Message

From: Americans for Limited Government [media@limitgov.org]
Sent: 4/30/2018 1:31:44 PM
To: Abboud, Michael [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b6f5af791a1842f1adcc088cbf9ed3ce-Abboud, Mic]
Subject: Trump approach to North Korea seems to bear fruit as the hermit kingdom comes to the negotiating table

North and South Korea have agreed to come together in the first real diplomatic breakthrough since the end of the Cold War

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

April 30, 2018

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Trump approach to North Korea seems to bear fruit as the hermit kingdom comes to the negotiating table

For nearly 70 years, conflict surrounding North Korea, South Korea, and the United States has put countless lives at risk and left U.S.- Asian relations in a cold limbo. Over the last decade, North Korea has become an increasingly volatile threat, but that changed this year with heightened pressure from the United States. In a historic step, North and South Korea have agreed to come together in the first real diplomatic breakthrough since the end of the Cold War, setting the path for victory for every actor.

First quarter disappoints again at only 2.3 percent growth annualized

Sometimes, it can take a while for the economic stimulus of a tax cut to take root. In 1981, the first year of the Reagan tax cut, the economy grew just 2.6 percent that year. A year later, in 1982, was the second worst recession in modern history when the economy shrank 1.9 percent. But once the waters had receded, the economy boomed. 4.6 percent in 1983. 7.3 percent in 1984, one of the highest growth rates in the postwar era.

Gohmert: Mueller Unmasked

"Robert Mueller's months-long witch hunt into so-called 'Russian collusion' continues to spiral out of control. Despite hundreds of hours of non-stop liberal-media coverage, most Americans still know very little about the man behind the probe. Congressman Louie Gohmert has had enough of the special counsel's abuse of power, and he's prepared to 'unmask' Mueller's questionable history and total lack of judgment spanning decades."

Trump approach to North Korea seems to bear fruit as the hermit kingdom comes to the negotiating table

By Natalia Castro

For nearly 70 years, conflict surrounding North Korea, South Korea, and the United States has put countless lives at risk and left U.S.-North Korean relations in a cold limbo. Over the last decade, North Korea has become an increasingly volatile threat as it has pushed for nuclear weapons, but now that changed this year with heightened pressure from the United States. In a historic step, North and South Korea have agreed to come together in the first real diplomatic breakthrough since the end of the Cold War, setting the path for victory for every actor.

For the first time since the physical end of the Korean War, North Korean Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un and South Korean President Moon Jae-in walked between the two territories and committed to a peace negotiation. The meeting preempts a summit between President Trump and Kim which, if successful, could lead to the formal end of the Korean War and the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, which the two declared to be common goals.

The U.S. and North Korea have had a long and troubled history, and no U.S. leader has been able to produce a favorable outcome between the two nations, yet now, international leaders are praising President Trump for his ability to unite the countries.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe explained during his April visit to the U.S. that Trump has "successfully forged a mutual understanding" after "very in-depth discussions" on North Korea and has credited Trump with demonstrating "unwavering determination in addressing the challenge" of North Korea.

Abe has been a firm supporter of Trump's aggressive approach toward North Korea.

Just a few months ago, Kim was threatening missiles against Guam and was rapidly working toward a nuclear-tipped missile force. President Trump responded by threatening to unleash "fire and fury" upon North Korea if an attack actualized. Within weeks, the United Nations Security Council

unanimously adopted a new sanctions resolution against North Korea, showing the willingness of Trump to follow through on aggressive steps against the country.

This sharply contrasted the actions of the Obama Administration, which took a tempered down, more diplomatic route toward the country. In fact, when Trump adopted this "fire and fury" policy, former Director of National Intelligence James Clapper, who served under former President Barack Obama, criticized Trump. Clapper told CNN's "Anderson Cooper 360," "We need to tone down the rhetoric of regime change and all this. As desirable as that may be, all that does is amp up the paranoia."

But this strategy did not amp up paranoia for anyone except Kim Jong-un, which finally allowed diplomacy to be possible.

The newly confirmed Secretary of State Mike Pompeo recently disclosed that he had met with Kim Jong-un in early April to discuss the ending of North Korea's nuclear weapons programs.

In Pompeo's first press conference, he explained, "We would not be where we are today without President Trump's maximum pressure campaign and the work that has been done all around the world to apply pressure to North Korea... The economic pressure that has been put in place by this global effort that President Trump has led... [Kim Jong-un] to believe that it is in his best interest to come to the table and talk about denuclearization."

Pompeo has admitted challenges still lie ahead, as trust with North Korea remains low, but with a serious threat of force from the U.S., resolution can be possible.

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning explained in a press release, "In order to show that they are sincere in their desire for peace, the North Koreans need to release the three Americans still being held hostage by the regime, followed closely by providing a full accounting of the North Korean nuclear and ballistic missile programs and U.S. inspectors must be part of the inspection teams throughout the denuclearization process. Once the peninsula is nuclear free, the U.S. can begin the process of bringing our troops home from South Korea."

The conflict between North Korea and South Korea and the United States is not yet over, but thanks to the efforts by the Trump administration, it has taken a significant step toward resolution. If North Korea is serious about the prospects of peace, the U.S. is ready to have its demands met and lead the global effort toward a denuclearized Korean Peninsula.

Natalia Castro is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

First quarter disappoints again at only 2.3 percent growth annualized

By Robert Romano

One of the puzzles of the U.S. economy since the turn of the century has been declining economic growth rates, with the economy not having grown above 4 percent since 2000 and not above 3 percent since 2005.

To get a good year of robust economic growth, it helps a lot to have a strong first quarter. Unfortunately, 2018 is not shaping up to be one of those years, after only growing at an inflation-adjusted 2.3 percent annualized in the first quarter.

Now, to get to even 3 percent for the year will require a big bounce back in the second quarter, at about 3.8 percent annualized, where we assume 3 percent growth in each of the remaining quarters for the year.

Each quarter that goes by failing to get back on pace, the much more difficult it becomes to reach 3 percent for the year.

But it's absolutely doable. There are still further estimates to be made, so it is possible the first quarter could be revised upward.

Also, the second quarter will be the first quarter when the Trump tax cuts have fully been realized as the withholding tables were changed in February so perhaps there will be a bump there.

However, it should be recalled that in 1981, the first year of the Reagan tax cut, was not signed into law until Aug. 1981. The economy grew just 2.6 percent that year.

A year later, in 1982, was the second worst recession in modern history when the economy shrank 1.9 percent. Interest rates were brought to such high levels it stifled investment. Unemployment spiked.

But once the waters had receded, the economy boomed. 4.6 percent in 1983. 7.3 percent in 1984, one of the highest growth rates in the postwar era.

So, sometimes, it can take a while for the economic stimulus of a tax cut to take root. Right now, it's good for household budgets having the extra money in the bank and don't forget that corporate taxes were cut, too, and hundreds of billions of dollars are being repatriated. But it might not create an immediate stimulus. It could, but it might not.

There are of course other factors. The long-term slowing growth has coincided with the globalization of the economy, with production being outsourced. China was granted most favored nation trading status in 2000 and entered the World Trade Organization in 2001. Since then, economic growth worldwide and investment has shifted to emerging markets.

Although President Trump has begun getting tough on trade with his recent rounds of steel and aluminum tariffs, the shifting of global supply chains overseas did not happen overnight and production won't shift back into the U.S. immediately either.

Another factor to consider is the slowing growth of the working age population, which weighs heavily on the potential growth of the economy. The theory here is that the fewer new people who are participating in the economy, the less new money will be spent in the economy, therefore driving growth down.

But in that case, the slower economic growth we see today might just be a benign indicator, unless there are reasons you really need robust growth.

Here the $21 trillion national debt comes to mind. Without that, you might care a lot less about how fast the economy grows. With it, you have to worry that once again the growth of the national debt is far outpacing the growth of the economy.

Consider, right now, the debt to GDP ratio sits at 105 percent. Since 2000 the debt has grown by about 7.4 percent a year, but nominally, that is, before adjusting for inflation, the economy has only grown at about 3.96 percent annually.

At those rates, in 20 years, the national debt will be $89.1 trillion, but the GDP only $42.7 trillion, a whopping debt to GDP ratio of 208 percent.

Therefore, more robust economic growth should be a national goal. Because the alternative is the debt will very soon be so large we can never hope to pay it back.

More immediately, though, there are reasons to be optimistic. Even if the economy slows down in the interim, with the pent-up demand taking root via the tax and deregulation stimulus taking root, we might see a bigger number, sooner or later. Hopefully it's sooner. Stay tuned.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

ALG Editor's Note: In the following report from Sean Hannity, Louie Gohmert unveils a thorough and well researched report he worked on to dispel the myth that Robert Mueller is infallible:

Sean Hannity

GOHMERT: Mueller Unmasked

By Hannity Staff

Robert Mueller's months-long witch hunt into so-called 'Russian collusion' continues to spiral out of control. Despite hundreds of hours of non-stop liberal-media coverage, most Americans still know very little about the man behind the probe.

Congressman Louie Gohmert has had enough of the special counsel's abuse of power, and he's prepared to 'unmask' Mueller's questionable history and total lack of judgment spanning decades.

In Robert Mueller: Unmasked, the GOP Representative pulls back the curtain and exposes the sordid truth surrounding the special counsel's career.

"What I have accumulated here is absolutely shocking upon the realization that Mueller's disreputable, twisted history speaks to the character of the man placed in a position to attempt to legalize a coup against a lawfully elected President," writes Gohmert.

Click here for the full report from Rep. Louie Gohmert (R-Texas).

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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To: Abboud, Michael [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b6f5af791a1842f1adcc088cbf9ed3ce-Abboud, Mic]
Subject: Republicans have the power to energize the Trump base in 2018, but time is running out

If the Republican establishment spent more time doing what they campaigned on, then maybe their base would be more energized

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April 25, 2018

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Republicans have the power to energize the Trump base in 2018, but time is running out

Congressional Republicans are whining about dozens of GOP incumbents being outraised by Democrat challengers. According to the elite, this is not supposed to happen; incumbents almost always raise more money than challengers. If the Republican establishment spent more time doing what they campaigned on, then maybe their base would be more energized.

President Trump threatens to pull out of NAFTA if Mexico fails to stop illegal immigrants and if the wall is not built

President Donald Trump on Twitter on April 23 declared that any new deal on NAFTA will be contingent on Mexico getting a handle on illegal immigrants pouring over the southern border and Congress getting its act together to fully fund the southern border wall. All but daring them, nice trade agreement you have there, shame if anything were to happen to it.

Mike Pompeo is already a successful peacemaker. Democrats ought to support him

At a time when the United States is trying to conduct groundbreaking yet delicate diplomatic relations, it's unconscionable to leave the position of America's top diplomat vacant. Leaving the role empty as a qualified nominee waits would stall peace talks and will enable North Korea to pursue its nuclear agenda — an agenda that makes many Americans the target of a nuclear missile. Though Democrats think their actions will hurt Trump, their obstruction will ultimately hurt the American people, not to mention their own re-election odds.

Do the 180 erased, 'hacked' DNC computers constitute obstruction of justice?

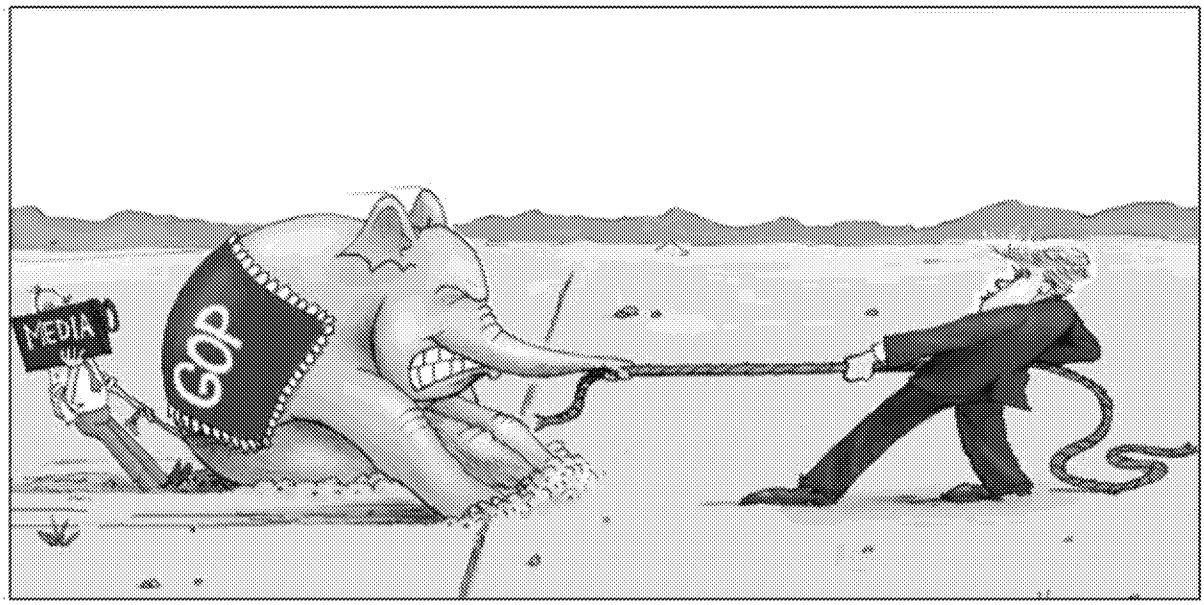
Rick Manning stated "DNC leadership in apparent collusion with the Obama FBI was given custodianship over key evidence related to whether or not Russia attempted to hack the DNC's computers. At some point since that allegation was initially made in 2016, James Comey's FBI should

have taken possession of those computers and servers, but failed. Now, more than 180 of the affected computers were erased according to the DNC's own court filing, software removed and operating systems reinstalled, most probably resulting in the destruction of key evidence of what the DNC alleges was a crime."

Margot Cleveland: FEC Records Indicate Hillary Campaign Illegally Laundered $84 Million

The lawsuit, filed last week in a DC district court, summarizes the DNC-Clinton conspiracy and provides detailed evidence from Federal Election Commission (FEC) filings confirming the complaint's allegations that Democrats undertook an extensive scheme to violate federal campaign limits.

Republicans have the power to energize the Trump base in 2018, but time is running out



By Printus LeBlanc

In a National Journal article last week, Congressional Republicans whined about dozens of GOP incumbents being outraised by Democrat challengers. According to the elite, this is not supposed to happen; incumbents almost always raise more money than challengers. If the Republican establishment spent more time doing what they campaigned on, then maybe their base would be more energized.

The Republicans were given control of Congress because of Obamacare. For four elections the Republican establishment kept saying give us power, and we will get rid of Obamacare. The base rose up and gave the establishment the House in 2010. In 2014, the base came through once again and gave the establishment the Senate. Finally, in 2016 the Republican base gave Republicans control of everything the House, the Senate, and the Presidency. The Republicans have only had full control of the government for 16 years out of the last 100, and what did they do with it? Fail.

The only part of the law that was repealed with the individual mandate, which will take effect in January.

Republicans were given the House, Senate, and Presidency for many reasons and one of them was getting rid all of Obamacare. The government intrusion into the healthcare market had dire consequences that still reverberate today. Obamacare has stifled job growth and raised insurance premiums for millions of Americans. It was a rallying cry for millions of Republican base voters. Not one Republican ran an election campaign on keeping Obamacare. Senate Majority Leader, Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) even stated, "should be repealed root and branch," when speaking about the abomination. Despite the bluster from Republicans in campaigns, most of Obamacare remains intact.

The rising national debt was another reason Republicans were able to regain control of the government. For eight years under President Obama, the national debt ballooned to unfathomable numbers just two decades ago. Under Obama, the national debt was raised by 74 percent or $8.588 trillion. Republicans were furious at this and promised to balance the budget if they had control of the government. Last time anyone checked, Congress passed a $1.3 trillion omnibus spending bill that would make Obama proud.

To add insult to injury, after Republican Congressional leadership worked with the Democrat party to give them almost everything they wanted in the budget, leadership allowed a vote on a balanced budget amendment to take place. The amendment failed with several Republicans voting against the measure knowing it was a meaningless vote because if leadership cared about a balanced budget, it would have had the vote before the omnibus vote.

The latest slap in the face to the conservatives of the Republican Party is the news that leadership is working on an immigration bill, that is, amnesty. There is now talk the establishment is working to get an immigration bill passed before the primary, something the less than a third of the American believe should be a priority.

President Trump won the election when no one, including the Republican establishment, believed he could. President Trump's stance on illegal immigration was particularly irksome to the establishment since the 2012 Romney election autopsy report had told Republicans to pander to illegal immigrants. President Trump was right, and the establishment was wrong, but the establishment continues to push amnesty. How is passing amnesty going to get the Republican base excited enough to donate money and get out and vote?

While it hasn't been the best Congress ever, there are reasons to have hope. There is still time to rally the Trump base that won the election 2016, but time is running out.

The Republicans were able to get the tax bill passed with zero help from the Democrat Party. The vast majority of Americans saw their pay increase as a result of the tax reform bill. Millions of Americans were also given bonuses in the thousands as a direct result of the bill. How are Democrats going to campaign on not voting for tax cuts when they had the chance?

Not only did the tax bill put more money in people's pockets, it also repealed the individual mandate of Obamacare. It allowed for oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The extremely unpopular provision of the healthcare abomination taxed people that could not afford health insurance. The tax cost hardworking Americans thousands a year in penalties. The Democrats are going to have a tough time trying to explain to people that cannot afford insurance their plan to fine them for not being able to afford insurance.

Another high note for the Republicans is the passage of the VA Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act. The legislation allows the Secretary of the Department of Veteran's Affairs to fire employees for cause. Prior to the law's passage, it was almost impossible to fire an employee of the VA for inferior performance.

A number of Obama midnight regulations were repealed under the Congressional Review Act as one of Congress' first orders of business.

And while the Senate has been outpaced by a snail when it comes to political appointees and some judges, Republicans were able to get Neil Gorsuch confirmed to the Supreme Court. Despite the Democrat obstruction, the President was able to get his twelfth federal appeals court nominee approved, setting a record for the most circuit court picks confirmed in the first year of a presidency.

Republicans have earned a D for their work so far. Not a failing grade but passing by the slimmest of margins. They have the power to bring their grade up, but they had better get to work. With House Speaker Paul Ryan retiring, now is the time for new leadership. Congress must do what they campaigned on, get the debt under control, repeal Obamacare, and secure the border. If you do what you campaigned on, the conservative base will come out in masse and reaffirm the GOP majority. Right now, however, the base is not happy.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

President Trump threatens to pull out of NAFTA if Mexico fails to stop illegal immigrants and if the wall is not built

By Robert Romano

"Mexico, whose laws on immigration are very tough, must stop people from going through Mexico and into the U.S. We may make this a condition of the new NAFTA Agreement. Our Country cannot accept what is happening! Also, we must get Wall funding fast."

That was President Donald Trump on Twitter on April 23, saying that any new deal on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) will be contingent on Mexico getting a handle on illegal immigrants pouring over the southern border.

It will also be contingent on Congress getting its act together to build the southern border wall.

Once again, Trump is demonstrating that he understands the leverage he possesses absolutely correctly, daring Congress and Mexico to ignore the illegal immigration problem to its own detriment. All but saying, that's a nice trade agreement you have there, shame if anything were to happen to it.

Anyone who still doubts President Trump's resolve at this stage to get better deals for the American people has not been paying attention.

Trump pulled out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership and has reaffirmed just last week that it's for good as he spoke of working on a bilateral trade deal with Japan instead.

Trump withdrew from the Paris climate accords.

Trump decertified the Iran nuclear deal and now is considering actively withdrawing from it.

Trump challenged the NATO alliance to spend more for its own defense and the allies have responded.

Trump only gave South Korea an exemption from the 25 percent steel tariff after it agreed to stop steel dumping and allow more U.S.-made automobiles into its economy.

As for Canada and Mexico, Trump has said their exemptions from the steel and also the 10 percent aluminum tariff are contingent on working in good faith on NAFTA renegotiations.

Trump has also applied real pressure, in concert with China, on North Korea. A summit is planned, but Trump has said if it's not a good deal on denuclearization, the U.S. will withdraw.

These are real applications of American power on the world stage. They are not the words of somebody who is bluffing.

The President alone can conclude treaties and other foreign agreements. NAFTA itself makes clear in via Article 2205 that the U.S. reserves the right to leave.

President Trump is not bluffing. Do not doubt him.

So, if the President says if Mexico does not start getting illegal immigration under control coming across the southern border, including the caravan of Hondurans still making its way north, then NAFTA is at stake, he means it.

If he says Congress had better provide funding for the southern border wall, he means it.

That is, if they truly love NAFTA, which is something of a holy relic in the D.C. swamp. Given the scorn that was heaped upon Trump in 2016 for opposing NAFTA — as the American people,

particularly in the Rust Belt cheered and gave him their votes — you might come away with the impression that some members of Congress would sell their own children to keep NAFTA.

Surely, then, Congress could find the funds to fully fund construction of the southern border wall. And Mexico can get control of its side of the border.

Sometimes, proper incentives are needed to get something done. Taking NAFTA hostage may be just the right prescription for President Trump. Let's see if Congress and Mexico start to move. It might take a few more tariffs before they get the message.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

USA TODAY

Mike Pompeo is already a successful peacemaker. Democrats ought to support him.

By Rick Manning

A casual observer might be surprised to learn that Mike Pompeo is in the midst of a confirmation battle to become President Trump's secretary of state. After all, he's already conducting high-stakes diplomatic negotiations for the United States.

On Monday afternoon, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee strictly along party lines to confirm Pompeo, the former CIA Director, to the full Senate for confirmation. Not one Democrat voted to

recommend him. Regardless of that vote, the nomination will go to the full Senate for a vote — where it will again face entrenched opposition from the Democrats. Over the past several days, a number of Democrats who had been reluctant to put Trump's pick in Foggy Bottom announced that they would vote to confirm Pompeo. Good for them, and good for our national interests. But a number of their peers are still undecided, and if they don't make the right decision, Pompeo might not be confirmed.

What's remarkable about this furor over Pompeo's nomination is that it persists even after the public learned that he served as the president's envoy during a secret Easter weekend meeting with North Korean dictator Kim Jong-un. *The Washington Post* reported that Pompeo "has taken the lead on the administration's negotiations with Pyongyang," and his meeting with Kim "marks the highest-level contact between the two countries since 2000," when then-Secretary of State Madeleine Albright met with the late dictator Kim Jong Il.

The stakes were high: Part of the administration's historic attempts to denuclearize North Korea, the meeting sets the stage for a highly anticipated summit between Kim and Trump himself. And by all accounts, Pompeo's meeting was a success.

Afterwards, North Korean officials confirmed that Kim was willing to negotiate potential denuclearization. During his confirmation hearing earlier this month, Pompeo told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that he is "optimistic" the United States can set conditions that will lead to a conversation between Kim and Trump that "will set us down the course of achieving a diplomatic outcome that ... America and the world so desperately need." He didn't mention the meeting, but it's now clear that it was a source of his optimism.

Meanwhile, Trump tweeted that the "meeting went very smoothly and a good relationship was formed." It even earned praise from frequent Trump critic Rep. Adam Schiff, who called the meeting "good news for diplomacy," adding, "I'm glad that the meeting took place." Pompeo's efforts are a concrete step towards a long-held American foreign policy goal of a denuclearized North Korea, and a world free of the communist regime's threats.

The successful meeting is just the latest example of Pompeo's preparedness for the role of secretary of state. His impressive resume includes graduating from West Point, earning a law degree from Harvard, and serving as a Congressman. Those credentials are why, when he was up for CIA Director last year, the Senate confirmed him by a 66-32 vote. Since then, he has learned even more about the national security threats and challenges the United States faces around the globe.

Yet no committee Democrats recommended him, and some red state Democrats still haven't said how they'll vote later this week. That includes Claire McCaskill, D-Mo., and Bill Nelson, D-Fla. (Doug Jones, who was elected Senator of Alabama earlier this year, is still on the fence as well.)

Though these senators are surely focused on the uphill campaigns they face this fall, now is not the time to play political games: With North Korea's nuclear capabilities on the line, we need stability in the State Department. Besides, voters don't like flip-flopping. How would Donnelly and McCaskill, who voted "yea" for Pompeo as CIA Director, explain a "no" vote now? Would they take a page out of John Kerry's book and say they were for Pompeo before they were against him?

At a time when the United States is trying to conduct groundbreaking yet delicate diplomatic relations, it's unconscionable to leave the position of America's top diplomat vacant. Leaving the role empty as a qualified nominee waits would stall peace talks and will enable North Korea to pursue its nuclear agenda — an agenda that makes many Americans the target of a nuclear missile. Though Democrats

think their actions will hurt Trump, their obstruction will ultimately hurt the American people, not to mention their own re-election odds.

These red state Democrats in the Senate should cease their political games and act quickly to confirm Pompeo.

Rick Manning is president of Americans for Limited Government.

Do the 180 erased, 'hacked' DNC computers constitute obstruction of justice?

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning issued the following statement calling attention to the DNC civil suit filing stating that "the DNC was required to decommission more than 140 servers, remove and reinstall all software, including the operating systems, for more than 180 computers, and rebuild at least 11 servers":

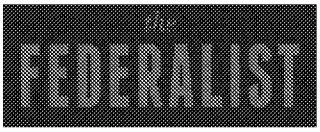
"DNC leadership in apparent collusion with the Obama FBI was given custodianship over key evidence related to whether or not Russia attempted to hack the DNC's computers. At some point since that allegation was initially made in 2016, James Comey's FBI should have taken possession of those computers and servers, but failed. Now, more than 180 of the affected computers were erased according to the DNC's own court filing, software removed and operating systems reinstalled, most probably resulting in the destruction of key evidence of what the DNC alleges was a crime. Often, these subsequent actions become the only knowable facts surrounding a criminal activity and if as the DNC alleged in their lawsuit that their computers were hacked by Russian sources, the destruction of that evidence could in itself be a criminal act.

"Given the admitted destruction of evidence by the DNC to support their civil suit that absolutely alleges crimes were committed, it is incumbent on the court to ensure that all forensic data, correspondence and all other communications related to the hack be protected and preserved not only at the DNC but at Crowdstrike, the DNC-paid for IT firm that did the only analysis of the DNC systems, and Perkins Coie, the law firm that hired them.

"One key consideration for the court might be driven by the raid of Trump personal attorney Michael Cohen's legal offices and residence, which is that if attorney-client privilege is void when there's an allegation of potential criminal activity, then the DNC law firm Perkins Coie should subjected to the same standard, or else all evidence obtained in the Cohen raid should be determined to be off limits as a violation of the President's Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Amendment rights. There have been obvious violations of federal law by failed Democrat candidate Hillary Clinton and her campaign that have been consistently ignored by federal investigators, while the President has been exposed to microscopic scrutiny of every aspect of his campaign. This is partisan double standard threatens the Constitution and the rule of law and must not be allowed to stand."

Click here for the full press release.

ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from The Federalist, Margot Cleveland reports on a recently filed lawsuit in DC that appears to show a money laundering scheme in the Hillary Clinton campaign:



Bombshell: FEC Records Indicate Hillary Campaign Illegally Laundered $84 Million

By Margot Cleveland

The press continues to feed the dying Russia collusion conspiracy theory, spending Friday's news cycle regurgitating Democrat talking points from the just-filed Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act lawsuit against the Trump campaign, WikiLeaks, and Russia.

Yet the mainstream media took no notice of last week's federal court filing that exposes an $84 million money-laundering conspiracy the Democratic National Committee and the Hillary Clinton campaign executed during the 2016 presidential election in violation of federal campaign-finance law.

That lawsuit, filed last week in a DC district court, summarizes the DNC-Clinton conspiracy and provides detailed evidence from Federal Election Commission (FEC) filings confirming the complaint's allegations that Democrats undertook an extensive scheme to violate federal campaign limits.

From Bundling To Money Laundering

Dan Backer, a campaign-finance lawyer and attorney-of-record in the lawsuit, explained the underlying law in an article for Investor's Business Daily: Under federal law, "an individual donor can contribute $2,700 to any candidate, $10,000 to any state party committee, and (during the 2016 cycle) $33,400 to a national party's main account. These groups can all get together and take a single check from a donor for the sum of those contribution limits—it's legal because the donor cannot exceed the base limit for any one recipient. And state parties can make unlimited transfer to their national party."

This legal loophole allows "bundlers" to raise large sums of money from wealthy donors—more than $400,000 at a time—filtering the funds to the national committees. Democrats and Republicans alike exploit this tactic. But once the money reaches the national committees, other limits apply.

Suspecting the DNC had exceeded those limits, a client of Backer's, the Committee to Defend the President, began reviewing FEC filings to determine whether there was excessive coordination between the DNC and Clinton. What Backer discovered, as he explained in an interview, was much worse. There was "extensive evidence in the Democrats' own FEC reports, when coupled with their own public statements that demonstrated massive straw man contributions papered through the state parties, to the DNC, and then directly to Clinton's campaign—in clear violation of federal campaign-finance law."

On behalf of his clients, on December 15, 2017 Backer filed an 86-page complaint with the FEC, asking the FEC to commence enforcement proceedings against Hillary Clinton, her campaign and its treasurer, the DNC and its treasurer, and the participating state Democratic committees. The complaint, and an attached exhibit consisting of nearly 20 pages of Excel spreadsheets, detailed the misconduct and provided concrete evidence supporting the allegations. In short, here's what happened and what the evidence establishes.

Think Of It Like A Shell Game With Millions Of Dollars

During the 2016 presidential election, Hillary Clinton, the DNC, and participating state Democratic committees established the Hillary Victory Fund (HVF) as a joint fundraising committee to accept contributions from large donors, some exceeding $400,000. So far, so good. To comply with campaign finance law, the HVF needed to transfer the donations to the specified recipients, whether the Clinton campaign, down-ticket Democrats, the DNC, or state committees.

FEC records, however, show several large contributions reported as received by the HVF and the same amount on the same day (or occasionally the following day) recorded as received by the DNC from a state Democratic committee, but *without* the state Democratic committee *ever* reporting the contribution.

For instance, the HVF reported transferring $19,500 to the Mississippi Democratic Party on November 2, 2015, and the Democratic National Committee reported receiving $19,500 from the Mississippi Democratic Party on November 2, 2015. But the Mississippi Democratic Party *never* recorded the receipt or the disbursement of the $19,500, and without the Mississippi Democratic Party controlling the funds, the HVF's contribution to the DNC violated campaign finance law.

Click here for the full story.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Message

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To: Abboud, Michael [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b6f5af791a1842f1adcc088cbf9ed3ce-Abboud, Mic]
Subject: Did Kanye West just single-handedly defeat the thought police by telling the world he loves President Trump?

Kanye West takes on the thought police — and triumphs

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

April 27, 2018

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Gemma Mullin: North and South Korea agree to 'COMPLETE denuclearisation' as Moon Jae-in vows 'there will be no war' with Kim Jong-un

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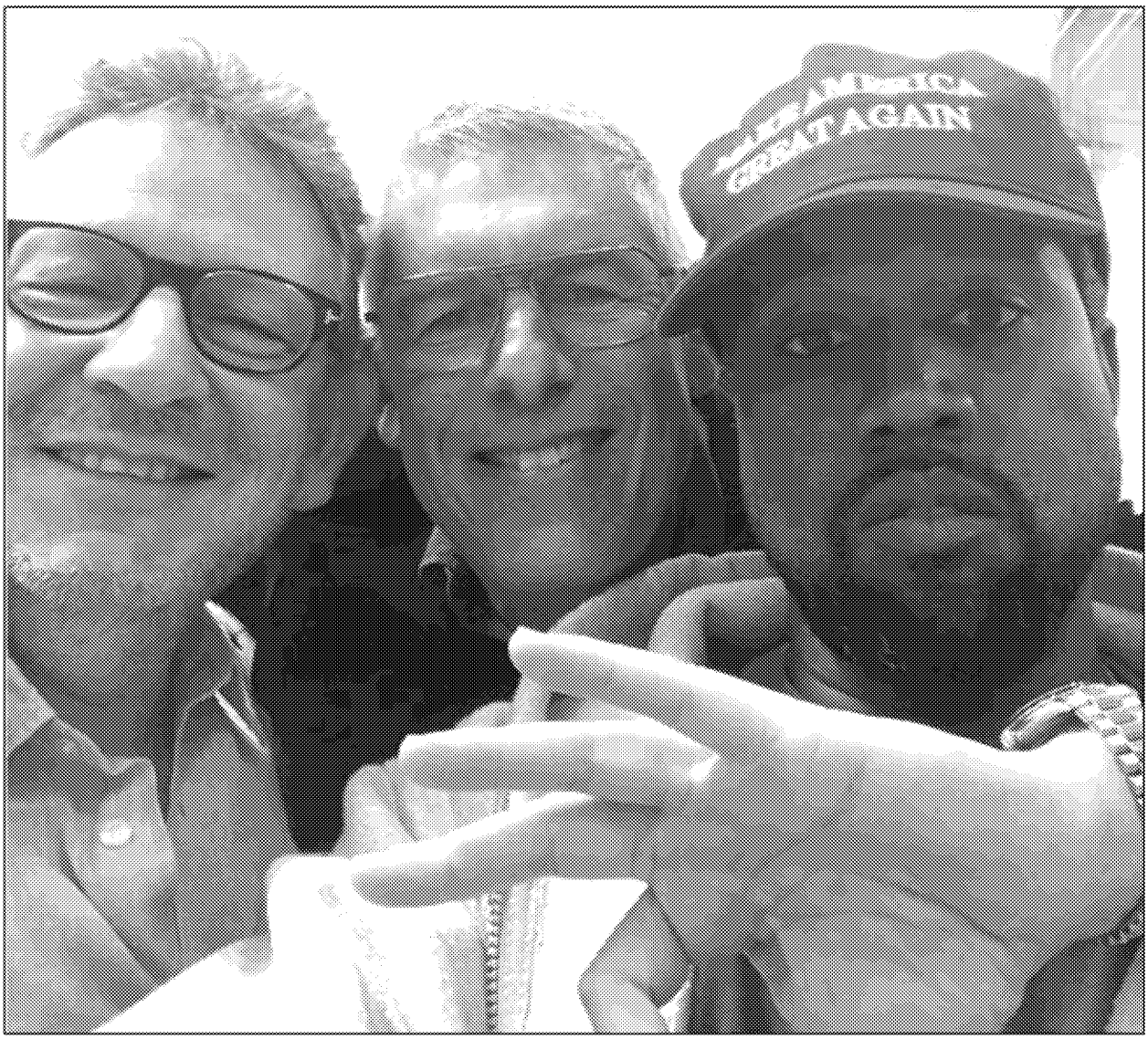
Did Kanye West just single-handedly defeat the thought police by telling the world he loves President Trump?



By Robert Romano

Whatever you do, don't put on a Make America Great Again hat.

Just ask Kanye West.

After the rap star tweeted something supporting President Donald Trump — insofar as it was not anti-Trump — his whole world changed. On April 25, West wrote, "You don't have to agree with trump but the mob can't make me not love him. We are both dragon energy. He is my brother. I love everyone. I don't agree with everything anyone does. That's what makes us individuals. And we have the right to independent thought."

It didn't matter that in that same minute, he also tweeted, "I love Hillary too" or that right before, he had prefaced the tweet by stating, "Free thinkers don't fear retaliation for your thoughts. The traditional thinkers are only using thoughts and words but they are in a mental prison. You are free. You've already won. Feel energized. Move in love not fear. Be afraid of nothing."

Or that a minute later he added, "Love who you want to love. That's free thought. I'm not even political. I'm not a democrat or a republican."

None of that mattered to the thought police, who immediately sprang into action as West was savaged on his own Twitter feed. It wasn't that he had posted something that was pro-Trump. It's that it wasn't anti-Trump.

Later, West posted a picture of himself wearing a Make America Great Again hat and a picture revealing that his hat had been signed by Trump personally. And then a picture of the President retweeting West, thanking him and writing, "very cool!"

MAKE AMERICA
GREAT AGAIN

Songwriter John Legend later texted his friend, which West posted, stating, "So many people who love you feel so betrayed right now because they know the harm that Trump's policies cause, especially to people of color. Don't let this be part of your legacy." To which, West replied, cordially but pointedly, "I love you John and I appreciate your thoughts. You bringing up my fans or my legacy is a tactic based on fear used to manipulate my free thought."

Later, Chance the Rapper tweeted in support of West, "Black people don't have to be democrats" and then predicted the next President would be an independent.

That was enough to break the Internet. Chance, particularly, inspired by West, had single-handedly smashed identity politics in a single tweet. It seems some won't be silenced so easily.

West later doubled down on Twitter, writing, "Claudio will be awesome when me and Chance build new homes in Chicago" and "Obama was in office for eight years and nothing in Chicago changed." Whoa.

It must be noted that it is practically impossible to draw an electoral map Democrats can win particularly in presidential contests without the near universal support from black Americans they currently garner — who comprise 12 percent of the population but 89 percent of whom tend to vote Democrat according to exit polls.

What Chance suggested really cuts to the heart of any political power Democrats currently wield because it begs the question, what if blacks didn't vote for Democrats?

Leaving that aside, that doesn't mean there would a sudden shift to vote Republican either.

West has clarified that he does not necessarily share the President's political views. It was not an endorsement as much as a show of respect to the President of the United States. Similarly, Trump's supporters might find little else in common with West, but there's a larger point West is making that does have a universal appeal.

Perhaps it's just as West said and he's tired of all the hateful politics and political violence that have become so prevalent today, and so wished as he stated to express a unifying message of love, letting Americans of all creeds and color that it's okay to disagree because at the end of the day, we're still all Americans.

Actor Rob Lowe had a similar tweet in response to the ratings success of the new Roseanne show, which features Roseanne as a pro-Trump lead character. In it, Lowe called attention to something that has been seemingly lost today but is actually just being ignored. Millions of Americans "who are able to laugh and love together as they passionately disagree," in Lowe's words, which describes my family and surely yours, too.

That's the America I believe in. The one with a dialogue that actually exists in everyday life, if not in the invective and personal attacks we typically find from the social media political warriors behaving as society's thought police, who are so invested in identity politics and political correctness they cannot countenance such a stunning development as free thought.

For example, Rolling Stone's Jon Dolan, who has written plenty of positive reviews of West, in the past calling his work that of a "genius," was particularly vile in his denunciation, writing, "It's music that until this deal-breaking week most of us could still listen to with revelation and enjoyment." Dolan still called him "the engine of a massive amount of amazing music full of raw beauty and exhilarating contradictions" but concluded he was a "jerkoff" so as to leave no doubt.

You see, now that West simply said he loves Trump and called him his brother — and Hillary and all people, too, but forget about that — and that's "deal-breaking." How could a message of peace lead to such venom?

Still, how refreshing. And how telling it is that today people thinking for themselves is so controversial. Bravo to Kanye West for putting an exclamation point on it.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

UFCW Bosses Should Resign

By Richard McCarty

From newsrooms to boardrooms, from college campuses to church campuses, and from Hollywood studios to the halls of Congress, powerful men are being called to account for alleged sexual misconduct. But somehow, Mickey Kasparian, a United Food and Commercial Workers International vice president, has managed to keep his job in spite of the scandal swirling around him. Both Kasparian (who is also the president of UFCW Local 135) and Marc Perrone, the UFCW International president, have handled the scandal very poorly; and both of them – leaders of a union in which women make up a majority – should resign.

Kasparian's scandal began in December of 2016 when Sandy Naranjo, a former UFCW employee, accused him of gender discrimination, retaliation, and wrongful termination. In her lawsuit, Naranjo alleged that "Kasparian created a work environment that was particularly hostile toward women"; she had previously viewed her job as a "dream job."

Just days after the first lawsuit was filed, a second former UFCW employee, Isabel Vasquez, broke her silence and accused Kasparian of something much worse – demanding she have a sexual relationship with him. Fearing for her job, she had complied with his humiliating demands, eventually retiring early. Kasparian kept an inappropriate picture of Vasquez behind his desk, and only removed it around the time she filed her lawsuit.

In April of 2017, a third former UFCW employee, Anabel Arauz, filed a lawsuit against Kasparian alleging discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. In her lawsuit, Arauz referred to the union and Kasparian's "demonstrated animus, bias, and discriminatory intent/conduct against women." Last December, Melody Godinez, who is an SEIU member and a union executive board member, filed a

lawsuit against Kasparian alleging that he had repeatedly sexually assaulted her. At her deposition, Godinez expressed a fear of Kasparian, whom she once viewed "as a friend and mentor."

It appears that the allegations against Kasparian have been costly. It was recently reported that the legal expenses for Kasparian's union local were more than four times higher than usual this past year. In recent years, his union has spent an average of $203,000 on legal representation; last year, it spent over $829,000. At the same time, the amount of money the union spent representing its members was lower last year than it has been in more than a decade.

Earlier this month, Perrone, the UFCW International president, responded to a UFCW member who wrote an open letter to him begging him to take action against Kasparian. In his reply, Perrone made it clear that he has no intention of lifting a finger to oust Kasparian. Instead, Perrone made excuses, writing, "You have made suggestions that the International can freely remove a local union president based on accusations made by others... Please understand, the UFCW International Union does not have this authority."

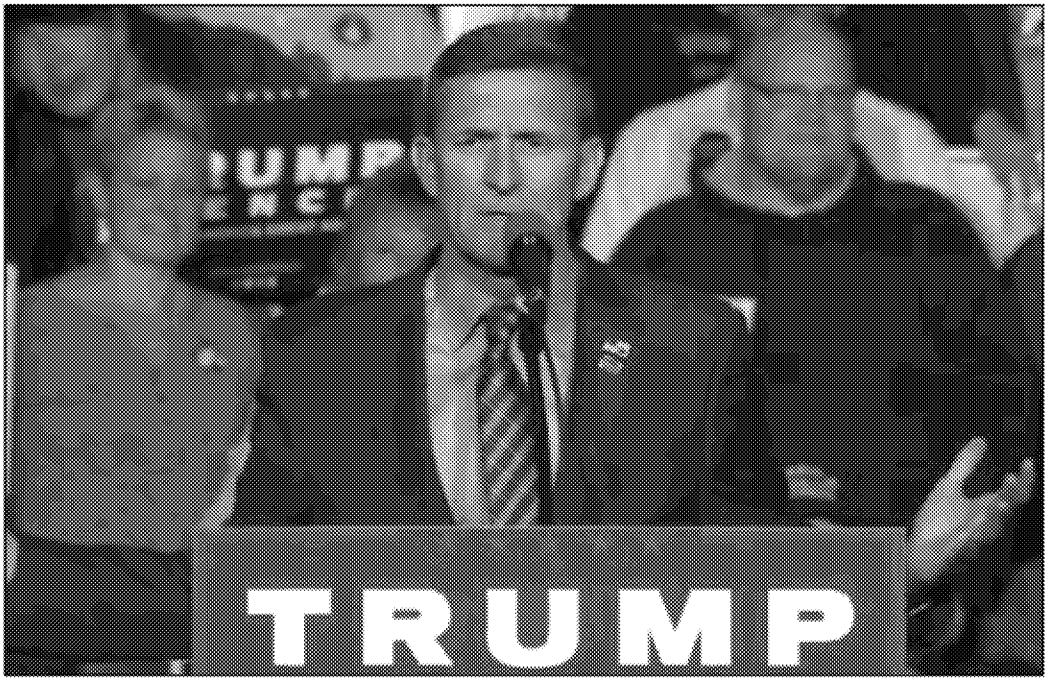
Perrone is trying to mislead with his statement. He would like for us to believe that there is nothing that the International Union can do, but that is not the case at all. In fact, according to the UFCW International Constitution, the UFCW Executive Committee has the authority to both suspend and remove any officer "whenever the activities of any... officer of a chartered body involve, in the judgment of the International Executive Committee, an emergency situation injurious to the welfare or best interests of the International Union or a chartered body..."

After more than a year's worth of embarrassing headlines and protests, it seems that Kasparian's scandals are sufficiently serious to enable the Executive Committee to punish him. Just who is on this Executive Committee which has the authority to decide whether or not to suspend or remove union officers? Perrone and four other UFCW International officers. So if Perrone wanted to fire Kasparian, he would only need two of the other four members of the Executive Committee to vote with him.

For the good of UFCW members, both Kasparian and Perrone should resign. Kasparian, already a divisive labor figure, has been accused of discrimination and/or sexual harassment by multiple Hispanic women from the labor movement; his union has paid enough to settle lawsuits against him already. For over a year, Perrone has refused to take action against Kasparian, and now Perrone has tried to mislead claiming that his hands are tied. His inaction and dishonesty make him unfit to lead.

Richard McCarty is the Director of Research for Americans for Limited Government Foundation.

Progressives are using lawfare to target their political opponents



By Printus LeBlanc

The Democrat Party has unveiled a not so new technique to attack their opponents. Everyone knows about the typical intimidation techniques such as boycotts, protesting, and rioting. Lawfare is an asymmetric technique using the legal system against an enemy. Keeping their enemies tied up in court and legal costs demoralize and sometimes forces the opponents to quit. Republicans need to wake up to tactics of the left and realize they are sometimes playing into their hands.

This has been a successful strategy for the Democrat Party so far, as we have seen with former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn. After the fraudulent Mueller investigation was started, it quickly became apparent Flynn was one of the primary targets. After months of interviews and interrogations, Flynn finally gave in and pled guilty to lying to the FBI. The charge had nothing to do with what Mueller was supposedly investigating, it was just another scalp.

Shortly after the guilty plea, the mainstream media concluded Flynn must have lied to the FBI if he pled guilty. It quickly became apparent the plea had nothing to do with guilt or innocence, it had more to do with finances. Flynn was going broke defending himself against the multimillion-dollar team Mueller sent after him. Almost immediately after pleading guilty, Flynn was forced to sell his home in Alexandria, Va. to pay his legal bills.

Since the guilty plea, it has revealed that former FBI Director James Comey briefed several Members of Congress in March of 2017 on the Flynn matter. Writing for the Washington Examiner, Byron York stated, “According to two sources familiar with the meetings, Comey told lawmakers that the FBI agents who interviewed Flynn did not believe that Flynn had lied to them, or that any inaccuracies in his answers were intentional.” Why did Flynn plead guilty then? Because he couldn’t afford to prove his innocence.

Former Trump campaign advisor Michael Caputo has been under constant siege since the end of the 2016 election. Once the various congressional committees started to investigate the non-existent connections between President Trump and Russia, Mr. Caputo would end up retaining lawyers in March of 2017. Rep. Jackie Speier (D-Calif.) would state Mr. Caputo was Vladimir Putin’s “image consultant” in congressional testimony with no evidence to back up the claim.

So far Mr. Caputo has only been interviewed by the House Intelligence Committee as a witness, but that comes at a steep price. Caputo estimates his legal bill will be in the neighborhood of $125,000, and that is if he is not part of the special counsel probe. If he has to go to the grand jury, the cost could further skyrocket.

Why would anyone want to serve in the Trump administration if they are going to have to spend more than half if not all their salary on lawyers for non-existent crimes? It has become increasingly obvious the Trump-Russia narrative was faked by the DNC and Hillary Campaign, but do the people caught up in the investigation get their time or money back? No.

It appears we had an attempted coup after the last election. Why does it seem the only people that are paying for the coup are Republicans that had nothing to do with Russia? Republicans must realize the longer they keep this sham investigation going instead of focusing on the coup attempt they are only hurting innocent people.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

Super special counsel legislation blasted as unconstitutional 'disastrous idea'

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning issued the following statement blasting the Senate Judiciary Committee proposal to shield Special Counsel Robert Mueller or any future special counsel from firing:

"Americans for Limited Government has always been a leading group in support of Congress reaffirming its constitutional Article I powers. Senator Mike Lee is the leader of the Senate's Article I project and has correctly noted that today's Senate Judiciary Committee action is an unconstitutional attempt to protect a Justice Department at-will, political appointee from firing, effectively stripping the President of his constitutional, Article II power to execute the laws. He is not a civil servant and can be removed at any time.

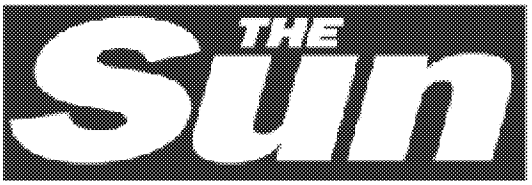
"Even you disagree with Sen. Lee on the constitutionality of the Judiciary Committee's proposal, this is still a disastrous idea. By taking away the Executive Branch's ability to remove a Special Counsel without judicial approval, the Judiciary Committee is effectively creating a permanent position. Once appointed, the Attorney General or Acting Attorney General will be stripped of any meaningful oversight of the actions of the Special Counsel. In effect, the Judiciary Committee proposal would make this and any future Special Counsel one of the most powerful people in the world, able to engage in unending investigations of the President or anyone else without meaningful oversight or worse, with blind eye turned on his misconduct.

"In the case of Robert Mueller, his appointment itself is illegitimate because it does not comport with the regulatory requirement that a specific crime be cited by the Acting Attorney General to be investigated. This failure was used by Mueller to cast and recast wider and wider nets desperately seeking crimes that are far afield from the initial allegations. Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman

Chuck Grassley has made a mistake in even considering this ill-conceived legislation, and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell is 100 percent correct in not wasting any floor time on it."

Click here for the full press release.

ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from The Sun, Gemma Mullin reports on the announcement of an agreement between North and South Korea to denuclearize the peninsula:



North and South Korea agree to 'COMPLETE denuclearisation' as Moon Jae-in vows 'there will be no war' with Kim Jong-un

By Gemma Mullin

At their first summit in more than a decade, the two sides announced they would seek an agreement to establish "permanent" and "solid" peace on the peninsula.

The declaration included promises to pursue military arms reduction, cease "hostile acts," turn their fortified border into a "peace zone," and seek multilateral talks with other countries, such as the United States.

In his first ever press conference in front of the world's media Kim Jong-un said:"We are one nation we cannot be separated. We share the same blood.

"We are living with each other. We are brothers."

The Koreas said they hope the parties will be able to declare an official end to the war by the end of this year.

He made history as he met with rival South Korean President Moon Jae-in for face-to-face talks on the southern side of the border.

President Moon said that the two countries would work to re-unite families who had been separated by the decades long conflict as Kim did what his father and grandfather never managed.

The dictator said his heart was "throbbing" as he became the first North Korean leader to cross the 38th parallel since the Korean War ended 65 years ago.

The two heads of state had "serious, frank" discussions on the topic of denuclearising the peninsula during the first meeting on southern soil in more than six decades.

Kim even quipped about his missile tests saying he wouldn't disturb the South's "early morning sleep anymore".

Both parties are drawing up a joint statement due to be announced together at the close of the discussions which will be followed by a dinner, which would also be attended by Kim's wife, Ri Sol Ju.

Click here for the full story.

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Subject: James Comey admits he knew the FBI investigation of President Trump was inevitable even after he knew it was ongoing at least since Oct. 2016

Comey lied to Trump, who was about to be sworn into office to execute the nation's laws as the President, about the most important law enforcement investigation his agency was undertaking

The Power Beat Daily

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April 17, 2018

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James Comey admits he knew the FBI investigation of President Trump was inevitable even after he knew it was ongoing at least since Oct. 2016

By the time former FBI Director James Comey told then-President Elect Donald Trump in Jan. 2017 that he was not under investigation, the FBI was already investigating his campaign. We know that because the Steele dossier had already been used as evidence to obtain a Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) court warrant against the Trump campaign in Oct. 2016. The surveillance was ongoing. And per the House Select Committee on Intelligence Feb. 2018 memorandum on those 2016 FISA court applications, "Then-Director James Corney signed three FISA applications in question on behalf of the FBI." Comey lied to Trump, who was about to be sworn into office to execute the nation's laws as the President, about the most important law enforcement investigation his agency was undertaking. Why shouldn't he have been fired?

Cartoon: A Higher Ego

James Comey, a legend in his own mind.

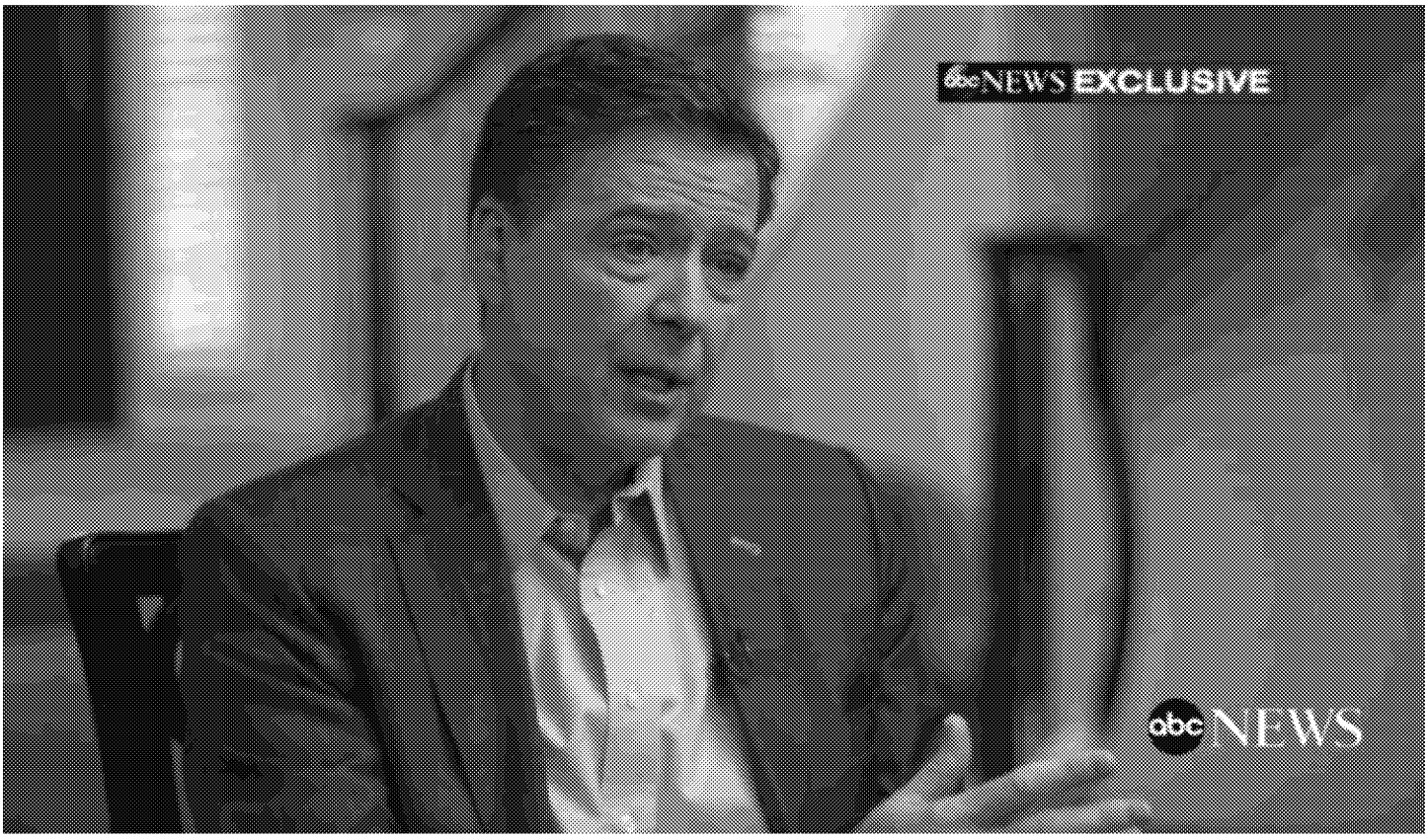
Scooter Libby pardon shows Donald Trump understands Mueller is not about justice, but about getting scalps

If you couldn't tell by the collective gasp from Washington D.C., late last week President Trump pardoned an innocent man, Scooter Libby. The mainstream media went crazy believing the pardon was a signal to the current Special Counsel Robert Mueller, letting him know he will pardon anyone he prosecutes. What is more important is Trump's pardon rights a wrong. Scooter Libby never leaked Valerie Plame's name, Richard Armitage did. Libby was caught up in the net of an overzealous Special Counsel that showed no interest in getting to the truth in order to take down a political enemy. Sound familiar?

PJ Media: Is DOJ Obstructing Congress in the Trump Surveillance Case?

"Did Rep. Devin Nunes (R-CA) really have to threaten to hold FBI Director Christopher Wray and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein in contempt and to start impeachment proceedings? Apparently so. Nunes chairs the House Intelligence Committee. For almost eight months, Wray and Rosenstein stalled his request for an unredacted copy of the memo that launched the Obama administration's investigation/surveillance of the Trump campaign. Eight months."

James Comey admits he knew the FBI investigation of President Trump was inevitable even after he knew it was ongoing at least since Oct. 2016



By Robert Romano

"It might have been a mistake."

That was former FBI Director James Comey appearing on ABC News with George Stephanopoulos that aired April 15, admitting that on Jan. 6, 2017 when he assured then President-Elect Donald Trump that he was not under FBI investigation for Russia collusion, it was very misleading.

Comey had just presented Trump with the Hillary Clinton, DNC-paid for Fusion GPS-Christopher Steele dossier alleging that the President was a Russian agent who had been compromised. He says he assured Trump, "We're not investigating you, sir."

Yet Comey explained, "The general counsel of the F.B.I. had argued, 'Look, it's literally true that we don't have a case open on President-elect Trump. We're looking at other people.' And-- and-- but his argument was, 'There's a problem with you saying that for two reasons. First, inevitably as we move along in the investigation as-- as to whether anyone was working with the Russians, the campaign's going to have to be a focus and the candidate's always the head of the campaign, so inevitably we're going to have to look at him. And second, you're going to create a duty to correct. But if you tell him he's under investigation and that changes, don't you have to go back and tell him…'"

Here, Comey is quoting the FBI's former general counsel, James Baker, as stating that "inevitably we're going to have to look at him," speaking of the President.

This is a stunning admission.

Here, Comey is revealing that before the President had even been sworn in, a major investigation of Trump was already in the works. What he told Trump was factually misleading. It was a lie.

Most of all, because, by then, in Jan. 2017, the Trump campaign was already under investigation. It wasn't merely hypothetical. They weren't thinking about looking into the Trump campaign. They already were. We know that because the Steele dossier had already been used as evidence to obtain a Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) court warrant against the Trump campaign in Oct. 2016. The surveillance was ongoing.

It is unbelievable that Comey would have been unaware of it. Per the House Select Committee on Intelligence Feb. 2018 memorandum on those FISA court applications, "Then-Director James Comey signed three FISA applications in question on behalf of the FBI."

Per Comey's testimony, again affirmed in the ABC News interview, the Steele dossier that made these allegations was "salacious and unverified." Yet, he used it before the FISA court judge and never told the court that it was potentially false, that he doubted it and that it had been paid for by the Democrats.

And still, to this day, Comey is pretending to the American people that the investigation into Trump and his campaign had not yet occurred when Trump was coming into office. When, by the FBI general counsel's own definition — who per Comey had advised him — any investigation into the Trump campaign was an investigation into Trump. Of course they were already looking at Trump. Just look at the timeline. Just look at his statements.

By the time Comey spoke to Trump, the investigation into him and his campaign had been going on for months. And Comey knew it.

On Feb. 14, 2017, the New York Times reported that the Justice Department was in fact investigating Trump and campaign officials for supposed contacts with Russian intelligence officials. But Comey would later testify that that story was false, still maintaining there had been no investigation into Trump at that stage.

Former White House Chief of Staff Reince Priebus, after being informed the story was false by former FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe asked him to come forward and disavow the story. Soon thereafter, stories began circulating of the White House "obstructing" justice. McCabe and Comey certainly should have known which way the investigation was headed, and now we know per Comey quoting Baker, they knew all along that the President would be in the crosshairs, because they had discussed it.

That is, how to approach Trump, the subject of the FBI's ongoing investigation into Russian alleged interference in the 2016 election and the Trump campaign's alleged hand in coordinating with the Russian government to put DNC-hacked emails onto Wikileaks, as the Steele dossier alleged.

Maybe he was in denial. But Comey lied to the then-President Elect about the investigation and then again after Trump was sworn in. Comey has repeatedly attempted to downplay the FBI's investigation that began in 2016, but by then the Justice Department was already all in.

That alone should have been grounds for his firing, which now we know was wholly justified and that, constitutionally and legally, the President had absolute authority to execute. Here was the FBI usurping the President's powers to execute the laws by lying to him about an active investigation by the nations' lead law enforcement agency.

Who did Comey think he was talking to?

Here, he was acting as if Trump would have no role in enforcing the laws in just a matter of days. Like the President, or maybe just this President, is some passive observer in the executive branch. Trump was confronting a faction within the executive branch that believes it has a monopoly on justice. On the truth.

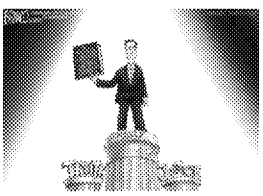
And it continues to this day. Considering the lengths that the Justice Department has gone through to conceal its investigation and to this day is still hiding documents and information from Congress, lying to the President, and so forth after it spied on the opposition party in an election year, it's a wonder everybody in the entire building hasn't been fired.

This is the greatest scandal in the FBI's history, and it happened under James Comey's watch. Perhaps that is the truth he fears the most. For shame.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Cartoon: A Higher Ego

By A.F. Branco



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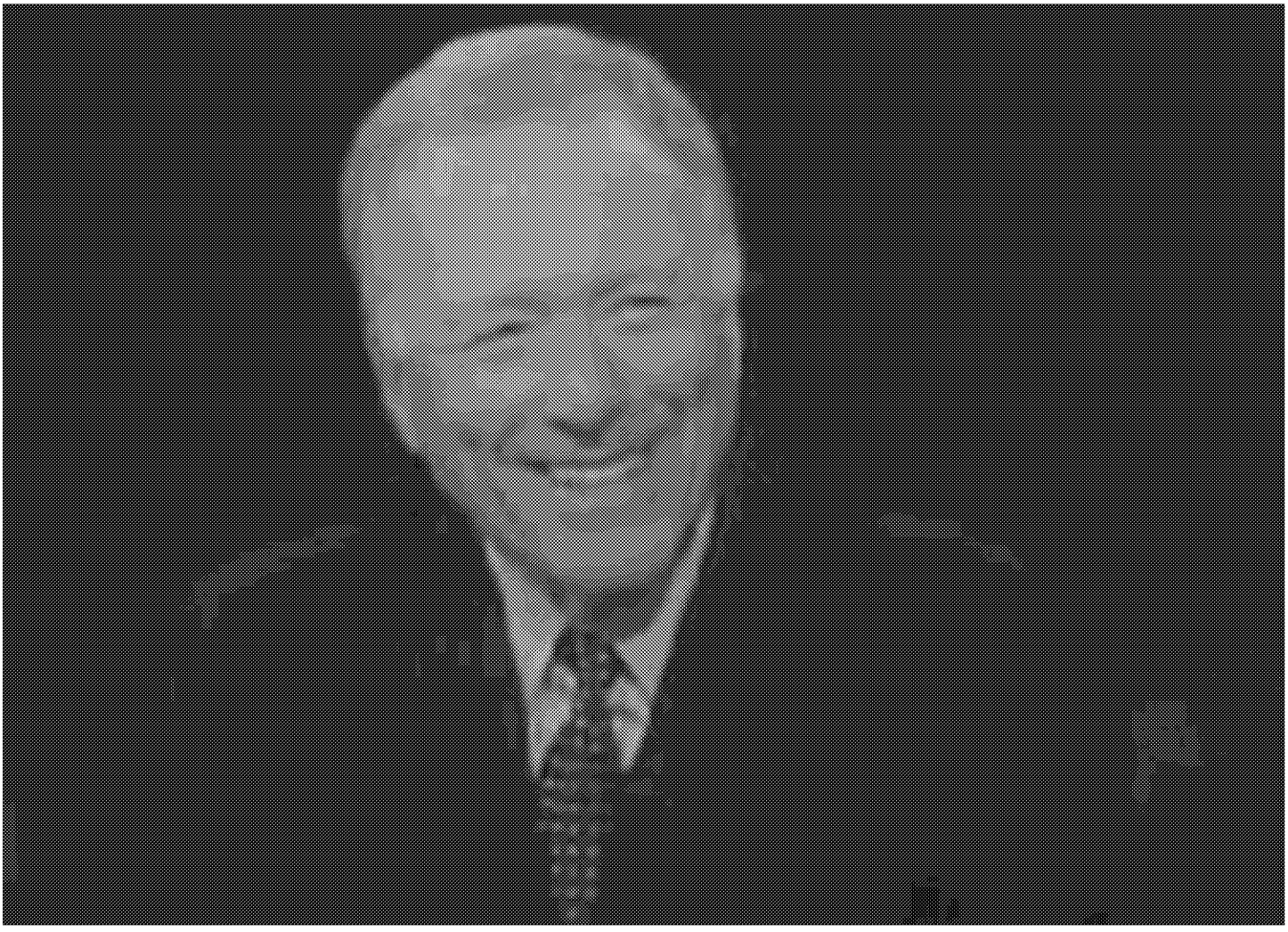
Scooter Libby pardon shows Donald Trump understands Mueller is not about justice, but about getting scalps



By Printus LeBlanc

If you couldn't tell by the collective gasp from Washington D.C., late last week President Donald Trump pardoned an innocent man, Scooter Libby. The mainstream media went crazy believing the pardon was a signal to the current Special Counsel Robert Mueller, letting him know he will pardon anyone he prosecutes. What is more important is Trump's pardon rights a wrong. Scooter Libby was caught up in the net of an overzealous Special Counsel that showed no interest in getting to the truth, sound familiar.

On July 14, 2004, the late Robert Novak wrote a column titled "Mission to Niger" for the Washington Post. In the column, Novak responds to a previous article by Ambassador Joe Wilson stating, "Wilson never worked for the CIA, but his wife, Valerie Plame, is an agency operative on weapons of mass destruction. Two senior administration officials told me that Wilson's wife suggested sending him to Niger to investigate the Italian report. The CIA says its counter-proliferation officials selected Wilson and asked his wife to contact him."

That paragraph launched a Special Counsel investigation trying to identify who Novak's source was that leaked the name of Valerie Plame as a CIA officer. Then Deputy Attorney General James Comey, there's a familiar name, appointed Patrick Fitzgerald to investigate the issue.

It quickly became apparent that Fitzgerald was not interested in finding out who leaked the name but was more interested in going after Vice President Dick Cheney. At the time there was an ongoing political struggle between Secretary of State Colin Powell and Vice President Dick Cheney. Colin Powell's Deputy, Richard Armitage would eventually admit to being Novak's source, but no charges were filed.

Novak himself wrote about his ordeal with the Fitzgerald in 2006 claiming Fitzgerald knew who the leak was early on stating, "For nearly the entire time of his investigation, Fitzgerald knew — independent of me — the identity of the sources I used in my column of July 14, 2003. A federal investigation was triggered when I reported that former Ambassador Joseph Wilson's wife, Valerie Plame Wilson, was employed by the CIA and helped initiate his 2002 mission to Niger. That Fitzgerald did not indict any of these sources may indicate his conclusion that none of them violated the Intelligence Identities Protection Act."

Not only did Fitzgerald know who the leaker was, Fitzgerald told the leaker to be quiet about the leak. Richard Armitage told CBS that Fitzgerald, "asked me not to discuss this, and I honored his request."

