Foreign Minister Qin Gang

THE CHINESE REGIME has removed newly appointed foreign minister Qin Gang, ending speculation about his future after a month-long unexplained absence.

Top diplomat Wang Yi replaced Mr. Qin as foreign minister, according to state media outlet Xinhua.

Mr. Qin's sudden dismissal came after a meteoric rise. Mr. Qin, who was widely seen as Chinese leader Xi Jinping's protégé, took over the foreign minister's job in December 2022, becoming one of the youngest officials to hold that position.

IRELAND

Ireland to Add Cancer Warnings to Liquor

IRELAND will become the first country to mandate health warnings on all alcoholic beverages, and other countries may soon follow suit.

While warning labels aren't new to alcoholic beverages, the country's comprehensive additions—including cancer and liver disease warnings—are.

RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR

Ben & Jerry's Parent Company to Allow Its Russian Workers to Be Conscripted

UNILEVER, the parent company of Ben & Jerry's ice cream, has agreed to comply with Russia's conscript law, opening up the possibility that thousands of its employees in Russia could be sent to the war in Ukraine if called up.

In a letter to B4Ukraine, a global coalition of civil society organizations calling for foreign companies to leave the Russian market, Unilever said it's aware of the Russian law "requiring any company operating in Russia to permit the prescription of employees should they be called." The consumer goods giant said it will "always comply with all the laws of the countries we operate in."

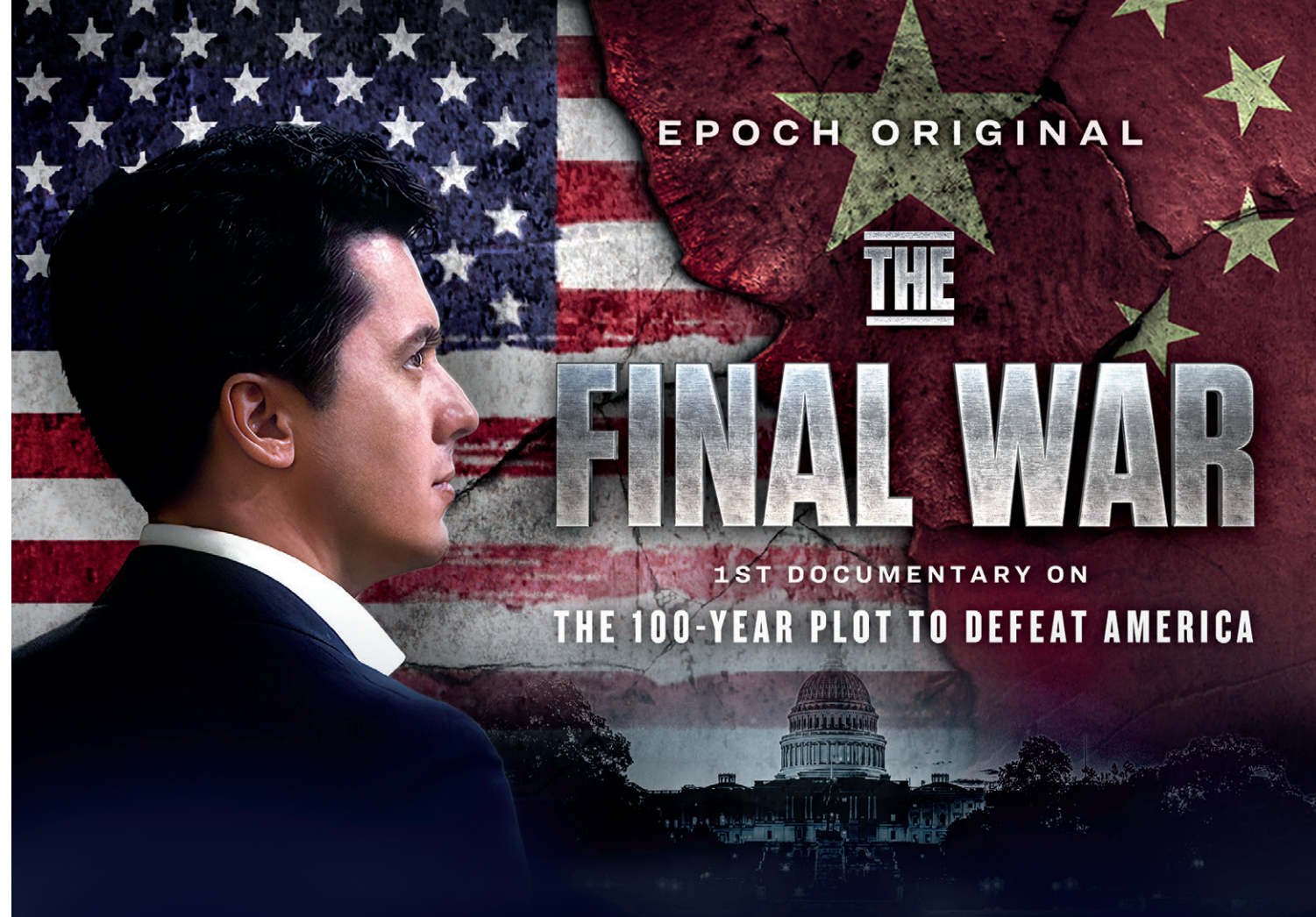
Unilever—an Anglo-Dutch multinational company that owns many other well-known brands such as Domestos, Dove, Magnum, and Vaseline—has about 3,000 employees in Russia who work at four manufacturing sites and a head office.

The legislation applies only to holders of Russian citizenship.



Ice cream for sale at a Ben & Jerry's store in Miami on Sept. 23, 2021.

THIS PAGE FROM TOP: MENAHEM KAHANA/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES, JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES



A MUST-SEE DOCUMENTARY FROM THE EPOCH TIMES

'THE FINAL WAR': A FILM ABOUT THE REAL EXISTENTIAL THREAT TO THE UNITED STATES

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Final War” is a film that is so relevant to current events and so important that we’re offering it to EVERYONE for free. It will answer your questions about the pandemic, the impending invasion of Taiwan, and how the CCP works to keep the United States occupied with at least four global adversaries.

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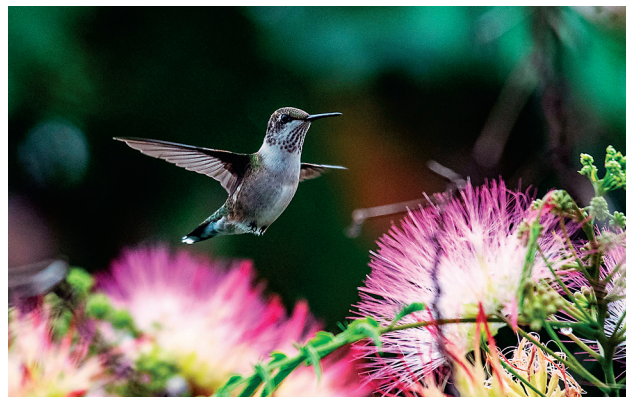
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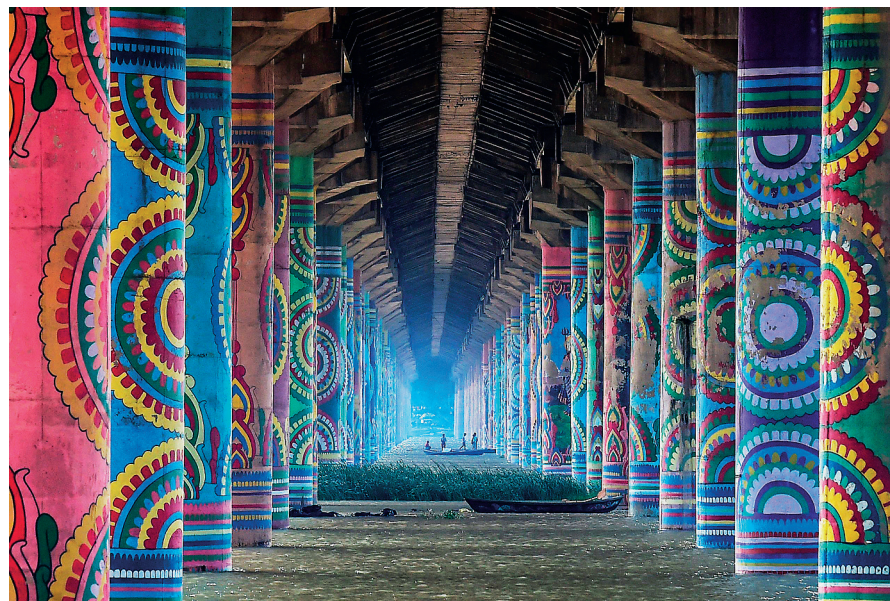
(Right)
Villagers try
to extinguish
a wildfire as
it approaches
Zambujeiro
village in
Cascais,
Portugal, on
July 25.



(Right)
A ruby-throated
hummingbird flies
over a mimosa tree
in Saugus, Mass.,
on July 22.



(Right) People ride a boat under a bridge in the swelled
water of the Ganges river following heavy monsoon
rains, in Prayagraj, India, on July 23.



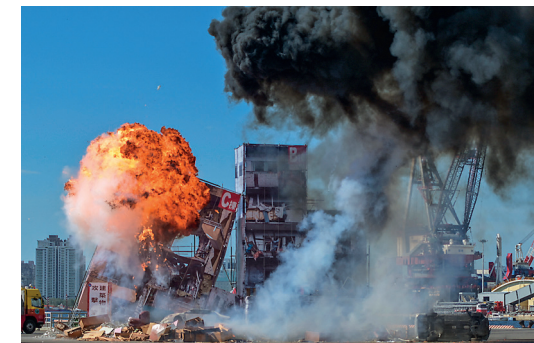
The Week in Photos



(Left)
A migrant
mother from
sub-Saharan
Africa and
her son at
the Libyan–
Tunisian
border, in Ras
Jedir, Libya, on
July 26.



(Above)
Pro-democracy
supporters gather
to protest after the
Thai Parliament
blocked the
nomination of
Move Forward
Party leader Pita
Limjaroenrat for
prime minister, in
Bangkok on July 23.



(Above) An explosion in a mock
collapsed building during a
military drill at Anping Harbor in
Tainan, Taiwan, on July 25.

COUNTERLOCKWISE FROM TOP: L. PATRICIA DE MELO/NOISEIRA/APP VIA GETTY IMAGES; JOSEPH PREZIOSO/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES; SANJAY KANOJA/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES; SAM YEH/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES; JACK TAYLOR/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES; MAHMUD TURKIA/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Law enforcement responds to the crash of a suspected smuggling vehicle and the resulting fire near Brackettville, Texas.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KINNEY COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

'We've just been kind of cast to the wolves,' Texas rancher says

BY CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON

SHERIFF
KINNEY COUNTY

TO SERVE & PROTECT

BORDER CRISIS

THE GOT AWAYS

THE HIDDEN CRISIS AT THE BORDER

KINNEY COUNTY, TEXAS—No one knows who they are, where they’re from, or where they’re going. But there are millions of them in the United States.

They are known as “gotaways”—illegal immigrants who evade U.S. Border Patrol and law enforcement by any means necessary and end up all over the United States.

Since January 2021, Border Patrol has recorded at least 1.7 million known gotaways at the southern border. Agents have no way of knowing how many they didn’t detect—by camera or footprints or in person.

“You can safely assume that anybody that went through the extra effort to avoid U.S. Border Patrol was not an asylum-seeker by default,” former Border Patrol chief Rodney Scott told The Epoch Times. Mr. Scott served during the Trump administration and for the first eight months of the Biden administration.

The American public is used to seeing images of groups of people, including families, who cross the border illegally and give themselves up to Border Patrol. Since the beginning of 2021, border agents have apprehended more than 6.7 million of these people. This population is mostly known as asylum-seekers—and, whether or not they actually apply for asylum or are eligible, they’re often released into the United States.

“The cartel pushes across the asylum-seekers, they overwhelm Border Patrol, basically pulling all their resources,” Mr. Scott said. “They have scouts out watching every part of the border, they figure out which sections of the border are now vacated. And then that’s where they push through the people who do not want to surrender. Those are going to be the potential terrorists, the criminals, people who have been deported before, the real threat to the U.S.

“There are hundreds and hundreds of miles of border right now as we speak that are completely unpatrolled because Border Patrol is overwhelmed with processing these ‘asylum-seekers.’”

In deep southwest Texas lie small counties that have become thoroughfares for gotaways—both on foot and in vehicles—who are trying to circumvent the Border Patrol checkpoints that are set up on major highways up to 60 miles from the border. In most cases, if a gotaway can get past those checkpoints, they’re unlikely to be caught by law enforcement.

‘All Preventable’

Texas’s Kinney County only shares 16 miles of border with Mexico, but it’s situated in such a way that it’s become a thoroughfare for illegal immigrants to reach the relative safety of San Antonio before traveling to their final destinations.

Kinney County Sheriff Brad Coe said that several years ago, his deputies would catch one or two carloads of illegal immigrants being smuggled per month. Now, he’s hitting highs of 95 vehicle loads per month. Thousands more are on foot, walking through local ranchland to avoid getting caught.

“We’re going to do what we can to stop them. I mean, A, it’s against the law. B, I can’t, in clear conscience, just sit back and do nothing, while these people get into Oklahoma City or Kansas City or Detroit, or whatever, and commit some type of heinous crime,” Mr. Coe told The Epoch Times.

“It may not be today, it may not be tomorrow, but somewhere down the road, if somebody rapes and kills somebody, and we find out that they came through here on my watch—that’s unacceptable.”

Prior to becoming sheriff in 2017, Mr. Coe was a Border Patrol agent for 31 years, based in Brackettville, Kinney County’s main city of around 1,800 people. As sheriff, he has overseen the consequences of the most dramatic increase in illegal immigration in his lifetime.

“Of course, every administration, every time we’ve had a presidential election, we’ve seen an



(Below) Illegal immigrants discovered in the bed of a pickup truck in Kinney County, Texas, on June 14, 2021.



FROM L: KINNEY COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE; CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES

uptick in illegal immigration, because there’s always that dream that there’s going to be a blanket amnesty,” he said. “Now that Biden’s here we’re seeing ... something I’ve never seen in 37 years. And we’re gonna pay the price for what’s going on now.”

During his 2020 presidential campaign, candidate Joe Biden said he supported free health care for illegal immigrants, a blanket amnesty for illegal immigrants already in the United States, and an easing of deportations.

“I would, in fact, make sure that there is, that we immediately surge to the border all those people who are seeking asylum. They deserve to be heard. That’s who we are. We’re a nation that says, ‘If you want to flee and you’re fleeing oppression, you should come,’” Mr. Biden said during a Democratic debate in September 2019.

On his first day in office, he halted border wall construction, reversed the ban on travel from terror-prone countries, suspended deportations of illegal aliens, stopped adding illegal immigrants to the “Remain in Mexico” program, strengthened the DACA program for children who were brought

over illegally, and released a sweeping immigration package to Congress that included amnesty for millions of illegal immigrants.

Mr. Coe said the gotaways paying to be smuggled through his county aren’t asylum-seekers.

“They’re far from asylum-seekers. We’re getting a little of everything. We’re catching sex offenders, murderers, people who have been deported for various heinous crimes,” he said.

During a stop with law enforcement in the county, The Epoch Times witnessed a couple from Oklahoma transporting six illegal immigrants from the border toward San Antonio. It was later discovered that one of the men, from Colombia, was wanted in the United States for child sex crimes.

In the same border area, Border Patrol agents arrested three child sex predators in a 48-hour period earlier in the year. One was a Salvadorian man convicted of child rape in Washington state, another was a Mexican man convicted of lewd acts with a child in Florida, and the third was a Salvadorian man convicted of unlawful sex ♡

(Above) Kinney County Constable Steve Gallegos and Kinney County sheriff’s deputies arrest an alleged smuggler transporting seven illegal immigrants from Guatemala near Brackettville, Texas, on May 25, 2021.

with a child in Utah, according to a Twitter post by the Border Patrol chief for the Del Rio sector. Recently, in Texas, an illegal immigrant allegedly shot and killed five of his neighbors. The suspect, Francisco Oropeza, is a Mexican national who'd been deported four times, according to U.S. immigration officials.

Kinney County Attorney Brent Smith said his county is doing what it can to prosecute illegal immigrants for breaking state laws.

"The one thing that's very unique about border crime, and deaths related to the border, is that they're all preventable," Mr. Smith told The Epoch Times.

"If we had a secure border, every single ... illegal alien that murders someone—that could have been prevented [because] they wouldn't have been here in the first place."

In April 2021, Mr. Smith drafted a state-of-disaster declaration for Kinney County. That inspired dozens of other Texas counties to follow suit, and by the end of May, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott declared a state of disaster and launched Operation Lone Star—a way for small counties to get the resources they needed to beef up their response to the border crisis.

Mr. Smith, whose office used to handle four to five cases per month before 2021, has relied on Operation Lone Star resources to ramp up its prosecution ability.

"Every issue that we face has to do with the volume. A criminal trespass case is pretty simple. Were you on the property? Yes or no? Did you have permission to be there? Yes or no? But when you have 5,000 of them, all of a sudden, it's complicated," he said.

Mr. Smith's office has prosecuted more than 5,000 people for misdemeanors committed in the county, including trespassing and evading arrest, since August 2021. All but about 20 were illegal immigrants, he said.

"The problem with Operation Lone Star is, it's not securing the border, it's addressing the side effects of an open border," he said.

"To many ranchers in Kinney County, Operation Lone Star is the only thing standing between them and an open border.

"But is it securing the border? No."

Texas Ranchers

Local ranchers whose land sits between the border and Border Patrol highway checkpoints have been experiencing huge increases in illegal immigrants walking through their properties.

Ranch manager Cole Hill, his wife, and their three young children live on a ranch in Kinney County, about 35 miles north of the U.S.-Mexico border. The property also flanks a Border Patrol



highway checkpoint, and those who want to evade capture tend to give it a wide berth.

Mr. Hill said he's dealt with illegal aliens traversing his land for years, but only at the rate of around 25 people a year, on average; sometimes, months would go by with no activity. Since 2021, however, he said it's been constant.

On Jan. 20, 2021, Mr. Hill's dog alerted him to a man on the front porch dressed head to toe in camouflage clothing.

"It obviously alarmed me. I've had plenty of encounters with illegal aliens over the past 10 or more years, but I've never had one that close to the house," Mr. Hill told The Epoch Times. "I stopped him. I told him to backtrack and get away."

He also called Border Patrol but doesn't know whether they caught the intruder.

"That was just kind of the beginning of this giant snowball that's occurring," he said.

The next encounter happened about three weeks later, when Hill and his oldest son were working out on the ranch. His wife frantically called to tell him that a group of illegal immigrants had surrounded the house.

"They're looking into windows, they're at the back door, they're at the front door, they're banging on the walls, everything," Mr. Hill said his wife told him.

He raced home and found one man on the front porch, while the rest had hidden as his truck approached.

"I made it pretty quickly to the individual on our front porch, I got him off the porch, and I promptly escorted him out of the yard," Mr. Hill said. He eventually cleared the rest of the group out of his garage and sent them away.

Again, he called Border Patrol, but it took agents

Kinney County shares 16 miles of border with Mexico and has become a thoroughfare for illegal immigrants trying to get to San Antonio, Texas.

FROM L: THE EPOCH TIMES; CHARLOTTE OUTHERTON/THE EPOCH TIMES

more than an hour to get there.

"Luckily, I was able to get home quick enough to stop anything from happening. It's a very scary situation knowing that we're this far out. We shouldn't have any trespassers on our property, we are way out in the middle of nowhere," Mr. Hill said.

"We've just been kind of cast to the wolves, and we're just left to deal with this problem, because nobody else wants it."

Wayne King, the manager of a large exotic game hunting ranch in Kinney County, said illegal immigrants walk through his property "like it's a highway."

"I have been woken up at night at 11, 12, 1 o'clock in the morning with them banging all over my doors, my windows. I've had to use my pistol to run them off," Mr. King said during a Texas state Senate field hearing.

"It's become a dangerous, dangerous thing to live every night of your life wondering. I sleep with pistols under my pillow, pistols in every room, pistols on my nightstand. It's just crazy. I live 25 miles from the nearest place; 911 doesn't help me a bit."

Christopher Roswell, whose family has owned property near the border for several generations, said the damage done to his property during the past two years adds up to a little over \$200,000.

"What I have witnessed over the last two years has been completely insane. We have been cussed at, threatened, had rocks and sticks thrown at us. Our dogs have been beaten on multiple occasions by illegals," Mr. Roswell said during his testimony to the Texas state Senate border committee.

"Every hunting camp I have has been vandalized. Our headquarters have been broken into. Over half of our highway gates have been run through. We've had three electric gates destroyed. Most of my hunting blinds have been vandalized—windows and doors broken, one set on fire, several used as bathrooms."

Ben Binnion, a wildlife biologist and general manager for a ranch in Maverick County, said he's moved his family off the ranch for safety reasons.

"My wife didn't want to have to kill somebody in self-defense, inside our house, in front of our children," he told The Epoch Times.

"If they're breaking into your house to get water or they're breaking into your house to cause harm to you, how would you handle the situation, because you don't know which one they're coming to do.

"You can't understand it unless you're out here seeing it every day, seeing the impact on the environment, seeing the impact on the locals, the local ranchers."

Mr. Binnion said that during his first year on the ranch in 2014, he kept notes and recorded that



"You can safely assume that anybody that went through the extra effort to avoid U.S. Border Patrol was not an asylum-seeker by default."

Rodney Scott, former chief, U.S. Border Patrol



"They're far from asylum-seekers. ... We're catching sex offenders, murderers, people that have been deported for various heinous crimes."

Brad Coe, sheriff, Kinney County



"If we had a secure border, every single ... illegal alien that murders someone—that could have been prevented."

Brent Smith, attorney, Kinney County



"They're looking into windows, they're at the back door, they're at the front door, they're banging on the walls, everything."

Cole Hill, ranch manager, recalling what his wife said during an encounter with illegal aliens



"I don't want to have to explain to a 4-year-old why there's a dead person laying in the middle of nowhere on our property."

Ben Binnion, ranch manager



"We've had some very serious accidents where ... there are bodies flying all over the place."

Henry Garcia, EMS director, Kinney County

1.7
MILLION

Since January 2021, Border Patrol has recorded at least 1.7 million known gotaways at the U.S.-Mexico border.

95
VEHICLE LOADS

Kinney County Sheriff Brad Coe says that his deputies are stopping up to 95 vehicle loads per month of illegal immigrants being smuggled.

\$9
MILLION

One local rancher has 3,000 acres, or \$9 million worth of property, that he can't use because illegal aliens keep cutting the fence, a ranch manager says.

\$300,000

Damages to a ranch owner's property have added up to around \$300,000 over the past two years.

Border Patrol apprehended about 37 individuals on his property.

"I'm getting 200 people a night on average on my trail cameras for two years solid now," he said.

"Out here, if you see people walking through the brush, they're breaking the law—100 percent guaranteed—because they're on your property without your permission."

Mr. Binnion said he has encountered illegal immigrants from Congo, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, and China, as well as Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Mexico.

"A lot of them that are walking through are trying to get to San Antonio or Houston as a way to get somewhere further," he said.

"I've [met people] wanting to go to New York, Chicago, Philadelphia. We have met a few that go to Denver and then Seattle."

During 2022, Mr. Binnion found 21 bodies on his ranch; one was discovered while he had one of his young children with him.

"I don't want to have to explain to a 4-year-old why there's a dead person laying in the middle of nowhere on our property," he said. He doesn't allow his children to ride around on the ranch with him anymore.

Financially, the damage done to his property has added up to about \$300,000 over the past two years.

"And that is simply putting a bandaid on a bullet hole. That has nothing to do with replacing anything. If we were to replace everything, it'd be \$800,000-plus," Mr. Binnion said.

He said he's had to hire a full-time employee to spend 40 hours a week fixing fences and picking up trash—"that's literally all he does."

"There's just endless streams of people coming over," he said. "I don't know what the future holds. I don't know what we're going to do. Something has to change."

Mr. Coe said the sheriff's office has placed some cameras around Kinney County. In the first six months of 2023, the cameras detected more than 29,000 illegal immigrants walking into the county.

"To our knowledge, none have been apprehended, and their whereabouts today are unknown," the sheriff's office said.

"We have no clue who they are, or where they're going. That's the scary part," Mr. Coe said. "They're walking in broad daylight, most of them, and unhindered. The odds are with them that they're not going to get caught."

Mr. Coe said one local rancher has 3,000 acres leased that he can't use because illegal immigrants keep cutting the fence.

"They're not just cutting a hole to walk through, they're cutting it from post to post. You're talking about a 20-foot section of fence, gone," he said.



CHARLOTTE OUTHBERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES

"Can't put cattle in there, can't put deer in there, can't have hunters come in. He's got \$9 million worth of property that he can't use."

Mr. Smith said as the stories of property damage, trespassing, and assault kept mounting, he hoped the federal government would step in.

"But they didn't," he said.

"The people in Kinney County, and in all counties along the border dealing with this aren't enjoying the freedom and the rights that are guaranteed in the Constitution, the right to property and enjoyment of life."

Lured on Social Media

The illegal aliens being smuggled by car are often driven by Americans, who are lured by the promise of quick and easy cash.

Ads on social media, especially TikTok, entice would-be smugglers with videos of wads of cash

Texas, Nebraska, and Iowa state troopers prepare to search a stolen vehicle in Kinney County, Texas, on July 21, 2021.

and the seemingly simple task of giving a few people a ride.

"They're promising all this money. We're going to pay you \$2,000, \$5,000. When you're 16, 17, 18 years old, it's a lot of money," Mr. Coe said.

"They come down, they pick up 10, they think it's gonna be an easy \$30,000. We're seeing everything. I mean, young kids, old people. We had a retired couple, they were in their 60s, trying to make ends meet, according to them."

"Now, we're getting people out of Ohio, Washington state, Illinois, flying in, picking up a rental car, coming to the border, trying to make quick money. And they're getting caught."

Human-smuggling arrests by Kinney County sheriff's deputies have quadrupled over the past three years.

In 2020, the deputies made 169 arrests for human smuggling in the county. In 2022, they made

741 arrests, and so far this year, Mr. Coe said it's already beyond 500. The numbers don't include the additional arrests in the county made by Border Patrol agents or Texas state troopers.

Human smuggling is a third-degree felony offense, punishable by up to two years in prison and a fine of up to \$2,000 for each person being smuggled. A new state law enacted in September 2021 removed a major barrier to prosecuting human smugglers. Prosecutors now needn't prove that alleged smugglers were paid, which was often the reason cases were thrown out.

The new law also raises the degree of felony if pecuniary gain is proven, if a smuggled person is a minor, or if the smuggler has a firearm.

Mr. Abbott has said he supports a five-year mandatory sentence for smugglers. However, the state legislature hasn't yet approved such a bill.

"The smugglers, they're going to do what- ♦♦

Recently in Texas, an illegal immigrant killed five of his neighbors. The suspect had been deported four times, officials say.

ever they can to get away,” Mr. Coe said. His deputies are often involved in high-speed pursuits as suspected smugglers try to out-drive them.

“We ended up in a pursuit, like we had last week, four people were killed right there. All because the driver didn’t want to stop.”

In another incident, a local woman was shot at by an alleged smuggler trying to shake law enforcement off his tail.

“To try to get away from law enforcement, he began shooting at oncoming traffic, striking her vehicle several times and forcing her off the road, hoping the DPS would stop the chase,” Mr. Smith said, referring to Texas Department of Public Safety troopers.

“That’s another example of what an open border looks like.”

It’s difficult to move in Mr. Coe’s evidence room. Stacks of white boxes with names written on the edge fill the shelves and rise from the floor in large stacks.

The boxes contain handguns seized by deputies over the past 18 months. The shotguns and ARs rest against a wall.

“Every Monday morning, I’m processing guns. And it’s not just the little Saturday Night Specials. We’re talking Glock, we’re talking Sigs, we’re talking Springfield .45s, we’ve got an AK-47, we’ve got a couple of AR-15s. We just got a shotgun over the

weekend,” Mr. Coe said.

“The first 35 years I was here, we would come across firearms once in a blue moon. Every so often, we’d catch a gun. So far this year, we’re at 91 or 92. My evidence room is full of guns waiting for things to go to court so I can get the status back on it so I can A, return it, or B, dispose of it.”

Impact on EMS

Between the road crashes, the trains, and the unforgiving southwest Texas weather, the Kinney County ambulance service spends almost two-thirds of its time and resources on the illegal immigration issue.

“There’s been some ugly, ugly stuff that has happened,” said Henry Garcia, director of emergency medical services for the county.

“We’ve had some very serious accidents where people ... you have them piled in in this vehicle and you start rolling over, there are bodies flying all over the place.”

One of the worst rollover crashes that he’s had to respond to so far involved 11 patients scattered at the scene after the driver lost control of the vehicle at speeds of more than 100 miles per hour on a stormy night. Mr. Garcia used both of his ambulances and had to call two more in from Uvalde and three from Del Rio to assist.

Freight trains traveling from the border are another common method for gotaways to get to San Antonio. They usually get on the train on the U.S. side of the border and hide in grain hoppers, or even inside brand new vehicles that are being imported within containers.

Mr. Garcia said he was called out a few months ago for a person who had slipped while jumping off the train and had his leg amputated at the knee by the train.

Other cases involve illegal immigrants sleeping on the tracks and not hearing an oncoming train.

“The myth is that if you’re going to sleep on the railroad tracks, get between the rails, because the snakes won’t come over the metal,” Mr. Garcia said.

He said this myth has resulted in several fatalities.

“If the conductor doesn’t see you, there’s no reason for them to sound their horn,” he said.

Mr. Garcia has one ambulance crew on deck at all times, and often a local volunteer firefighter or a deputy will be pulled in to drive a second ambulance if it’s needed.

If an illegal immigrant complains of an injury, Border Patrol won’t take the person into custody until he or she has been medically cleared, Mr. Garcia said.

“If it’s medically involved, we get paged out. I run the whole spectrum: from calls that are worthless to very, very serious calls,” he said.

Texas state troopers arrest two U.S. citizens who were transporting three illegal immigrants to San Antonio, in Kinney County, Texas, on Oct. 20, 2021.



FROM L: CHARLOTTE CUTBERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES; THE EPOCH TIMES

“The one that really irritated me—we went 48 miles. The call came out as a laceration on his hand. The person had scraped their hand, not even broke the skin, but scraped their hand on barbed wire while they were trying to jump the fence, and complained that they’d been injured. Ninety-mile round trip.”

Mr. Garcia said local county residents have had to wait for emergency care or for transport to the hospital because the ambulance crews are tied up with illegal immigrants.

Prior to 2021, Mr. Garcia said he’d get about 250 callouts per year at the highest point. During 2022, his agency received almost 600 callouts.

“It’s not to say we didn’t have immigration issues three, four years ago; it was just not as prevalent,” Mr. Garcia said.

The county is out of pocket by more than \$70,000 and counting, due to unpaid bills by illegal immigrants.

“In these immigration situations, I would say if we recover 25 percent of the cost, we consider ourselves lucky,” he said.

He sends outstanding medical bills to Homeland Security for reimbursement, “but it comes back ‘not eligible,’ and so it ends right there.”

The remoteness of the area, combined with the high number of catastrophic injuries, means a helicopter is often called out to whisk the injured to a San Antonio hospital.

Mr. Garcia estimates the air ambulance costs can total up to \$90,000, depending on what medical care is needed on the way.

He gave an example of an illegal immigrant who suffered a snake bite while walking through ranchland. The ambulance responded, and medics administered one vial of anti-venom, which is all they carry. The helicopter arrived, and by the time it flew out and landed at the hospital, the air medics had administered 18 more vials of anti-venom. Each vial costs \$1,500, which added up to \$28,500 of anti-venom used.

“We ate the bill as far as what we did. The air ambulance ate their bill, because they’re in the same situation we are—they don’t have anybody to bill,” Mr. Garcia said.

School Lockdowns

The local school campus in Brackettville is home to the town’s elementary, middle, and high schools, with a total of 571 students. The campus is located along one of the busiest smuggling routes in the county, and although deputies avoid turn-

ing on their lights or sirens until they’re past the school, it doesn’t always happen so smoothly.

“It is not uncommon for us to go into a shelter-in-place at least once a week. And unfortunately, even when it is just once a week, it may be multiple times during the day,” said Eliza Diaz, Brackett school district superintendent.

“At that point, students and staff are not allowed to leave their buildings until we get the all-clear.”

The school district has spent \$60,000 to place large boulders between the road and the school buildings to ensure that no cars plow into a building during a chase.

The school has also added perimeter gates, badge readers to access buildings, and panic buttons in classrooms.

“We’ve added some signage letting people know that we are a school that has a guardian program, [and] we do have staff members that are armed,” Ms. Diaz said.

“I would say over the last two years, instead of seeing it get better, it’s actually gotten a little worse. You can’t help but be concerned about the what ifs, what time is it going to happen next time? Where are students going to be?”

On several occasions, bailouts have occurred near the school, and vehicle occupants have tried to get into school buildings. A bailout is when a driver who is trying to evade law enforcement stops and all occupants flee in different directions.

In Kinney County, many residents have signed up to receive alerts on their phone from the sheriff’s office when a chase or bailout is occurring near town.

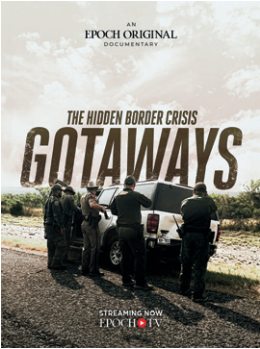
Last Christmas Eve, a law enforcement pursuit ended in a bailout near a Brackettville community. While absconding, at least one occupant shot at law enforcement.

“All occupants are considered to be armed and dangerous. Stay indoors and keep all doors and vehicles locked,” states the alert from the sheriff’s office.

Alerts are sent out several times a month, but not for every situation encountered.

An alert from June 9 states: “Texas DPS attempted to stop a vehicle on US 90 west when the driver of the vehicle intentionally went off the roadway. At this time, the occupants all absconded onto a ranch. It is unsure how many [illegal immigrants] ran from the vehicle.”

Many locals, as soon as they hear a helicopter, quickly go inside and lock their doors and



“Gotaways,” a new documentary on the border crisis, is now streaming live on EpochTV.



Illegal immigrants sneak cross the Rio Grande from the Mexico side to the Texas city of Roma, hoping to avoid Border Patrol.

“There are hundreds and hundreds of miles of border right now as we speak that are completely unpatrolled because Border Patrol is overwhelmed with processing these ‘asylum-seekers.’”

Rodney Scott, former chief, U.S. Border Patrol

31,300
ARRESTS

Texas state law enforcement officers have made more than 31,300 criminal arrests since Operation Lone Star’s inception in May 2021.

30%

DNA tests administered under the Trump administration revealed a 30 percent rate of familial fraud in El Paso and Rio Grande Valley, Texas. Illegal immigrants were buying or borrowing children for easier entry into the United States.

50%

At least 50 percent of illegal immigrants who are arrested on state charges bond out on cash bonds, the Kinney County attorney says.

422
MILLION

Texas law enforcement has seized more than 422 million lethal doses of fentanyl during Operation Lone Star.



Trail camera photos of illegal aliens provided by ranchers in Kinney County, Texas.

windows. A helicopter usually denotes a search for fleeing smugglers and illegal aliens.

In one case, in the middle of the day, a block from the school, a vehicle being followed by a deputy turned up a side street and stopped. The dashcam footage shows the occupants bailing out and fleeing, but the deputy was able to apprehend the driver. Law enforcement officers always try to catch the driver, at the expense of others getting away.

Several of the occupants weren't caught; however, a local homeowner with a security camera called the sheriff's office the next day after noticing a man ducking into their shed.

The man was apprehended, and law enforcement identified him as one of the people who had jumped out of the car the day before.

Mr. Smith said the man was charged with criminal trespass and evading on foot.

"They always run, they don't ever just surrender. So you tack on evading law enforcement to the charge. Usually, there's more than one crime that's being committed when an apprehension

Human smuggling arrests by Kinney County Sheriff's deputies have quadrupled over the past three years.

or an arrest is made. And so it's usually evading arrest, criminal trespass," he said.

"And so, prosecuting them for two different criminal charges is better, obviously, than one, if you want to create a deterrent."

Jail Issues

Mr. Coe's decades-old jail has space for 14 inmates, but most of the time now, it's shut down.

"It's old, it's falling apart. We're trying to keep it patched together. I'm having to spend money to try to keep it open," Mr. Coe said.

He's had to file charges at-large for dozens of smugglers due to a lack of jail space, especially for women and 17-year-olds (whom Texas treats as adults).

Once Operation Lone Star was up and running, the state made available in August 2021

FROM L. COURTESY OF RANCHERS; MARIO TAMAYO/GETTY IMAGES

about 6,000 male-only beds for alleged smugglers and illegal immigrants who were arrested for state crimes.

But it still couldn't take females or 17-year-olds.

"So I have to either A, cut them loose, or B, try to find a place to put them. And that's very difficult with women. Very, very difficult," Mr. Coe said.

He said deputies have to release females who are arrested for smuggling and file the charges at large. If a grand jury agrees to indict, a warrant is then issued for the woman.

If the woman is then stopped somewhere for a traffic violation, the law enforcement officer will see a warrant alert for her.

"They call us, 'Hey, we've got Jane Doe here. She's wanted for smuggling out of your county.' I still can't take her because I don't have a place to put them," Mr. Coe said.

He said once smugglers learned that the county had no space for female inmates, the number of female drivers increased.

In the past month, however, the state has set up a facility that can accommodate up to 200 female inmates.

Everyone Has to Pay

Illegal immigrants have to pay cartels or smuggling organizations to get across the U.S. border, and it costs more as a getaway to get farther into the United States.

A Mexican national told The Epoch Times that he paid \$4,000 to get to San Antonio. Another group of Mexican nationals said they had paid \$5,000 each to get to Dallas, where they had planned to pay off their debt by working in the construction industry.

"It's indentured slavery. They're gonna have to pay that back sometime. And a lot of them don't have a choice. 'This is going to be your job, you're either going to be a cook, you're going to work in a sweatshop, or you're going to work in the sex industry,'" Mr. Coe said.

He said his office picked up a Honduran woman recently who was in debt for \$5,000 for her journey to San Antonio.

"Her final destination was supposed to be the East Coast, but she was going to be in San Antonio for a while, working, before she made her final destination, which was going to cost her another \$5,000," Mr. Coe said.

Smugglers often hold illegal immigrants at stash houses until their smuggling fees are paid, either by them or by their families.

"They're being abused on the way over here. They're being abused once they get here. And they're being abused when they hit their final destination," Mr. Coe said.

The exploitation often starts south of the U.S. border. Two out of three migrants traveling to

the U.S.-Mexico border say they experience violence along the way, including abduction, theft, extortion, torture, and rape, according to Doctors Without Borders.

"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," said Marlene Castro, a Border Patrol supervisory agent.

The issue of fake families also was highlighted during the Trump administration, when it was discovered that illegal immigrants were buying or borrowing young children so they could cross the border together and claim to be a family unit, which often allowed them to be released into the United States quickly. After the Trump administration began administering DNA tests in cases where border agents suspected no familial ties, the initiative revealed a 30 percent rate of fraud in the first two test areas of El Paso and Rio Grande Valley, Texas.

The Biden administration halted the DNA testing.

The Jury Trial

The first and only local jury trial thus far under the Operation Lone Star border program wrapped up in Kinney County on May 9, 2022.

The defendant, Honduran native Lester Hidalgo Aguilar, was charged with trespass, which was enhanced to a Class B misdemeanor, since he was found more than 100 feet inside the property line of an agricultural operation, and then elevated to a Class A misdemeanor, as the crime occurred during a declared state disaster.

Mr. Aguilar was found guilty, and the judge sentenced him to the maximum jail time of one year. The judge declined to apply an accompanying fine, which could have been up to \$4,000, but said Mr. Aguilar should pay court costs (\$290).

During sentencing, Mr. Aguilar admitted to

Since the beginning of Operation Lone Star in 2021, more than 394,200 illegal immigrants have been apprehended by state law enforcement, according to Texas Gov. Greg Abbott.





“Angel moms,” mothers of people who were killed by illegal immigrants, hold signs and photos of their loved ones at an event outside the U.S. Capitol in Washington.

a criminal history that includes a 1996 shoplifting charge in Omaha, Nebraska, buying cocaine in California in 2002, and conducting a home invasion in Florida in 1999.

Cheryl Gabler Tomlin, on whose family ranch Mr. Aguilar was arrested, testified at the trial, saying the property is fully fenced and no one was authorized to enter the property, where she raises cattle and goats.

After the trial, she told The Epoch Times she was satisfied with the outcome.

“I thought he would get off. I’m happy,” she said as she left the courtroom.

Ms. Tomlin said her life had changed considerably in the past year and a half as more illegal immigrants encroached on her land. She recalled one of her scariest moments when she was opening a fence to let her horses out while still astride her ATV. A man appeared, and she said he whispered, “Don’t tell, don’t tell,” and leapt over the fence toward her ATV.

She hit the gas, and he struck the side of the ATV and fell down. She waved down Border Patrol agents who were down the road looking for him. The agents arrested the man and later told her that he was a five-time aggravated assault felon from Honduras.

“I have a gun all the time now,” Ms. Tomlin said.

Failure to Appear

Prior to Mr. Aguilar’s trial, almost all illegal immigrant defendants had pleaded guilty or no contest to trespass or other misdemeanor charges, and had reached a plea deal of time

served and no fine.

After a misdemeanor arrest, Mr. Smith examines the evidence in the case file from the sheriff’s office or Texas state troopers. If it’s determined that trespass occurred, he’ll file a complaint against the individual for trespassing. The charge is elevated if the individual had a deadly weapon, the individual was found more than 100 feet past the property line on agricultural land, or if the alleged crime took place during a disaster.

Once charged, the suspect will make a plea, and if he pleads guilty, he’ll most likely get time in jail and be turned over to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

It’s not a hefty penalty, but “we’re hoping they avoid our county,” Mr. Smith said.

The maximum punishment for a Class B misdemeanor in Texas is 180 days in jail and a \$2,000 fine, whereas a Class A misdemeanor is one year in jail and a \$4,000 fine.