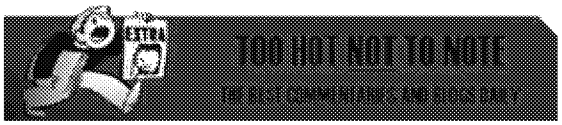
This begs the question if Fitzgerald knew who leaked the name early on in the investigation, and Armitage was not indicted after he admitted to the crime Fitzgerald was supposed to investigate, what was Fitzgerald investigating?

Libby would eventually be convicted of obstructing justice and perjury, not because he lied or obstructed justice, but because different people had different recollections of conversations they had with Libby. Imagine trying to recall every phone conversation you had within a three-month period perfectly. If you get calls mixed up, you are guilty by that standard of "justice."

The Mueller investigation is starting to look an awful lot like the Fitzgerald inquisition. Neither Special Counsel investigated what it was originally formed to investigate. If Mueller was investigating Russian interference, wouldn't he investigate the Russian hack of the DNC server? There have been no reports Mueller has looked at the hack or Wikileaks, which published the DNC and John Podesta emails. It has been proven Fitzgerald knew who the leaker was but continued to harass people in hopes of getting to his ultimate prize, the Vice President.

Perhaps the most important lesson to take from the pardon of Libby is that President Trump now knows Mueller is not about justice. Mueller is about getting the highest-level scalp he can, just as Fitzgerald was. The President should not talk to Mueller because as the Libby prosecution shows, getting one of hundreds of phone conversations confused can be your downfall.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following article from PJ Media, Hans Von Spakovsky reports on the DOJ and FBI refusing to cooperate with Congress:

Is DOJ Obstructing Congress in the Trump Surveillance Case?

By Hans A. Von Spakovsky

Did Rep. Devin Nunes (R-CA) really have to threaten to hold FBI Director Christopher Wray and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein in contempt and to start impeachment proceedings? Apparently so.

Nunes chairs the House Intelligence Committee. For almost eight months, Wray and Rosenstein stalled his request for an unredacted copy of the memo that launched the Obama administration's investigation/surveillance of the Trump campaign. Eight months.

But when Nunes threatened impeachment, he received the memo within 24 hours.

The Committee is investigating whether the Justice Department and the FBI (which is part of the Justice Department) had a credible, legal basis for opening their extraordinary investigation of a presidential candidate's campaign. And the Justice Department has been trying to slow-walk the Committee's investigation from the start.

But all the delaying tactics in the world can't diminish the power of Congress to exercise oversight of a federal agency's behavior -- or possible misbehavior.

In August 2017, the Committee subpoenaed Justice, demanding all documents associated with the opening of its "counterintelligence" operation examining Russian influence in the 2016 election. The subpoena covered the administration's request, submitted to the FISA court, seeking surveillance warrants. The Justice Department, however, refused to provide an unredacted copy of the original FBI document that outlined its reasoning for opening the investigation.

In a 1975 case, *Eastland v. U.S. Servicemen's Fund*, the Supreme Court said that the "scope of [Congress's] inquiry ... is as penetrating and far-reaching as the potential power to enact and appropriate under the Constitution." That power, according to a 1957 Supreme Court decision, *Watkins v. U.S.*, is at its peak when Congress is investigating "corruption, maladministration, or inefficiencies in the agencies of Government."

Given that the Committee is looking into possible corruption in this investigation and/or maladministration of the statute governing the FISA court and the issuance of secret surveillance warrants, the oversight power of the Committee is at its height in this inquiry.

In an April 6 letter responding to Nunes' latest demand for the unredacted memo, Assistant Attorney General Stephen Boyd didn't directly address the demand. He did, however, generally try to justify the delay by citing "relevant legal precedents, the Department's significant law enforcement and national security responsibilities, and Executive Branch confidentiality interests."

Such excuses are not novel. A 2012 report by the Congressional Research Service notes that, for generations, Congress has sought "and obtained access to information concerning prosecutorial misconduct by Department of Justice officials" -- and that includes access to "pre-decisional deliberative prosecutorial memoranda."

According to the congressional report, these demands are "often resisted" by Justice for many of the same reasons outlined by Boyd but are "usually released upon committee insistence." That is because none of the reasons provided by Boyd provides a legal basis for refusing to turn over documents. Often Justice will also cave into Congress for political reasons such as nominations being held up or threats to withhold budget funding unless the demands are met.

Click here for the full story.

Americans for Limited Government
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United States

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Subject: If California is the future, the future does not look good

The middle class is fleeing, and the politicians seem intent on keeping them out

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

April 20, 2018

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If California is the future, the future does not look good

In a Twitter post attacking President Trump, Sen. Kamala Harris (D-Calif.) tweeted "California represents the future." After looking at the stats, it is hard to see what type of future California has. People are no longer going west to live the California dream. The middle class is fleeing, and the politicians seem intent on keeping them out. Things are bad and getting worse in California, but there may be some small rays of hope.

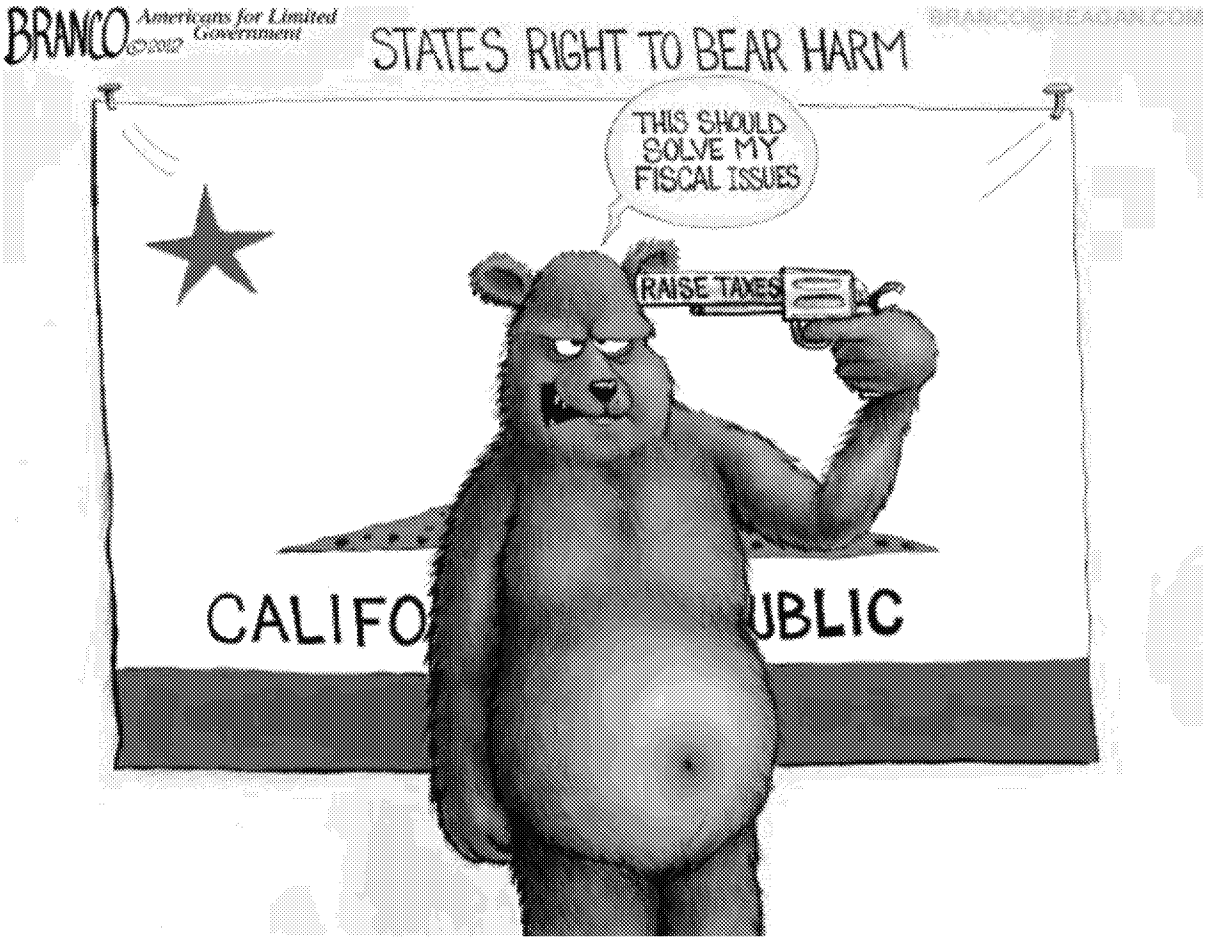
Charter schools continue to show the need for school choice

Charter schools are transforming American education. For the country's most at risk students, charter schools are playing a critical role in building educational opportunities for students. As the Department of Education expands charter school use, studies proving their effectiveness have begun pouring into academia, proving that school choice is the best path toward educational advancement.

Timothy Daughtry: Look Around You: Do You Still Think America Won the Cold War?

Does it still look like we won the Cold War? The Soviet Union might have died in 1991, but the intellectual and moral virus that killed it – The Marxist worldview – has spread to the United States and is wearing away our defenses against socialist tyranny.

If California is the future, the future does not look good



By Printus LeBlanc

In a Twitter post attacking President Trump, Sen. Kamala Harris (D-Calif.) tweeted "California represents the future." After looking at the stats, it is hard to see what type of future California has. People are no longer going west to live the California dream. The middle class is fleeing, and the politicians seem intent on keeping them out. Things are bad and getting worse in California, but there may be some small rays of hope.

California's education system is a disaster. According to statistics released in September, not even half of California students are proficient in English with only 1 out of 3 being proficient in math. What makes this worse, these numbers broke a positive trend stopping two-years of slight improvement.

California is also ground zero for the poverty crisis. When people think about California, they usually think of beaches, movie stars and money, but a closer look tells a different story. Recently released data shows California has the highest poverty rate in the country, 20.4 percent, beating out states snobby Californians look down upon like Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama.

Homelessness is an epidemic in California. California accounts for 12 percent of U.S. population, the largest in the nation, but it also holds 25 percent of the homeless in the country according to a report from HUD. It is so bad in California if you combined the total homeless population of the Texas and Florida and doubled it, you still would not approach California numbers, even though the combined total population totals of Texas and Florida would surpass California by 8 million.

The most surefire way to tell California is not the future, is to look at the U Haul pricing. Renting a U haul truck to leave California is astronomically more expensive than renting a truck to move into California. A recent survey shows it cost 1,600 percent more expensive to rent a truck to go from San Jose to Las Vegas than it is to go from Las Vegas to San Jose. To go from San Jose to Austin it will cost $4,320, but only $1,053 in reverse, a 400 percent difference. This is a pure measure of supply and demand in the moving market, and the exodus from the capital of the Silicon Valley doesn't bode well for the formerly golden state.

To back up U Haul pricing, the Legislative Analyst's Office of the California Legislature's Nonpartisan Fiscal and Policy Advisor, produced a report detailing migration to and from California between 2007 and 2016. For the first time in its history, California is losing its population. Between 2007 and 2016, 5 million people moved to California while 6 million moved to other states for a net loss.

As bad as it seems for California right now, there might be light at the end of the tunnel. It seems the silent majority in California have had enough and are starting to make their voice heard.

The president of San Francisco Travel, the city's visitors bureau, Joe D'Alessandro's is now sounding the alarm. His job is being made more difficult because the conditions of San Francisco are atrocious. The progressive paradise has turned into an open sewer.

In an interview with the San Francisco Chronicle D'Alessandro stated, "The streets are filthy. There's trash everywhere. It's disgusting." He continued, "I've never seen any other city like this — the homelessness, dirty streets, drug use on the streets, smash-and-grabs."

It may have seemed like the entire state was onboard with the idea of turning the state into a sanctuary state, but a slew of localities have recently taken action against the state government including Orange and San Diego County which have combined with a dozen other counties in the state to join a DOJ lawsuit against California's sanctuary law.

President Donald Trump noted the uprising in a tweet on April 18, stating, "There is a Revolution going on in California. Soooo many Sanctuary areas want OUT of this ridiculous, crime infested & breeding concept."

California is past its glory days. It is no longer the promise land in the west, but the progressives may have finally stepped over the line. It took generations of progressive lunacy to ruin the golden state; it'll take a few generations of hard work to get it back to even.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

Charter schools continue to show the need for school choice

By Natalia Castro

Charter schools are transforming American education. For the country's most at risk students, charter schools are playing a critical role in building educational opportunities for students. As the Department of Education expands charter school use, studies proving their effectiveness have begun pouring into academia, proving that school choice is the best path toward educational advancement.

The biannual National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) has released their 2017 National Report Cards assessing achievement across American schools through controlled variables. On a national level, charter schools appear to be even with non-charter schools, but John Valant of the Brookings Institute explains there is a clear reason why. In his March 2016 article, Valant explains charter schools are often clustered in urban areas and use a lottery system to take on a district's most poor and underserved students. This allows them to show particular growth in America's most needed areas.

This is further illustrated by the NAEP report, which showed on the *district* level, charter schools far outperform traditional schools. In America's most diverse cities, charter schools are leading the way.

In Atlanta, with 19 percent of schools now being charter schools, charter school students produce average math test scores that are 17 points higher than their non-charter school counterparts. Similarly, in Los Angeles, charter school students score on average 28 points higher on math test scores.

In Cleveland, Ohio's most diverse county, charter school students score on average 18 points higher than their non-charter counterparts on reading exams. In Milwaukee, Wisconsin's most diverse county, charter school students outperform non-charter school students on reading test scores by 14 points.

The Center for Public Education fact sheet on charter schools attests this is due to diverse teaching staffs that can teach free from excessive state and federal regulations. With the ability to craft entire

curriculums around student success, charter schools are able to experiment different methods of success.

Education Secretary Betsy DeVos has seen these positive impacts first hand in her home state of Michigan.

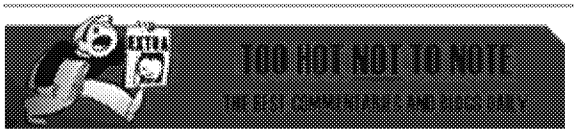
Findings from a new study by researchers at the University of Michigan compared students who received admittance into a charter school system through a lottery with those who also applied for the lottery but got denied in order to measure school success. While transitioning students showed the smallest progress, by the time charter school students graduated they displayed higher scores in both math and reading.

But this was by far the greatest impact.

In these Michigan charter schools, teachers are 47 percent more likely to be viewed as mentors than administrators. Principles observe teaching roughly 9 hours per day versus roughly 2 hours in traditional schools, due to administrative tasks. While teachers are paid less in charter schools, they are 20 percent more likely to receive performance bonuses.

Charter schools encourage the entire administrative staff to work for and with students, thus creating a holistically stronger learning environment. Last September, Secretary DeVos decided to allocate significant funds toward charter school development. Across the country, for our most at-risk students, those funds are paying off. But states do not have to wait federal intervention, they are already proving that once broken free from centralized control, particularly in urban areas, charter schools are providing better opportunities for the nation's most at risk students.

Natalia Castro is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following op-ed from Townhall, Timothy Daughtry opines on how we defeated the USSR, but the virus that created the USSR has spread to the U.S. specifically on college campuses:

Townhall

Look Around You: Do You Still Think America Won the Cold War?

By Timothy Daughtry

American teenagers march in the streets to gut or eliminate the Second Amendment, and our youth are increasingly comfortable with socialism. Conservative speakers are harassed and physically threatened on college campuses. According to many in positions of power, any difference in achievement or earning among various social groups is *assumed* to be evidence of discrimination or oppression of one group by another, and *assumed* to be grounds for governmental intervention. Our national borders are being worn away despite popular demands for border security. Much of what passes for news is filtered and packaged to support the leftist agenda.

Does it still look like we won the Cold War?

The Soviet Union might have died in 1991, but the intellectual and moral virus that killed it – The Marxist worldview – has spread to the United States and is wearing away our defenses against socialist tyranny.

It is not necessary to find hordes of card-carrying communists in order to recognize the threat of Marxism in American culture and politics. Worldviews – including our views of government and political issues – are not so much the product of conscious deliberation as of cultural immersion, and so it is possible for people to learn to see society and politics through a Marxist lens without ever realizing it.

And the importance of cultural immersion was the great insight of the Cultural Marxists beginning in the 1920s. Marxist intellectuals such as Antonio Gramsci realized that the deep values of Judeo-Christian culture stood in the way of enlisting people in violent revolution. It was hard to enlist people in a violent struggle of class against class if their worldview saw people as morally responsible individuals and not as faceless members of an economic or demographic class. National identity and patriotism stood in the way of uniting Karl Marx's "workers of the world" to overthrow the capitalist system. Belief in God and timeless principles of right and wrong stood in the way of the materialist worldview and its moral relativism.

And so Gramsci and other Marxist writers envisioned a "long march" through the cultural institutions of the West, beginning with the universities. The primary tactic was Critical Theory, the relentless assault upon the intellectual and moral foundations of Western culture. If Marxist ideas about economics, the family, religion, and society in general could gain dominance in the universities, those ideas would eventually follow graduates into other cultural institutions such as public education, the news media, and entertainment.

The Frankfurt School in Germany attracted numerous intellectuals to the cause of Cultural Marxism, and many of them fled to America's universities as Hitler rose to power in the 1930s and '40s. While America's international policy was to confront and contain communism around the world, the intellectual and moral assumptions of the Marxist worldview were taking hold in many of our universities.

The left's cultural strategy did not require conscious conversion to Marxism as a political theory. Repeated exposure to the assumptions and implications of the Marxist worldview and the enforced absence of contradictory frames of reference were sufficient.

Most Americans have never heard of Marxist intellectuals such as Herbert Marcuse, but his 1965 treatise on Repressive Tolerance provided the justification for *intolerance*toward any views that stood in the way of the Marxist liberation agenda. The impact of his thinking can be seen in campus speech codes and harassment of conservative speakers on today's college campuses. Disagreement with today's left is simply defined as hate speech, and hate speech is simply not to be tolerated. Argument – and minds – closed.

Click here for the full story.

Americans for Limited Government
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Subject: Netanyahu briefing proving Iran nuke program exists leaves Trump little choice but to leave Iran nuke deal

If President Trump wants to make a deal with Kim Jong Un on nuclear disarmament on the Korean peninsula, he needs to demonstrate that Iran lying to the United States about nuclear disarmament has real consequences

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

May 01, 2018

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Netanyahu briefing proving Iran nuke program exists leaves Trump little choice but to leave Iran nuke deal

The credibility of the U.S. is at stake. If President Trump wants to make a deal with Kim Jong Un on nuclear disarmament on the Korean peninsula, he needs to demonstrate that Iran lying to the United States about nuclear disarmament has real consequences. Leaving the ill-conceived Iran nuclear deal and reinstating sanctions accomplishes that. It sends the "right message" in President Trump's words to Kim Jong Un, which is that there can be no deals with liars.

Cartoon: Democrats' Demands

If the Democrats got half of what they wanted, half of America would be in the unemployment line

Testers serves swamp in outrageous Trump doc attack

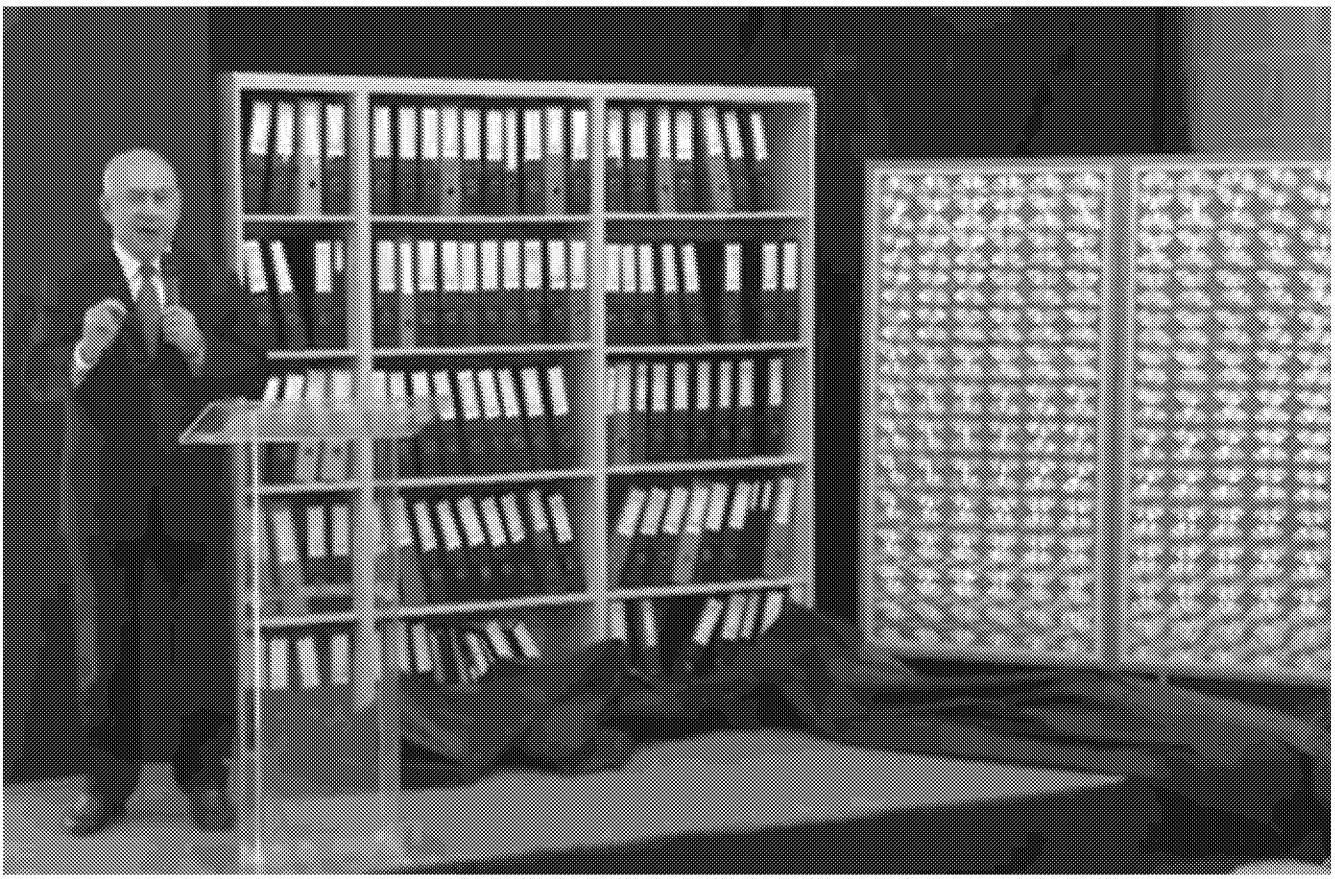
Last week the mainstream media participated in the character assassination of an honorable man with no proof of any of the allegations. At the same time, CNN is printing unsubstantiated falsehoods about a commissioned officer in the U.S. Navy, Jim Acosta is whining on national TV because the majority of Americans don't believe the BS they are peddling. If you want to know why President Trump calls the mainstream media fake news and it has a lower approval rating than the President look no further than the actions taken by the mainstream media and a vile Senator last week.

Sebastian Gorka: There was no Trump-Russia collusion, but Putin achieved his goal

"The Trump campaign never colluded with Moscow. However, Moscow inserted its lies into documents paid for by the other campaign during a presidential election. That propaganda was used to justify spying on Americans. Illegally. And a serving director of U.S. intelligence helped to make Russian propaganda look real as he leaked the fact that it had been briefed to the newly elected president to the media company that would later hire him. To that end, Vladimir Putin, the former KGB

colonel, with the help of James Clapper, Jim Comey, members of the media and other Americans, achieved his goal: to 'sow discord in American society and undermine our faith in the democratic process.'"

Netanyahu briefing proving Iran nuke program exists leaves Trump little choice but to leave Iran nuke deal



By Robert Romano

The Iran nuclear deal, authored by former President Barack Obama, was predicated on one crucial aspect that, according to the agreement, "Iran reaffirms that under no circumstances will Iran ever seek, develop or acquire any nuclear weapons."

There's only one problem, reported Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in a dramatic presentation on April 30 citing Israeli intelligence's success in obtaining tens of thousands of documents. The documents prove Iran has always had a nuclear weapons program since at least 1999, and never disclosed its existence under the terms of the Iran nuclear deal. It lied.

"[T]hese files conclusively prove that Iran is brazenly lying when it says it never had a nuclear weapons program. The files prove that," Netanyahu said, stating that Israel had "obtained half a ton of the material inside these vaults. And here's what we got. Fifty-five thousand pages. Another 55,000 files on 183 CDs."

Meaning, the deal was entered into by Obama, and authorized by Congress in 2015, under false pretenses. Iran denies to this day that it ever had a nuclear weapons program as the program was concealed from negotiators of the Iran nuclear agreement and perhaps more importantly, from the American people.

Netanyahu stated that Israel had shared its intelligence with President Donald Trump and that "the United States can vouch for its authenticity."

It is hard to believe that Netanyahu would have come forward now unless the U.S. intended very much to vouch for the material. Sure enough, within hours of Netanyahu's briefing, White House and other U.S. officials who spoke to the Washington Free Beacon's Adam Kredo confirmed the materials are authentic.

At a press conference immediately following Netanyahu's statement, President Trump said that if the U.S. leaves the Iran nuclear deal, it would help the U.S. end the nuclear weapons program in North Korea. "I think it sends the right message," Trump said. He's right.

If the U.S. were to remain in the Iran nuclear deal after May 12, it would effectively be admitting that it's okay to lie to the U.S. government about nuclear weapons in a disarmament deal. Trump cannot possibly afford to be in that position when he meets with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un later this year. There has to be consequences for not dealing honestly in the U.S. In the case of Iran, that has to mean no more deal.

The fact is, if everything outlined by Netanyahu had been known in 2015, the Iran nuclear agreement would have never been authorized by Congress — because Obama would have never dared to submit it. He might have still unilaterally rescinded the sanctions against Iran, which was always his prerogative under U.S. law — agree or disagree with Congressionally enacted sanctions, but they do in fact grant the President a lot of discretion to levy or lift sanctions — but there never would have been widespread Congressional support.

Now it is President Trump's prerogative to now reinstate the sanctions on Iran, as well he should. Trump does not need Congress. And if Netanayahu is correct, the entire Iran deal was built on a lie.

In the least, the U.S. must now confront Iran with this new material that proves there was and is a military nuclear program and hold Tehran accountable. If the Iran agreement was supposed to produce complete, irreversible disarmament, then clearly we are still a ways off. And unlike in North Korea, there is no comparable partner like South Korea in the negotiations with an equal stake in the outcome.

Iran retains the capability and intention to develop nuclear weapons, in violation of its obligations under the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, Netanyahu stressed, adding, "We've known for years that Iran had a secret nuclear weapons program called Project Amad. We can now prove that Project Amad was a comprehensive program to design, build and test nuclear weapons. We can also prove that Iran is secretly storing Project Amad material to use at a time of its choice to develop nuclear weapons."

Why is Iran storing its original plans and blueprints, Netanyahu asked: "So in December 2015, the IAEA published its final assessment of what it called the military aspects of Iran's nuclear program. This is the report. This was Iran's chance to fully come clean to the IAEA. They could tell the truth, they could say, we had this program, this secret program, it's over, we shelved it, it doesn't exist, we destroyed the material. Here's what Iran actually told the IAEA. It said, Iran denied the existence of a

coordinated program aimed at the development of a nuclear explosive device, and specifically denied, get this, specifically denied the existence of the Amad plan."

Netanyahu added, "The material proves otherwise, that Iran authorized, initiated and funded Project Amad, a coordinated program aimed at the development of a nuclear explosive device."

The reason Iran did not come clean is what everyone has always known. The 2015 Iran nuclear agreement was never a credible disarmament program.

Which is why Prime Minister Netanyahu is now leaving President Trump with little choice but to leave the deal and reinstate sanctions. Trump might seek to issue an ultimatum beforehand, but it is clear that — as nuclear disarmament talks with North Korea are about to proceed — the U.S. must not and cannot afford to tolerate Iran's deliberate obfuscation of its nuclear weapons program.

The consequences are clear, Netanyahu said, "The nuclear deal gives Iran a clear pass to an atomic arsenal. It does so because it gives them the three components that are necessary to produce this arsenal. First, unlimited enrichment in a few years. And they plan to do that. They plan to have several hundred thousand advanced centrifuges with which they can enrich mountains of uranium for that core that I showed you before. For many, many such cores. Second, it completely fails to address Iran's continued development of ballistic missiles. And third, and this is new, it completely fails to address Iran's secret nuclear bomb program and its advanced work on weaponization."

Doesn't sound like much of a deal.

And now, the credibility of the U.S. is at stake. If President Trump wants to make a deal with Kim Jong Un on nuclear disarmament on the Korean peninsula, he needs to demonstrate that there are real consequences for Iran lying about nuclear disarmament. Leaving the ill-conceived Iran nuclear deal and reinstating sanctions accomplishes that. It sends the "right message" in President Trump's words to Kim Jong Un, which is that there can be no deals with liars.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy of Americans for Limited Government.

Cartoon: Democrats' Demands

By A.F. Branco

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Testers serves swamp in outrageous Trump doc attack

By Printus LeBlanc

Last week the mainstream media participated in the character assassination of an honorable man with no proof of any of the allegations. At the same time, CNN is printing unsubstantiated falsehoods about a commissioned officer in the U.S. Navy, Jim Acosta is whining on national TV because the majority of Americans don't believe the BS they are peddling. If you want to know why President Donald Trump calls the mainstream media fake news and it has a lower approval rating than the President look no further than the actions taken by the mainstream media and a vile Senator last week.

President Trump nominated Rear Admiral Ronny Jackson to take over the Department of Veterans Affairs. The nomination drew instant ire from many, not because the Rear Admiral wasn't qualified, but simply because Trump nominated him, and Democrats are fearful of privatization of the VA. Jackson's credentials are impeccable, more impeccable than anyone criticizing him for sure. Jackson has been deployed multiple times around the world caring for service members including a combat tour in Iraq during the height of the fighting. Jackson has also served in the White House Medical Unit under the last three Presidents.

Shortly after the nomination, Senator Jon Tester (D-Mont.) unleashed a torrent of accusations against the highly decorated Navy Admiral. The media picked up the stories immediately, plastering them on newspapers and news networks.

The media wrote the stories in a way that made many accusations impossible to prove or refute. They know that as a doctor Jackson cannot discuss any prescriptions he wrote if he wrote any at all. But by making the accusation, the media painted an honorable man in a negative light, with no way to prove his innocence. A truly horrific practice in "journalism."

Will the mainstream media hold itself responsible for what it did to Jackson? Will the media admit it ran unverified allegations against an honorable man for the purpose of destroying him? Will the media hold the politician leading the charge of making potentially false allegations responsible? Don't count on it.

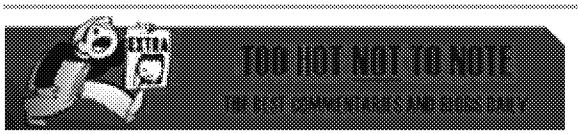
This is not the first time a member of Congress openly lied to achieve a goal, and the media carried the water for them. In the 2012 Presidential election, then Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) went to the Senate floor and made false statements about Republican Presidential candidate Mitt Romney. Reid stated, "So the word is out that he has not paid any taxes for ten years. Let him prove he has paid taxes because he has not." The media ran with the Reid accusations and hounded Romney about the issue, never asking Reid to prove his point. As it turned out, Romney had paid his taxes.

The entire Russia investigation was started on baseless, unverified accusations. After more than 18 months of investigations, not a scintilla of evidence has been provided by the media or their Democrat propaganda masters to prove any collusion between the Trump campaign and the Russian government. It has become clear the evidence may not exist because many of the accusations came from Clinton operatives Sid Blumenthal and Cody Shearer, a circular loop where information from the Clinton world was fed to Fusion GPS and Christopher Steele, packaged up and reported back to the Clinton campaign and the DNC. Has that stopped the media from reporting on the non-existent Russia collusion story? Has the media called for their Clinton allies to be held accountable?

There is some good news, though. Tester is up for reelection this year. The media will not hold themselves or a Democrat responsible for the lies they tell, but the people of Montana have that ability in November. Tester is running for reelection in a state Trump won by more than 20 points. Tester voted against the popular tax cuts while working with other liberal Democrats to fight the President on securing the border.

Last week did nothing but show the true partisan nature of the mainstream media. Last week, Senator Tester showed he will stop at nothing to score political points with his liberal progressive masters. The mainstream media is going to continue whining because more than half of Republicans view them as the enemy. After what they did last week, the media is going to look at negative rating fondly, and Sen. Tester is going to have to look for a job.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from The Hill, Sebastian Gorka reports on the House Intelligence Committee report and the lack of evidence of Trump-Russia collusion, but it seems Putin still succeeded because the left has frozen the government with their actions:

THE HILL

There was no Trump-Russia collusion, but Putin achieved his goal

By Sebastian Gorka

The House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence has published its report on Russian "collusion" or, more accurately, on "Russian active measures," a phrase associated with the subversive methods used by the former Soviet Union to undermine Western democracies.

This isn't just another congressional "memo." At more than 240 pages in length the, report took more than a year to write, with more than 70 witnesses interviewed, 300,000 documents reviewed and almost two dozen congressional subpoenas issued.

Given the current political and media climate, it is no surprise that the report's 44 findings and 26 recommendations have been drowned out by the vitriol and noise of competing "narratives." This is problematic, to say the least, since most Americans will never read even the conclusion of this very important document.

To that end, here are the essentials.

Russia has been undermining Western democracies with "active measures" such as propaganda and disinformation for a very long time, yet, in 2015, Vladimir Putin initiated a specific influence campaign targeting the elections for U.S. president.

This was not done to assist a specific candidate but to "sow discord in American society and undermine our faith in the democratic process." And in this he was successful.

At the same time, Russia used cyber measures to target American information systems. Individuals and organizations were targeted but, thankfully, none of the vote-tallying or data-recording systems used in our elections were compromised.

With regards to the prime accusation, the committee found "no evidence that the Trump campaign colluded, coordinated, or conspired with the Russian government."

Yet, the investigation does conclude that "the Clinton campaign and the DNC, using a series of cutouts and intermediaries to obscure the roles, paid for opposition research on Trump obtained from Russian sources, including a litany of claims by high-ranking current and former Russia government officials."

This unfounded opposition research would be turned into the infamous "Steele Dossier" used to illegally acquire a Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) court warrant to spy on at least one former Trump campaign adviser.

Most disturbing of all, the investigators found that President Obama's director of intelligence, James Clapper, provided "inconsistent" testimony about his contacts with the media, especially CNN, regarding his knowledge of the Steele Dossier and his discussing it with CNN's Jake Tapper.

If one follows the detailed timeline provided, it is now obvious that the American media wanted to report on the accusations against President Trump in the opposition research file but needed a "news hook" to hang their story on.

That hook was provided when Clapper encouraged then-FBI Director James Comey to brief the uncorroborated file to President-elect Trump, after which point the fact of the briefing's having occurred was "leaked" to the press by Clapper so as to give the dossier the credibility it lacked internally. Note that Clapper now has a contract with CNN as one of its "talking heads."

In a report of this magnitude, many other important facts are revealed, including the revelation that the FBI agents who interviewed Gen. Michael Flynn under oath "did not detect any deception during Flynn's interview." For a man who has suffered a great deal since then, this is a very important finding, given all we know now about the serial perjury committed by others, such as the FBI's now-fired deputy director, Andrew McCabe.

Click here for the full story.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Subject: How President Trump could shut hidden 'backdoor' hardware threats from China being installed on critical systems

The U.S. is vulnerable to installing imported, vulnerable computer hardware from China and elsewhere with hidden backdoors on critical infrastructure, like the power grid, water systems, hospitals, air traffic control, communications and defense-related systems

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

April 13, 2018

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How President Trump could shut hidden 'backdoor' hardware threats from China being installed on critical systems

The U.S. is vulnerable to installing imported, vulnerable computer hardware from China and elsewhere with hidden backdoors on critical infrastructure, like the power grid, water systems, hospitals, air traffic control, communications and defense-related systems. And President Donald Trump could do something about it by levying a heavy tariff on technology components that include such unsecure backdoors.

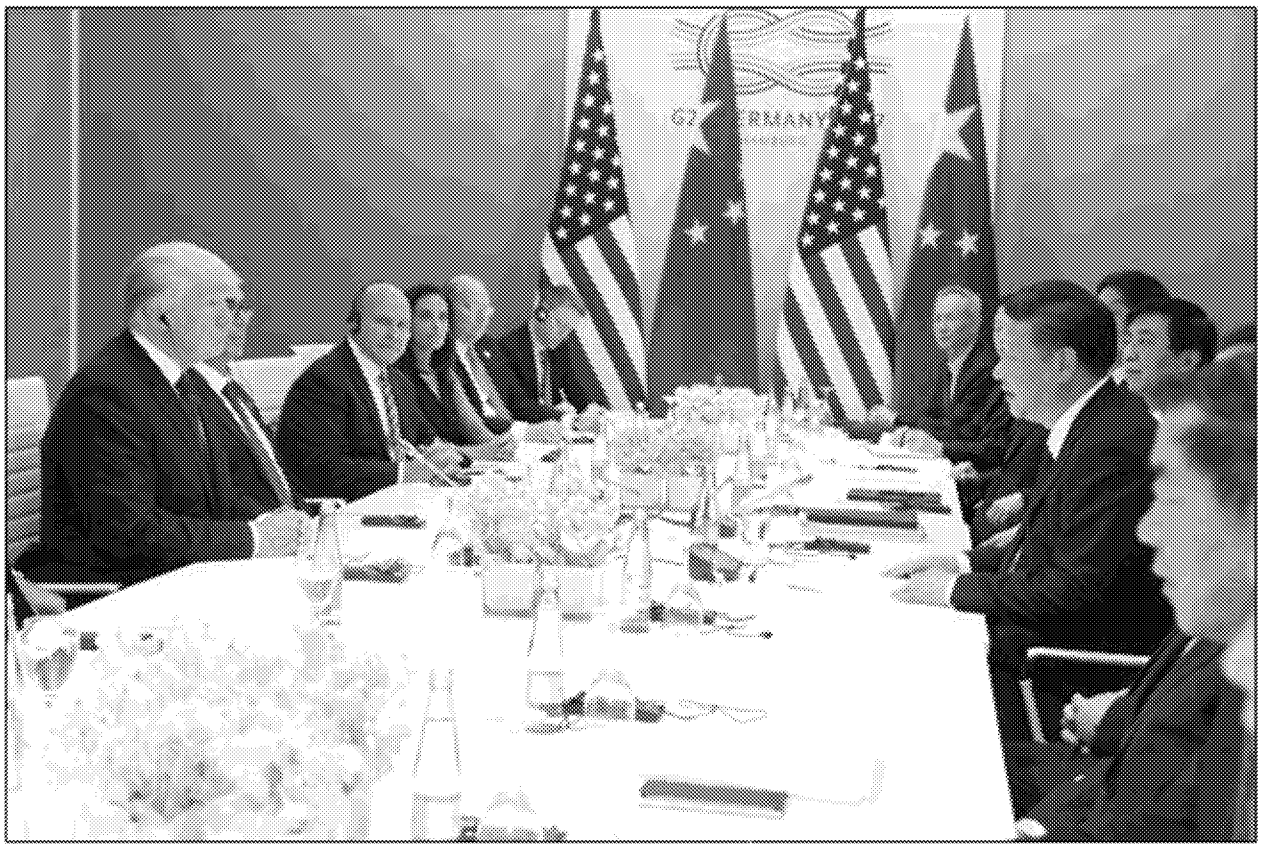
Trump Derangement Syndrome is getting bad

Bill Kristol, in an attempt to stay relevant, has shown just how crazy he has become. Kristol is the founding director of Republicans for the Rule of Law, a group dedicated to protecting Special Counsel Robert Mueller. Kristol intends to run the ads during Fox and Friends in the hope of reaching the President. Kristol, like most establishment Republicans, want an endless investigation into President Trump in the hopes he will be impeached, and they can regain control of the party they believe belongs to them. Kristol and his ilk have proven they will stop at nothing to end the presidency of Trump, even if they have to spit on everything they've ever done in the past.

Ed Morrissey: Mulvaney To Congress: Thanks To You, I Don't Have To Answer Any Of Your Questions — Ever

"When Mick Mulvaney served in the House, he tried to warn colleagues that the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau was too independent of Congress. Now that he's running the CFPB, Mulvaney wants to demonstrate just how correct he was. For the second straight day, the acting director has told a congressional panel that he can just sit in front of them all day and ignore their questions, and there's nothing they can do about it…"

How President Trump could shut hidden 'backdoor' hardware threats from China being installed on critical systems



Source: *Whitehouse.gov.*

By Robert Romano

The U.S. is vulnerable to installing imported, vulnerable computer hardware from China and elsewhere with hidden backdoors on critical infrastructure, like the power grid, water systems, hospitals, air traffic control, communications and defense-related systems. And the American people may not find out about it until it is too late and things start getting switched off.

Fortunately, President Donald Trump could do something about it by levying a heavy tariff on technology components that include such unsecure backdoors or from regions known to produce such backdoors.

In 2016, a group of computer engineers at the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor hypothesized that a single circuit could be developed out of millions or billions onto a computer chip to create a "backdoor" to the computer's operating system. Called an "analog" hack, it proved that "a fabrication-time attacker can leverage analog circuits to create a hardware attack that is small (i.e., requires as little as one gate) and stealthy (i.e., requires an unlikely trigger sequence before effecting a chip's functionality)."

Unfortunately, because chip manufacturers rely on global supply chains for fabrication and then, necessarily, on post-fabrication testing to detect problems, this leaves virtually every chip vulnerable

and highly unlikely to be detected: "this type of testing leaves the door open to malicious modifications since attackers can craft attack triggers requiring a sequence of unlikely events, which will never be encountered by even the most diligent tester."

The core of the problem identified by the engineers is "Outsourcing of chip fabrication opens up hardware to attack," such that at any point in the fabrication process this "needle in a haystack" circuit could be introduced by a single employee without detection. The proof of concept on an OR1200 chip suggested that "Experimental results show that our attacks work, show that our attacks elude activation by a diverse set of benchmarks, and suggest that our attacks evade known defenses." In short, the engineers proved it worked.

Militarized, it is easy to conceive that the U.S. could import the technology that will be used against it, with the power grid, potable water and even the critical nuclear offensive and defensive weapons systems potentially being able to be shut off at the flip of a switch. For years it has been speculated that such malicious circuits could be put onto computer chips by intelligence agencies, but with the University of Michigan study, it suddenly appeared quite viable.

A year later, in May 2017, the Michigan engineers' worst fears were realized when it was publicly revealed that such an exploit had not only already been found on the Intel family of processor chips on the so-called Intel Management Engine, but had been manufactured tens of millions of times over, effectively proliferating all over the world. As described by the UK Register's Thomas Claburn: "The firmware-level bugs allow logged-in administrators, and malicious or hijacked high-privilege processes, to run code beneath the operating system to spy on or meddle with the computer completely out of sight of other users and admins. The holes can also be exploited by network administrators, or people masquerading as admins, to remotely infect machines with spyware and invisible rootkits, potentially," or even commandeer applications.

Security patches have since been developed by Microsoft and others to secure affected systems, and Intel developed a detection tool that can be downloaded to alert a user if their system is affected.

At least one group suggested the bug was intentional. A team of researchers at the London-based Positive Technologies on Aug. 28, 2017 published a study outlining a process that disables the Intel Management Engine that it says it found because it used publicly available utilities to take a peek at the code that makes the Intel chip work, finding a line of code called "High Assurance Platform (HAP) enable". After Googling the term, the team turned up a 2009 paper from the National Security Agency Commercial Solutions Center about these so-called High Assurance Platforms that utilize commercially available technologies with "additional High Assurance Security mechanisms." The description in the NSA paper states, "The fusion of commercial initiatives plus trusted software create a 'High Assurance Platform' (HAP)." Now, that in itself does not actually prove that the Intel Management Engine was compromised on behalf of intelligence agencies in accordance with being such a platform. But, the team was able to engineer a process that would disable the Intel Management Engine.

Officially, the story is that the bug was actually an unintentional design flaw that was only discovered after several millions of units had already shipped and were in use. According to an official statement from Intel in August 2017, "Intel does not and will not design backdoors for access into its products. Recent reports claiming otherwise are misinformed and blatantly false. Intel does not participate in any efforts to decrease security of its technology."

In many ways it would be better if the design "flaw" was actually an intentional backdoor, since then at least this occurred in a controlled environment with the awareness and cooperation of the manufacturer with the U.S. government to assist in national security endeavors, meaning government systems were unaffected. Unfortunately, officially, the vulnerable Intel hardware was sold everywhere, everyone bought into it and the vulnerability proliferated across the entire planet, and the manufacturer was unaware. And they might have even been installed on critical systems, including those necessary for functioning national security, if the federal government was unaware of the bug.

Or intelligence agencies could have been aware, but did not alert the manufacturer. Therefore, although outsourcing of technology plays a key role with this problem and insourcing will be a means to solving it, foreign supply chains are not the only problem that must be contended with. With the case of Intel, it shows absolutely that not only can foreign manufacturers subversively include such analog hacks on hardware, so could domestic companies accidentally, and even with the knowledge of the government, then they might not help it get fixed.

Once fabricated and eventually exposed, suddenly tens of millions of chips are available all over the world that can be reverse engineered by hostile state and non-state actors to be exploited, replicated or improved upon. The more these types of products are sold commercially, the more likely more they will be fabricated in ways that are even more surreptitious.

There are other examples, in May 2017, the Department of Homeland Security's Industrial Control Systems Cyber Emergency Response Team confirmed that Hikvision security cameras, a Chinese manufacturer of video surveillance equipment, had come with hidden backdoors installed on them. Think of that, a security camera that the manufacturer may have wanted to be compromised.

These events could be looked at as the digital equivalent of a near-miss from an asteroid. It's not merely a possibility or even a probability, but a practical certainty that eventually these types of malicious circuits will be included with a chip operating a critical system vital to national security — and the public might be unaware that it has occurred until it is too late. Why? Because today these types of components are being outsourced and not secured at all aspects of the supply chain.

In March, Federal Communications Commission Chairman Ajit Pai announced that his agency will be voting on blocking U.S. subsidies to companies that purchase Chinese technology, pointing to the danger of hidden back doors. Pai stated, "Threats to national security posed by certain communications equipment providers are a matter of bipartisan concern. Hidden 'back doors' to our networks in routers, switches — and virtually any other type of telecommunications equipment — can provide an avenue for hostile governments to inject viruses, launch denial-of-service attacks, steal data, and more."

Similarly, last month Singapore-based Broadcom was blocked from purchasing tech giant Qualcomm by President Trump, to prevent this very thing from happening. Qualcomm makes components for everything including computers, networks and smart phones.

Clearly this is a priority for the Trump administration, but more needs to be done to create a secure domestic supply chain in light of these national security concerns. Restrictions could be placed on the sale of imported devices that do not meet with U.S. cyber security specifications, either in the form of quotas, tariffs or blocking importation altogether.

Similarly, regulations could be enacted requiring that critical systems funded by the federal government only use components made in America under the new specifications, taking the FCC's proposal a bit further.

Diplomatic talks can be engaged to formulate an international cyber treaty that could govern the rules of the road, outlawing manufacturing backdoors.

To prevent proliferation, safeguards should be taken to ensure that such backdoors are not similarly deployed by U.S. military and intelligence agencies into commercial products for spying since if and when they are discovered, they can be proliferated and reverse-engineered by foreign adversaries and non-state actors to undermine the very system that is supposed to be concerned with security.

What is clear is that without a proper national technology strategy, of which tariffs and other import controls could play a key role, the U.S. remains vulnerable to installing imported, vulnerable computer hardware on critical infrastructure, like the power grid, water systems, air traffic control, communications, hospitals and defense-related systems, and the American people may not be aware of it until the power grid is shut off, the water system is compromised or planes start falling out of the sky.

It is the equivalent of opening the gates and letting the Trojan Horse inside to enable the Greek soldiers to burn Troy to the ground.

What was merely speculative just a few years ago is now fully realized, with multiple examples of compromised hardware both as a proven concept and millions of sales. A single undetected malicious circuit on a chip, installed on the wrong system, could prove to be devastating to national security and even our constitutional system of government, and the Trump administration, Congress and the tech industry need to act before it is too late.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Trump Derangement Syndrome is getting bad

C/O Liberty Alliance

By Printus LeBlanc

Bill Kristol, in an attempt to stay relevant, has shown just how crazy he has become. Kristol is the founding director of Republicans for the Rule of Law, a group dedicated to protecting Special Council Robert Mueller. Kristol intends to run the ads during Fox and Friends in the hope of reaching the President. Kristol, like most establishment Republicans, want an endless investigation into President Trump in the hopes he will be impeached, and they can regain control of the party they believe belongs to them. Kristol and his ilk have proven they will stop at nothing to end the presidency of Trump, even if they have to spit on everything they've ever done in the past.

Mr. Kristol himself was once considered a standard bearer of conservativism but has caught a full-blown case of Trump Derangement Syndrome (TDS). Symptoms include ignoring potential crimes and constitutional violations committed by those going after President Trump.

One of the more obvious examples of Kristol's TDS was his mocking of the memo produced by the House Intelligence Committee, known as the Nunes memo. In a Twitter post, Kristol bashed the Nunes memo calling the information in the memo "embarrassing." What most people found embarrassing was the idea the FBI and DOJ misled the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court (FISC) and used a political opposition research document to spy on political opponents. Apparently, Kristol is okay with police state tactics as long as he is the beneficiary.

If Kristol and cohorts knew how to use google, they could easily find several instances in Mueller's career where he acted less than honorable.

During the 1980s Robert Mueller was an assistant U.S. attorney then acting U.S. attorney in Boston. During this time, under his supervision, the FBI was running an informant one James "Whitey" Bulger. While under the protection of the FBI and DOJ, Bulger would expand his criminal empire. Also, during this time, Bulger divulged that four men convicted of murder in 1965 were innocent.

Did the FBI and DOJ look into the case to clear the innocent men? No, in fact, Muller wrote letters to parole and pardon boards to keep the men in prison after the FBI and DOJ knew of their innocence. The actions of the DOJ and FBI were so egregious, in 2007 a jury awarded more than $101 million in damages to the surviving men and their families, two of the men died in prison innocent of the crimes they were in prison for. Does this sound honorable?

What about the anthrax case? Hardly what one would call honorable service. According to Carl Cannon from Real Clear Politics, Robert Mueller zeroed in on one suspect, Steven Hatfill, while ignoring tips and evidence leading to the actual anthrax killer, Bruce Edwards Ivins. Carl Cannon stated, "the bureau was bullied into focusing on the government scientist by Democratic Sen. Patrick Leahy (whose office, along with that of Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, was targeted by an anthrax-laced letter) and was duped into focusing on Hatfill by two sources – a conspiracy-minded college professor with a political agenda who'd never met Hatfill and by Nicholas Kristof, who put his conspiracy theories in the paper while mocking the FBI for not arresting Hatfill."

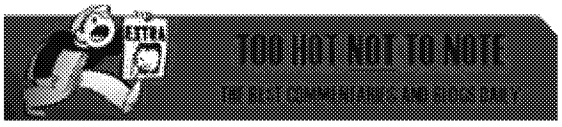
Hatfill had his life turned upside down for years with the full weight of the federal government bearing down on him. After years of legal torture, the DOJ would drop the case, exonerate Hatfill, and pay him a seven-figure legal settlement. But perhaps the most insulting aspect of the case is the Director of the FBI, Robert Mueller couldn't be troubled to apologize to Hatfill for years of harassment.

Is this what Bill Kristol considers honorable? Leaving innocent men in jail and harassing innocent suspects for years and not even apologizing when you are proven wrong does not seem to fit on the honorable scale I know.

Mr. Kristol may have more credibility if he could answer one question, what crime is Mueller investigating? Mr. Kristol cannot answer that question, because he does not care. In his hatred of President Trump, the former Republican has adopted tactics that would make Joseph Stalin proud. Mr. Kristol is apparently adopting the motto of the Soviet Secret Police, "Show me the man and I'll find you the crime." Kristol and his latest group seem to take more after Stalin than Washington.

This is a challenge issued to all Bill Kristol and all former federal prosecutors serving in Congress that keep covering up for Mueller, explain why Robert Mueller leaving innocent men in jail is honorable. Explain why Mueller ruining an innocent man's life in a politically motivated investigation is honorable. They can't, and they won't. All their latest stunt is doing is proving what many grassroots limited government conservatives knew all along, there is no difference between them and the Democrats.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from Hot Air, Ed Morrissey reports on two hearings Mick Mulvaney had on Capitol Hill in which he reiterated his position that the CFPB has too much power and not enough oversight:

HOT AIR

Mulvaney To Congress: Thanks To You, I Don't Have To Answer Any Of Your Questions — Ever

By Ed Morrissey

When Mick Mulvaney served in the House, he tried to warn colleagues that the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau was too independent of Congress. Now that he's running the CFPB, Mulvaney wants to demonstrate just how correct he was. For the second straight day, the acting director has told a congressional panel that he can just sit in front of them all day and ignore their questions, and there's nothing they can do about it:

Mick Mulvaney, the acting director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), told a Senate panel on Thursday that he's not legally bound to answer lawmakers' questions, only to appear before them, in comments meant to stress his agency's independence.

"While I have to be here by statute, I don't think I have to answer your questions," Mulvaney told the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee. "If you take a look at the actual statute that requires me to be here, it says that I 'shall appear' before the Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs of the Senate. And I'm here and I'm happy to do it."

Mulvaney delivered the same message to the House yesterday. In testimony before the Financial Services committee, Mulvaney pointed out that the enabling statute for the CFPB only required him to show up when asked. Otherwise, he could just as well twiddle his thumbs or answer e-mails rather than answering any questions from Congress:

> Mick Mulvaney took his seat before a congressional committee Wednesday for the first time since his controversial appointment to be the nation's top consumer financial watchdog and boldly declared he didn't have to say a word.
>
> "I believe it would be my statutory right to just sit here and twiddle my thumbs while you all ask questions," Mulvaney, acting director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, told the House Financial Services Committee.

Jeb Hensarling found it hilarious, calling protests from his Democratic colleagues "great comic relief":

> The committee's chairman, Rep. Jeb Hensarling (R-Texas), who has been the leading opponent of the bureau, said "it is sheer irony and great comic relief to see the wailing and gnashing of teeth of many of my Democratic colleagues" about their inability to hold Mulvaney accountable.
>
> Hensarling validated Mulvaney's view that Dodd-Frank doesn't require him to answer lawmakers' questions, adding that "you could play Candy Crush for the next few hours and there would be nothing we could do about it."

This attempt to force Congress to reckon with its own bad ideas didn't just start yesterday. Mulvaney threw the first punch last week in correspondence with Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), who helped

create the agency — and its independence from Congress. The Washington Examiner covered the exchange:

Click here for the full story.

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Subject: If President Trump is not the target of the Mueller investigation, then why did Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein appoint a special counsel in the first place?

So, if there is no longer an investigation being targeted at Trump or the campaign itself including a charge that the campaign itself had broken the law, what is Sessions' conflict of interest?

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

April 24, 2018

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If President Trump is not the target of the Mueller investigation, then why did Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein appoint a special counsel in the first place?

When Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein met with President Donald Trump on April 12, the President was assured that he was not the target of any investigation by Special Counsel Robert Mueller, Bloomberg reports. This raises an interesting question: Why is there even a special counsel still?

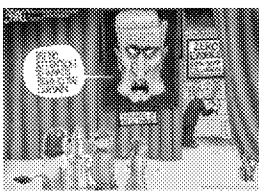
Cartoon: A 'mountain' of evidence

The DNC has a "mountain" of evidence.

Real Clear Politics: Devin Nunes On Russia Probe Origin Says "Major Irregularities" At State Dept, Sidney Blumenthal Involved

House Intelligence Committee Chairman Devin Nunes says on 'Sunday Morning Futures' with Maria Bartiromo that potential "major irregularities" exist at the State Department with regard to how the FBI found out about the George Papadopoulos meeting with a Russian national that led to the FBI's original investigation into potential Trump/Russia collusion.

If President Trump is not the target of the Mueller investigation, then why did Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein appoint a special counsel in the first place?



By Robert Romano

When Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein met with President Donald Trump on April 12, the President was assured that he was not the target of any investigation by Special Counsel Robert Mueller, Bloomberg reports.

This raises an interesting question: Why is there even a special counsel then?

On March 2, 2017, Attorney General Jeff Sessions recused himself "from any existing or future investigations of any matters related in any way to the campaigns for President of the United States."

Sessions said he had done so under 28 CFR 45.2, which states Justice Department employees must recuse themselves from any "criminal investigation or prosecution if he has a personal or political relationship with ... an elected official, a candidate (whether or not successful) for elective, public office, a political party, or a campaign organization."

This implied heavily that there was at least a criminal investigation — rather than a counterintelligence investigation — already in the works. And based on his statement, it also implied that the investigation was into either President Trump or the Trump campaign itself, which Sessions had participated in.

On May 9, 2017, under recommendation by Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, Trump fired then-FBI Director James Comey, explaining that part of his reasoning included "I greatly appreciate you informing me, on three separate occasions, that I am not under investigation, I nevertheless concur with the judgment of the Department of Justice that you are not able to effectively lead the Bureau."

On May 17, 2017, Rosenstein appointed Robert Mueller as special counsel by Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein to investigate, mainly, "any links and/or coordination between the Russian government and individuals associated with the campaign of President Donald Trump..."

That was the first confirmation that indeed the investigation was looking directly at the campaign. But it did not allege a crime. It just said Mueller was to investigate "any matters that arose or may arise directly from the investigation" and that "If the Special Counsel believes it is necessary and appropriate, the Special Counsel is authorized to prosecute federal crimes arising from the investigation of these matters." It was an open-ended book.

Was it supposed to be an investigation into the firing of Comey? An obstruction of justice case? Who knows?

What is clear is that the special counsel appointment requires under 28 CFR 600.1 that "in cases in which the Attorney General is recused, the Acting Attorney General, will appoint a Special Counsel when he or she determines that criminal investigation of a person or matter is warranted and ... That investigation or prosecution of that person or matter by a United States Attorney's Office or litigating Division of the Department of Justice would present a conflict of interest for the Department or other extraordinary circumstances..."

Again, there needed to be a crime to investigate from the outset. As the National Review's Andrew McCarthy, a former federal prosecutor, has argued for more almost a year, Rosenstein had not followed the regulation.

It was only on a post-hoc basis that Rosenstein issued a memorandum in Aug. 2017 alleging actual crimes, and only then after one-time Trump campaign manager Paul Manafort's house had already been raided in July 2017.

In addition to investigating whether Manafort "[c]omitted a crime or crimes by colluding with Russian government officials with respect to the Russian government's efforts to interfere with the 2016 election for President of the United States, in violation of United States law," which would have been within the scope of the Sessions recusal, Mueller was also tasked to see if Manafort "[c]omitted a crime or crimes arising out of payments he received from the Ukrainian government before and during the tenure of President Viktor Yanukovych."

But when the In the 31-page indictment of Manafort and Richard Gates was presented, Russia was mentioned four times, naming Manafort's company, Davis Manafort Partners, Inc., which had some staff in Russia, and that Manafort's client, former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych and his Party of the Regions was "pro-Russia," and that after the civil war began in Ukraine, Yanukovych fled to Russia.

There was no mention of the Russian government or any individuals working for the Russian government. Nor any mention of the 2016 election campaign for President Trump. It had all the appearances of having gone beyond the scope of Sessions' original recusal.

Certainly the investigation had started out looking at Trump and his campaign, in 2016, when the investigation was launched in July 2016 and then a Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) court warrant request was granted in Oct. 2016 to spy on the campaign.

In an ABC News interview with Comey that aired April 15, the former FBI Director confirmed that the FBI's legal view that an investigation of the Trump campaign would "inevitably" mean there was an investigation into Trump himself: "The general counsel of the F.B.I. [James Baker] had argued, 'Look, it's literally true that we don't have a case open on President-elect Trump. We're looking at other people.' And– and– but his argument was, 'There's a problem with you saying that for two reasons. First, inevitably as we move along in the investigation as– as to whether anyone was working with the Russians, the campaign's going to have to be a focus and the candidate's always the head of the campaign, so inevitably we're going to have to look at him. And second, you're going to create a duty to correct. But if you tell him he's under investigation and that changes, don't you have to go back and tell him…'"

Meaning, Trump was always at least the subject of the investigation, if not the target. The distinction now made by Rosenstein, however, that Trump is not a target, now calls into question the entire enterprise.

Namely, if Trump or the campaign organization itself is not being criminally prosecuted — as Rosenstein is now contending — then why does Sessions' recusal even apply?

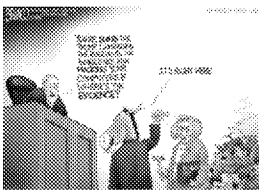
Again, recusals only apply to "criminal investigation[s] or prosecution[s]" and Sessions recused himself from "any existing or future investigations of any matters related in any way to the campaigns for President of the United States."

So, if there is no longer an investigation being targeted at Trump or the campaign itself including a charge that the campaign itself had broken the law, what is Sessions' conflict of interest? What is the Department's conflict of interest? If there is none, shouldn't that mean that the Special Counsel's investigation is over and ought to be closed? The only reason for the recusal was Sessions' political relationship to Trump. If Trump's not the target, then the cause for the recusal has been cured, and that should be the end of the probe.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Cartoon: A 'mountain' of evidence

By A.F. Branco



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ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from Real Clear Politics, Tim Hains reports on an interview Devin Nunes did over the weekend in which he said no intelligence was used to start the Trump-Russia investigation:

Devin Nunes On Russia Probe Origin: "Major Irregularities" At State Dept, Sidney Blumenthal Involved

By Tim Hains

House Intelligence Committee Chairman Devin Nunes says on 'Sunday Morning Futures' with Maria Bartiromo that potential "major irregularities" exist at the State Department with regard to how the FBI found out about the George Papadopoulos meeting with a Russian national that led to the FBI's original investigation into potential Trump/Russia collusion.

DEVIN NUNES: It took a long time to actually get this... the original intelligence, the original reasons that the counterintelligence investigation was started.

This is really important to us because a counterintelligence investigation uses the tools of our intelligence services, that are not supposed to be used on American citizens. So we've wanted to know what intelligence they had that actually led to this investigation.

So what we found now, after investigators have reviewed it is that, in fact, there was no intelligence.

Nunes next speaks about confirming that the "Five Eyes" spying agreement between the U.S., U.K., Canada, Australia, and New Zealand is not the origin of the spying on Papadopoulos, adding: "We are not supposed to spy on each other's citizens, and it worked well."

NUNES: As you know, we are investigating the State Department, we think there are some major irregularities at the State Department, and we're trying to figure out how this information about Papadopoulos, of all people, who was supposedly met with some folks in London, how that made it across to the FBI's hands.

We know a little bit about that because of what some of the State Dept. officials themselves have said about that.

So we were glad to get this behind us, but as we peel another piece back, it leaves more unanswered questions.

MARIA BARTIROMO: You're telling us that in order for the FBI and DoJ to launch an investigation into so-called collusion between Trump and the Russians, there was no intelligence used? So I don't understand, how did this investigation start?

NUNES: I think that is the point. We don't understand, we've never understood. We don't have access to these finished intelligence products, and we've never seen one. We thought maybe one went through a different channel that was kept really secret... well, in fact, after our investigators reviewed this, there was no Five Eyes intelligence product, as has been reported. There was no product. And I think that is a major problem...

At the highest level, what is this about? A counterintelligence operation that was at the height of the political campaign, where you opened up an investigation, using these intelligence services to spy on the other campaign, it is really serious stuff...

I can tell you we now longtime associates of Hillary Clinton, including Sidney Blumenthal and Corey Shearer, were actively giving information to the State Dept. that was making its way to the FBI... So we know this was at least from two witnesses, and so we're trying to piece all that together.

Click here for the full story.

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United States

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Subject: Did the DNC destroy the evidence of the 'hack' on their servers? Court filing says 140 servers decommissioned, 180 computers erased and 11 servers 'rebuilt.'

Because all the servers have now been decommissioned or rebuilt, and the affected computers erased over, we may never know what really happened

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

April 23, 2018

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Did the DNC destroy the evidence of the 'hack' on their servers? Court filing says 140 servers decommissioned, 180 computers erased and 11 servers 'rebuilt.'

According to the DNC's filing in federal court suing the Trump campaign, Wikileaks and Russia, after the alleged hack of emails on the committee's servers in 2016, which were never turned over to the FBI, "in order to remove the unauthorized users from its network, the DNC was required to decommission more than 140 servers, remove and reinstall all software, including the operating systems, for more than 180 computers, and rebuild at least 11 servers." And we're supposed to, what? Just take their words for it about their grand conspiracy theory?

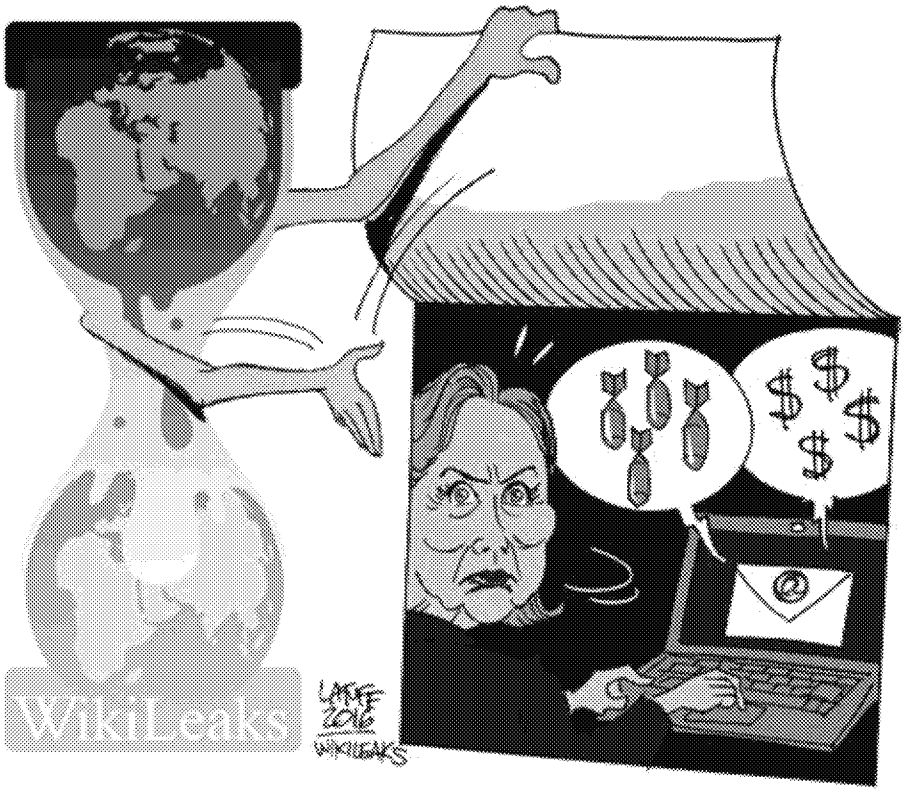
Washington Post hypocrisy shines through again with Amazon

"Democracy dies in darkness." This is the motto the Jeff Bezos-owned Washington Post proudly proclaims as the guiding principle of their publication; unfortunately, if this is true, the Washington Post is an accomplice in the death of democracy. Amazon, which Bezos owns, has been under fire for workforce abuse, but the Post refuses to report on it.