However, at least 50 percent of the illegal immigrants bond out on cash bonds, Mr. Smith said.

“The problem is, they pay their cash bond to get released. And then usually they never show again. And so whether they’re in Mexico or another country, I don’t know, but they don’t show up for court,” he said.

“And so most of the cases are resolved either by plea deals or failure to appear in court.”

Mr. Smith said several illegal immigrants who were arrested and charged with trespass have since been arrested again in the county.

“There are two people in this entire situation that can solve this crisis. One is President Biden

It’s only going to get worse. Because as long as they’re allowing the people to come in and make some bogus claim to asylum, they’re just going to keep coming.

Brad Coe,
sheriff, Kinney County

and the other is Governor Abbott. I do not believe President Biden is going to solve this crisis,” Mr. Smith said.

“What you have to do is prevent them from coming in in the first place.”

The Invasion Argument

Border Patrol has apprehended more than 6.7 million illegal immigrants along the southern border since January 2021, according to Customs and Border Protection data.

Mr. Smith points to the Constitution to argue that if the federal government fails to protect Texas, then the state can take matters into its own hands.

Article IV, Section 4 of the U.S. Constitution states, “The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion.”

Article I, Section 10 of the U.S. Constitution says a state can’t engage in war without the authority of Congress—unless it’s being actually invaded or in imminent danger.

Article 4, Section 7 of the Texas Constitution allows for the governor to use the state’s militia to repel invasions.

“A movement of people with tanks and bullets and planes would be an invasion. But in the Constitution, it has no restriction on what invasion actually is. It has no definition, except the plain meaning of the language. And the plain meaning of the language isn’t restricted to a military or a state actor. It’s anything that’s unwanted that’s causing danger to the Republic, or violating the sovereignty of another state or nation,” Mr. Smith said.

The state has recently taken more radical steps to stop illegal immigrants from entering Texas from Mexico. In June, Mr. Abbott deployed a 1,000-foot line of floating buoys down the Rio Grande in Eagle Pass, where illegal crossings—as well as drownings in the swift river—have been common.

The barrier, along with concertina wire along the riverbank, has forced would-be illegal immigrants to turn back to Mexico or find another place to cross.

The Biden administration in July threatened to sue Texas if the buoys aren’t removed.

“Texas’s unauthorized construction of the floating barrier is a prima facie violation of the Rivers and Harbors Act. This floating barrier poses a risk to navigation, as well as public safety, in the Rio Grande River, and it presents humanitarian concerns,” wrote Todd Kim, an assistant attorney general, and Jaime Esparza, the U.S. attorney for the Western District of Texas, according to a July 20 letter obtained by The Epoch Times.

Mr. Abbott has signaled that he remains undeterred, writing on Twitter July 21, “We will see you in court, Mr. President.”

The governor blamed Mr. Biden and his policies for fueling a “tragic humanitarian crisis” at the border.

“His open border policies encourage migrants to risk their lives crossing illegally through the Rio Grande, instead of safely and legally over a bridge,” Mr. Abbott wrote on Twitter.

“We will continue to deploy every strategy to protect Texans and Americans—and the migrants risking their lives.”

Since the beginning of Operation Lone Star in 2021, more than 394,200 illegal immigrants have been apprehended by state law enforcement, according to Mr. Abbott.

Troopers have made more than 31,300 criminal arrests, with reports of more than 29,100 felony charges brought related to the border crisis, the governor’s office states.

Additionally, Texas law enforcement has seized more than 422 million lethal doses of fentanyl during Operation Lone Star.

‘It’s Only Going to Get Worse’

Mr. Smith said he’s concerned that county residents will stop relying on the government for safety and take matters into their own hands.

“I hate that county residents may have to do that, to protect their families. It shouldn’t be up to them to have to do that,” he said.

“The underlying purpose of any type of government, whether it’s local, state, or federal, is to protect its citizens. And right now, both the state and federal government are failing to do that. And our one jurisdiction we have here, we’re trying to do everything we can to do that.”

Mr. Coe, the former Border Patrol agent, predicts that the border crisis will remain unabated for now.

“It’s only going to get worse,” he said, “because as long as they’re allowing the people to come in and make some bogus claim to asylum, they’re just going to keep coming.”

Mr. Scott, the former Border Patrol chief, spoke at a border security summit in Austin in 2022, where he asked the audience to think about their own homes.

“It can be an apartment, it can be anything else. Is it wrong to ask people to come to your front door of your home? Then why would it be wrong to ask people to come to the front door of our nation?” Mr. Scott said.

“At our national level, we have ports of entry—328 of them—that are established as our front doors. And we just ask everybody to go through that front door, period.” ■

EXCLUSIVE

Jan. 6 Prisoner Takes Charge to Supreme Court

‘The federal government has effectively declared a jihad ... on everyone within sight of Jan. 6,’ attorney says

By Patricia Tolson

Attorneys for Jan. 6 prisoner Edward Jacob Lang have filed a document with the Supreme Court challenging the government’s obstruction of Congress charge, which carries up to a 20-year prison sentence.

PHOTO BY MADALINA VASILIU/THE EPOCH TIMES

A MAN DEFENDING HIMSELF against charges related to the Jan. 6, 2021, U.S. Capitol breach has filed to take his challenge of the infamous obstruction charge, levied against him and hundreds of other Jan. 6 prisoners and defendants, all the way to the Supreme Court.

On July 7, attorneys for Jan. 6 prisoner Edward Jacob (Jake) Lang filed a document with the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) challenging the government’s obstruction of Congress charge—one of the most common felony charges used against Jan. 6 defendants—which carries up to a 20-year prison sentence.

“We filed what’s called a writ of certiorari, or a request to the Supreme Court to hear an issue,” Norm Pattis, lead attorney for Mr. Lang, told The Epoch Times. Mr. Pattis explained that the legal team is asking the high court to review the details behind Mr. Lang’s alleged violation of Title 18 U.S. Code Section 1512(c)(2), one of the 11 charges against him, according to court documents.

According to the writ, obtained exclusively by The Epoch Times: “Mr. Lang filed a motion to dismiss the Section 1512 count prior to trial. The District Court granted his motion.

“On a consolidated interlocutory appeal to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit joined by two similarly situated co-defendants, the Court, in a split decision, reversed the District Court. A motion for rehearing was denied.”

The “question presented for review” is “whether the Court of Appeals erred in concluding that application of 18 U.S.C. Section 1512(c)(2), a statute crafted to prevent tampering with evidence in ‘official proceedings,’ can be used to prosecute acts of violence against police officers in the context of a public demonstration that turned into a riot, resulting in so ‘breathtaking’ an application of the statute as to run afoul of *Van Buren v.*

United States, 141 S. Ct. 1648 (2021).”

The document warns the high court that “dozens of convictions” on this same obstruction charge are “headed to this Court,” all arising from the Capitol breach, and that “resolution of the question is imperative to prevent the use of this statute to prosecute folks who protested in a good faith belief that their actions were necessary to prevent an election from being stolen, an event tantamount to an internal coup d’état.”

“Refusal to resolve this question will chill others inclined to petition and assemble for the redress of grievances, for fear that those opposed to their views might prosecute them for possessing a ‘corrupt’ intent,” the document reads.

‘Really Far Afield’

Obstruction under Section 1512(c) is among the 37 charges for which the federal government indicted the current GOP front-runner for the 2024 election, former President Donald Trump. A favorable ruling by the Supreme Court could have a significant effect on Mr. Trump’s legal future.

This isn’t the first time the obstruction charge has been called into question.

Politico reported that during a two-hour hearing on Nov. 19, 2021, U.S. District Judge Dabney Friedrich argued in the case of Jan. 6 prisoner Guy Reffitt—also charged with hindering communications through physical force, civil disorder, and bringing a firearm onto the grounds—that the government’s effort to apply the obstruction charge appeared to run “really far afield” from what Congress intended.

Judge Friedrich ultimately allowed the charge to stand.

On June 7, 2022, U.S. District Judge Carl Nichols granted Mr. Lang’s motion to dismiss the obstruction charge.

It was the third time Judge Nichols granted a Jan. 6 prisoner’s motion to dismiss. On March 8, 2022, he had granted the motion to dismiss of Jan. 6 prisoner Garret Miller. ♦

300
Defendants
FEDERAL
PROSECUTORS
have charged
more than 300
Jan. 6 defendants
with obstructing
congressional
proceedings.

900
Days
EDWARD JACOB
Lang has been
detained for more
than 900 days
without a trial.

“Upon review of the Defendant’s [Motion to Dismiss], and for the reasons discussed in the Court’s [opinions] in *United States v. Miller*, it is ordered that the Motion is granted,” Judge Nichols wrote. “It is further ordered that Count Nine is dismissed without prejudice Superseding Indictment.”

Judge Nichols then granted the motion to dismiss of Jan. 6 defendant Joseph Fischer on March 15, 2022.

Judge Nichols said he believes that the statute “must be interpreted” in such a way that “requires that the defendant have taken some action with respect to a document, record, or other object in order to corruptly obstruct, impede or influence an official proceeding.”

In all, federal prosecutors have charged more than 300 Jan. 6 defendants with obstructing congressional proceedings. The obstruction charge has been frequently used by the Justice Department during plea negotiations and as a means to coerce some Jan. 6 protesters into providing information to incriminate fellow protesters.

‘Reworking the Penal Code’

Mr. Pattis and fellow Lang attorney Steven Metcalf are asking the United States Supreme Court to review their client’s case and determine “whether the federal government is misusing the statute designed to prohibit or deter tampering with evidence or evidentiary proceedings” to inflict “extra heavy punishment on those involved in the January 6 events.”

Title 18 U.S.C. Section 1512 provides in part:

- (c) Whoever corruptly –
 - (1) alters, destroys, mutilates, or conceals a record, document, or other object, or attempts to do so, with the intent to impair the object’s integrity or availability for the use in an official proceeding; or
 - (2) otherwise obstructs, influences or impedes any official proceeding, or attempts to do so, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 20 years, or both.

“The statute says if you obstruct or impede an official proceeding, by screwing around with records or documents, you’re guilty of a felony,” Mr. Pattis said.

“Congress amended that to include a second section that says if you interfere with an official proceeding, you are guilty as well. That statute has been used to punish Jan. 6 protesters who broke the law by trespassing or, in some cases, engaging in acts of violence against police officers, even when that act was in defense of themselves.”

As described by the Congressional Research Service, the obstruction measure refers to “witness tampering” and the suppression or destruction of evidence in the “obstruction of pending congressional or federal administrative proceedings.”

Mr. Pattis argues in his SCOTUS filing that the government’s “ambitious federal prosecutors” are “reworking the

penal code to make it do work never intended to be done, work that threatens to chill, and does chill, ordinary Americans in their First Amendment rights to assemble, to petition for the redress of grievances and to speak out on matters of public concern.”

“It has a chilling effect on dissent and chills people in the exercise of their First Amendment rights. ... Now, people are going to be afraid to go to a protest, because if that protest turns into a riot, they might get charged with a felony carrying 20 years, and that’s ridiculous,” Mr. Pattis told *The Epoch Times*.

While conceding “there were minor charges” that could “fit” some alleged crimes, he said, “You don’t have to make everything into the functional equivalent of the death penalty.”

Mr. Pattis said Mr. Lang’s team is trying to take the case to the Supreme Court “because it’s a 20-year felony.”

“It significantly enhances the criminal exposure of these defendants,” he said. “Our view is that prosecutors have stretched this statute into a shape that Congress never intended it to take. It’s a grotesque overreach on the part of the federal government.”

‘Bigger Than J6’

Mr. Lang said the Biden administration is intentionally twisting the law into a weapon against those who support Mr. Trump. The SCOTUS filing, he said, is “bigger than [Jan. 6], and exposes the root of political persecution, using a weaponized DOJ and FBI against conservatives.”

“The 1512 charge the DOJ is using against me and hundreds of other Americans is a perfect example of the Biden regime abusing the law code, and using it as an instrument of political oppression against MAGA dissidents,” Mr. Lang said, in a statement issued exclusively to *The Epoch Times*. “When the current party in power perverts the law to coerce, threaten, silence, stifle and imprison the supporters of the former political party, in order to scare the public at large from any protesting or political dissent, this is the true mark of the collapse of free speech and our Democratic Republic.”

Mr. Lang, who has been detained for more than 900 days without a trial, is



Protesters stand on the East steps of the U.S. Capitol during a rally against the 2020 presidential election results, in Washington on Jan. 6, 2021.

currently incarcerated at the Alexandria Detention Center in Alexandria, Virginia.

He spoke of the timing of the court filing and how the potential outcome could affect the government’s separate effort to use the obstruction charge to disqualify Mr. Trump from running for the presidency.

“Donald Trump is the political front-runner for the Republican Party, and while the other bogus charges might easily go away through a plea deal, the obstruction of Congress charge carries prison time,” Mr. Lang told *The Epoch Times* by phone from the detention center. “This one would land him in serious hot water with a conviction.”

Even with a plea deal, Mr. Lang said, the former president would get prison time, and it would come during an election year “while he’s trying to run his campaign from a prison cell.”

“The stakes couldn’t be higher,” he said. “If we win this, we can bring American jurisprudence back to a healthy state.” He added, “If the 1512 charge is overturned, it could spring hundreds of Jan. 6 defendants from prison.”

“They’re using 1512 as an instrument of

political oppression and to coerce, threaten, and imprison dissidents and the supporters and leaders of the political party they ousted. The thing I want to focus on is that in order for America to return to a normal and positive discourse, we need to stop allowing the current political party [to use] the DOJ and the FBI as the strong arm of the law to bend and shape law into an instrument of oppression.”

Dozens of Jan. 6 defendants and prisoners have attempted to have their obstruction charges dismissed, but at least 10 federal judges have upheld the charges.

Mr. Lang is the first to take his case to the Supreme Court.

The SCOTUS filing reads, “In the name of saving democracy, prosecutors are undermining the core principles on which this republic stands.” Without a positive ruling from the Court, it states, “hundreds, if not thousands, of Americans, will face substantial prison sentences for doing no more than speaking out at a protest that evolved into a dynamic conflict.”

“It is no overstatement to say the future of the First Amendment hangs in the balance,” the writ reads. “A statute

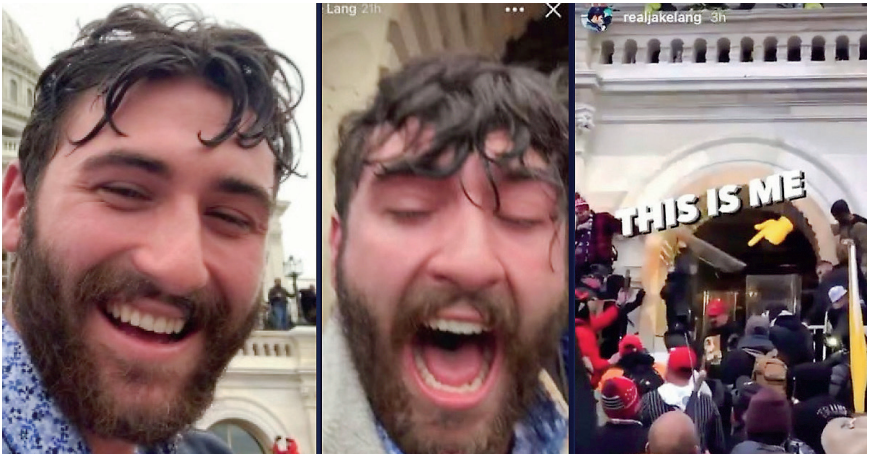
intended to combat financial fraud has been transformed into a blatant political instrument to crush dissent.”

In his interview with *The Epoch Times*, Mr. Pattis shared stronger sentiments.

“We think the federal government has effectively declared a jihad, or a holy war, on everyone within sight of Jan. 6, in ways that are chilling, repulsive, and contrary to so much of what this country stands for,” he said.

He said that even in the wake of the Civil War, “where 600,000 Americans killed one another in a contest of brother versus brother,” every rebel was repatriated within three years after the war ended.

“We’re still prosecuting people for participating in a four-hour riot on Jan. 6—two years later,” he said. “What the hell’s the matter with the Justice Department? The selective interpretation of the law, the stretching of the law to punish dissent, and the evidence in Mr. Lang’s case will show that he was engaged in self-defense. Not offensive behavior. This is wrong. It’s going to take the Supreme Court to right the ship, and we hope it does.” ■



“[The SCOTUS filing is] bigger than J6, and exposes the root of political persecution, using a weaponized DOJ and FBI against conservatives,” says Jan. 6 prisoner Edward Jacob Lang.

FROM: FBI COURT FILING, JON CHERRY/GETTY IMAGES

SPOTLIGHT

Walking Out

MEMBERS OF THE WRITERS GUILD OF AMERICA and the Screen Actors Guild walk a picket line outside of Paramount Pictures in Los Angeles on July 21. Tens of thousands of Hollywood actors went on strike, over demands such as wage increase and protection against artificial intelligence, at midnight on July 14, effectively bringing the giant movie and television business to a halt as they join writers in the first industry-wide walkout in 63 years.

PHOTO BY VALERIE MACON/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



Subsequent to California's rent control rules, the average rent increase jumped to about 20 percent from 4 percent.

PHOTO BY FREDERIC J. BROWN/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

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RENTAL MARKET

Eviction Policies Benefit Tenants; Landlords Say They Cause Problems

'It's a state government takeover of private property,' a landlord representative said

BY PATRICIA TOLSON

Nation Policies

WHILE THE DIRECTOR OF a tenants association says “just cause policies benefit tenants,” the president of a landlords association insists they “just cause a lot of problems” for landlords.

“Just cause” eviction policies are designed to prevent random, retaliatory, or discriminatory evictions by ensuring that landlords can evict tenants only for specific reasons, such as failure to pay rent, intentional property damage, or refusal to comply with the terms of the lease.

Tenant advocates insist that just cause policies protect tenants from unjust evictions and costly rent hikes. Conversely, landlords say that just cause policies make it difficult to get rid of problem tenants and reduce the number of available properties by discouraging owners from offering their properties for rent.

Since 2019, California, Oregon, and Washington have adopted “just” or “good” cause policies. Baltimore, Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., have also adopted just cause measures.

While just cause eviction requirements in San Francisco and New York City apply only to units that are rent-regulated, just cause requirements in Washington, D.C., and New Jersey apply to all rental units.

If a landlord evicts a tenant in Portland, Oregon, without cause or forces a tenant to move because they raised the rent to an unaffordable level in excess of 10 percent, they are required to pay the tenant’s moving costs.

In Seattle, just cause eviction protections also apply to month-to-month tenancies and verbal agreements.

In Philadelphia, tenants can challenge an eviction notice through the court or the Fair Housing Commission, and while the case is being deliberated, the eviction notice is considered invalid.

With the sunset of the federal COVID-19 eviction moratoriums, as more tenants lose pandemic-era welfare benefits, and as the costs of rent continue to escalate across the country, just cause protections are likely to be expanded and tested. A study by researchers at Princeton University shows that although evictions fell sharply during the COVID-19 pandemic, they have returned to or exceeded normal levels in many places. ♦

‘Night and Day’

On May 10, 2021, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee signed HB 1236 into law, “Protecting residential tenants from the beginning to end of their tenancies by penalizing the inclusion of unlawful lease provisions and limiting the reasons for eviction, refusal to continue, and termination.”

Terri Anderson from the Tenants Union of Washington state told The Epoch Times that “just cause policies benefit tenants because, without ‘just cause,’ landlords don’t have to have a reason to evict a tenant.”

However, she refers to the tenant protection measure as a flawed just cause law, because at the last minute, the state Legislature voted in an amendment that renders the law applicable “only to tenants who have a month-to-month contract,” she said.

“Tenants who have a fixed-term lease can still receive a notice that their lease will not be renewed,” she said, adding that “the difference between ‘cause’ and ‘no cause’ is night and day.”

But just cause ordinances can be a double-edged sword for renters.

Before just cause ordinances, the only reasons a landlord could force a tenant to vacate in Washington state was failure to pay rent or failure to abide by the rules in the lease, Ms. Anderson said.

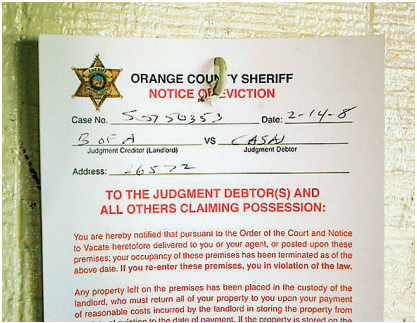
“When you pass just cause, you add just causes,” she explained. “In Washington state, we’ve added that if it’s a single-family unit and a landlord wants to sell it, they can evict the tenant.”

Another just cause in Washington is if the landlord wants to do substantial rehabilitation that would require the tenant to vacate the building for that work to be done, Ms. Anderson said.

She advised that tenants who plan to move and prospective renters familiarize themselves with just cause laws as they vary among the states and cities that have adopted them.

“No cause evictions are devastating for tenants,” Ms. Anderson said. She also said that without just cause ordinances, tenants could never form a tenants association in their building to collectively address condition issues, which is one of the main reasons tenants want to organize.

“A tenant’s biggest issue is getting repairs made on a timely basis,” she said.



An Orange County Sheriff eviction notice in Laguna Hills, Calif, in this file photo.