Mollie Hemingway: Comey's Memos Indicate Dossier Briefing Of Trump Was A Setup

"Newly released memos written by former FBI director James Comey indicate that an early 2017 briefing for then-President-elect Donald Trump about the contents of an infamous dossier was held so it could be leaked to media outlets eager to report on the dossier's allegations. In multiple memos, Comey specifically mentioned that CNN had the dossier and wanted a "news hook" that would enable the network to report on its most salacious allegations even though they had not been verified."

Did the DNC destroy the evidence of the 'hack' on their servers? Court filing says 140 servers decommissioned, 180 computers erased and 11 servers 'rebuilt.'



By Robert Romano

On Twitter on April 20, President Donald Trump has said if there's an upside to the DNC lawsuit against the Trump campaign, Wikileaks and Russia, he said "we will now counter for the DNC Server that they refused to give to the FBI..."

But according to the DNC's filing, the committee may have destroyed all the evidence of the alleged hack by Russia of the DNC emails: "As a result of the persistence of the Russian state-sponsored infiltration, in order to remove the unauthorized users from its network, the DNC was required to decommission more than 140 servers, remove and reinstall all software, including the operating systems, for more than 180 computers, and rebuild at least 11 servers."

Which sounds familiar. Anyway, 18 U.S.C. 1519 states, for anyone who still cares, "Whoever knowingly alters, destroys, mutilates, conceals, covers up, falsifies, or makes a false entry in any record, document, or tangible object with the intent to impede, obstruct, or influence the investigation or proper administration of any matter within the jurisdiction of any department or agency of the United States or any case filed under title 11, or in relation to or contemplation of any such matter or case, shall be fined under this title, imprisoned not more than 20 years, or both."

So here the DNC is alleging in federal court that crimes were committed on its servers, they never let the FBI investigate and they deleted the operating systems on all the affected computers, totaling 180, decommissioned 140 servers and "rebuilt" 11 servers.

And we're all supposed to just, what? Take their words for it?

What is incredible is that for almost two years, the Justice Department has just been a-okay with that. In testimony on Jan. 10, 2017 before the Senate Intelligence Committee, Comey stated that "Ultimately what was agreed to is the private company [Crowdstrike] would share with us what they

saw… Our forensics folks would always prefer to get access to the original device or server that's involved, so it's the best evidence."

Crowdstrike, which was hired by the same law firm that tasked Fusion GPS to commission the Christopher Steele dossier, Perkins Coie, got the task of investigating the servers in 2016. As an aside, and very interestingly, none of the major allegations by Steele, which the DNC paid for, appear in the DNC lawsuit. Some of the top alleged colluders from the Steele dossier, Trump himself, his lawyer Michael Cohen or one-time foreign policy advisor Carter Page are named as defendants.

Crowdstrike Co-founder Dmitri Alperovitch in the Washington Post published June 14, 2016 spoke of the lack of evidence as to how it was that somebody got onto the Democratic National Committee (DNC) servers to get the emails that were ultimately published on Wikileaks in July 2016. According to the Washington Post, "CrowdStrike is not sure how the hackers got in. The firm suspects they may have targeted DNC employees with 'spearphishing' emails… 'But we don't have hard evidence,' Alperovitch said," the report stated. Nor was Alperovitch really sure who had hacked the DNC emails: "CrowdStrike is less sure of whom Cozy Bear works for but thinks it might be the Federal Security Service, or FSB, the country's powerful security agency, which was once headed by Putin." Not exactly air tight.

On Nov. 17, 2016 former National Intelligence Director James Clapper told the House Intelligence Committee: "As far as the WikiLeaks connection, the evidence there is not as strong and we don't have good insight into the sequencing of the releases or when the data may have been provided," adding, "We don't have as good of insight into that." Perhaps because they had no idea. Because they never looked at the servers.

In fact, because all the servers have now been decommissioned or rebuilt, and the affected computers erased over, we may never know what really happened. But there should still be an attempt made to find out. Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning in a statement agreed with President Trump about investigating the servers still, saying, "The President should immediately demand the DNC servers be turned over to his legal team's own forensic analysis team in order to determine the origins any hack. Given that the DNC failed to provide this basic piece of evidence to the FBI in the past, it will provide the people of the United States the first independent look at what really happened with their servers."

That is, if there is even any data left.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Washington Post hypocrisy shines through again with Amazon

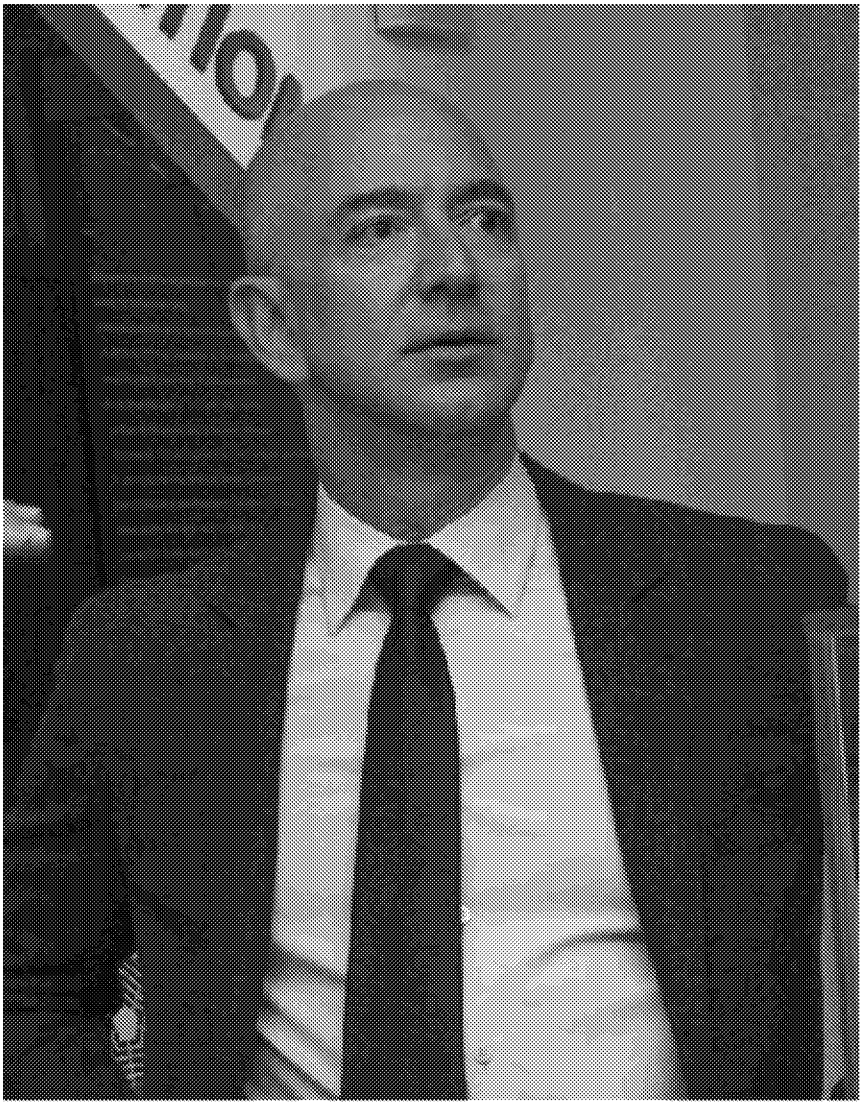


Photo courtesy of DOD

By Natalia Castro

"Democracy dies in darkness." This is the motto the Washington Post proudly proclaims as the guiding principle of their publication; unfortunately, if this is true, the Washington Post is an accomplice in the death of democracy. While pretending the defend journalistic integrity, the Post's recent silence on issues regarding their parent company, Amazon, shed light on the real intentions behind their reporting.

Amazon has been under fire for workforce abuse. James Bloodworth, an English writer, went undercover for six months working low wage jobs in the United Kingdom. One of this first jobs, as an Amon warehouse worker, a job he compared to a prison sentence.

Bloodworth explained to Business Insider, "I've worked in warehouses before, but this was nothing like I had experienced. You don't have proper breaks — by the time you get to the canteen, you only have 15 or 20 minutes for lunch, in a 10-1/2-hour working day. You don't have time to eat properly to get a drink."

Alleging unfeasible productivity targets and strict oversight, Bloodworth explained that Amazon workers felt so much pressure to avoid bathroom breaks, they would routinely urinate in plastic bottles to avoid punishment.

Bloodworth's discoveries have only just begun a chain of outrage by disgruntled employees.

On March 21 and 22, 98 percent of Amazon's staff in Spain's largest center supported a strike against the company for unfair working conditions and stagnant wages. Amazon responded by failing to renew the contracts of 100 temporal workers who joined in the strike, according to an April 2018 report in a Latin American news outlet, TeleSUR.

Even domestically, Amazon workers are retaliating against harsh working conditions.

In December, New Jersey Amazon warehouse workers rallied outside an Amazon Books store in Manhattan to remind customers that workers are often underpaid and denied basic benefits. In November, California-based newspaper, The Sacramento Bee, reported of a class action lawsuit against Amazon by California distribution center workers for being forced to work long hours with no rest breaks or overtime pay. In 2011, Amazon's Allentown, Pa. facility were so unsafe that the company kept an ambulance parked outside to take workers to the hospital on hot days because it lacked air conditioning.

Amazon's owner, Jeff Bezos was named Forbes most wealthy person in the world in 2018, with a net worth over $112 billion; yet, The Daily Dot's Phillip Tracy reports in April 2018, in Arizona, one in three Amazon employees depends on food stamps.

Amazon quietly denies all of these reports. But the most egregious part of their abuse is not just what they do to their employees, but Jeff Bezos ability to manipulate the media to prevent awareness.

In 2013, Bezos closed a deal with the previous owner of the Washington Post to purchase the paper for $250 million, and the paper has been in his pocket ever since.

While the Washington Post happily publishes articles entitled "The unspoken factor in **Amazon**'s search for a new home: Jeff Bezos's support for gay rights" and "The **Amazon** stat long kept under wraps is revealed: Prime has over 100 million subscribers", the only time the Post appears to have reported on unfair labor practices was in 2013 *immediately after* Bezos bought the page.

This article even notes, "Amazon won't own The Post. Bezos will. And, in his letter to employees, Bezos appeared to address any potential conflict of interest head-on: 'The values of The Post do not need changing,' he wrote. 'The paper's duty will remain to its readers and not to the private interests of its owners.'"

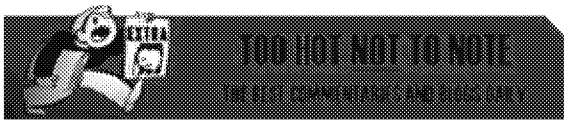
However, a simple search for Amazon-related articles on the Washington Post's page reveals a chilling fact: all Amazon related articles are positive or informative, while negatives regarding the company's labor practices are quietly ignored.

Meanwhile, if one searches "Trump Russia" on the Post's page, they will see articles ranging from "Nikki Haley's 'confusion' sheds light on the **Trump-Russia** mystery" to "When did **Trump** and Putin talk about 'hookers'?".

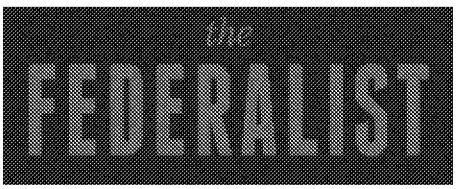
It is clear, while every detail, no matter how ridiculous, of the witch hunt against Trump is chronicled, the Washington Post ignores issues that directly affect the lives of over 500,000 American workers.

If democracy dies in darkness, the Washington Post should be convicted of murder. Their cherry-picked reporting poses a great threat to the American people. For billionaire Jeff Bezos to be held accountable for his actions, media outlets must report on them, so the American people know about them. The Washington Post is failing the American people.

Natalia Castro is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following column from The Federalist, Mollie Hemingway reports on the James Comey memos and how it looks like the meeting with Trump and Comey was a setup to release the dossier:



Comey's Memos Indicate Dossier Briefing Of Trump Was A Setup

By Mollie Hemingway

Newly released memos written by former FBI director James Comey indicate that an early 2017 briefing for then-President-elect Donald Trump about the contents of an infamous dossier was held so it could be leaked to media outlets eager to report on the dossier's allegations. In multiple memos, Comey specifically mentioned that CNN had the dossier and wanted a "news hook" that would enable the network to report on its most salacious allegations even though they had not been verified.

"I said the Russians allegedly had tapes involving him and prostitutes at the Presidential Suite at the Ritz Carlton in Moscow from about 2013," Comey wrote of his conversation with Trump in a classified memo that was released in redacted form late Thursday. "I said I wasn't saying this was true, only that I wanted him to know both that it had been reported and that the reports were in many hands."

No media organizations had reported the allegations at the time Comey briefed Trump.

"I said media like CNN had them and were looking for a news hook," Comey added in his memo about the briefing with Trump on January 6, 2017.

In another classified memo written on January 28, 2017, Comey wrote that in a separate meeting Trump mentioned the allegation about the alleged tape of prostitutes at a hotel and called it "fake news."

"I explained again why I had thought it important that he know about it," Comey wrote. "I also explained that one of the reasons we told him was that the media, CNN in particular, was telling us they were about to run with it."

Of the many thousands of articles promoting a still-unproven theory of treasonous collusion between President Donald Trump and Russia, few were as significant as CNN's January 10 story "Intel chiefs presented Trump with claims of Russian efforts to compromise him." Extremely well-placed sources told CNN that the Obama administration's top intelligence appointees had briefed Obama, Biden, and Trump all about a dossier they took incredibly seriously and considered credible. And it sounded really bad, as the headline indicated.

"Russian operatives claim to have compromising personal and financial information about Mr. Trump," CNN declared. BuzzFeed published the actual dossier within minutes of CNN's story going

live, showing the world that the dossier was riddled with salacious gossip that lacked even a possibility of corroboration.

Keep in mind that nothing we now know about the dossier had been reported at the time. It wasn't yet reported that it was used by the FBI to provide a substantial basis to wiretap at least one Trump affiliate despite the fact it was unverified. It wasn't yet reported that the product was bought and paid for as a Hillary Clinton campaign operation, or that it was secretly funded by the DNC using a law firm as a pass-through to hide its provenance in federal campaign filings. It wasn't yet reported that its author's working relationship with the FBI was terminated because he had lied to the agency about how he wouldn't talk to the media.

After nearly a year of wrangling, the seven memos written by Comey were finally handed over on Thursday to Congress, which oversees the operation and funding of the FBI and the Department of Justice (DOJ). The memos purport to show Comey's version of his interactions with the president before Comey was fired last May. According to Daniel Richman, the original recipient of Comey's leaks who now claims to be his personal attorney, Comey gave him four memos. Four of the seven memos are classified, meaning that at least one of the memos he leaked was classified. By his own account, Comey orchestrated these leaks to the media in order to launch an aggressive special counsel to avenge his firing by Trump in May 2017. The memos given to Congress on Thursday were quickly leaked to the media.

Click here for the full story.

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Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Subject: President Trump stands by voters that got him elected, rejects Trans-Pacific Partnership for good

If the President believes these agreements do not put America first, he will kill them

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

April 19, 2018

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President Trump stands by voters that got him elected, rejects Trans-Pacific Partnership for good

The U.S. is out of the TPP for good, and we can thank President Trump. Going forward, this should give the Trump administration far more leverage in getting deals out of Mexico and Canada via NAFTA renegotiation and China via the World Trade Organization. Same deal with the Paris climate accord. Or the Iran nuclear deal. If the President believes these agreements do not put America first, he will kill them.

Banks that took taxpayer bailouts seek to revive Eric Holder's anti-Second Amendment Operation Choke Point

America's largest banks should uphold American values: entrepreneurship, innovation, and, perhaps more than anything, the principles of the Constitution. Yet several of the country's largest banks have decided to go against these principles by opposing the people's Second Amendment right to bear arms. Citigroup and Bank of America have enacted policies to stop lending to companies that make assault-style guns, while this has the potential for wide-reaching consequences on basic American rights, it also represents an opportunity for the people to prove the American way.

Fox News: GOP reps refer Comey, Clinton, McCabe for criminal investigation

"Nearly a dozen Republican members of Congress on Wednesday sent a criminal referral to the Justice Department and FBI seeking an investigation of former bureau boss James Comey, his deputy Andrew McCabe, ex-Attorney General Loretta Lynch and Hillary Clinton in connection with 2016 campaign controversies."

President Trump stands by voters that got him elected, rejects Trans-Pacific Partnership for good

By Robert Romano

President Donald Trump is back to the issue that got him elected more than any other and transformed the U.S. electoral map in 2016, and that is rejecting the 11-nation Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal that had been proposed by former President Barack Obama.

On Twitter on April 17, Trump appeared to rule out the TPP once and for all: "While Japan and South Korea would like us to go back into TPP, I don't like the deal for the United States. Too many contingencies and no way to get out if it doesn't work. Bilateral deals are far more efficient, profitable and better for OUR workers. Look how bad WTO is to U.S."

That had followed a turbulent week for the President as he toyed with the idea of getting back into the TPP. Bloomberg had reported on April 12 that "Two White House officials who spoke on condition of anonymity confirmed that the president directed economic adviser Larry Kudlow and U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer to explore the feasibility of re-entering the TPP."

The President then confirmed his thinking on Twitter on April 12 that he was open to a new deal, but offered certain provisos: "Would only join TPP if the deal were substantially better than the deal offered to Pres. Obama. We already have BILATERAL deals with six of the eleven nations in TPP,

and are working to make a deal with the biggest of those nations, Japan, who has hit us hard on trade for years!"

Upon hearing the reports, Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning warned via a statement that reentering the TPP would be bad for the American economy and bad for Trump politically, saying, "President Donald Trump made it clear well before his candidacy in 2015 that he opposed the Trans-Pacific Partnership, calling it a bad, bad deal. One of his first acts as President was to withdraw from the TPP to the applause of the American people because it did not put America first. The White House's reported reconsideration of this withdrawal would be a disaster both for our nation and for President Trump, who won the election promising to get out of this deal. This sovereignty-killing globalist dream pact embodies everything that the President has opposed throughout his political life, and there is simply no margin to reenter it."

For Manning, the TPP was something akin to a third rail for the President. Fighting against it and other bad trade deals like NAFTA and the World Trade Organization had helped Trump cement his Electoral College majority in the Rust Belt states of Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin in 2016.

It was an issue that proved popular in the 2016 GOP nominating contest, revealing a Republican electorate that was with Trump on trade, surprising many political observers and most of all, Trump's Republican opponents in the primary.

Against Hillary Clinton, the issue helped bring on board union households, reuniting the coalition that helped Ronald Reagan win in the 1980s.

It was Trump's vision that got him elected, but suddenly, with the reports on being open to a new TPP, it was all up in the air.

Fortunately, by April 17, just prior to meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at Mar-a-Lago, Fla., Trump had popped the trial balloon completely. Apparently, navigating and reorienting the 11-nation trade agreement was not as feasible as it might appear at first glance. Or perhaps it just all Trump's art of the deal.

So far, Japan has not been granted any exceptions to the President's steel and aluminum tariffs and now another new trade agreement could be at hand. At a working lunch with Abe on April 19, Trump said, "the word 'reciprocal' will be the primary word that we're going to be using. And we use that with every nation now, because the United States has not been properly led on trade. Our people have let us down. Whether it's our Presidents or our representatives, they've let us down. So free, fair, and reciprocal. And I think we've all agreed to that. And that's just very important." Later at a joint press conference, Abe agreed that he and Trump had agreed to begin talks on "free, fair and reciprocal trade deals" between the two countries on a bilateral basis.

On TPP, Trump said, "'I like bilateral better, I think it's better for our country, I think it's better for our workers. I would much prefer a bilateral deal, a deal directly with Japan." And that's what they're working on.

Trump said he likes to remain "flexible," of course — again, the art of the deal — and so finally offered, "Unless they offer us a deal that we cannot refuse, I would not go back into TPP." Which won't happen. The TPP had been in negotiations since 2005. By the time all 11 nations got a new agreement together to try to make another offer to the U.S. on a multinational basis, Trump would in all likelihood already be out of office.

Meaning, the U.S. is out of the TPP for good, and we can thank President Trump. Going forward, this should give the Trump administration far more leverage in getting deals out of Japan on a bilateral basis, Mexico and Canada via NAFTA renegotiation and China via the World Trade Organization. Same deal with the Paris climate accord. Or the Iran nuclear deal.

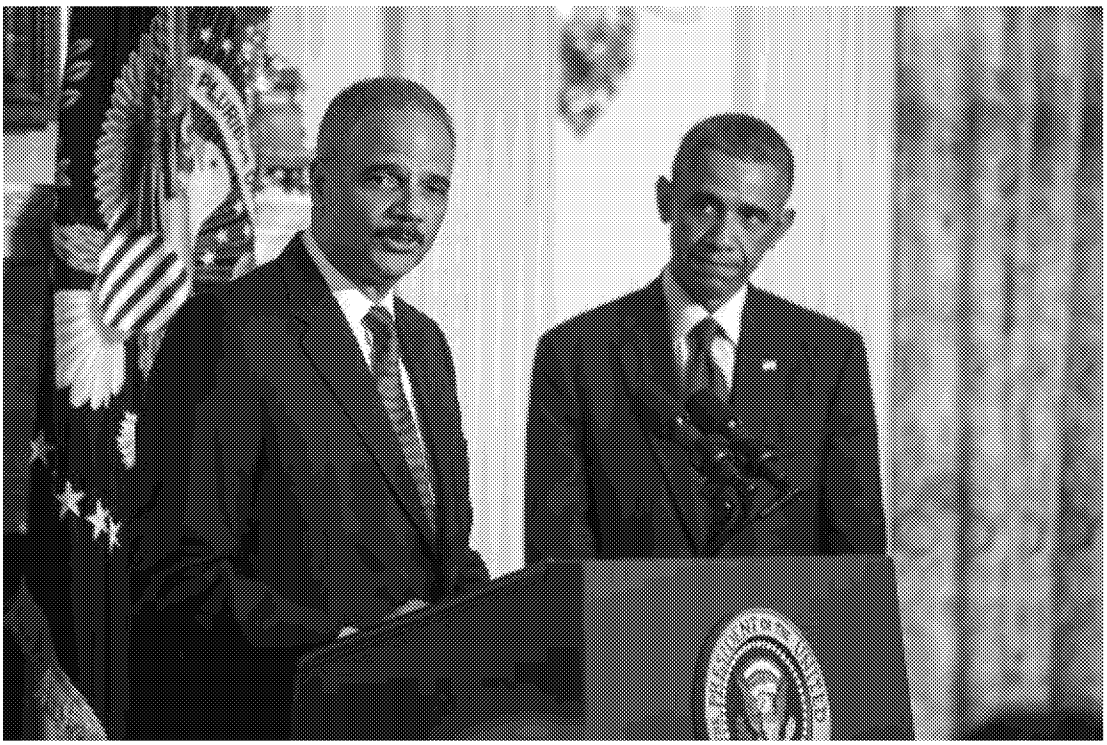
If the President believes these agreements do not put America first, he will kill them.

That is the Trump card. The President can, as he has just done, unilaterally leave NAFTA, the WTO, Iran, or any other bad deal, just like he did the TPP and Paris. Food for thought. Trump isn't bluffing. He'll actually do it.

Don't doubt him.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Banks that took taxpayer bailouts seek to revive Eric Holder's anti-Second Amendment Operation Choke Point



By Natalia Castro

America's largest banks should uphold American values: entrepreneurship, innovation, and, perhaps more than anything, the principles of the Constitution. Yet several of the country's largest banks have decided to go against these principles by opposing the people's Second Amendment right to bear arms. Citigroup and Bank of America have enacted policies to stop lending to companies that make

semi-automatic rifles, while this has the potential for wide-reaching consequences on basic American rights, it also represents an opportunity for the people to prove the American way.

Citigroup announced in a March 22 press release their banks would "require new retail sector clients or partners to adhere to these best practices: (1) they don't sell firearms to someone who hasn't passed a background check, (2) they restrict the sale of firearms for individuals under 21 years of age, and (3) they don't sell bump stocks or high-capacity magazines. This policy will apply across the firm, including to small business, commercial and institutional clients, as well as credit card partners, whether co-brand or private label."

Similarly, in an interview with Bloomberg Television in early April, Back of America vice chairman Anne Finucane announced the bank would no longer finance companies that manufacture semi-automatic rifles for civilian use.

Citigroup Executive Vice President Ed Skyler explained in the press release; this policy does not center on "an ideological mission to rid the world of firearms" and defended the Constitutional right of millions of Americans to bear arms. These banks claim this will not affect individual consumers who use Citi or Bank of America cards yet the policy directly contradicts these words.

Across the country, gun manufacturers are being forced to adjust for this policy. Yvette Shields of the economic publication The Bond Buyer explains Chicago financial officials are working tirelessly to halt these anti-gun policies. Chicago chief financial officer Carole Brown noted, these banks policies will prevent the industry from gaining necessary capital, inherently restricting access to firearms.

Ben Jackson, vice president of government relations at the Illinois Bankers Association, told Shields, "Given the broad language of the ordinance, banks would find it 'impossible' to police the activities of all its retail clients… Banks could be subject to client lawsuits for their policies. The ordinance also lacks a waiver provision if there is a compelling business reason."

By enacting anti-gun policies, Citigroup and Bank of America have attempted to restrict Americans access to guns and complicated the entire marketplace.

However, a press release from the National Rifle Association's Institute for Legislative Action highlights the irony of this action. As the April 13 release reminds, "Citigroup, Bank of America, and other major corporations would do well to recognize that the American voter, through their elected representatives, has repeatedly rejected restrictions on their Second Amendment rights."

Now, the American people will not just have the chance to prove their commitment to the Second Amendment on the ballot box but also through their financial decisions. One bank has gone against the tide of Citigroup and Bank of America, Wells Fargo.

As Wells chief financial officer John Shrewsberry told reporters, "As our CEO has publicly stated, we do not believe that the American public wants banks to decide which legal products consumers can and cannot buy. We believe this issue requires a legislative solution that allows the public to voice their concerns."

Wells Fargo has the right idea. Luckily, we have a capitalist system, so the American people can decide to move their business away from Bank of America and Citigroup and toward banks such as Wells Fargo that protect the people's interest.

Banks are not policymakers and should not take that role. Particularly not banks that have been bailed out by the federal government who are now deciding to go against the Constitution. If Bank of

America and Citigroup want to defy the basic principles of the Constitution they may, they are not the government, but the American people ought to defend those principles and take their business elsewhere.

Natalia Castro is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government

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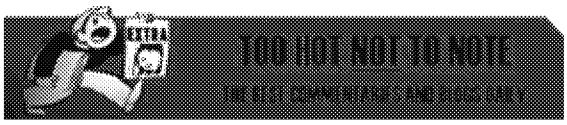

ALG Editor's Note: In the following featured report from Fox News, House Republican members of Congress have made criminal referrals to the Justice Department on former FBI Director James Comey, former FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe, former Attorney General Loretta Lynch and Hillary Clinton:

GOP reps refer Comey, Clinton, McCabe for criminal investigation

By Judson Berger and Brooke Singman

Nearly a dozen Republican members of Congress on Wednesday sent a criminal referral to the Justice Department and FBI seeking an investigation of former bureau boss James Comey, his deputy Andrew McCabe, ex-Attorney General Loretta Lynch and Hillary Clinton in connection with 2016 campaign controversies.

Attorney General Jeff Sessions already announced last month he had assigned a federal prosecutor to review some of those broader issues, while resisting calls for a second special counsel. But the referral represents an escalation of Republican pressure to probe top Democrats and Trump critics.

Rep. Ron DeSantis, R-Fla., and 10 other House lawmakers want an investigation into potential violations that cover everything from the handling of the Clinton email probe to the anti-Trump dossier's funding to the Uranium One controversy. They made their case in a letter sent Wednesday to Sessions, FBI Director Christopher Wray, and U.S. Attorney John Huber, whom Sessions named to lead the previously announced evaluation.

Complaining about "dissimilar degrees of zealousness" in the investigations into Clinton and Trump campaign associates, they wrote:

"Because we believe that those in positions of high authority should be treated the same as every other American, we want to be sure that the potential violations of law outlined below are vetted appropriately."

They named Comey, Clinton, Lynch, McCabe, FBI agents Peter Strzok and Lisa Page and several others as figures who should be investigated.

Get full story here.

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Why are Democrats trying to infect the U.S. with the same disease that is killing children in the U.K.?

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

April 26, 2018

Permission to republish original op-eds and cartoons granted.

Government run healthcare sentences another child to death in the U.K. warning against death panels in the U.S.

In the U.K., if the hospital wants to terminate life support on your child and you disagree, a court can compel the end of life. It's the sort of state-run death panel we must never allow here.

The data on guns destroys the left's narrative

Gun reform is often framed as one of the most divisive issues in the United States; but this characterization of the issue, created with fear-inducing rhetoric on the left, is nothing more than an attempt to increase outreach. Facts don't often align with feelings; as the facts make clear, guns are not seen as violent to most Americans, but a necessary method of protection. Propagating the myth that guns are universally destructive only allows the left to further threaten gun rights.

Trump supporters, Republicans still sour on GOP Congress, poll shows

A new poll by McLaughlin & Associates on behalf of the Ear to the Ground Listening Project that found 57 percent of likely voters disapprove of the Republican majority in Congress, including 32 percent of Trump voters, 25 percent of Republicans and 64 percent of independents.

NBC News: Voter reject Democrat impeach Trump candidates 47-42

"As Democratic candidates for Congress in swing districts weigh how to talk about President Donald Trump in their campaigns, a new poll shows that they might want to hold off on using the "I" word. The poll from NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist shows that 47 percent of registered voters say they would definitely vote against *a candidate for Congress who proposed impeaching Trump, compared to 42 percent who said they would definitely vote for that candidate. One in ten voters were unsure."*

Government run healthcare sentences another child to death in the U.K. warning against death panels in the U.S.

By Printus LeBlanc

In his failed presidential bid, Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) ran on a platform of socialized medicine, and he is still pushing the issue in the Senate today. The Senator and his fellow travelers hailed government-controlled healthcare as the solution to all problems, despite glaring failures of socialism around the world. For the second time in less than a year, a nation with government-controlled healthcare has sentenced a child to death, and the question must be asked. Why are Democrats trying to infect the U.S. with the same disease that is killing children in the U.K.?

If you have been paying attention to international news, you likely know about British child Alfie Evans. Alfie is the 23-month-old child of Tom and Kate James. Alfie has been at Alder Hey Children's Hospital since December 2016. The doctors have been unable to diagnose what is wrong with him, but believe it could be a rare degenerative neurological condition, the same condition Charlie Gard had. Another child the U.K. sentenced to death.

The hospital, which is run by the National Health Service (NHS), has decided that it is no longer in the child's best interest to live, and intended to take him off life support. The parents did not agree with this and have fought the U.K. government to keep their child alive. The family went to court for permission to take their child to Italy for further treatment. The Pope and Italian government recently gotten involved and offered to treat Alfie at Vatican's Bambino Gesu Children's Hospital at no cost to the NHS. The Italian Defense Ministry has stated they have a plane on standby ready to retrieve the boy and bring him to the Vatican.

The NHS denied the family's request to move their son, and by mid-afternoon, on April 25 the family lost their petition to the Court of Appeals. The three judges rejected the families appeal backing the decision of the High Court the previous day. The decision is a death sentence for the child.

How can this happen? How can a hospital filled with doctors and nurses kill a child? Isn't part of the Hippocratic oath "first, to do no harm"?

This is able to happen because in a nation with socialized medicine, the patients and family do not make decisions, government bureaucrats and courts do. This is what happens when a government gets too much power.

Section 15 of the Mental Capacity Act of 2005 sadly gives the courts in the UK, not parents, guardians or caregivers, the power to make these end-of-life determinations: "Power to make declarations (1)The court may make declarations as to—(a)whether a person has or lacks capacity to make a decision specified in the declaration; (b)whether a person has or lacks capacity to make decisions on such matters as are described in the declaration; (c)the lawfulness or otherwise of any act done, or yet to be done, in relation to that person." This is a state-run system of death, where courts get to decide to pull the plug even when families are not ready.

When the government has the power to order an action that leads directly to the death of a child in a hospital it runs, doesn't that seem like too much power?

One must ask, where is the harm in letting the child go to the Vatican? If the Vatican is willing to take on the expenses in providing for the child, why would the NHS be so vehemently against it?

The only entity harmed by letting the child go to the Vatican hospital is the NHS. Perhaps if the child were to go to a non-NHS hospital and improve, the NHS would be utterly embarrassed. In a society with socialized medicine, government-run healthcare must be the ultimate arbiter and never challenged.

Bernie Sanders and his fellow travelers have admitted their goal is complete government control of healthcare. Where are the human rights groups challenging Sen. Sanders and his fellow travelers on the ethics of sentencing a child to death?

In socialized medicine, when the government decides it is time to die, there is nothing to be done about it. This is the lesson that must learned from the debacle at the NHS in the U.K. While in the U.S. we value life and pursue it at all costs, societies with socialized medicine tend to lean towards death. The U.K. should be ashamed of itself for letting this happen, but more importantly, Americans must look at how the right to make decisions over death has been ceded to the government overseas and vow never here.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

The data on guns destroys the left's narrative

By Natalia Castro

Gun reform is often framed as one of the most divisive issues in the United States; but this characterization of the issue, created with fear-inducing rhetoric on the left, is nothing more than an attempt to increase outreach. Facts don't often align with feelings; as the facts make clear, guns are not seen as violent to most Americans, but a necessary method of protection. Propagating the myth that guns are universally destructive only allows the left to further threaten gun rights.

Researchers Allie Nicodemo and Lia Petronio from Northeastern University found in a Feb. 2018 study, U.S. schools are significantly safer today than they were in the 1990s. In fact, school and mass shootings have been on the decline since the 1990s, when four times the number of children were killed in schools.

Yet despite this, a Pew Research survey from March and April 2018 found that, overall, 57 percent of teens said they were worried about the possibility of a shooting happening in their school. Similarly, 63 percent of teenager's parents said they were at least somewhat worried about the possibility of a shooting happening at their children's school.

So why the discrepancy? Why do so many children and parents seem to believe a shooting will occur in their schools, despite evidence to the contrary?

The answer is simple: liberal media groups and politicians have inflated the school shootings narrative to further an anti-gun agenda.

Following the Parkland shooting, several media outlets began reporting that there had been 18 school shootings in the first 45 days of 2018. This number, as Siraj Hashmi of the Washington Examiner explains, was first recorded by the gun control advocacy group Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund.

This group vaguely defines school shootings as any gun relating issue to take place in a school, allowing them to overstate cases and build fear.

For instance, the group includes an incident at a Clinton County, Mich. elementary school where a man committed suicide in the parking lot while the school was closed, and no children were present a school shooting. Of the 18 school shootings, the group lists, only seven resulted in a person's death, as many were cases of accidental firings.

As Hashmi concludes, "Make no mistake, every shooting incident listed above is concerning... but, in no way is a mass shooting at a school happening every two-three days in the United States. It's an unfair, dishonest, and disingenuous characterization by the media."

Democratic politicians also play a vital role in propagating the myth of rampant mass shootings. Both former President Barack Obama and Senator Harry Reid have maintained that the United States is "the only advanced country" where mass shootings occur with such frequency.

However, as a study on global mass shooting incidents from 2009-2015 from the Crime Prevention Research Center found, the U.S. does not lead the advanced world in mass shootings, we are not even in the top ten. While Norway and Serbia top the list, the United States comes in at 11, following Belgium and the Czech Republic.

In 2013 Obama's Administration issued a Presidential Memorandum asking the Centers for Disease Control to "research the causes and prevention of gun violence", the research conducted found exactly the opposite of what the President had hoped.

The study subcontracted out to the Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, found 61 percent of firearm-related deaths were suicides, *not* homicides, discounting the myth that most gun owners are violent toward others. Similarly, the Institute found that defensive gun use is far more common than offensive use; "with estimates of annual uses ranging from about 500,000 to more than 3 million per year, in the context of about 300,000 violent crimes involving firearms in 2008."

Democrats and anti-gun driven media groups are trying to promote the idea that guns create dangerous situations for America's most vulnerable students, but this is simply untrue. The truth is, more Americans see guns as a safety tool than a violent one. The latest NBC News/ Wall Street Journal poll reveals that six in 10 Americans say gun ownership increases safety.

By pushing a narrative that school and mass shootings should be a constant fear for everyone, suburban parents and students are pressured into fear and promote gun control legislation; but for a vast majority of American, guns are not a violent weapon.

Luckily, most Americans do not fall for this hoax for long. As an April 2018 Gallup poll reveals, guns/gun control being viewed as one of Americans top priority issues in March jumped, just following the Parkland shooting, but by April, the level of concern has already diminished back to normal levels.

It is easy to have an emotional reaction to events such as the tragedy in Parkland; however, the American people cannot let their emotions prevent them from seeing liberal propaganda. As the left attempts to dominate media and political attitudes regarding guns to further a gun control agenda, people must remember what they have always known to be true- guns are nothing more than how they are used, and believing they are a valuable tool for protection is not an unpopular opinion.

Natalia Castro is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

Trump supporters, Republicans still sour on GOP Congress, poll shows

By Robert Romano

A new poll by McLaughlin & Associates on behalf of the Ear to the Ground Listening Project that found 57 percent of likely voters disapprove of the Republican majority in Congress, including 32 percent of Trump voters, 25 percent of Republicans and 64 percent of independents.

Believe it or not, that's actually an improvement from several months ago. A similar poll in Nov. 2017 by McLaughlin & Associates had nationwide disapproval of the GOP majority at 62 percent.

That had followed failed attempts to repeal and replace Obamacare in July 2017 and again in Sept. 2017, which looms large as disgruntling factor for Republicans.

Those numbers improved a bit after the big tax cut bill passed in Dec. 2017, which also repealed the Obamacare individual mandate to purchase insurance and allowed for oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

But whatever momentum was had after that took a dump in March with the $1.3 trillion omnibus spending bill. It spent too much money on Democrat priorities like an Amtrak tunnel between New York and New Jersey, and although it increased defense spending, a Trump administration priority, it did not fully fund the southern border wall and failed to defund sanctuary cities and Planned Parenthood.

There have been a couple of other successes. A number of Obama midnight regulations were repealed via the Congressional Review Act at the beginning of 2017 and the Obama era Housing and Urban Development regulation conditioning receipt community development block grants on changes to local zoning along racial and income criteria was prohibited in the omnibus.

Still, Republican dissatisfaction of the GOP Congress is far too high for Republicans to make an effective defense of the House majority in 2018, let alone pick up many seats in the Senate in a year when the environment actually favored them.

Nine Democrat seats up are in states President Donald Trump carried in 2016: Florida, Indiana, Missouri, Montana, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Ohio. They could have been potential pick-ups, but now those prospects far more iffy as Republicans might be happy simply to keep the Senate majority and not lose any seats.

In every midterm following a presidential election, you can expect the opposition party, in this case the Democrats, to be fired up. Right now, the McLaughlin poll shows Democrats are united and that Republicans and Republican-leaning independents are dispirited. The reason is because they feel like they are not winning battles in Congress.

"This poll is a wake-up call," Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning said in reaction, calling for new leadership. "It is clear that if Republicans want to create enthusiasm with those who should support them, they need to start fighting in favor of the issues that got them elected. With House Speaker Paul Ryan retiring, they need to choose a new Speaker who can credibly lead them in this fight. No one in the current leadership team has the credibility to fight for the values and principles that got the House Republicans their majority in 2010."

It's not all bad news. The poll shows Democrats with only a narrow edge in the generic ballot, 44 percent to 43 percent. As bad as the numbers are on approve or disapprove, on the ballot, independents are split 34 percent to 34 percent Republican and Democrat in terms of who they're voting for.

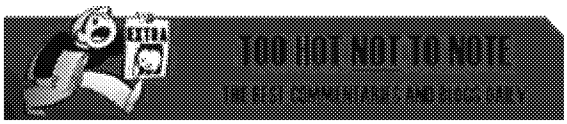
Meaning as much as Republican-leaning Americans are with the GOP Congress, they believe a Democrat-controlled Congress would be much worse.

Meaning, there's still time before November for Republicans to get their priorities funded and things they oppose defunded in the appropriations process, and to accomplish other things their base wants. The fiscal year ends on Sept. 30.

But to get a good deal, Republicans need leverage, and with a lame duck House Speaker, right now they have none. Therefore, now is the time for new, unifying leadership in the House that can get a better deal for the American people in this year's appropriations process and restore confidence in the Republican majority. That is, if Republicans in Washington, D.C. want to keep their majority.

Manning called on Republicans to fight to show their supporters they have their backs, concluding, "It is clear that Americans want a fight for the future of their country and if Republicans refuse to do it, they will be fired in November."

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from NBC News, the author discusses a recent poll showing more registered voters would support a candidate that votes against impeachment than for impeachment, a shock to the Democrat Party elites:

NBCNEWS.com

Voter reject Democrat impeach Trump candidates 47-42

By NBC News

As Democratic candidates for Congress in swing districts weigh how to talk about President Donald Trump in their campaigns, a new poll shows that they might want to hold off on using the "I" word.

The poll from NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist shows that 47 percent of registered voters say they would definitely vote *against* a candidate for Congress who proposed impeaching Trump, compared to 42 percent who said they would definitely vote for that candidate. One in ten voters were unsure.

While Democrats and Republicans remained mostly in their partisan corners, with 70 percent of Democrats saying they would definitely vote for a candidate who favored impeachment and 84 percent of Republicans saying they'd do the opposite, independents were opposed to supporting a pro-impeachment candidate, 47 percent to 42 percent.

Click here for the full story.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Subject: If Michael Cohen lied about not being Prague in 2016, he may have fooled everyone — including CNN, Buzzfeed, the intelligence community and President Trump

If Cohen somehow got into Germany and back to the U.S. in late August or early September 2016 without anyone knowing including immigration officials — he's a ninja

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

April 16, 2018

Permission to republish original op-eds and cartoons granted.

If Michael Cohen lied about not being Prague in 2016, he may have fooled everyone — including CNN, Buzzfeed, the intelligence community and President Trump

If Trump attorney Michael Cohen somehow got into Germany and back into the U.S. in late August or early September 2016 to get to Prague, Czech Republic without anyone knowing including immigration officials — he's a ninja. And he would have fooled everyone — including CNN, the intelligence community and President Trump.

The left is making mountains out of molehills to distract Republicans and the Trump administration

Democrats have never been fans of fiscal conservatism unless it furthers an attack on Republicans. From media outlets to political figures, the left has attempted to convince the American people that various executives within the Trump Administration are wasting taxpayer money on lavish unnecessary expenses. Yet, as the facts prove once again, this is nothing more than an attempt to obstruct the success of this administration with hypocritical claims.

John Tierney: Scott Pruitt, Warrior for Science

"Imagine if the head of a federal agency announced a new policy for its scientific research: from now on, the agency would no longer allow its studies to be reviewed and challenged by independent scientists, and its researchers would not share the data on which their conclusions were based. The response from scientists and journalists would be outrage. By refusing peer review from outsiders, the agency would be rejecting a fundamental scientific tradition. By not sharing data with other researchers, it would be violating a standard transparency requirement at leading scientific journals. If a Republican official did such a thing, you'd expect to hear denunciations of this latest offensive in the 'Republican war on science.'"

If Michael Cohen lied about not being Prague in 2016, he may have fooled everyone — including CNN, Buzzfeed, the intelligence community and President Trump

By Robert Romano

"By the way, we just found out, I was just coming down, Michael Cohen... is a very talented lawyer, he's a good lawyer at my firm, it was just reported that it wasn't this Michael Cohen they were talking about. So, all night long, it's Michael Cohen. I said, I want to see your passport, he brings his passport to my office, I say, hey, wait a minute, he didn't leave the country, he wasn't out of the country. They had, Michael Cohen of the Trump Organization was in Prague. It turned out to be a different Michael Cohen. It's a disgrace, what took place, it's a disgrace, and I think they ought to be apologize, to start with, to Michael Cohen."

That was then-President Elect Donald Trump at his famous CNN is "fake news" press conference on Jan. 11, 2017 calling the Fusion GPS-Christopher Steele dossier — which was paid for by the DNC and the Hillary Clinton campaign — a fake. It had contended that Cohen was in Prague in late August or early September to meet with Russian agents and to clean up the supposed fallout of one-time Trump campaign advisor Carter Page and former campaign manager Paul Manafort allegedly working with Russia to hack the DNC and put the emails onto Wikileaks.

Prior to that news conference, on Jan. 11, 2017, Jake Tapper reported on CNN, corroborating Cohen's account: "Michael Cohen, Trump's lawyer, has been out there because in this

uncorroborated report, it talks about Michael Cohen, Trump's official corporate lawyer, making a trip to the Czech Republic. My reporting suggests that people tried to run that down, and they concluded that it was different Michael Cohen. It was a Michael Cohen with a passport from another country, same birth year, different birth date. So for Michael Cohen to dispute that he was in the Czech Republic, completely confirms and comports with our reporting and it's one of the reasons why the intelligence chiefs did not get specific with these allegations and that's why I hope at the press conference today people are more general and don't get into the specifics because a lot of that stuff just has not been proven."

By Cohen's account, appearing on Hannity on Jan. 11, 2017, he said Trump called him after the Steele dossier story broke and asked if he was ever in Prague, to which the answer was never. "I've never been in Prague… And so he said, 'Michael, I really need to know.' I said, 'Mr. Trump, I have never been to Prague.' He said to me, 'Okay.' I said, 'Do you want to see my passport? I live close to the office.' And he said, 'Yeah, you mind if I see it?' And I said, 'Of course not, you're the President Elect. I'll be there in about two minutes.'"

All along, Cohen contested, he had never been to Prague. In May 2017, he allowed Buzzfeed, which had broken the dossier story, to examine his passport, which took pictures of it: "The stamps indicate he traveled abroad at least four times in 2016: twice to London, once to St. Maarten, and once to Italy in July. The Italian trip is the most intriguing, because it places Cohen in what's known as the Schengen Area: a group of 26 European countries, including the Czech Republic, that allows visitors to travel freely among them without getting any additional passport stamps. Upon entering the Schengen Area, visitors get a rectangular stamp with the date, a country code, their port of entry, and a symbol showing how they entered — such as an airplane or a train. In Cohen's passport, that mark appears on page 17, with a date of July 9. The mark is too faint to be fully legible. The exit stamp, similar but with rounded edges, is also light, but the letters 'cino' are legible, indicating he flew out of Leonardo da Vinci–Fiumicino Airport in Rome. That stamp is dated July 17."

As for London and St. Maarten, "Regarding the three other 2016 stamps in his passport, Cohen said he visited London twice, where his daughter is studying: once in October for a birthday party and again in November for Thanksgiving. He said he vacationed in the Caribbean island of St. Maarten in January."

As for August, stating he was actually with his son at the University of Southern California with his son's baseball coach during that time. The Atlantic confirmed Cohen was on campus on Aug. 29 via a University baseball source. For the month of September, Cohen says he was in New York.

So, on the surface, and from the outset, it appeared the Steele dossier was a big bust. If he wasn't in Prague ever, and hadn't even left the country in the time frame the Steele dossier put him there, then he certainly couldn't have been here talking with Russian agents.

But now McClatchy has reported on April 13 that, Special Counsel Robert Mueller's team is saying that Cohen somehow managed to get in and out of the country without getting his passport stamped. The report states, "investigators have traced evidence that Cohen entered the Czech Republic through Germany, apparently during August or early September of 2016 as the ex-spy reported, said the sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the investigation is confidential. He wouldn't have needed a passport for such a trip, because both countries are in the so-called Schengen Area in which 26 nations operate with open borders. The disclosure still left a puzzle: The

sources did not say whether Cohen took a commercial flight or private jet to Europe, and gave no explanation as to why no record of such a trip has surfaced."

For his part, Cohen is maintaining he was never in Prague. On Twitter, April 14, he stated, "Bad reporting, bad information and bad story by same reporter Peter Stone... No matter how many times or ways they write it, I have never been to Prague. I was in LA with my son. Proven!"

So is it more fake news? At least one part of the report is incorrect. Cohen would have still needed a passport to get to Germany from the U.S. and back again, even if he traveled on ground to Prague. But again, Cohen's passport never puts him in Germany in 2016.

If Cohen somehow got into Germany and back to the U.S. in late August or early September 2016 without anyone knowing including immigration officials — he's a ninja. And he would have fooled everyone — including CNN, the intelligence community and President Trump.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

The left is making mountains out of molehills to distract Republicans and the Trump administration

By Natalia Castro

Democrats have never been fans of fiscal conservatism unless it furthers an attack on Republicans. From media outlets to political figures, the left has attempted to convince the American people that various executives within the Trump administration are wasting taxpayer money on lavish unnecessary expenses. Yet, as the facts prove once again, this is nothing more than an attempt to obstruct the success of this administration with hypocritical claims.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin assisted President Trump in implementing one of the largest tax cut overhauls in our nation's history, so it is no surprise the left has decided to make him a target for attack. Several media outlets, such as the Huffington Post, have reported issues with Mnuchin's travel expenditures, questioning his use of military planes rather than commercial flights.

These attacks are both unwarranted and hypocritical. Last week, the Treasury Department released information regarding the travel of Secretary Mnuchin and his recent predecessors to dispel rumors of abuse.

Treasury reports show that Mnuchin spent about $1.2 million on travel in FY 2017 and has spent $781,000 on travel so far in FY 2018, with a majority of his flights using commercial airlines rather than private military planes.

This is significantly less than the roughly $3.2 million Treasury Secretary Jack Lew spent in FY 2016 on travel or the roughly $2.2 million Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner spent in FY 2011 on travel. Both Secretaries served under President Obama.

While Mnuchin *did* spend more in his first year in office than either of his predecessors, the difference of $135,000 between Mnuchin and Geithner's first-year travel expenses hardly requires outcry by the left, especially considering the inspector general has already reviewed Mnuchin's expenses and saw no violation of the law.

Clearly, the left is promoting baseless attacks to delegitimize a successful member of the Trump administration, and Mnuchin is not alone. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Director Scott Pruitt and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Ben Carson have also been victims of repeated attacks regarding expenditures.

Pruitt has been mocked for his expensive spending on travel and security. As Michael Biesecker of the Chicago Tribune reported, "Environmental Protection Agency chief Scott Pruitt's concern with his safety came at a steep cost to taxpayers as his swollen security detail blew through overtime budgets and at times diverted officers away from investigating environmental crimes. Altogether, the agency spent millions of dollars for a 20-member full-time detail that is more than three times the size of his predecessor's part-time security contingent."

But three times the expenses on security should not be a point of criticism about Pruitt but instead on the people requiring Pruitt to act in this way.

The EPA's assistant inspector general for investigations, Patrick Sullivan, told CNN on Nov. 2017, "We have at least four times — four to five times the number of threats against Mr. Pruitt than we had against [Obama's EPA Chief] Ms. McCarthy… They run the variety of direct death threats — 'I'm going to put a bullet in your brain' — to implied threats — 'if you don't classify this particular chemical in this particular way, I'm going to hurt you.'"

Additionally, the Washington Examiner reported on Feb. 2018; the EPA currently has 70 open probes into threats against Pruitt and his family. *This* is the reason the EPA's Criminal Investigations Division decided to provide Pruitt with a 24/7 security detail to ensure his and his family's safety.

Pruitt did not become EPA director and decide he wanted lavish travel and constant security; the threats levied against his family by the left caused him to *need* this expensive security detail. Liberals created this problem and are now blaming Pruitt for being a victim.

Meanwhile, at HUD, Congressional Democrats such as Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio), have called Carson's spending of $31,000 on furniture for HUD offices "extremely disturbing" and led Congressional probes into Carson's spending.

While Carson has admitted his spending should have been better controlled, it is by no means excessive compared to previous administrations.

As the Washington Free Beacon reported in Feb. 2015, the Obama Administration's Department of Homeland Security (DHS) spent $147.7 million on furniture between FY 2010 and FY 2014. This included $1.1 million for furniture in a single Vermont office, $2.4 million for furniture in a single D.C. office and $163,856 for "waiting room seating" in one office in 2014.

Obama's DHS also spent an incredible $148, 809 for "aluminum folding tables in support of Sandy Recovery Office" a full two years after Hurricane Sandy occurred in 2012. To be clear, a single aluminum folding table on Amazon is $39.99, Obama's DHS could have purchased nearly 4,000 tables with these funds for an office quickly becoming purposeless, yet the left is attacking the Trump Administration for improper spending.

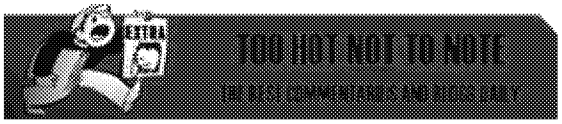
Despite all this, Carson is still trying to prevent this abuse and misuse of funds from being allowed in his office, even if he is barely a culprit.

Last month, Carson introduced new financial controls "to enhance department's fiscal strength and integrity." In a press release, Carson explains, "We simply need to do better. An updated system of internal controls will provide our agency with greater certainty that the dollars we spend are spent in a manner that satisfies all laws and regulations, and most importantly, the American people. We will approach this as any business would by increasing transparency and accountability."

The Trump Administration is working tirelessly to eliminate waste and introduce successful policy. Naturally this scares the left. While politicians and the liberal media continue to make baseless claims against this administration, individuals such as Mnuchin, Pruitt, and Carson must continue fighting for better policy for the people. Whether you believe excessive spending by executives is not an issue at

all or one that has plagued every modern administration, the reality is it is *not* a uniquely Republican issue, and the left's attempts to frame it as one must be rejected.

Natalia Castro is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from City Journal, John Tierney describes how Scott Pruitt is bring science back to the EPA and the absolute breakdown the left is having because they can no longer peddle science without showing their work:

CITY JOURNAL

Scott Pruitt, Warrior for Science

By John Tierney

Imagine if the head of a federal agency announced a new policy for its scientific research: from now on, the agency would no longer allow its studies to be reviewed and challenged by independent scientists, and its researchers would not share the data on which their conclusions were based. The response from scientists and journalists would be outrage. By refusing peer review from outsiders, the agency would be rejecting a fundamental scientific tradition. By not sharing data with other researchers, it would be violating a standard transparency requirement at leading scientific journals. If a Republican official did such a thing, you'd expect to hear denunciations of this latest offensive in the "Republican war on science."

That's the accusation being hurled at Scott Pruitt, the Republican who heads the Environmental Protection Agency. But Pruitt hasn't done anything to discourage peer review. In fact, he's done the opposite: he has called for the use of more independent experts to review the EPA's research and has just announced that the agency would rely only on studies for which data are available to be shared. Yet Democratic officials and liberal journalists have denounced these moves as an "attack on science," and Democrats have cited them (along with accusations of ethical violations) in their campaign to force Pruitt out of his job.

How could "the party of science," as Democrats like to call themselves, be opposed to transparency and peer review? Because better scientific oversight would make it tougher for the EPA to justify its costly regulations. To environmentalists, rigorous scientific protocols are fine in theory, but not in practice if they interfere with the green political agenda. As usual, the real war on science is the one waged from the left.

The EPA has been plagued by politicized science since its inception in 1970. One of its first tasks was to evaluate the claim, popularized in Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, that the use of DDT pesticide was causing an epidemic of cancer. The agency held extensive hearings that led to the conclusion that DDT was not a carcinogen, a finding that subsequent research would confirm. Yet the

EPA administrator, William Ruckelshaus, reportedly never even bothered to read the scientific testimony. Ignoring the thousands of pages of evidence, he declared DDT a potential carcinogen and banned most uses of it.

Since then, the agency has repeatedly been criticized for relying on weak or cherry-picked evidence to promote needless alarms justifying the expansion of its authority (and budget). Its warnings about BPA, a chemical used in plastics, were called unscientific by leading researchers in the field. Its conclusion that secondhand smoke was killing thousands of people annually was ruled by a judge to be in violation of "scientific procedure and norms"—and was firmly debunked by later research.

To justify the costs of the Obama administration's Clean Power Plan restricting coal-burning power plants, the EPA relied on a controversial claim that a particular form of air pollution (from small particulates) was responsible for large numbers of premature deaths. To reach that conclusion, the agency ignored contradictory evidence and chose to rely on 1990s research whose methodology and conclusions were open to question. The EPA's advisory committee on air pollution, a group of outside scientists, was sufficiently concerned at the time to ask to see the supporting data. But the researchers and the EPA refused to share the data, citing the confidentiality of the medical records involved, and they have continued refusing demands from Congress and other researchers to share it, as Steve Milloy recounts in his book, *Scare Pollution: Why and How to Fix the EPA.*

Pruitt's new policy will force the EPA to rely on studies for which data is available to other researchers, ensuring the transparency that enables findings to be tested and confirmed. So why is he being attacked? His critics argue that some worthwhile research will be ignored because it is based on confidential records that are impractical to share. They say that it would cost the EPA several hundred million dollars to redact personal medical information in the air-pollution studies used to justify the Obama administration's Clean Power Plan. But even if that estimate is correct—it seems awfully high—it's a pittance compared with the costs of the EPA's regulations. The Obama EPA estimated the annual cost of its Clean Power Plan at $8 billion; others estimated it at more than $30 billion. Before saddling utility customers with those higher bills year after year, the EPA could at least pay for reliable research.

Click here for the full story.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Message

From: Small, Jeff [Jeff.Small@mail.house.gov]
Sent: 8/1/2018 8:23:48 PM
To: Ringel, Aaron [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=1654bdc951284a6d899a418a89fb0abf-Ringel, Aar]; Palich, Christian [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=330ad62e158d43af93fcbbece930d21a-Palich, Chr]; Rodrick, Christian [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=6515dbe46dae466da53c8a3aa3be8cc2-Rodrick, Ch]; Abboud, Michael [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b6f5af791a1842f1adcc088cbf9ed3ce-Abboud, Mic]; Gunasekara, Mandy [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=53d1a3caa8bb4ebab8a2d28ca59b6f45-Gunasekara,]
CC: 'dhenry@roqstrategies.com' [dhenry@roqstrategies.com]; michelle@westerncaucusfoundation.org
Subject: RE: Upcoming Montana Western Caucus Trip
Attachments: MT WCF Agenda 2018 .docx

Aaron, Christian, Christian, Michael and Mandy,

Wanted to circle back with you all and see if someone from EPA can join us for all or part of our upcoming Montana Trip?

Know your rules are slightly different but below is what I sent to House staff.

As of now, we have 7 members of Congress, nearly 30 staffers, as well as agency officials from DOI, NPS and DOE.

Let Darrel Henry or Michelle from the Foundation or me know if you have questions. Think Darrell plans to send a formal invite from the Foundation inviting you all to provide a panelist for Friday's Forum that you all can send to Ethics.

We'd obviously love to have participation from the agency if someone can make it.

Sincerely,

Jeff Small
Executive Director | Congressional Western Caucus
Senior Advisor | Congressman Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.
2057 Rayburn HOB | Washington, DC 20515
https://westerncaucus.house.gov
(202) 225-2315 main
jeff.small@mail.house.gov

From: Small, Jeff
Sent: Wednesday, August 01, 2018 3:51 PM
To: Small, Jeff
Cc: Hanson, Tanner
Subject: Western Caucus Montana Trip

It's not too late to RSVP for the upcoming Western Caucus Trip to Montana organized by the Western Caucus Foundation!

Attached is the most recent agenda. Please let us know if you are interested in going on the trip and book your room ASAP as we have a lot of interest.

You need to RSVP to be on the list and get the trip updates.

1. **Western Caucus Foundation August Montana Trip** | Friday, August 17th – Sunday, August 19th
   By now you should have received an invite for the Western Caucus Foundation's "Montana Summer Western Field Tour and Roundtable" 3-day trip. Please note changed dates.
   - Featuring tours of Yellowstone National Park, an outdoor issues and wildlife briefing, fishing equipment factory & timber mill tours and optional fishing opportunities.
   - Members and staff should fly into Bozeman on Thursday, 8/16 and out on Monday, 8/20 or Tuesday, 8/21.
   - **HOTEL:** The room block for the trip is at the Comfort Suites, 2515 Catamount St., Bozeman, MT 59718. The group rate is $152 on Thur. 8/16 and Sun. 8/19; $168 on Fri. 8/17 and Sat. 8/18. To reserve, call 506-587-0800 and mention the Western Caucus Foundation room block.
   - RSVP FOR THE EVENT HERE.
   - Click here for the current agenda.
   - Members and staff are highly encouraged to attend.
   - You can use your office MRA for the hotel and flights. Other allowable expenses will be covered by the Foundation.

Please let us know if you have questions.

Jeff Small
Executive Director | Congressional Western Caucus
Senior Advisor | Congressman Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.

WESTERN CAUCUS FOUNDATION

THE HONORABLE STEVE DAINES
HONORARY CO-CHAIR

THE HONORABLE PAUL GOSAR
HONORARY CO-CHAIR

Summer Western Roundtable and Field Tour
Friday, August 17, 2018 - Sunday, August 19, 2018
Optional Program on Monday, August 20, 2018
Bozeman, MT

Draft Agenda

Thursday, August 16

All Day	ARRIVAL
RON	Location: Comfort Suites in Bozeman, MT **Reservation information provided upon registration.**

Friday, August 17

9:15 a.m.	Western Policy Roundtable Location: The Baxter, Bozeman, MT
	Western Policy Luncheon (widely attended event) Location: The Baxter, Bozeman, MT Keynote lunch speaker: TBA
2:00 p.m.	Simms fishing equipment factory tour and briefing Location: Simms Fishing Products, 177 Garden Dr., Bozeman, MT 59718
3:30 p.m.	Recreational Industry briefing and demonstration Location: TBD
7:30 p.m.	Dinner (widely attended event) Location: Mint Café Bar, 27 E Main St, Belgrade, MT 59714
RON	Location: Comfort Suites in Bozeman, MT

Saturday, August 18

7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	OPTIONAL ACTIVITY: Fishing opportunity
9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	Briefing on Montana Wildlife Issues Location: Museum of the Rockies
1:00 p.m.	Depart for Livingston, Western Wildfires issues briefing en route. (Lunch provided en route) Location: Bus
2:30 p.m.	Timber & forestry briefing and mill tour Location: RY Timber: 5284 US-89, Livingston, MT 59047

Evening	Dinner on own in Bozeman
7:00 p.m.	Reception Location: 14 North Restaurant, 14 N Church Avenue, Bozeman, MT 59715
RON	Location: Comfort Suites in Bozeman, MT

Sunday, August 19

7:30 a.m.	Depart Hotel for field tour of Yellowstone Park w/ briefings on current national park issues
Evening	Reception Location: TBA
RON	Location: Comfort Suites in Bozeman, MT

Monday, August 20 – FLY OUT DAY OR OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

10:00 a.m.	Depart hotel for Billings *Via motor coach provided by the Crow Tribe of Indians
12:00 p.m.	Luncheon briefing (widely attended event) Location: TBD Topic: Free market economic development under compact governance.
2:30 p.m.	Depart Billings for Crow Agency *Via motor coach provided by the Crow Tribe of Indians
3:30 p.m.	Briefing on coal export issues Location: TBD
5:00 p.m.	Reception w/ the Crow Nation Location: Crow Agency
6:00 p.m.	Crow Days Closing Parade and Pow Wow Location: Crow Agency
8:30 p.m.	Return to hotel in Billings, MT *Via motor coach provided by the Crow Tribe of Indians
RON	Location: TBA in Billings, MT. **Reservation information provided upon registration.**

Cost Information: Events listed will be hosted by the Western Caucus Foundation. Invited attendees will be responsible for their own transportation r/t to Montana, hotel accommodations, and meals and other items not listed.

Cost estimates:	**Airfare (DCA to Bozeman, MT):**	**$500-600 (approx.)**
	Hotel Thursday and Sunday	**$152 per night**
	Hotel Friday and Saturday	**$169 per night**
	Dinner Saturday:	**~$30**
	Optional Fishing:	**$200 + $50 license**
	***Hotel provides complimentary breakfast**	

For questions, and contact:

Michelle Chavez @ 505-918-0380 or michelle@westerncaucusfoundation.org
Erica Anderson @ 202-422-6645 or erica@westerncaucusfoundation.org
Darrell Henry @ 202-487-8727 or info@westerncaucusfoundation.org
Amy Bradley @ 703-549-5090 or amyfordbradley@comcast.net

Attendance to all Foundation events limited to Western Caucus members, staff, supporters and invited guests.

These events are planned to fully comply with Congressional Ethics Rules and Other Applicable Laws.

The Western Caucus Foundation (WCF) is a charitable and educational organization under Section 501(c)(3). Contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law. It provides education and communications to policy makers and the public to further enhance and sustain the West's dynamic and unique culture.

Message

From: Americans for Limited Government [media@limitgov.org]
Sent: 4/9/2018 1:30:38 PM
To: Abboud, Michael [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b6f5af791a1842f1adcc088cbf9ed3ce-Abboud, Mic]
Subject: China is a paper dragon on rare earths monopoly, dumping treasuries

China will do whatever it wants at the end of the day, but it must realize, the market's invisible hand always wins

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

April 9, 2018

Permission to republish original op-eds and cartoons granted.

China is a paper dragon on rare earths monopoly, dumping treasuries

The bottom line is that the U.S. and frankly, global markets capacity to respond to price shocks that might be seen via rare earth embargoes or dumping treasuries, should not be underestimated. Sea changes of these sorts are investment opportunities for others. Whatever shortages foreseen in the short run will be some other company's boon. China will do whatever it wants at the end of the day, but it must realize, the market's invisible hand always wins.

The Department of Labor needs Patrick Pizzella

The Department of Labor needs an upgrade. As President Trump makes radical changes across the executive branch, the Department of Labor has remained a step behind, but it is not necessarily the department's fault or even the Department's Secretary Alexander Acosta. It's the Senate's fault. The Senate has stalled the confirmation of Trump's nominees to executive positions, such as the nominee Deputy Secretary of the Department of Labor, Patrick Pizzella. This has prevented necessary reforms from taking place and slowed the progress of the entire agency.

Mark Robinson: Why am I punished for the act of criminals

"And guess who's gonna to be the one that suffers? It's gonna be me…Our rights are the ones that are being taken away – that's the reason why I came down here today. Gun show or no gun show, NRA or no NRA, I'm here to stand up for the law abiding citizens of this community."

China is a paper dragon on rare earths monopoly, dumping treasuries

By Robert Romano

Two key arguments are often made by those warning of a trade war with China, which is that Beijing could inflict major damage by cutting off the export of rare earth metals and by dumping its $1 trillion horde of U.S. treasuries.

But on both of these China could be more of a paper dragon than the conventional wisdom would have you believe.

First, on rare earth metals. Jeff Spross at The Week argues that "if things do spiral into all-out trade war, it's worth noting China has a nuclear option. I'm referring to rare earth metals. These are elements like dysprosium, neodymium, gadolinium, and ytterbium. They aren't actually rare, but they do play crucial roles in everything from smart phones to electric car motors, hard drives, wind turbines, military radar, smart bombs, laser guidance, and more. They're also quite difficult to mine and process. It turns out the United States is almost entirely dependent on foreign suppliers for rare earth metals. More importantly, it's almost entirely dependent on China specifically for rare earth metals that have been processed into a final and usable form. Basically, if China really wanted to mess with America, it could just clamp down on these exports."