“They want to live in decent, healthy, safe housing, and no-cause evictions make it very easy for landlords to ignore requests for repairs because tenants are too afraid to call authorities to force repairs because they know they will get evicted without cause. They would rather live in substandard housing rather than risk being evicted.

“That’s what happens without just cause. That’s why we fight so hard for just cause eviction laws.”

‘The Biggest Detriments’

Assembly Bill 1482 in California, otherwise known as the “Tenant Protection Act of 2019,” restricts the reasons landlords can evict tenants and how often and by what amount they can raise tenants’ rent. A 2019 Princeton University study of just cause ordinances in four

California cities found that the policies were effective in decreasing eviction.

As explained by the California Rental Housing Association, there are 11 reasons a landlord can evict a tenant. These “at fault” just causes include failure to pay rent, breach of the lease term, criminal activity, subletting the unit, refusing to allow owner access, and using the unit for unlawful purposes.

Four “no-fault” just cause rules cover situations in which a property owner wants to remove the property from the market, plans to raze the property, is complying with a local ordinance or court order, or wants to move into the unit or have a direct relative move in.

Unlike in Washington state, California’s just cause law doesn’t allow a landlord to evict a tenant if the landlord wants or needs to sell the property.

According to Chris Airola, this is “the most damaging aspect of just cause for a landlord.”

Mr. Airola is the CEO of RentPros, a leader in the property management business in the greater Sacramento area for more than 30 years. He is also the president of the California Landlord Association.

“According to California’s rules, selling the property is not a just cause for removing tenants,” Mr. Airola told The Epoch Times. “When owners want to sell a property, the tenants come with it, and the new landlords are not allowed to increase the rent more than the cap. This is really one of the biggest detriments I see with just cause.”

Rent Controls

As explained by the California Rental Housing Association, landlords in California aren’t allowed to raise rent, over the course of a year, by more than 10 percent or 5 percent plus the applicable consumer price index, whichever is lower.

If the rent of a unit is far below market value, a landlord can raise it to current levels after a tenant voluntarily vacates the property. However, once a new tenant moves in, all future rent increases are subject to the rent cap. Because rent on units occupied by long-term tenants is forced to stay below market value over the term of the lease, most landlords take advantage of the vacancy to hike the rent



Demonstrators hold placards to call for the canceling of rents and mortgages, and to prevent evictions, at the White House on Sept. 25, 2021.

before taking on another tenant.

Mr. Airola said the average rent increase in the greater Sacramento area over the past 25 years was about 4 percent. Subsequent to California’s rent control rules, the average rent hike has been about 20 percent. A study by Realtor.com found that the Sacramento area had the fifth-biggest average rent growth among metro areas in the country in 2021, with rent increasing by 19.5 percent.

Problem Tenants

Another problem Mr. Airola finds with just cause policies is that a landlord can end up stuck with a “problem renter” in a multitenant property such as a duplex or an apartment complex.

Mr. Airola recalled one tenant who was a substance abuser and would sit outside of his unit making vulgar comments to other tenants who passed by, particularly to females.

Despite multiple complaints from tenants, with some filing restraining orders against him, Mr. Airola said, “We couldn’t get rid of him.

“We went to court twice on this and

both times, the judge said he didn’t see just cause because a tenant being disruptive to the community is not just cause.

“The judge said it was free speech.” “So what happened is the good tenants moved out. All of them left, leaving one unit occupied, the one with the rude tenant. Now, whenever we try to show the property to a prospective new tenant, there he is.”

Mr. Airola also noted that “tenants who are out there marching and protesting for rent control” will be the same ones protesting because he can’t get rid of a rude tenant.

Housing as a Right

“As a society, we are very ignorant when it comes to the details of things like this,” Mr. Airola explained. “Just cause may have its place in some arenas and in some situations. But for the most part, it’s a state government takeover of private property.”

While the just cause laws do allow a property owner to evict a tenant for nonpayment of rent and when they plan on tearing down the property, there are

other rules that make the eviction of a tenant a lengthy and costly process.

“If a tenant doesn’t pay rent, I can evict them,” Mr. Airola said. “But where it used to take three to four weeks, now we’re lucky if it’s four to five months. Then, let’s say I have a building I want to tear down. That would be a no-fault eviction. But now I have to pay relocation fees.”

There’s also the matter of new builds. There won’t be new builds because the owners know they can’t get their money back, he said.

While California legislators and “just cause” advocates “don’t quite come out and say it just yet,” Mr. Airola said “they’re pushing toward the notion that housing is a right.”

Organizations such as the United Nations, the Socialist Alliance, and the National Homelessness Law Center have already declared that housing is a human right

“If housing is a right,” Mr. Airola said, “it should be provided by the government” rather than by private property owners. ■

JOURNALIST MATT TAIBBI ON ONLINE CENSORSHIP

Taibbi says censorship corrupts the American spirit of individual, free thought

By Matt McGregor & Jan Jekielek



It isn't the goal of journalists to tell people what to think and for whom to vote, Mr. Taibbi says, but that's what the craft has become over the past several years.

PHOTO BY MARK WILSON/GETTY IMAGES

THE “CONSENSUS ENFORCEMENT mechanism” of censorship on social media has not only been an attack on civil liberty but also sapped the public square of a desire to reach the truth, according to journalist Matt Taibbi.

Where there was once a hunger for freedom, there’s now a collective apathy over fighting to keep it preserved, Mr. Taibbi said.

“In parallel to this censorship program, I think what they’re doing with things like shadow banning and deny listing is they’re trying to simplify controversies and reduce everybody’s field of view,” Mr. Taibbi said in an interview on EpochTV’s “American Thought Leaders.”

In doing so, the will to be curious and think about issues in a complicated way has been exhausted, he said.

“It’s making us less interested in fighting for our rights.”

In 2022, Mr. Taibbi uncovered an FBI censorship operation in partnership with former Twitter staff, and he released certain internal Twitter documents known as the Twitter Files.

In his speech at “Freedom Fest” in Memphis, Tennessee, on July 14, Mr. Taibbi said that what he found unbelievable was not the government censorship but its endorsement in society at large.

“The part that didn’t compute was why so many in the general public were accepting of the situation,” Mr. Taibbi said in the speech. “This included people I knew. Many people in America are not just accepting of digital censorship; they believe it to be vitally necessary.”

The American public had formerly been known for its rebellious, fighting spirit, willing to protest government overreach, but what’s taken place over the past several years has transformed that spirit into compliance, he said.

This transformation has only been facilitated by social media, he said.

“I was one of the first people in the ‘mainstream media’ to worry about [internet censorship] in the States, and one of the first things I was told is that social media is addictive, the same way cigarettes are addictive,” Mr. Taibbi said. “There are studies done about how people

get dopamine hits even from feeling, for instance, the waffle pattern on the back of their phones; they’re addicted to the whole process of looking at their phones.”

This addiction fuels an internet culture that’s intrinsically anti-individualistic, he said, which most prominently shows in younger people whose self-worth becomes ensnared by how much attention they’re getting on social media, leaving them to rely not on self-creation but on group approval.

Mr. Taibbi said this mindset is contrary to the American spirit.



“IT’S MAKING US LESS INTERESTED IN FIGHTING FOR OUR RIGHTS.”

Matt Taibbi, journalist

“We Americans once cherished independence and lived off folk tales about going off on one’s own, on the open road,” he said in his speech. “Think about Ishmael, or Huck and Jim, or Chuck Berry, who picked up a guitar and sang about setting out with ‘no particular place to go,’ creating a dazzling sound that touched a nerve with the whole world.”

But that spirit has departed, Mr. Taibbi said.

“We never had to think about how we fit into a crowd as much as we do now,” he told EpochTV. “And I think internet culture wraps up everybody so much in group affirmation that it’s been very harmful.”

A Chilling Effect on Individual Thought

This herd behavior has contaminated journalism, a field that he said in the past instructed people to go in the opposite direction, ask questions, and think critically.

In media today, he said, journalists are discouraged from stepping out of the narrative.

“Now, the stars of our business and mainstream media are all people who go along with the consensus view of things, and it’s very frowned upon to raise questions about things that have ‘been decided,’” he said.

This fear has spread into academia and newsrooms, Mr. Taibbi said, creating a chilling effect on the sharing of individual thought.

“That’s just a terrible atmosphere for this kind of job because you need to have that spirit of free inquiry in order to get to the truth,” Mr. Taibbi said.

Investigative reporting isn’t about garnering popularity by reinforcing a shared consensus, he said, although that’s what journalism today has become.

“Your average investigative journalist—the good ones—are difficult, prickly people who go against the grain, and they keep digging until they find what they think is the truth,” he said. “Take somebody like Seymour Hersh—that is exactly the kind of person the current system is designed to weed out—the person who doesn’t accept on its face whatever the official explanation of things is.”

Hersh reported in February an allegation that the Biden administration had sanctioned a military operation that involved destroying three of the four Nord Stream pipelines, while legacy media outlets issued the consensus that their destruction was “a mystery.”

“That’s the attitude of a real journalist,” Mr. Taibbi said. “They don’t want that person anymore, and it wasn’t until about 10 years ago that I started to see people expressing that openly in the business. Ever since, I’ve been trying to understand why that is. What’s the big change?”

Even before the internet, there was a demographic shift in journalism, Mr. Taibbi said.

“When my father started doing this



Social media addiction fuels an internet culture that is intrinsically anti-individualistic, leaving young people to rely not on self-creation but on group approval, says Mr. Taibbi.

job, it was more of a trade than a profession,” Mr. Taibbi said. “It was very common for people who went into journalism to be the sons and daughters of electricians or plumbers or graduates of typing schools.”

After the book “All the President’s Men” about reporting on the 1972 Watergate scandal was published in 1974 followed by a 1976 film, journalism became more appealing to the sons and daughters of the wealthy elite, Mr. Taibbi said.

“So, this created a problem, especially, I noticed, on the campaign trail, because they were the same people socially as the people they were reporting on,” Mr. Taibbi said.

Instead of being adversarial, reporters had entered into a cooperative relationship with the political players, Mr. Taibbi said.

As an example, Mr. Taibbi pointed to the 1996 book “Primary Colors,” which was first published anonymously, though it was later found to be written by columnist Joe Klein.

Mr. Klein mixed fiction and nonfiction to tell the story of former President Bill Clinton’s 1992 campaign trail.

“Instead of ‘All the President’s Men,’ this was somebody who got in the inside and told the story from the point of view of the candidate, as opposed to looking at the candidate on behalf of the public,” Mr. Taibbi said.

‘Consensus Enforcement Mechanism’

During former President Barack Obama’s administration, and later under former President Donald Trump, journalists galvanized into what Mr. Taibbi called a “consensus enforcement mechanism” resembling the Soviet, “low-rent advertisement” reporting that carried water for the factions of the Communist Party.

With no evidence, American journalists took unsupported stories, such as the allegation that Trump had worked with the Russian government to get elected, and attacked anyone who questioned the narrative, Mr. Taibbi said. ♦

“I was recognizing the same kinds of language that we saw in the [Iraq weapons of mass destruction] affair, where a lot of people were talking about anonymous sources, referring to things that could not be independently confirmed by other reporters,” Mr. Taibbi said. “Like science, if you can’t repeat the experiment in the lab, you’ve got to be a little bit nervous about it. And I thought this is a really big story to be risking so much on.”

In May, special counsel John Durham issued his final report, in which he concluded that there was no collusion between Trump and Russia and that the FBI had made several “missteps” in the investigation.

When he saw journalists such as Glenn Greenwald scorned for reporting on the holes in the Russiagate story, Mr. Taibbi said he began to become convinced that it was more propaganda than truth.

“It only got worse from there,” he said.

Though seasoned journalists such as he and Mr. Greenwald can face the heat, Mr. Taibbi warned that this treatment dissuades journalists who may now be less inclined to seek real answers.

“They’re going to look at this and say, ‘If I go over there and I start saying these things, that might be the end of my career, and so, do I need that?’” Mr. Taibbi said.

It’s not the goal of journalists to tell people what to think and for whom to vote, he said, but that’s what the craft has become over the past several years.

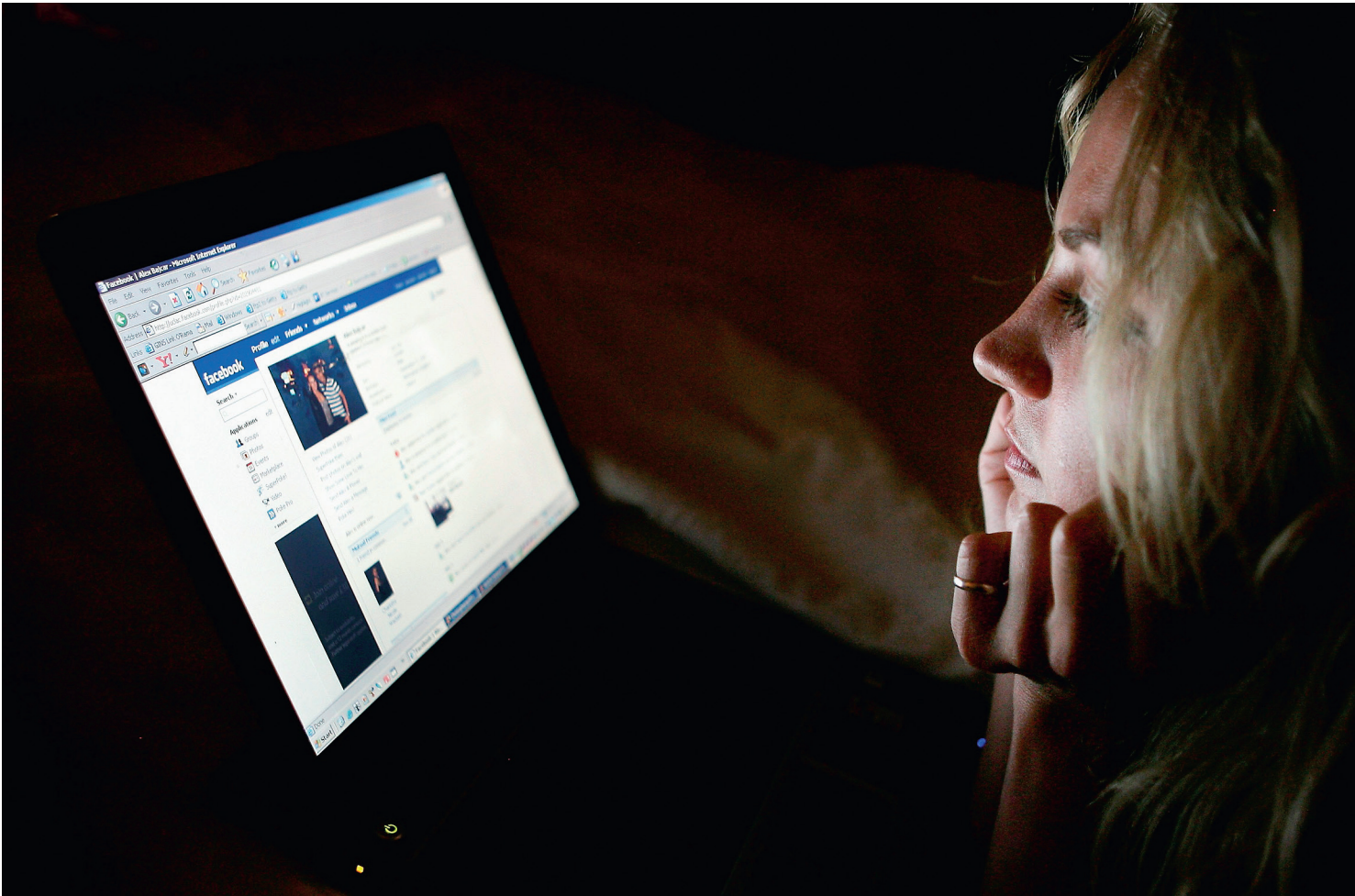
“Our job ends when we publish the stuff,” Mr. Taibbi said. “It’s up to the reader to figure out what to do with the information.”

Because it was blinded by its own false narratives and push to steer public opinion, the press failed to see why Trump was succeeding, Mr. Taibbi said.

“And that was amazing to me because it seemed to be incredibly obvious,” he said.

Trump was giving voice to the growing frustration of those who were marginalized throughout the Obama administration, Mr. Taibbi said.

“And people had a right to be angry at that time,” he said. “America was becoming dysfunctional. We had just lived through a crippling financial crisis where the rich got completely bailed out



“There are studies done about how people get dopamine hits even from feeling, for instance, the waffle pattern on the back of their phones; they’re addicted to the whole process of looking at their phones,” says Mr. Taibbi.

and everybody else didn’t. There was all of this hostility out there. He captured that in a very smart way.”

However, that’s not what the media reported, Mr. Taibbi said.

What it reported instead, he said, was a litany of ad hominem attacks, calling Trump a racist and a liar while telling the American public not to vote for him.

“That only made people angrier, because Americans don’t like to be told what to do,” Mr. Taibbi said. “They especially don’t like it when it’s coming from the media class, which I think has lost a lot of trust in the last 20 years or so.”

‘Two Minutes Hate’

By using code words such as white supremacist, terrorist, fascist, and anti-

vaxxer, the media class effectively silences the voice of millions of American citizens, Mr. Taibbi said.

“It’s almost like the same kind of thinking that Dostoevsky was describing in ‘Crime and Punishment,’” he said. “Once you think somebody is bad enough, once you’ve convinced yourself in your mind that they’re so devoid of positive qualities that you don’t have to have normal human sympathy or compassion, then everything is permitted, right?”

News stories used these code words to demonize entire groups of Americans who don’t concede to legacy media’s narrative and called on its readers to “appropriately disdain them.”

“That’s something that was predicted

by Orwell,” Mr. Taibbi said. “Why have the Two Minutes Hate? Because it’s necessary. It’s a reinforcement mechanism in a society where intellectualism is downplayed.”

In “1984,” George Orwell described the ceremony as “a hideous ecstasy of fear and vindictiveness,” in which members of the public expressed their hatred of their perceived enemy, which Mr. Taibbi called “an important ritual” for people who need to feel in hateful concert with others.

“And that’s what you see on the internet,” Mr. Taibbi said.

The Propagandizing of American Citizens

In 1948, the Smith–Mundt Act, or the U.S. Information and Educational Exchange Act, was passed, which prohibited intelligence agencies from propagandizing the U.S. population.

THE AMERICAN PUBLIC HAS TRANSFORMED ITS FORMERLY FIGHTING SPIRIT INTO COMPLIANCE IN RECENT YEARS, JOURNALIST MATT TAIBBI SAYS.

“What we’ve found is that they’ve been gradually rolling back those restrictions,” Mr. Taibbi said.

Agencies such as the FBI and CIA that had been using counterterrorism disinformation methods on foreign adversaries are now turning those operations inward on U.S. citizens, Mr. Taibbi said.

“Instead of ‘Don’t join al-Qaeda,’ now they’re saying, ‘Don’t vote for Donald Trump,’ or ‘Don’t join the Canadian truckers’ protest,’ or ‘Don’t join the Yellow Vests movement,’” Mr. Taibbi said.

It’s not a right or a left plot, Mr. Taibbi said, but a larger scheme to keep people restrained within a government-ordained worldview.

“We see the outlines of it in the Twitter Files, but I think if we dig deeper, we’re going to find that there’s much more to it,” Mr. Taibbi said.

‘Defining Issue of Our Time’

Numerous digital manipulations such

as shadow banning and deep fakes add to the multiple ways in which the internet has been used to create a manufactured reality, Mr. Taibbi said.

“Because right now, people are getting a completely skewed version of reality when they go online,” he said. “Things that are actually popular look unpopular, and things that are unpopular look popular, and that influences people in very strange ways.”

Mr. Taibbi said that it’s the defining issue of our time, around which it will be decided how much freedom people are going to have in the digital age.

“Are we going to tightly regulate the way people think? Or are we going to allow them to be free thinkers, as we did very briefly in the West?” Mr. Taibbi asked. “This is an inflection point that may turn out later to be a crucial moment in the intellectual history of the people, and I hope it comes out the right way, because I think it’s very scary.” ■



In 2022, Mr. Taibbi uncovered an FBI censorship operation in partnership with former Twitter staff.

SPOTLIGHT

Turbulent Trouble

A HOUSE MISSING ITS ROOF, after a violent storm hit the area in Le Cret-du-Loche, Switzerland, on July 24. One death and at least 40 injuries were reported after the storm, which surprised residents at 11:30 a.m. local time with 135-mile-per-hour winds.

PHOTO BY FABRICE COFFRINI/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



An illustration of cholesterol plaque in an artery. People with high LDL cholesterol levels aren't the only ones at risk for heart attacks, many people with normal levels may also experience similar health problems.

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HEALTH

'BAD' CHOLESTEROL MAY NOT BE SO BAD

Doctors say there are better alternatives to LDL cholesterol tests
BY MARINA ZHANG

FOR DECADES, LOW-DENSITY LIPOPROTEIN (LDL) cholesterol was one of the most critical indicators that doctors measured for heart disease. Now, doctors and researchers are challenging whether LDL cholesterol, also known as "bad cholesterol," is really as bad as we once feared. Research shows that measuring LDL cholesterol doesn't always effectively assess a person's cardiovascular risk and that other tests may be more useful.

Low-Density Lipoproteins Versus LDL Cholesterol

Many people with normal LDL cholesterol levels may experience heart attacks, cardiovascular research scientist James DiNicholantonio told The Epoch Times via email.

The number of LDL particles, rather than LDL cholesterol, may be a more relevant risk factor.

Studies have shown that LDL cholesterol levels predict higher cardiovascular risk 40 percent of the time, while apolipoprotein B (apoB) concentration, the summation of all LDL particles and their precursors, is associated with elevated risk 70 percent of the time.

Other studies comparing LDL cholesterol levels against cholesterol levels in LDL and its precursors, apoB number, and LDL particle number, also found that the latter two tend to be stronger predictors of risk, while LDL cholesterol is the weakest.

So what's the difference between LDL particles and LDL cholesterol?

An LDL particle is a type of lipoprotein made by the liver. Its primary function is to deliver triglycerides from the liver to other cells in the

body. Transporting cholesterol is more akin to an LDL's side hustle. The cholesterol that an LDL transports is called LDL cholesterol.

High-density lipoprotein (HDL) and LDL cholesterol contain the same cholesterol; their carriers are what differ. LDL cholesterol can also leak into blood vessels, causing atherosclerosis, thereby earning its "bad" reputation.

On the other hand, HDL particles can venture into atherosclerotic plaques to absorb the cholesterol trapped inside, preventing further plaque formation and helping to prevent heart disease. Hence, HDL cholesterol is considered "good."

Therefore, nutritionist Jonny Bowden says labeling HDL and LDL cholesterol as good and bad cholesterol is wrong.

Mr. Bowden, who co-authored the bestselling book "The Great Cholesterol Myth," compared measuring the number of LDL particles to counting the number of passengers traveling in cars on a road. We know that more cars mean more congestion and traffic accidents, but more passengers doesn't necessarily indicate this. Conversely, traffic could still be congested even if passenger numbers are low or average.

"My LDL [cholesterol] was like 100, maybe 110 mg/dL; very, very close to ideal," Mr. Bowden said. "Then I got the particle tests, and they showed an entirely different picture."

The test showed that he carried many small, dense LDL particles in his blood and was at high risk for cardiovascular events.

2 Types of LDL, 1 Is More Harmful

There are two types of LDL particles: large and buoyant, and small and dense.

The small and dense LDLs are much more ➡



The advanced lipid test can better identify high-risk people with normal LDL cholesterol profiles because it usually looks at LDL particle numbers.

atherogenic (contributive to atherosclerosis), whereas the large, buoyant LDLs are less so. These two types of LDLs can be measured through advanced lipid testing.

About 80 percent of total LDL cholesterol level comprises the more harmless large, buoyant LDLs, with atherogenic small, dense LDL making up the rest.

Interestingly, fats increase large, buoyant LDLs and decrease small, dense LDLs, whereas refined carbohydrates increase small, dense LDLs. Professor Erik Froyen from California State Polytechnic University, who has a doctorate in nutritional biology and whose research investigates mechanisms by which fatty acids impact cancer and cardiovascular disease risk factors, has also demonstrated this in his work.

Some research suggests that intake of refined carbohydrates is more relevant than saturated fat in causing coronary heart disease.

Mr. Bowden compares large, buoyant LDLs with large volleyballs that float along in the water, moving with the tide, while small, dense LDLs are like small golf balls that get stuck between rocks, where they start oxidizing and accumulating to form atherosclerotic plaques.

Individuals with more large, buoyant LDLs are said to exhibit a pattern A type of cholesterol profile, and these people are at low risk of atherosclerosis.

On the other hand, those with more small, dense LDLs exhibit a pattern B cholesterol profile

and are at risk of atherosclerosis. Their markers for metabolic disease risks may also be elevated.

Small, dense LDLs carry less cholesterol than large, buoyant LDLs, so a person can have a normal LDL cholesterol level but a pattern B cholesterol profile.

However, lipidologist professor Carol Kirkpatrick, head of the Wellness Center at Idaho State University, highlighted that for most people, overall LDL particle number is more relevant than LDL size.

“What we know now is that, yes, [small dense LDLs] may be important, but it really ends up being a red flag for people who have metabolic dysfunction,” Ms. Kirkpatrick, who is also a registered dietitian nutritionist, told The Epoch Times.

Some studies have found that large LDLs have

Small, dense LDLs carry less cholesterol than large, buoyant LDLs, so a person can have a normal LDL cholesterol level but be at risk of atherosclerosis.

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a neutral effect on atherosclerosis, though other scientists disagree.

“We know that statins, for instance, lower cardiovascular risk, and statins preferentially reduce larger LDL particles,” said professor Kevin Maki of Indiana University, whose interest is in preventing and managing cardiometabolic disease.

However, the statin and LDL link has also been challenged.

“It’s really unclear if the benefit of statins is because it lowers LDL,” cardiologist Dr. Robert Dubroff told The Epoch Times.

“There are other drugs that can lower LDL, and many of them have been tested in well-conducted randomized trials and shown no benefit.”

Dr. Dubroff indicated that there are interventions that lower cardiovascular risk without lowering LDL.

**Coronary Heart Disease:
A Multifactorial Disease**

Cardiovascular disease can be caused by various factors unrelated to LDL particles and LDL cholesterol.

Age is the most significant risk factor for cardiovascular disease, Mr. Maki said. The same is the case for one’s blood vessels and the blood vessels’ inner linings as he or she ages. Damage to the lining can result in inflammation, which raises LDL particle levels and may precipitate atherosclerosis.

Inflammation is also recognized as a risk factor, encouraging plaque formation and elevating LDLs in the bloodstream.

Insulin resistance is also increasingly recognized as a major contributor. It strongly correlates with Type 2 diabetes, which doubles the risk of death from heart disease or stroke.

Professor Benjamin Bikman from Brigham Young University told The Epoch Times that he sees two sides to insulin resistance: hyperinsulinemia, meaning high blood insulin, and actual insulin resistance, where the body no longer sufficiently responds to insulin.

Hyperinsulinemia encourages the formation of small, dense LDLs rather than large, buoyant ones. Insulin also increases blood pressure and encourages endothelial growth inside blood vessels, both related to atherosclerosis.

Dr. Dubroff said a patient who suffered multiple cardiovascular events was transferred to him a few years ago. The patient underwent coronary artery bypass three times and had been treated aggressively with statin medications, but his cardiovascular events continued.

Dr. Dubroff noticed that his patient’s blood sugar was borderline prediabetic and that he

was overweight and had high blood triglycerides and low HDL. However, none of these risk factors were addressed by previous doctors.

He told his patient that the correct way forward was to improve his diet, lose weight, and exercise more.

Dr. Dubroff followed this patient for an additional 10 years.

“He never had any additional problems, even though his cholesterol level did not change,” Dr. Dubroff said.

Regarding tracing the source of one’s heart disease, Mr. Maki said: “I would say it’s not this or that, it’s this and that. LDL cholesterol is a factor; particle concentration is a factor; insulin resistance is a factor.”

Addressing all risk factors instead of one will enable us to be the “most successful at reducing cardiovascular risks,” he said.

Better or Add-Value Tests

The advanced lipid test can better identify high-risk people with normal LDL cholesterol profiles. The test usually looks at LDL particle numbers or apoB numbers, which provide the total number of a person’s non-HDL lipoprotein particles.

Non-HDL particles include VLDL, IDL, and LDL particles. VLDL and IDL are precursors to LDL particles, so a high non-HDL particle number suggests high LDL particles.

However, advanced lipid testing usually isn’t covered by insurance. Therefore, health professionals sometimes offer alternative markers for examination.

Mr. Maki said that if he could only pick one thing to examine, he would choose non-HDL cholesterol, colloquially known as the “poor man’s apoB.”

This test is covered by insurance and looks at all the cholesterol carried in the non-HDL lipoproteins. While it provides a weaker predictive value than apoB, it can give a general indication of whether more particles are traveling in the bloodstream.

Mr. Bowden and Mr. Bikan suggested the triglyceride-to-HDL ratio to calculate insulin resistance.

When a person’s insulin levels are high, it encourages the destruction of HDL particles while encouraging blood triglyceride production. This leads to more LDL particles, especially small, dense, atherogenic LDL particles in the blood.

Markers for inflammation may also be suggestive of atherosclerosis. Inflammation can cause C-reactive protein (CRP) levels to become elevated. CRP can enter blood vessels and create an atherogenic environment. ■

70%

STUDIES HAVE shown that LDL cholesterol levels predict higher cardiovascular risk 40 percent of the time, while the summation of all LDL particles and their precursors is associated with elevated risk 70 percent of the time.

80%

ABOUT 80 percent of total LDL cholesterol levels comprises the more harmless large, buoyant LDLs, with atherogenic small, dense LDL making up the rest.

DRUG APPROVAL

FDA'S RECENT CONTROVERSIAL REMDESIVIR APPROVAL

Drug approved for COVID-19 treatment in people with kidney problems, despite data showing renal failure

By Megan Redshaw

THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION (FDA) on July 14 approved Veklury, also known as remdesivir, to treat COVID-19 in people with severe renal impairment, including dialysis, despite data showing that the drug increases the risk of kidney failure.

Remdesivir is an antiviral medication that targets the RNA in viruses to prevent replication. The FDA first authorized remdesivir for emergency use in May 2020 to treat people with severe COVID-19. It has since been approved for adults and children as young as 28 days who weigh at least 6.6 pounds.

Remdesivir is the first and only FDA-approved antiviral COVID-19 treatment for people with renal disease.

The U.S. approval follows the European Commission's decision on June 26 to extend the approved use of Veklury to treat COVID-19 in people with severe renal impairment. The updated prescribing information for remdesivir doesn't require adjusting the dose for renal-impaired patients and also removes the requirement that patients undergo estimated glomerular filtration rate testing—the most reliable way to measure how well the kidneys are working before taking the drug.

"The approval by the FDA of Veklury for the treatment of patients with renal impairment reflects the urgency to make this medicine available to these patients, and underscores the established safety profile for Veklury," Anu Osinusi, vice president of Clinical Research for



▲
Remdesivir is the first and only FDA-approved antiviral COVID-19 treatment for people with renal disease.

Hepatitis, Respiratory, and Emerging Viruses at Gilead Sciences, said in a statement.

According to the company, the FDA based its approval of remdesivir for use in patients with severe renal impairment on the results of a phase 1 study and a phase 3 randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled, parallel-group, multicenter study trial that assessed how the drug interacts with the body and its safety profile. Yet the phase 3 study was terminated prematurely because of "feasibility issues" and because it was "underpowered to assess for efficacy because of lower-than-expected enrollment."

The company stated that its data didn't reveal any new safety signals "associated with increased metabolite levels in patients with severely reduced kidney function." However, data from the phase 3 study show that the rate of serious adverse events was significantly higher for those who had received remdesivir than it was for those who had received the placebo. People who had taken remdesivir were more likely to experience acute kidney injury (AKI), sepsis, COVID-19 pneumonia, sudden death, and heart problems.

"Remdesivir should never have been approved in the first place," Dr. Paul Marik, a critical care physician and author of more than 500 peer-reviewed journal articles, told The Epoch Times. "Gilead had to cook the data to be approved. The World Health Organization's [WHO] own data show it increases the risk of kidney failure twentyfold, so why you would

approve it for someone with renal dysfunction is obscene."

In 2020, the WHO published a bulletin that recommended against using remdesivir to treat COVID-19. The WHO's recommendations were based on a review of evidence published in The British Medical Journal, which included data from four international trials covering more than 7,000 hospitalized COVID-19 patients. The WHO found no evidence that the treatment helped hospitalized patients recover or improved their outcomes.

Dr. Marik said the National Institutes of Health and Gilead "cooked the first study" that formed the initial basis of the FDA authorization in October 2020 because remdesivir was "so toxic."

"They committed scientific fraud in a single clinical study that provided data to the FDA, changing the endpoint halfway through the study to try and prove the drug had any benefit," he said. "The FDA is a proxy for Big Pharma. It has no interest in public health."

Numerous Studies Link Remdesivir to Severe Kidney Problems

In a study published in December 2020 in Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics, researchers detected a safety signal for remdesivir and nephrotoxicity—a rapid deterioration of kidney function that's caused by damage associated with a drug, chemical, or toxin.

Using a combination of the terms "acute renal failure" and "remdesivir" in the WHO's Vigibase system—which gathers spontaneous reports of suspected adverse drug reactions from more than 130 countries—a "statistically significant disproportionality signal" was observed in 138 cases instead of the nine expected. The odds ratio of acute renal failure with remdesivir was twentyfold that of comparative drugs.

A March 2022 study in Frontiers—using data from the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System—identified a significant association between AKI and remdesivir in COVID-19 patients, especially in older male patients and those aged 65 and older.

A May 2021 pharmacovigilance analysis found that "compared with the use of chloroquine, hydroxychloroquine, dexamethasone, sarilumab, or tocilizumab, the use of remdesivir was associated with an increased reporting of kidney disorders."



"The [WHO's] own data shows [that remdesivir] increases the risk of kidney failure twentyfold."

*Dr. Paul Marik,
physician and author*

▼
Gilead Sciences says that the approval by the FDA of Veklury for the treatment of patients with renal impairment underscores the established safety profile for the medication.

As part of the same analysis, researchers assessed 5,532 reports related to COVID-19 patients from the WHO's database and identified 434 cases related to kidney disorders, including 327 reported with remdesivir.

Remdesivir treatment was discontinued shortly after kidney disorder onset, and the median treatment duration was three days. In 316 cases, no other drug was suspected in the onset of kidney disorders. Reactions were serious in 301 cases (92 percent), and 15 patients died. Acute kidney injury presented in 295 cases, with tubular necrosis in eight cases.

"Our findings, based on postmarketing real-life data from [more than] 5,000 COVID-19 patients, support that kidney disorders, almost exclusively AKI, represent a serious, early, and potentially fatal adverse drug reaction of remdesivir," the study reads. "These results are consistent with findings from another group."

Although the researchers said further data were needed to confirm the safety signal, they urged physicians to be aware of the potential risk of kidney problems and, when prescribing remdesivir, to perform "close kidney monitoring"—the very monitoring that the FDA has removed from its updated prescribing information but is still found on the National Institutes of Health's website on COVID-19 treatment guidelines.

The FDA and Gilead didn't respond to requests for comment. ■



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POLITICS • ECONOMY • OPINION THAT MATTERS

Week 30

Perspectives

Credit card debt in July reached an unprecedented \$993 billion, according to the Federal Reserve.

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CREDIT CARD THREAT

Credit card balances will become terrifying in a full-blown recession. [56](#)



EV SUBSIDIES ENRICH CORPORATIONS

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INSIDE

Thomas McArdle



Credit Card Threat

Credit card balances will become terrifying in a full-blown recession

IN THE MIDDLE AGES, THE Catholic Church, reflecting Plato and Aristotle, considered the lending of money at interest a grave evil, for reasons ranging from the metaphysical to practical concerns regarding exploitation of the poor and personal responsibility.

While there was never an absolute prohibition of providing credit stated in either the Old or New Testaments, or even in medieval doctrinal pronouncements, any practice or condition that mitigated the integrity of the concept of private property was viewed as problematic.

“Lending money at interest gives us the opportunity to exploit the passions or necessities of other men by compelling them to submit to ruinous conditions,” observed the Belgian Jesuit moral theologian the Rev. Arthur Vermeersch.

In the 21st century, those overloaded with debt may find that it isn’t some fat cat creditor but the government that comes knocking and uses the weight of what they owe to force them to live in ways that are opposed to their preferences.

The violent shifts from the booming Trump economy to COVID-19 lockdowns to President Joe Biden’s trillion-dollar spending spree not only ignited a rate of inflation unseen for 40 years but also propelled revolving personal debt to record levels. Outstanding credit card debt was \$858 billion in March 2020, contracting to \$736 billion 13 months later amid the lockdowns.

As measured by the Federal Reserve, credit card debt in July reached an unprecedented \$993 billion—despite all the stimulus that Washington took out of the taxpayers’ pockets in targeted relief.

Further, CEOs such as JPMorgan Chase’s Jamie Dimon see Americans’ post-COVID-19 eagerness to use their charge cards as a positive sign of prosper-

ity in the months ahead, indicating that consumers are “resilient ... not recessionary.”

When people buy lots now and pay later, there’s no question that it means that they’re confident of the future, and we’re undeniably seeing a collective exhale after the long agony of the coronavirus constraints in economic activity and the accompanying cabin fever.

The federal government possesses the keys to the cell doors of the debtor prisons of today.

But debt is debt. Sustained high levels of aggregate red ink ultimately mean less investment, especially in the smaller enterprises that generate so many jobs, and will ultimately depress consumer spending power and economic mobility. And when full-blown recession is felt all around them, with its job losses and credit crunches, and this time around in a high-inflation environment, that credit card balance will suddenly become terrifying. What won’t we do to reduce it when we’re up against the wall?

The federal government possesses the keys to the cell doors of the debtor prisons of today. We have already seen Mr. Biden attempt to politicize personal debt in an illegal fashion by rewarding loan forgiveness to the Democrat-heavy constituency of college degree holders—an idea that actually increases consumer debt—but fortunately, he was stopped by the federal judiciary.

The White House immediately set to work bypassing the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in June to kill its student debt relief program by seeking to use a questionable interpretation of yet another law. Executive branch regulations would require borrowers

to pay only a small proportion of their disposable income minus the costs of housing, food, and other expenses deemed as necessities.

Despite the federal government’s direct involvement in college loans, there’s nothing to suggest that the left who will be in power in the future wouldn’t similarly dangle debt relief when it comes to credit card bills.

Not unconditionally, of course. And that’s key. Those being offered relief would have to be prejudged according to scrupulously calculated criteria in terms of income and lifestyle, and to encourage desired behavior—with the buying of their votes topping the list.

Do you want to see that Master-card balance magically shrink? Sure thing—Just reduce your carbon footprint. Or prove that that small business you own hasn’t been homophobic. Or place your children in an approved education (i.e., indoctrination) program. These make up just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the ways that today’s Democratic Party can use debt to bribe and manipulate the behavior even of those with whom they disagree on almost everything.

From sending checks directly to citizens to welfare disguised as tax relief, to outright corruption forcibly funded by taxpayers in the form of government contracts handed to politically favored groups, even on the basis of race—in Washington and in states and cities across party and political divides, the government uses cash to coax activity that it likes.

No one should imagine that the too-high credit card balance that he or she carries wouldn’t be subject to politicians exploiting the “necessities of other men by compelling them to submit to ruinous conditions.” The collective condition of having to accept government help might just be the most accurate definition of socialism there is.

Anders Corr



The West Leaks Chip Tech to China

Washington in new tech war against Beijing and its US enablers

THE U.S.—CHINA CHIP war is heating up. The world’s two largest superpowers are clashing over semiconductors that determine increasingly more of our lives, from when the smart toaster pops in the morning to what we write to our friends, family, and colleagues using ChatGPT in the afternoon.

The latest silicon wafers, with transistors as tiny as viruses, fuel the most powerful artificial intelligence (AI) systems that will determine success on 21st-century military and economic battlefields. AI could send the human race into extinction if it escapes human control and determines its own goals or comes under the control of a malicious individual.

The future of humanity rides on who controls AI and who controls the most powerful chips that give the indispensable computing punch to AI and other leading economic and military technologies.

Computer chip manufacturers that might lose key technologies to adversary nations—most notably communist China—are therefore coming under increasing attention from authorities in the United States, the Netherlands, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, where top chips are designed and manufactured.

The Biden administration is considering new chip controls and outbound investment restrictions on top of October 2022 export controls by the U.S. Commerce Department—a move The New York Times called an “act of war.” In the fall of 2022, the department followed up on the Trump administration’s Huawei controls by imposing the strictest-ever export controls on chip technologies in coordination with Taiwan, Japan, and the Netherlands.

China imports more computer chips by value than oil, and an oil embargo on Japan sparked the Pearl Harbor

attack in 1941. So the “war” metaphor isn’t entirely misplaced. Beijing is playing with fire in attempting to assert its own global hegemony, and democracies have been forced to fight fire with fire in response. Beijing’s alliance with Moscow, and the latter’s attacks on Ukraine, are adding to a global sense of alarm. Between November 2022 and December 2022, China’s exports of integrated circuits to Russia jumped by approximately 350 percent.

The future of humanity rides on who controls AI and who controls the most powerful chips.

Therefore, Washington’s plan for enhanced chip controls on China takes on critical national security significance for both Europe and Asia. Yet the largest U.S. chip companies, who benefited from approximately \$63 billion in combined Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) Act subsidies and tax breaks, oppose the restrictions. Their biggest customers are in China, the “world’s factory” that produces most electronics products, not to mention serves as a transshipment hub to the world’s most dangerous regimes.

On July 17, executives from Intel, Qualcomm, and Nvidia lobbied Biden administration officials, including Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo, national security adviser Jake Sullivan, and National Economic Council Director Lael Brainard.

Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) denounced the effort.

“The heads of Intel, Nvidia, and Qualcomm are putting profits ahead of national security,” he said in a July 19 statement. “These CEOs are lobbying against export controls designed

to keep the Chinese Communist Party away from AI technology.”

Mr. Rubio noted that U.S. capital and chips strengthen the Chinese regime. “We cannot allow China to get its hands on advanced AI chips,” he said. “I urge the Biden Administration and my congressional colleagues to stand firm and not give in to these CEOs’ last-minute lobbying.”