That much is true. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. at present is 100 percent reliant on imports of rare earth metals, used in the components of some of the most important modern technologies we take for granted every day. And much of it presently comes from China.

Spross references a piece by Victoria Bruce at the Hill, writing, "The most recent 2016 Government Accounting Office (GAO) report called China's monopoly on rare earths a 'bedrock national security issue,' and back in 2010, the GAO warned Congress that it could take up to 15 years for the U.S. to re-develop its own rare earth supply chain."

On the other hand, China by no means has a total monopoly on rare earth metals. Although the U.S. has not mined rare earths the past two years, U.S. military ally Australia has been ramping up its production the past decade, and now is the number two producer in the world at 20,000 metric tons in 2017.

In fact, China has been losing global market share since its high-water mark of 95 percent of global production in 2010. Now it's more like 80 percent, largely thanks to Australia ramping up production. And Australia has all of the elements we would be looking for, according to Geoscience Australia.

The U.S. consumed about 12,690 metric tons of rare earths in 2017, according to the USGS. It also reports about 1.4 million metric tons of reserves in the U.S. Molycorp based in California since it went bankrupt in 2015 has been repurchased by MP Mine Operations LLC. Although there was some concern about Shenghe, a Chinese company, being a part of that deal, Chicago hedge fund JHL Capital Group and New York's QVT Financial LP were also included, with Shenghe being described as a minority investor.

The transaction may yet attract a fresh review by the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States just to be certain in light of recent developments. In the meantime, while it might take MP Mine Operations some time to get back up and running, it is certainly moving in that direction. For example, just in December, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission transferred Molycorp's old export licenses to MP Mine.

Elsewhere, in Idaho, for example, there are tremendous reserves of untapped rare earth minerals just waiting to be mined.

So, if worse came to worse, in the event of a Chinese embargo on rare earths, there are other producers who would likely respond to global market demand, much the same way the world did during the Arab oil embargo of the 1970s. Efficiency gains were made, and production increased elsewhere. Eventually, accommodation was reached. The embargo was ultimately counterproductive for the embagoer and benefited everyone else.

Similarly, the oil price shock in the 2000s unintentionally fueled investment in the shale oil boom occurring in North America.

China is more than welcome to try to embargo exports of rare earths, but in all likelihood it would simply redirect global supply chains and be nothing more than a temporary disruption. It would also be embargoing its most valuable technology exports, so there's no money in an embargo, either. Increased prices would simply fuel investment in alternative sourcing for the materials, leading to major investment opportunities elsewhere.

In the meantime, it might also compel Congress to take action

Much the same can be said of the $15.45 trillion U.S. treasuries market. China holds about $1.168 trillion, or about 7.5 percent. Again, if China wished to sell all of those starting tomorrow, they'd be more than welcome. Interest rates would probably temporarily spike, but markets would probably adjust, not to mention central banks. For example, if there were no other buyers, the Federal Reserve could conceivably intervene and purchase the bonds as a stopgap.

The bottom line is that the U.S. and frankly, global markets' capacity to respond to price shocks that might be seen via rare earth embargoes or dumping treasuries, should not be underestimated. Sea changes of these sorts are investment opportunities for others. Whatever shortages are foreseen in the short run will be some other company's boon.

China will do whatever it wants at the end of the day, but it must realize, the market's invisible hand always wins.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

The Department of Labor needs Patrick Pizzella

By Natalia Castro

The Department of Labor needs an upgrade. As President Donald Trump makes important changes across the executive branch, the Department of Labor has remained a step behind, but it is not necessarily the department's fault or even Secretary Alexander Acosta. It's the Senate's fault. The Senate has stalled the confirmation of Trump's nominees to executive positions, such as the nominee Deputy Secretary of the Department of Labor, Patrick Pizzella. This has prevented necessary reforms from taking place and slowed the progress of the entire agency.

Patrick Pizzella has been the right choice for the Deputy Secretary for a long time.

Most recently, Pizzella has served as Acting Chairman of the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA). Pizzella's board hears cases regarding unfair labor practices, union representation, and arbitration appeals. Pizzella has avoided controversy in all of his positions, so it was no surprise in 2013 when a Democratic-majority Senate led by Harry Reid unanimously confirmed Pizzella to serve on the board by voice vote.

But under the Trump Administration, attempts by Senators to disrupt the confirmation process have left Pizzella stalled over and over again, making him a case study on Senate inefficiency.

President Trump nominated Pizzella on June 20, 2017, and the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions held a hearing less than a month later, reporting favorably on Pizzella. Following the July hearing, Committee Chairman Senator Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) praised Pizzella, explained he "brings a wealth of relevant experience in both Democratic and Republican administrations."

Yet despite these bipartisan words of affirmation, Pizzella was not placed on the Senate Executive Calendar until October, and an exact date was *still* never decided. Upon calling Senator Alexander's office, staff claimed "Democrats are merely obstructing the agenda" and blamed the existence of "scheduling conflicts that make votes difficult."

By January, Pizzella's nomination had timed out when Senate entered recess, and President Trump resubmitted Pizzella's nomination at the beginning of the year.

Over ten months after Pizzella's initial job offer, the Senate has finally made a motion to begin the voting process for Pizzella expected this week, and it is a good thing because the department needs it.

The Department of Labor has been a recent center for controversy as some conservatives claim career Obama-era employees are preventing the Trump agenda from being achieved. Powerline blog writer Paul Mirengoff explains, "Acosta changed the Obama administration's interpretation of independent contractors under the [Wages and the Fair Labor Standards Act] FLSA with respect to home health registries. However, to the consternation of Sen. Marco Rubio, he permits career employees to continuing using the Obama administration's interpretation. No wonder those who deal with the Acosta Department of Labor refer to 2017 as Year Nine of the Obama DOL."

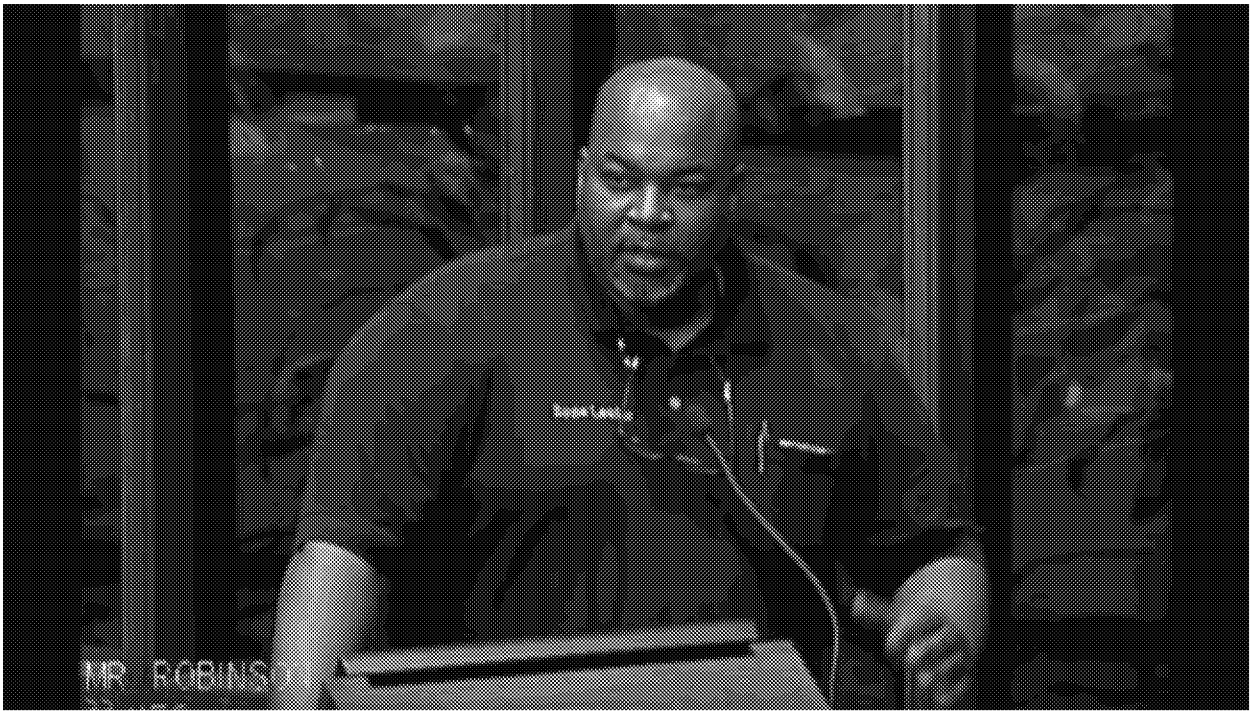
While Acosta focuses on the big picture for the Department, he needs a Deputy Secretary like Pizzella to ensure employees are properly implementing the President's agenda.

Under both Democratic and Republican administrations, Pizzella has been credited with improving employee efficiency and removing wasteful initiatives. Don Todd, former Deputy Assistant Secretary for Labor Department's Office of Labor Management Standards during the George W. Bush Administration, applauded Pizzella's act to modernize phone systems and increase unity between all levels of the Department of Labor.

By stalling Pizzella's nomination, the Senate has prevented a critical member of the Trump administration from taking his position, leaving the entire agency behind. A minority in a single chamber of Congress cannot be allowed to halt the entire government. If Senate Republicans are truly committed to the Trump agenda, they must finally confirm Pizzella.

Natalia Castro is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

ALG Editor's Note: In the following video, Mark Robinson, a resident of Greensboro, NC, gave an impassioned speech in support of the Second Amendment in front of the city council. The speech has gone viral because it is hard to find a paid politician give a better speech about the 2nd Amendment:



Click here for the full video.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Message

From: Americans for Limited Government [media@limitgov.org]
Sent: 4/18/2018 1:32:43 PM
To: Abboud, Michael [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b6f5af791a1842f1adcc088cbf9ed3ce-Abboud, Mic]
Subject: Why are State Attorneys General putting up with school walkouts to promote gun control when the walkouts violate state laws against disrupting public schools?

The walkouts serve no educational purpose, they serve a political purpose — and State Attorneys General nationwide do not have to put up with it

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

April 18, 2018

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Why are State Attorneys General putting up with school walkouts to promote gun control when the walkouts violate state laws against disrupting public schools?

More school walkouts are planned on April 19 and April 20 to promote gun control in the wake of the Parkland, Fla. massacre. However, school walkouts appear to violate state laws prohibiting the disruption of public schools, no matter what issue they're protesting. So why are State Attorneys General putting up with them?

National Association of Scholars calls for the end of 'secret science' in government regulations

Every day, the federal government puts out new regulations, updates old ones, or eliminates them all together. This is done in the Federal Register and is published every morning. What most people don't know is a great amount of the rules and regulations published in the Federal Register were concocted using reports from government and third-party scientists using "secret science." Thankfully the National Association of Scholars (NAS) is now calling out federal agencies and Congress for not doing enough to ensure science used to influence every single American can be reproduced by independently.

Victor Davis Hanson: Colluders on the Loose

If collusion is the twin of conspiracy, then there are lots of colluders running around Washington. Robert Mueller was tasked to find evidence of Trump and Russia collusion that might have warped the 2016 campaign and thrown the election to Trump. After a year, his investigation has found no concrete evidence of collusion. So it has often turned to other purported Trump misadventures. Ironically, collusion of all sorts — illegal, barely legal, and simply unethical — has been the sea that Washington fish always swim in.

Why are State Attorneys General putting up with school walkouts to promote gun control when the walkouts violate state laws against disrupting public schools?

By Robert Romano

Indivisible.org is at it again, openly organizing more than 2,300 school walkouts on April 19 and April 20 to call for a "nationwide protest of our leaders' failure to pass laws that protect us from gun violence," urging more nationwide gun control laws in the wake of the Parkland, Fla. massacre in February.

The purpose of the protest is purely about electoral politics, with the organizers saying, "if cowardly politicians fail to act, young people will show them the consequences of letting so many Americans die by voting them out in November."

Republicans have majorities in both the House and Senate, and "vote them out" appears to be specifically directed at them. But even if you wanted to say it wasn't purely partisan, it is still is certainly about organizing voters towards a political objective.

The real question is why are these political protests occurring during school hours? Why can't they happen after school or over the weekends when they won't be so disruptive? How many walkouts are they planning this year? Isn't this disrupting academic studies?

And why are State Attorneys General putting up with it?

For example, in South Carolina, more than a dozen such school walkouts are planned. Yet according to Title 16 - Crimes and Offenses, Chapter 17 - OFFENSES AGAINST PUBLIC POLICY, Section 16-17-420, anyone who unnecessarily — and there is no question that political rallies are unnecessary

since they could take place after school or on the weekends when they won't disrupt academic studies — interferes or disturbs schools from carrying out a normal day is guilty of a misdemeanor.

Similarly, in Florida, Title XLVI, Chapter 871.01(1) states, "Whoever willfully interrupts or disturbs any school or any assembly of people met for the worship of God or for any lawful purpose commits a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083."

EDUC § 37.124(a) in Texas states, "A person other than a primary or secondary grade student enrolled in the school commits an offense if the person, on school property or on public property within 500 feet of school property, alone or in concert with others, intentionally disrupts the conduct of classes or other school activities." It further provides that "Disrupting the conduct of classes or other school activities" includes in (c)(1)(B) "enticing or attempting to entice a student away from a class or other school activity that the student is required to attend..."

Well, these school walkout events are being planned openly and flagrantly in violation of state and local laws by this national group, Indivisible. They are absolutely trying to entice students to leave classes they are otherwise required to attend. There is no question.

In some cases across the country the events are being sanctioned by the local school district. When similar walkouts were planned on March 14, the Fairfax County, Va. superintendent Scott Brabrand sent a letter to parents stating, "principals at the middle, high, and secondary schools have been directed to work with students to find peaceful and safe opportunities to facilitate the observance..."

This, despite Virginia law under Title 18.2, Chapter 9, § 18.2-415 that defines disorderly conduct as any person acting "with the intent to cause public inconvenience, annoyance or alarm, or recklessly creating a risk thereof, he... Willfully... disrupts the operation of any school or any activity conducted or sponsored by any school, if the disruption ... prevents or interferes with the orderly conduct of the operation or activity..."

Local districts can cancel school activities for emergencies such as inclement weather or for events that are otherwise sanctioned by law, like elections. But not for political rallies.

There is no First Amendment obligation to allow for school walkouts. If states or individual school districts were to adopt policies that allow for them, which they could do, the risk is that they could be staged every day. Because, if similar walk outs were not allowed for other issues, say, a pro-life walkout or a pro-Second Amendment walkout, it would violate viewpoint neutrality as required under the First Amendment.

Not that they should. Discussion of national issues is allowed at schools in a classroom setting where students can state their views, in social studies, government and civics classes. There is no need to allow every interest group the right to disrupt a school day for their specific favored issue.

But the fact is, South Carolina, Florida, Texas and Virginia — and states across the country — have already set public policy by making it a crime to disrupt a normal school day that brokers no political rally exception.

Proponents of the walkouts like to cite the 1969 Supreme Court decision, *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District*, which said students have a First Amendment right to wear black arm bands to school, stating that students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate..." Part of the rationale is that the arm bands were not disruptive.

This is beyond arm bands. This is about disrupting school activities repeatedly for electoral politics by allowing students to leave class for the second time in as many weeks.

States have a compelling state interest in placing these types of time and place restrictions on speech and assemblies as it relates to the school day, and local officials who are essentially canceling school activities for a specific interest group appear to be doing so in violation of the statute — and when they won't allow it for other issues, in violation of the First Amendment.

At the end of the day, states should not be lightly allowing these school shutdowns in the name of speech, otherwise they will have to cater to every interest group. Students can and should be leading discussions in the classroom under a teacher's direction, time permitting. Walkouts should not be sanctioned at all.

Those organizing the walkouts across state lines, if they are violating state laws by disrupting public schools, can and should be subject to prosecution. The walkouts serve no educational purpose, they serve a political purpose — and State Attorneys General nationwide do not have to put up with it.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

National Association of Scholars calls for the end of 'secret science' in government regulations

C/O Liberty Alliance

By Printus LeBlanc

Every day, the federal government puts out new regulations, updates old ones, or eliminates them all together. This is done in the Federal Register and is published every morning. What most people don't know is a great amount of the rules and regulations published in the Federal Register were concocted using reports from government and third-party scientists using "secret science." Thankfully the National Association of Scholars (NAS) is now calling out federal agencies and Congress for not doing enough to ensure science used to influence every single American can be reproduced independently by making the data publicly available.

Secret science has long been a tool of the progressive movement to push its radical agenda. The U.S. government gives out billions in grants to research institutions around the country. The grants are given to study everything from climate change and medical research to animal mating habits and shrimp on a treadmill. The product of the research is then given to the representative government agency and often extensive economy changing regulations are drawn up and implemented based on the study.

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt has been at the forefront of the battle, announcing on March 19, the EPA will no longer use reports that do not make their data and methodology public. Pruitt has been under constant assault in the media since he took action, but the report released by the NAS backs up the actions Pruitt took.

NAS President Peter Wood and director of research David Randall published an op-ed in the Wall Street Journal opining about the irreproducibility crisis gripping the scientific community and the danger it poses stating, "A deeper issue is that the irreproducibility crisis has remained largely invisible to the general public and policy makers. That's a problem given how often the government relies on supposed scientific findings to inform its decisions. Every year the U.S. adds more laws and regulations that could be based on nothing more than statistical manipulations."

They continued, "All government agencies should review the scientific justifications for their policies and regulations to ensure they meet strict reproducibility standards. The economics research that steers decisions at the Federal Reserve and the Treasury Department needs to be rechecked. The social psychology that informs education policy could be entirely irreproducible. The whole discipline of climate science is a farrago of unreliable statistics, arbitrary research techniques and politicized groupthink."

The NAS report came up with 40 recommendations for Congress, the executive branch, universities, and the judiciary branch to reverse the irreproducibility crisis in modern science.

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning concurs with Scott Pruitt and the NAS report, calling on the agencies to act now, "It is ridiculous that we even have to have a discussion about whether the data collected by scientists relying on government funding that is used in policy making ought to be published, reproducible and transparent, but here we are. The National Association of Scholars correctly notes that we face crisis of irreproducibility in modern science, and government absolutely agencies play a tremendous role in exacerbating it when they implement policies without fully publishing the science behind it. We echo the Association's call for the EPA and other agencies to adopt the standards used by the National Institutes for Health in requiring that data be published and be accessible in the grantmaking process. Science and policies generated based on it rely on its transparency and must adhere to the requirement that every theory can be falsified."

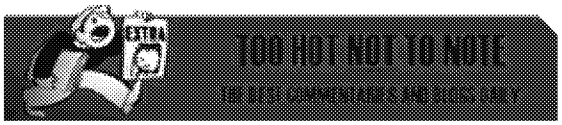
However, the most important action must be taken by Congress.

Even if every federal agency in the executive branch followed Scott Pruitt's lead, the next administration could reverse the decision. For that reason, Congress must pass legislation that disallows the use of "secret science" by federal agencies to justify regulations. U.S. Rep. Lamar Smith (R-Texas), Chairman of the Space, Science, and Technology Committee, has been fighting the transparency battle for years and introduced H.R. 1430, the Honest and Open New EPA Science Treatment Act of 2017. The legislation has passed the House and awaits action in the Senate. McConnell should move immediately to bring the legislation to the floor and dare the Democrats to stop the open science debate.

It is time to get politics out of the science used by the government. Science is supposed to be open and transparent to test falsifiability. When data is hidden it signals an agenda, and that is what we have gotten the past eight years. The NAS is to be celebrated for daring to publish a report many in the scientific community see as a threat. Now that Congress has been armed with the knowledge

from the report, it should act to protect scientific integrity or else secret science from political operatives will make the rules.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from National Review, Victor Davis Hanson outlines the much of the real collusion in D.C. and how Mueller isn't touching it:

NATIONAL REVIEW

Colluders on the Loose

By Victor Davis Hanson

If collusion is the twin of conspiracy, then there are lots of colluders running around Washington.

Robert Mueller was tasked to find evidence of Trump and Russia collusion that might have warped the 2016 campaign and thrown the election to Trump. After a year, his investigation has found no concrete evidence of collusion. So it has often turned to other purported Trump misadventures. Ironically, collusion of all sorts — illegal, barely legal, and simply unethical — has been the sea that Washington fish always swim in.

Christopher Steele, hired by the Hillary Clinton campaign through a series of firewall intermediaries, probably paid Russian sources for gossip and smears. If there is a crime of collusion, then Clinton-campaign contractors should be under investigation for seeking Russian help to find dirt on Trump, to spread smears around throughout the DOJ, FBI, and CIA, and to make sure that the dirt was leaked to the press in the final weeks of the campaign — for the sole "insurance" purposes of losing Trump the election.

Some sort of collusion likely occurred when the Obama DOJ and FBI sought FISA-court requests to surveille Carter Page and, indirectly, possibly many other members of the Trump campaign. On repeated occasions, they all made sure the FISA-court judges were *not* apprised that the Steele dossier, the chief basis for these requests, was paid for by the Clinton campaign, that the dossier was not verified by the FBI, that the dossier was the source of media stories that in circular fashion were used to convince the FISA judges to grant the surveillance requests, and that the FBI had severed relations with Steele on the basis of his unreliability. Such a collusion of silence was similar to James Comey's admission that he apprised President Trump of every iota of lurid sexual gossip about him — except that his source was a dossier paid for by Hillary Clinton and written by a campaign operative hired to find dirt on Trump and who had been working with Comey's FBI to get FISA approval to spy on Trump's own aides.

Apparently, a number of government officials must have been in cahoots to get all their stories and agendas straight ahead of time. They certainly agreed on talking points to keep embarrassing facts from FISA judges, and they did so on a number of occasions. Does that behavior fall under the definition of some sort of colluding obstruction?

Who set up the ruse in which an FBI director types up confidential notes of a meeting with the president and passes them to a friend to ensure a firewall conduit to the press, to publish as a "leak" from an "unidentified source" to damage the reputation of the president? All that would require a degree of collusion to leak a classified FBI document that is so sensitive that House Intelligence Committee members with security clearances cannot see what the media and a personal friend of Comey's already have.

James Comey himself was quite a colluder. Somehow, he managed to mislead Congress by assuring them that he had not written his assessment of Hillary Clinton before he interviewed her and supposedly had not been the source of or approved leaks to the media. He has contradicted what both Loretta Lynch and Andrew McCabe have said. He has deliberately misled a FISA court by withholding information from it, vital to any evaluation of the veracity of his writ. He probably lied when he was messaging the media that Trump was under investigation while simultaneously assuring Trump in person that he was not. He has admitted that he warped an FBI investigation into Hillary Clinton's private email server because he assumed she'd win the presidency — an admission of politicized interference into a criminal investigation, if not a blatant confession that the FBI in felonious fashion was manipulating investigatory evidence to affect the outcome of a U.S. election. For Comey to escape legal exposure from all that required some sort of colluding help in high places.

Former attorney general Loretta Lynch seems to have been involved in all sorts of collusion. Given that there are more than 5,000 airports in the United States, two jets — one carrying the attorney general, the other the ex-president and spouse of a presidential candidate of the same shared party currently under investigation by Attorney General Lynch — do not just accidentally bump into each other on the tarmac of the Phoenix airport. There was no more chance of that than of investing $1,000 in cattle futures and reaping a $100,000 profit ten months later. And after elevating the FBI director from investigator to prosecutor with the final say on whether to prosecute Hillary Clinton, why was the supposedly quasi-recused Lynch then quibbling over the vocabulary of Comey's report on Clinton?

Imagine the following possible ethical collusion. What if both ABC News and CBS News were now running mostly favorable news accounts about Donald Trump's administration, rather than the media's 90 percent (on average) negative coverage. And imagine that one of Donald Trump's chief advisers and a deputy national-security adviser was the brother of the current CBS News president, while the sister of the ABC News president was another one of Trump's top national- security and energy advisers.

What would the media say of such apparent incestuousness that involved two-thirds of the networks' nightly newscasts? Yet that was precisely the case of the Rhodes and the Sherwood siblings during the Obama administration.

Speaking of journalistic ethics, what would the media make of a conservative JournoList that shared strategies among top reporters about how to deal with Trump critics, or a conservative WikiLeaks trove, in which journalists communicated frequently with the Trump campaign and ran their stories by it for pre-published "fact checking"? Would the media dub that unethical collusion?

How exactly did the media get wind of the scurrilous Steele dossier in the closing days of the U.S. campaign? And who exactly knew of its contents — James Comey and his FBI hierarchy, CIA director John Brennan, Senator Harry Reid, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper — and

who in government colluded with the media to disseminate such unproven data with the expressed intent of warping an ongoing U.S. election?

If one wished to dream up a colluding investigatory team, one could have done no better than Robert Mueller's special-counsel investigators and other top DOJ and FBI officials.

The public for much of 2016 was not told that the chief investigator of the Clinton email scandal, Andrew McCabe, since cited for serial untruthfulness, was the spouse of a political candidate who had earlier received nearly $700,000 (40 percent of all money raised for her campaign) from Clinton-related campaign-funding committees.

Why didn't Mueller simply tell the public when and why Lisa Page and Peter Strzok left his investigation team?

Former Trump-campaign chairman Paul Manafort, Trump's daughter Ivanka, and Jared Kushner, the president's son-in-law, had also been represented by attorneys from the legal firm WilmerHale, Mueller's old firm, which supplied a number of counselors to the Mueller team. At least seven of Mueller's team were known to have contributed money to the Democratic party or Hillary Clinton or both.

Andrew Weissmann, yet another former partner at WilmerHale and a Mueller investigator, had emailed applause to Obama DOJ holdover Sally Yates when she had tried to block the immigration moratorium issued by her then boss, President Trump. Like others on Mueller's team, Weissmann was a donor to Democratic causes and an admitted Hillary Clinton partisan. And Sally Yates co-signed one of the FISA-court requests to surveille Trump campaign associates, and she also did not disclose to the court the full provenance of the Steele dossier.

Another Obama holdover, Associate Deputy Attorney General Bruce G. Ohr, met with the architects of the Fusion GPS dossier. Ohr apparently did not disclose that meeting to his superiors. His wife, a Russia expert, had been hired by Fusion GPS to help find damaging information about Donald Trump. Ohr deliberately — and probably unlawfully — hid that fact on a federal disclosure form. Who thought up that trick?

Click here for the full story.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
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United States

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Whoever is leading the House this year, if it's still Ryan, needs to force votes in the Senate on the priorities that got President Trump and Republicans elected in 2016

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

April 12, 2018

Permission to republish original op-eds and cartoons granted.

It's as if the GOP is trying to lose control of Congress

If Paul Ryan was going to retire, he should have done it in December after the tax cut bill was done. There would have been time for new leadership elections. It would have engaged a necessary conversation about the best path forward for Congress, with members choosing the right direction by selecting new leadership. Instead, Ryan waited, and now has seemingly ceded the 2018 midterm electoral battlefield at a critical moment. It has all the appearance of a retreat, and now, it's practically too late to replace him.

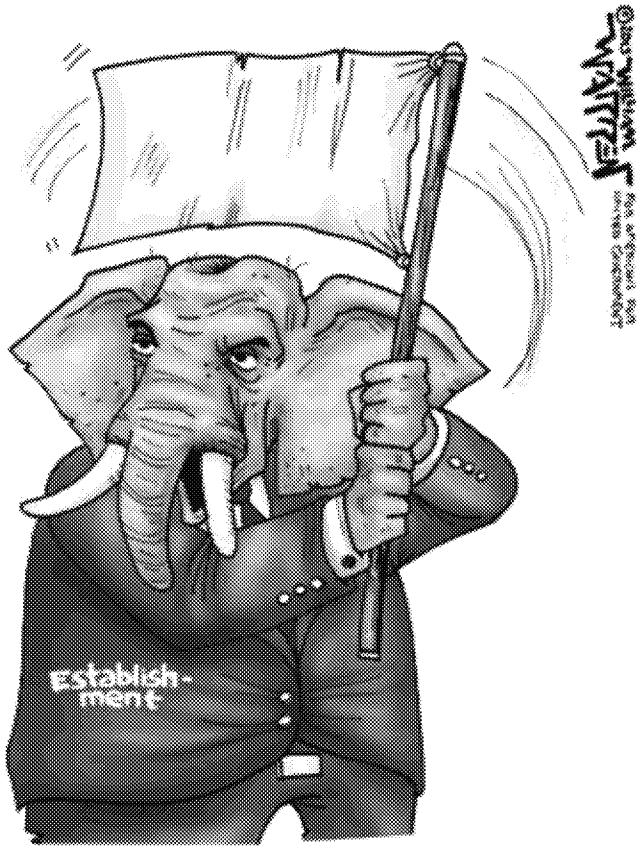
Pruitt revises CAFE standards to meet real life not Obama fantasy land

On April 2, 2018, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Scott Pruitt EPA's Administrator, Scott Pruitt, announced the completion of the Midterm Evaluation (MTE) process for greenhouse gas emission standards. Pruitt concluded the current standards for vehicles in 2022-2025 were unrealistic and needed to be revised. Of course, environmental radicals went crazy, refusing to care how many people might be hurt by government regulations. Thankfully President Trump and Administrator Pruitt are not scared of the big green radicals and have set a course of prosperity for the American people.

Fox News: Rosenstein lets Nunes, Gowdy review FBI memo that kick-started Russia probe

"Facing legal action, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein allowed House Intelligence Committee chairman Rep. Devin Nunes, R-Calif., and Rep. Trey Gowdy, R-S.C., to view the FBI memo that instigated the bureau's counterintelligence investigation of contacts between Russia and the Trump campaign, Nunes confirmed on Wednesday."

It's as if the GOP is trying to lose control of Congress



By Robert Romano

House Speaker Paul Ryan is not running for reelection in 2018, but apparently intends to serve out his term as House Speaker. That brings the wave of House Republicans retiring or running for different offices this cycle up to 40.

That, after the $1.3 trillion stinker of an omnibus spending bill, where Democrat priorities like the New York-New Jersey Gateway tunnel were included with an extra $380 million, Planned Parenthood continues to get $500 million a year via Medicaid and other government health programs, but President Donald Trump's priorities like building the southern border wall, defunding sanctuary cities and states, and his infrastructure plan were not.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer hailed the spending bill as a win for Democrats: "We don't have the House. We don't have the Senate. We don't have the presidency, but we produced a darn good bill for the priorities that we have believed in."

After that, rumors started swirling that Ryan would not stay on as Speaker, which have proven to be correct.

It's not that the current GOP Congress is without accomplishments. Tax cuts, increased defense spending, repealing the Obamacare individual mandate, drilling in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), stopping some of Obama's midnight regulations and ending Obama's HUD housing zoning takeover rule were all signed into law by President Trump.

Those are things Republicans have been running on for years. And make no mistake, those are huge accomplishments. Ryan deserves a lot of the credit, too.

It's also in the rear-view mirror. On its own, it's not enough to keep the House majority. House Republicans needed a leader who would be setting the agenda, connecting with voters this year about why the GOP should keep the majority and what will be accomplished in Congress next year.

And now the leader of the House will not be leading the re-election campaign in 2018 with skin in the game.

If Paul Ryan was going to retire, he should have done it in December after the tax cut bill was done. It was a high water mark for Congress. There would have been time for new leadership elections. It would have engaged a necessary conversation about the best path forward for Congress, with members choosing the right direction by selecting new leadership.

Instead, Ryan waited, and now has seemingly ceded the 2018 midterm electoral battlefield at a critical moment. It has all the appearance of a retreat, and now, it's practically too late to replace him.

If there is any logic now for Ryan to serve out his term as Speaker, it's that running nobody as the next Speaker versus House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) does better in voters' minds than anybody in current leadership that brought us the omnibus who might presently take over as Speaker. It's a lot like running for President without a candidate. Call it the Spiro Agnew strategy, who was apparently chosen by Richard Nixon as a running mate in 1968 precisely because he was unknown. Nixon ran better on his own.

And perhaps Republican members will run better without having to defend Speaker Ryan.

Again, Republicans have accomplishments. But those now risk being overshadowed by a Republican electorate dispirited by the major concessions given to the other side, and by infighting and a failure to properly defend the President of their own party and the office of the Presidency itself.

It has been revealed the preceding Obama administration spied on what was then the opposition party in 2016, the Trump campaign, under false charges of Russia collusion, and then the secret investigation was carried over into the Trump administration in 2017.

Republicans led by House Intelligence Committee Chairman Devin Nunes (R-Calif.) and House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.) have conducted vigorous oversight to expose the Obama spying scandal.

Special Counsel Robert Mueller has far exceeded the scope of Attorney General Jeff Sessions' original recusal from any matters related to the 2016 presidential election.

But it's not enough. So far, Republican Congressional leaders have been unwilling to take on the implications of the out of control Justice Department that is operating its own agenda to overturn the express will of the American people who voted for President Trump in 2016. The rule of law is in grave danger.

Yet, Ryan and company offer no solution for a rogue element in the executive branch that has no place in our constitutional republic, in which the Framers only ever envisioned one president executing the laws.

Let the investigation play out, the wise men preach, and then pretend that those who are leading this investigation have integrity when they have resorted to violating constitutional rights and other misconduct to get what they want. Some offer bills to protect Mueller. It's cowardly.

Elsewhere, President Trump has his agenda on border security, but Congressional Republicans have rejected that by failing to fight for it when they have the power of the purse. It is all very dispiriting to Republican voters. Many will stay home, testing Republican majorities in marginal districts.

The Senate is a different story because of the seats that are up this year. Republicans could still pick up a few seats there, but they need a counterpart.

On the House side, Republicans still need an aggressive legislative strategy that forces the Senate to make big concessions to the President. Unfortunately, most of the must-pass legislative vehicles that might have done this, that is, the debt ceiling, the budget and the omnibus have already sailed.

There is still time to get the southern border wall funded in the appropriations and September funding bills, but it will take a fight to get it in the Senate.

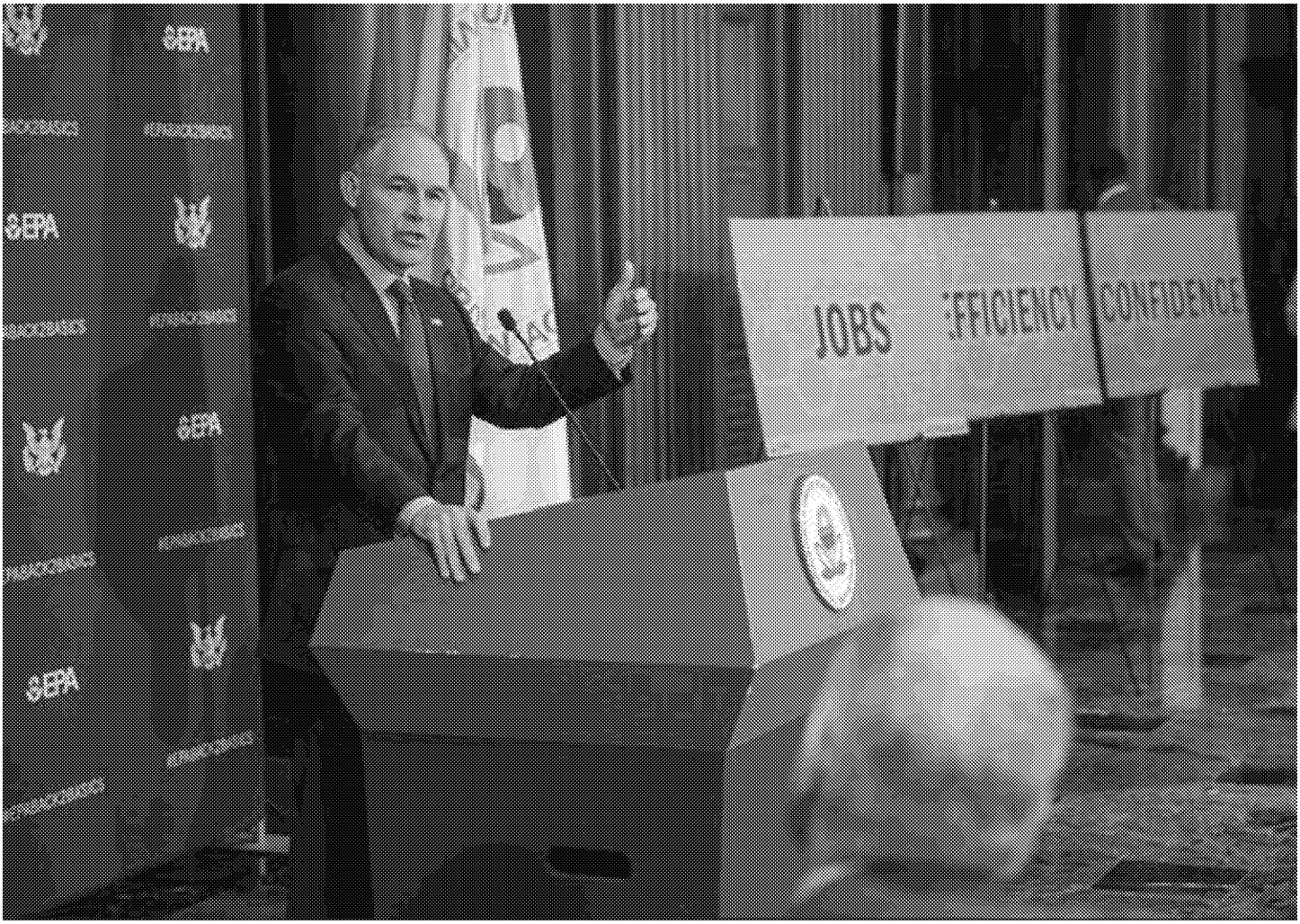
Using key votes on impoundment of funds, which only require a simple majority in the Senate to pass, offers an opportunity to roll back items that remain unpopular. Force votes on rescinding monies for Planned Parenthood and sanctuary cities and states. Make senators defend their votes.

On the September funding bill, the risk is that members led by Ryan will be anxious to avoid "another" shutdown and so will simply pass a stopgap into the lame duck and then after November, pass another stopgap, potentially leaving a Speaker Pelosi to set the agenda in 2019.

Whoever is leading the House this year, if it's still Ryan, needs to force votes in the Senate on the priorities that got President Trump and Republicans elected in 2016. If Ryan wanted to stand aside and not lead the majority in the House for re-election, he should have done it months ago. But to make the most of it, the one silver lining is that the Republican race for Speaker has now become nationalized, and those who wish to be Speaker can and should campaign nationally to make their case to lead.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Pruitt revises CAFE standards to meet real life, not Obama's fantasy land



By Printus LeBlanc

On April 2, 2018, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Scott Pruitt EPA's Administrator, Scott Pruitt, announced the completion of the Midterm Evaluation (MTE) process for greenhouse gas emission standards. Pruitt concluded the current standards for vehicles in 2022-2025 were unrealistic and needed to be revised. Of course, environmental radicals went crazy, refusing to care how many people might be hurt by government regulations. Thankfully President Trump and Administrator Pruitt are not scared of the big green radicals and have set a course of prosperity for the American people.

The Obama administration didn't even try to hide its hatred for the fossil fuel industry. The industry was attacked from every angle. It restricted oil drilling, imposed excess regulations on transportation of oil and gas, and raised Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards for the future to unrealistic levels. The increased CAFE standards were a direct attempt to social engineer the population. The administration didn't like the fossil fuel industry, so it imposed regulations it believed would lead to the death of the light truck and SUV.

When the Trump administration took over, one of its priorities was to ensure excessive regulations from the EPA were not putting people out of work. The CAFE standards were one such set of regulations.

The CAFE standards are rules regulating the fuel economy of a given fleet of vehicles. The regulations were part of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975, which came about as a result of the 1973 oil embargo. Congress wanted to reduce America's dependence on foreign oil, and they believed CAFE standards would help with that. The first year for CAFE coverage was 1978, and it was intended to double fuel economy to 27.5 mpg by 1985.

The Obama administration moved aggressively once in office. On May 19, 2009, Obama proposed new CAFE standards for model year cars 2012 through 2016. The new standards required 39 mpg for cars and 30 mpg for trucks for an average of 35.5 mpg in 2016. This was a massive increase from the from the 2009 average of 25 mpg.

Obama continued the assault in 2011, announcing another astronomical hike in CAFE standards. The administration increased the average for model year 2025 vehicles to 54.5 mpg. A number intended to push all Americans out of light trucks and SUVs and into Prii (plural of Prius). The high threshold for mpg was designed to do one thing and one thing only, put Americans in cars they didn't want to drive.

When the Trump administration took over, it vowed to update or end burdensome regulations, and the CAFE standards were squarely in his crosshairs. The CAFE standards were hurting the automobile industry, and the President wanted a review of the issue conducted.

Scott Pruitt went to work and concluded the previous administration's goals were not only unreasonable but reckless and not based on market conditions.

The original EPA report failed to take into effect basic market principles such as supply and demand. The report released by Pruitt's EPA stated, "the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers (Alliance) stated that the level of technology modeled by EPA is insufficient to meet the standards and that the actual level of technology needed is misaligned with market realities. Global automakers similarly charged that "decline in vehicle sales, lower gas prices, an increased preference for light trucks over cars, and sluggish demand for high fuel economy vehicles – are taking place as the stringency of the standards increase at an unprecedented rate."

An issue no one is thinking about is the disabled community. People that need a vehicle with wheelchair access choose SUVs or minivans for a reason. These are the only vehicles that are affordable, spacious, and can handle the stress load. Mechanical wheelchairs can get up to 500 lbs. and when the lift system or ramp is included the added weight can be up to half a ton. The vehicles used for this task do not get the best gas mileage simply because of the additional weight. If automakers were going to be fined for making the vehicles that don't meet the excessively high CAFE standards set by the Obama administration, why would they make them?

The Obama era CAFE standards would have eliminated an entire class of vehicle hundreds of thousands of people depend on for transportation. Thankfully the Trump administration halted this assault against the handicapped community.

President Trump promised action at the EPA and Scot Pruitt is delivering. Despite made up controversies flung at him daily, Pruitt continues to set the EPA on the right path balancing the economy and jobs with protecting the environment for future generations. The CAFE standards are

an important step in restoring sanity to the EPA. President Trump and Administrator Pruitt are to be commended for listening to the American people, something most people in D.C. forgot how to do.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor for Americans for Limited Government.

ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from Fox News, Catherine Herridge reports on the late braking news that the FBI finally let Congress view FBI memo that started Russia probe:

Rosenstein lets Nunes, Gowdy review FBI memo that kick-started Russia probe

By Catherine Herridge

Facing legal action, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein allowed House Intelligence Committee chairman Rep. Devin Nunes, R-Calif., and Rep. Trey Gowdy, R-S.C., to view the FBI memo that instigated the bureau's counterintelligence investigation of contacts between Russia and the Trump campaign, Nunes confirmed on Wednesday.

The meeting came a day after Nunes threatened to take legal action -- including contempt proceedings and impeachment -- against Rosenstein and FBI Director Christopher Wray for failing to produce a clean copy of the memo, known as an electronic communication or EC, that was responsive to an August 2017 committee subpoena.

"Although the subpoenas issued by this Committee in August 2017 remain in effect, I'd like to thank Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein for his cooperation today," Nunes responded.

When asked on Fox News' "The Ingraham Angle" Tuesday if he would hold the officials in contempt of Congress, Nunes said, "we're not going to just hold in contempt. We will have a plan to hold in contempt and to impeach ... we're not messing around here."

A government source told Fox News that Nunes, Gowdy and committee Republican staff were able to view the two-page memo with relatively few redactions. The source described those redactions as "minimal and justified."

Fox News has previously reported that the memo was either drafted by or had significant input from FBI agent Peter Strzok, who was removed from special counsel Robert Mueller's probe after the discovery of anti-Trump text messages between him and another FBI official, Lisa Page.

Despite Rosenstein making the minimally redacted version of the memo available, the government source said committee Republicans remained concerned about the memo's underlying intelligence and the credibility of the sources which would require further investigation.

A Justice Department official told Fox News that the memo's redactions had been "narrowly tailored to protect the name of a foreign country and the name of a foreign agent... These words must remain

redacted after determining that revealing the words could harm the national security of the American people by undermining the trust we have with this foreign nation."

Get full story here.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
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United States

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Subject: President Trump is right. The Justice Department's endless investigation into the White House is 'an attack on our country.'

It is absolutely an attack on our country, and as the President stated, "an attack on what we all stand for."

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

April 11, 2018

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President Trump is right. The Justice Department's endless investigation into the White House is 'an attack on our country.'

Today we have an ongoing investigation into President Donald Trump by a part of the executive branch, a faction that has seized power, a malady that Article II's unitary executive was supposed to cure. It was unconstitutional the moment it was carried over into Trump's Presidency, and now it is absolutely violating the President's constitutional rights by piercing his attorney-client privilege. National talk show host and constitutional scholar and attorney Mark Levin on April 9 called the damage being inflicted on the Constitution by this investigation "irreversible." The President has called it "an attack on our country" and "an attack on what we all stand for." He's right.

Using rescissions, Republicans may be able to salvage the midterms

When the President signed the budget a few weeks ago, it was obvious he was disgusted about having the sign the horrible bill. The only reason the President signed the bill was because the military was in dire straits. Those pushing the bill knew how the President felt about the military and used that against him to get the bloated bill passed. Fear not, there is a way the President can reduce some of the spending, while at the same putting the Democrats up for reelection on the record. The President can and should submit multiple rescissions immediately.

Business Insider: It looks like China just blinked in its trade battle with Trump

After exchanging threats of a trade war with President Donald Trump, Chinese President Xi Jinping appears to have blinked in his back-and-forth with the US leader. Xi appeased fears of a trade war between the US and China on Tuesday by discussing plans to further open up the country's economy. Some economic measures he said were under consideration: lowering import tariffs on automobiles, enforcing intellectual property of foreign groups, improving the investment environment for international companies, and reducing duties on consumer products.

President Trump is right. The Justice Department's endless investigation into the White House is 'an attack on our country.'

By Robert Romano

"It's an attack on our country, in a true sense. It's an attack on what we all stand for."

That was President Donald Trump's reaction to the FBI raid of the residence and office of his personal attorney, Michael Cohen. Later, on Twitter, Trump declared, "Attorney–client privilege is dead!"

The President is right. The Sixth Amendment guarantees that "In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall... have the Assistance of Counsel for his defense," but who will want to be a defense lawyer now that counsels can apparently be prosecuted for protecting their client's legal interests, for example, by settling legal claims with potential litigants? The Fifth Amendment guarantees that no person shall be denied of liberty with "due process" and the right not to incriminate oneself, yet by denying Trump the right to keep private legal counsel, he is being denied due process and privileged communications could now be used against him.

Cohen settled such a matter with Stephanie Clifford a.k.a. porn star Stormy Daniels for $130,000 in Oct. 2016 before the election, which Clifford now says was to cover up an affair she had with Trump. Clifford had reportedly signed a non-disclosure agreement as a part of the settlement and she accepted the money.

Now, supposedly, federal prosecutors are looking into the payment as some sort of in-kind contribution to the Trump campaign. But to prove it, federal prosecutors would have to show that the payment was "in cooperation, consultation or concert with, or at the request or suggestion of, a candidate's campaign," per the Federal Election Commission's definition.

In a statement to the New York Times in February, Cohen had said, "Neither the Trump Organization nor the Trump campaign was a party to the transaction with Ms. Clifford, and neither reimbursed me for the payment, either directly or indirectly." President Trump has since denied he was aware of the payment. But even if he was, candidates for public office do not cease to have legal rights to settle private claims unrelated to the campaign. Could the payment have been to protect the Trump campaign? Sure.

But it could have been to protect his marriage. His family. His professional reputation. There was no guarantee Trump would win the election. Disclosure of an extramarital affair could be damaging in a number of ways, and surely as Trump's personal attorney, Cohen had the power to settle such a claim on Trump's behalf before the election, after the election and in between. That'd be like saying Trump today could not settle a civil matter out of court in private because he has already announced his intent to run for re-election in 2020 because that would be an in-kind contribution. It's preposterous.

Every American has a constitutional right to settle such legal disputes without courts getting involved. This was a civil matter.

A similar criminal complaint was brought against former Sen. John Edwards (D-Mass.) in 2011, and he was supposedly using actual campaign money to pay to cover up an affair, but nothing came of it. Edwards was found not guilty in 2012 of illegally obtaining donations. All other charges against Edwards were dropped after the jury came back dead-locked.

Cohen has been Trump's attorney for 12 years. By seizing everything at Cohen's home and office, that will surely include communications with Trump going back all those years. The matter was reportedly referred by Special Counsel Robert Mueller to the U.S. Attorney of the Southern District of New York.

It had nothing to do with Mueller's "Russia" investigation — which seems to be about everything but Russia anyway — but if it turns up something that suits the Special Counsel's investigation, surely it will be used by Mueller. It gives Mueller's all the benefits of raiding Cohen without actually having to do it himself, and none of the risk.

In other words, if Mueller had something on Cohen to do with Russia collusion in the 2016 election, surely he would have gotten his own warrant to go after him. Instead, it was outsourced to another U.S. Attorney. Meaning, there was no collusion. Nothing to justify going at Cohen, so another pretext had to be developed for violating the President's constitutional right to legal counsel. And even then, they may not have found what they were looking for, as now federal prosecutors are subpoenaing Trump Organization for documents related to the Clifford payment.

Which is not any surprise. The ends justify the means to these federal prosecutors and will do whatever it takes to take down Trump — which is what this is all really about.

The President explained, "I have this witch hunt constantly going on for over 12 months now — and actually, much more than that. You could say it was right after I won the nomination, it started."

Again, the President is right. Long before the election, the FBI initiated its investigation in the summer of 2016, when the Hillary Clinton campaign, DNC-paid for Christopher Steele dossier by Fusion GPS appeared alleging that Trump was a Russian agent.

That was the document Comey produced to then-President Elect Donald Trump on Jan. 6, 2017. By then, Trump and his campaign were under active investigation. Comey was setting the stage for a conflict between the Justice Department and President Trump.

That's when the Justice Department crossed the Rubicon. It is hard not to wonder if former FBI Director James Comey was attempting to get fired all along?

Trump would later suggest that he thought Comey was attempting to leverage him with the dossier's allegations and what turns out really was an ongoing investigation into Trump on the Russia question.

By Jan. 10, the story had leaked to CNN and soon the dossier was published by Buzzfeed.

Once Buzzfeed published the dossier the risk of exposure was ratcheted up — particularly the provenance of the dossier being paid for by the DNC and then pursued by the Obama Justice Department.

Trump's personal attorney Michael Cohen, it turns out, had never been to Prague as the dossier had alleged. And if he wasn't in Prague, then he couldn't have been there colluding with Russian agents as was alleged. The dossier was a fraud. And it had led to a national security investigation into the Trump campaign, the opposition party, in an election year.

Suddenly, the investigation was a race against time. Either Trump would be removed from office, or their hands in a bogus investigation would be revealed. They had to go all the way, if for no other reason, then to legitimize the original investigation.

By that time, incoming National Security Advisor Michael Flynn had already been recorded having the conversation with Russian Ambassador Sergei Kislyak on Dec. 22, 2016 about sanctions by the lame duck Obama administration against Moscow. The FBI would ultimately question Flynn about the conversation on Jan. 24, 2017. That followed first the fact the conversation had occurred being leaked to the Washington Post and then the contents to contradict a denial by the incoming administration that sanctions had been discussed.

By Feb. 14, 2017, the New York Times was reporting that the Justice Department was actively investigating Trump and campaign officials for supposed contacts with Russian intelligence officials. When then-White House Chief of Staff Reince Priebus asked then-FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe to come forward and say the story was fake, after telling Priebus it was false, that was the first time the White House was accused of "obstructing" justice. The episode might prove that an obstruction case was what they had in mind to be built all along. They just needed Trump to interfere with the investigation in some more substantive way.

In short, the Justice Department's gambit might have been to carry over the ongoing investigation into the Trump campaign into the new administration, deny to the White House there was an investigation

into the President but in the meantime leak the fact that there was an investigation. It could have been bait, daring the President to intervene.

The end result, with Comey being fired, was then taken as the evidence that Trump had obstructed the investigation.

During the early months of 2017, Trump would ask Comey if he was under investigation, and Comey denied he was. When Comey was finally fired, something the President absolutely had the power to do, under recommendation by Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, Trump explained part of his reasoning included "I greatly appreciate you informing me, on three separate occasions, that I am not under investigation, I nevertheless concur with the judgment of the Department of Justice that you are not able to effectively lead the Bureau." Then, Rosenstein appointed the Special Counsel.

This was always an investigation in search of a crime in search of evidence. In that order.

It sure looks like the President was set up. And now, a year later, Mueller has not brought forward any case of President Trump colluding with Russia on anything. One-time campaign manager Paul Manafort was brought up on charges to do with his tenure advising former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych in the 2000s. Flynn pled guilty to lying investigators. One-time campaign advisor George Papadopoulos pled guilty to lying to investigators. So far, no collusion.

Instead, we've got Mueller putting the U.S. Attorney in New York onto the porn star case and ransacking Trump's attorney's office. Perhaps he's preparing to get fired after finding nothing on the President, too, and so needs another U.S. Attorney to pursue the case. It never ends.

And in the meantime, it could be putting U.S. national security at risk.

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning called the raid in a statement a "trivial distraction in dangerous times," noting that "the President is dealing with talks to denuclearize North Korea, the Syrian chemical weapons attack, trade issues with China and potential Russian encroachments into Ukraine. The distraction that Mueller's headline-seeking antics create over trivial matters are no longer in U.S. national security interests. We need President Trump fully focused on the real problems facing our nation. It's time for Jeff Sessions to swat the gnat that is Mueller and put the Special Counsel investigation to rest. Our nation's security demands it."

So, while the President is now dealing with real threats to national security, the Justice Department has been imagining for the past two years that Trump was a Russian agent. And when that proved not to be true, they're resorting to the allegations of a porn star who is being accused by Trump's lawyer Cohen of violating her non-disclosure agreement she took payment to enter into as a legal settlement.

It is hard to imagine how any other President except Trump could keep governing robustly while this absolute undermining of the office is continuing.

This is Constitution-breaking stuff. The Justice Department is utterly out of control. This is why the Framers thought there should only be one president at a time.

In Federalist No. 70, Alexander Hamilton wrote of the unitary executive in the Constitution as "essential to the steady administration of the laws" and to "the security of liberty against the enterprises and assaults of ambition, of faction, and of anarchy." It was deemed necessary preventing factions within an executive branch vying for power and executing laws against each other, which was the plague of the ancient Roman Republic with its dual consul system.

In short, by crossing this legal Rubicon, Mueller and company have put national security in danger, the Bill of Rights in jeopardy and the office of the Presidency itself at risk. It takes on the appearance of attempting to overturn the will of the American people who voted to elect Trump in 2016.

Similarly, Justice Department memoranda from 2000 and 1973 affirm the idea that a president cannot be indicted for a crime by the Justice Department because "the indictment and criminal prosecution of a sitting President would unduly interfere with the ability of the executive branch to perform its constitutionally assigned duties, and would thus violate the constitutional separation of powers." Only Congress can prosecute a sitting president via the constitutionally prescribed impeachment.

Yet today we have an ongoing investigation into the President by a part of the executive branch, a faction that has seized power, a malady that Article II's unitary executive was supposed to cure. The investigation has always been an unconstitutional abomination the moment it was carried over into Trump's Presidency, and now it is absolutely violating the President's constitutional rights by piercing his attorney-client privilege. National talk show host and constitutional scholar and attorney Mark Levin on April 9 called the damage being inflicted on the Constitution by this investigation "irreversible." So, yes, it is absolutely an attack on our country, and as the President stated, "an attack on what we all stand for."

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Using rescissions, President Trump may be able to salvage the midterms for the GOP Congress

By Printus LeBlanc

When the President signed the budget a few weeks ago, it was obvious he was disgusted about having the sign the horrible bill. The only reason the President signed the bill was because the military was in dire straits. Those pushing the bill knew how the President felt about the military and used that against him to get the bloated bill passed. Fear not, however, there is a way the President can reduce some of the spending, while at the same time putting Congressional Democrats up for reelection on the record. The President can and should submit multiple rescissions immediately.

Title X of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 is known as the Impoundment Control Act. The act divides impoundments into two categories and establishes distinct procedures for each. A deferral delays the use of funds; a rescission is a presidential request that Congress rescind (cancel) an appropriation or another form of budget authority.

To propose a rescission, the President must submit a message to Congress specifying the amount, the accounts and programs involved, the estimated fiscal and program effects, and the reasons for the rescission. Multiple rescissions may be grouped into a single message. After the message has been submitted to it, Congress has 45 days of "continuous session" (usually a larger number of calendar days) during which it can pass a rescission bill. Congress may rescind all, part, or none of the amount proposed by the President.

Rescissions are important because they only require a simple majority vote to pass in both in the House and the Senate. This solves the biggest problem in the Senate, the 60-vote rule. The rule that allows the Senate minority to block any bill, including funding bills, from advancing without getting 60 votes. A rescission only requires 51 votes to pass out of the Senate.

If you read the leftist publications, like the Washington Post, you would think this is an obscure rule that has never been used. This is far from the truth. From 1974 to 1999, the executive branch requested $76 billion in rescissions, and Congress approved $25 billion. It is only since 2000 have Presidents resisted rescissions. President Bush barely chose to use the tactic, and Obama never used it. This gives the President and Republicans in Congress a chance for a much-needed win.

Things are not looking good for the Republicans headed into the midterms, but several rescission bills could change the Republican's fortune. The President should not request a single rescission through Congress, but dozens. The President should go back to the budget he proposed on March 16, 2017, and work off it when requesting rescissions. The President's original budget slashed the federal spending by $4.5 trillion over ten years.

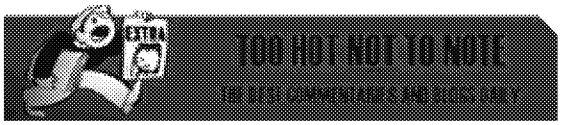
From a purely political standpoint, Congress doesn't even need to pass the rescissions. It would be great if Congress could pass the rescissions, but a string of votes that progressives have to defend in the midterms is enough. The upcoming Senate midterm election map does not appear to favor the left. Make them defend bloated spending and overreaching government programs.

There are 10 Democrat Senators up for reelection in states President Trump won, and forcing them to vote against spending cuts after they voted not to secure the border, would put their seats in jeopardy. Either they vote for the cuts, President Trump gets a win, and the Senators get primary challenged from the extreme left. If they vote against the cuts, they then have to face an angry electorate for gross overspending.

Republicans in Congress forced the President to sign a bad bill. Now they can take some of the sting out of that decision while giving themselves a better chance to maintain control after the midterms.

The President should begin submitting rescission requests immediately, and Congress should begin voting on them. Of course, that is if Republicans like being in the majority.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from Business Insider, Pat Ralph reports on the recent breakthgouh on U.S. China trade relations with Chinese President Xi Jinping promising to reduce the tariffs on imported cars:

It looks like China just blinked in its trade battle with Trump

By Pat Ralph

After exchanging threats of a trade war with President Donald Trump, Chinese President Xi Jinping appears to have blinked in his back-and-forth with the US leader.

Xi appeased fears of a trade war between the US and China on Tuesday by discussing plans to further open up the country's economy. Some economic measures he said were under consideration: lowering import tariffs on automobiles, enforcing intellectual property of foreign groups, improving the investment environment for international companies, and reducing duties on consumer products.

"Very thankful for President Xi of China's kind words on tariffs and automobile barriers...also, his enlightenment on intellectual property and technology transfers," Trump tweeted Tuesday. "We will make great progress together!"

The stock market seemed to respond well to the conciliatory tone. The Dow Jones industrial average jumped nearly 400 points at the open on Tuesday, while the S&P and the Nasdaq composite each rose over 1%. US automakers' shares also rallied following the encouraging news, with Ford, General Motors, Tesla, and Fiat Chrysler all seeing gains at the opening.

"If you look at President Xi's speech, it was conciliatory and that feels like a de-escalation," said Art Hogan, who serves as the chief market strategist at the investment bank B. Riley FBR. "That's what the market wants."

Xi's apparent willingness to temper the chances of a trade war with the US could allow Trump to declare victory, Politico's Ben White wrote in his morning newsletter.

Greg Valliere, the chief global strategist at Horizon Investments, said it was too early for Trump to declare a win over his Chinese counterpart. But he called the developments a "big deal" for investors, saying it's clear that China wanted to "lower the temperature" in the trade battle.

Click here for the full story.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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The left is now trying everything to destroy his position and defame his record, but Pruitt must power through, his job is far too important

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

April 03, 2018

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If environmental radicals are in full panic mode over Scott Pruitt at EPA, that means he is doing a good job

The left has spent over a decade trying to expand the influence and oversight of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), but the American people voted against this influence when they elected President Trump to prioritize economic advancement. Trump followed through on this promise by appointing Scott Pruitt as EPA Chief. The left is now trying everything to destroy his position and defame his record, but Pruitt must power through, his job is far too important.

Cartoon: Feed the Hogg

Progressives will use whatever vehicle they can to kill the First and Second Amendments

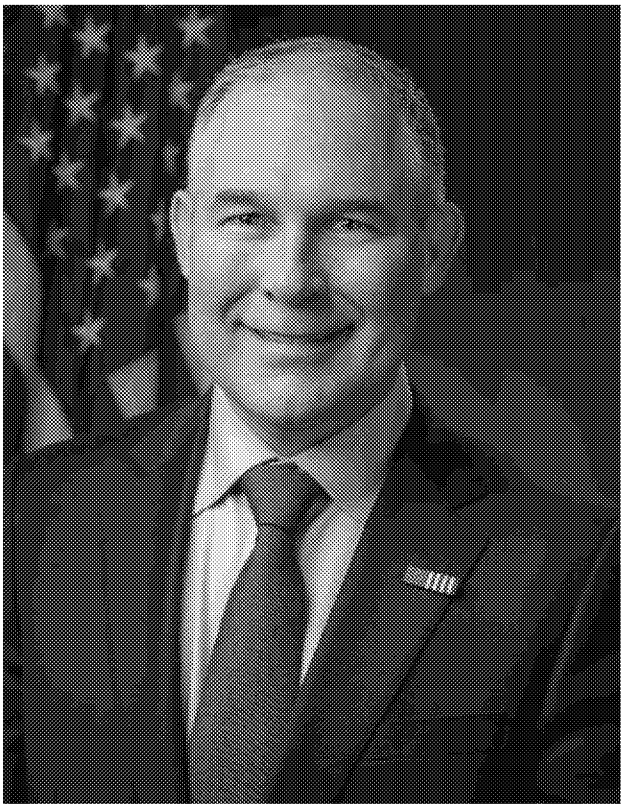
David Hogg is a dangerous demagogue leading a mob and should not be underestimated

In a very short span of time, David Hogg has become a dangerous demagogue who should not be underestimated, who is exploiting a national tragedy to take away individual rights and to have his critics thrown off the air who disagree. He is leading a mob, and if it is not roundly denounced now, there's no telling where it might end up. The First and Second Amendments could just be the appetizer.

Diana West: KGB deception is no myth

"I set out to describe the impact of the secret honeycombing of the halls of power and influence in New Deal/wartime Washington, D.C. by an intelligence army of covert agents and communists under Kremlin discipline — more than 500 have now been identified — and came up with 'for all intents and purposes occupied.' A goodly number of these secret agents, of whom Alger Hiss is only the most famous, reached senior policy-making positions in the FDR administration."

If environmental radicals are in full panic mode over Scott Pruitt at EPA, that means he is doing a good job



By Natalia Castro

The left has spent over a decade trying to expand the influence and oversight of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), but the American people voted against this influence when they elected President Trump to prioritize economic advancement. Trump followed through on this promise by appointing Scott Pruitt as EPA Administrator. The left is now trying everything to destroy his position and defame his record, but Pruitt must power through, his job is far too important.

Last year, nearly every Republican *and* two Democrats voted to confirm Pruitt. North Dakota Senate Democrat Heidi Heitkamp explained, "Once Mr. Pruitt is confirmed to lead EPA, I'll work to make sure EPA focuses on smart regulation and works with states and local communities to address issues like the unworkable Waters of the U.S. rule and the punitive final Clean Power Plan rules."

And this is exactly what Pruitt has done. Under Pruitt's leadership in the last year, the EPA has begun receiving public comments to replace the Clean Power Plan and blocked the implementation of the Waters of the U.S. rule . Both of these Obama-era initiatives dramatically expanded the EPA's influence over local waterways and implemented emissions regulations to "combat climate change," and as a consequence, close businesses ruled environmentally hazardous.

Pruitt has been integral in implementing the conservative agenda of President Trump, and it *terrifies* liberals. So the left has resorted to character attacks.

Democrats, such as Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.), have been quick to blast Pruitt for his expenditures on increased security this year, not realizing, they are the reason for the cost.

Pruitt and his entire family have received an unprecedented number of direct threats to their life.

The EPA's assistant inspector general for investigations, Patrick Sullivan, told CNN on Nov. 2017, "We have at least four times -- four to five times the number of threats against Mr. Pruitt than we had against [Obama's EPA Chief] Ms. McCarthy… They run the variety of direct death threats -- 'I'm going to put a bullet in your brain' -- to implied threats -- 'if you don't classify this particular chemical in this particular way, I'm going to hurt you.'"

Additionally, the Washington Examiner reported on Feb. 2018; the EPA currently has 70 open probes into threats against Pruitt and his family. This has caused the EPA's Criminal Investigations Division to provide Pruitt with a 24/7 security detail to ensure his and his family's safety.

Now, the left has cooked up a new conspiracy against Pruitt.

It has recently been revealed that Administrator Pruitt and his family stayed in a Capitol Hill condominium partially owned by the wife of an energy lobbyist several times over the last year. The lease has sparked controversy because of its "unconventional" term, Pruitt paid for the space by the day at a rate of $50 a night. His payments amounted to $6,100 over the course of six months, according to documents shared with Bloomberg News.

Pruitt received approval in advance for the arrangement by the EPA Ethics office, but in spite of this okay, Democrats have been quick to call "corruption!", claiming that the lobbyist wife's ownership of the condo makes it a "gift" to Pruitt.

In a March 30 memo, Kevin Minoli, a career attorney, and the EPA's designated ethics official explained, "Market value for rental apartments is commonly thought of in terms of rental cost per month. Under the terms of the lease, if the space was utilized for one 30-day month, then the rental cost would be $1500, which is a reasonable market value… "The lease authorized use by the administrator and his immediate family, specifically including his spouse and children, and consistent with that provision of the lease his immediate family did stay there when they were in Washington, D.C."

Minoli continued, "Entering into the lease was consistent with federal ethics regulations regarding gifts, and use of the property in accordance with the lease agreement did not constitute a gift as defined in those regulations."

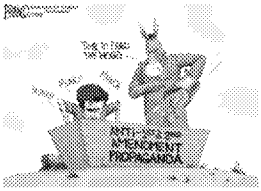
Minoli is the second EPA ethics official to come to Pruitt's defense. Justina Fugh, an ethics lawyer at the EPA for a dozen years, told BuzzFeed News this story was causing "so much drama" for what she believes to be an above board living arrangement.

Scott Pruitt has done his job, and he has done it well. All the left's continued attacks prove is that it is willing to dismiss facts in favor of pushing an agenda. Pruitt must continue charting the EPA's path toward a balance between environmental concerns and economic development and security, rather than be distracted by the baseless attacks from political opponents, and President Trump needs to stand behind this stalwart of his administration, who is big part of what is needed to make America great again.

Natalia Castro is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

Cartoon: Feed the Hogg

By A.F. Branco



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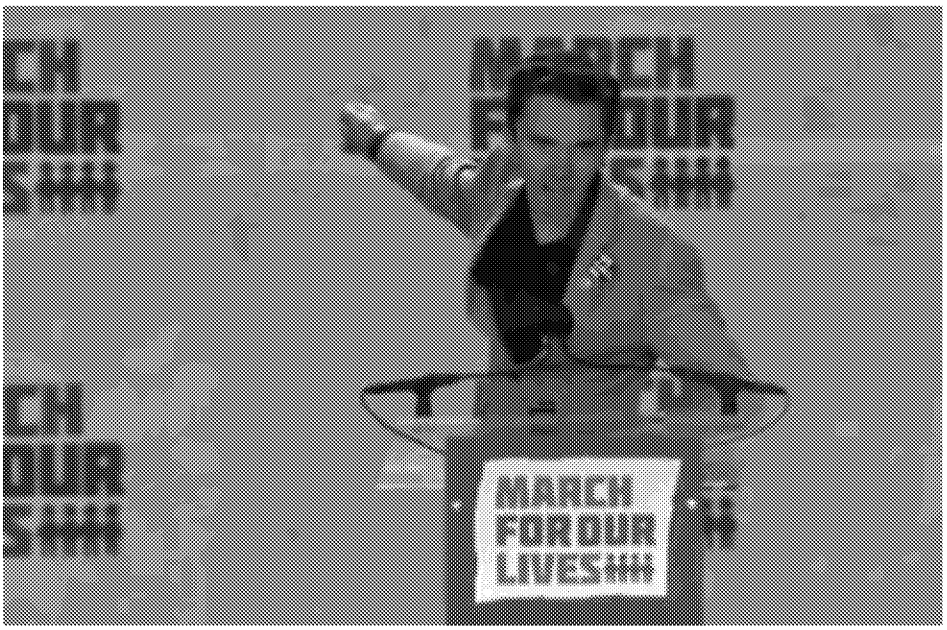
David Hogg is a dangerous demagogue leading a mob and should not be underestimated



By Robert Romano

Parkland surviving student David Hogg has now expanded his national gun control campaign to seek to silence dissident voices, including Fox News' Laura Ingraham, after Ingraham mocked Hogg's rejections from some colleges.

Hogg then threatened to wage a national boycott of prominent advertisers on Ingraham's program, resulting in 17 advertisers pulling out the program as of this writing.

Fortunately, so far, Fox is holding its ground. Jack Abernethy, co-president of the 21st Century Fox-owned cable outlet, issued a statement declaring, "We cannot and will not allow voices to be censored by agenda-driven intimidation efforts. We look forward to having Laura Ingraham back hosting her program next Monday when she returns from spring vacation with her children." Good for Fox, and good for Abernethy.

Still, the speed that advertisers are backing out is frightening. Our free press system relies on financial resources to hold prominent public figures, like Hogg, accountable for their words and actions.

But wait, isn't Hogg just a high school student? Yes, he is. Who survived a national tragedy and who now is leading a campaign that in fact endangers constitutional rights beyond the Second Amendment individual right to keep and bear arms.

Even though he is not a government official, through fear, Hogg's attack on Ingraham indirectly endangers First Amendment freedoms including the right to speak out and criticize public officials. Agree or disagree with Ingraham on a host of issues, she is a voice who tries to hold government officials and politicians accountable. The intimidating tactics Hogg is using are usually reserved for silencing dissidents in non-free countries.

In a very short span of time, David Hogg has become a dangerous demagogue who should not be underestimated, who is exploiting a national tragedy to take away individual rights and to have his critics thrown off the air who disagree. He is leading a mob, and if it is not roundly denounced now, there's no telling where it might end up. I hesitate to guess but the implications are real enough. The First and Second Amendments could just be the appetizer.

Since the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School massacre on Feb. 14, there are already calls, for example by former Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens, to repeal the Second Amendment and ban semi-automatic firearms.

When I brought this to my wife's attention, who is neither a gunowner nor really all that interested in politics, her initial reaction was that without the Second Amendment, who would protect individuals' First Amendment rights when the government started cracking down on those, too?

Her implication was that without the right to keep and bear arms, the American people would lack the means to defend themselves, not simply against criminals like the killer at Parkland Nikolas Cruz, but potentially against a tyrannical government. She's right.

After the Massachusetts rebellion broke out in 1775, one of the British government's first acts was to seize the gunpowder from the magazine in Williamsburg, Va. and put it on a Royal Navy ship. It is what governments do when it views its own citizens as a threat.

Since the Stevens' oped, Hogg and others in the March for our Lives movement have clarified they are not in favor of repealing the Second Amendment. Which really is not of any comfort. It's a dodge. And the zeal Hogg has engendered in his followers, already three quarters of a million on Twitter, is truly alarming.

What makes it more so is the disingenuousness of the platform Hogg stands upon, that pretends, as he did on March 22, that this is not about banning guns: "I think that a lot of people that are out there that are fearing what we're saying right now think that we're going to try to take their guns and we're not. The Never Again movement and March for our Lives is not trying to take your guns, we're trying to take back our lives because just as much as you have a right to own a weapon, we have the right to liberty, we have the right to peace and we have the right to live."

But on March 24 on NPR, Hogg told the world what he really thinks, explaining to host Scott Simon he was calling for "a ban on high-capacity magazines and an assault weapons ban."

Since fully automatic weapons have been illegal since 1986, all an assault weapons ban could possibly mean is a prohibition on the sale and possession of semi-automatic rifles and perhaps handguns, too, as Stevens called for. You see, we're left to surmise since Hogg is not nearly specific enough for somebody who's supposed to be leading a national movement on gun control.

So, by his own words, Hogg is a liar. On March 22 he declared "The Never Again movement and March for our Lives is not trying to take your guns" and on March 24 he called for "an assault weapons ban," implicating semi-automatics owned by millions of Americans.

In fact, there are approximately 85 million semi-automatic firearms in this country out of more than 300 million guns. Leaving aside what for Hogg must be a footnote that such a ban and then confiscation would be blatantly unconstitutional — what part of "keep and bear arms" is ambiguous? — and the fact that such a move could conceivably tear this country asunder, that's a lot of guns for the government to take away that he promised wouldn't be.

On March 11 on Twitter, Hogg implored, "Can we please not debate this as Democrats and Republicans but discuss this as Americans?" Yes, let's discuss this. Which is it, Mr. Hogg, confiscating 85 million semi-automatics or not? Please discuss your obvious contradiction.

A free people are those who are armed, and those who forget that will not long remain a free people.

Now, by making an example of Ingraham, Hogg and his adherents hope to use fear for one's livelihood to silence critics who favor gun rights. Good luck with that. Fox News should continue to stand by Ingraham, or more heads will be put into these public guillotines. It won't end with her.

Yes, we all have a right to live. And as a part of that, we all have a right and in fact a duty to oppose the likes of demagogues like Hogg who might one day seek higher office and really do a number on individual rights and have his critics removed from public view. Now is the time to speak up against his misguided agenda because later, it might be too late.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

ALG Editor's Note: In the following special report from The American Spectator, Diana West publishes a rebuttal to a Washington Post hit piece on the book American Betrayal she wrote in 2013:

KGB deception is no myth

By Diana West

Removing a few blinders from the Washington Post's "Outlook."

On March 18, 2018, the Washington Post Outlook section categorized KGB influence operations and my book, American Betrayal, *both as "myth." In response, I sent in the following essay, which Outlook has turned down.*

I am the author of that unnamed "book written in 2013" whose research and argumentation, anchored in nearly 1,000 endnotes, were labeled a "myth" by Mark Kramer ("Five Myths about Espionage," Outlook, March 18, 2018).

Here's how Kramer made his case in "Myth No. 5":

A surprisingly common misconception about spies is that they set out to change policy in the countries where they operate. A book published in 2013, for example, alleged that Stalin's spies in the 1940s had effectively "occupied" the United States and guided the policies of the Roosevelt administration.

Since Kramer forgot to mention it, the title of that "book published in 2013" is: *American Betrayal: The Secret Assault on Our Nation's Character* (St. Martin's Press). On page 68, I set out to describe the impact of the secret honeycombing of the halls of power and influence in New Deal/wartime Washington, D.C. by an intelligence army of covert agents and communists under Kremlin discipline — more than 500 have now been identified — and came up with "for all intents and purposes occupied."

A goodly number of these secret agents, of whom Alger Hiss is only the most famous, reached senior policy-making positions in the FDR administration. In Kramer's telling, however, all they really did as they inched closer and closer to the Secretary of the Treasury or State or the President was filch classified documents. Questions concerning whether/how these secret agents and ideological communists influenced the direction of U.S. policy- and even war-making to the Kremlin's advantage — questions my book explores — are to be dismissed as what Kramer describes as a "surprisingly common misperception."

Given that Kramer wrote an op-ed last year about the long history of "Moscow's active measures to influence U.S. politics and undermine U.S. foreign policy," perhaps it is his own recent Outlook statement that is surprising; however, it is no myth.

That there exist "spies" — better known as agents of influence, for example — who seek to "change," or, more realistically, influence policy-making and other activities of rival nations is a fact. It is an especially salient fact in the case of the fronts, networks and sophisticated campaigns of deception directed by the KGB, and overseen, at least in the post-Stalin era, as renowned Soviet dissident Vladimir Bukovsky reminds us, by the Central Committee of the Communist Party in Moscow. Lest there be any confusion, this has been going on for one hundred years — not only in "the 1940s." My own book aside, I am afraid that when Mark Kramer, as director of Cold War Studies at Harvard, dismisses all of this and more as "myth," it is akin to the Army Corps of Engineers dismissing as "myth" the presence of water in the Mississippi River.

The late Soviet expert Joseph D. Douglass, Jr. put it this way: "The Soviets live and breathe deception. You cannot understand what they are doing without understanding this. Indeed, you can't even begin to understand communism without understanding deception, which is very rarely mentioned in textbooks on communism."

I am guessing deception is very rarely mentioned in textbooks on espionage that Professor Kramer assigns in his "Cold War Studies" courses. What follows, then, is a chance for him to bone up.

The late intelligence expert Herbert Romerstein, also a seasoned congressional investigator, could not have expressed it more simply. In the first sentences of his 1991 monograph, titled, non-mythologically, "Soviet Agents of Influence," he wrote:

> An intelligence service has two main functions in a target country. One is to collect information from either classified or unclassified sources. The second is to influence the situation in that country.

Ex-Communist and ex-Soviet-agent Whittaker Chambers knew all about that effort to "influence the situation" from the Other Side. In his real-life experience, influence was paramount. A courier for the Communist Underground in New Deal Washington, Chambers served as a Soviet military intelligence operative until 1939 when he broke with the movement. Later, working with the FBI and then Congress, he would become the 20th century's most famous public witness to Soviet espionage and American treason. In what Mark Kramer would probably call "a book published in 1952," a.k.a. *Witness*, Chambers explained:

> That power to influence policy has always been the ultimate purpose of the Communist Party's infiltration. It was much more dangerous, and, as events have proved, much more difficult to detect, than espionage [stealing secrets], which beside it is trivial, though the two go hand and hand.

There is nothing magical, let alone mythical, about any of this.

Hope Hale Davis was a lesser-known member of the evolving communist underground Chambers worked with in D.C. In 1994, Davis, a lifelong Woman of the Left, published her memoir of the period, *Great Day Coming.* From the book jacket: "As underground members their job was to infiltrate high policy-making levels of government..." (Many of their doings in situ are also set forth in a book published in 2012, *Stalin's Secret Agents: The Subversion of Roosevelt's Government* by M. Stanton Evans and Herbert Romerstein.)

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Subject: Environmental radicals go all out against Scott Pruitt

If Russia is the enemy, why are these environmental groups being funded by Russia?

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

April 6, 2018

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Environmental radicals go all out against Scott Pruitt

If you've been paying attention to the news lately, you know there is a concerted effort to get Scott Pruitt fired. He has been a constant target of the left, but the recent announcement about ending "secret science" in the EPA has sent the radical environmentalists crazy. Who is doing this, and where are they getting the money?

Dehumanizing Trump and his supporters is dangerous — and is becoming normalized

Ask yourself: Do you own a "Make America Great Again" hat? Would you think twice before putting it on and walking down a city street today? If you answer the latter in the affirmative, congratulations, you too are a victim of political intimidation. The real danger is that this demonization of Trump, his supporters, conservatives and others is that it could be generating true believers, who no longer see their opponents as fellow Americans.

The model for civil service reform could be what has happened at the VA

Just three years ago, the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) was one of the most scandal-ridden agencies in the federal government. Today, the VA is working efficiently and effectively to follow through on their mission of caring for our nation's veterans. The difference is simple, an administration invested in draining the swamp came together with a Congress willing to dismantle wasteful bureaucracies and finally hold employees accountable for their actions. Now, other agencies are ready to do the same, and they must restore American trust in the system.

Breitbart News Tonight Radio: Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning defends Trump approach on trade with China

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning discusses the ongoing trade issues with China in the following clip from Breitbart News Radio on Sirius XM.

Environmental radicals go all out against Scott Pruitt

By Printus LeBlanc

If you've been paying attention to the news lately, you know there is a concerted effort to get Trump administration Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt fired. He has been a constant target of the left, but the recent announcement about ending "secret science" in the EPA has sent the radical environmentalists crazy. Who is doing this, and where are they getting the money?

The attacks have been fast and furious against Pruitt. One of the first complaints flung at Pruitt was about the cost of his air travel. The administrator took a trip to Italy to meet with his European counterparts in June of 2017. The left is apparently upset that it cost slightly over $30,000 for the security detail to accompany Pruitt.

What most of the mainstream media is not telling the people is that since Scott Pruitt assumed the EPA Administrator post he has received four times the threats against himself and his family than the previous EPA Administrator received. The extra security and first-class seating are needed to protect Mr. Pruitt. If the radical environmentalists don't like the cost, they should stop threatening him.

Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) even dared to complain about the EPA's spending on the Pruitt detail stating the amount is, "excessive or inappropriate and whether it detracts from the agency's ability to investigate environmental crimes." Maybe if the Senator from Rhode Island would speak to the radical environmentalists about their threats to Mr. Pruitt's safety the EPA would not have to spend so much. I bet he never complains about security costs for the Senate.

Another complaint centered around Pruitt renting a room from a friend at $50 per night, before he found a place for his family to join him. It is only a story because the friend happens to be married to a lobbyist for an energy company. The EPA's chief ethics counsel Justina Fugh cleared the stay stating, "the arrangement wasn't an ethics issue because Pruitt paid rent." A quick search on craigslist will verify that $50 per night is the market price for a room.

One of the critical groups leading the charge against Mr. Pruitt is the Environmental Integrity Project (EIP). The radical group was founded in 2002 by Eric Schaeffer, a former disgruntled EPA employee. EIP is dedicated to ending the fossil fuel economy. Seems like a typical radical environmental group, until the funding comes to light.

EIP has received over $700,000 from a group known as the Energy Foundation. A 2014 Senate report called the Energy Foundation a "pass through." It is an organization that receives tens of millions from other charities and foundations to dole out to groups that can do the activist work the donors are not allowed to do. It is one of these main funders of the Energy Foundation that raises eyebrows.

The Sea Change Foundation is a San Francisco based group that has given tens of millions to the Energy Foundation. The Sea Change Foundation gets their money from a variety of funders, but $23 million came from Klein Ltd out of Bermuda. Klein Ltd is interesting because according to a report exploring the link between environmental groups and the Kremlin, "Klein Ltd. is a corporation that 'only exists on paper' and is based out of a Bermuda law firm called Wakefield Quin."

Wakefield Quin is a law firm tied to Russian oligarchs Leonid Reiman and Mickail Fridman (two close allies of Russian President Vladimir Putin), along with Russian state-owned oil giant Rosneft. Because of Bermuda secrecy laws, this is where the trail of foreign cash ends. This begs the question, are firms connected to Russia funding the radical environmental movement? This would make sense considering the success Scott Pruitt has had in enacting President Trump's energy policies.

The Trump energy policies scare radical environmentalists and Russia to death. Russia profits financially and geopolitically when energy prices are high. Oil and gas revenue make up a sizable portion of Russian government revenue and they cannot be happy the U.S. is moving towards energy dominance. An energy dominant America, embodied by policies that end the war on coal, as well as supporting drilling and fracking, do not allow environmentalists to get to push unproven, unreliable green policies. The USSR was famous for using radical leftists as "useful idiots" in the Cold War, and now it looks like the more things change the more they stay the same.

Clearly, the claims being levied against Scott Pruitt are petty at best. The left simply hates him (yes hates, just look at the threats) and will do anything to stop him and push their radical agenda, even if they have taken Russian money in the past to cripple U.S. energy production. The President has already voiced support for Pruitt, and he should be praised for ignoring these baseless attacks from people that want him to fail.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

Dehumanizing Trump and his supporters is dangerous — and is becoming normalized

By Robert Romano

One of the most evil aspects of Nazi ideology was the dehumanization of its opponents: the Jews, communists, Poles, Gypsies, gays and so forth. It was a necessary precondition, psychologically, for what ultimately became mass murder.

But it takes other forms, too, that are harder to spot. We may use them ourselves occasionally in considering political opponents and not even realize it. The effect, though, is no less dehumanizing.

A very recent example of the dehumanization of conservatives came against Sen. Ted Cruz, who was confronted by activist Tammy Talpas over his support for repealing Obamacare, "If you force me into a high-risk pool, you will either bankrupt me or kill me. I take these threats of medical aggression personally and seriously, and I can assure you I'm not the only Texan who does. My question is: Will you pledge to submit to a DNA test to prove that you're human?"

The implication, of course, is that if you support repealing Obamacare, you lack human compassion. You're less than human.

This is a rather mild form, yet still pretty common, of dehumanization tactics by the left.

It has also been used to legitimize forms of political violence. U.S. Senator Kamala Harris (D-Calif.), said to be a serious contender for the Democratic nomination in 2020, when asked a silly question by Ellen DeGeneres on television of who she'd rather be stuck in an elevator with, President Trump,

Attorney General Jeff Sessions or Vice President Mike Pence, joked, "Does one of us have to come out alive?"

Now potential political violence against the President and those in his administration has become a punchline on daytime talk shows.

Last year, other forms of political violence described against the President included portraying the assassination of President Donald Trump in Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar," or Kathy Griffin's depicted decapitation of Trump.

President Trump himself has been repeatedly portrayed as a modern-day Hitler. If you support him, you must be a Nazi. "Dilbert" creator Scott Adams has written often on the dangers of this Hitlerization of our politics.

The "punch a Nazi" campaign itself was a somewhat ironic twist of history, insofar as the dehumanizing tactic since World War II has become to portray one's opponents as Nazi monsters, in this case Trump supporters, who are similarly bereft of the right to live without fear of violence.

To be clear, neither Trump nor his supporters are Nazis. They are being portrayed as Nazis by the left, which makes it easier, psychologically, to deck one on the street.

Ask yourself: Do you own a "Make America Great Again" hat? Would you think twice before putting it on and walking down a city street today? If you answer the latter in the affirmative, congratulations, you too are a victim of political intimidation.

There is little wonder why this demonization led to violent riots in San Jose and Chicago during the election campaign with Trump supporters being physically assaulted. Then there was the attempted assassination of U.S. Rep. Steve Scalise, Sen. Rand Paul and other Republicans at a Congressional baseball game practice in June 2017 by James Hodgkinson, a radicalized nut who thought President Trump colluded with the Russians to steal the election.

This dehumanization also legitimizes using the color of law to prosecute one's political opponents, for example with Special Counsel Robert Mueller's prosecution of Trump campaign officials as somehow being foreign agents in league with Russia.

In a recent Saturday Night Live skit portraying Mueller, Becca K. played by Cecily Strong, representing Democrats, is devastated to learn that President Donald Trump might not be prosecuted by Mueller. But, Kate McKinnon, depicting Mueller, offers a consolation prize: "If it makes you feel any better, the Kush is cooked," referring to the President's son-in-law Jared Kushner as potentially being the target of prosecution.

In short, they might not be able to get the President, but destroying the First Family will have to do. That'll show him and everyone else what the consequences of opposition are.

Similarly, any communication by Trump with Russia — principal among the President's Article II constitutional power to conduct foreign affairs — is viewed as tantamount to treason. This has manifested itself even at the White House, where almost every diplomatic visit or call with Russia instantly leaks and then is criminalized by media outlets.

Most recently President Trump's conversation with Russian President Vladimir Putin calling for talks on preventing another nuclear arms race — you know, which might prevent a nuclear war — was leaked and again used to portray the President as a foreign agent. This, despite a long history of

American presidents since John F. Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev installed the red telephone after the Cuban Missile Crisis, who engaged with talks with Russia first on strategic arms limitations and then eventually, reductions.

Elsewhere, this dehumanization has resulted in opponents of gun control measures — which really amount to gun confiscation — by the March for our Lives movement being accused of complicity in the murdering of children by Nikolas Cruz. Surviving Parkland student Cameron Kasky told Sen. Marco Rubio, at the CNN forum on Feb. 21, "Senator Rubio, it's hard to look at you and not look down the barrel of an AR-15 and not look at Nikolas Cruz." Disagree with them, and you support mass murder. You're an accomplice.

The dehumanization of the opposition can even be used to delegitimize reasonable discourse itself. There was the push to "unfriend" Trump supporters on Facebook. Actor Robert De Niro's reaction to the success of the new Roseanne show, said to be pro-Trump (perhaps insofar as it's not anti-Trump), was to suggest it wasn't worth discussing, "We're at a point ... where it's beyond trying to see another person's point of view."

In 2016, De Niro blatantly used the dehumanizing tactic, calling Trump a "dog" who he'd like to "punch in the face."

Mind you, this is not merely about the animalization of the opposition, portraying opponents in the guise of animals or other creatures, often quite common for example in political cartoons. That's not what we're talking about here.

When combined with some of the other elements described above, fed by a genuine belief that the opponent truly is less than human, then yes, the animalization of political enemies — which was absolutely used by the Nazis — can become a potent weapon. Couple it with, say, a call to violence or use it to portray entire groups or races of people as subhuman, and you've probably crossed that line.

That's plenty of examples. They are by no means exhaustive. And dehumanization is not merely the province of the left, but recently it has become increasingly prevalent with gathering support in the mainstream.

It should be alarming.

But it isn't.

The Ted Cruz story where he's supposed to take a DNA test to prove he's human was shared tens of thousands of times as it was reported across media outlets almost as an afterthought. Maybe you saw it on your Facebook feed this week. It's just a joke, right?

The question perhaps we should ask is what impact this might be having on the nation at large? Because it appears that it is really beginning to take its toll.

Recall, not only can dehumanization be used to legitimize political violence, in its most extreme form, in Germany, after years of endless state-run propaganda, it was channeled toward the destruction of millions of people.

Right now, we're clearly not there yet in this country. But when one half of the nation starts to believe the other half is no longer worthy of rights or even basic respect, the country is in trouble.

There are consequences for this tactic, which on the surface may appear to simply serve a partisan agenda. Something to agitate supporters in preparation of the next round of elections. But underneath, it seems to bear all the hallmarks of pure hatred. This is not how you win elections. It's how you create social discord.

The real danger is that this demonization of Trump, his supporters, conservatives and others is that it could be generating true believers, who no longer see their opponents as fellow Americans — and perhaps not even from the same species.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

The model for civil service reform could be how the VA is being reformed by making it so civil servants can be fired

By Natalia Castro

Just three years ago, the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) was one of the most scandal-ridden agencies in the federal government. Today, the VA is working efficiently and effectively to follow through on their mission of caring for our nation's veterans. The difference is simple, an

administration invested in draining the swamp came together with a Congress willing to dismantle wasteful bureaucracies and finally hold employees accountable for their actions. Now, other agencies are ready to do the same, and they must restore American trust in the system.

Nearly four years ago, the VA was known for two things: harboring corrupt employees and providing veterans with inadequate care.

Under the Obama Administration, long wait times left veterans without care for months on end. A Government Accountability Office report from April 2016 found mismanagement and disorganization amongst VA employees caused new veterans to wait three to eight weeks for medical care; many patients failed to receive any care at all.

Despite this, a bureaucratic system which rewards longevity rather than efficiency, allowed the problems to persist. John Cooper, a spokesman for Concerned Veterans for America, told the Washington Times of April 2016, "It has taken the VA two years to propose firing three senior leaders responsible for the Phoenix VA scandal, which led to nearly 300 veteran dying waiting for care."

But this is not the VA in 2018 because of concerted efforts from members of Congress and the current administration.

Florida Senator Marco Rubio led an initiative in the Senate to increase employee accountability through the VA Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act. As Rubio explained in May 2017 to Fox News, "Today, there will be a hearing on my bill, the veterans accountability bill that will give the VA secretary the power to fire bad employees. People caught, for example, watching pornography while on the job, et cetera. And that bill is going to pass out of that committee, and I believe it's going to pass out of the full Senate with bipartisan support and it will pass the House, it already has, and it will be headed to the president's desk."

And it did. And in the second half of 2017, the VA Accountability Report showed firings rose by 60 percent. Finally, the VA was able to hold workers accountable for failing veterans. Similarly, the VA has become the first agency to post information regarding disciplinary action online, while maintaining protections for whistleblowers.

But the VA is not the only agency known for bureaucratic waste and inefficiency. Across executive agencies, protectionist policies prevent disciplinary action from being brought against career employees. This creates negative workplace environments and allows inefficiencies to plague our entire government.

Rep. Barry Loudermilk (R-Ga.) introduced H.R. 559, The Modern Employment Reform, Improvement, and Transformation Act or MERIT Act of 2017. The legislation does several things to model federal employee dismissal after private sector employee dismissal:

- Increase agency management's power to remove poor employees
- Expedite timelines; 7 - 21 days' notice of action; simple presentation of cause with employees given opportunity to respond

- Retain employee right to appeal to the Merit Systems Protection Board
- Cap appeal decision time at 30 days, after which the dismissal is upheld, unless declared otherwise
- Require that if the 3--day deadline is not met, MSPB must report to Congress and the oversight committees in the House and Senate and explain non-compliance
- Uphold whistleblower protections

The bill has over 50 cosponsors and has recently caught the eye of former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich.

In highlighting actions Republicans in Congress can take to ensure they hold the House and gain seats in the Senate, Speaker Gingrich said of the MERIT Act, "Implementing this program should be common sense to most Americans. Most people know that if they act inappropriately at work or ignore their duties, they are going to get fired. In fact, 89 percent of people who participated in a telephone town hall with Rep. Loudermilk agreed that government employees should be held to the same employment standards as they are at their jobs."

Speaker Gingrich continued, "At the same time, this is a tough idea for Democrats to oppose. It would be very entertaining to see Democratic candidates nationwide try to explain to voters why federal employees, who are paid with taxpayer dollars, should receive extraordinary protection from being terminated for breaking rules and slacking off while they are supposed to be doing the peoples' work."

Government inefficiency does not just waste money; it risks lives. Congress and the President took a significant step in draining the swamp when they drained the VA of corrupt career employees, but now the mission must continue. Congress should continue the work of the VA Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act by expanding it with the Rep. Loudermilk's MERIT Act. It is a win-win situation for Republicans in Congress, they get to vote with the taxpayers and the opposition gets to show the people who they really stand with.

Natalia Castro is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

ALG in the News...
HOT OFF THE PRESS

Breitbart News Tonight Radio: Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning defends Trump approach on trade with China

ALG Editor's Note: Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning defends the Trump approach to trade with China including the U.S. tariffs in the following clip from Breitbart News Radio on Sirius XM:

Click here to listen to the full interview.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Subject: The gloves come off: President Trump rises as he delivers big-time on trade, immigration

Make no mistake, the tariffs and moving the military to the southern border increases the President's leverage, and could help to persuade Mexico and China to come to the negotiating table

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

April 5, 2018

Permission to republish original op-eds and cartoons granted.

The gloves come off: President Trump rises as he delivers big-time on trade, immigration

After Congress failed to deliver the border wall and the goods trade deficit with China hit an all-time high in 2017 at $375 billion, President Trump has taken the gloves off, levying his first round of major tariffs and sending the military to secure the southern border.

EPA Chief Scott Pruitt gets results — that's why he's a target of the left

President Donald Trump is standing by his embattled Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Scott Pruitt, according to reports. Let's be clear, that is good thing for both Trump and the country. Pruitt is one of the shining stars of the Trump administration, and no one who supports the president's "Make America Great Again" agenda should want him replaced.

Mueller's gross prosecutorial misconduct exposes need for dismissal

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning: "The revelation that once again Special Counsel Robert Mueller failed in his basic constitutional responsibility to turn over all exculpatory evidence to Paul Manafort, including the Aug. 2 memo, is inexcusable and yet another fireable offense."

Roll Call: Republicans Mulling Budget Gambit to Avoid Spending Some Omnibus Funds

"The Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 — more frequently referred to as the Budget Act, the sections of the law that are more commonly used — provides an expedited process for the president to propose and Congress to review a rescission resolution identifying appropriations that the administration does not want to spend. Multiple rescissions can be grouped in a single message, and Congress has 45 legislative days to approve all, part or none of the

president's request. The budget law would provide a path for the Senate to consider a rescission resolution with only a simple majority support."

The gloves come off: President Trump rises as he delivers big-time on trade, immigration

By Robert Romano

In the past month, President Donald Trump has levied a 25 percent tariff on steel and 10 percent on aluminum, hit China with $60 billion of tariffs for intellectual property theft and steel dumping, got South Korea to give major concessions on steel dumping and importing U.S.-made cars and has now activated the National Guard to help secure the nation's southern border.

The President also threatened NAFTA over a caravan of refugees headed from Honduras through Mexico with the intention of reaching the U.S.: "The big Caravan of People from Honduras, now coming across Mexico and heading to our 'Weak Laws' Border, had better be stopped before it gets there. Cash cow NAFTA is in play, as is foreign aid to Honduras and the countries that allow this to happen," Trump tweeted on April 3.

Mexico has since replied that it is disbanding the caravan. We'll see how successful they are.

The President's attitude appears be, that's a nice trade agreement you have there. Be a shame if anything were to happen to it. Congress should be paying attention, too.

In the meantime, President Trump has taken Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals off the table as something for Congress to barter with. On April 1, he tweeted, "Republicans must go to Nuclear Option to pass tough laws NOW. NO MORE DACA DEAL!"

As a result, the President's approval rating has soared to 51 percent, according to Rasmussen Reports, which is little wonder. Trump is delivering on the issues that won him the Republican nomination and ultimately the election in 2016: trade and immigration.

The pushback, of course, has also been fairly predictable. On the tariffs, despite immediately getting concessions from South Korea, the punditry class wasted no time in worrying over a new trade war.

Trump shot back on Twitter on April 4, arguing, "We are not in a trade war with China, that war was lost many years ago by the foolish, or incompetent, people who represented the U.S. Now we have a Trade Deficit of $500 Billion a year, with Intellectual Property Theft of another $300 Billion." Trump added, "When you're already $500 Billion DOWN, you can't lose!"

Here, the President has a point. China, could have a lot more to lose than the U.S. In 2017, it shipped $505 billion of goods to the U.S., compared with $130 billion of U.S. exports to China, according to U.S. Census data.

As a result, the goods trade deficit with China hit an all-time high of $375 billion in 2017.

In the meantime, Congress failed to fully fund the President's signature legislative promise to build a southern border wall in the $1.3 trillion omnibus spending bill, instead only delivering the $1.6 billion supplemental for some additional fencing — a year late.

All of which helps to explain Trump moving to be more aggressive in 2018. Waiting to see what Congress might deliver on border security, and simply exchanging pleasantries between trade officials was not moving the needle on the issues that got Trump elected, particularly in the Rust Belt states of Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin. A year on the job, with no wall being built and the trade deficit ballooning, Trump has responded with major actions.

Thanks to Congress' inaction on the wall and even DACA, the odds Trump will withdraw from NAFTA is probably rising. Just saying.

Make no mistake, the tariffs and moving the military to the southern border increases the President's leverage, and could help to persuade Mexico and China to come to the negotiating table. National Economic Council Director Larry Kudlow hinted on April 4 that the tariffs might not go into effect, but only if China deals.

In the meantime, stay tuned. Mexico and China may yet need a few more reminders. It looks like the gloves have finally come off.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

THE HILL

EPA Chief Scott Pruitt gets results — that's why he's a target of the left

By Richard Manning

President Donald Trump is standing by his embattled Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Scott Pruitt, according to reports. Let's be clear, that is good thing for both Trump and the country. Pruitt is one of the shining stars of the Trump administration, and no one who supports the president's "Make America Great Again" agenda should want him replaced.

Current complaints about Pruitt's Washington, D.C., condo, rented at the fair-market value from a lobbyist, are mostly politically motivated. As the designated agency ethics official for the EPA explained:

"Entering into the lease was consistent with federal ethics regulations regarding gifts, and use of the property in accordance with the lease agreement did not constitute a gift as defined in those regulations."

Yet some hope that by attacking Pruitt on fake ethics charges, the media-created scandal will cause the Trump White House to either foolishly force Pruitt out or cause him to throw up his hands in disgust and resign.

This would be a disaster for President Trump and all of us who care about his success.

EPA Administrator Pruitt has been instrumental in taking on the difficult task of rolling back Obama era regulations and in his first year has already completed 22 deregulatory actions, saving more than a billion dollars in regulatory costs.

Something as benign as Pruitt's recently announced effort to make certain that the methodology of the science the EPA uses to make regulatory determinations is transparent and the results are repeatable, has come under fire from former Obama-era EPA administrators Gina McCarthy and Janet McCabe called it, "his latest effort to cripple the agency."

It would seem that making sure the science behind major economy-shattering regulations is actually accurate and that the data is available for public scrutiny should be standard. Yet, incredibly, Pruitt is having to fightfor the sake of establishing sound science that meets the basic criteria of the scientific method in order to restore valid underpinnings for environmental regulations.

Pruitt is even having to re-evaluate the Obama administration's controversial and arbitrary fuel efficiency standard that set a car and light truck fleet average of 50 miles per gallon by 2025, regardless of whether it was technologically possible to achieve it. Effectively, this policy would force auto makers to sell expensive-to-produce electric vehicles to consumers at a loss in order to be able to sell customers the trucks and other gasoline-consuming vehicles that they want at significantly increased prices.

The changes announced by the EPA have left open what the fuel efficiency standards will be, and likely will end the state of California's waiver to federal law allowing the rogue state to compel stricter standards under the Clean Air Act.

President Trump can expect to hear an uproar from states like California and New York over Pruitt's smart decision on Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards, but when Administrator Pruitt prevails on this issue, it will help the president achieve his goal of putting the American auto industry back on top. Pruitt is doing the hard work to achieve the Trump agenda and taking the political and personal attacks that are part of battling the environmental industry driving American manufacturing to the breaking point.

We are talking about more than angry letter writing. In fact, Pruitt and his family have been subjected to a significant stream of personal threats. The threats have become so severe that the EPA inspector general, who is tasked with the physical safety of the administrator, now provides 24/7 protection for him and his family.

Incredibly, Pruitt gets zero credit from the left for increasing Superfund clean-up efforts designed to restore polluted sites to usability. He gets zero credit for enforcement actions that resulted in the second highest level of civil and administrative fine collections in the past decade, falling short of only FY 2016 which included a massive BP settlement. He gets zero credit because these critics are less concerned with cleaning up legitimate messes, than strangling the American manufacturing sector today and into the future.

President Donald Trump can and should be proud of his administrator's efforts at the EPA. Scott Pruitt is moving the Trump agenda forward and ensuring that the environment remains protected while our economic engines roar back to life.

Scott Pruitt is excelling at his job, and that is why he is the target of those who want to see the Trump administration fail. The president needs to recognize this and continue to stand by his chief general in the war against the regulatory stranglehold that was left by Obama. To be persuaded to make a personnel change at the EPA would be a disastrous mistake for his policy agenda. Most importantly, it would be a bad, bad decision for America's future.

Click here for the original article.

Rick Manning is president of Americans for Limited Government.

ALG
PRESS RELEASES

Mueller's gross prosecutorial misconduct exposes need for dismissal

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement urging Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein to dismiss to Robert Mueller as Special Counsel for withholding exculpatory evidence from Paul Manafort including the Aug. 2, 2017 order only authorizing the investigation into Manafort a week after his home was raided by Mueller:

"The revelation that once again Special Counsel Robert Mueller failed in his basic constitutional responsibility to turn over all exculpatory evidence to Paul Manafort, including the Aug. 2 memo, is inexcusable and yet another fireable offense. Mueller himself knows the importance of following the law as it relates to evidence, as in the 2008 Ted Stevens case that was eventually dismissed due to prosecutorial misconduct and withholding evidence, he had to testify before Congress about the actions of FBI agents under his control involved in the case.

"Mueller's failure to follow basic evidentiary principles is dwarfed by the revelation that his legal invasion into Paul Manafort's home complete with groping Manafort's wife in bed was not originally authorized by Rosenstein, with the authorization to investigate Manafort only coming a week later in a post hoc legal rationalization of the raid.

"The likelihood that Michael Flynn pled guilty prior to learning that the FBI agents who interviewed him recommended against charges being filed is another example of Mueller's gross misconduct. There is no place for Mueller's bullying tactics designed to get guilty pleas from defendants in clear violation of Fifth Amendment due process requirements to have all evidence presented affirmed in *Brady v. Maryland* in 1963.

"Mueller's actions are a stain on the American system of jurisprudence. While they may make for good television show script fodder, they are anything but in the best interests of justice being served.

"Once again, it is befuddling how Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein can continue to allow this high-profile destruction of the public confidence in our prosecutorial system to continue. It is time for civil liberties advocates on the left to wake up to the importance of maintaining constitutional rights even for your political opponents. Mueller's conduct has become grotesque in its abuse of the Bill of Rights and in the least he should be dismissed if not also held legally accountable by those he's abused."

Click here for the full press release

ALG Editor's Note: In the following article from Roll Call, John Bennett reports on a little known rule in the 1974 Budget Law that allows Congress to rescind parts of the recently passed budget:

Roll Call

Republicans Mulling Budget Gambit to Avoid Spending Some Omnibus Funds

By John T. Bennett

President Donald Trump and congressional Republican leaders, frustrated they had to work with Democrats to pass a fiscal 2018 omnibus spending measure, are mulling a way for their party to effectively cut some of the funds they just approved.

The idea would be to deploy lesser-used provisions of the 1974 budget law to roll back spending by impounding some of the appropriated funds.

The Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 — more frequently referred to as the Budget Act, the sections of the law that are more commonly used — provides an expedited process for the president to propose and Congress to review a rescission resolution identifying appropriations that the administration does not want to spend.

Multiple rescissions can be grouped in a single message, and Congress has 45 legislative days to approve all, part or none of the president's request.

The budget law would provide a path for the Senate to consider a rescission resolution with only a simple majority support.

House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy has been discussing the possibility of a rescission package with White House officials as a way to curb domestic spending in the omnibus, a GOP aide confirmed Monday evening following reports from ABC News.

McCarthy and Trump personally discussed the idea during a phone call this week, while the speaker's office has had staff level discussions with the White House about the concept, a senior GOP source added. Since the rescission process has not been used in a long time, congressional leaders are still discussing how it all might play out but it is an idea they're taking seriously, the source said.

The White House and the Office of Management and Budget did not return requests for comment.

The discussions come after Congress passed and Trump begrudgingly signed into law a $1.3 trillion omnibus spending bill last month.

Republicans celebrated a boost to defense spending, while lamenting the increase to domestic spending that was necessary to win Democratic support.

Trump, in an an omnibus signing ceremony held hours after he threatened to veto the measure, called on Congress to give him line-item veto authority on spending bills — a law Congress passed in 1996 but the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional just two years later.

The impound procedure provides the president with similar power to reject specific spending but only with the constitutionally required approval of Congress, which holds the power of the purse.

The maneuver may succeed in the House but would be a tough lift in the Senate, where Republicans hold a slim 50-49 majority (soon to be 51-49 after Cindy Hyde-Smith is sworn in to fill the Mississippi Senate seat vacated by Thad Cochran).

Getting 50 Republican votes to roll back spending the Congress just approved might be a long shot given the delicate nature of crafting the omnibus itself.

Such an effort would almost certainly make it harder for appropriators to negotiate future bipartisan spending deals. Congress has just six months to attempt to pass all 12 appropriations bills, whether individually or packaged again as an omnibus, before the start of fiscal 2019 on Oct. 1.

Click here for the full story.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Subject: Time for President Trump to reevaluate India, Brazil inclusion in General System of Preferences

Why are two of the larger economies in the world receiving duty-free trade preferences supposed to be for "the world's poorest countries"?

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 30, 2018

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Time for President Trump to reevaluate India, Brazil inclusion in General System of Preferences

This past week, Congress tucked a renewal of the $21 billion a year General System of Preferences. The program "provide[s] opportunities for many of the world's poorest countries to use trade to grow their economies…" according to the U.S. Trade Representative. In 2017, the top recipient was the seventh largest economy in the world, India, at $5.6 billion. The third top recipient was eight largest economy, Brazil, at $2.5 billion. Why are two of the larger economies in the world receiving duty-free trade preferences supposed to be for "the world's poorest countries"?

We Pause to Remark

Back during the days of the Red Menace when the left was defending Julius and Ethel Rosenberg plus Alger Hiss, those of us who believed the Soviet Union was a threat were labeled right wing extremists who saw Russians under every bed. Liberals now sound more extreme than any member of the John Birch Society ever did. They see Russians under every napkin.

Powerline: Congress has defunded AFFH

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purported victim of a crime refuse to cooperate with law enforcement in solving that crime? Is it hiding."

Time for President Trump to reevaluate India, Brazil inclusion in General System of Preferences

Source: *Whitehouse.gov.*

By Robert Romano

The past month has seen President Donald Trump significantly toughening up the U.S. stance on trade, enacting a 25 percent tariff on steel and 10 percent on aluminum and then $60 billion worth of tariffs against China for intellectual property theft and steel dumping. The month was capped off by an announcement that South Korea had agreed to concessions reducing exports of steel to the U.S. and an increase in U.S.-made automobile imports.

Just this past week, Congress tucked a renewal of the $21 billion a year General System of Preferences. The program "provide[s] opportunities for many of the world's poorest countries to use trade to grow their economies…" according to the U.S. Trade Representative website.

It does so by giving participating, poor countries a certain amount of duty-free imports to the U.S. Here's the problem.

In 2017, the top recipient was the seventh largest economy in the world, India, at $5.6 billion. The third top recipient was eight largest economy, Brazil, at $2.5 billion.

If these are two of the larger economies in the world, why do they still qualify for the General System of Preferences as being exclusive for the "world's poorest countries"?

The answer is they really shouldn't.

And President Trump does not have to continue it. 19 U.S.C. Section 2462(d)(1) provides that "The President may withdraw, suspend, or limit the application of the duty-free treatment accorded under this subchapter with respect to any country."

In other words, the President has significant leverage with respect to the General System of Preferences, leading one group to call for a reevaluation of the U.S. trade relationship with India: "GSP renewal will help empower the US Trade Representative (USTR) and other US negotiators as they sit down with India's representatives at upcoming commercial discussions," the Alliance for Fair Trade with India said.

The same could be said for Brazil.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered the opening speech the World Economic Summit at Davos this year, blasting Trump as he warned, "forces of protectionism are raising their heads." It was the height of hypocrisy.

An Americans for Limited Government Foundation report by Assistant Professor of Finance at the College of Business Administration, University of Texas at El Paso Alex Holcomb recently blasted the "Make in India" program as doing nothing alleviate India's trade barriers: "India [is] imposing price controls, demanding technological transfers, and instituting other manifestations of non-tariff barriers once investments are undertaken. The campaign therefore often amounts to little more than regulatory entrapment."

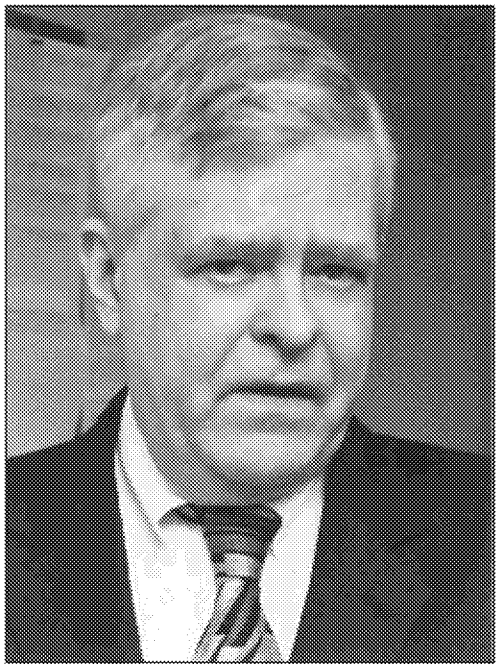
In addition, India charges 13.4 percent tariffs on a most favored nation basis, and Brazil charges 13.6 percent. The U.S. charges 3.7 percent in comparison. That's not reciprocity.

Which is precisely the type of global trade imbalance that President Trump promised to address when he won the election in 2016.

Instead of trade preferences, Trump should seek to establish bilateral trade relations with both of these economies. Only then can the goal of fair and reciprocal trade be achieved. Right now, the U.S. is giving India and Brazil, two of the larger economies in the world, duty-free treatment and the U.S. is getting nothing in return. President Trump should change that.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

We Pause to Remark



By Don Todd

Whites in general and white males in particular are under attack in our society. We are told by the left that they have too much influence, too much money and that they distort our culture. Ironically these same charges were made against the Jews in Socialist Germany during the nineteen thirties.

Mueller marches on. Next he will be indicting Snuffy Smith who parked cars for Trump campaign staffers. The charges will be overdue library books from 2012 and leaving a toilet seat up in 2010 and then lying about it to an FBI agent in 2018.

The lesson from the Mueller investigation is never talk to the FBI. Do not give them the time of day. If you do and you are one minute off they will charge you with lying to them and you will have to mortgage your house to pay legal fees for your defense.

Back during the days of the Red Menace when the left was defending Julius and Ethel Rosenberg plus Alger Hiss, those of us who believed the Soviet Union was a threat were labeled right wing extremists who saw Russians under every bed. Liberals now sound more extreme than any member of the John Birch Society ever did. They see Russians under every napkin.

When Susan Rice sent herself a memo memorializing a meeting she had with Obama where he told to do things, "by the book," she forgot to mention that the book he was referring to was Marxist Saul Alinsky's Rules for Radicals.

The nation is justifiably upset of the senseless deaths of seventeen high school students in Florida. In the meantime 2500 children are murdered every day in the country's abortion slaughter houses and the nation goes ho-hum.

There was a time when broadcasters would not run advertisements for Preparation H because they felt it was too personal a product. Now you have five years olds asking their mothers, "Mommy what is erectile dysfunction?"

When the film, Gone With The Wind, was first exhibited the audience would gasp when Clark Gable said, "Frankly my dear I don't give a damn." This was because they had never hear anyone swear in a movie before. An indication of the coarsening of our culture.

Stormy Daniels, an aging floozy who had sex with strangers on video if the price was right is challenging the moral integrity of our President. The reaction of the MSM and the Never Trumpers is, "This paragon must be listened to."

The left has always been good at astro-turfing so it is no surprise that they were able to turn out thousands of snot nosed kids to tell us they were too emotionally immature and unstable to buy a gun but were just the people to set gun policy.

The same group of teens attacking Second Amendment rights are the ones who often wear tee shirts sympathetic to and bearing the image of psychopathic serial killer Che Guevara.

The MSM lives by a simple rule, Democrats good, Republican and Trump bad. The Democrats live in a world in which they can do no wrong which is causing them to live in a false world. They have been led to believe that, "We are going to take your guns and raise your taxes," is a winning platform. The Republicans and Trump on the other hand can do whatever they wish knowing that they will be denounced regardless.

Don Todd is the President of Americans for Limited Government Foundation.

ALG in the News...
HOT OFF THE PRESS

ALG Editor's Note: In the following article from Powerline, Vice President of Policy at Americans for Limited Government Robert Romano makes the case for Department of Housing and Urban Development Ben Carson to rescind the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing regulation after Congress defunded it from being used to make changes to local zoning ordinances:

POWERLINE

Congress has defunded AFFH

By Paul Mirengoff

The omnibus bill Congress passed, and President Trump signed last week is a disaster. However, one positive thing to come out of it, in addition of course to the increase in military spending, was the defunding of President Obama's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing regulation (AFFH). This is a move we've been advocating for some time. Finally, the Republican Congress pulled the trigger.

AFFH enables the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to order more than 1,200 cities and counties that accepted any part of annual community development block grants to rezone neighborhoods along income and racial criteria. I have written frequently about this rule — e.g., here and here.

The omnibus provides:

> *None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to direct a grantee to undertake specific changes to existing zoning laws as part of carrying out the final rule entitled 'Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing' … or the notice entitled 'Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Assessment Tool'. . .*

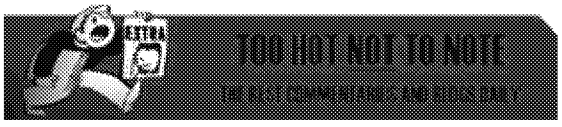
There's somewhat less to this than meets the eye. HUD Secretary Ben Carson has already delayed AFFH until 2020. So even without the omnibus, HUD would not be using funds to promote AFFH this year or next. But as long as the regulation remains on the books, it might spring back into play after 2020.

Here's what really needs to happen: Ben Carson needs to rescind AFFH. He has been reluctant to do so. Now that Congress has defunded the program, maybe he will take his cue and kill this federal hijacking of local governments.

Robert Romano of Americans for Limited Government argues that the AFFH defund facilitates this move. He explains:

> *Without Congress acting, simply rescinding this regulation would have been far riskier for Carson and Trump.*
>
> *In 1983, the Supreme Court decided [in] Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association v. State Farm Mutual that [when] rescinding any regulation issued, an agency is obligated to supply a reasoned analysis "for the change beyond that which may be required when an agency does not act in the first instance."*
>
> *The outcome was that it is much more difficult to rescind an existing regulation than it is to either modify it or never have issued it in the first place, leaving every single regulatory rescission subject to judicial review.*
>
> *Ultimately, the rescinding agency has to argue not only that rescinding the regulation in question is rational based on the statutory scheme, but prove that enacting it was irrational to begin with.*
>
> *Carson and Trump will now have no problems on that count if they choose to rescind or roll back most of the HUD zoning regulation. The regulation, which absolutely affects zoning, no longer rationally rests within the statutory scheme. It's now illegal to spend money on implementing it as it was written.*

Click here for the full story.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following special report from The American Spectator, George Parry investigates the DNC server hack and the questions that still exist on whether the Russians hacked it or not:

Mr. Mueller: Was the DNC Server Actually Hacked by the Russians?

By George Parry

According to NBC News, Special Counsel Robert Mueller's team recently began asking witnesses "pointed questions" about whether Donald Trump was aware that the Democratic National

Committee's emails had been stolen before that was publicly known, and whether he was involved in their "strategic release" during the presidential campaign. NBC states that the "line of questioning suggests the special counsel, who is tasked with examining whether there was collusion between the Trump campaign and Russia during the 2016 election, is looking into possible coordination between WikiLeaks and Trump associates in disseminating the emails, which U.S. intelligence officials say were stolen by Russia."

Assuming NBC's report is true, then it would appear that Team Mueller has put the cart before the horse. Before chasing after Trump-Russia collusion in the hacking of the DNC's email server, they need to first establish whether a hack even happened.

Consider the following:

On June 15, 2016, CrowdStrike, a private computer security company working for the Democratic National Committee, announced that it had detected Russian malware on the DNC's computer server. The next day, a self-described Romanian hacker, Guccifer 2.0, claimed he was a WikiLeaks source and had hacked the DNC's server. He then posted online DNC computer files that contained metadata that indicated Russian involvement in the hack.

On July 22, 2016, just days before the Democratic National Convention, WikiLeaks published approximately 20,000 DNC emails.

Much to the embarrassment of Hillary Clinton, the released files showed that the DNC had secretly collaborated with her campaign to promote her candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination over that of Bernie Sanders. This caused the Clinton campaign serious political damage at the Democratic convention.

Well after the convention, Jennifer Palmieri, Clinton's public relations chief, said in a March 2017 Washington *Post* essay that she worked assiduously during the nominating convention to "get the press to focus on… the prospect that Russia had not only hacked and stolen emails from the DNC, but that it had done so to help Donald Trump and hurt Hillary."

We now know that at about the same time that WikiLeaks made its announcement, the DNC and the Clinton campaign were funding efforts by Fusion GPS and its hireling, former British spy Christopher Steele, to dredge up anti-Trump dirt purportedly from Russian sources.

Ultimately Steele produced a dossier which former FBI Director James Comey has publicly characterized as "salacious" and "unverified." Nevertheless, for reasons yet to be disclosed, Comey's FBI saw fit to use that same dossier as a basis for obtaining a FISA warrant to spy on the Trump campaign and administration in its quest to uncover Russian ties to Trump.

Despite these revelations, the mainstream media have stubbornly clung to the Trump-Russia collusion narrative. And central to that the narrative is that the Trump campaign colluded with the Russians to hack the DNC email server.

But, in their coverage, the mainstream media have downplayed the very odd behavior of the DNC, the putative target of the alleged hack. For, when the Department of Homeland Security and the FBI learned of the hacking claim, they asked to examine the server.

And the DNC refused.

Why would the purported victim of a crime refuse to cooperate with law enforcement in solving that crime? Is it hiding something? Is it afraid the server's contents will discredit the Russia-hacking story?

The answers to those questions began to emerge thanks to an article in the August 8, 2017 issue of the*Nation*. By no means a pro-Trump publication, the *Nation* published an exhaustive report about an exacting forensic investigation of the DNC hack by the Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS), an organization of former CIA, FBI, National Security Agency, and military intelligence officers, technical experts, and analysts.

As reported by the *Nation*, VIPS has a well-established record of debunking questionable intelligence assessments that have been slanted to serve political purposes. For example, in the run-up to the invasion of Iraq, VIPS courageously and correctly challenged the accuracy and veracity of the CIA's intelligence estimates that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction and that he posed a threat to the United States. Similarly, VIPS has condemned the use of "enhanced interrogation techniques" on suspected terrorists. In short, VIPS can hardly be described as either a right-wing cabal or as carrying water for the Republican Party.

In its analysis of the purported DNC hack, VIPS brought to bear the impressive talents of more than a dozen experienced, well-credentialed experts, including William Binney, a former NSA technical director and cofounder of the NSA's Signals Intelligence Automation Research Center; Edward Loomis, former NSA technical director for the Office of Signals Processing; and Skip Folden, a former IBM information technology manager. As the French would say, these are *l'hommes serieux*, as are the other computer-system designers, program architects, and analysts with whom they investigated the Clinton-DNC hack story.

As set forth in the article, VIPS' investigative findings were nothing short of stunning.

First, VIPS concluded that the DNC data were not hacked by the Russians or anyone else accessing the server over the internet. Instead, the data were downloaded by means of a thumb drive or similar portable storage device physically attached to the DNC server.

How was this determined? The time stamps contained in the released computer files' metadata establish that, at 6:45 p.m. July 5, 2016, 1,976 *megabytes* (not megabits) of data were downloaded from the DNC's server. This took 87 seconds, which means the transfer rate was 22.7 megabytes per second, a speed, according to VIPS, that "is much faster than what is physically possible with a hack." Such a speed could be accomplished only by direct connection of a portable storage device to the server. Accordingly, VIPS concluded that the DNC data theft was an inside job by someone with physical access to the server.

Click here for the full story.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Message

From: Mike Thompson [mthompson@CRCPublicRelations.com]
Sent: 4/3/2018 3:17:09 PM
To: Bennett, Tate [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=1fa92542f7ca4d01973b18b2f11b9141-Bennett, El]
CC: Konkus, John [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=555471b2baa6419e8e141696f4577062-Konkus, Joh]; Abboud, Michael [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b6f5af791a1842f1adcc088cbf9ed3ce-Abboud, Mic]
Subject: Re: can you send me Administrator's speech

thanks. Would be very helpful to get it as soon as is convenient.

From: Bennett, Tate <Bennett.Tate@epa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, April 3, 2018 11:08 AM
To: Mike Thompson
Cc: Konkus, John; Abboud, Michael
Subject: Re: can you send me Administrator's speech

John and Mike can help

On Apr 3, 2018, at 10:37 AM, Mike Thompson <mthompson@CRCPublicRelations.com> wrote:

> can you send me the text of the full speech?

==========
Mike Thompson
CRC Public Relations
Ex. 6
==========

Message

From: Americans for Limited Government [media@limitgov.org]
Sent: 4/2/2018 1:32:41 PM
To: Abboud, Michael [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b6f5af791a1842f1adcc088cbf9ed3ce-Abboud, Mic]
Subject: If the President doesn't want to sign another bad omnibus bill, he must act now

A September continuing resolution to a lame duck session almost guarantees that the President's priorities will lose even if the GOP maintains control of Congress

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

April 02, 2018

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If the President doesn't want to sign another bad omnibus bill, he must act now

President Trump declared he would never sign another stinker government funding bill like the omnibus again, yet many in Washington, D.C. expect the legislative funding game to be played exactly the same way this upcoming September. It doesn't have to be, and if the GOP wants its majority to survive, they better make certain it isn't.

Another overbearing Obama rule bites the dust

As many have noticed the Obama administration was very much in favor of regulations for the sake of regulations. The administration tried to regulate everything from the air in our lungs and food in our stomach, to the climate controlled by the Sun. But earlier this month, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals struck another blow against the abusive administrative state imposed on the American People by the previous administration and returned some sanity to the U.S.

David Raney: From ancient Athens to modern America: Thank the right to 'bear arms' for freedom

Former Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens' recent opinion piece in the New York Times advocating the repeal of the Second Amendment appears to have surprised many, but it shouldn't have. In 2008, while considering the District of Columbia v. Heller *case, Stevens and three of his "progressive" colleagues on the United States Supreme Court attempted to effectively repeal the Second Amendment by judicial fiat. Their failure to do so was a victory for our republic and its inheritance of ordered liberty that predates the ancient societies of Athens and Rome.*

Marc Thiessen: There's nothing wrong with a census question about citizenship

No, it's not. There is nothing wrong with asking about citizenship. Canada asks a citizenship question on its census. So do Australia and many other U.S. allies. The U.S. government asked about citizenship for 130 years — from 1820 to 1950 — as part of the decennial "short form" census and

continued to do so in the "long form" survey — distributed to 1 in 6 people — through 2000, when the long form was replaced by the annual American Community Survey. The ACS goes to about 2.6 percent of the population each year and asks about citizenship to this day.

If the President doesn't want to sign another bad omnibus bill, he must act now

By Rick Manning

President Trump declared he would never sign another stinker government funding bill like the omnibus again, yet many in Washington, D.C. expect the legislative funding game to be played exactly the same way this upcoming September. It doesn't have to be, and if the GOP wants its majority to survive, they better make certain it isn't.

The President has to take the lead in this effort to force Congress to return to regular order on the twelve appropriations bills that should go to his desk between now and Sept. 30.

The first step is to demand that he receive the Defense appropriations bill on his desk no later than Memorial Day. Seasoned D.C. insiders will cluck their teeth noting that the Senate won't pass an individual Defense appropriations bill because it is their big bargaining chip during the inevitable massive spending bill fight. That is interesting, but not relevant when vulnerable Democrat Senator after Senator is being politically whipped by their constituents to end an actual, real-life filibuster against the passage of the bill. With the President using the bully pulpit to excoriate them, they will cave-in to the pressure. But only if they are forced to actually filibuster the bill and hold the Senate floor, as opposed to the current courtesy paper filibuster.

If, as is likely, there are differences of opinion between the House and Senate about what should be in the appropriations bill, they resolve the differences, the House passes the amended bill, and the Senate Democrats have a choice on whether to try to hold the floor again.

After a few of these forced, real filibusters, the Democrats will be much less likely to fight everything, but instead will negotiate some changes in exchange for their votes. That is regular order, rather than the current hostage taking which is the current government funding process.

But to break the stranglehold of failure that engulfs the legislative process, President Trump needs to engage in both the timing of when each bill comes up, and making certain that the funding bills contain his priorities. He cannot afford to find himself doing a photo-op in front of "big, beautiful walls" only to discover that funding for those walls has been explicitly prohibited in the funding bill that he is promoting.

The previous administration was expert at forcing GOP leaders in the House and Senate to accept its funding priorities and stripping out riders and defunds that were counter to their policy wishes. President Trump can and should be even more effective with ostensible support from majorities in both houses of Congress. The White House just needs a war room which combines legislative calendar and messaging to bring the full weight of the executive branch to bear.

While the above description is simplistic in that achieving the goal of passing individual appropriations bills and avoiding a continuing resolution to extend funding of the government into the lame duck is much harder than described. The truth is that President Trump will likely not have a better Congress to work within 2019, so this may be his last, best opportunity to achieve his funding priorities until his second term.

The White House needs to recognize this right now, and begin a focused battle plan to force their priorities through Congress in September. A September continuing resolution to a lame duck session almost guarantees that the President's priorities will lose even if the GOP maintains control of Congress.

The best answer is to avoid this problem by putting every ounce of energy into funding those priorities during the spring and summer so a late September choice between a bad, bad bill and shutting down the government is avoided.

Rick Manning is the President of Americans for Limited Government.

Another overbearing Obama regulation, the fiduciary rule, bites the dust

By Printus LeBlanc

As many have noticed the Obama administration was very much in favor of regulations for the sake of regulations. The administration tried to regulate everything from the air in our lungs and food in our stomach, to the climate controlled by the Sun. But earlier this month, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals struck another blow against the abusive administrative state imposed on the American People by the previous administration and returned some sanity to the U.S.

Spurred on by the financial crisis the Department of Labor (DOL) attempted to regulate the part of the financial industry by proposing a rule in 2010. The department already had authority over employer-sponsored retirement plans under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA). The authority did not include Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA), which are already regulated by the IRS and SEC. The backlash caused the administration to withdraw the rule and try again five years later.

In 2015, President Obama warned the financial industry change was coming, and in April of 2016, the new rule came down under DOL. The new rule was designed to get away from the commission-based system financial services industry. The then Assistant Secretary for Employee Benefits Security Phyllis Borzi was the main driver for the rule. A quick glance of a Borzi speech and it becomes clear, the former Assistant Secretary does not like the financial services industry.

The rule would be known as the DOL Fiduciary Rule or the Best Interests Rule. The main thrust of the rule raised the fiduciary standard of brokers to Registered Investment Advisors. Brokers typically were paid on commission of sales, and the DOL believed this meant they could not be objective when giving advice. DOL believed taking commissions out of the equation would result in better financial advice. It became apparent quickly this was not going to be the case.

The DOL rule would have ended up hurting small dollar retirement savers. If someone saves a couple hundred a month for their retirement, where is the incentive for an investment firm to advise them? At the end of the year, that person or couple was able to save $1,500-$3,000, but the investment firm has a much greater liability according to the rule. The investor could come after the investment firm years later claiming the firm made the wrong investments and sue. What incentive is there to take on small dollar clients that can sue for more than they invest? None. This is not hypothetical; this is reality.

The Chamber of Commerce conducted a survey of investment firms and found some startling statistics:

- 92 percent of firms surveyed say that the rule could limit or restrict investment products for their customers, which could ultimately affect some 11 million households;
- Up to 7 million individual retirement account owners could lose access to investment advice altogether;
- A survey of insurance service providers shows 70 percent already have or are considering exiting the market for small balance IRAs and small plans, and half are preparing to raise minimum account requirements for IRAs;
- A survey of advisors finds 71 percent will stop providing advice to at least some of their current small accounts due to the risk and increased costs of the rule;
- Other surveys found that 35 percent of advisors will stop serving accounts under $25,000, and 25 percent will raise their client minimum account thresholds; and
- One large mutual fund provider reports that its number of orphaned accounts nearly doubled in the first three months of 2017, and that the average account balance in these orphan accounts is just $21,000. Further, it projects that ultimately 16 percent of the accounts it services will be orphaned this year because of the fiduciary rule.

- Fortunately, thanks to the Fifth Circuit's ruling, the rule is null and void, and investment firms need not worry. In a 2-1 decision, the court vacated the rule "in toto," noting the DOL's new definition of fiduciary was did not fit with the text of ERISA and the IRS code. The court also found the rule's new definitions were unreasonable.

The Obama administration tried to literally regulate everything under the sun. This is a small victory for free market capitalism, but the fight is not over. The DOL has not shown it is going to fight the ruling, and it should not. All agencies across the federal government should continue to roll back abusive regulations, and Congress should act to ensure future abusive administrations cannot overregulate people's lives. This is a two-front battle, the executive branch, and the legislative branch; Congress needs to step up.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

THE HILL

David Raney: From ancient Athens to modern America: Thank the right to 'bear arms' for freedom

By David Raney

Former Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens' recent opinion piece in the New York Times advocating the repeal of the Second Amendment appears to have surprised many, but it shouldn't have. In 2008, while considering the *District of Columbia v. Heller* case, Stevens and three of his "progressive" colleagues on the United States Supreme Court attempted to effectively repeal the Second Amendment by judicial fiat. Their failure to do so was a victory for our republic and its inheritance of ordered liberty that predates the ancient societies of Athens and Rome.

Owning and bearing arms for a variety of legitimate purposes (such as collecting, hunting, and defense of self, family, and state) has been a vital part of the Western tradition for millennia and is our birthright as a free people. This right (or the lack thereof) has separated the free and the enslaved since before the rise of Athenian democracy.

The Greek philosopher Aristotle asserted that the private possession of arms was a right and duty of citizenship that secured the state against internal and external threats. Centuries later, the Roman statesman Cicero (whom our nation's founders admired and emulated) argued that the use of arms for self-defense was part of a natural law that must be respected. He also adhered to the long-standing conviction that the use of private arms for the defense of the republic was an essential duty of Roman citizenship.

Our English forebears also understood well the link between the people's possession of arms and liberty. In 1688, a coalition of forces loyal to the English Parliament and William of Orange removed James II from the throne in a relatively bloodless affair that became known as the "Glorious Revolution." One of the major grievances the revolutionaries lodged against the king was that he disarmed many of his subjects. Indeed, Parliament insisted that, as a condition of assuming the throne, the new sovereigns — William and Mary — agree to a declaration of rights that, in part, protected fundamental liberties of the English people. One of the individual liberties enumerated in

the document, which became known as the English Bill of Rights, was that of possessing arms "for their defence."

The English political philosopher John Locke published his "Second Treatise of Civil Government" in the wake of the Glorious Revolution. Locke argued that all men possess "natural rights" by virtue of their birth — the rights of life, liberty, and property (a trio that emerged, in slightly altered form, in our own Declaration of Independence).

Our nation's founders (including those who proposed and approved the Bill of Rights) understood that for these natural rights to mean anything, people had to possess the capacity to defend their lives, liberty, and property from offenders, both foreign and domestic. They further understood that the government frequently was unable to protect these rights adequately. Consequently, each individual was ultimately responsible for his own security, and firearms were considered a proper and effective means of attaining that end.