The House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), including Chair Mike Gallagher (R-Wis.) and ranking Democratic member Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-Ill.), summoned Qualcomm and other investors in China’s tech companies to examine the feasibility of restricting venture capital investments in sensitive technologies such as AI, quantum computing, and chipmaking. The committee stated that the tech companies in China contribute to the regime’s human rights abuse and military modernization, threatening U.S. national security and technological dominance. By extension, the investors bear some responsibility for these negative outcomes.

Loss of technology is ongoing, as 30,000 experts in the largest European tech companies over the past two decades have moved to China in what amounts to a “brain drain” fueled by Beijing’s semiconductor and telecom ambitions.

“US officials have warned for years that China incentivizes intellectual property theft with a vast system of cash grants, tax breaks and other perks designed to induce Chinese nationals living abroad to bring back expertise and trade secrets,” Bloomberg reported.

The United States and our allies have been caught out by the CCP in what’s becoming our most dangerous hour and a struggle for the values of liberty and democracy upon which our nation was founded. Now, we must make up for lost time.

Another Student Debt Scheme

The Supreme Court rejects one debt relief scheme; Biden admin tries another



AFTER LOSING AT THE Supreme Court, President Joe Biden has floated another student debt relief scheme. Lawyers and judges will take a while to decide if this new approach passes constitutional muster, no doubt, until after the 2024 election. But while the legal gears turn—slowly as ever—the political-economic implications will emerge immediately and be the same as last time.

The last student debt relief plan would have given \$10,000 in outstanding debt relief to individuals below a certain income level and an additional \$10,000 to Pell Grant recipients. The program would have cost the Treasury some \$400 billion in lost revenue flows.

The Supreme Court’s 6–3 decision denied that the White House had the authority to do this, as it claimed, under the Higher Education Relief Opportunities for Students Act. The new approach to debt relief is more piecemeal than the first.

The Education Department has already decided to give credit for debt repayments even during a time when payment obligations were waived and no payments were made. The department has also decided to extend and enhance the public-service loan forgiveness provision, exclude certain sorts of income from the maximum income calculation, and reduce to 5 percent of disposable income the allowed maximum payment.

The costs of this new plan would exceed those of the original effort. According to the Education Department, even when debtors made no payments, granting of credits denies the Treasury some \$39 billion. Other changes, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, would raise the proportion of debtors getting relief from

50 percent of all student debtors presently to 66 percent.

Over a longer time frame, the Penn Wharton Budget Model estimates that, ultimately, the changes would cover some 91 percent of the debtors and cost some \$470 billion over the next decade, and still more after that.

They not only would have borne the cost of their own education, but now, in this plan, will face taxes to pay for another’s degree.

Only a fool would try to foretell the legal wrangles about to take place, much less guess how the Supreme Court will ultimately find it. But it’s a straightforward exercise to identify the political-economic issues that this new effort will raise. They will be the same as with the last effort. The beneficiaries will support it, even as they claim it’s insufficiently generous, while resistance will emerge in Congress and elsewhere.

The position of the beneficiaries is straightforward in the extreme. On the other side, matters are more nuanced. Questions of equity will dominate, while a need to address the underlying problem will gain some purchase as well.

The most immediate aspect of the equity issue concerns those who paid for their education out of savings or borrowed but have already repaid the debt. They would get nothing from this plan. On another level is equity to taxpayers. The denial of repayment revenues to the Treasury would mean that taxpayers would have to fill the financing gap. That burden would fall partly on people

who, for any number of reasons, doubtless some of them financial, never received a university degree.

These people then would have to pay for another to receive a credential that presumably affords these beneficiaries greater earnings power than the degreeless taxpayer who must foot the bill. It would be doubly unfair to those who paid for their education out of savings or who have repaid their loans. They not only would have borne the cost of their own education, but now, in this plan, will face taxes to pay for another’s degree.

Beyond these serious equity questions is the issue of the underlying causes of these terrible debt problems—the “root causes,” to use an expression that has become wildly popular in public policy discussions. The loans are as large as they are and so unsupportable because college has become insupportably expensive, and college has become so expensive in large part because public monies (often in the form of loans) have become readily available to the educational effort.

By paying those debts with taxpayer monies, the new White House plan, like the old one, would do nothing to slow or stop this oppressive money spiral that burdens students, family savings, and taxpayers to the benefit of university administrations and faculties. Indeed, far from correcting this ugly pattern, the debt-relief plans would extend and enlarge it.

To be sure, this White House—in this plan and the one before it—has made no claim to address “root causes.” Perhaps in the circumstance, it asks too much of any single plan to do so. But if it’s unreasonable to ask the plan to solve all aspects of this national problem, it’s nonetheless entirely reasonable to ask that it doesn’t exacerbate that problem, as this plan and the earlier one would.

EV Subsidies Enrich Corporations

‘Bidenomics’ would spend up to \$7 million to create each \$50,000 ‘green’ job, study finds



DESPITE THE CLAIMS of “Bidenomics” acolytes that it’ll “rebuild the middle class,” a new study states that the hundreds of billions of dollars in federal subsidies for electric vehicle (EV) production are wasteful corporate giveaways, to the tune of as much as \$7 million per job created.

“Taxpayers are going to forgo tens of billions of dollars that are going to be given to some of the biggest corporations in America to build specialty vehicles that consumers don’t seem to want,” Robert Bryce, an energy expert and author, told The Epoch Times.

Significantly tighter emissions regulations on cars and light trucks were announced by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in April, with the goal of mandating that up to 67 percent of new vehicles sold would have to be electric by 2032.

However, the history of government industrial policy is rife with massive waste and insider dealing. A hallmark case is Solyndra, a maker of solar panels that was granted \$500 million in federal loan guarantees by the Obama–Biden administration, only to go bankrupt two years later.

Many experts say the current EV agenda will end the same way. According to industry reports, Ford sold 12,000 EVs in the first quarter of 2023 but lost, on average, about \$60,000 for every EV they sold.

“Considering that the Ford Model e average selling price was around \$58,000 in the first quarter, the Blue Oval spent \$118,000 on average for every EV it sold,” one report reads. “The losses are expected to accelerate in the second quarter, as Ford announced an up to \$4,000 price cut on the Mustang Mach-E.”



Many experts say the current EV agenda will end up going bankrupt. According to industry reports, Ford sold 12,000 EVs in the first quarter of 2023 but lost, on average, about \$60,000 for every EV they sold.

The Biden administration’s campaign of “green” subsidies and regulations, which they call Bidenomics, will “grow the economy from the middle out and the bottom up,” according to the White House.

“The President’s agenda is strengthening our clean energy supply chains by spurring new and expanded U.S. factories, including more than 150 battery plants and 50 solar plants already announced,” the White House stated.

But a report by Good Jobs First took a look at government spending on new EV battery plants and found that EV subsidies ranged from \$2 million to \$7.7 million per job created. The report also states that the wages from these projects are often below aver-

age for autoworkers. The average hourly wage for production workers in the U.S. car industry is \$28.41, or \$59,093 per year for full-time workers, but all of the EV projects are paying significantly less than that.

“Production workers at General Motors and LG’s new joint venture battery plant in Warren, Ohio, are expected to make a paltry \$16.50 an hour to start, up to \$20 an hour after seven years,” the report reads.

As part of the Inflation Reduction Act, the Advanced Manufacturing Production Credit (also known as section 45X) provides for subsidies for some new EV factories of more than a billion dollars each per year.

“The 45X program alone will cost taxpayers over \$200 billion in the next decade, far more than the \$31 billion estimated by Congress’s Joint Committee on Taxation,” the Good Jobs report reads. “On top of 45X and other federal incentives, factories manufacturing electric vehicles and batteries have also been promised well over \$13 billion in state and local economic development incentives in just the past 18 months.”

EV sales rose to about a million vehicles in 2022 from 300,000 vehicles in 2020, but there are signs that demand is slowing. The supply of unsold EVs on car lots has swelled by nearly 350 percent this year to more than 92,000 units, or a 92-day supply, as compared with a 54-day supply of gasoline-powered cars, according to a report by Cox Automotive.

“Where do they make their money? On internal combustion engine vehicles,” Mr. Bryce said. “And yet, they’re going to spend tens of billions of dollars, including massive amounts of money from taxpayers to try to effectively force feed electric vehicles into the marketplace.”

DANIEL LACALLE is chief economist at hedge fund Tressis and author of “Freedom or Equality,” “Escape from the Central Bank Trap,” and “Life in the Financial Markets.”

Daniel Lacalle



Accept 3 Percent Inflation?

There’s a mainstream narrative that 3 percent inflation is a success

THE RECENT UNIVERSITY of Michigan survey’s reading of one-year inflation expectations rose to 3.4 percent in July from 3.3 percent in June. The five-year outlook also increased to 3.1 percent from 3 percent in the previous month.

There’s a mainstream narrative that’s spreading throughout the financial media: We must accept 3 percent annual inflation as a success at combating rising prices; this is enough to pivot and return to monetary easing. Actually, it isn’t.

Three percent annual inflation for 10 years is a loss of 34 percent of the purchasing power of the currency after what’s already a disastrous inflationary environment.

There’s nothing positive about rising long-term inflation expectations. It isn’t just the confirmation of a terrible destruction of real wages and deposit savings but also a huge incentive to maintaining the least efficient and unproductive parts of the economy. Inflation isn’t just a hidden tax created by bloated government spending financed with artificially created currency; it’s also a hidden subsidy to obsolescence and a huge disincentive to innovation and technological transformation.

It isn’t a surprise to read that so many market participants are demanding more quantitative easing. Monetary expansion has been a huge driver of market bubbles, and many investors want the “bubble of everything” to return, even if it means weaker economic growth, poor productivity, and declining real wages.

The evidence from the past six months is that the entire bounce of the S&P 500 index has been driven by multiple expansion. While sales and earnings growth have been weak, the index now trades above 20 times



The economy shouldn’t be driven by government spending and financial assets but by a thriving middle class and growing productive investment.

earnings from 17 times at the end of December 2022. Furthermore, and considering the wave of downgrades of earnings’ estimates, the most bullish investors seem to require more multiple expansion, and that can only come from easing.

The reality, though, is that a per-annum average inflation rate of 3 percent means much higher food, utilities, gas, and other essential purchases.

Inflation isn’t caused by commodities, wages, or profits. Inflation is caused by the constant increase in the quantity of currency in circulation well above real demand. The biggest consumer of newly created currency is the government, in a country where the annual deficit isn’t expected to be lower than \$1 trillion every year until 2032. Government spending causes inflation, which is the loss of the purchasing power of the currency that the central bank issues. When many said there was “no inflation,” what

we witnessed was massive financial asset inflation and a disproportionate increase in the prices of nonreplicable goods and services.

Remember that what they call “no inflation” was the period between 1996 and 2018, when health care costs rose by 100 percent, child care by 110 percent, housing by 60 percent, and college tuition by 200 percent, and the average price increase of nonreplaceable goods and services rose by 57 percent, according to the American Enterprise Institute study. Between 2000 and 2022, the same study showed an overall inflation of essential goods and services of 74 percent.

If no inflation is a 74 percent price increase in the average basket of essential goods and services, imagine for a second what 3 percent annual official consumer price index would be for those same nonreplaceable goods.

This is what’s wiping out the middle class: negative real wage growth and massive increases in the prices of essential goods created by the constant erosion of the purchasing power of the currency.

Can economists truly ignore the destruction of the economy and the middle class only to justify more government spending or a small increase in equity and bond valuations? Maybe, but it’s a bad idea to support the destruction of the economy only to see some asset values rise, particularly because those vanish with increasingly frequent and aggressive market corrections.

The economy shouldn’t be driven by government spending and financial assets but by a thriving middle class and growing productive investment. Monetary easing isn’t strengthening the economy. It’s weakening the fabric that creates progress only to support an ever-increasing size of government.

JOE RAEBLE/GETTY IMAGES

FAN YU is an expert in finance and economics and has contributed analyses on China’s economy since 2015.

Fan Yu

Labor Strikes

Unions are ready to test their clout just as corporate earnings wobble

BUSINESSES HAVE ALREADY been struggling with inflation for more than a year. But this summer, the biggest wave of labor strikes in years will further complicate their inflation fight.

Almost 700,000 workers, across several companies in different industries, have threatened to go on strike this summer in an effort to secure higher wages and more benefits. In all, 2023 is shaping up to be the biggest strike year since the 1970s.

Two strikes are already occurring in Hollywood, with members of the Writers Guild of America and Screen Actors Guild walking off their jobs by July in the first twin strike in Hollywood in six decades. Together, these strikes could prove to be devastating to the media and entertainment industry.

While logistics giant United Parcel Service (UPS) reached a last-minute tentative deal with the Teamsters union on July 25 to avoid a crippling strike, United Auto Workers union members at Detroit’s “Big Three” automakers are likely to join in what Bloomberg News called a potential “summer of strikes.”

Unions, which have dwindled in importance over the past few decades, are testing their clout just as corporate earnings wobble and companies are wrestling with high inflation and an economic slowdown.

At a macro level, more than two years of negative real wage growth have hurt middle-class workers. And companies haven’t been able to meet union wage demands as deadlines approach for new multi-year labor agreements. While the companies potentially affected by



Any strikes that occur could have a lingering effect on the workers, the companies, and their investors.

the strikes differ, all are facing economic and financial headwinds.

Hollywood studio profits have been lowered by the secular consumer shift to streaming from linear TV. In a report from late July, rating company Moody’s said the media and entertainment industry’s eventual new contracts with the actors and writers guilds—and the contract with the Directors Guild of America—could add \$450 million to \$600 million in costs to the sector as a whole. The analysts expect companies with network cable delivery, which relies on having new content, such as Paramount and Warner Media, to be among the most negatively affected by a prolonged strike.

On the other end of the spectrum, streaming companies such as Netflix, which can recycle existing content and don’t rely on advertising, can better withstand a protracted labor dispute.

UPS does package deliveries and

faces an uncertain economic environment going forward. Obviously, a firm that handles almost 30 percent of all package deliveries in the United States is critical to the country’s economy.

UPS’s total compensation and benefits expense in the first quarter of 2023 was 50 percent of its total revenue, which has already increased by 2 percent from the first quarter of 2022 and by 1 percent from the fourth quarter of 2022.

While details of the UPS agreement aren’t yet public, the union said full-time and part-time employees will both receive \$2.50 more per hour this year and potentially another \$7.50 per hour over the length of the new contract.

In Detroit, United Auto Workers is gearing up for a labor fight as its U.S. contract with Ford, General Motors, and Stellantis (formerly known as Fiat Chrysler) is set to expire on Sept. 14.

The automakers so far have been digging in their heels. They believe that union wages are competitive, especially compared to nonunionized U.S. workers at Tesla and other foreign automakers.

Any strikes that might occur could have a lingering effect on the workers, the companies, and their investors. If workers benefit, it could galvanize organizing efforts at other companies such as Amazon, Tesla, and Starbucks, which have hundreds of thousands of mostly nonunionized workers.

For example, Teamsters President Sean O’Brien already has his sights set on Amazon as his next labor organizing target.

Investors owning shares in companies subject to employees potentially unionizing need to include these additional costs in their investment thesis.

ROBYN BECK/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

THOUGHT LEADERS

US Electric Grid Dependent on China-Made Transformers

An attack on 9 substations could black out the whole country for an extended period of time, expert says



Tommy Waller, president and CEO of the Center for Security Policy.

ILLUSTRATION BY THE EPOCH TIMES, LEI CHEN/ THE EPOCH TIMES

“**E**VERY SINGLE WAY you look at it, modern society is not prepared to live without electricity,” says

Tommy Waller, the president and CEO of the Center for Security Policy and an expert on the U.S. grid. He’s also featured in the documentary “Grid Down, Power Up.”

In a recent episode of “American Thought Leaders,” host Jan Jekielek and Mr. Waller discussed the vulnerabilities of the United States’ electrical grid, why the industry and our government have failed to correct these problems, and what happens if the grid goes down.

JAN JEKIELEK: In May 2020, President Trump signed an executive order declaring an emergency around the national grid. This happened after one of these large, high-voltage transformers in the grid made by a Chinese manufacturer was inspected by authorities. The results of that inspection are classified, but this grid emergency ensued. Tell us what happened.

TOMMY WALLER: On May 1, 2020, an executive order declared a grid security emergency. It recognized that our bulk power system has become dependent on certain countries hostile to the United States, including communist China. In this case, the transformer was seized by the federal government in 2019 and brought to Sandia National Laboratory, where it was inspected.

Many experts consider these extra-high-voltage transformers to be the backbone of our modern grid. If this device that we depend on for the lifeblood of our modern civilization could be manipulated or turned off, then that would be extremely problematic for us. It’s a vector of attack that the Trump administration tried to address through executive order. Unfortunately, on the first day of the current Biden administration,

“If an adversary knew which nine substations to attack, this could cause cascading failures that could black out the whole country for an extended period of time.”

that executive order was suspended. Our nation has since imported about another 100 transformers from China. There are now somewhere around 400 in the U.S. grid.

When we say the grid, we’re talking about the whole system that generates electricity, transmits it, and distributes it. This transmission normally occurs over long distances. These extra-high-voltage transformers are needed to step up the voltage and then to bring it back down. It’s that high voltage that allows it to travel those long distances. These assets are absolutely critical.

If that transformer stopped working for any reason, then you’re not moving that electricity from where it’s produced to where it’s needed. The assets themselves, the large ones, may take years to produce. The lead time for that production has gone from about a year to more like four years, and there’s only so many of those assets. We can’t afford to lose them for any reason, whether it’s because they were manufactured with the malicious intent of manipulating them, or because they’re somehow attacked.

MR. JEKIELEK: What does a situation look like where power goes down in a significant portion of the country?

MR. WALLER: In 1977, there was a 24-hour blackout in New York City. It was a natural form of an electromagnetic pulse [EMP], a lightning strike that hit a substation in New Jersey. In that 24-

hour period, more than 4,500 looters were arrested, more than 550 police officers were injured in the line of duty, and there was over \$300 million worth of damage in that city.

Think about our dependence on electricity. If you’re in an urban environment, you lose water right away. Refrigeration is critical to our food system, and that depends on electricity. Every single way you look at it, modern society is not prepared to live without electricity. In short order, you have suffering and chaos.

MR. JEKIELEK: “Grid Down, Power Up” asserts that taking down just nine of these power stations or substations around the entire United States could result in a complete failure of the grid.

MR. WALLER: “Grid Down, Power Up” covers that, but it wasn’t the documentary that discovered this. It was actually the federal government, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission [FERC], which oversees our bulk power system. This came in the wake of a physical attack and sabotage. In April 2013, a substation outside of San Jose [California] was attacked by a gunman.

FERC did a classified study in the wake of that attack. They discovered that if an adversary knew which nine substations to attack, this could cause cascading failures that could black out the whole country for an extended period of time. Some may remember the great Northeast blackout of



Wall bushings with corona rings draw electricity to and from the transformers into the valves, in The Dalles, Ore., in this file photo.

August 14, 2003, when there was a cascading failure from a tree branch in Ohio striking a transmission line. That single point of failure caused a cascading blackout that resulted in 55 million customers losing power, some for up to two weeks. Whether it's Mother Nature or a human adversary, the system can be taken down if it's not properly protected.

MR. JEKIELEK: How did we start importing these absolutely critical pieces of infrastructure?

MR. WALLER: In the same ways we as a nation came to depend on China for lots of different things. We know that the CCP [Chinese Communist Party] has been executing unrestricted warfare against the rest of the free world, predominantly the United States. One method of unrestricted warfare is looking for the critical vulnerabilities of a society and figuring out how to exploit them.

In this case, what the Chinese did was genius. They realized that these transformers need a certain type

of steel to be manufactured, grain-oriented electrical steel. What do the Chinese do? They dumped into the market massive amounts of grain-oriented steel. They cornered the market for the precursors that are needed to create the transformers. I'm sure you and your viewers are familiar with the inexpensive aspect of purchasing products from China, which is made possible by slave labor, if you want to call it that.

MR. JEKIELEK: By multiple factors, but yes.

MR. WALLER: Exactly. The CCP uses these different factors to corner the market on an asset that any modern civilization needs to survive. That put a lot of other manufacturers out of business. The utility industry has to make an investment in a transformer and asks, "What's the price of these things?" Any investment is going to result in the utility spending money and all of us who pay electricity bills paying more, the more the utility spends. It's understandable for them

to look to save money. That's one avenue that the Chinese used to get into that market by providing these transformers.

Today, our country needs to identify where these transformers are and get them inspected. Then we need to produce these domestically or else have our allies produce them while ensuring they are not using components from communist China.

MR. JEKIELEK: How many have been inspected to date?

MR. WALLER: We know that one was inspected at Sandia National Laboratory. That's all we know. We know that a president of the United States declared an emergency on May 1, 2020, so we know this is a big deal. The good thing is that even if the federal government isn't moving as fast as it should, the states are waking up.

Texas, for example, has its own grid. The last legislative session passed the Lone Star Protection Act or Infrastructure Protection Act. It was designed to identify whether critical infrastructure components were coming from adversaries to make sure problems like this don't happen in that state.

MR. JEKIELEK: The cornering of the market for these high-voltage transformers is as much a military decision as it is a state business decision. An interview that came out later by an expert said they found something in this transformer that would allow it to be turned off remotely.