As the majority in the Heller decision pointed out, those who crafted the Second Amendment intended for it to protect a pre-existing, individual right. Indeed, when James Madison, the "Father of the Constitution," introduced the Bill of Rights in the House of Representatives, he made clear his understanding that the guarantees contained therein protected individual rights.

Notably, when the Senate considered the provision that became the Second Amendment, its members defeated a proposal that would have limited the right to keep and bear arms to "the common defense." In other words, the Senate deliberately chose not to restrict this right to service in an organized body such as a militia.

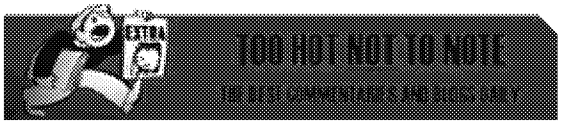
Those who suggest that the Second Amendment is "outdated" or "irrelevant" today are often poor students of human nature and history. Many notorious attempts to restrict or ban firearms have been directed at the most vulnerable members of our society, and this trend continues today.

Shortly after the Civil War, many Southern states enacted so-called "black codes" that prohibited freedmen from keeping or bearing arms — a clear attempt to keep former slaves in a state of virtual slavery. In the early 20th century, states such as New York and Michigan enacted schemes to require permits for the purchase of handguns under the guise of keeping such firearms out of the hands of so-called undesirables. To many who supported these laws, "undesirables" included blacks and recent immigrants.

Today, proposals to bar young adults from purchasing firearms of any kind threaten to deprive this segment of our population of the natural right of self-preservation.

Ultimately, the final and most effective barrier between the citizens of our republic and any number of gun control schemes that would rob them of their God-given natural rights is the Second Amendment. Any attempts by John Paul Stevens or anyone else to repeal it should be resisted with a civil but firm response reminiscent of the legendary John Paul Jones: "I have not yet begun to fight!"

David A. Raney is professor of history at Hillsdale College where he holds the John Anthony Halter Chair in American History, the Constitution, and the Second Amendment.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following op-ed in the Washington Post, Marc Thiessen discusses the controversy and why it should not be a controversy to ask about citizenship on the census:

The Washington Post

There's nothing wrong with a census question about citizenship

By Marc A. Thiessen

The Trump administration is being sued over its plans to include a question about citizenship in the 2020 Census, which California Attorney General Xavier Becerra (D) says "is not just a bad idea — it is illegal."

No, it's not. There is nothing wrong with asking about citizenship. Canada asks a citizenship question on its census. So do Australia and many other U.S. allies. The U.S. government asked about citizenship for 130 years — from 1820 to 1950 — as part of the decennial "short form" census and continued to do so in the "long form" survey — distributed to 1 in 6 people — through 2000, when the long form was replaced by the annual American Community Survey. The ACS goes to about 2.6 percent of the population each year and asks about citizenship to this day.

So why are many on the left up in arms over a question that should be relatively uncontroversial? Answer: Money and power. Democrats are worried that adding a citizenship question will dampen participation in the census by illegal immigrants, reducing the total population count in the Democratic-leaning metropolitan areas where illegal immigrants are largely concentrated. Because census data is used to determine the distribution of federal funds, that could decrease the cities' share of more than $675 billion a year in federal funding. And because census data is also used to create and apportion congressional seats, Democrats fear that if illegal immigrants don't participate it could shift power from Democratic cities to rural communities, which tend to vote Republican.

At least, that's Democrats' theory. But there is no evidence that a citizenship question would dramatically impact census participation. The census is not like a telemarketing survey where people have the option of adding their names to a "do not call" list. Everyone is required by law to respond. If a household does not fill out the census form, then census workers visit that household to gather census data. If they still cannot get a household to cooperate, nonrespondents can be fined or prosecuted — though in practice they rarely are. Usually, the Census Bureau instead asks neighbors about the household in order to get as much accurate information as possible. This may add costs to the census, but it is not likely to produce inaccurate data.

Moreover, if asking about citizenship is a deterrent to participation by illegal immigrants, then what about the existing census question that asks whether respondents are "of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin" — the only ethnic group specifically called out? Respondents are required by law to tell the government whether they are of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban or other Hispanic origin, which they are required to list ("print origin, for example, Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, and so on"). If that does not deter the participation of many illegal immigrants, how would a question on citizenship?

There is no good reason not to answer the census, whether one is here legally or illegally. As the Census Bureau points out, "It is against the law for any Census Bureau employee to disclose or publish any census or survey information that identifies an individual or business . . . the FBI and

other government entities do not have the legal right to access this information." Furthermore, the proposed question is about citizenship, not legal status. This question should not be a deterrent to participation for anyone.

But let's say for the sake of argument that some illegal immigrants do decide not to participate in the 2020 Census. So what? Illegal immigrants are here *illegally*. If they choose to violate U.S. law yet again by refusing to participate in the census because of a perfectly legitimate question about citizenship, that's not the U.S. government's fault.

Click here for the full op-ed.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Subject: Rosenstein memo to Mueller proves special counsel probe into Manafort far beyond scope of Sessions' original recusal

Why did Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein order Special Counsel Robert Mueller to investigate Paul Manafort for his work for Viktor Yanukovych in Ukraine in the 2000s, which had nothing to do with the election?

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

April 04, 2018

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Rosenstein memo to Mueller proves special counsel probe into Manafort far beyond scope of Sessions' original recusal

Attorney General Jeff Sessions recused himself from any matters pertaining to the 2016 election campaign. So why did Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein order Special Counsel Robert Mueller to investigate Paul Manafort for his work for Viktor Yanukovych in Ukraine in the 2000s, which had nothing to do with the election?

President Trump must force Congress to quit taking the military hostage in budget negotiations

The U.S. military is the strongest most lethal force the world has ever known. There is not one square foot of space on this planet the U.S. cannot launch a strike against. However, for all its strength and power the U.S. military's greatest weakness is Congress. It has become a yearly tradition for the military to be held hostage in the budget process. The constant Congressional games are having a detrimental effect on the military and have cost lives. President Trump was extremely unhappy about signing the omnibus late last month and vowed never to do it again. If the President wishes to keep that vow, he must pressure Congress to go through the regular appropriations process and remove the military hostage Congress uses to push the budget through.

Mulvaney Brings Law and Order to the CFPB

Mick Mulvaney, the acting director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, is bringing responsibility and transparency to his agency – so of course he is under attack by Democrats. From the beginning, Democrats tried to block Mulvaney's appointment. Richard Cordray, the first director of the CFPB, resigned last year and attempted to appoint his own successor, Leandra English, who filed

a lawsuit to keep the job. Though federal judges have thus far supported President Trump's authority to name an interim director of the agency, English's lawsuit continues. But Mulvaney's appointment is constitutional. Over 100 congressional Republicans filed an amicus brief last month arguing that Trump has the legal authority to appoint Mulvaney.

President Trump should stand by EPA Administrator Pruitt

Rick Manning stated, "Scott Pruitt's tenure as Administrator of the EPA is one of the best examples of a successful cabinet level pick by President Donald Trump. It is normal that those who are attempting to defend the Obama EPA's radical stranglehold on our economy would subject Pruitt to a constant barrage of complaints to hamper the deregulatory agenda that is ending the war on coal."

Rosenstein memo to Mueller proves special counsel probe into Manafort far beyond scope of Sessions' original recusal

By Robert Romano

On March 2, 2017, Attorney General Jeff Sessions recused himself "from any existing or future investigations of any matters related in any way to the campaigns for President of the United States."

Arguably, as far as recusals go, it was too broad and did not narrowly list what specific part of the campaign that Sessions would have an appearance of impropriety. But there it is.

This led eventually to the appointment of Robert Mueller as special counsel by Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein on May 17, 2017 to investigate, mainly, "any links and/or coordination between the Russian government and individuals associated with the campaign of President Donald Trump..."

Since then, Mueller has produced several indictments, including some that appear far outside the scope of Sessions' original recusal.

For example, former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn was indicted for supposedly lying to investigators about a conversation he had with Russian Ambassador Sergei Kisylak in Dec. 2016, which was after the election. The interview with FBI agents happened in Jan. 2017.

If Sessions was only recused from "matters related in any way to the campaigns for President of the United States," then how could have Mueller delivered an indictment for actions after the campaign was over? Flynn's conversation had nothing to do with the campaign, it was reportedly centered on Russia's potential response to new sanctions that had been slapped on Moscow by the lame duck Obama administration.

Then there's the fallacious idea that by firing former FBI Director James Comey in May 2017 — on Rosenstein's recommendation and something the President absolutely has the authority to do with or without a reason — President Trump was somehow obstructing the investigation into Flynn. Again, the Flynn matter was after the election, and the Comey firing well after it. Nothing about Sessions' original statement indicates he was recused from these matters. In fact, the firing occurred after the recusal, not before.

Somehow, though, it all, reportedly based on leaks probably from Mueller's team, has come under Mueller's umbrella. It hasn't a thing to do with the campaign or even Russia's efforts to interfere with the election. Not even close.

Another example were the indictments of one-time Trump campaign manager Paul Manafort and his associate Richard Gates.

In the 31-page Manafort and Gates indictment, Russia was mentioned four times, naming Manafort's company, Davis Manafort Partners, Inc., which had some staff in Russia, and that Manafort's client, former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych and his Party of the Regions was "pro-Russia," and that after the civil war began in Ukraine, Yanukovych fled to Russia.

There was no mention of the Russian government or any individuals working for the Russian government. Nor any mention of the 2016 election campaign for President Trump.

Now we know why, based on an Aug. 2017 memo from Rosenstein to Mueller, outlining what he was to investigate. In addition to investigating whether Manafort "[c]omitted a crime or crimes by colluding with Russian government officials with respect to the Russian government's efforts to interfere with the 2016 election for President of the United States, in violation of United States law," which would have been within the scope of the Sessions recusal, Mueller was also tasked to see if Manafort "[c]omitted a crime or crimes arising out of payments he received from the Ukrainian government before and during the tenure of President Viktor Yanukovych."

Mueller relies on the fact that Manafort was Trump's campaign manager in 2016 even though the conduct leading back to Ukraine predated 2016. He never alleges any definitive link between Manafort's work as campaign manager and the crimes for which he is charged. There are potential

Russian connections alluded to, but none directly to the Russian government. It is clear that Manafort's work in Ukraine before 2016 was not tied the Russian government's alleged efforts to interfere with the 2016 elections, because they couldn't have been.

In the Rosenstein memo, there is no pretense that the Ukraine matter had a thing to do with the 2016 election campaign. Manafort worked for Yanukovych from about 2005 through 2014, including Yanukovych's 2010 electoral win in Ukraine. It had nothing to do with the U.S. elections. It could not have anticipated Trump would run for President or that Manafort would get the campaign manager job. Thus it was always beyond the scope of the recusal by Attorney General Sessions.

Now, this may be a matter that the Justice Department had been pursuing for years, but there was no reason it could not have been giving to a U.S. Attorney operating under normal order with oversight by the Attorney General. Did Jeff Sessions have business in Ukraine? No, of course not. Nor did Sessions mention Ukraine as a matter he needed to recuse himself from.

Manafort's lawyers to their credit are fighting this very issue in federal court, but it shouldn't take a federal judge's order to do what should be handled administratively at the Justice Department.

It is clear now that Mueller is investigating those things that Rosenstein has directed him to. So the fault with going beyond the scope of the original recusal lays squarely at the feet of Rosenstein. That does not absolve Mueller of course. He has delivered indictments that similarly go beyond the scope of the recusal.

The question of course is what can be done about what has become a wide-ranging fishing expedition with no end in sight? Sessions should again, clarify that the scope of his recusal included matters specifically pertaining to the 2016 election. Anything not included in that ought to either be reassigned to a U.S. Attorney to handle, or dismissed entirely.

Everyone can see where this is headed. And it would be a grave miscarriage of justice to allow Rosenstein and Mueller to expand what was a broad recusal for the 2016 election even further, although not broad enough to capture what they really wanted to investigate which was Trump and Flynn in 2017, into something it wasn't.

So far, the Washington Post is reporting that Mueller has told Trump's legal team that Trump is not a criminal target of the investigation. That is worth considering although if that turns out not to be true, then this would be about undoing the results of the 2016 elections when you get right down to it. An undemocratic coup that has no place in America. Mueller would be alleging crimes the special counsel does not even have the authority to investigate after the election.

Attorney General Sessions can fix this, but he has to clarify what his recusal included, and what it did not.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

President Trump must force Congress to quit taking the military hostage in budget negotiations

By Printus LeBlanc

The U.S. military is the strongest most lethal force the world has ever known. There is not one square foot of space on this planet the U.S. cannot launch a strike against. However, for all its strength and power the U.S. military's greatest weakness is Congress. It has become a yearly tradition for the military to be held hostage in the budget process. The constant Congressional games are having a detrimental effect on the military and have cost lives. President Donald Trump was extremely unhappy about signing the omnibus late last month and vowed never to do it again. If the President wishes to keep that vow, he must pressure Congress to go through the regular appropriations process and remove the military hostage Congress uses to push the budget through.

The U.S. Constitution gives Congress the power of the purse. Article 1, Section 9, Clause 7 of the sacred document states, "No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time." This has turned into what is known as the "Appropriations Process."

Each year the Executive Branch submits a budget proposal between the first Monday in January and the first Monday in February. Following the President's proposal, which Congress usually ignores, the House and Senate begin their process which begins with a budget resolution, moves to authorizations, and finally appropriations. In the end, there is supposed to be 12 appropriations bills

covering all spending of the federal government. The bills are then supposed to go to the President for signature and voila, the government is funded.

However, when the funding bills do not pass, a Continuing Resolution (CR) is passed to keep the federal government open. The CR does nothing more than keep the government funded at the previously funded levels. It may not seem like a big deal, but the continuous CRs are having a deadly effect on the military.

Secretary of Defense James Mattis sent a letter to the Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) laying out the damage a CR will do to the military. In the 6-page letter Mattis outlined the harmful effects a CR has, with the primary effects being felt on the following:

> **Training**: Impacts begin immediately, with the first 30-days of a CR. By 90 days, the lost training is unrecoverable due to subsequent scheduled training events. These training loses reduce the effectiveness of subsequent training events in FY18 and in subsequent years.
>
> **Readiness and Maintenance**: The impacts of a CR are felt immediately, and grow exponentially over time. Although maintenance impacts can be mitigated for some activities operating under a 3-month CR, in areas, such as Navy Ship Depot Maintenance, funding shortfalls result in delays in Naval vessel availability, which may affect subsequent deployment rotations.
>
> **Personnel**: The uncertainty imposed during a 3-month CR causes most hiring actions and recruitment to be curtailed, and vacancies to then be re-announced once an appropriation is enacted. This disruption leaves critical gaps in the workforce skill set and causes unnecessary angst among military and civil servants, making the government a far-less attractive option to the highest-skilled potential candidates.

President Trump has seen these problems up close. Anyone that paid attention to him in the election and since he won, knows his deep devotion to the military. The swamp also knows that and used it against him. That is why the swamp creatures have continually bundled the spending together in an omnibus with the military spending increases the President requested, making it tough not to sign the bill.

The problem is voting in the Senate. Because of antiquated rules, that are not mandated in the Constitution, appropriations bills require 60 votes to pass. The rule allows the party in the minority to declare they will filibuster, without actually launching a filibuster, to stop legislation. A lazy filibuster if you will. So, the Senate could be split 59-41, and the party with 41 Senators controls the Senate. There is nothing about this rule in the Constitution, and it is nothing more than an excuse to stop working.

Congress has the power to fix the problem. Congress must begin the appropriations process immediately and put the military funding bill up for a vote first; we only have six short months until the next funding deadline. The President has the most far-reaching bully pulpit in the world, and he must use it to pressure Congress. A few tweets from the President can send shockwaves through D.C., and a few well-timed tweets about Congress not doing their job could put the pressure on, especially during primary season.

There are 10 Senators up for reelection in states President Trump won. Put pressure on them to vote against or filibuster the defense appropriations. Make a Senator stand up for dozens of hours and tell the American people why they should not fund the military first.

It is time for Congress to prioritize the appropriations process. Congress is asking the military to put their lives on the line around the globe. At least they could give them the funds for the training and equipment needed to do the mission being asked of them.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor for Americans for Limited Government.

REAL CLEAR POLITICS

Mulvaney Brings Law and Order to the CFPB

By Rick Manning

Mick Mulvaney, the acting director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, is bringing responsibility and transparency to his agency – so of course he is under attack by Democrats.

The brainchild of Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), the CFPB purportedly exists to shield consumers from fraud. In reality, Democrats created a powerful rogue agency that they could use to control and reward their political friends. The agency was given largely unchecked enforcement authority and spent taxpayer money recklessly. Now that Democrats have lost the keys to that castle, they are making baseless accusations that Mulvaney is acting lawlessly, projecting onto him what they did to the agency. However, Mulvaney is trying to reform the CFPB into what its mission actually is: to protect consumers.

From the beginning, Democrats tried to block Mulvaney's appointment. Richard Cordray, the first director of the CFPB, resigned last year and attempted to appoint his own successor, Leandra English, who filed a lawsuit to keep the job. Though federal judges have thus far supported President Trump's authority to name an interim director of the agency, English's lawsuit continues. But Mulvaney's appointment is constitutional. Over 100 congressional Republicans filed an amicus brief last month arguing that Trump has the legal authority to appoint Mulvaney.

Just as his appointment was constitutional, Mulvaney is trying to make his agency operate in a constitutional fashion by making sure its actions stay within the realm of its authority and its operating costs stay within an appropriate budget.

Among many examples of reckless spending under its previous director, the CFPB spent over $215 million to renovate its headquarters. On his very first day as acting director of the agency, Mulvaney told the Daily Caller News Foundation that he would seek to rein in the soaring renovation costs.

"My objective in managing this agency is to make it more accountable, efficient, and effective in fulfilling its statutory obligations," Mulvaney said. "Because Congress does not control the bureau's budget through appropriations, we are left to budget ourselves without oversight, and every dollar we draw from the Federal Reserve is one less dollar available to pay down the deficit."

While examining his agency's budget in January, Mulvaney determined the bureau would need $145 million for its second quarter operating costs, but it already had $177 million in a "reserve fund" created by his predecessor. So Mulvaney told then-Fed Chair Janet Yellen that the CFPB would not require any additional operating funds for its second quarter.

In a letter to Yellen, Mulvaney suggested that the Fed instead direct those funds to the Treasury to reduce the deficit.

"While this approximately $145 million may not make much of a dent in the deficit, the men and women at the Bureau are proud to do their part to be responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars," he wrote.

Mulvaney's actions to trim the CFPB's budget and control its regulatory actions have led to accusations from Democrats that he is attempting to shut down the bureau, but he is doing no such thing. Mulvaney has stated that he has "no intention of shutting down the bureau" and that the law requires the CFPB to "enforce consumer-protection laws, and we will continue to do so under my watch."

Democrats, including Warren, have also baselessly accused the acting director of acting unethically by dropping investigations into some payday lenders and delaying a new rule regulating them due to campaign contributions he received from the industry when he was in Congress.

Mulvaney responded to these charges in a remarkable letter. "I reject your insinuation — repeated three times in as many pages — that my actions as Acting Director are based on considerations other than the careful examination of the law and the facts particular" to any matter, he wrote, adding:

"Prior to your letter, I would have never thought to consider, for instance, whether your vote against repealing the Bureau's arbitration rule was influenced by campaign donations you may have received from trial lawyers or other parties who stood to financially gain from the rule. Perhaps I should reconsider. Instead, shall we agree that such accusations are baseless and discuss policy matters as responsible officers holding a public trust?"

Contrary to these claims from Democrats, Mulvaney is the reformer CFPB needs, bringing both law and order to the bureau. Mulvaney is scaling the agency back to enforce the law as appropriate, rather than to "push the envelope," as his predecessor described the agency's actions. He is focused on fiscal responsibility and an equitable enforcement process that balances regulatory costs with need for consumer protections. He will ensure the agency advocates for consumers rather than the Democrats' agenda.

Rick Manning is president of Americans for Limited Government.

President Trump should stand by EPA Administrator Pruitt

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning issued the following statement urging President Donald Trump to stand by EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt:

"Scott Pruitt's tenure as Administrator of the EPA is one of the best examples of a successful cabinet level pick by President Donald Trump. It is normal that those who are attempting to defend the Obama EPA's radical stranglehold on our economy would subject Pruitt to a constant barrage of complaints to hamper the deregulatory agenda that is ending the war on coal. Reports from the agency that Pruitt has been subjected to a dramatic increase in threats to his and his family's safety demonstrates the kind of courage and commitment it takes to unwind the radical environmentalist agenda. President Trump has been right in the past when he regularly and openly praised Pruitt for his dedication, hard work and commitment to restoring balance to America's environmental regulations. Now there are those who are attempting to besmirch Pruitt's reputation through attacks about his Washington, D.C. living arrangements. Let's be clear. Pruitt received approval from career civil servants in charge of the EPA ethics office that are now being questioned by partisans with a radical agenda.

"President Trump knows better than anyone what it is like to be falsely attacked by people with an agenda and how the anti-Trump news media will accuse first and look for the facts later. Trump should embrace Pruitt as a man of integrity and empower him to continue doing his outstanding work

at the EPA, carrying out the Trump agenda to end the war on energy development and make America competitive again."

Click here for the full press release.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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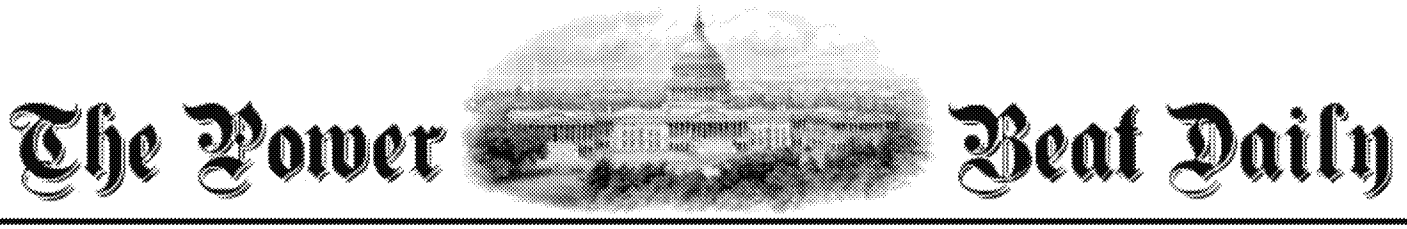
Subject: If Congress wants war on Syria, maybe they should act. After all, that is their job

Maybe those wanting the President to act should take a look at the Constitution



All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

April 10, 2018

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If Congress wants war on Syria, maybe they should act. After all, that is their job.

On April 3, President Donald Trump told the nation he was considering pulling U.S. troops out of Syria after Islamic State was defeated, as the President campaigned on not getting the U.S. into unnecessary foreign wars. This angered many in D.C. as they were hoping for an open-ended conflict and regime change. Then, according to reports, the Syrian regime used chemical weapons against its population again. Before the bodies were even cold, D.C. was blaming the President for the Assad attack and calling for him to take action against the regime. Maybe those wanting the President to act should take a look at the Constitution. Congress and only Congress has the power to declare war in Article I, Section 8.

Cartoon: Golden Gate

California opens the gates to illegal immigration.

Facebook faces attack for not being anti-conservative enough

The reason Facebook has thrived as a platform was because users could generate their own content and promote it. It's a great place to do promotions. But groups that might normally defend Facebook on free market grounds are now silent as the regulators are getting ready to pounce, because they feel they have been treated unfairly by Facebook because of political bias. Now they have no friends.

Rosenstein should be fired after 'inexcusable' FBI raid on Trump personal attorney

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning: "It is beyond comprehension how Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein would have allowed the U.S. Attorney in Manhattan and the FBI based in Manhattan to become pawns in Mueller's Constitution-destroying game. Rod Rosenstein should not still have a job by the end of this week. This prosecutorial insanity to has to end."

Hans A. von Spakovsky: Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg should answer these questions when he testifies before Congress

"When Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg testifies before Congress Tuesday and Wednesday he will have plenty of explaining to do to answer a torrent of criticism that has been leveled at his company in recent weeks. We've compiled a list of 10 of the most important questions we think lawmakers should ask Zuckerberg when he is scheduled to testify at a joint meeting of the Senate Judiciary and Commerce Committees on Tuesday and then before the House Commerce and Energy Committee on Wednesday."

If Congress wants action on Syria, maybe they should act. After all, that is their job.

By Printus LeBlanc

On April 3, President Donald Trump told the nation he was considering pulling U.S. troops out of Syria after Islamic State was defeated, as the President campaigned on not getting the U.S. into unnecessary foreign wars.

"As far as Syria is concerned, our primary mission in terms of that was getting rid of ISIS. We've almost completed that task, and we'll be making a decision very quickly in coordination with others as to what we'll do… I want to get out. I want to bring our troops home," Trump said.

This angered many in D.C. as they were hoping for an open-ended conflict and regime change. Then, according to reports, the Syrian regime used chemical weapons against its population again. Before the bodies were even cold, D.C. was blaming the President for the Assad attack and calling for him to take action against the regime. Maybe those wanting the President to act should take a look at the Constitution.

Congress and only Congress has the power to declare war. Article I, Section 8, of the Constitution states: "The Congress shall have power…To declare war, grant letters of marque and reprisal, and make rules concerning captures on land and water." Seems clear, only Congress can declare war.

This begs the question, why are members of Congress asking the President to go to war with Syria, for which there is no authorization, without doing its constitutionally mandated job? A search on Congress.gov shows there is no bill calling for war to be declared on Syria or the regime of Bashar al-Assad. A few bills calling for going after Islamic State in Syria, but conducting regime change in Damascus. Not one Member of Congress, from either side of the aisle, complaining about the President's possible withdraw from Syria, has introduced legislation making regime change legal. If you believe in the mission so much, shouldn't you put your money your mouth is?

An argument can be made the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) covered the President's actions against Islamic State. The AUMF authorized the use of the military by the President to pursue terrorist organizations that planned authorized, committed, or aided the group that carried out 9/11. ISIS is a terrorist group split off from al-Qaeda, the group responsible from the terrorist attacks on 9/11.

But, the Assad regime is not part of ISIS. Yes, the Assad regime is led by horrible war criminals who deserve to die, but there is no authorization to remove them, or permanently station troops in Syria. If certain Senators believe the U.S. military should depose Assad or keep bases in Syria, they should introduce legislation stating as much.

Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) agrees, and just today stated, "The use of chemical weapons absolutely requires a response from the United States," Sen. Lee said. "But if that response is going to include military force, the President of the United States should come to Congress and ask for authorization before military force is used." Lee is right. There is no such authorization. Congress would have to pass one.

Not only are some Members of Congress asking the President to go to war without doing its constitutionally mandated job, they are asking the President to send the military to war after spending almost a decade destroying the military. The U.S. military is in tatters and it is a direct result of Congress.

The mainstream media might not be paying attention, but the U.S. military has had a rash of aviation crashes. In the last three weeks alone, six crashes have led to 16 deaths. From fiscal year 2013 through 2017 at least 133 members of the military were killed in aviation mishaps, according to Military Times. To give an idea of how high that number is, the U.S. military lost 278 members in Afghanistan in the same time frame.

Air Force Gen. Herbert Carlisle, former head of Air Combat Command, blamed the rise in mishaps and deaths on severe defense cuts. When talking to the Military Times Carlisle stated, "We are reaping the benefits — or the tragedies — that we got into back in sequestration." Carlisle continued about the cuts discussing the increase in accidents stating it was "actually a lagging indicator. By the time you're having accidents, and the accident rates are increasing, then you've already gone down a path."

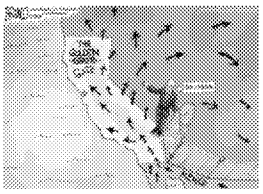
Passing one budget, six months late mind you, does not fix the problem. It will take the military years to get out of the hole Congress dug for them. Pilots need to increase training to make up for missed flight hours. It takes time to manufacture the needed aircraft parts, and it takes an inordinate amount of time to refit, repair, and build new navy ships. Just because you gave them the money to fix what you broke, that doesn't mean it is magically fixed.

Congress, you cannot have it both ways. You do not get to complain the President is not going to war when it is your duty to declare war. You do not get to underfund the military, leaving readiness levels dangerously low, while trying to send our men and women into combat poorly trained with subpar equipment. Congress should try doing its job first. There is nothing worse than someone complaining about the job someone else is doing, a job they want, when they are failing at their job.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

Cartoon: Golden Gate

By A.F. Branco



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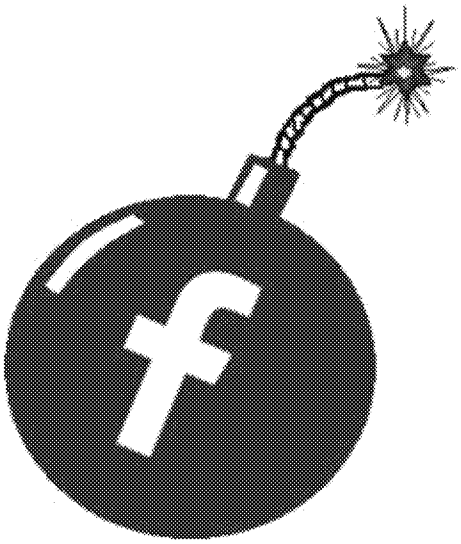
Facebook faces attack for not being anti-conservative enough



By Robert Romano

Diamond and Silk, two pro-Trump commentators, have scored a significant concession from Facebook after the social media site labeled their videos "unsafe to the community." The pair say their social media traffic was doing great but that suddenly it had been throttled in recent months, with many users no longer able see the pair's content on their newsfeeds.

After months of attempting to reach out to the social media giant, they finally received a reply, stating that their content had been deemed "unsafe," causing the video creators, Lynnette "Diamond" Hardaway and Rochelle "Silk" Richardson, to come forward. But Facebook may finally be changing its tune.

A Facebook spokesperson told Fox News, "We are aware of this issue. We are reaching out to the creators of Diamond & Silk to try and resolve this matter." That was after the pai appeared on Fox to raise the alarm bell over the throttling.

The concession stands in stark contrast to how Facebook dealt with its labeling Breitbart.com with a Wikipedia description that it is a "far-right" news outlet that is "intentionally misleading," a description that now appears on every post Breitbart puts on Facebook like a scarlet letter. It has no resemblance to reality. Breitbart is fairly mainstream publication where conservatives can go to get news. One might disagree with what they put out there, but they are accountable to facts and have a thorough editorial process. Yes, it publishes opinion pieces, but those are held to similar standards and there isn't a newspaper that doesn't have editorials. They have done nothing to be labeled political extremists by Facebook, but there it is.

In the meantime, Facebook hosts pages for Antifa groups all over the world, a group whose stated tactic is to commit political violence against its opponents. They bear no such moniker as "violent" or "unsafe" or even "far-left" even as the group is under active criminal investigation for its many attacks.

There is absolutely a double-standard at Facebook. Looking elsewhere, just look at how it has handled fallout from Cambridge Analytica, which was accused of "harvesting" data from Facebook users to support President Donald Trump's campaign in 2016, as if that was unusual.

In truth, as expertly reported by Chris Kavanagh at Medium.com, Cambridge developed an app, a personality quiz, that took advantage of a Facebook *feature* that allowed app developers to also get

information on the friends of people who downloaded the app. It was called "friends permission." Thousands of app developers were using it without much controversy for years.

Facebook eventually discontinued the practice in 2015 but by then, the firms that had already gathered data would have retained it.

But it was not much different than the way websites use advertiser cookies to gather data on website visitors. Some sites will even refuse to serve up the content unless you switch off your ad-blocker. That's because they are gathering data for ad purposes. They are able to customize that data when advertisers purchase ads on their sites that can target based on user interests, say, what stories you read, the same exact thing Facebook does, and arguably with far less transparency.

So why is Facebook being targeted for something app developers were allowed to and even encouraged to do for years as a part of the social media company's API and is increasingly common on websites across the Internet, not just Facebook?

And why has Facebook done such a poor job of defending itself against what appears to be a scurrilous attack?

The outward appearance is that the only reason Facebook is being targeted with potential regulatory action is because data was supposedly used to help President Trump win the election. But who cares? That's not a crime.

Similarly, here are thousands of apps made for Facebook that gather and are still gathering data.

In the meantime, that data is used by all political actors. Right now, it's easy-peasy to just buy an ad and target it to whoever you want. You don't need an app. Want to target Donald Trump supporters on Facebook in 10 states? No problem. Just buy an ad and target it to followers of the President's page. Want to go at Bernie Sanders supporters instead? Sure.

That's just the basic functionality of its ads manager, and there's nothing wrong with it. In fact, followers of non-political pages can be targeted with political ads. They never "signed up" for political ads, but there is not a dimension or characteristic that cannot be targeted with an ad. For example, want to target Millennials who like Apple with a message about tech policy? Go for it.

Carol Davidsen, one-time Director of Integration & Media Targeting at Obama for America, tweeted in March how Facebook allowed the 2012 Obama campaign to do things with its data that no one else would have been allowed to: "Facebook was surprised we were able to suck out the whole social graph, but they didn't stop us once they realized that was what we were doing… They came to office in the days following election recruiting [and] were very candid that they allowed us to do things they wouldn't have allowed someone else to do because they were on our side."

Was that an in-kind contribution to the Obama campaign? Even if it was, presuming the campaign actually got access to things nobody else is allowed to access, so far, no allegations have been leveled against the Obama campaign for "harvesting" data. Or that Facebook violated user privacy by using that data to target Obama supporters' friends.

Because it's a silly allegation. Everyone who was using Facebook's API at the time could target friends of users.

In short, the only apparent reason that Facebook is in the regulatory crosshairs is not because its data was used politically — it's always been used politically by Democrats and Republicans — but because Facebook's data was used on behalf of President Trump in 2016.

It's being attacked for not being anti-conservative enough. Not anti-Trump enough.

The data might not have even been any good. The Trump campaign ended up using RNC data for voter identification, not Cambridge. But there you have it. They're Republicans! Get 'em!

And Facebook appears to be capitulating.

A media mob is attempting to bully Facebook into acting even more to shut down conservative pages and groups. Diamond and Silk may be achieving some small yet important concessions right now for their own page, but it is clear that there is a wider effort afoot to censor conservative voices everywhere on social media platforms, not just Facebook, with shadow-banning and other types of throttling.

Facebook must resist that. The reason it has thrived as a platform was because users could generate their own content and promote it. It's a great place to do promotions. But groups that might normally defend Facebook on free market grounds are now silent as the regulators are getting ready to pounce, because they feel they have been treated unfairly by Facebook because of political bias. Now they have no friends.

Facebook would be far better served by acting as a neutral actor politically. It need not filter out politics. Just stop playing favorites. Because at the end of the day, Facebook is an ad company, and in a free market setting on the Internet, there's nothing wrong with targeting ads toward individuals based on characteristics selected by the advertiser.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Rosenstein should be fired after 'inexcusable' FBI raid on Trump personal attorney

April 9, 2018, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement calling for Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein to be fired after the FBI raided the office of President Donald Trump's personal attorney, Michael Cohen:

"It is inexcusable that Special Counsel Robert Mueller would recommend that President Donald Trump's attorney-client privilege be violated in one more example of the win-at-any-cost attitude by this rogue prosecutor. It is beyond comprehension how Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein would have allowed the U.S. Attorney in Manhattan and the FBI based in Manhattan to become pawns in Mueller's Constitution-destroying game. Rod Rosenstein should not still have a job by the end of this week. This prosecutorial insanity has to end."

To view online: https://getliberty.org/2018/04/rosenstein-should-be-fired-after-inexcusable-fbi-raid-on-trump-personal-attorney/

ALG Editor's Note: In the following opinion piece from Fox News, Hans von Spakovsky compiled a list of 10 questions that should be asked of Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg when he testifies before Congress:

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg should answer these questions when he testifies before Congress

By Hans A. von Spakovsky

When Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg testifies before Congress Tuesday and Wednesday he will have plenty of explaining to do to answer a torrent of criticism that has been leveled at his company in recent weeks.

We've compiled a list of 10 of the most important questions we think lawmakers should ask Zuckerberg when he is scheduled to testify at a joint meeting of the Senate Judiciary and Commerce Committees on Tuesday and then before the House Commerce and Energy Committee on Wednesday. We list these below – but first, here's some background.

Facebook's handling of its users' personal data has sparked privacy concerns as well as questions about how others – including political campaigns – have used that data.

Zuckerberg was invited to testify before Congress after multiple sources reported that the political consulting firm Cambridge Analytica gained access to as many as 87 million Facebook profiles. Cambridge Analytica allegedly used that information improperly after it was hired by the Donald Trump presidential campaign. This raises two questions.

First, what information did Cambridge Analytica acquire and how did it come by that information? Zuckerberg has indicated publicly that he knows the answer to these questions, so Congress should have no trouble sorting that out.

Cambridge Analytica used the information to craft sophisticated, targeted political ads. And that raises the second – and far more interesting – question: Did Cambridge Analytica's actions constitute a novel use of Facebook user information, or is this precisely how the social media company *intends* the data to be used by its paying customers?

What members of Congress and the general public need to keep in mind is that nothing is free. While individuals who use Facebook don't have to pay for it, Facebook makes money – and lots of it – using their information.

Facebook's net income was nearly $16 billion last year. The company sells advertising to commercial clients seeking to target Facebook users based on profiles derived from those users' online activities.

That very same ability – to identify and reach users most likely to be receptive to a client's product or service – was valuable not just to the Trump campaign, but also to President Obama's 2012 re-election effort. Indeed, it was the Obama campaign that pioneered the use of such data to win elections.

In light of this, here are 10 of the most important questions that we suggest lawmakers ask Zuckerberg when he appears before Congress:

1. Mr. Zuckerberg, you recently said: "At Facebook, we are squarely in the camp of the companies that work hard to charge you less and provide a free service that everyone can use." If users of your platform are not the source of your income, who is?

2. Specifically, what services do you provide to your paying customers and how much access do you give them to the data of Facebook users?

3. How do political campaigns leverage your services, and what are your rules governing campaign-sponsored advertisements and access to individual Facebook user data? What will be the impact of new rules you announced Friday to require people to reveal their identities and verify their location before they are allowed to buy political or "issue" ads?

4. Carol Davidsen, the director of data integration and media analytics for President Obama's 2012 re-election campaign, said: "Facebook was surprised we were able to suck out the whole social graph, but they didn't stop us once they realized what we were doing." She noted that "they (Facebook) were very candid that they allowed us to do things they wouldn't have allowed someone else to do because *they were on our side*." Did Facebook, in fact, let the Obama campaign use Facebook data in ways that were outside of the company's normal and acceptable use standards? If so, why? Who at Facebook made this decision?

5. Did the Mitt Romney presidential campaign receive access to the same information and company expertise provided to the Obama campaign? If not, why not? Who at Facebook made this decision?

6. You and other Facebook executives tell users that "we do not sell your data." Are you asserting that all marketing and targeting data that is sold to commercial customers is anonymized and generalized so that no individual Facebook user can be specifically targeted or marketed to?

7. Doesn't the Obama campaign's use of your information to identify and target individual so-called "persuadables" on Facebook contradict the above claim?

8. Did the way that the Obama campaign used Facebook's data influence your decision to change your data use policies in 2014? If so, how?

9. Does Facebook now, or has it ever, deliberately collected the content of users' phone calls and/or messages via any of your company's applications or services? If so, what have you done with that data?

10. Why have you suggested that the government may need to regulate you and other tech companies? Why don't you simply adopt the practices you believe are necessary to protect the privacy of your users without requiring government coercion?

Modern technology is changing how we communicate. Those changes bring major advantages, but they also raise serious questions. One of those questions is: How much privacy do users of a social

media platform like Facebook have a right to expect when they post personal information to share with their families, their friends and the world at large?

Get the full story here.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Subject: Omni-bust: Congress fails to secure border as President Trump risks heading into 2020 without any new concrete wall being built

The President has a rapidly diminishing window of opportunity to get the wall built. It may be now or never.

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 23, 2018

Permission to republish original op-eds and cartoons granted.

Omni-bust: Congress fails to secure border as President Trump risks heading into 2020 without any new concrete wall being built

A year late, Congress has finally approved the President's supplemental request to begin construction of the southern border wall at $1.6 billion. But because Congress did not get started with the supplemental last year, the odds they were going to get to full funding for the wall for fiscal year 2018, that is, spending levels for Oct. 1, 2017 through Sept. 30, 2018, dropped markedly. Now, a year later, the southern border wall is still not fully funded, and time is running out to get it done before the midterm elections, after which Republicans might no longer be in control of Congress. What are they waiting for?

Scott Pruitt is bringing transparency to the EPA. Why is the Church of Man-made Climate Change angry about that?

Earlier this week Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Scott Pruitt announced a policy change that is driving several "scientists" mad. Pruitt announced the EPA would no longer use "science" from outside groups that refuse to share data. This has become a problem for the agency because previous administrations would receive reports from outside groups and make decisions based on the report without reviewing the data. Any data scientists will tell you junk data going in means junk results coming out.

Mollie Hemingway: McCabe's Bogus Witch Hunt of Jeff Sessions Confirms Worst Fears About FBI/DOJ Politicization

Thousands upon thousands of media reports over the last year and a half have intimated, suggested, or flat-out asserted that President Donald Trump is a traitor who colluded with Russia to steal the 2016 election from Hillary Clinton. What this widely held theory lacks in evidence, its diehard

supporters in the media and other anti-Trump bastions make up for with their faith-filled conviction of its truth.

Omni-bust: Congress fails to secure border as President Trump risks heading into 2020 without any new concrete wall being built

By Robert Romano

Click here to tell Congress to build the wall now!

A year late, Congress has finally approved the President's supplemental request to begin construction of the southern border wall at $1.6 billion.

The supplemental was requested in March 2017. It was supposed to be included in the May 2017 omnibus spending bill affecting spending levels for Oct. 1, 2016 through Sept. 30, 2017.

This would have paved the way for the full funding for the wall being included this year.

Unfortunately, it didn't happen. Because Congress did not get started with the supplemental last year, the odds they were going to get to full funding for the wall for fiscal year 2018, that is, spending levels for Oct. 1, 2017 through Sept. 30, 2018, dropped markedly.

Now those who were warning of precisely this outcome have been vindicated.

This was a broken promise from the get-go. After the election, House Speaker Paul Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell were promising $12 billion to $15 billion for the wall.

On Jan. 27, 2017, Ryan told the American people that, "This is something, [the wall], we want to get on right away. And so we do believe this is urgent. We believe this is one of the most important promises the President made running for office. It's a promise he's going to keep and it's a promise we're going to help him keep."

Ryan added, "We anticipate a supplemental coming from the administration on defense and the border" and "I'm hoping in the first quarter we can get this done. But again, it's getting [Mick Mulvaney confirmed as Office of Management and Budget Director and] up and running so they can send us the supplemental."

Mulvaney was confirmed on Feb. 16 and the supplemental request was proposed on March 14 by Mulvaney and then formally put in on March 16 by President Trump to Speaker Ryan. So far, so good.

Unfortunately for the President and his supporters, by March 30, Ryan had kicked the can down the road, telling CBS News, "The big chunk of money for the wall really is… next fiscal year's appropriations because they literally can't start construction even this quickly." So, the wall, which Ryan had described as "urgent" was now being put off at least a year.

But then that was wrong, too. Instead, the spending bill Congress approved this week only includes the supplemental that was supposed to pass last year. The down payment includes bollard fencing and some levees and some secondary fencing, plus replacing some existing fencing. No concrete walls like the prototypes the President was surveying earlier this month.

Meaning, not only is the wall part of the wall still not fully funded, it's not even been begun. To be fair, the supplemental request last year was always going to be that fencing. It was thought that the wall portion would be passed this year. That was Congress' failure.

It was not for a lack of opportunities. Both the supplemental and the fully funded wall could have been included in the September 2017 continuing resolution. Didn't happen.

Or they have been included in the December 2017 continuing resolution. Didn't happen.

See a pattern? Because Congress waited a year to approve the President's initial down payment on the, wall, the American people are still waiting for the "big chunk of money for the wall" Ryan promised a year ago.

Now, there are one, maybe two vehicles left to get the wall funded before the 2018 midterm Congressional elections. The fiscal year ends Sept. 30. So the full funding for the wall could be done there. But it doesn't seem likely.

Where is the urgency Ryan spoke of? Are Republicans trying to lose the midterms?

Most likely, Congress will just pass a continuing resolution that would put funding into the lame duck period after the election but prior to the swearing in of the next Congress. Assuming Republicans lose the midterms, what will the Democrats' incentive be to allow funding for the wall then?

Meaning it's do or die in September, which literally could be President Trump's last chance to get the wall done. Why? Because come Jan. 2019, he might not be dealing with a Speaker Ryan, but instead, a House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and perhaps even a Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, both of whom are emphatically opposed to any southern border wall.

Optimists might say that Republicans could still get it all done in 2019, because they might not lose either house of Congress this year. Maybe. Unfortunately, the omnibus spending bill also failed to defund sanctuary cities. It did not expand funding for interior enforcement. It passed an expansion of the FBI's criminal background database but did nothing to advance reciprocity and concealed carry. And it spends so much money it is possible we'll see a $1 trillion budget deficit this year.

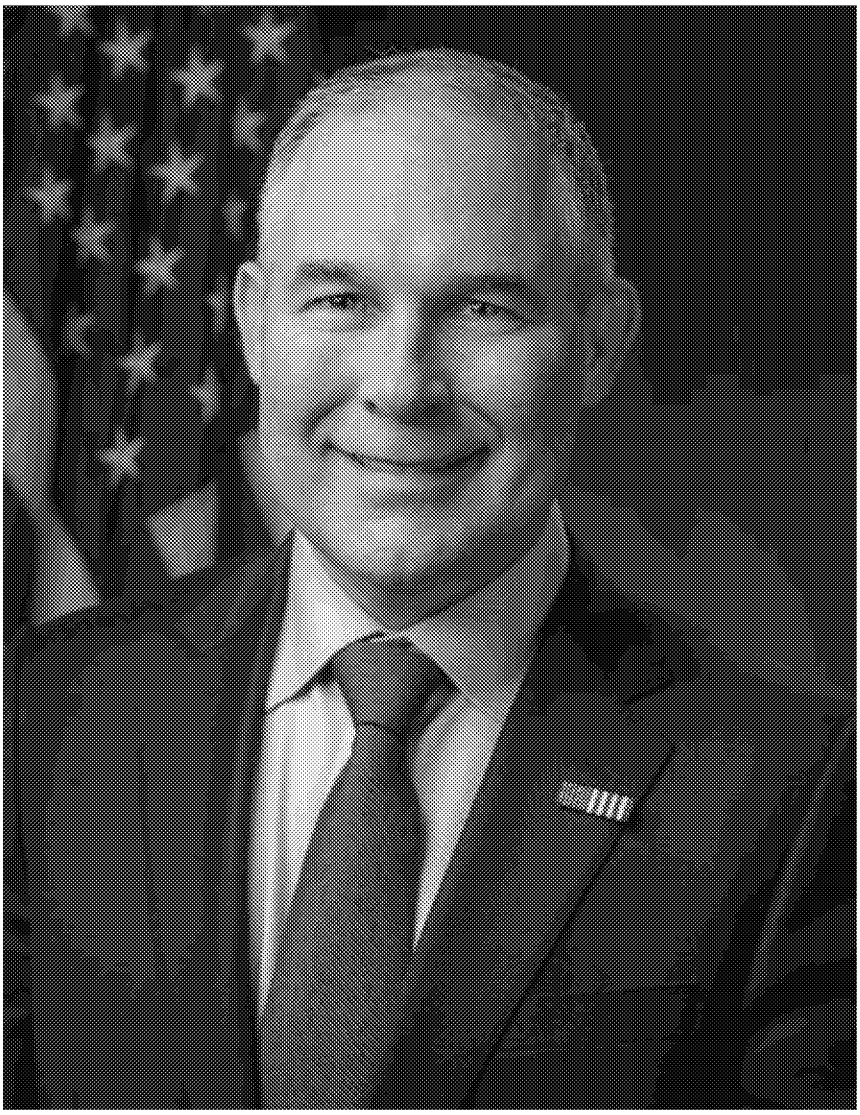
In addressing illegal immigration, protecting gun rights and the $20 trillion national debt, issues Republican voters deeply care about, the record in this Congress is less than stellar. This could make it difficult for Republicans to turn out their voters for the 2018 midterms, which are already tough enough for incumbent parties.

Now, Republicans are less likely to keep the House and Senate in November, making it far less likely that the wall will be ever fully funded. The GOP should be running scared right now. It's their majorities that are stake.

What does all this mean? Headed into 2020, Trump could be coming back to voters empty-handed on his signature campaign promise of the southern border wall. There is still time to get it done by September, but in reality, the President has a rapidly diminishing window of opportunity to get the wall built. It may be now or never.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Scott Pruitt is bringing transparency to the EPA; why is the Church of Man-made Climate Change angry about that?



By Printus LeBlanc

Earlier this week Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Scott Pruitt announced a policy change that is driving several "scientists" mad. Pruitt announced the EPA would no longer use "science" from outside groups that refuse to share data. This has become a problem for the agency because previous administrations would receive reports from outside groups and make decisions based on the report without reviewing the data. Any scientist will be able to tell you junk data going in means junk results coming out.

In an interview given to The Daily Caller, Pruitt stated, "If we use a third party to engage in scientific review or inquiry, and that's the basis of rule-making, you and every American citizen across the country deserve to know what's the data, what's the methodology that was used to reach that conclusion that was the underpinning of what—rules that were adopted by this agency."

Pruitt continued, "When we do contract that science out, sometimes the findings are published; we make that part of our rule-making processes, but then we don't publish the methodology and data that went into those findings because the third party who did the study won't give it to us."

Many climate change alarmists are already howling at the moon because of the decision. They feel like they should be able to submit work to the government without having to show their work, makes you wonder if they've ever taken a high-school math class. What is not up for debate is the enormous weight given to the studies and the potential harm to the U.S. economy the studies present.

Michael Bastasch, reporting for the Daily Signal, notes, "The EPA has primarily relied on two 1990s studies linking fine particulate pollution to premature death. Neither of the studies have made their data public, but the EPA used their findings to justify sweeping air quality regulations." These air quality regulations end up putting thousands of people out of work, without ever having to show the data that led to the regulations.

Another of the more famous "studies" is Michael Mann's hockey stick graph. Al Gore even used it in his film an Inconvenient Truth, you may remember it as a documentary that hasn't gotten one prediction right. The "hockey stick" graph has been used by just about every environmental group in the world to prove man-made climate change. The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has used the graph in the past to justify its barbaric environmental recommendations.

Mann just lost a libel lawsuit in Canada. Mann initiated the suit against Canadian Climatologist, Dr. Tim Ball after Ball, using more reliable and publicly available data, disproved Mann's famous hockey stick graph. In fact, Tim Ball's graph looks nothing like Mann's graph. The twist in the case had Mann failing to meet a court-ordered deadline to hand over the data he used to get his graph. What was Mann trying to hide?

One of the U.S. government's own agencies has even been caught manipulating climate data. A former principal scientist at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA), John Bates, accused his former agency of manipulating data to erase the global warming pause. Bates blasted the agency for the faulty science because he believed the 2015 report was rushed to get President Obama's desk before the Paris Climate Summit. Science that impacts thousands of jobs and millions of families should not be rushed.

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning stated, "transparency about the scientific method used to come to conclusions that have major public policy impacts, is essential in order for others to evaluate and attempt to replicate the findings. Every grade school child learns that for

science to be legitimate, someone doing the exact same process have to come up with the same results. It's called falsifiability. Data that cannot be examined and potentially falsified simply must not be accepted by the government. Transparency is the key to ending politically driven science."

It is important to note, Pruitt is not ruling out the studies. All the studies have to do is show their work. Provide the raw data to ensure there has been no data manipulation to reach a preconceived conclusion. Considering most of the scientists perform the studies using federally funded research grants, the data belongs to the American taxpayer. If the "scientists" have nothing to hide, they should have nothing to fear.

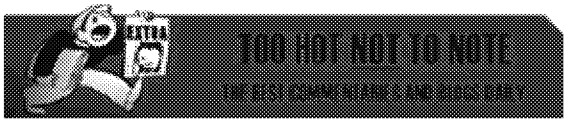
U.S. Rep. Lamar Smith (R-Texas), Chairman of the Space, Science, and Technology Committee, has been fighting the transparency battle for years. Chairman Smith has introduced H.R. 1430, the Honest and Open New EPA Science Treatment Act of 2017. The bill states:

"The Administrator shall not propose, finalize, or disseminate a covered action unless all scientific and technical information relied on to support such covered action is—(A) the best available science; (B) specifically identified; and (C) publicly available online in a manner that is sufficient for independent analysis and substantial reproduction of research results, except that any personally identifiable information, trade secrets, or commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential, shall be redacted prior to public availability."

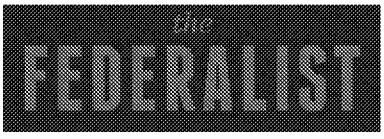
Doesn't seem like too much to ask. Every student from the third grade to a Ph.D. must do the same thing, show your work so that it can potentially be falsified. Otherwise it's not really scientific.

Scott Pruitt is to be commended for this action, but more can be done. The Senate must act to ensure secret science is no longer used to justify job-killing regulations. The House has already done its job; it is now up to the Senate to ensure transparency.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following column from The Federalist, Mollie Hemingway details how the Attorney General was the target of the politicized FBI:



McCabe's Bogus Witch Hunt of Jeff Sessions Confirms Worst Fears About FBI/DOJ Politicization

By Mollie Hemingway

Thousands upon thousands of media reports over the last year and a half have intimated, suggested, or flat-out asserted that President Donald Trump is a traitor who colluded with Russia to steal the 2016 election from Hillary Clinton. What this widely held theory lacks in evidence, its diehard supporters in the media and other anti-Trump bastions make up for with their faith-filled conviction of its truth.

An alternate storyline has been unfolding over that same time. The basic contour is that claims Trump stole the election by treasonously colluding with Russia are the result of a coordinated campaign that was bought and paid for by the Clinton campaign and Democratic National Committee, weaponized by the federal government, and promulgated by a completely compliant media.

This week ABC News reported that former FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe personally authorized a criminal investigation into Attorney General Jeff Sessions over his alleged ties to Russians. Sessions fired McCabe last week after the Department of Justice's (DOJ) Office of Inspector General (IG) reported his misconduct to the FBI's Office of Professional Responsibility. These internal overseers determined McCabe had made unauthorized disclosures to the news media and not been truthful when asked about it on multiple occasions, including when he was under oath. McCabe was long considered one of the bureau leadership's many leakers while still employed.

This latest leak to ABC News was viewed by many in the media as bad for Sessions. For the people who still cling to the Russia conspiracy theory, this news was proof of that theory.

For the people who have trouble believing that Jeff Sessions — yes, that Jeff Sessions — is a Russian agent meriting a criminal investigation by the FBI, the second storyline continues to bear fruit.

How In The World Did This Story Get Going?

Of all the Russian conspiracy angles, the one alleging Sessions is working on behalf of the Russians is easily the most outlandish. The former U.S. senator from Alabama, Sessions is a southern conservative who supported Trump in part because of shared views on the need to fix U.S. immigration policy.

In January 2017, Sessions was undergoing his confirmation hearings in the midst of the initial Red Panic gripping DC. Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) asked Sessions, "Several of the President-elect's nominees or senior advisers have Russian ties. Have you been in contact with anyone connected to any part of the Russian government about the 2016 election, either before or after election day?" Sessions responded "No."

Sen. Al Franken (D-Minn.) asked him a convoluted question about a brand-new CNN report claiming that Obama intelligence chiefs were taking the Steele dossier extremely seriously. Then-FBI Director James Comey had briefed Trump about the dossier's salacious claims of compromising information held by Russians shortly before the fact of that briefing was leaked to CNN by a mysterious someone with knowledge of that briefing.

> Franken: Now, again, I'm telling you this as it's coming out, so you know. But if it's true, it's obviously extremely serious and if there is any evidence that anyone affiliated with the Trump campaign communicated with the Russian government in the course of this campaign, what will you do?

> Then-Sen. Jeff Sessions: Senator Franken, I'm not aware of any of those activities. I have been called a surrogate at a time or two in that campaign and I didn't have — did not have communications with the Russians, and I'm unable to comment on it.

We now know the dossier turned out to not only be riddled with errors and falsehoods, but was also an operation of the Clinton campaign. But that was not known when Franken asked his questions about collusion between the Trump campaign and Russia.

Click here for the full story.

Americans for Limited Government
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United States

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Subject: Congress succeeds in gutting Obama HUD racial and income zoning rule in omnibus

One good thing that came out of the omnibus spending bill is that it defunds a key aspect of the Obama era Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulation, Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing.

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 27, 2018

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Congress succeeds in gutting Obama HUD racial and income zoning rule in omnibus

One good thing that came out of the omnibus spending bill signed into law by President Donald Trump is that it defunds a key aspect of the Obama era Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulation, Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing. This was the rule enacted in 2015 that allowed HUD to order more than 1,200 cities and counties that accepted any part of $3 billion of annual community development block grants to rezone neighborhoods along income and racial criteria. This was always a vast overreach, where the federal government could come in and tell communities what must be built and where. Now, it's over.

Cartoon: Ventriloquist

Who is really speaking when the Parkland students vaguely call for gun "control"?

Editorial: Demagoguery at March for our Lives obvious to those who are watching

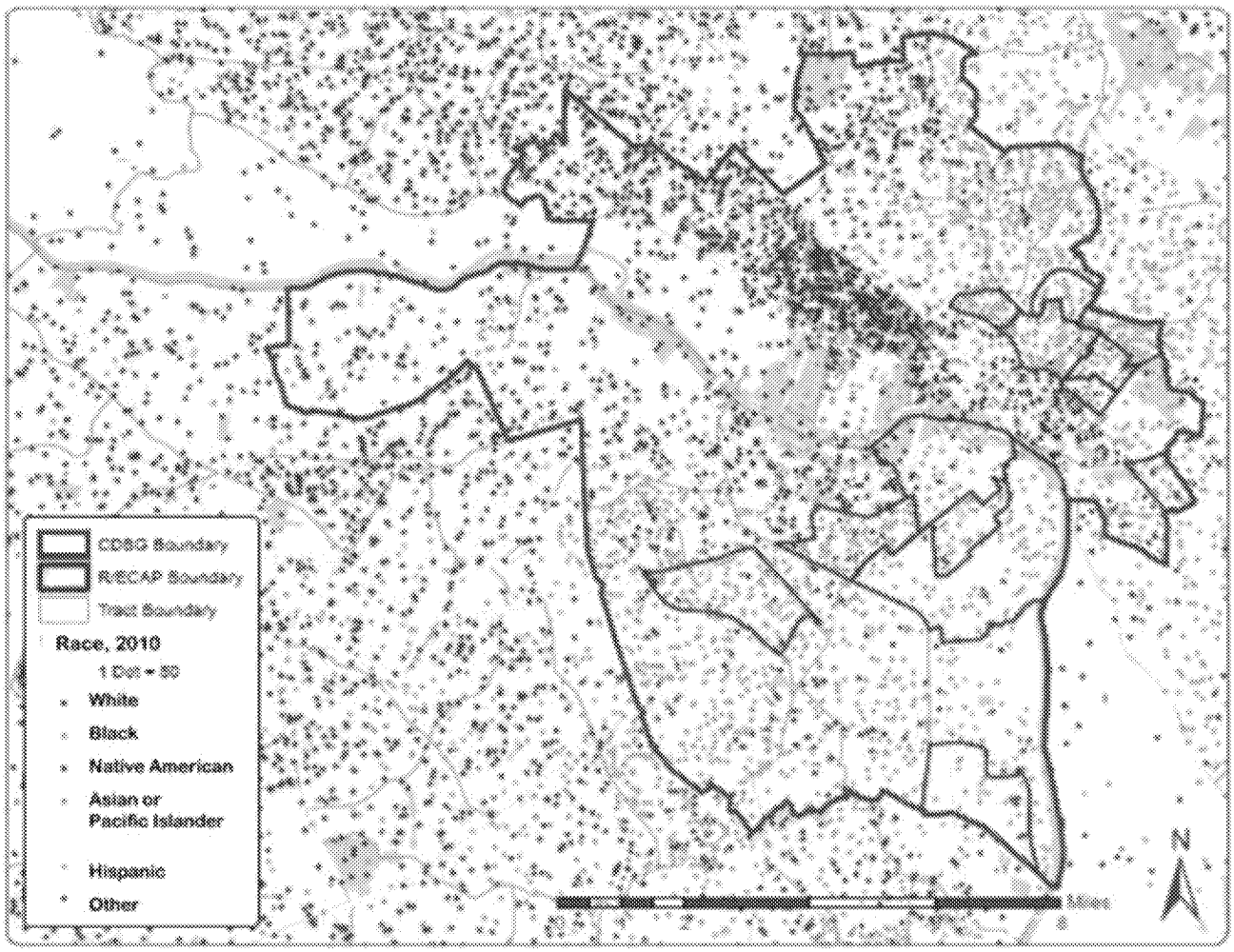
These are Democrat organizing rallies. Centered on gun control but more broadly supporting a left-wing agenda and getting out the vote in the midterm elections. It attempts to nationalize these issues, but most Americans will likely find little in common with the Parkland teens' radical prescription for this country. Behind this ambiguous call for democracy is a push to shred the Constitution of individual rights. They have the right to live, yes, and the rest of us have the right to protect ourselves from their radical agenda that will not stop at stripping Americans of the means to defend themselves.

Sara Carter: Questions Still Surround Robert Mueller's Boston Past

"Cullen said in his story that Mueller who was first an assistant US attorney, 'then as the acting US attorney in Boston' had written 'letters to the parole and pardons board throughout the 1980s opposing clemency for the four men framed by FBI lies. Of course, Mueller was also in that position

while Whitey Bulger was helping the FBI cart off his criminal competitors even as he buried bodies in shallow graves along the Neponset.'"

Congress succeeds in gutting Obama HUD racial and income zoning rule in omnibus



Source: Department of Housing and Urban Development

By Robert Romano

One good thing that came out of the omnibus spending bill signed into law by President Donald Trump is that it defunds a key aspect of the Obama era Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulation, Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing.

This was the rule enacted in 2015 that allowed HUD to order more than 1,200 cities and counties that accepted any part of $3 billion of annual community development block grants to rezone neighborhoods along income and racial criteria.

This was always a vast overreach, where the federal government could come in and tell communities what must be built and where. Now, it's over.

Under Division L, Title II of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018, Section 234, it states, "None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Department of Housing and Urban

Development to direct a grantee to undertake specific changes to existing zoning laws as part of carrying out the final rule entitled 'Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing' … or the notice entitled 'Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Assessment Tool' ..."

This provision utterly guts the HUD regulation, which had already been delayed by HUD Secretary Ben Carson earlier this year until 2020.

Now, with the backing of Congress, Carson needs to go the extra mile and either rescind this regulation completely, or revise it to comply with the new law.

Congress has spoken on this issue under its Article I power of the purse, and is now saying that the Fair Housing Act, community development block grants and this regulation can no longer be used to direct communities to undertake any changes to zoning.

Believe it or not, this is a game changer.

Without Congress acting, simply rescinding this regulation would have been far riskier for Carson and Trump.

In 1983, the Supreme Court decided *Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association v. State Farm Mutual* that rescinding any regulation issued an agency is obligated to supply a reasoned analysis "for the change beyond that which may be required when an agency does not act in the first instance."

The outcome was that it is much more difficult to rescind an existing regulation than it is to either modify it or never have issued it in the first place, leaving every single regulatory rescission subject to judicial review.

Ultimately, the rescinding agency has to argue not only that rescinding the regulation in question is rational based on the statutory scheme, but prove that enacting it was irrational to begin with.

Carson and Trump will now have no problems on that count if they choose to rescind or roll back most of the HUD zoning regulation. The regulation, which absolutely affects zoning, no longer rationally rests within the statutory scheme. It's now illegal to spend money on implementing it as it was written.

Now nobody can argue that the Fair Housing Act implicitly requires such changes be made to zoning laws. Thanks to U.S. Rep. Paul Gosar (R-Ariz.), the representative who first pushed to defund this regulation, Congress has changed the terms of the game.

Realistically, that will remain true so long as Congress keeps carrying forward the defund language in every single omnibus spending bill going forward. Republicans will have to fight to defund this provision every year so long as the regulation remains in place.

Should Democrats win the midterm elections in November, they might seek to strip this language out of next year's HUD appropriations bill. To avert this possibility, Carson must begin the regulatory rescission process immediately. There is not a moment to lose.

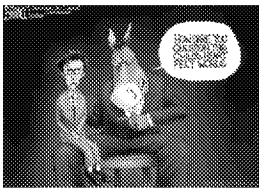
While there were many problems with the $1.3 trillion omnibus spending bill, one thing the Republican-led Congress got absolutely right was defunding Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing from being used to force communities to make changes to local zoning law.