MR. WALLER: We imported this massive 500,000-pound electric transformer from China. They decided to send it to one of our national labs when it came into the country. They found hardware in it that had the ability for somebody in China to switch it off.

MR. JEKIELEK: This is just one

shocking way that the system can be compromised. But we also have other potential routes. Please give us a picture of these.

MR. WALLER: We talked about physical sabotage like what happened in California. We just saw this in North Carolina at the end of last year with rifle fire. There's lots of different ways you can harm the grid: cyber attack, a localized electromagnetic attack, a directed energy weapon, or a nuclear electromagnetic pulse.

There will also be blackouts if we continue some of the policies of our government. You can't shut down large baseload powered generators like nuclear, coal, and fossil fuel plants and replace them with renewables, when the sun only shines and the wind only blows intermittently, and at the same time electrify everything.

The grid is also vulnerable to threats from Mother Nature. It's 100 percent certain that at some point the grid will go down because of solar weather. That's a warning I've personally issued at least twice to Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm. So far, it doesn't look like we're doing what we need to do about it, even though it's a completely fixable problem.

In fact, just this past March, there was a massive solar storm, and it happened to be on the opposite side of the sun. Had it traveled toward Earth, we might not be having this interview right now. The reason is that these highly charged particles react with the Earth's magnetosphere. In fact, in the northern latitudes, people can see the Aurora Borealis, the Northern Lights, which is the visual depiction of the electromagnetic energy generated when these particles slam into our magnetosphere.

In 1921, there was a solar storm. They call it the railroad storm because there were railroad stations in Connecticut and throughout the Northeast that caught fire and burned to the ground. Why did they catch fire?

“Our bulk power system has become dependent on certain countries hostile to the United States.”

Because the telegraph lines were 100-plus kilometers long and had ground-induced currents from a solar storm that caused sparks and fires.

Those currents go into our transformers. The level of protection we have from the current standards is so low that the grid will go down if we have a significant storm. When I say that it's 100 percent certain, all I'm saying is that the level of protection we have now and the standards that have been set by the industry and approved by the government guarantee that the grid goes down if we suffer a solar storm of significant magnitude.

MR. JEKIELEK: You would think they would care about this.

MR. WALLER: Some do. The people who keep the lights on in this country, they do. They provide for our survival every day. Unfortunately, when it comes to the rules that govern that industry, there are a lot of people who've been obstructing and lobbying against really reasonable, prudent, and affordable methods to protect this infrastructure.

MR. JEKIELEK: Before we talk about those, tell me a little about yourself.

MR. WALLER: I felt a calling to serve in uniform since I can remember, and I was sworn into the Marine Corps on my 18th birthday. Eventually, I became a Force Reconnaissance Marine. It was a privilege to be part of that community. The Marines I served with are among the best in the nation.

I told myself I'd stay in until they kicked me out, and we reached that point. I took a stand on the COVID vaccine mandate, and unfortunately, along with many others, my religious accommodations were denied. I waited a year, I appealed, and did everything I could, but I was not allowed to continue serving.

I was also recruited at one point by the U.S. Air Force's Electromagnetic Defense Task Force, to be a staff member of that organization and to help them form a task force to address electromagnetic spectrum threats, and to produce two reports on this issue that lay out the challenges.

I was blessed that during the last half of my career in the reserves, I had this civilian job with the Center for Security Policy, a nonprofit founded by Frank Gaffney, who worked for President Reagan. Frank knew all about nuclear EMP years before it was declassified. He'd been worried about the grid for decades.

This job is more than a job, it's a calling in life. He taught me about electromagnetic pulse and about these threats. Then, he assigned me the duty of managing this nationwide Secure the Grid Coalition.

I'm not a physicist or an engineer. I'm an infantry guy. But I was blessed to be the apprentice to some of the world's foremost experts in all of these different threats to this critical infrastructure. I was able to translate to the American people and to our policymakers the reality of those threats and what needs to be done to defend against them. ♦

ILLUSTRATION BY THE EPOCH TIMES, GREG WAHL-STEPHENS/GETTY IMAGES

MR. JEKIELEK: Please give me an overview of the specific grid-related threats that are coming from China. I know you see that as the biggest threat among the many you’ve just described.

MR. WALLER: If we adopt policies that rely on China to produce our transformers or the tens of thousands of inverters we need for our wind and solar technology, we are using markets cornered by China.

When we embrace policies that create a dependency on China, while at the same time creating vulnerabilities because we are not producing enough electricity, that’s one threat. The second one is cyber. We know that China has a significant cyber capability, and that can mean cyber espionage where they’re stealing secrets in our power production, whether it’s nuclear power or otherwise.

The supply chain we mentioned already. They could be producing different things with a hardware backdoor that would allow them to remotely control certain things. Then there is electromagnetic attack. We know that the Chinese are obviously nuclear-capable; it’s part of their war-fighting doctrine to focus on both that and cyber. Part of their cyber doctrine is the use of electromagnetic pulse.

Nuclear EMP is in the cards if they wanted to use that. We just watched a balloon cross the entire continental United States, and that balloon could be a platform for an EMP attack. It doesn’t take an intercontinental ballistic missile.

Then there’s the possibility of physical sabotage. Look at our open borders and our immigration policy with respect to the People’s Republic of China. If they put the right people here with the right know-how, they can conduct physical attacks on the grid.

MR. JEKIELEK: Please tell us about the Secure the Grid Coalition. This is

something that American citizens can get involved in.

MR. WALLER: Our Secure the Grid Coalition is a bipartisan group co-chaired by Ambassador Woolsey, who was President Clinton’s director of Central Intelligence, and by Newt Gingrich, former speaker of the House. We’ve got hundreds of members around the country.

We’re talking about a volunteer effort in the states and at the federal level to shape policies to protect this critical infrastructure. One valuable product of that effort has been “Grid Down, Power Up.” One of the members of the Secure the Grid Coalition, David Tice, sank an immense amount of money, time, and effort into the film. Dennis Quaid is the narrator. Now you’ve got David Tice and Dennis Quaid speaking all around the country because they care about this. But the film they produced, “Grid Down, Power Up,” is the culmination of nearly a decade of interviews of the experts in our coalition. I’ve been trying to brief policymakers for nine years, and this film can teach them in less than an hour.

The producer, on his website, GridDownPowerUp.com, created a tab called “participate.” You click on that tab and see all the policy recommendations that we’ve been promoting for years. Click on that, and you can get involved.

MR. JEKIELEK: Apparently there are some easy ways to harden some of this infrastructure that aren’t that expensive.

MR. WALLER: Yes. Let’s take one example, the threat we can’t deter: the sun. We know it makes harmful ground-induced currents that can travel into certain vulnerable transformers. There are technologies out there like neutral ground blockers which can be applied to those vulnerable transformers.

If they were to install these neutral

ground blockers on these transformers, analysis has shown they could solve that problem for the entire United States for just over \$4 billion. This is what I explained to the secretary of energy regarding the bipartisan infrastructure bill, \$1.2 trillion.

So one-third of 1 percent of that infrastructure bill could solve the problem of solar weather. Yet there’s no indication, despite multiple attempts, they’re spending the money on that.

Here’s another example. Your viewers can drive down the road and look at the substation that provides the lifeblood to that neighborhood with only a chain link fence around it. It should be ballistic protected to make sure these transformers can’t be shot up and can’t be viewed. It’s a fixable problem.

MR. JEKIELEK: The viewers of this program might be thinking: “So, where is the hope? How can we change these large bodies that are doing things in this highly problematic way?”

MR. WALLER: The hope comes from the bottom up. Right now, for instance, there’s legislation in Texas authored by state Sen. Bob Hall that would create a commission that would analyze all these threats and decide how to address them, as opposed to depending on the federal government. There’s no reason why states can’t do that around the country.

MR. JEKIELEK: Any final thoughts as we finish?

MR. WALLER: We need to be better prepared to live without electricity for as long as we can. We also need to get involved. The Participate tab at GridDownPowerUp.com gives every American the opportunity to do just that. ■

This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.

Gold's Recent Drop Below \$2,000 Creates Buying Opportunity

UBS and other analysts maintain positive forecasts, projecting prices of \$2,050 by September, \$2,100 by year-end, and \$2,200 by March 2024, with a new target of \$2,250 by June 2024.

WHY IS THIS THE PERFECT TIME TO INVEST?

- U.S. dollar weakness and potential interest rate cuts by the Federal Reserve create favorable conditions for gold.
- Rising recession risks increase demand for safe-haven assets like gold.
- Renowned expert Nitesh Shah, head of Commodities and Macroeconomic Research at Wisdom Tree, expects a new all-time high for gold by the end of 2023.

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Consider Big Plans Carefully

Take your time making life-changing decisions

By Jeff Minick



IN ONE OF THE GREAT cartoon strips of all time, Bill Watterson’s “Calvin and Hobbes,” Calvin is an articulate, mischievous, and self-centered boy. Hobbes is his stuffed tiger, who in Calvin’s imagination comes to life as his best friend. In one of these cartoons, the two of them are zipping down a hill in a wagon, Calvin seated ahead of Hobbes.

Calvin: I’m sick of hearing about personal responsibility! I’ve already done my part to make the world a better place to live.

Hobbes: Really?

Calvin: Sure! I was born!

Hobbes (Unnoticed by Calvin, rolling his eyes): Oh, yes, I forgot to thank you.

Calvin: Join the club!

Some people believe, like Calvin, that the world was created for them rather than vice versa. They’re the ones whose huge egos outstrip their brains or talent, and who, when their plans crash and burn, always blame others. For examples of this exaggerated sense of one’s own importance, we’ve only to look at many of today’s celebrities and politicians.

Of course, some degree of self-confidence is crucial for success. Despite his impoverished boyhood, poor education, and erratic political career, Abraham Lincoln had faith enough in himself to win the presidency. Booker T. Washington overcame the obstacles of race and a poverty-stricken youth

to found Tuskegee Institute and give black communities hundreds of teachers, doctors, and lawyers.

So how do we foster such self-assurance without falling into arrogance? To answer this, another iconic American has offered some help. In “The Narrative of the Life of David Crockett,” the “king of the wild frontier” begins his autobiography with this advice: “I leave this rule for others when I’m dead, Be always sure you’re right—THEN GO AHEAD!”

How do we foster self-assurance without falling into arrogance?

That simple motto contains a good deal of wisdom. It advises action yet reminds us to make sure we’re heading down the right path. It’s a yellow flag cautioning us to weigh a task or an enterprise before embarking on it, to take into account variables and hidden dangers in our plan of action. We do our research, listen to the voices of others, particularly those with opinions different from ours, and consider what glitches and traps may await us.

To plunge ahead with our plans, blinkered by hubris and ignorance, can bring disaster. We saw the consequences of this conceit during the COVID-19 pandemic, when officials shuttered shops and closed schools, ostensibly to save lives, but with little

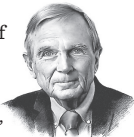
regard for the social and economic catastrophes these policies inflicted on untold millions. On a much smaller scale, we sometimes do the same in our personal lives, such as jumping from one employer to another for the sole benefit of higher earnings, only to discover that our ill-considered move has shackled us to a job we despise.

“Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening my ax.” Lincoln may never have spoken those words sometimes attributed to him, but they nevertheless contain valuable advice. Yes, occasionally an emergency dictates urgent action, but more often than not, we have time for stepping back, thinking, and drafting a plan.

If we live, as Calvin implies, as narcissists, shouldering no personal responsibility and demanding that the world meet us on our own terms, that ugly pride will sooner or later lead to our downfall.

On the other hand, those who are sure enough of themselves to tap the brakes and take the time to humbly assess a situation may avoid such defeats. Best of all, when we quit trying to impress others and work on impressing ourselves, we win. ■

Jeff Minick lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. He is the author of two novels, “Amanda Bell” and “Dust on Their Wings,” and two works of nonfiction, “Learning as I Go” and “Movies Make the Man.”



Unwind

When it comes to scotch, there’s no better place to learn about and enjoy it than Edinburgh, Scotland.

PHOTO BY TIM JOHNSON



An Up-close Look at Scotch 72

THIS BEAUTIFUL HOME is a tropical oasis of tranquility set in exotic Coconut Grove, just minutes from downtown Miami and Miami Beach. 70

ONCE A STAPLE OF EVERY CITY and town, soda fountains are no longer quite so common, but we’ve found several where you can still get an ice cream float. 75

IT ISN’T ENOUGH TO just wash the car’s exterior; to make it last and be fun to drive, spend some time making the interior like new. 76



Tropical Beauty

An idyllic Coconut Grove residence

By Bill Lindsey

Relaxing by the pool of this estate, located a five-minute drive from downtown Miami, is an ideal way to allow stress to magically evaporate.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF FLOAK STUDIOS/ONE SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL REALTY

COCONUT GROVE, THE OLDEST continuously inhabited neighborhood in Miami, is known for art festivals and a laid-back yet genteel atmosphere. When entering “the Grove,” one passes Vizcaya and many other impressive residences, including this three-level, palatial estate soaring 21 feet above sea level on a limestone ridge. Partially visible past the wall crafted of limestone blocks, the seven-bedroom, seven-full-bath, two-half-bath, 6,890-square-foot home was built in 2020. Its location on the ridge allows the home to enjoy a full basement, an amenity virtually unheard of in South Florida, and many other unique features. The double-height living room is framed by oversized floor-to-ceiling rectangular windows that provide views of the property’s lush landscaping. The airy interior spaces flow together smoothly, from the living room to the formal dining area to the kitchen, which is outfitted with premium appliances and family dining accommo-

tions. Upstairs, a mezzanine walkway affords views of the main level, the pool, and the surrounding grounds. The master bedroom has a bathroom equipped with dual vanities, a soaking tub, and an oversized spa-quality walk-in shower. The bedroom’s private terrace is ideal for alfresco dining and relaxing. Also on this level is a compact gym set to the side of the home’s entertainment room. Other notable features include an elevator, an air-conditioned full basement, a whole-house generator, and a two-car garage. The 9,375-square-foot lot is tastefully landscaped with native vegetation alongside a pool and spa, outdoor shower, covered terrace, and a well-equipped outdoor kitchen to host family gatherings or entertain guests. The property’s separate guest apartment would also serve well as a private office or artist’s studio. The property is a five-minute golf cart ride from Coconut Grove’s shops and restaurants, a five-minute drive by car to downtown Miami, and a 20-minute drive to the beach or Miami International Airport. ■



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\$13,500,000**

- 7 bedrooms
- 5 full baths, 2 half-baths
- 6,890 square feet
- 9,375-square-foot lot

KEY FEATURES

- Elevator
- Air-conditioned full basement
- Guest apartment

AGENT

Michael Martinez
ONE Sotheby's Int'l
Realty
305-979-9367



(Above) The ceiling soars high above the dining room and open floor plan main level, with a mezzanine area and bedrooms on the second level. (Top Right) The airy and inviting living room looks out over the pool and lush tropical landscaping. (Right) The residence has impressive curb appeal, securely tucked behind a wall of locally sourced limestone.



Scottish Whisky

Get the full Scottish experience with whisky tasting in Edinburgh

By Tim Johnson



A cooper works with casks in a cooperage, preparing them to hold whisky.

PHOTO BY LEON HARRIS/GETTY IMAGES

THE SCOTCH WHISKY EXPERIENCE is perhaps the ultimate destination for anyone who loves the good stuff—or just wants to learn more about it. Open since 1988 and founded as a collective effort from 19 individual Scotch companies (representing 90 percent of the industry), this fun place is part museum and part interactive exhibition. The goal was to introduce and educate their mostly international visitors on the nuances and importance of Scotland’s favorite libation. And whisky is a fairly fascinating thing. The name itself is an anglicization of the Gaelic word uisce, which means “water.” The art and science of distillation may date all the way back to the Babylonians but didn’t reach Ireland and Scotland until many centuries later. By the 15th century, monks and physicians here were making “aqua vitae” (the water of life) for purely medicinal purposes.

That soon changed. By the 16th century, whisky was being consumed for pleasure—King James IV of Scotland, for one, was a fan. Distillation moved out of monasteries and into private homes and farms. In 1608, Old Bushmills, near Ireland’s wild and wonderful northern coast, received the first royal license, making it the oldest licensed whiskey distillery in the world.

Traveling around the world, I’ve encountered many different versions. Like wine, whisky very much reflects the place where it was raised—its terroir is a very important thing. The natural ingredients—usually some combination (or a single grain) of wheat, barley, corn, and rye. The water. The type of still.

And, perhaps most important, the aging process, from the type of barrel and ambient temperatures to the location of the cellar. Many distilleries encourage hands-on experiences, handling and even tasting the grains, walking among the stills, and sometimes sampling the whisky right from the cask to experience it at different stages of its evolution. Distillers are almost invariably interesting people, mad scientists at heart, and always give a great tour.

In addition to small boutique labels, I’ve sampled big brands—in the rolling hills of southern Tennessee, I’ve sipped Jack Daniel’s, and in central Dublin, Jameson. Each country has its own standards, as well as limitations, on particular designations. For example, in many countries, bourbon must only and always refer to a whiskey made in the United States.

I learned that the same is true in Scotland. “To be called Scotch whisky, it must be aged for at least three years and one day,” said Keo, my guide at the Scotch Whisky Experience.

The Scottish whisky industry is worth more than

\$7 BILLION



Speyside is the most prolific of Scotland’s six whisky regions.

The majority of today’s Scottish whisky casks were first used for Tennessee bourbon.

Cardhu Gold Reserve Single Malt Scotch Whisky.





Ross Fountain with Edinburgh Castle in the background in Edinburgh, Scotland.

At our first stop, an interpreter walked through the whole process, from malting and mashing to fermentation and distillation and finally, aging. Next, a film on a big wraparound screen illustrated the five whisky regions in Scotland—Highland, Lowland, Speyside, Campbeltown, and tiny Islay. An accompanying scratch-and-sniff card animated the scents of each one.

Next, the tasting, sitting around a U-shaped table in a graceful wood-paneled chamber.

“You’re sitting in a typical 1870s sample room,” he explained, recounting some of the history, such as how a master blender would put together the perfect blend.

Given a number of options, I selected their standard Islay, from GlenAllachie Distillery.

What’s the proper way to taste? Give it a good sniff beforehand—aroma is important. Pay attention to the look, the legs, the taste, the finish. But ultimately, Keo said, just have fun.

“The right way is any way you want to, as long as you enjoy it,” he said.

Sipping it from the Glencairn glass, I found that the Islay was smoky, warming, and lovely.

And then, the grand finale—a visit to the largest collection of unopened whisky in the world; seeing 3,384 unopened bottles is an awe-inspiring exercise. Set behind glass in backlit cabinets, it’s just row upon row upon row of brown, green, and amber, all under the light of chandeliers; a hallowed room, in Scotch circles—one Brazilian man’s private collection.

“In his eyes, the whisky is back with its family,” Keo said.

He showed me the two oldest bottles, one from 1897 and the other from 1904. There were tattered labels on both, with a significant amount of liquid absent—the result not of a sneaky visitor getting behind the glass but rather of natural evaporation over time.

What would it taste like?

“I have no idea,” Keo said, noting that whiskies rarely or never go off.

So, perhaps, quite good. I’ll never know.

We exited into—where else?—a bar. Keo directed me to try a couple of other samples. Too soon, I rejoined the crush of foot traffic on the Royal Mile. It had been quite a half-day so far, tasting the good stuff and learning so much and feeling satisfied and confident that the next time I encounter a great Glencairn of whisky, I’ll never again take it for granted. ■



Glasses of single malt Scotch whisky with a view of Edinburgh, Scotland, in the background.

Tim Johnson is based in Toronto. He has visited 140 countries across all seven continents.

If You Go

Fly:

Edinburgh Airport is the busiest in Scotland. While the bulk of its flights are to European cities, a handful fly nonstop from North America.

Getting Around:

Scotland’s capital is very walkable. A network of clean, efficient, safe trams will whisk you across town.

Stay:

The Caledonian (Waldorf-Astoria) combines Victorian style with lovely views of the Castle.

Take Note:

You can springboard to tastings at a number of nearby distilleries, perhaps using a tour company such as Rabbie’s.

THIS PAGE FROM TOP: ARCADY/SHUTTERSTOCK, BARMALIN/SHUTTERSTOCK

LONG LIVE THE SODA FOUNTAIN: THE MODERN-DAY SHOPS KEEPING A PIECE OF AMERICANA ALIVE

Shops across the country are slinging old-fashioned drinks—and newfangled creations—in nostalgic surrounds

By Eric Lucas

“TAKE YOUR MEDICINE, Eric.” My mother’s command from years ago rings in my ears as Jill

Smith, co-owner of Colorado’s Salida Pharmacy and Fountain, explains why flavored sodas were invented in the 19th century—and why most soda fountains were found in pharmacies.

“Back then, medicine was a liquid or a powder that tasted bad. Mix it into a soda, and it was far more palatable,” Ms. Smith says.

I raise my glass of lime-hibiscus phosphate to salute this information and take a deep draught. Phosphates are very old-fashioned soda drinks made by mixing a flavored syrup with carbonated water and a tangy powder or syrup of acid phosphate, which lends a tart element. The result is lighter, less overbearing, and more refreshing than modern commercial sodas.