Congress has done its job. Now it is up to the Trump administration with Carson in the lead to rescind this regulation with the window of opportunity Congress has given, so that no administration ever again attempts to take over local governments across the country.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Cartoon: Ventriloquist

By A.F. Branco



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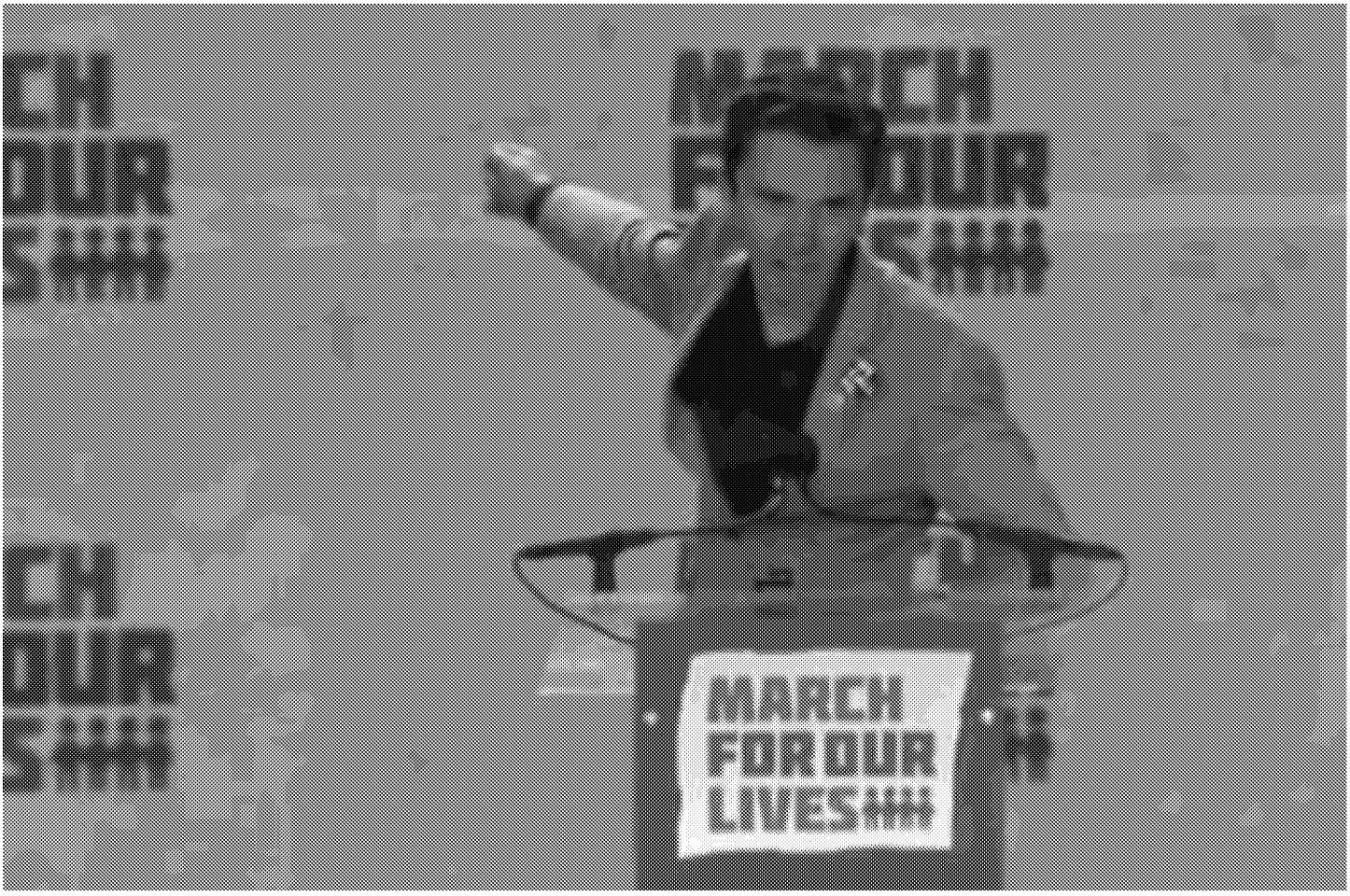
Editorial: Demagoguery at March for our Lives obvious to those who are watching



"This is the start of the spring and the blossoming of our democracy. So let's take this to our local legislators, and let's take this to midterm elections, because without the persistence — heat — without the persistence of voters and Americans everywhere, getting out to every election, democracy will not flourish. But it can, and it will. So, I say to those politicians that say change will not come, I say: We will not stop until every man, every woman, every child, and every American can live without fear of gun violence."

That was Parkland surviving student David Hogg apparently calling for guns to be banned but very explicitly calling for voters to show up and vote in the Congressional midterms—for Democrats. In many ways, Hogg represents the future. A radical future that will come to pass if the American people sit by idly now and allow a band of teenagers to strip away their rights.

But maybe not. Days ago, Hogg denied he was calling for a gun ban: "I think that a lot of people that are out there that are fearing what we're saying right now think that we're going to try to take their guns and we're not. The Never Again movement and March for our Lives is not trying to take your guns, we're trying to take back our lives because just as much as you have a right to own a weapon, we have the right to liberty, we have the right to peace and we have the right to live."

So, some sort of gun "control"? Maybe. Probably best not to find out. For this is the language of demagoguery. Radicalism. One that says one thing while moving to do precisely the opposite.

What is clear is that behind the push is an express partisan agenda. Hogg started his speech going after Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.): "I'm gonna start off by putting this price tag right here as a reminder for you guys to know how much Marco Rubio took for every student's life in Florida. One dollar and five cents."

Nationalschoolwalkout.us, where students can organize their own walkouts from school — another is planned for April 20 — the group vows, "we won't tolerate any more inaction on this issue. And if cowardly politicians fail to act, young people will show them the consequences of letting so many Americans die by voting them out in November." It's being organized by Indivisible.org, where students can go to organize their own school walkouts. It has published a guide, "Indivisible: A Practical Guide for Resisting the Trump Agenda."

The group's website clearly states, "National School Walkout is movement powered and led by students across the country. Event registration and a map of events for the April 20th school walkouts are hosted in-kind by the Indivisible Project team."

Hogg in his statements has called Congressional districting policies are racist and oppressing the poor. This is the language of the left. Indivisible has a clearly Democrat agenda of opposing tax cuts, opposing any deal with Trump on DACA, opposing the war in Yemen or any actions against Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons, and protecting Obamacare and expanding Medicaid.

These are Democrat organizing rallies. Centered on gun control but more broadly supporting a left-wing agenda and getting out the vote in the midterm elections. It attempts to nationalize these issues, but most Americans will likely find little in common with the Parkland teens' radical prescription for this country. Behind this ambiguous call for democracy is a push to shred the Constitution of individual rights. They have the right to live, yes, and the rest of us have the right to protect ourselves from their radical agenda that will not stop at stripping Americans of the means to defend themselves.

ALG Editor's Note: In the following column from Sara Carter, she details Special Counsel Robert Mueller's time in Boston as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, and the issue that he wrote letters to a parole board trying to keep men in prison when the FBI knew the men were innocent of the crime they were incarcerated for:

Questions Still Surround Robert Mueller's Boston Past

By Sara Carter

President Donald Trump directed angry tweets at Special Counsel Robert Mueller over the weekend. The tweets were prompted by the Department of Justice's decision to fire Deputy Director Andrew McCabe Friday as recommended by the bureau's Office of Professional Responsibility took action on

McCabe after the DOJ's Inspector General handed over evidence that the former FBI agent lied under oath and leaked information to the media.

Trump's Tweets on Mueller appeared to some Republicans and Democrats to be a veiled threat to fire Mueller. Those lawmakers warned the president that it would be the 'beginning of the end for his presidency' if Trump fired the special counsel. They also criticized Trump's attorney John Dowd for suggesting over the weekend that the Mueller probe should end. Ty Cobb, the president's personal attorney, reassured lawmakers on Monday that the president does not plan to fire Mueller.

But Dowd is not alone.

McCabe's firing should raise serious questions as to where Mueller's investigation is going. Mueller's past involvement in cases casts a very different light on the former FBI director than the one painted by his proponents and the media, said David Schoen, a civil rights and defense attorney. Schoen has been outspoken on the special counsel and criticized Mueller's top attorney Andrew Weissmann's involvement in the investigation, as reported.

"We all have the right – even the obligation – to demand fairness in the process and this process is not the least bit fair and the investigations lack integrity," said Schoen. He noted that as a defense attorney, Dowd should question how the investigation against Trump and his campaign came to be and if it was based on false information in an unverified dossier paid for by political opponents then the investigation is moot, said Schoen.

The Trump Russia investigation appears to be based, at least in significant part, on unverified and circumstantial evidence, coordinated actions of political opponents and "it is irretrievably tainted from its inception and must end now," Schoen said. The case was also established by partisan bureau officials who were bent on bringing charges against Trump, he added. Although some lawmakers have asked for a second special counsel to investigate the FBI and DOJ's actions in investigating Trump, many still continue to support Mueller's ongoing investigation, which began at the behest of those being accused of wrongdoing in the FBI.

Schoen is surprised that lawmakers have lauded Mueller as a stellar and well-respected former FBI director but have little knowledge about the former bureau director's past from the criticism during his years in Boston, challenges with the 911 Commission findings when he was first appointed to the FBI and handling of the Anthrax case to name a few, he said.

Mueller In Boston

In Boston, Mueller was an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the U.S. Attorney's Office and then became the Acting U.S. Attorney from 1986 through 1987.

It was Mueller's actions during that time that raised questions about his role in one of the FBI's most controversial cases involving the FBI's use of a confidential informant that led to the convictions of four innocent men, who were sentenced to death for murders they did not commit.

Local law enforcement officials, the media, and some colleagues criticized Mueller and the FBI for what they believed was the bureau's role in covering up for the FBI's longtime dealings with mobster and informant James "Whitey" Bulger.

Bulger was a kingpin and a confidential informant for the FBI from the 1970s in the bureau's efforts to take down the Italian mafia in Boston. But Bulger's relationship with his FBI handler Special Agent John Connolly became toxic. It was later discovered that Connolly went out of his way to protect

Bulger and aided the crime boss against investigations being conducted by the Boston PD and the Massachusetts State Police. According to reports at the time, Connolly would inform Bulger of wiretaps and surveillance being conducted by law enforcement.

Journalist Kevin Cullen wrote extensively about the FBI's involvement with Bulger and raised concerns about the old case in a 2011 article in Boston.com after Obama asked Congress to make an exception to allow Mueller to stay on two-extra years beyond the mandated 10 year limit as FBI director.

Click here for the full story.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Subject: The D.C. swamp hides behind military to get omnibus passed

Did the GOP establishment and Democrat party sneak one by the President?

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 26, 2018

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The D.C. swamp hides behind military to get omnibus passed

If you haven't heard, President Trump signed a horrendous omnibus bill on Friday. The bill funded the military, but that's about all of President Trump's priorities it funded. Leadership in the House and Senate used the military as a hostage to get the funding for their pet projects through and convince the President he must sign the bill if he wanted to fund the military. Did the GOP establishment and Democrat party sneak one by the President?

Paul: Apostle of Christ is a movie for the modern world

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'Lone DNC hacker' theory by Daily Beast contradicts multiple hacker report by Crowdstrike in 2016 that cited both Cozy Bear and Fancy Bear

The Daily Beast's Spencer Ackerman and Kevin Poulsen are reporting that the hacking of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) in 2016 was done by a "lone hacker" who worked for Russian military intelligence, the GRU, citing U.S. investigators. There's only one problem. The claim contradicts one of the key findings from Crowdstrike, the firm hired by the DNC to investigate the hack in 2016, which is that there was more than one set of hackers on the DNC's server.

Disappointed over Trump signature on omnibus

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning: "The President's signature on the $1.3 trillion omnibus spending bill accepts Congress' verdict that buying military material to be sent around the world is more important than defending our own border. It's clear that the President understands the bad bargain he was given, and the staff responsible for negotiating it should be fired because they failed."

The D.C. swamp hides behind military to get omnibus passed

By Printus LeBlanc

If you haven't heard, President Trump signed a horrendous $1.3 trillion omnibus bill on Friday. The bill funded the military, but that's about all of President Trump's priorities it funded. Leadership in the House and Senate used the military as a hostage to get the funding for their pet projects through and convince the President he must sign the bill if he wanted to fund the military. Did the GOP establishment and Democrat party sneak one by the President?

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer voiced his approval of the spending bill stating, "Overall, we Democrats are very happy with what we have been able to accomplish on a number of very important priorities." He should be happy, he is getting the rest of the country to pay for the gateway project, a tunnel between New Jersey and New York that is likely to become the Big Dig 2.0.

Schumer added, "we're able to accomplish more in the minority than we were when we had the presidency or even were in the majority."

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi also gloated about the spending bill, calling it, "a tremendous victory for the American people," noting the bill doesn't fund the promised border wall. She continued, "if you want to think you're getting a wall, just think it, and sign the bill."

Dara Lind of the uber progressive publication Vox is bragging about the omnibus writing, "Trump wanted 1,000 new ICE agents; he's getting barely 100, and *none* of them are the field agents responsible for arresting unauthorized immigrants. (Instead, ICE is getting more staff for investigations and mission support.) And when it comes to immigration detention, Congress isn't just refusing to give the White House the 20 percent increase in detention Trump asked for — it's

rebuking ICE for overspending and expecting Congress to bail it out." The bill decreases the ability of ICE to deport criminal illegal aliens. I don't remember any Republican running on reducing the number of criminal illegal aliens deported.

Many people will remember just a short time ago President Trump was touring the new prototypes of the border wall. The prototypes looked nice and impressive, but that is all they will ever be, prototypes. While many will try and save face proclaiming this budget funds the wall, that is not simply true. The budget funds some fencing, but it specifically prohibits the funding of any of the prototypes. The bill states, "The amounts designated...shall only be available for operationally effective designs deployed as of the date of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017...such as currently deployed steel bollard designs that prioritize agent safety."

That means Republican leadership let President Trump go down to the border and tour the new prototype walls, knowing the wall would not be funded. Did they intentionally try to embarrass the President?

Rep. Mark Sanford's (R-S.C.) tells a story of Rep. Maxine Watters (D-Calif.) bragging in the elevator to the Republicans, "I'm so happy that you all put all the things I wanted in the omnibus!" If Watters got everything she wanted, did Republican leadership even put up a fight? Besides defense spending what did they get?

In what is probably the most insulting aspect of the omnibus, the U.S. taxpayers are borrowing money from China, only to send millions back to China for developmental aid, only to have China charge U.S. taxpayers interest on the free money we gave them. This omnibus created a new level of asinine that was previously unthinkable.

The House of Representatives did its job, why didn't the Senate? The House passed all its appropriations bills, but the Senate passed none. This is why there was an omnibus instead of individual appropriations bills. The Senate refused to put appropriations bills together so it could use the military as cover for funding non-essential projects.

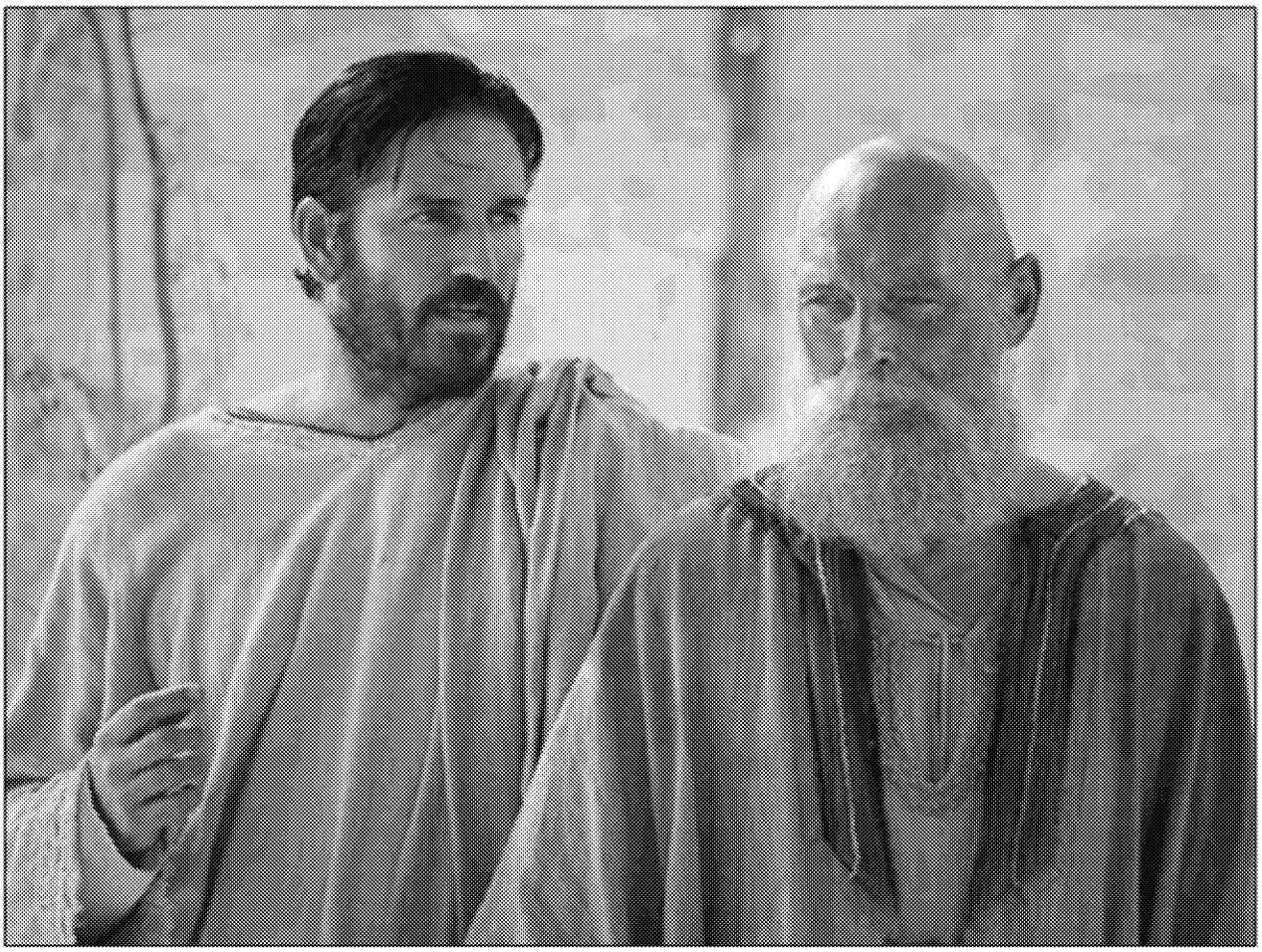
Passage of the omnibus means that for Trump priorities like building the wall, the September 30 deadline for the end of the fiscal year is probably the last chance to get it fully funded before the Congressional midterm elections.

Hopefully the Democrats taking victory laps and spiking the ball will wake the President up to the notion not all those around him are working for his agenda. The President now knows he cannot trust Republican leadership and must be more engaged. The President must put pressure on the Senate to pass appropriations bills and push his agenda through. If needs be, the President must get Senators on record as voting against the military and for wasteful spending projects. Finally, President Trump must be more willing to draw a line in the sand that will result in a veto when crossed. Veto threats have to be issued before votes, not after.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

THE HILL

Paul: Apostle of Christ is a movie for the modern world



Source: *Affirm Films/Sony Pictures Entertainment.*

By Rick Manning

Today, persecution of Christians around much of the world from the Middle East to China is one of the silent shames of America's foreign and economic policy. But Hollywood is releasing a movie for Holy Week that might empower Christians around the nation to end this silence by reminding people of the 1st century Roman persecution that sought to snuff out followers of Jesus Christ from Rome and around the world.

The movie *Paul: Apostle of Christ,* is not a political film. It is an historic one. Different than normal Christian fare in that the Gospel is given through Paul's actions and words, but not by an overt, in your face, call for conversion. This might disappoint some, but it makes sense in the context of the movie and it is this difference which just might make it one of the most impactful films of this decade.

Filmed in a gritty style that makes the viewer feel and almost smell 1st century Rome, the story brings to life the Apostle Paul, the man whose letters make up much of the Bible's New Testament. Before anyone stops reading because this is just another preachy Christian movie, please know that the movie is faithful to the writings of Paul, but it is anything but preachy.

Instead it is a story about a man's real-life memories of the evil he has done in the past (persecuting Christians prior to his conversion on the road to Damascus) and his determination to not return evil for evil in the present.

With memories etched into modern America's collective consciousness of Christians beheaded on the beaches of Libya, children being crucified by ISIS for their belief in Christ and the on-going attempted destruction of the remaining Christians in much of the eastern Mediterranean where Paul established the first Christian churches, the movie provides a powerful message to America's leaders about love and prayer.

In a red carpet conversation with Jim Caviezel, who plays Luke in the movie, I asked what message he would like for people in D.C. to know about persecution around the world, exemplified by the "Paul" movie. His reply,

"You mean as far as the Chaldeans, Coptic and Syrian Christians that were crucified on Good Friday last year? I'd say, the United States, we've got to start, as Christians, not being afraid. Every man dies, not every man really lives and in this film what Paul says at the end is really powerful, 'to live is Christ, to die is gain.' We all die, man, its how you live your life and there are a lot of people out there that need our help... And I think modern day Christians really struggle with death, Billy Graham just died, he lived 99 years. A lot of people cried, but my God if you don't believe that man is with Jesus what kind of faith do you have?"

In "Paul: The Apostle of Christ," the history of Nero's violence against Christians is shown without some of the graphic visuals that dominate modern horror movies, but the impact is clear. The palpable fear amongst those who stood for Christ rings true throughout the movie. And in the context of the executions of Christians at the hands of Muslims in the Middle East, the destruction of churches and imprisonment of Christians in China, North Korea, Nigeria and elsewhere around the world, the movie should mobilize the Christian world to not meet hate with hate, but rather to meet it with love and an abiding faith that God is sovereign and in control.

Political leaders follow movements, and the first step in ending the evil of persecution is naming it. In Rome, it was Nero, but in the modern world it is China's totalitarianism, North Korea's evil Leader worship, and in Sharia Law practicing Islamic states it is those who see it as their duty to Allah to exterminate the infidel.

Paul: Apostle of Christ is not a movie about persecution, but instead one of the courage of people of faith in Christ who oftentimes died horrific deaths for the glory of God.

The movie is not a political manifesto, but instead a story of the triumph of love over hate, with 1st century Rome almost two millennia in the rear-view mirror, we know the rest of the story - that Paul's faith lived on, even as his body inevitably perished.

Modern Hollywood took the chance to tell Paul's story, because it is every bit as relevant today as it was in those ancient times. Paul was willing to stand and die for his faith as he wrote to the Philippians, "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain."

In a modern world where evil seems be rampant, Paul and his devotion to Jesus Christ stands as a beacon of how humanity should be and what we still should aspire toward. And as Caviezel, the man who played Jesus in the "Passion of the Christ" reminded us, we all die, but do we all really live?

Christians are called to live for something bigger than themselves and bring glory to God by being Christ unto the world. Not to be conquerors but slaves to Christ who turn the other cheek to those who would be their enemies, but confront sin without fear.

Something to think about as the celebration of Christ rising from the dead on Easter morning approaches.

Rick Manning is the President of Americans for Limited Government.

'Lone DNC hacker' theory by Daily Beast contradicts multiple hacker report by Crowdstrike in 2016 that cited both Cozy Bear and Fancy Bear

By Robert Romano

The Daily Beast's Spencer Ackerman and Kevin Poulsen are reporting that the hacking of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) in 2016 was done by a "lone hacker" who worked for Russian military intelligence, the GRU, citing U.S. investigators.

"Guccifer 2.0, the 'lone hacker' who took credit for providing WikiLeaks with stolen emails from the Democratic National Committee, was in fact an officer of Russia's military intelligence directorate (GRU), The Daily Beast has learned," Ackerman and Poulsen write.

There's only one problem. The claim contradicts one of the key findings from Crowdstrike, the firm originally hired by the DNC to investigate the hack in 2016 and to date the only group who ever actually got access to the server. Then, the finding was that there was more than one set of hackers on the DNC's server.

According the Washington Post's Ellen Nakashima, who broke the story on June 14, 2016, "The firm identified two separate hacker groups," both of which were attributed to Russia but let's leave the attribution aside for a moment.

The Post continues, "One group, which CrowdStrike had dubbed Cozy Bear, had gained access last summer and was monitoring the DNC's email and chat communications, Alperovitch said. The other, which the firm had named Fancy Bear, broke into the network in late April and targeted the opposition research files. It was this breach that set off the alarm. The hackers stole two files, Henry said. And they had access to the computers of the entire research staff — an average of about several dozen on any given day."

So, per Alperovitch, Cozy Bear was responsible for getting the DNC emails, which were ultimately published on Wikileaks, and Fancy Bear was responsible for getting the opposition research files, which were never published by Wikileaks.

Critically, Nakshima writes, "The two groups did not appear to be working together, Alperovitch said. Fancy Bear is believed to work for the GRU, or Russia's military intelligence service, he said. CrowdStrike is less sure of whom Cozy Bear works for but thinks it might be the Federal Security Service, or FSB, the country's powerful security agency, which was once headed by Putin."

To put a fine point on this, there was always more doubt about who got the DNC emails, even from Crowdstrike, with the attribution being "less sure" and qualified with a "might."

Nor was it clear how they did it: "CrowdStrike is not sure how the hackers got in. The firm suspects they may have targeted DNC employees with 'spearphishing' emails... 'But we don't have hard evidence,' Alperovitch said."

On Nov. 17, 2016 former National Intelligence Director James Clapper echoed that uncertainty, telling the House Intelligence Committee: "As far as the WikiLeaks connection, the evidence there is not as strong and we don't have good insight into the sequencing of the releases or when the data may have been provided."

Compare that to the certitude expressed now by the Daily Beast that "Security firms and declassified U.S. intelligence findings previously identified the GRU as the agency running 'Fancy Bear,' the ten-year-old hacking organization behind the DNC email theft..."

Again, Crowdstrike never attributed the emails to Fancy Bear. The DNC emails were attributed to Cozy Bear. To review the chain of events:

On June 15, 2016, Crowdstrike published its analysis of the DNC hack.

Guccifer 2.0 then suddenly appeared and began publishing documents, including an opposition research file on Trump, with Russian fingerprints.

The WordPress blog by Guccifer 2.0 appeared, taking credit for the DNC hack described in the Washington Post story. The blog posted some of the documents as proof of the hack. Critically, Guccifer 2.0 claimed, "The main part of the papers, thousands of files and mails, I gave to Wikileaks. They will publish them soon." Here, Guccifer 2.0 associated itself with Wikileaks and was outing itself as Wikileaks' source.

The same day, it was revealed that metadata in one of the files posted by Guccifer 2.0 was modified by a user whose name in Cyrillic was "Felix Edmundovich," a reference to a founder of the Soviet-era secret police. This became confirmation for many that the Russians did it.

Meaning, if Guccifer 2.0 was Russian military intelligence agency, the GRU, as reported by the Daily Beast, and let's say they were, it wanted the entire world to think it was responsible for the DNC hacks, all of them, and left a trail of breadcrumbs leading back to Russia on purpose. They wanted to be caught.

Or, Guccifer 2.0 could have possibly been taking credit for something he or she was not responsible for. The claims only appeared after the Washington Post had already published its story, revealing everything that had been taken from the DNC servers, and after Julian Assange appeared on ITV on June 12, 2016 stating he had emails related to Hillary Clinton that were to be published.

Guccifer 2.0 could have been responsible for taking the opposition research — the blog did post some of those documents after all — but not the emails, which it never posted. They really could have been separate groups, as Crowdstrike had found. We still don't know.

Meaning, despite the open and shut nature of the Daily Beast story, we may be no closer to solving the mystery of who hacked the DNC emails and gave them to Wikileaks, which has to this day denied any connection to Russia. It might be easier to just say that Guccifer 2.0 was the "lone hacker," but it still might not be true.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Disappointed over Trump signature on omnibus

March 23, 2018, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement expressing disappointment in President Donald Trump signing the $1.3 trillion omnibus spending bill:

"Disappointed. The President's signature on the $1.3 trillion omnibus spending bill accepts Congress' verdict that buying military material to be sent around the world is more important than defending our own border. It's clear that the President understands the bad bargain he was given, and the staff responsible for negotiating it should be fired because they failed.

"Any reasonable observer of D.C. politics over the past decade can now predict that in September, Congress will present the President with a continuing resolution, which continues the exact funding priorities he is bemoaning in the current bill as not being fully met. If the President is to keep his

promise never to sign a bill like this again, he must demand full funding of the government on his desk by September 15 to avoid government shutdown drama. Funding the government at levels that Obama would never have dreamed of is not an option and a continuing resolution in September will merely continue the astronomical funding levels. Therefore, the President must insist Congress put 13 individual appropriations bills on his desk with the military funding first so we no longer have the extortion axe of not funding the military over the nation's head, or else veto it."

Permalink at https://getliberty.org/2018/03/disappointed-over-trump-signature-on-omnibus/

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Subject: The left is going crazy over the Andrew McCabe firing, but Attorney General Jeff Sessions got it exactly right

McCabe's firing was recommended by the FBI's internal career civil service run Office of Professional Responsibility

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 19, 2018

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The left is going crazy over the Andrew McCabe firing, but Attorney General Jeff Sessions got it exactly right

Attorney General Jeff Sessions got it exactly right. He followed the recommendations of the career, non-political, Justice Department staff, to fire former FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe. And by doing so, ensured that the process was not politicized. The reaction now shows just how politically weaponized the agency had become, with the left defending those who abused their positions to utilize the nation's intelligence services against their political opponents.

Jeff Flake doesn't deserve to lead, complicit with establishment do-nothings

Early polling in a potential primary showed Sen. Jeff Flake was going to get clobbered, and so he announced his retirement, giving a widely hailed speech on the Senate floor where he declared "I will not be complicit" with President Donald Trump. Ironically, apparently recognizing that the Presidency is a vehicle for getting things done, when it came time to vote for the Trump tax cuts or put Neil Gorsuch on the Supreme Court by eliminating the Supreme Court filibuster, Flake voted "Yes." So, when Sen. Flake appears on CNN to suggest Republicans "might not deserve to lead" because they are following President Donald Trump, take it with a giant grain of salt.

Andrew McCarthy: Mueller's Investigation Flouts Justice Department Standards

"With Rosenstein's passive approval, Mueller is shredding Justice Department charging policy by alleging earth-shattering crimes, then cutting a sweetheart deal that shields the defendant from liability for those crimes and from the penalties prescribed by Congress. The special counsel, moreover, has become a legislature unto himself, promulgating the new, grandiose crime of 'conspiracy against the United States' by distorting the concept of 'fraud.'"

The left is going crazy over the Andrew McCabe firing, but Attorney General Jeff Sessions got it exactly right

By Rick Manning

Former Acting Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation Andrew McCabe has been fired by Attorney General Jeff Sessions and the left is going crazy.

McCabe's firing was recommended by the FBI's internal career civil service run Office of Professional Responsibility, and the Attorney General acted accordingly.

The Office of Professional Responsibility has been run by Robin Ashton who was appointed to the post in 2010 by former Attorney General Eric Holder, who extolled her, "As a veteran career prosecutor, Robin is uniquely qualified to serve as Counsel for Professional Responsibility, and I am confident she will lead the office with the highest standards of professionalism, integrity and dedication."

During Holder's tenure as Attorney General, Ashton was awarded the Attorney General's Claudia J. Flynn Award for Professional Responsibility in 2013, the Attorney General's Award for Outstanding Leadership in Management in 2010, as well as receiving the United States Attorney's Award for Meritorious Service in 2010.

The Washington Post reported about the March 14, 2018 recommendation saying, "The FBI office that handles employee discipline has recommended firing the bureau's former deputy director over allegations that he authorized the disclosure of sensitive information to a reporter and misled investigators when asked about it, leaving Attorney General Jeff Sessions to decide whether he should fire the veteran official just four days before his expected retirement date, people familiar with the matter said."

So let's be clear. Andrew McCabe's political activities while serving as the Deputy Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation were so outrageous that the career civil servants charged with the responsibility of reviewing misconduct cases recommended that he be fired four days prior to his retirement date, denying him his pension.

It was not a "political" firing, but instead McCabe was let go because career civil servants recommended it, and given the high esteem that Holder obviously held the person he hired to run that office, no one should be able to claim anything else.

Yet, the same Eric Holder who oversaw much of the politicization of the FBI had the audacity to tweet, "Analyze McCabe firing on two levels: the substance and the timing. We don't know enough about the substance yet. The timing appears cruel and a cave that compromised DOJ independence to please an increasingly erratic President who should've played no role here. This is dangerous."

Holder knows better and he and others on the left are the only ones playing politics over the McCabe firing. His appointee to the Office of Professional Responsibility made the recommendation to fire four days prior to McCabe's retirement date. Attorney General Sessions waited for and acted on that recommendation. If he had acted earlier, as many believe he should have, Holder would have been angry that he didn't let the process play out, but now by allowing the internal public employee review of the case run its course, Sessions is attacked as "cruel" and "caving" to the President.

If anyone needs proof that McCabe was nothing more than a political operative in a standard issue FBI white short sleeved shirt, you only have to read McCabe's defiant reaction to the firing: "This attack on my credibility is one part of a larger effort not just to slander me personally, but to taint the FBI, law enforcement, and intelligence professionals more generally. It is part of this Administration's ongoing war on the FBI and the efforts of the Special Counsel investigation, which continue to this day. Their persistence in this campaign only highlights the importance of the Special Counsel's work."

Hardly the contrite words of someone who spent a full four hours meeting with Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein the previous day trying to save his pension, but instead, we see the partisan McCabe, still intent on taking out the duly elected President of the United States.

What any clear minded individual would have to note, is that Attorney General Sessions got it exactly right. He followed the recommendations of the career, non-political, Justice Department staff, to fire McCabe, and by doing so, ensured that the process was not politicized.

And McCabe's own reaction demonstrates just how politically weaponized it had become.

The only truly stunning thing that has come from this event is that the left has revealed itself as defenders of those who abused their positions to utilize the nation's intelligence services against their political opponents. All the while, claiming that those who were elected and appointed to clean up the mess are taking the nation in a dangerous direction.

If the left and right cannot mutually agree that the FBI, CIA and the rest of the alphabet soup of intelligence agencies can no longer be allowed to use their enormous power for political purposes, then there is real reason to fear for the future of our nation.

In fact, if we are going to be able to pull our nation back from the brink, it is exactly the measured type of actions that Attorney General Sessions has embraced to restore the rule of law after eight years of abuse that will lead the way. For this reason, the nation owes Attorney General Sessions a debt of gratitude, both for following the law and allowing the process to play itself out before making a decision.

Rick Manning is the President of Americans for Limited Government.

Jeff Flake doesn't deserve to lead, complicit with establishment do-nothings

By Robert Romano

Sen. Jeff Flake is retiring. Because he no longer has the support of his own constituents in Arizona.

Which is no surprise. Flake does not represent his constituents on issues they care about. He is for open borders on trade and illegal immigrant amnesty.

Early polling in a potential primary showed he was going to get clobbered, and so he announced his retirement, giving a widely hailed speech on the Senate floor where he declared "I will not be complicit" with President Donald Trump.

Ironically, apparently recognizing that the Presidency is a vehicle for getting things done, when it came time to vote for the Trump tax cuts or put Neil Gorsuch on the Supreme Court by eliminating the Supreme Court filibuster, Flake voted "Yes."

So, when Sen. Flake appears on CNN to suggest Republicans "might not deserve to lead" because they are following President Donald Trump, take it with a giant grain of salt.

Flake is really speaking for himself. It is he who does not deserve to lead. He wouldn't even take his stance to voters and attempt to defend it at the polls. Now, why should anyone support him?

He couldn't follow a president who proposed historic individual and corporate tax cuts to get the economy moving again.

Who opened the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for oil drilling.

Who put Neil Gorsuch and other constitutionalists on the federal bench.

Who repealed the Obamacare individual mandate forcing everyone to purchase health insurance.

Who greenlit the construction of the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines.

Who pulled the U.S. out of the Paris climate accords and ended former President Barack Obama's so-called Clean Power Plan.

Who has created a pro-business climate with fewer regulations.

Who has affirmed Congress' exclusive lawmaking authority under Article I of the Constitution, by moving to end the Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and putting the issue to Congress to resolve where it belongs.

Who has proposed to secure the southern border with a wall, end the family chain migration immigration system and the visa lottery, and institute national E-Verify.

Who is restoring the rule of law, cracking down on violent illegal alien offenders, gangs and ending the war on police.

Who recognized what anyone who can look at a map can figure out, that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel.

Who, if he had not run, we might very well be living under a President Hillary Clinton.

Now, Flake might have disagreed with Trump's positions on trade, calling for the renegotiation of NAFTA, withdrawing from the Trans-Pacific Partnership and slapping 25 percent and 10 percent tariffs on steel and aluminum, respectively. Those are discussions worth having.

But, Flake's objections have never really centered on policy. For him, it's total style over substance. He doesn't like the way Trump talks. The way he communicates on Twitter.

You know, the down-to-earth messaging that connected the President with tens of millions of voters in 2016, that propelled him to victory over Clinton in the election.

That's right. Trump talks tough. And he speaks directly to the American people. Not to tell them what they want to hear. But what he believes is right for the country. That's why he won.

Perhaps that's what has Flake and the establishment in total flight. Trump is leading America. He is the President we need and they've been left in the dust.

Flake sounds more like he is running to head up an ancient philosophy club than he is about to take on President Trump in the primary in 2020, but I wish him luck. While he's sitting out there in self-imposed exile, President Trump will still be busy getting more stuff done for the American people.

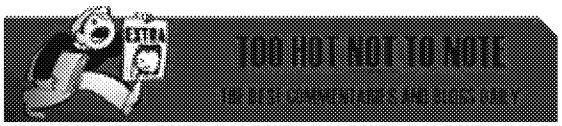
Maybe while he's out there, he'll run into a few of them who support the President and learn a thing or two.

For Congressional Republicans there is one of two things they can do. Stand with President Trump and fight for America and endeavor to get the agenda that got Trump and the GOP elected in 2016, show they care about those issues that put America first and rekindled trust in the Republican brand, or follow Flake's surrender and lose badly.

The fact is, Republicans haven't deserved to lead for years after so many disappointments. Corporate bailouts. Open borders. Shipping jobs and production overseas. Selling out to Democrats year after year.

It was President Trump who changed that. That's why he won, and that's why he deserves his chance to lead. Good riddance to Flake. The people of Arizona deserve his retirement. Time to turn the page.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from National Review, Andrew McCarthy discusses the Mueller investigation and how it is not adhering to Justice Department standards:

NATIONAL REVIEW

Mueller's Investigation Flouts Justice Department Standards

By Andrew McCarthy

These columns have many times observed Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein's failure to set limits on Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation. To trigger the appointment of a special counsel, federal regulations require the Justice Department to identify the *crimes* that warrant investigation and prosecution — crimes that the Justice Department is too conflicted to investigate in the normal course; crimes that become the parameters of the special counsel's jurisdiction.

Rosenstein, instead, put the cart before the horse: Mueller was invited to conduct a fishing expedition, a boundless quest to hunt for undiscovered crimes, rather than an investigation and prosecution of known crimes.

That deviation, it turns out, is not the half of it. With Rosenstein's passive approval, Mueller is shredding Justice Department charging policy by alleging earth-shattering crimes, then cutting a sweetheart deal that shields the defendant from liability for those crimes and from the penalties prescribed by Congress. The special counsel, moreover, has become a legislature unto himself, promulgating the new, grandiose crime of "conspiracy against the United States" by distorting the concept of "fraud."

Why does the special counsel need to invent an offense to get a guilty plea? Why doesn't he demand a plea to one of the several truly egregious statutory crimes he claims have been committed?

Good questions.

The Multi-Million-Dollar Fraud Indictments . . . and Penny-Ante Plea

On Thursday, February 22, with now-familiar fanfare, Mueller filed an indictment against Paul Manafort and Richard Gates, alleging extremely serious crimes. Let's put aside for now that the charges have absolutely nothing to do with the stated rationale for Mueller's appointment, namely, Russian interference in the 2016 election and possible Trump-campaign collusion therein.

According to the special counsel, Manafort and Gates conspired to commit more than $25 million in bank fraud. In all, the indictment charges nine bank-fraud counts, each carrying a potential penalty of up to 30 years' imprisonment (i.e., 270 years combined). Furthermore, the two defendants are formally charged with $14 million in tax fraud (the indictment's narrative of the offense actually alleges

well over twice that amount). There are five tax-fraud counts, yielding a potential 15 years' imprisonment (up to three years for each offense), against each defendant.

Mind you, this indictment, filed in the Eastern District of Virginia, is not a stand-alone. It piles atop an earlier indictment in the District of Columbia. That one, filed back in October, accuses Manafort and Gates of an eye-popping $75 million money-laundering conspiracy, a charge that carries a penalty of up to 20 years' imprisonment.

The two indictments contain many other felony charges. But sticking with just these most serious ones, we can safely say that, on February 22, Manafort and Gates were portrayed as high-order federal felons who faced decades of prison time based on financial frauds in the nine-digit range. And while I have previously discussed potential proof problems for the money-laundering charge, proving bank fraud and tax fraud is comparatively straightforward. The indictment indicates that the evidence of these crimes is well documented and daunting.

Yet, the very next day, Friday, February 23, Mueller permitted Gates to plead guilty to two minor charges — a vaporous "conspiracy against the United States" and the process crime of misleading investigators, each carrying a sentence of zero to five years in jail. This flouted Justice Department policies designed to ensure that federal law is enforced evenhandedly across the nation.

'The Most Serious Readily Provable Charge'

In plea negotiations, federal prosecutors are instructed to require that a defendant plead guilty to "the most serious readily provable charge consistent with the nature and extent of his/her conduct." (See U.S. Attorney's Manual, sec. 27.430.) In a properly functioning Justice Department, a defendant is not accused of over $100 million in financial fraud and then, within 24 hours, permitted to plead guilty in a wrist-slap deal that drops the major allegations and caps his potential sentence well beneath the penalties applicable by statute.

As outlined above, Mueller accused Gates of significant felonies totaling over 300 years of potential incarceration. Had the special counsel simply demanded a plea to a single bank-fraud count — the most serious statutory crime charged and, according to the indictment's description, an offense that is readily provable — Gates would have faced up to 30 years' imprisonment.

If, as all appearances suggest, Mueller's goal is to get Gates to cooperate, such a plea, besides honoring Justice Department guidelines, would have provided plenty of incentive. Under federal law, the prosecutor does not need to sell out the case for a song to induce cooperation. The prosecutor can demand a guilty plea that reflects the gravity of the defendant's actual offenses. Then, if the defendant cooperates fully and truthfully, the law permits the prosecutor to ask the judge to impose a sentence beneath the severe term that would otherwise be called for — a sentence of little or no jail time.

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Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None

Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Subject: The Renewable Fuel Standard is beyond repair; it is time to repeal it

It is nothing more than a tax on the consumer and a subsidy for big business

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 16, 2018

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The Renewable Fuel Standard is beyond repair; it is time to repeal it.

For several years the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) has placed an undue burden on the consumers and producers of transportation fuel. It became clear early in the implementation of the RFS it had significant flaws, but special interests have fought reform for fear of losing their gravy train. The RFS has turned nothing more than a government subsidy for the farmers. It is time to return competition to the transportation fuel market and repeal the RFS.

Restore Union Transparency

Union members deserve to know where their dues money is going. For too long, union members have been largely kept in the dark about their unions' finances, which has allowed corrupt union bosses to line their pockets with their members' money and get away with it for years.

The Christopher Steele dossier has become the greatest threat to national security

The lies of the Steele dossier that the President is a Russian agent have become the greatest threat to U.S. national security, a barrier to diplomacy between the two countries in the world that absolutely need to be talking to one another. It is time to put this dangerous fiction to rest — before we pass the point of no return on the road to a war that cannot be won.

Daily Caller: Obama DOJ Forced FBI To Delete 500,000 Fugitives From Background Check Database

"The Justice Department under Barack Obama directed the FBI to drop more than 500,000 names of fugitives with outstanding arrest warrants from the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, acting FBI deputy director David Bowdich testified Wednesday."

The Renewable Fuel Standard is beyond repair; it is time to repeal it.

By Printus LeBlanc

For several years the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) has placed an undue burden on the consumers and producers of transportation fuel. It became clear early in the implementation of the RFS it had significant flaws, but special interests have fought reform for fear of losing their gravy train. The RFS has turned nothing more than a government subsidy for the farmers. It is time to return competition to the transportation fuel market and repeal the RFS.

In 2005, Congress passed, and President Bush signed the Energy Policy Act of 2005. Among the many new regulations created in the legislation, the RFS was birthed. The RFS mandated a certain amount of renewable fuels, mostly corn ethanol, be blended with gasoline. The amount was 4 billion gallons in 2006 with a rise to 7.5 billion in 2012.

In 2007, the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 was passed. The bill increased the amount of renewable fuel to be blended. It required 9 billion gallons be blended in 2008 with an increase to 36 billion gallons in 2022. The increase amounted to a massive government ordered subsidy to be paid to biofuel producers.

Each refiner has a Renewable Volume Obligation (RVO) that is given to them by the EPA. A Renewable Identification Numbers (RIN) is a tracking number used for biofuels. To ensure every refiner is following the laws outlined in the 2005 and 2007 acts the EPA devised a way to track each batch of biofuel. Refiners must have a certain amount of RINs to meet its RVO. If a refiner does not have the capability to blend biofuel, it must purchase a RIN from another refiner that can produce RINs. A government mandate forcing a private company to buy a product it doesn't need or want, where have we heard this before?

The largest refinery on the East Coast was just bankrupted by the RFS. The refinery belonging to Philadelphia Energy Solutions (PES) was forced to declare bankruptcy in January. The 335,000 barrel per day refinery was over $600 million in debt, much of that due to the RFS. PES stated it spent $218 million in 2017 for RINs, more than it spent on personnel.

Even the U.S. Energy Information Agency knows the RFS isn't worth it, stating, "The energy content of ethanol is about 33 percent less than pure gasoline. The impact of fuel ethanol on vehicle fuel economy varies depending on the amount of denaturant that is added to the ethanol. The energy content of denaturant is about equal to the energy content of pure gasoline. In general, vehicle fuel economy may decrease by about 3 percent when using E10 relative to gasoline that does not contain fuel ethanol."

This begs the question, why is the U.S. government mandating consumers purchase a less efficient fuel?

Not only is ethanol less fuel efficient, but it also acts as yet another tax on the consumer. A 2014 study by the Congressional Budget Office found the RFS adds between $0.13 and $0.26 per gallon of regular gasoline and $0.30 to $0.51 for diesel.

Now the environmental lobby is turning against the RFS. Writing for The Hill, David DeGennaro of the National Wildlife Federation, noted the carbon pollution released by farmers plowing more than 7 million acres between 2008 and 2012 released emissions equal to 20 million cars.

The renewable fuel standard is a complete failure. It did not reduce dependence on foreign oil, fracking did. So are electric cars that don't use fuel. The RFS did not help the environment; it made it worse. If it did nothing that it was supposed to do, then why is the Obamacare mandate of energy still around? If the special interests are unwilling to reform it, the RFS must be repealed. At this point, it is nothing more than a tax on the consumer and a subsidy for big business.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

Restore Union Transparency

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By Richard McCarty

Union members deserve to know where their dues money is going. For too long, union members have been largely kept in the dark about their unions' finances, which has allowed corrupt union bosses to line their pockets with their members' money and get away with it for years.

Labor Secretary Elaine Chao, who served during the George W. Bush Administration, sought to change that. Of course, union bosses were adamantly opposed to additional scrutiny and spent their members' money trying to block some of Chao's reforms in the courts; the courts ultimately sided with

Chao. Unfortunately, after Obama won the presidency with the strong support of union bosses, his Labor Department was in no mood to demand much transparency from them; so the agency rolled back Chao's reforms or simply refused to enforce the law. With Obama long gone, the Trump Labor Department needs to get to work reinstating these critical reforms immediately.

Specifically, the Labor Department needs to reinstate Chao's reforms of the following filings.

LM-2 filings were supposed to include the full value of compensation packages, including things like free housing and deferred compensation; they were also supposed to include the names of buyers and sellers of union assets of $5,000 or more, and they were to include an itemized listing of receipts.

T-1 filings were supposed to cover trusts such as strike funds, training funds, and building funds.

LM-3 filings are simpler than the LM-2; Chao's regulation concerning this filing "set the procedure by which a labor organization would lose the privilege of filing a simplified report."

LM-30 filings, which disclose union officers and employees' conflicts of interest, were enhanced to include more details, but the Obama Administration announced that it wouldn't enforce the regulation as long as those required to file the report complied "in some manner."

For anyone who doubts the importance of union transparency regulations, it should be noted that hundreds of union officials were indicted and convicted on charges of embezzlement, filing false documents, and other crimes during Chao's tenure at the Labor Department. Additionally, union officials control hundreds of billions of dollars; and unions are some of the most generous and influential political contributors.

While union transparency might seem like a dry, obscure topic, regulations like these can help prevent and reveal corruption by union bosses. If union bosses are tempted to misappropriate funds, they might think twice about it if they know that the union will have to file detailed reports with the Department of Labor. Those union bosses who choose to roll the dice hoping no one will notice their inappropriate expenditures may learn to their chagrin that an eagle-eyed union member or journalist has pored over their union's reports and spotted the misallocated funds.

Once it's discovered that union officials have misspent union members' funds, members can demand that the individuals responsible for the expenditures resign or be fired, or they can vote them out of office. Furthermore, union members can report such offenses to authorities for investigation and potential prosecution. Knowledge really is power.

"Overall, the Trump Labor Department has done a good job of rolling back Obama's detrimental regulations. Now, we need the Department to seize the opportunity and reinstate Secretary Chao's union transparency reforms. We're over a year into the Trump Administration, and the clock is ticking. We know union bosses will likely try to tie these regulations up in the courts. So there's no time to waste," said Rick Manning, a member of Trump's Labor Department transition team.

President Trump was elected with the support of many labor union members, but without the support of virtually any union bosses – nearly all of them supported Hillary Clinton. The Trump Administration should, once again, stand with workers and give them more tools to help determine whether their union's funds are being spent appropriately. Best of all, the Labor Department doesn't need to reinvent the wheel; it just needs to reinstate the transparency rules crafted during Chao's tenure at the Department.

Richard McCarty is the Director of Research at Americans for Limited Government Foundation.

The Christopher Steele dossier has become the greatest threat to national security

By Robert Romano

The past month has seen some of the greatest escalation between the U.S., its allies and Russia since the height of the Cold War, if not in the entire history of relations between the two countries.

In early February, about 200 Russian soldiers were killed on the ground in Syria after attacking U.S. forces stationed there.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has unveiled a new low-flying, high-speed nuclear missile said to be able to defeat U.S. missile defenses. Leaving aside the existence of multiple independently targetable reentry vehicle warheads since the 1970s, which overwhelm targets with multiple warheads simultaneously such that they cannot all be shot down, Moscow's point was to remind us that we are vulnerable. Now, the talk is of a new strategic arms race.

The U.S. is sending arms into Ukraine to back the Kiev faction in the civil war there.

Ukraine has requested membership in NATO. NATO has responded by granting Ukraine the status of being an "aspirant" country in the alliance.

Sergei Skripal, a double agent and associate of former British spy Christopher Steele, and his daughter were poisoned in an apparent nerve gas attack in Salisbury, UK.

It was reported that Skripal might have been one of the sources Steele used in his infamous series of memos accusing President Donald Trump of being a Russian agent in 2016 during the election campaign. The attack then takes on the appearance, whether or not based in fact as being personal retaliation by Putin against Skripal for having had a hand in the Steele dossier.

Or perhaps it was retaliation for simply being a double agent. Another report suggested that Skripal's daughter might have been targeted by her prospective mother-in-law, said to be a Russian security official, upset her son would marry into the family of a traitor.

The UK has since blamed Russia for the attack and expelled Russian diplomats from its country. The U.S. reiterated the assessment that Russia was responsible for the attack.

Russia, for its part, has denied it was responsible for the attack.

Since then, the U.S. has issued a new series of sanctions against Russia for allegedly interfering in the 2016 elections.

In short, tensions are rising dramatically.

And it is hard to imagine all this happening without the Steele dossier, which combined with the Justice Department investigation that it inspired in 2016 into Trump-Russian collusion has seemingly tied the hands of the U.S. administration.

Even as it turns out the documents were politically motivated, paid for by the Clinton campaign and the Democratic National Committee (DNC), never corroborated and then used by federal officials to launch a national security investigation into the Trump campaign that never found the object of the investigation.

No matter how discredited the dossier is, or how much dangerous the situation becomes, the more the accusers double down to save face and to keep up the war footing against Moscow.

Any concession offered to Moscow, even ones to pull back from the brink, now become a "crime" against the state, something else for Special Counsel Robert Mueller to investigate, a potential quid pro quo for an arrangement that never existed in reality.

This makes war more likely.

Now, to prove the U.S. administration are not Russian agents, all actions must be cast through a prism of being tough against Moscow. On March 15, the Republican National Committee issued a memo to supporters via email, reading, "Trump's Tough-On-Russia Record" and "President Trump Has Repeatedly Sanctioned Russia And Supported Our Allies Against Russian Aggressions."

The memo highlights that the U.S. too expelled Russian diplomats in 2017, closing a consulate in San Francisco and two other diplomatic annexes in New York and Washington.

To its credit, the RNC left out the part where 200 Russians were killed in Syria by U.S. forces. But why not include it? What proves more how tough we are on a country than sending their soldiers home in body bags?

The U.S. and Russia still remain the world's foremost nuclear powers. Each is an existential threat to the other. But these incidents, coming in such close succession, coupled with the Steele dossier and the Justice Department's never-ending investigation into Trump and Russia — now Mueller is subpoenaing Trump organization financial statements dating back years before the election — make it next to impossible to engage in diplomacy. Thus making further escalation more likely.

In the meantime, Steele and Fusion GPS CEO Glenn Simpson have cast serious doubts on their own memos' veracity, especially the outrageous allegation that the Russians somehow possessed blackmail against Trump, some video with him and prostitutes in a hotel room in Moscow in 2013 that most probably never happened. Per Steele, on if the incident ever happened, "It's fifty-fifty." He had no clue if it happened. But it prompted him to bring it to the FBI, and the rest is history.

As The Federalist's Molie Hemingway reported, in reality, "President Trump's longtime bodyguard Keith Schiller told congressional investigators that on that trip someone offered to send five women to Trump's hotel room. Schiller said he took it as a joke, and declined. He also testified that he told Trump about it when he escorted him back to his hotel room and that the two had a laugh. From this nugget of reality was spun a pornographic and difficult to believe scene of Trump using prostitutes to defile the Obama hotel bed."

The rest of the dossier has not panned out either. People were said to be in places they couldn't, threads were connected that were too good to be true on behalf of the Clinton campaign.

As a result, the official inquest into these matters is itself has become tainted to its core. Every day that goes by, more and more misconduct by the Justice Department is revealed in its handling of its investigation into Trump. The bias of investigators has been revealed, the disregard for exculpatory evidence and so forth.

The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act was invoked in federal courts without verified evidence to obtain surveillance against the Trump campaign during the election. It led to the U.S. administration spying on the opposition party, a grotesque abuse of power that did far more to interfere with the elections and the peaceful transfer of power than anything Russia is accused of.

Now, one need not be skeptical about official proclamations such as Russia being responsible for hacking the DNC and putting the emails onto Wikileaks, or even being behind for this nerve gas attack in the UK, to be extremely concerned about this turn of events.

Russia could be responsible for those things. And if it were not for the Steele dossier accusing Trump of being involved with Russia and the Justice Department investigation accusing everyone who ever spoke to a Russian of treason, they might have been dealt with via diplomacy. Some of these events might have even been prevented. Unfortunately, windows of opportunity for diplomacy to cool tensions appear to be diminishing.

It's getting to the point where this could cast a cloud over U.S.-Russian relations for a generation, long after Trump has left office. Each escalation is getting harder to turn back from. Eventually it becomes more to do with national pride than the facts.

Anyone of these flashpoints is extremely dangerous in their own right. Dealing with them is that much more difficult thanks to the Justice Department's relentless investigation into the false, reckless charge that the President is a Russian agent.

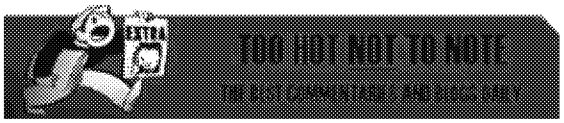
It would be hard enough to repair relations without all this.

The key point is that President is innocent of the basic charge of being a Russian agent, and for everyone's sake, this witch hunt needs to end once and for all. Look at what is happening.

The lies of the Steele dossier that the President is a Russian agent have become the greatest threat to U.S. national security, a source of escalation and a barrier to diplomacy between the two countries

in the world that absolutely need to be talking to one another. It is time to put this dangerous fiction to rest — before we pass the point of no return on the road to a war that cannot be won.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from The Daily Caller, Kerry Picket reports on the recent revelations that the Obama administration removed 500,000 fugitives from the background check database:

THE DAILY CALLER

Obama DOJ Forced FBI To Delete 500,000 Fugitives From Background Check Database

By Kerry Picket

The Justice Department under Barack Obama directed the FBI to drop more than 500,000 names of fugitives with outstanding arrest warrants from the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, acting FBI deputy director David Bowdich testified Wednesday.

Fugitives from justice are barred from buying a firearm under federal law. But what is a fugitive from justice? That definition has been under debate by the FBI and the ATF.

According to The Washington Post, the FBI considered any person with an outstanding arrest warrant to be a fugitive. On the other hand, the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives defined a fugitive as someone who has an outstanding arrest warrant *and* has crossed state lines.

That disagreement was settled at the end of Obama's second term, when the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel sided with the ATF's interpretation. Under President Donald Trump, the DOJ defined a fugitive as a person who went to another state to dodge criminal prosecution or evade giving testimony in criminal court, and implemented the Office of Legal Counsel's decision. The decision meant that around half a million fugitives were removed from the National Instant Criminal Background Check System.

During a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing about law enforcement's faulty response to Parkland, Florida shooter Nikolas Cruz, California Democratic Sen. Dianne Feinstein asked Bowdich about the removal.

"That was a decision that was made under the previous administration," Bowdich testified. "It was the Department of Justice's Office of Legal Counsel that reviewed the law and believed that it needed to be interpreted so that if someone was a fugitive in a state, there had to be indications that they had crossed state lines."

"Otherwise they were not known to be a fugitive under the law and the way it was interpreted," he added.

Attorney General Jeff Sessions recently announced the Justice Department will "aggressively" pursue any person who lies on their background check.

Click here for the full story.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Subject: The omnibus reversed one of Obama's administrative land grabs

One of few bright spots in Congress's recently passed budget was finally defunding the protections granted to this bird, allowing economic development to thrive in the Midwest once again

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 28, 2018

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The omnibus reversed one of Obama's administrative land grabs

For years, a bird has been the most expensive drain on the Midwest's economy. The greater sage grouse is not listed as an endangered animal under the Endangered Species Act, but this has not prevented the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) from placing significant restrictions on business and lifestyle throughout the Midwest in an attempt to protect this notably flamboyant bird. One of few bright spots in Congress's recently passed budget was finally defunding the protections granted to this bird, allowing economic development to thrive in the Midwest once again.

John Paul Stevens is dead wrong about his tyrannical call to repeal the Second Amendment and ban semi-automatic guns, but at least he's honest

There are more than 300 million guns nationwide owned by about 80 million people. About 85 million of those are estimated to be semi-automatic guns, which would be banned under former Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens' plan to repeal the Second Amendment. In meantime, there are about 132,000 schools public and private nationwide. Which do we suppose will be easier to secure: The 80 million gun owners who believe their right to defend themselves from a tyrannical government is God-given? Or the 132,000 schools where armed guards could be posted? Do the math.

The federal government needs to prosecute grant fraud

If the federal government is going to continue handing out billions in grants for research, then create regulations based on the research, it must ensure the accuracy of the research and prosecute fraud when found. A scientist that manipulates data to meet a preconceived result is not a scientist, they are a fraud and should be prosecuted as such.

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Rick Manning stated, "Professional naysayers and worry warts claimed doom was upon us when

President Trump announced his steel and aluminum tariffs. They were wrong. South Korea's announcement that they will end dumping steel into the U.S., and double U.S. automobile quotas into their country in exchange for an exemption from the increased steel tariffs is a clear-cut victory for the Trump trade agenda."

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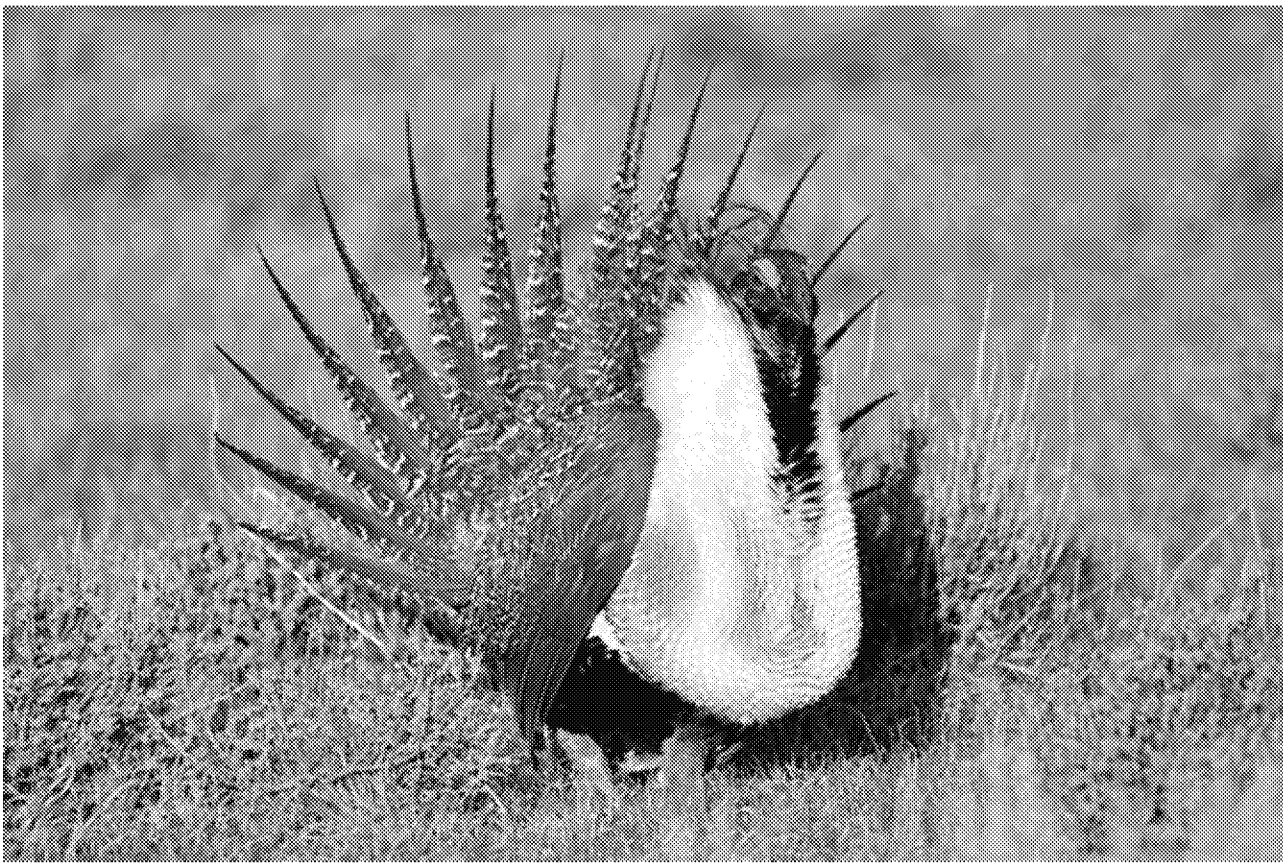
The omnibus reversed one of Obama's administrative land grabs



By Natalia Castro

For years, a bird has been the most expensive drain on the Midwest's economy. The greater sage grouse is not listed as an endangered animal under the Endangered Species Act, but this has not prevented the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) from placing significant restrictions on business and lifestyle throughout the Midwest in an attempt to protect this notably flamboyant bird. One of few bright spots in Congress's recently passed budget was finally defunding the protections granted to this bird, allowing economic development to thrive in the Midwest once again.

Finalized in 2015 through the Obama Administration's Department of Interior, the sage grouse protection plan was a large scale federal conservation plan to preserve a bird that was not even threatened enough to land on the endangered species list. At the time, Department of Interior Secretary Jewell called the plan "historic," as it dedicated 5.5 million acres of land across ten states to conservation efforts.

As it became quickly clear, environmentalists were the only ones singing praises to this plan.

University of Idaho economist Neil Rimbey explained to the Capital Post, to meet concern surrounding the sage grouse, land managers place restrictions on ranchers, usually requiring ranchers to delay grazing by a month or remove cattle a month early. Rimbey continues, this is done "with no idea of the economic impact, and they can have a very dramatic impact at the ranch level."

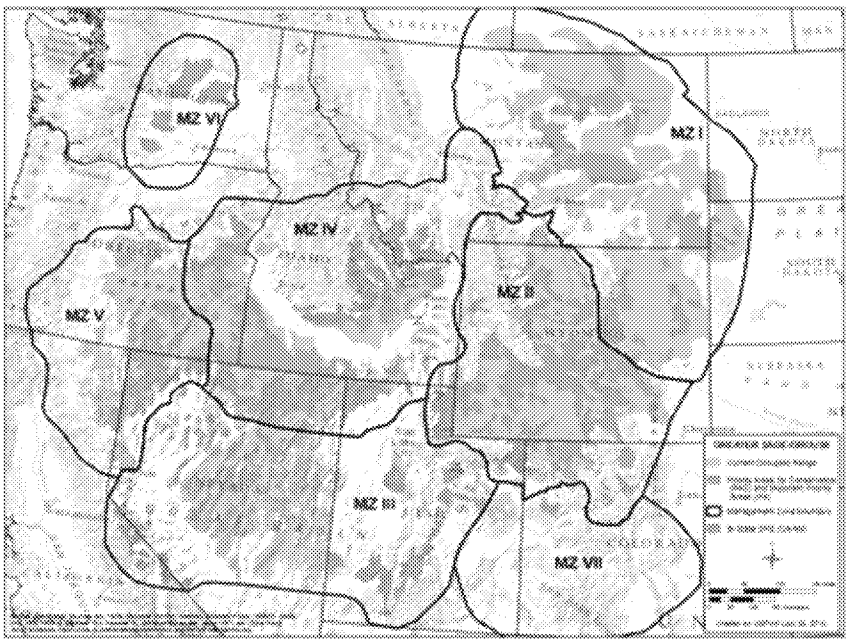
This economic impact is felt across the western lands, from individual ranches to large oil companies.

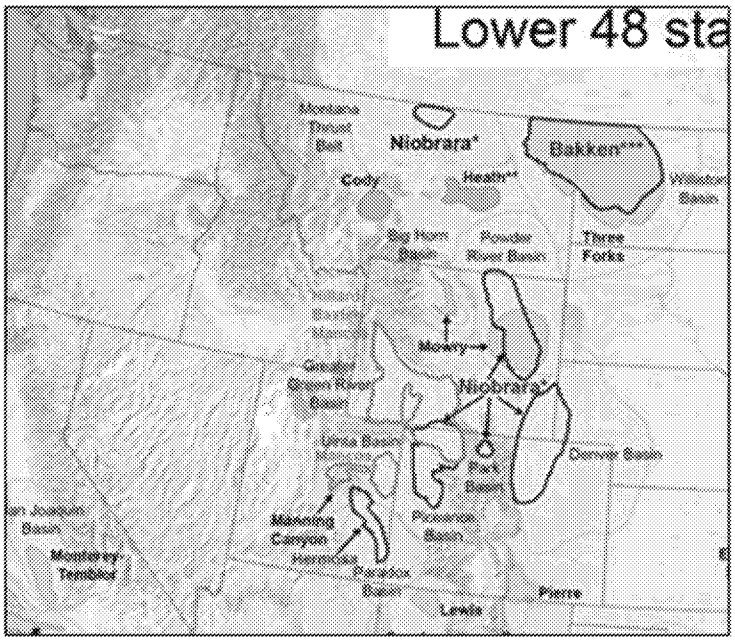
A University of Wyoming 2016 report found, "Due to the large surface area occupied by sage-grouse in Wyoming, the management of sage-grouse habitat could potentially have a significant economic impact on the State of Wyoming in terms of reductions in commodity production caused by management actions intended to protect the species' habitat... For oil and gas development and wind development the direct economic impact estimates represents regional expenditures to develop these resources. The annual direct economic impact for commodity production from sage-grouse habitat is estimated to be $18.4 billion. This represents 22 percent of the total economic output for the entire Wyoming economy".

An $18.4 billion price tag is a lot to pay for a bird that is not endangered, but when looking at comparative maps of the area, it becomes clear environmentalist are not simply trying to save an already abundant bird, they are also trying to further an anti-oil agenda.

The areas listed as sage grouse conservation sites cover some of the most shale oil-rich lands in the western states. By placing protections on this bird, the Obama-era Interior Department threatened to halt one of the most promising new areas of domestic energy production.