John Denver sings “Rocky Mountain High” on the sound system, of course, and a massive century-old mirror from a defunct pharmacy reflects the tradition embodied in this relatively new business, which combines an apothecary and a drinks fountain just as one would’ve found in most American towns before World War II.

The soda fountain became a mainstream fixture of American life after Prohibition. No more bars meant a lack of places for people to gather and socialize. The soda fountain filled the gap.

An egg cream, an iconic New York drink, from Brooklyn Pharmacy and Soda Fountain.

A huckleberry phosphate at Goody’s in Boise, Idaho.

At Goody’s Soda Fountain in Boise, Idaho, the ambiance is full-on summer family fun.



WHERE TO GO

Shug’s Soda Fountain and Ice Cream

1525 First Ave., Seattle.

ShugsSodaFountain.com

Goody’s Soda Fountain

1502 N. 13th St., Boise, Idaho

GoodySodaFountain.com

Salida Pharmacy and Fountain

137 F St., Salida, Colo.

SalidaPF.com

Brooklyn Pharmacy and Soda Fountain

513 Henry St., Brooklyn, N.Y.

BrooklynPharmacyAndSodaFountain.com

Nostalgia by the Glass

Industry observers believe that the 1970s fast-food tidal wave and the hegemony of industrial sodas have turned soda fountains into anachronisms.

“You’d be surprised,” Ms. Smith declares. “Soda fountains are making a comeback, not just in pharmacies.”

This trend is evident at Seattle’s Pike Place Market, where, on a sunny 80-degree spring day, crowds line up out the door to place their order at Shug’s, a stand-alone fountain on First Avenue that opened in 2016 for nostalgic purposes. As with most soda fountains old and new, ice cream and sundaes are also on the menu; also available are espresso drinks and new-age adult concoctions, such as the prosecco float.

Soda fountains can even bear iconic regional weight. The egg cream, for example, is the signature fountain drink of the Northeast United States, essentially a chocolate seltzer that apparently originated in New York in about 1880. It’s kept alive at places such as Brooklyn Pharmacy and Soda Fountain.

Opened in 2010, the shop is housed in a restored 1920 building in which the floor-to-ceiling wood shelves exalt its early life as a neighborhood apothecary. Here, servers in bow-tied chef shirts make your order by hand, practicing a craft almost two centuries old, the modern edition of an American tradition. ■

Eric Lucas is a retired associate editor at *Alaska Beyond Magazine* and lives on a small farm on a remote island north of Seattle.

INTERIOR DETAILING

101 After you wash your car, make time to clean the inside, too

By Bill Lindsey

Considering it's where we spend so much time, the car's interior needs to be kept clean and pristine.

PHOTO BY DELECTUS/GETTY IMAGES

A CLEAN CAR DRIVES BETTER, and detailing can be fun. Because this project requires a lot of time inside the vehicle, pull the car inside a garage or under a carport to avoid becoming overheated. You can also work during early morning or late afternoon hours, or use a fan to blow cool air inside.

Gather the tools needed: a shop vacuum, cotton or microfiber cloths, glass cleaner, and vinyl and leather conditioners. Then, turn off the phone, set the radio to a favorite station, crank up the volume, and get busy.

The first step is going through every nook and cranny, removing the floor mats and everything from the seats, under the seats, and in the trunk or cargo compartment. If the floor mats are looking a bit past their prime, now is the time to replace them with a set of all-weather molded mats. These mats hold debris, dirt, and even spilled liquids, making cleanup as easy as removing and rinsing them. To keep them looking good, apply a spritz of Armor All Tire Protectant or a similar product, making sure to wipe up any slippery residue.

Next, go through the glove compartment and console storage area as well as the door pockets to remove loose change, fuel receipts, empty water bottles, dog toys, lost screwdrivers, and anything else; the goal is to have the carpeted flooring, the seats, and the various storage compartments ready to be vacuumed.

Turn off the phone, set the radio to a favorite station, crank up the volume, and get busy.

Have several trash bags handy to collect debris as it's discovered; the first rule of any project is to not have one action result in additional actions, so don't make a pile of debris that you will later need to collect, bag, and take to the trash can.

With the interior areas empty, look for stains, spills, or other issues. Treat stains appropriately for the surface; as an example, spilled soda on an all-weather floor mat is a simple rinse-and-let-dry task, while a stain on leather or cloth upholstery requires the use of an appropriate cleaning agent.

Greasy fingerprints on the steering wheel or door handles can be removed by wiping them with a very slightly damp soft cloth. If the grease is stubborn, put a tiny drop of degreasing soap on the cloth.

The next step is to use the same soft cloth to clean and remove dust from the dashboard, door panels, console storage lid, leather or vinyl seats, and other bits of interior trim. It's OK to use an interior detailing product that cleans and shines, as long as the label clearly states that it can be used on those surfaces—if in doubt, just use a tiny bit of water on the cloth.



Vacuuming dirt, dust, and debris helps keep the carpeting in great condition; get all the other nooks and crannies, too.



Use a very slightly damp microfiber cloth to remove dust from touchscreens without scratching the delicate surface.

Applying a leather conditioner after cleaning leather seats with saddle soap will keep them looking their best.



Wipe down the steering wheel, hub, the steering column, control stalks, and the instrument panel to remove accumulated dust.

CLOCKWISE FROM L: SOFIKOS/SHUTTERSTOCK, NEW AFRICA/SHUTTERSTOCK, PERFECTLAB/SHUTTERSTOCK, ALEKSANDR KONDRATOV/GETTY IMAGES



Get the whole family involved to make it fun; vacuum the cargo area and storage bins of SUVs to prevent “mystery odors.”

Wipe the cloth around the steering wheel and its hub, the steering wheel column, and all the control stalks that operate lights, turn signals, and more that have an uncanny ability to gather and hold dust. Run the cloth across the instrument panel, touchscreen panels, and around air-conditioning ducts. Replace the vehicle’s cabin filter annually.

Using a product such as Turtle Wax Fresh Clean Detailer, lightly spray and then use a soft cotton or microfiber cloth to wipe and dry the dashboard, door panels, console cover, and other interior trim. With proper care, leather interiors can remain looking great for the life of the car. The trick is to promptly remove dirt that can abrade the surface, or spills that can create an unsightly stain.

Saddle soap is an excellent choice for removing grime; use a leather cleaner and conditioner to keep leather and vinyl seats and trim looking good and to help avoid cracks. If leather upholstery is cracked or the finish is thin, consult a local upholstery shop to determine if they can restore it by using leather paint and repairing any worn spots or tears.

To restore the inside of windows and the windshield to a sparkly clean condition, many detail pros

apply vinegar and then remove it via wadded newspaper.

Now, it’s time to vacuum every surface, using a thin tip to get into tight areas such as under, between, and on the seats; on the surface of the trunk or cargo area; and inside all door pockets. If you notice any odor, consider a light spritzing of Febreze or a similar air freshener.

That’s it. Now, all you have to do is replace the floor mats and take the car for a ride. ■



True car aficionados will use a small paint brush to remove dust from A/C vents, stereo control buttons, and other hard-to-reach areas.

ET
LIFESTYLE
CLEAN YOUR RIDE

Refresh your car’s interior



1
Dust Magnets

The dashboard, instrument panel, and corners of touchscreens attract dust, so use a very slightly wet cloth to gently remove it. Greasy fingerprints on door handles can be removed with a drop of degreasing soap on a soft cloth.



2
Wipe Your Feet

Because floor mats get dirty quickly, consider upgrading to a set of all-weather mats that trap and hold a surprising amount of mud, liquid, and dirt, yet are easy to clean.



3
Preserve and Restore

Use a quality leather and/or vinyl protectant on the dashboard, door panels, console cover, and leather seats.

THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: INGORTHAN/GETTY IMAGES; ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE EPOCH TIMES; DIGITONONLINE/SHUTTERSTOCK

**ESSENTIAL
ANGLING GEAR**

What you need to land fresh or saltwater trophy fish

By Bill Lindsey



Better Technology to Land More Fish

ABU GARCIA MAX PRO SPINNING COMBO

\$89.99

This handy rig features the same technology used in their premier offerings, such as the Rocket line management and spool lip design for the ultimate casting distance and accuracy. This affordably priced combo provides an ultra-smooth experience, thanks to six ball bearings and one roller bearing. The lightweight body and rotor construction reduces hand fatigue.



Master All Waters
ORVIS CLEARWATER FLY ROD OUTFIT

\$335

Orvis speaks fluent “fly fishing” with this Vermont-designed, nine-foot, five-weight rod that does it all. From western rivers to big eastern water, from light bass to big trout, it’s ready to fill your creel, all in a travel-ready package. Backed by a 25-year warranty and a rod, reel, rod tube, and fly line with backing—all you’ll need to go fishing are your favorite flies.



Ready, Set, Fish!

RONCO POCKET FISHERMAN

\$39.99

Late-night television commercials made this an iconic piece of fishing tackle. When folded, it fits in the pocket of cargo shorts or even a briefcase so you can fish anywhere you want. The integral tackle compartment holds a bobber, sinker, and lure to get you fishing in minutes. When there’s no room for a full-size rod and reel, this will let you land the big ones.



Bring Everything
CALISSA RECON ROLLING BACKPACK TACKLE BOX

\$139.99

Experienced anglers will tell you that it’s the one hook or sinker that they forgot to bring that kept them from landing a world-record fish. That will never happen with this ultimate tackle box. Equipped with an extending handle and wheels—and backpack straps—it can go anywhere, bringing with it five large tackle trays, four rod holders, and a top section that can hold reels, a camera, or drinks and snacks.



The Pro’s Choice
PENN SQUALL LEVER DRAG COMBO

\$219.99

Designed to land saltwater trophies, this rod features a one-piece tubular glass blank with an extra-strong solid fiberglass tip to handle the toughest gamefish. The reel’s Versa-Handle system, frame-flush ratcheting lever drag, stainless steel main pinion and gear, and five stainless steel bearings ensure smooth performance throughout the battle.

Are there books you'd recommend?
We'd love to hear from you. Let us know at features@epochtimes.com

RECOMMENDED READING

This week, we feature a fascinating history of a mysterious English Renaissance disease and an exciting memoir of a quest for the lost ship Endurance.




FICTION

‘Uhtred’s Feast’
By Bernard Cornwell and Suzanne Pollak

Prolific writer of historical fiction Bernard Cornwell gives us a last salute to his Saxon warrior, Uhtred of Bebbanburg, in this upcoming collection of stories. But this is more than a work of fiction. Writer Suzanne Pollock adds her passion for Anglo-Saxon cookery with lots of early medieval recipes, from “Rabbit Braised in Ale” to “Barley Flatbread.” Not only do fans of the “Last Kingdom” series get another visit with Uhtred, but the adventurous get to share some meals with him as well.

HARPER, 2023, 288 PAGES

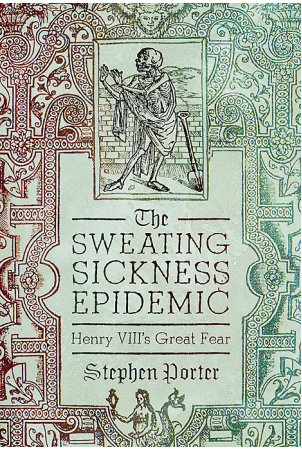


HISTORICAL FICTION

‘Lockett and the Devil’s Path’
By T.J. Johnston

It’s March 1863 when the drama unfolds in Tennessee. Civil War buffs will appreciate the latest volume in the James Lockett series. Thrilling military encounters, espionage, and an ongoing love story of star-crossed lovers is written with folksy charm against a background of accurate history. Perhaps not as well known, the Tullahoma Campaign pitted Union Gen. William Rosecrans against Confederate Gen. Braxton Bragg in a conflict challenged by difficult terrain. Capt. Lockett plays a major role.

VIVUS HISTORICAL PRESS, 2023, 373 PAGES



HISTORY

‘The Sweating Sickness Epidemic’
By Stephen Porter

Between 1485 and 1551, a series of epidemics hit England. The disease was called the sweating sickness. Then it disappeared, never to return. Even today, doctors are uncertain of what microbe caused it. This book tells that story. It traces its march across England, shows its effect on English life, and follows modern scientific studies of what caused the disease and why it disappeared. A study of the effect of disease on society, it shows medicine’s limits in the 16th century and today.

PEN AND SWORD HISTORY, 2023, 160 PAGES




FOR KIDS

‘Pinocchio’
By Carlo Collodi

Dive into the original “Pinocchio,” as Carlo Collodi explores the consequences of selfishness, abdicating responsibility, and dishonesty, among other themes. The familiar tale features the kindly woodcarver Gepetto, who creates a puppet that dreams of becoming a real boy. A bit dark, this deeply symbolic, classic work of literature is worth knowing.

UNION SQUARE KIDS, 2014, 184 PAGES

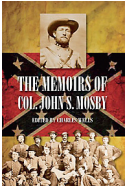


EXPLORATION

‘The Ship Beneath the Ice’
By Mensun Bound

More than a century ago, the Endurance sank to the bottom of the Weddell Sea, leaving Ernest Shackleton and 27 others standing atop the icy landscape of Antarctica. How the entire crew survived is one of history’s greatest survival stories. Using the latest technology, marine archaeologist Mensun Bound collaborated with some of the brightest minds in oceanography and exploration to conduct two expeditions in an attempt to locate the Endurance. It’s an incredible bookend to the Shackleton story.

MARINER BOOKS, 2023, 416 PAGES




CLASSICS

‘The Memoirs of Col. John S. Mosby’
By John S. Mosby

This Civil War classic offers insight into the mind, battlefield tactics, and daring spirit of one of the United States’ greatest partisan leaders, nicknamed “the Gray Ghost.” One of the Confederacy’s most famous soldiers, Mosby was a colorful commander of cavalry who, after the war, accepted Reconstruction, worked for the federal government, and supported President Ulysses Grant. His account of his military exploits is clear, blunt, and precise and often delivered with a sly sense of humor that’s sure to bring a smile.

BARNES REVIEW, 2013, 262 PAGES



Ian Kane
is a U.S. Army veteran, filmmaker, and author. He enjoys the great outdoors and volunteering.

ENTERTAINMENT

This week, we feature a Malaysian thriller with a strong anti-human-trafficking message and a time-traveling sequel to an '80s blockbuster.

NEW RELEASE



‘Walid’ (2023)

► Walid (Megat Sharizal) is a good-hearted man who helps his fellow Malaysian villagers as a teacher and repairman. He builds a bond with one of his immigrant students, Aisha (Putri Qaseh), but a gang kidnaps her for use in their human trafficking operations. This is an action-packed movie that carries a powerful message against human trafficking (similar to the breakthrough phenomenon “Sound of Freedom”). Although some of the scenes are very realistically violent, this film showcases the powerful silat martial arts.

ACTION | THRILLER

Release Date:
July 28, 2023 (Limited)

Director:
Areel Abu Bakar

Starring:
Megat Sharizal, Putri Qaseh, Namron

Running Time:
1 hour, 58 minutes

MPAA Rating: Not Rated

Where to Watch:
Theaters

★★★★★

A SUMPTUOUS 1930S MUSICAL



‘Roberta’ (1935)

► When ex-football star John Kent (Randolph Scott) inadvertently inherits a gown shop while visiting Paris, he and his pal Huck Haines (Fred Astaire) attract a number of interesting characters, including a mysterious countess and a beautiful designer. From the entrancing dance routines

COMEDY | MUSICAL | ROMANCE

Release Date:
March 8, 1935

Director:
William A. Seiter

Starring:
Irene Dunne, Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers

Running Time:
1 hour, 46 minutes

Not Rated

Where to Watch:
Apple TV, Amazon, Vudu

★★★★★

Epoch Watchlist

FAMILY PICK

‘Rally Road Racers’ (2023)

► When slow loris Zhi (Jimmy O. Yang) learns that his grandmother Granny Bai (Lisa Lu) is getting evicted, he teams up with wise goat Gnash (J.K. Simmons) to prepare him for an epic rally race. Winning the race could save his grandmother’s house, but he faces some challenges that may derail his efforts. This animated racing adventure features charming talking animals that quickly grow on you as the movie progresses. It carries



positive messages about the importance of friends and family, responsibility, and the value of hard work.

ANIMATION | COMEDY | FAMILY

Release Date:
May 12, 2023

Director:
Ross Venokur

Starring:
Chloe Bennet, J.K. Simmons, Sharon Horgan

Running Time:
1 hour, 33 minutes

MPAA Rating: PG

Where to Watch:
Vudu, Amazon, Apple TV

★★★★★

ADVENTURE SEQUEL DELIVERS THE GOODS

‘Back to the Future Part II’ (1989)

► Marty McFly (Michael J. Fox) and Dr. Emmett Brown (Christopher Lloyd) are back in another time-traveling adventure. When they learn that their timeline has become corrupted, Marty and Doc must face off against the dastardly Biff Tannen (Thomas Wilson) once again. This is one of the few sequels that lives up to the hype. It sports an intricate storyline, wacky characters, and lots of



laughs. While the plot may be a little more complex this time, it captures much of the magic of the first film.

ADVENTURE | COMEDY | SCI-FI

Release Date:
Nov. 22, 1989

Director:
Robert Zemeckis

Starring:
Michael J. Fox, Christopher Lloyd, Lea Thompson

Running Time:
1 hour, 48 minutes

MPAA Rating:
PG

Where to Watch:
Amazon, Apple TV, Vudu

★★★★★

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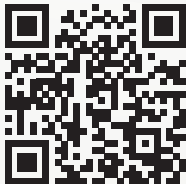
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THE EPOCH TIMES

TRUTH AND TRADITION



Theme Park Etiquette

Enjoying time spent in crowds

If your summer plans include a visit to a theme park, good manners are a must as you rub elbows with throngs of other fun-seekers.

By Bill Lindsey

1 Patience Is a Virtue

As soon as you set foot in a theme park, resist the urge to hurry; it'll lead only to frustration. If the lines are long, take a deep breath, relax, and enjoy the view and the ambiance. Use the time to make friends with nearby groups in line—you'll see them again in other lines throughout the day, making it more fun for all of you.



2 Use Inside Voices Indoors

While you're inside exhibits or on an indoor ride, be mindful that sound travels and that not everyone there wants to hear your observations. This goes for kids, too; while the idea is for them to have fun, that doesn't excuse loud shrieks or shouting at each other. This is an especially important item, as overly loud conversations can ruin the fun for those around you.

3 No Trash, No Smoke

Theme parks are designed to relax visitors, but that's no excuse to let good manners become lax. If you need to dispose of a food wrapper or drink container, don't simply drop it while you're waiting in line—theme parks are usually "littered" with trash receptacles. If you must smoke, find a designated area where your smoke won't irritate others.

5 Picture Perfect Manners

There are few things as jarring as sitting and enjoying a performance when someone suddenly stands in front of you, blocking your view to take a photo. It's OK to take photos or shoot video, but be respectful of those around you. In a darkened auditorium or pavilion, turn off your camera's flash and remain seated to avoid blocking the view of those around you.

4 Keep Going

Unless you're at a designated photo opportunity spot, keep moving. Stopping to take a selfie or a group photo might inadvertently create a logjam behind you. On a hot day, this isn't the way to make new friends. If you're at a designated photo spot, don't hog it—there will no doubt be others waiting for their turn to memorialize the day, too.



Re: The Last Edition of Epoch Insight Magazine—Aug. 4, 2023

Dear valued subscriber,

As part of our ongoing commitment to providing you with the best possible experience and most valuable content, we are embarking on a strategic transition. We will be discontinuing our Epoch Insight magazine to introduce a new range of special and premium content that we believe will better cater to your interests and preferences.

While the week 31 edition will mark Epoch Insight's final release, we are excited to announce that we will continue serving you with our flagship product, The Epoch Times weekly newspaper!

This transition requires no action on your part, and you will not incur any charges as a result of it.

Here's what will happen with your remaining balance:

If you already have a print (newspaper or American Essence) or digital subscription, your balance will be credited to your account and applied to future invoices.

If you don't currently have another subscription with us, your balance will be credited to a discounted Epoch Times newspaper print plan, which is now offered at \$139 per year (previously \$159 per year). You'll also receive an extra subscription credit of \$15.

Print newspaper subscriptions include:

- The Epoch Times weekly newspaper, delivered to your doorstep
- Unlimited digital access to TheEpochTimes.com, including news, opinion, and health articles; games; and EpochTV's documentaries, movies, and talk shows
- Unlimited digital access to our app, compatible with iPhone and Android platforms
- Daily ePaper

Here's a helpful example: With a newspaper print plan of \$139/year and a credit of \$15, you will be given a discounted rate of \$2.38/week. If your balance is \$67 by Aug. 4, then you will be given $\$67 / \$2.38 = 28$ weeks of a print subscription. After that, you can decide whether you'd like to renew or not.

If you have any questions about this transition, or if you're interested in exploring other options besides a print or digital subscription, we're here to help! Don't hesitate to contact our customer support team by either calling **1-833-699-1888** or submitting a support request at **Help.TheEpochTimes.com**.

Our team is dedicated to ensuring that this transition is as smooth as possible for you. We deeply appreciate your loyalty and support, and we look forward to continuing this journey with you.

We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience caused and are grateful to keep living in "Truth and Tradition" with you.

Best regards,

The Epoch Insight Team