Greater Sage Grouse protected areas overlap U.S.-based shale formations





Source: *Fws.gov and Eia.gov.*

The University of Wyoming report continued, since sage grouse protections were implemented, they have cost the state of Wyoming nearly 80,000 jobs in the oil and gas well drilling and production industries.

While much of the recent Congressional omnibus bill has sparked controversy, one matter that can be celebrated was the defunding of the wasteful sage grouse initiative.

Section 120 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018 explains, "None of the funds made available by this or any other Act may be used by the Secretary of the Interior to write or issue pursuant to section 4 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1533) a proposed rule for greater sage-grouse (Centrocercus urophasianus); a proposed rule for the Columbia basin distinct population segment of greater sage-grouse."

This effectively prevents the sage grouse protections from being enforced because the funding will not exist. Congress will have to renew the prohibition every year, but there it is.

While this is a small step in removing environmentalist overreach, it allows for big steps in U.S. oil and gas production to be achieved. The sage grouse should have never been protected to begin with, it is thriving on the western planes, and now our economy can thrive there as well.

Natalia Castro is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

John Paul Stevens is dead wrong about his tyrannical call to repeal the Second Amendment and ban semi-automatic guns, but at least he's honest

By Robert Romano

Finally, an honest liberal stands up and tells us all what he really thinks.

Former Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens in the New York Times has called for the Second Amendment to be repealed, presumably so that Congress and the states can start banning guns.

Therein, Stevens acknowledged that under current Supreme Court precedent, although he disagreed with the *D.C. v. Heller* decision in 2008, owning firearms is still an individual right secured by the Constitution.

Here, Stevens, who is dead wrong in calling for the Second Amendment's repeal, is underscoring the real challenge facing activists pushing for decisive action in the wake of the Parkland massacre pushing for more gun "control" measures.

Stevens too advocates for more aggressive gun control laws, which he defines in calling for lawmakers "to enact legislation prohibiting civilian ownership of semiautomatic weapons." So, there is a big ol' ban in there.

Of which, there are more than 300 million guns nationwide owned by about 80 million people. About 85 million of those are estimated to be semi-automatic guns, which would be banned under Stevens' plan.

In meantime, there are about 132,000 schools public and private nationwide.

Which do we suppose will be easier to secure: The 80 million gun owners who believe their right to defend themselves from a tyrannical government is God-given?

Or the 132,000 schools where armed guards could be posted?

You shouldn't have to think too long about this. Do the math.

In the John Paul Stevens version of America, the Second Amendment would be repealed and Congress would begin banning categories of guns, one by one, until finally, a national ban might be implemented. Stevens wants to start with the 85 million semi-automatics.

It would be up to the government to round up the guns. Those who refuse would be subject to force, apprehending or killing those criminals still owning or manufacturing guns.

More passive means might be devised for individuals to turn over their weapons willingly such as buybacks and the like. But at the end of the day, there would still be holdouts — perhaps tens of millions of holdouts — who would refuse to leave themselves and their families defenseless.

It would tear this country apart.

Or the schools could be secured with armed guards, say, two in every school. If they were each paid on average $50,000 a yea, the schools could be secured for about $13 billion.

It could even be done out of existing dollars. So, instead of hiring another janitor or two, schools could prioritize and bake into their budgets real school security.

For what it's worth, Congress sneezes out almost that much money every day, spending about $11 billion a day out of the $4.1 trillion budget.

Then there is a major political problem Stevens faces. To pass the Stevens amendment, he would need two-thirds of the House and Senate, and then 38 state legislatures to ratify it.

By comparison, a simple majority would be needed to hire the armed school security guards if it was done by Congress via budget reconciliation, or a simple majority in the House and 60 votes in the Senate for regular order bills.

Again, do the math. Securing the schools with guards would be far easier to both pass and ultimately implement than attempting tyrannical gun bans and a Second Amendment repeal.

And, unlike a nationwide gun ban, securing the schools would actually have a real deterrent effect as the targets were hardened. It would save lives.

When you get down to it, everyone has a right to live. And a part of that is the right to defend oneself. By calling for a national ban on semi-automatic guns by repealing the Second Amendment, Stevens believes the government ought to deny everyone that right. What he may not realize is that he and those who support his call are playing with fire.

Let's all hope they don't light the fuse.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

The federal government needs to prosecute grant fraud

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
INSPECTOR
GENERAL
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By Printus LeBlanc

Every year, the federal government gives out billions of taxpayer dollars through dozens of federal agencies to study man-made climate change. It has become a cottage industry supporting hundreds of "scientists" around the world. Their research has led to countless federal agency regulations costing the U.S. economy thousands of jobs and trillions in economic output. What would happen if the underlying data in the studies was falsified?

The studies are used in courts of law around the country. New York City is suing Exxon, Shell, and several other oil companies for what it calls, "present and future damage to the city from climate change." San Francisco and Oakland are also suing five oil companies in California, stating oil companies must "pay for the cost of protecting the Bay Area from rising sea levels and other effects of global warming."

Arnold Schwarzenegger is even getting into the act, recently announcing he is going to sue oil companies "for knowingly killing people all over the world." He has yet to announce he is going to stop making movies that use copious amounts of energy to produce or quit flying private.

But a recent decision by EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt may throw everything up for grabs, including the studies used to launch the lawsuits. As the Daily Torch reported last week, Pruitt is ending the practice of "secret science" to justify regulations within the EPA.

This raises an interesting question. If the scientists manipulated data to come to a preconceived result, is this a crime? If the scientists filled out grant applications using manipulated data, is that fraud? The law says yes.

- 18 U.S. Code 1341 – Frauds and swindles – Whoever, having devised or intending to devise any scheme or artifice to defraud, or for obtaining money or property by means of false or fraudulent pretenses, representations, or promises, or to sell, dispose of, loan, exchange, alter, give away, distribute, supply, or furnish or procure for unlawful use any counterfeit or spurious coin, obligation, security, or other article, or anything represented to be or intimated or held out to be such counterfeit or spurious article, for the purpose of executing such scheme or artifice or attempting so to do, places in any post office or authorized depository for mail matter, any matter or thing whatever to be sent or delivered by the Postal Service, or deposits or causes to be deposited any matter or thing whatever to be sent or delivered by any private or commercial interstate carrier, or takes or receives therefrom, any such matter or thing, or knowingly causes to be delivered by mail or such carrier according to the direction thereon, or at the place at which it is directed to be delivered by the person to whom it is addressed, any such matter or thing, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 20 years, or both.
- 18 U.S. Code 1343 – Fraud by wire, radio, or television – Whoever, having devised or intending to devise any scheme or artifice to defraud, or for obtaining money or property by means of false or fraudulent pretenses, representations, or promises, transmits or causes to be transmitted by means of wire, radio, or television communication in interstate or foreign commerce, any writings, signs, signals, pictures, or sounds for the purpose of executing such scheme or artifice, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 20 years, or both.

- 18 U.S. Code 371 – Conspiracy – If two or more persons conspire either to commit any offense against the United States, or to defraud the United States, or any agency thereof in any manner or for any purpose, and one or more of such persons do any act to effect the object of the conspiracy, each shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than five years, or both. to commit offense or to defraud United States.

After looking at the hacked emails of the University of East Anglia's Climatic Research Unit, it certainly appears data was manipulated to achieve a preconceived outcome. Several scientists around the world manipulated data to end the Medieval Warming Period (MWP) according to the leaked emails. The new data was then used to push massive governmental regulations.

This is not the first time questionable science has been used to justify regulations or lawsuits.

The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), a division of the Centers for Disease Control, issued a report linking health problems to a chemical called diacetyl. The report spawned more than 1,000 lawsuits, but there appears to be a flaw in the science.

The agency tries to link diacetyl to Bronchiolitis obliterans, also known as popcorn lung, through exposure from microwave popcorn and coffee roasting, but the agency ignores cigarette smoke. Perhaps they do this because other studies cannot link smokers to popcorn lung. Cardno ChemRisk published a study in Critical Reviews on Toxicology stating, "We found that diacetyl and 2,3-pentanedione exposures from cigarette smoking far exceed occupational exposures for most food/flavoring workers who smoke." They continued, "Further, because smoking has not been shown to be a risk factor for bronchiolitis obliterans, our findings are inconsistent with claims that diacetyl and/or 2,3-pentanedione exposure are risk factors for this disease."

Why would NIOSH ignore one set of facts to concentrate on another set of facts? Could trial lawyers have anything to do with it?

If the federal government is going to continue handing out billions in grants for research, then create regulations based on the research, it must ensure the accuracy of the research and prosecute fraud when found. All data must be made available to agencies and the public, bare minimum. And if a scientist manipulates data to meet a preconceived result, he is not a scientist, he is a fraud and should be prosecuted as such.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

South Korean concessions proves Trump steel tariffs are already working

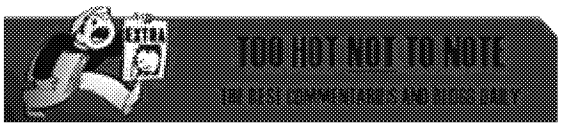
Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning issued the following statement praising the Trump administration for already achieving major concessions from South Korea on the steel and aluminum tariffs:

"Professional naysayers and worry warts claimed doom was upon us when President Trump announced his steel and aluminum tariffs. They were wrong. South Korea's announcement that they

will end dumping steel into the U.S., and double U.S. automobile quotas into their country in exchange for an exemption from the increased steel tariffs is a clear-cut victory for the Trump trade agenda. Not surprising to anyone outside of academia, the obvious outcome of Trump's steel tariff announcement was that countries would come to America wanting to make a deal, transforming the landscape towards more international trade on a reciprocal basis, evening out the playing field. Hopefully this will result in a reevaluation by those whose knee-jerk reactions always get it wrong."

"The Trump trade agenda is wildly popular across party lines, particularly with blue collar voters. That's why Trump won in 2016. It is time for Republicans in Congress to catch up with the President on this important economic policy that puts America first."

Click here for the full press release.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following article from The Hill, John Solomon and Alison Spann detail the allegations made by a former FBI informant in the Uranium One case, that Russia was supplying Iran with nuclear material while they were also attempting to corner the U.S. uranium market:

THE HILL

Informant provided FBI evidence Russia aided Iran nuclear program during Obama years

By John Solomon and Alison Spann

A former undercover informant says he provided evidence to the FBI during President Obama's first term that Russia was assisting Iran's nuclear program even as billions in new U.S. business flowed to Moscow's uranium industry.

William Douglas Campbell told The Hill his evidence included that Russia was intercepting nonpublic copies of international inspection reports on Tehran's nuclear program and sending equipment, advice and materials to a nuclear facility inside Iran.

Campbell said Russian nuclear executives were extremely concerned that Moscow's ongoing assistance to Iran might boomerang on them just as they were winning billions of dollars in new nuclear fuel contracts inside the United States.

"The people I was working with had been briefed by Moscow to keep a very low profile regarding Moscow's work with Tehran," Campbell said in an interview. "Moscow was supplying equipment, nuclear equipment, nuclear services to Iran. And Moscow, specifically the leadership in Moscow, were concerned that it would offset the strategy they had here in the United States if the United States understood the close relationship between Moscow and Tehran."

A spokesman for former President Obama did not return multiple requests for comment.

Congressional Democrats have written a memo questioning Campbell's credibility and memory while Republicans say his story calls into question the favorable treatment the Obama administration gave Russia.

Notes of Campbell's FBI debriefings show he reported in 2010 that a Russian nuclear executive was using "the same kind of payment network" to move funds between Russia and Iran as was used to launder kickbacks between Moscow and Americans.

Campbell worked from 2008 to 2014 as an undercover informant inside Rosatom, Russia's state-controlled nuclear giant, while posing as a consultant. He helped the FBI put several Russian and U.S. executives in prison for a bribery, kickback, money laundering and extortion scheme.

He said he became concerned the United States was providing favorable decisions to the Russian nuclear industry in 2010 and 2011 — clearing the way for Moscow to buy large U.S. uranium assets and to secure billions in nuclear fuel contracts — even as he reported evidence of Moscow's help to Iran.

"I got no feedback. They took the reports and the reports, I assume, went to specific people assigned to analyze the reports and that was the last I heard of it," he said.

Click here for the full story.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Subject: Trump's art of the deal: New South Korean trade deal and progress on denuclearization in North Korea proves tariffs, sanctions and pressure work

Is Trump's art of the deal working?

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 29, 2018

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Trump's art of the deal: New South Korean trade deal and progress on denuclearization in North Korea proves tariffs, sanctions and pressure work

South Korea has agreed to stop dumping steel and import more U.S. automobiles, North Korea is ready to talk denuclearization, and China and the U.S. could be ready to talk about an end of U.S. technology transfer to Beijing. Is Trump's art of the deal working?

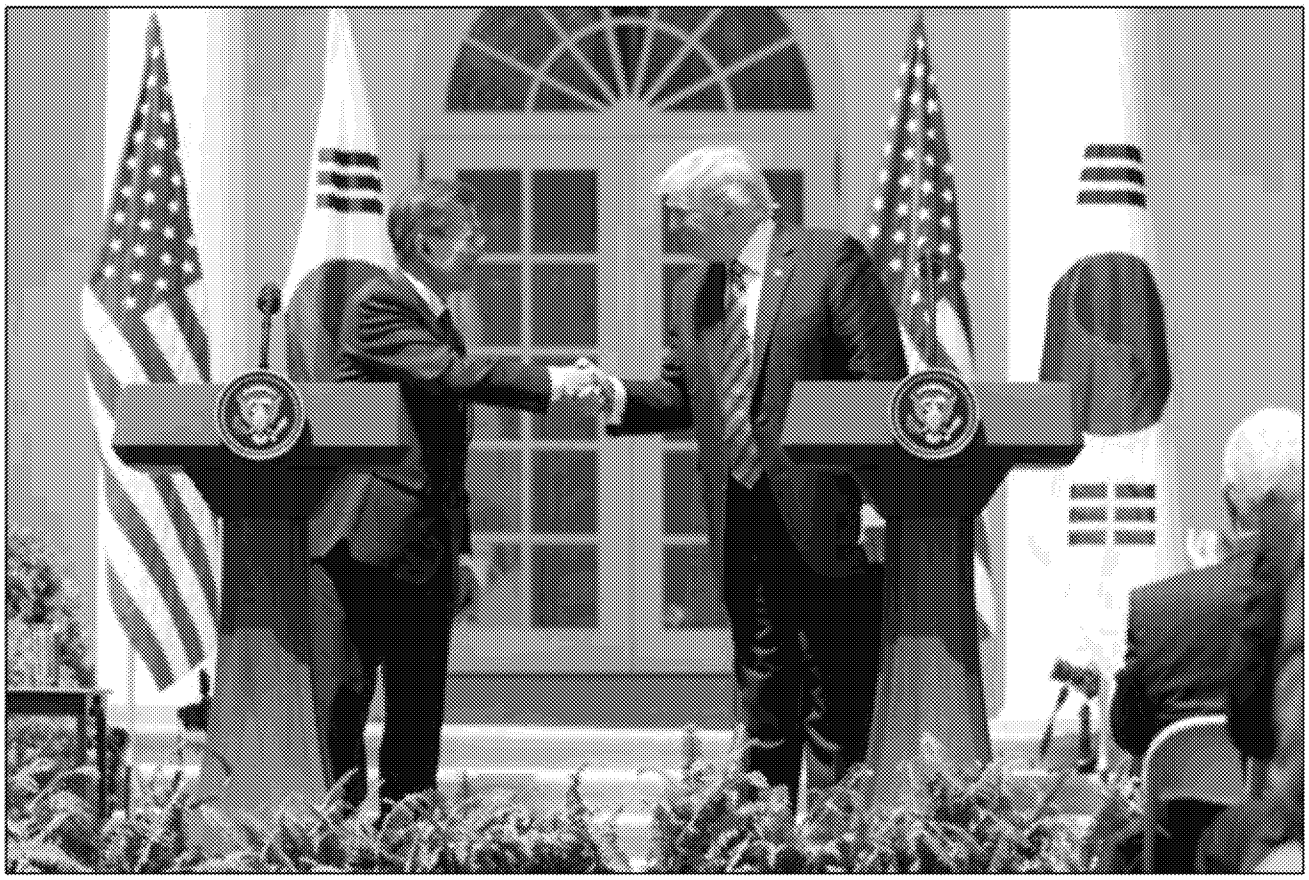
Ask Venezuela, socialism always fails; why do progressives want to bring its policies here?

In the 2016 Presidential election, candidates like Bernie Sanders framed socialism as a viable option, but ask any Venezuelan citizen, and they will tell you it is a deadly curse. The system of government supported by the left seems to promote equality and prosperity, but victims of socialism understand the chaos the system creates. As Venezuela continues to become the worst humanitarian crisis in the Western Hemisphere, it also becomes a case study in yet another failed socialist experiment.

Byron York: House subpoena rattles Justice Department; Sessions 'angry' at slow response; FBI 'called on the carpet'

"The FBI is promising swift action on a House subpoena covering three politically charged investigations after word that Attorney General Jeff Sessions has grown angry with the bureau's slow-walking of congressional requests for information."

Trump's Art of the Deal: New South Korean trade deal and progress on denuclearization in North Korea proves tariffs, sanctions and pressure work



Source: *Whitehouse.gov.*

By Robert Romano

In "The Art of the Deal," President Donald Trump wrote: "Leverage: don't make deals without it."

Three developments in the past week prove that President Trump's approach to foreign affairs where he utilizes all the tools in his arsenal including tariffs, sanctions, and overall pressure — are yielding dividends in the Asia Pacific region because they exerted significant leverage by the U.S.

South Korea and the U.S. have agreed to new amendments to the U.S.-South Korean trade agreement, where South Korea agreed to reduce its steel export quota by 30 percent and to double the amount of American-made cars that are imported.

In exchange, the U.S. will grant South Korea an exemption to President Trump's 25 percent tariff on steel imports.

Senior administration officials have also hinted that a new currency agreement is in the works that would address exchange rate and Treasury markets manipulation.

These were all things Trump had spoken of last June when South Korean President Moon Jae-In visited the White House. Now they're actually being delivered.

All because of Trump's tough stance on trade, including the tariffs but also his call for trade to be fair and reciprocal. The discussions were ongoing, South Korea was already at the table, but after the

tariffs were announced, a new agreement was quickly hammered out, which ended up being in both the U.S. and South Korea's interests. South Korea is the number three exporter of steel to the U.S.

China is the number one exporter of steel to South Korea, leading some to worry that it could become a pass-through for Chinese steel if South Korea were given an exemption to the steel tariffs. A hard quota stops that dead in its tracks, the administration officials said, because shipping Chinese steel instead of their own would harm South Korean producers.

Elsewhere, Trump's new $60 billion of tariffs against China over intellectual property abuses have brought Beijing to the negotiating table, Reuters reports: "Premier Li Keqiang said earlier on Monday that China and the United States should maintain negotiations and repeated pledges to ease access for American businesses to China's markets. Li told a conference that included global chief executives that China would treat foreign and domestic firms equally, would not force foreign firms to transfer technology and would strengthen intellectual property rights, repeating promises that have failed to placate Washington."

U.S. officials have heard all this before, but there it is. The U.S. and China are engaging in talks to settle trade differences. With the tariffs in play, this could finally result in concessions to each side's benefit. To see these promises realized, President Trump will need to keep the pressure on to get China to reduce its tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade, including currency.

Because, as we're seeing elsewhere, the pressure is working.

Perhaps most importantly, now it is being reported that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un after meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping has agreed in principle to discuss denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula, with Kim stating, "The issue of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula can be resolved – if South Korea and the United States respond to our efforts with goodwill, create an atmosphere of peace and stability while taking progressive and synchronous measures for the realization of peace."

President Trump responded favorably on Twitter, stating, "Received message last night from Xi Jinping of China that his meeting with Kim Jong Un went very well and that Kim looks forward to his meeting with me. In the meantime, and unfortunately, maximum sanctions and pressure must be maintained at all cost[s]!"

This could be a major, history-changing breakthrough. This is like moving mountains. Recall Trump promised "fire and fury" would be rained down on North Korea if it came to war. The U.S. has instituted stiff sanctions on North Korea and has placed immense pressure on China to act.

Now it's all coming together. Hopefully.

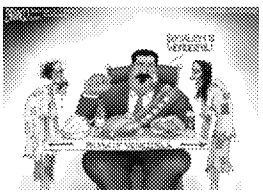
Diplomacy, which has always been a possible avenue of resolution, appears to be fully engaged now. Peace could be within sight. It may not work out in the end. But it never would have been possible without the credible threat of force promised by Trump, backed up by the sanctions.

Meaning, all of Trump's doomsayers who promised a new Great Depression from the tariffs and nuclear Armageddon from his tough stance against North Korea may be wearing a lot of egg on their faces when this is all over. Ironically, they might have even helped enhance Trump's leverage with his deal-making, since the consequences of not making a deal being reported might be grave.

There are still many challenges that need to be overcome, and the road forward is fraught with numerous pitfalls, but there are real opportunities here that did not exist prior to President Trump. And so far, believe it or not, it looks like Trump's art of the deal might actually be working after all.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Ask Venezuela, socialism always fails; why do progressives want to bring its policies here?



By Natalia Castro

In the 2016 Presidential election, candidates like Bernie Sanders framed socialism as a viable option, but ask any Venezuelan citizen, and they will tell you it is a deadly curse. The system of government supported by the left *seems* to promote equality and prosperity, but victims of socialism understand the chaos the system creates. As Venezuela continues to become the worst humanitarian crisis in the Western Hemisphere, it also becomes a case study in yet another failed socialist experiment.

Venezuela had it all. The Mises Institute of Austrian Economics, Freedom, and Peace in an October 2017 report by Rafael Acevedo and Luis B. Cirocco explains, in the late 20th century, Venezuela had a functioning democracy with a large oil supply. But as the government acquired more and more industry, wealth grew disproportionately, creating a large impoverished underclass.

Socialism was the problem. And the vast income inequality and seemingly disposable government income from oil revenues, allowed populist leader Hugo Chávez to enter the political realm as things got wose.

Acevedo and Cirocco continue, "He was elected in 1998 and promised to replace our light socialism with more radical socialism. This only accelerated the problems we had been facing for decades. Nevertheless, he was able to pass through an even *more* anti-private-property constitution. Since Chávez's death in 2013, the attacks on private property have continued, and Chávez's successor, Nicolás Maduro, promises only more of the same. Except now, the government is turning toward outright authoritarian socialism, and Maduro is seeking a new constitution in which private property is almost totally abolished, and Maduro will be allowed to remain in power for life."

Things got worse, again, native Venezuelan and political activist Debbie D'Souza explained on PragerU, once oil prices took a dive in 2014, the Venezuelan government could no longer make good on expensive promises to the people; and hyperinflation made the countries currency worthless, businesses left for capitalist countries, and 75 percent of adult's lost weight due to food insecurity.

For context, one U.S. Dollar is currently worth about 50 thousand Venezuelan Bolívars.

Venezuela's government maintains strict control and is unafraid to use it. Mary Anastasia O'Grady of the Wall Street Journal reveals, "The dictatorship increasingly controls what food there is. Dollars from oil exports go only to the state, which uses them to import. It also confiscates, at will, farm production and the output of agricultural processors… To receive the rations, Venezuelans must carry the *Carnet de la Patria*, a government-issued license only available to those approved by the regime."

The scarcity brought on by socialism has allowed the distribution of food to become a political weapon, and it is fueling a humanitarian nightmare.

The United Nations reported this month that in 2017, over 94,000 Venezuelans fled their country and sought refuge in neighboring nations like Colombia, a 2,000 percent increase since 2014. This has made the Venezuelan crisis the largest refugee crisis Latin America has ever seen.

This is not just the story of a failing country; it is the story of socialism.

Parallels can be made to socialist regimes across the world. Felipe Moura Brasil, a journalist and Veja magazine columnist, explained to PragerU, "[In Brazil], [s]ocialism worked for a while, socialism always works at the beginning; but government spending kept going up, and then [the President's] socialist paradise fell apart, and the economy fell with it. The outcome: from 2008 to 2015, government spending grew nearly four times as fast as tax revenue. The economy shrank 3.8 percent in 2015, the worst result in 25 years… We also remain among the world's leaders in murder and robbery, and we rank near the bottom in of industrialized nations in terms of education and healthcare."

Brazil and Venezuela had the opportunity to become global leaders, they had resources and wealth; but they also had socialism, which destroyed all of their potential.

As D'Souza noted, "Once a country goes down a socialist path, there's no easy way back. And the longer a country stays socialist, the harder it is to reform it… When people get used to depending on the government, no matter how poor they remain, that dependency is hard to break."

The United States spoke lightly of socialism in the 2016 election, but what most do not realize is that when power is given to the government, it is taken from the people and is difficult to be given back. Americans must look at Venezuela's tragedy and understand that it *can* happen here if we let it. If we allow the government to provide us with everything, we are giving them the capability to take *everything* away.

Natalia Castro is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from The Washington Examiner, Byron York reports on the FBI leadership being dressed down by AG Sessions for failing to comply with congressional subpoenas:

Byron York: House subpoena rattles Justice Department; Sessions 'angry' at slow response; FBI 'called on the carpet'

By Byron York

The FBI is promising swift action on a House subpoena covering three politically charged investigations after word that Attorney General Jeff Sessions has grown angry with the bureau's slow-walking of congressional requests for information.

Last week the House Judiciary Committee sent a subpoena to Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein demanding documents from the Justice Department and the FBI "regarding charging decisions in the investigation surrounding former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's private email server, potential abuses of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, and the FBI's Office of Professional Responsibility recommendation to fire former FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe," according to a committee press release.

In a letter accompanying the subpoena, Chairman Bob Goodlatte, R-Va., told Rosenstein the committee had asked for the documents months ago and received little or nothing in response. "Given the department's ongoing delays in producing these documents, I am left with no choice but to issue [a] subpoena to compel production of these documents," Goodlatte wrote.

Late Tuesday, a source who asked to be identified as a "DOJ insider" emailed an update from inside the Justice Department, making clear Sessions has grown impatient with FBI Director Christopher Wray:

Senior staff on both sides of the street have met on this and the FBI is getting called on the carpet. The Attorney General is angry with how slow the process has moved when it comes to requests from Congress to the FBI. He's told Wray that the pace is unacceptable and that if the FBI needs to double the number of people working on this, then that's what they need to do, but he is done seeing the Department criticized for the FBI's slow walking of requests from Congress like the last administration when these requests should be a top priority.

Sure enough, on Tuesday, Wray issued a press release promising to double the number of people working on the document request. From Wray:

As the Director of the FBI, I am committed to ensuring that the Bureau is being transparent and responsive to legitimate congressional requests. Up until today, we have dedicated 27 FBI staff to review the records that are potentially responsive to Chairman Goodlatte's requests. The actual number of documents responsive to this request is likely in the thousands. Regardless, I agree that

the current pace of production is too slow. Accordingly, I am doubling the number of assigned FBI staff, for a total of 54, to cover two shifts per day from 8 a.m. to midnight to expedite completion of this project.

Wray's announcement was welcome news to members of the House committee. Welcome — but still cautiously received.

Click here for the full story.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Subject: The IRS and Congress are ignoring millions of felonies committed by illegal immigrants stealing identities

Why is this still happening?

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 21, 2018

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The IRS and Congress are ignoring millions of felonies committed by illegal immigrants stealing identities. Why is this still happening?

Despite the media and amnesty proponents on both sides of the aisle declaring illegal immigrants don't commit crimes, a recent report from CNS News should shut down the amnesty debate. After reviewing several Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) reports, CNS found the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) routinely ignores massive numbers of possible identity theft. According to the report, there were 1.2 million cases in 2017 in which illegal aliens filed tax returns using Social Security Numbers (SSN). Why are the IRS and Congress ignoring a problem costing American citizens billions of dollars and countless years to fix?

Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao smeared over inheritance she received from her mother's death

Peter Schweizer's latest book "Secret Empires," details a 2008 "windfall" received by then-Labor Secretary and now-Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao. Schweizer claims the money somehow came from the Chinese government. In fact, it was inheritance from the death of Chao's mother, Ruth Mulan Chu, in 2007 after she lost her battle with cancer.

Daily Caller: Scott Pruitt Will End EPA's Use Of 'Secret Science' To Justify Regulations

"Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Scott Pruitt will soon end his agency's use of 'secret science' to craft regulations. 'We need to make sure their data and methodology are published as part of the record,' Pruitt said in an exclusive interview with The Daily Caller News Foundation. 'Otherwise, it's not transparent. It's not objectively measured, and that's important.'"

The IRS and Congress are ignoring millions of felonies committed by illegal immigrants stealing identities. Why is this still happening?

By Printus LeBlanc

Despite the media and amnesty proponents on both sides of the aisle declaring illegal immigrants don't commit crimes, a recent report from CNS News should shut down the amnesty debate. After reviewing several Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) reports, CNS found the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) routinely ignores massive numbers of possible identity theft. According to the report, there were 1.2 million cases in 2017 in which illegal aliens filed tax returns using Social Security Numbers (SSN). Why are the IRS and Congress ignoring a problem costing American citizens billions of dollars and countless years to fix?

This is not the typical identity theft most people think of, but employment identity theft. Employment identity theft is when someone uses another person's identity to get a job. The IRS can identify the theft through the ITIN/SSN mismatch process. The process detects instances in which an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) is listed as either the primary or secondary Taxpayer Identification Number on form 1040, and the Form W-2, included with the return has an SSN.

What is most infuriating about the recent report is the lack of enforcement of federal law. The IRS found 1.3 million cases of employment-related identity theft between 2011 and 2016. But in the same time frame, the IRS made 20,986 prosecution recommendations with only 4,329 being recommended for identity theft.

The list of crimes being committed by the millions of illegal immigrants is numerous:

- 18 U.S. Code 1028 – Fraud and related activity in connection with identification documents, authentication features, and information (identity theft)
- 18 U.S. Code 1341 – Frauds and swindles (mail fraud)
- 18 U.S. Code 1343 – Fraud by wire, radio, or television (wire fraud)
- 18 U.S. Code 371 – Conspiracy to commit offense or to defraud United States (conspiracy)

- Every day American citizens are investigated, charged, and convicted of these crimes. Why should illegal immigrants be any different?

What no one on Capitol Hill or the media is talking about, is the damage a stolen identity can do to a person. It may not seem like much to use someone else's identity to get a job, but it can take years to get the official records corrected. Home loans are denied, interest rates rise, and jobs are denied when there is an identity theft problem. It is hard to find someone that has not been impacted by identity theft, including myself:

> Several years ago, a friend of mine separated from the military. He and I were training for a contracting job with the State Department. After training, as we were getting ready to deploy, he was told he could not go because an update to his security clearance, which he previously possessed, found someone had stolen his identity. This honorably discharged Marine Scout Sniper was being denied a job because someone stole his identity. That's how serious stolen identities are.

A stolen identity can ruin a person's life. Why is Congress trying to grant amnesty to people hurting American citizens?

The first thing that should happen is the IRS must make criminal referrals to the Justice Department for cases of identity theft. The DOJ must then move to prosecute and deport any illegal immigrants that committed identity fraud. This cannot continue, the lack of punishment for committing multiple felonies only invites more lawlessness.

Congress must also act. It must move to pass E-Verify. E-Verify will ensure illegal immigrants cannot be hired. The ITIN program must also be abolished. The program is filled with fraud and abuse costing taxpayers billions a year in improper payments. This must be done before any agreement is worked out on the DACA program or amnesty for Dreamers. Before any deal is done, Congress must demand an audit of potential DACA recipients and Dreamers to find out who amongst the group committed identity theft. Congress cannot reward identity theft with a green card.

Congress and the federal government need to show the American people they matter.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao smeared over inheritance she received from her mother's death

By Robert Romano

"In 2004, [Elaine Chao and Mitch McConnell] had an average net worth of $3.1 million according to public disclosures—well below the senate average of $14.5 million. Ten years later, they had a net worth of between $9.2 million and $36.5 million. The key: in 2008 they received a gift from Elaine Chao's father, James [between $5 million and $25 million]."

That is the passage from Peter Schweizer's latest book "Secret Empires," detailing a 2008 "windfall" received by then-Labor Secretary and now-Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao. Schweizer claims the money somehow came from the Chinese government.

In fact, it was inheritance from the death of Chao's mother, Ruth Mulan Chu, in 2007 after she lost her battle with cancer.

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning, who worked at the Labor Department under Chao during that time, noted in a statement blasting the book, "Anyone who worked with her at that time was aware that her mother was gravely ill. Unfortunately, when she passed, her estate was dispersed and the Secretary received some portion of that money. Any attempt to characterize this as anything but a normal generational transfer of wealth is misguided. And as anyone who has lost a parent will attest, any inheritance is small compared to the hole in your heart left by the loss."

Schweizer does not tell readers why the gift was made, but for a footnote, Schweizer references a 2009 Politico report by Manu Raju and John Bresnahan, "Members' fortunes see steep declines."

Raju and Bresnahan actually do better reporting than Schweizer, letting their readers know where the money came from because they included a statement from McConnell spokesman Don Stewart: "That was a gift from Secretary Chao's father in April 2008 to the Senator and the Secretary, in memory of her mother, who passed away in August 2007."

Raju and Bresnahan also report that the gift was fully transparent because it appeared in McConnell's annual financial disclosure report. That's how they learned about it. So not only was there not a crime or even an ethical issue to do with the inheritance, it was fully reported as required under the law.

Instead, Schweizer implies it reveals a cozy relationship between Chao, McConnell and the Chinese government, warranting some sort of security concern. He characterizes it as "money flowing from the Chinese government to the McConnell-Chao family…" making it sound like some sort of bribe or something.

In fact, it was money within the family and most of it was made in the U.S.

In fact, James Chao fled China early in his life to Taiwan before coming to America where he built his ship-building company, Foremost, based in New York. Schweizer references Mr. Chao's investment and trade with Chinese companies, because some of those included defense contractors, as evidence of him basically being a Chinese agent, through which Chao and McConnell appear as pawns, implementing China's preferred policies in Washington, D.C. at the highest corridors of power.

Or, you know, Chao's family was very successful and wealthy, and has made multiple investments throughout the region including, yes, in China, which have proved profitable. Investing in Chinese companies does not make somebody a Chinese agent. Even if one disagrees with the stances Chao or McConnell have taken on China, and they are certainly debatable, these connections do not appear to be particularly relevant.

Similar cheap shots were taken last year at Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross by NBC News and the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists for investing in a British company, Navigator, that ships natural gas all over the world, including from Russia. Russia is one of the top exporters of natural gas in the world.

Which is as unsurprising as a businessman from Taiwan also having assets in China. Lots of investors have made money in China. It's now the second largest economy in the world.

Now, there are many debatable problems to do with globalization, the impact on local economies and workers, trade flows and the like. Investment on its own really is not one of them. Interconnected financial markets makes investment in companies foreign and domestic easy and advantageous.

The attack on the Chao family appears to be that they have benefitted from those trends and insinuates that this has impacted public policy decisions by Chao and McConnell, but with no evidence.

Schweizer calls Chao and McConnell's record "soft" but does not convincingly prove any sort of quid pro quo, and certainly not to do with the 2008 inheritance, which is the vast majority of the wealth that Schweizer makes the case against.

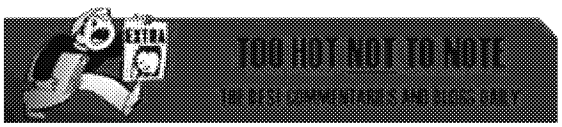
Why not let readers know it was inheritance? They should not have to type the footnote into their Internet browsers before they realize there was more to the story.

Again, there are many perfectly legitimate reasons to take a hard line on China as has President Donald Trump on trade relations, projecting military power, intellectual property rights and other issues. The shot Schweizer takes here really misses the mark and unfairly smears a family as acting as Chinese agents simply because they invested money in China.

In the context Schweizer is presenting, you have to believe that while Chao and McConnell have been married since 1993, only in the event of Chao's mother's death in 2007 did Chao's father use the opportunity to finally make the bribe. It not only does not pass the smell test, it stands out as shameful, lazy journalism; yet more foreign hysteria, this time in China.

As Manning concluded in his statement, "Secretary Chao's story encapsulates the American dream. Her father fled Communist China and as he gained the means brought his wife and children to America from Taiwan over time. The Secretary has spent her life in public service and has made a true difference for our nation. It was a great honor for me to serve under her leadership at the Department of Labor in the Bush administration, and Mr. Schweizer owes her an apology for miscasting the inheritance she received during this trying time in her life."

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from The Daily Caller News Foundation, Michael Bastasch reports on the announcement form EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt that his agency will stop using secret science to justify regulations:

THE DAILY CALLER

Scott Pruitt Will End EPA's Use Of 'Secret Science' To Justify Regulations

By Michael Bastasch

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Scott Pruitt will soon end his agency's use of "secret science" to craft regulations.

"We need to make sure their data and methodology are published as part of the record," Pruitt said in an exclusive interview with The Daily Caller News Foundation. "Otherwise, it's not transparent. It's not objectively measured, and that's important."

Pruitt will reverse long-standing EPA policy allowing regulators to rely on non-public scientific data in crafting rules. Such studies have been used to justify tens of billions of dollars worth of regulations.

EPA regulators would only be allowed to consider scientific studies that make their data available for public scrutiny under Pruitt's new policy. Also, EPA-funded studies would need to make all their data public.

"When we do contract that science out, sometimes the findings are published; we make that part of our rule-making processes, but then we don't publish the methodology and data that went into those findings because the third party who did the study won't give it to us," Pruitt added.

"And we've said that's fine — we're changing that as well," Pruitt told TheDCNF.

Conservatives have long criticized EPA for relying on scientific studies that published their findings but not the underlying data. However, Democrats and environmental activists have challenged past attempts to bring transparency to studies used in rule making.

Texas Republican Rep. Lamar Smith pushed legislation to end the use of what he calls "secret science" at EPA. Pruitt instituted another policy in 2017 backed by Smith against EPA-funded scientists serving on agency advisory boards.

"If we use a third party to engage in scientific review or inquiry, and that's the basis of rulemaking, you and every American citizen across the country deserve to know what's the data, what's the methodology that was used to reach that conclusion that was the underpinning of what — rules that were adopted by this agency," Pruitt explained.

Pruitt's pending science transparency policy mirrors Smith's HONEST Act, which passed the House in March 2017. Smith's office was pleased to hear Pruitt was adopting another policy the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology chairman championed.

"The chairman has long worked toward a more open and transparent rule-making process at EPA, and he looks forward to any announcement from Administrator Pruitt that would achieve that goal," committee spokeswoman Thea McDonald told TheDCNF.

Junk science crusader Steve Milloy also called on EPA to end its use of "secret science" in rule making, especially when it comes to studies on the toxicity of fine particulates in the air.

EPA has primarily relied on two 1990s studies linking fine particulate pollution to premature death. Neither studies have made their data public, but EPA used their findings to justify sweeping air quality regulations.

Reported benefits from EPA rules are "mostly attributable to the reduction in public exposure to fine particulate matter," according to the White House Office of Management and Budget report. That's equivalent to billions of dollars.

In fact, one of EPA's most expensive regulation on the books, called MATS, derived most of its estimated benefits from reducing particulates not from reducing mercury, which the rule was ostensibly crafted to address.

EPA estimated MATS would cost $8.2 billion but yield between $28 billion to $77 billion in public health benefits. It's a similar story for the Clean Power Plan, which EPA estimated would cost $8.4 billion and yield from $14 billion to $34 billion in health and climate benefits.

Democrats and environmentalists have largely opposed attempts to require EPA rely on transparent scientific data. Said data would restrict the amount of studies EPA can use, but a major objection is making data public would reveal confidential patient data, opponents argue.

"A lot of the data that EPA uses to protect public health and ensure that we have clean air and clean water relies on data that cannot be publicly released," Union of Concerned Scientists representative Yogin Kothari told E&E News.

"It really hamstrings the ability of the EPA to do anything, to fulfill its mission," Kothari said.

Milloy, however, countered and argued it's a "red herring" to claim that forcing regulators to use public science data would harm patient privacy.

"The availability of such data sets is nothing new," said Milloy, publisher of JunkScience.com and senior fellow at the Energy and Environmental Legal Institute.

"The state of California, for example, makes such data available under the moniker, 'Public Use Death Files,'" Milloy said. "We used such data in the form of over two million anonymized death certificates in our recent California study on particulates and death."

"Opponents of data transparency are just trying to hide the data from independent scrutiny," Milloy added. "But the studies that use this data are taxpayer-financed, and they are used to regulate the public."

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Subject: If Congressional Republicans won't stand with President Trump, defund sanctuary cities and build the wall now, they won't ever

Should Congress do what they campaigned on?

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 15, 2018

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If Congressional Republicans won't stand with President Trump, defund sanctuary cities and build the wall now, they won't ever

The Pennsylvania special election was a wake-up call. If Congressional Republicans won't do what they promised now and stand with President Trump, giving the tools the administration needs to enforce immigration law and keep the promises that were made in 2016, when they have a majority, they won't ever, and they certainly won't be winning many more elections any time soon.

Cartoon: Flexible

Democrats do not believe they can afford to make a deal with President Donald Trump on anything.

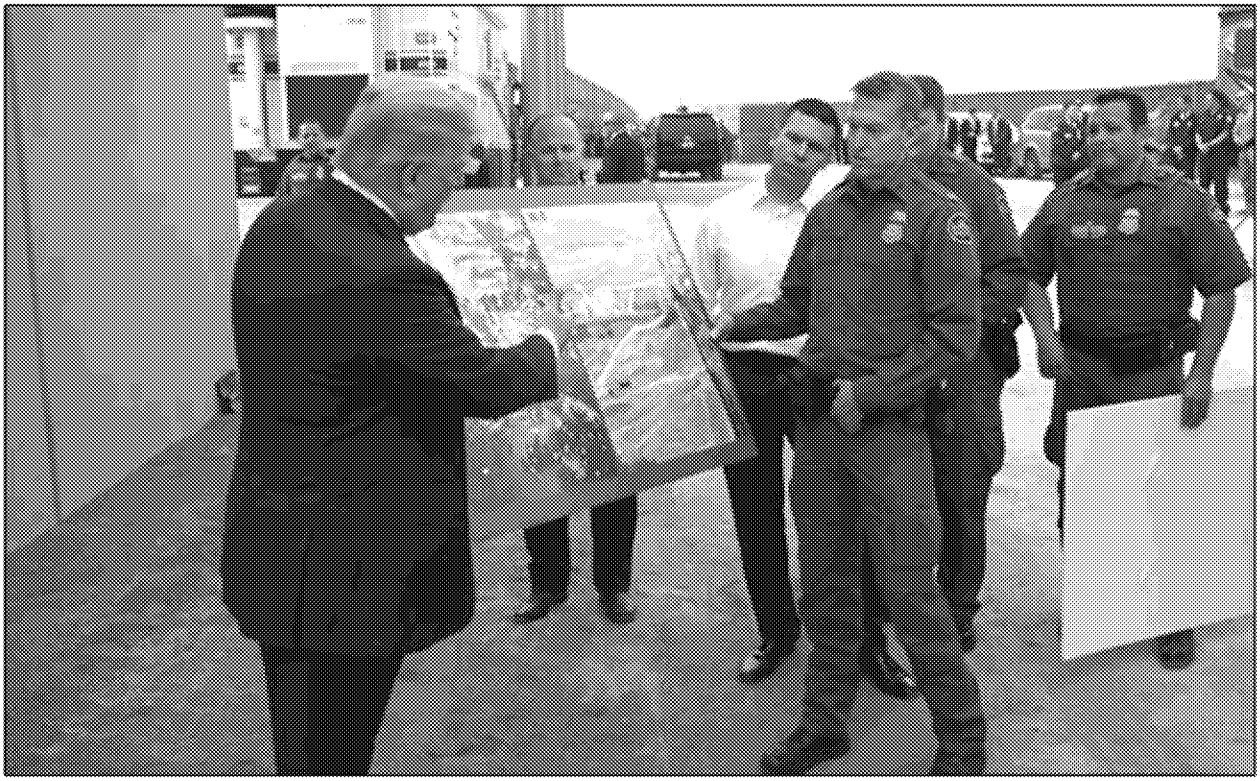
House GOP opposition to Trump's steel tariffs blew the Pa. special election race

In the pro-Trump trade agenda district containing part of Pittsburgh and surrounding areas, which political party do you think voters associated with supporting Trump's popular policy in Pennsylvania special election? If they were paying attention at all, it wasn't the House GOP leaders who had dumped millions of dollars into the race. No, the GOP House members' aggressive denunciation of the Trump steel tariffs solidified the notion that if you want to support the Trump trade agenda, you better vote for the Democrat.

Breitbart.com: Rick Manning warns China would control everything on the Internet if Trump hadn't blocked the Qualcomm takeover

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning: "They [Broadcom] were attempting to buy all of the intellectual property that drives everything in the world."

If Congressional Republicans won't stand with President Trump, defund sanctuary cities and build the wall now, they won't ever



By Robert Romano

President Donald Trump and Attorney General Jeff Sessions have all but declared war on sanctuary states, cities and counties that refuse to comply with federal immigration law.

The Justice Department has initiated a federal lawsuit to strike down California's unconstitutional attempt to ignore the Supremacy Clause and prohibit cooperation with federal law enforcement officials.

Speaking in San Diego, Calif. after reviewing prototypes for the southern border wall, the President called out California officials for putting national security in danger: "California sanctuary policies put the entire nation at risk. They're the best friend of the criminal. That's what exactly is happening. The criminals take refuge in these sanctuary cities, and it's very dangerous for our police and enforcement folks."

Trump continued, "The smugglers, the traffickers, the gang members, they're all taking refuge, and I think a lot of people in California understand that. A lot of people from a lot of other places understand it, and they don't want sanctuary cities."

Moreover, the President stated, these state and local officials are putting the rule of law and the supremacy of federal law on the line: "These policies release dangerous criminal offenders to prey on innocent people and nullify the federal law. They're threatening the security and the safety of the people of our country. In the upcoming omnibus budget bill, Congress must fund the border wall and prohibit grants to sanctuary jurisdictions that threaten the security of our country and the people of our country. We must enforce our laws and protect our people."

Trump is right. It's the new nullification.

And now the President is presenting Congress with Republican majorities a golden opportunity to show just where they stand. Are they with the President and the American people on enforcing the rule of law and defending the Constitution? Or do they stand with the lawbreakers running California? This was an issue that was critical to Republicans winning the elections of 2016.

All Congress has to do is insist on the omnibus spending bill that the House has already acted on, which will bolster the Trump administration's efforts by denying federal funds to any jurisdiction to will not respect illegal immigrant detainer requests by federal immigration officials.

And build the entire southern border wall while they're at it. It's time to keep out the drugs, gangs and the endless, unregulated stream of migrants. What are Republicans waiting for?

The midterm elections are up in November, and the way Republicans are running their campaigns — away from President Trump, his policies and his supporters — they're going to lose big-time. And they'll deserve to lose.

They won't stand with Trump on trade, and now, when it comes to securing the border and taking on the greatest crisis since nullification, once again they are nowhere to be found.

It's not too late to stand with President on these issues, but really, it's now or never. Even in a good year, Republicans might still lose their majorities. Midterms are tough for the incumbent party. Always have been. Meaning, this is Republicans' best shot to implement the Trump agenda — and prove that they have finally learned their lesson after neglecting their constituents and the American people's interests for decades.

2016 was the year of the forgotten men and women, when President Trump spoke to the neglected concerns of the American people. Have Congressional Republicans already forgotten them — again?

Unfortunately, the word on the street is that House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) are ready to trade away defunding sanctuary cities and building the wall to Democrats. Apparently in exchange for keeping the government open. When are they going to fight?

If the Republicans are so concerned about losing the majority, the question is why do they care?

Because if they're going to let the Democrats determine every deal anyway, then they are truly a majority in name only. Not worth voting for. Why should everyone get riled up for the midterm elections if this is how feckless the legislative process is when Republicans are in charge?

President Trump might be better off just waiting until 2019 to make a deal with a Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.). That might be more honest.

Or, Republican leaders can prove, finally, that they are up to the task of leading this nation — by defeating this new nullification in its cradle. We either have a country or we don't. If Republicans won't stand up for the supreme law of the land now, then they are no longer the party of Lincoln, and we won't have a country for very long.

President Trump won the Republican nomination and then the general election in 2016 by promising to restore the rule of law and secure the border. And in 2020, he'll do fine politically, win or lose, with or without Republican majorities. At least he's trying.

To prove they deserve to keep their majorities, the GOP Congress needs to use its power of the purse and take funds away from the lawless sanctuary states and cities and build the wall. Punish lawless officials that do not respect the supreme law of the land.

The Pennsylvania special election was a wake-up call. If Congressional Republicans won't do what they promised now and stand with President Trump, giving the tools the administration needs to enforce immigration law and keep the promises that were made in 2016, when they have a majority, they won't ever, and they certainly won't be winning many more elections any time soon.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Cartoon: Flexible

By A.F. Branco

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House GOP opposition to Trump's steel tariffs blew the Pa. special election race

By Rick Manning

Washington, D.C. House Republicans are scrambling to explain how they lost a special election in a Pennsylvania district that President Trump won by 20 points.

It really is pretty simple. They still don't have a clue how or why Trump won.

The district was formerly served by a Republican who was pro-life, pro-gun and had a long history of opposition to the one-sided trade deals that the President got elected arguing against. Unfortunately, the strongly anti-abortion Congressman got caught urging his mistress to have an abortion and as a result, he had to go away.

The race to replace pitted a mid-30s Democrat who came from a prominent family and campaigned as pro-gun, pro-life and for the Trump trade agenda against a 60 year old Republican state senator who also claimed that he was pro-gun, pro-life and for Trump's fair and reciprocal trade agenda.

For a variety of factors, the race was extremely close and President Trump pushed forward with a plan that had been a year in the making to announce steel and aluminum tariffs against China's steel dumping policy which continues to decimate the U.S. steel industry. In doing so, Trump demonstrated his commitment to his campaign promises and asked voters to send the Republican to D.C. to help him.

And this is where the idiocy of the House Republican establishment took over, as House Speaker Paul Ryan, flanked by his senior leadership team, urged the President to reconsider the tariffs and, however nuanced, more than 100 House Republicans signed a letter cautioning against the tariff imposition.

In the week that followed, Republicans could barely be constrained in their rush toward the cameras to denounce the tariffs as "dangerous" and economy imperiling.

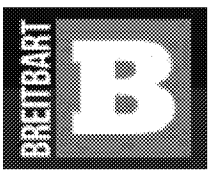
In the pro-Trump trade agenda district containing part of Pittsburgh and surrounding areas, which political party do you think voters associated with supporting Trump's popular policy? If they were paying attention at all, it wasn't the House GOP leaders who had dumped millions of dollars into the race. No, the GOP House members' aggressive denunciation of the Trump steel tariffs solidified the notion that if you want to support the Trump trade agenda, you better vote for the Democrat.

The sad fact is that House Republican leaders demonstrated either that they don't have a clue how to message to Trump voters, or that they actually don't want to win seats in blue collar pro-Trump districts.

It is almost as if they don't want to be burdened by holding the majority in the House in 2019, and if they don't wake up and start embracing the President's winning messages on immigration enforcement and trade, they will find themselves looking up at Speaker Pelosi in January 2019.

Rick Manning is the President of Americans for Limited Government.

ALG Editor's Note: In the following featured interview by Breitbart.com, Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning praised the decision by President Donald Trump to block to takeover of U.S.-based Qualcomm by Singapore-based Broadcom:



Rick Manning: China would control everything on the Internet if Trump hadn't blocked the Qualcomm takeover

By Sean Moran

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning told hosts Matthew Boyle and Amanda House on *Breitbart News Daily* on Tuesday that if President Donald Trump were to approve Broadcom' hostile takeover of Qualcomm, the "Chinese would have controlled everything we do on the Internet."

Rick Manning discussed President Trump's order blocking Broadcom, a foreign technology company with strong ties to China, from attempting to purchase Qualcomm, arguing that the deal was a threat to America's national security.

The president acted on the recommendation of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the U.S. (CFIUS); CFIUS reviews foreign acquisitions of American companies and can recommend to the president that he block the purchase on national security concerns. Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin heads CFIUS.

Mnuchin argued that the decision was due to the president's "commitment to take all actions necessary to protect the national security of the United States."

Manning suggested that Qualcomm has "patents and technology and other things that are vital to our national interests that they own. Broadcom is attempting a hostile takeover to get that intellectual property."

Manning continued:

As we move over to a 5G world, this is the essentially the Internet of Things (IOT) revolution that's going to happen, the question is who's going to dominate that industry, it's either going to be Qualcomm or a Chinese company called Huawei. If the hostile takeover were to be allowed to occur the Chinese would have controlled every thing we do on the Internet on the outocoming years.

"They would be able to turn a switch and then change our electrical grid," Manning added.

Boyle remarked, "This is one of the greatest untold stories of his presidency, the use of CFIUS to block China in their efforts to get into the United States."

The Americans for Limited Government president then suggested that this recent decision serves a significant turning point for CFIUS.

"CFIUS in the past, Matt, has been very reluctant to intervene, and it's groundbreaking," Manning explained. "They [Broadcom] were attempting to buy all of the intellectual property that drives everything in the world."

Manning then continued, explaining to the *Breitbart News Daily* hosts that China has a game plan to dominate global industry.

"It's to take industry by industry in the United States, and around the world, and create a dependency, where we, and the rest of the world, cannot compete," Manning argued.

Manning also cited China's dominance in the rare earth metals industry as well as the middle kingdom's dumping of steel and aluminum in the United States and other countries.

Congressman Lou Barletta (R-PA), who is running for the U.S. Senate seat in Pennsylvania, told Breitbart News in an exclusive interview how America can exploit its anthracite coal resources to compete against China in the rare earth metal industry.

Manning then told *Breitbart News Daily* why America needs a vibrant domestic steel industry for national security concerns:

If we do not have the capacity to produce high-grade steel for our basic needs, for the basic infrastructure needs we have in this country, we're dead, we're dead. President Trump knows that we only have one plant that makes high-grade steel, one plant that makes high-grade aluminum necessary for military applications. President Trump says that they're being deliberately undercut in a war with China by undercutting markets and making it so that those plants cannot survive.

"He's probably the first president since Ronald Reagan who gets that we're in an international competition," Manning added.

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United States

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Subject: How many laws did the Oakland mayor break?

Every drop of blood spilled by the criminal illegal immigrants the mayor warned is on her hands

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 7, 2018

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How many laws did the Oakland mayor break?

Anyone that paid attention to the 2016 election knows the issue of illegal immigration was one of the core issues that drove President Trump to victory. For good reason, the American people were tired of open borders and criminal illegal immigrants roaming freely through their streets. President Trump is keeping his promise to deport criminal illegal immigrants, but many local politicians care more about convicted criminals than they do their own citizens.

Living in the Lap of Luxury

According to a report it filed with the US Department of Labor, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) spent over $2.3 million at 4- to 5-star hotels around the world in 2016. (Data for 2017 is not yet available.) With so many of SEIU's members working low-paying jobs as janitors and health care workers, it seems unlikely that many of SEIU's members regularly travel in such luxury.

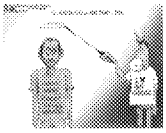
Anti-establishment, anti-euro parties topple power in Italy

Euro opponent Matteo Salvini is poised to become Italy's next prime minister.

The Economist: Xi Jinping decides to abolish presidential term limits

"Censorship makes judging public reaction in China hard. But there was more inventive mockery in response to the startling announcement on February 25th than there was during the country's biggest political event of the past few years, a party congress last October. There was also some unusual open dissent. A prominent former editor, Li Datong, and a well-known businesswoman, Wang Ying, both appealed to the legislature through WeChat, a social-media platform, demanding that it reject what Ms Wang called an 'outright betrayal'. Many Chinese, it seems, regard scrapping term limits as a return to the bad old days of strongman rule."

How many laws did the Oakland mayor break?



By Printus LeBlanc

Anyone that paid attention to the 2016 election knows the issue of illegal immigration was one of the core issues that drove President Trump to victory. For good reason, the American people were tired of open borders and criminal illegal immigrants roaming freely through their streets. President Trump is keeping his promise to deport criminal illegal immigrants, but many local politicians care more about convicted criminals than they do their own citizens.

Since President Trump took office, ICE has increased arrests by 40 percent, a far cry from the Obama administration that had a habit of releasing criminal illegal immigrants into the community. The Obama administration was so inept, or corrupt, at security it released over 19,000 criminal illegal immigrants into U.S. communities. The 19,000 had over 64,000 convictions, including hundreds of guilty of murder, kidnapping, and sexual assault. For some reason, the Obama administration didn't believe in deporting violent criminals; the administration felt it was more appropriate to let them roam streets.

Last week, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) launched a series of raids across Northern California targeting hundreds of criminal illegal immigrants. It is important to note; these are illegal immigrants that have committed crimes in addition to being here illegally. Illegal immigrants convicted of assault, child sex crimes, and weapons charges were just a small sampling of the people targeted for removal. However, the Mayor of Oakland had different plans.

Shortly before the raids were to begin, Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf (D) sent out a tweet warning criminal illegal immigrants of the impending raids. The warning gave the criminals time to relocate and hide. ICE still carried out the raids, but only captured 180 illegal immigrants that were either convicted criminals, had been issued a final order of removal and failed to depart the United States, or had been previously removed.

Federal immigration officials believe as many as 800 criminals were able to avoid arrest thanks to the tip-off from the Mayor. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement chief Thomas Homan stated that Schaaf's actions were, "no better than a gang lookout yelling 'police' when a police cruiser comes in the neighborhood." It brings up the obvious question, did the mayor break the law?

There seem to be at least three apparent violations of the law by the mayor:

1. 18 U.S. Code 2(a) ***Aiding and Abetting*** – "Whoever commits an offense against the United States or aids, abets, counsels, commands, induces or procures its commission, is punishable as a principal." In layman's terms, it means assisting in someone else's commission of a crime.
2. 18 U.S. Code 3 ***Accessory after the fact*** – "Whoever, knowing that an offense against the United States has been committed, receives, relieves, comforts or assists the offender in order to hinder or prevent his apprehension, trial or punishment, is an accessory after the fact."

3. 18 U.S. Code 1503 ***Obstruction of Justice*** – "Whoever corruptly by any threatening letter or communication, influences, obstructs, or impedes, or endeavors to influence, obstruct, or impede, the due administration of justice, shall be punished."

Not only should criminal charges be brought against the mayor, but Congress must also act to make sure this does not happen again, and the best way to do that is to hit them in the pocketbook. Not the city, county, or state's pocketbook but the official's personal pocketbook. A piece of legislation introduced in Colorado is the best way to achieve that goal.

State Senators (Vicki Marble and Tim Neville) and a pair of State Representatives (Phil Covarrubias and Dave Williams) from introduced SB17-281, the Hold Colorado Government Accountable Sanctuary Jurisdictions bill. The bill waives governmental immunity against a jurisdiction and its public employees for personal injuries caused to crime victims because a jurisdiction is a sanctuary jurisdiction. If a local official knew they could be held financially liable for the crimes committed by illegal immigrants they let go, it is doubtful sanctuary city policies would continue.

Americans for Limited Government President Ric Manning stated, "Any private citizen who engaged in the same activity as Mayor Schaaf would have been locked up and already facing charges. There is no excuse for putting law enforcement and Oakland residents in danger due to misguided loyalties. Not only should she be locked up, but all federal law enforcement funds should be frozen."

Every drop of blood spilled by the criminal illegal immigrants the mayor warned is on her hands. She chose to put the feelings of convicted criminals over Oakland residents. The Justice Department must act, or every sanctuary city will follow the Oakland example and warn offenders of impending raids.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

Living in the Lap of Luxury

By Richard McCarty

According to a report it filed with the US Department of Labor, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) spent over $2.3 million at 4- to 5-star hotels around the world in 2016. (Data for 2017 is not yet available.) With so many of SEIU's members working low-paying jobs as janitors and health care workers, it seems unlikely that many of SEIU's members regularly travel in such luxury.

Below are some of the amenities available at several of these fine hotels.

- SEIU spent nearly $50,000 at the 5-star Regis Washington DC, which is one of the nicest hotels in the city. The hotel is located near the White House; its lobby features crystal chandeliers, marble floors, and a baby grand piano. Most evenings, the hotel conducts a ceremony opening a champagne bottle with a saber and then distributes complimentary glasses of champagne.
- SEIU spent over $18,000 at the 5-star InterContinental Hong Kong. The hotel has stunning views of the city's harbor. In 2016, the hotel had one fancy restaurant that was Michelin-rated; now it has two. Each hotel room includes a loaner smart phone that guests can use to make unlimited local or international calls. The phone also offers unlimited data and functions as a hotspot.
- SEIU spent over $8,000 at the 5-star Park Hyatt Chicago, the "flagship Park Hyatt hotel." The hotel has beautiful views of downtown Chicago and Lake Michigan. Rooms in this hotel have remote control blinds, iPads, espresso machines, bathrobes, slippers, and televisions in the bathrooms.
- SEIU spent over $5,000 at the 5-star Westin New York at Times Square. Guests staying at this hotel who forgot their workout clothes can borrow pants or shorts, a shirt, socks, and tennis shoes for just a few dollars. Room service, on the other hand, is much more expensive: the room service menu offers a cheeseburger for $26, yogurt for $12, pancakes for $22, a muffin for $14, and an ice cream sandwich for $14. If none of the room service options suit guests' appetites, they can order a chicken pot pie for $29 in the hotel's bar.
- SEIU spent over $70,000 at the 5-star MGM Grand Detroit, one of the nicest hotels there. The hotel has a casino, a spa, an indoor pool, and Wolfgang Puck Steak, which received a 4-star rating from the Forbes Travel Guide. This rating makes the steakhouse the highest-rated restaurant in the state, according to Forbes.
- SEIU spent over $27,000 at the 5-star MotorCity Casino Hotel in Detroit, also one of the nicest hotels in Detroit. Guests can use the hotel's spa and its pillow library and dine at the hotel's AAA Four Diamond Award-winning restaurant, Iridescence. Iridescence is one of only five restaurants in the state receiving this award. At Iridescence, the menu includes caviar for $125 and a 6-ounce Japanese steak for $120.
- SEIU spent over $5,000 at the 5-star Taj Boston, which was previously a Ritz-Carlton. The hotel is noted for its "vast array of museum-worthy artwork." The hotel's restaurant, The Café,

received the AAA Four Diamond Award; it is one only twelve restaurants in the state receiving this award. The hotel is located on the same block as Burberry, Brooks Brother's, and Armani, and is across the street from Boston Commons. A Tiffany & Co. boutique can be accessed from the hotel's lobby. The hotel offers guests a pillow menu, a bath menu, a bath butler, and complimentary shoeshines. A seasonal fireplace butler is available to assist guests staying in the hotel's fireplace suites.

It's a little hard to believe that SEIU had to spend over $2 million of its members' money at fancy, swanky hotels in just one year. Surely, there were other less costly lodging options that SEIU could have chosen if SEIU's bosses wanted to conserve their members' funds. But because SIEU chose to spend its members' money in this fashion, SEIU members are due an explanation as to who is traveling in luxury at their expense and why.

Richard McCarty is the Director of Research for Americans for Limited Government Foundation.

Anti-establishment, anti-euro parties prevail in Italy

By Robert Romano

Almost a decade after the sovereign debt crisis began in Europe, with increasing sentiment for countries to withdraw from the Eurozone currency union, and for the first time in Italy, a narrow majority voted against the establishment parties.

The trouble? The Italian people voted for two separate anti-establishment parties: The Five-Star Movement with 32.7 percent of the vote and the League with 17.4 percent of the vote.

Italy has one of the largest sovereign debts in the world at €2.5 trillion but since the crisis in sovereign bond markets emerged, hitting Greece, Portugal, Ireland, Spain and Italy the hardest, the debtor nations have been held captive in the euro currency.

Any other sovereign country in such a situation would use its central bank to engage in open market operations and restore confidence to markets, essentially printing money to pay the debt. It would be default by another name.

But Eurozone countries only received assistance from the European Central Bank with very stringent terms. In essence, Brussels was taking over the sovereign decisions of member countries, and dictating terms to legislatures.

The experience helped fuel uprisings all across Europe.

The radical-left Syriza decimated the Socialists in Greece in 2015.

The Five-Star Movement in Italy has slowly gained support in successive elections since 2013 and now is the largest single party in the country. It had consistently supported a national referendum to leave the Eurozone but in this past cycle party leader Luigi Di Maio would only call such a referendum "a last resort, which I hope to avoid."

In the UK, Brexit reached critical mass in 2016 as the British people voted to leave the European Union.

For his part, the League's Matteo Salvini — whose party beat out Silvio Berlusconi's Forza Italia — remains opposed to the Eurozone, stating on the campaign trail, "I remain convinced ... that the euro under these conditions was an error. Which we will put right."

Now, Salvini has become the top contender to lead a national government in Italy. He had formed a center-right coalition with Berlusconi. Together, they garnered 37 percent of the vote. Almost, but not quite enough to get the 40 percent needed to form a government.

To get across the finish line, Salvini has to make a deal. So would Di Maio, whose Five Star Movement — founded by comedian Beppe Grillo — has never joined a governing coalition, always opting for opposition.

Could Salvini and Five Star come together to address Italy's fiscal woes?

Obstacles include divergent views on immigration, with Salvini taking a Trumpian stance against the wave of migration from the Middle East throughout Italy and more broadly Europe.

The party of Matteo Renzi, who has resigned as Prime Minister, could also serve as an obstacle, although Renzi on his way out the door suggested his party would be in opposition and not form a coalition with the Five-Stars. Renzi's center-left coalition only received 23 percent of the vote.

Claudio Borghi, the League's top economist suggested that the Five-Stars form a government with the center-right in an interview with Reuters: "What I would prefer for my country would be the centre-right and 5-Star because I think we could find common ground."

Which, there is something to be said for that. One thing that united Five Star and the center-right was opposition to Renzi's proposed constitutional referendum, which failed by about 6 million votes, losing 41 percent to 59 percent. In many ways, the same coalition showed up in Italy on March 4.

But Salvini ruled it out such a grand coalition, at least initially, stating, "The 5-Stars have changed their minds too many times and on too many topics, so for me it's a big 'no.'"

What about with Renzi? Salvini was quick to quip, "I won't comment on the debacle of others, Matteo Renzi's arrogance has been punished."

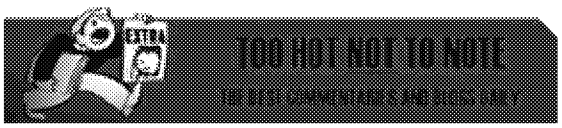
To get to the 40 percent needed to form a government, Salvini will either have to make a deal with Di Maio or with perhaps smaller members of Renzi's coalition.

Di Maio could play the kingmaker or could form the opposition with Renzi's party.

If the center-right and parts of the center-left cannot form a coalition, then Di Maio may be more well-positioned to assume control, in a coalition with parts of the center-right coalition or with Renzi's party.

The question is, what happens? Who knows? It's Italy. Under their constitution, the President of Italy, Sergio Mattarella, determines which party gets an opportunity to create a government. By its nature, the system calls for compromise. Anything could happen. Stay tuned.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following editorial from The Economist, the author describes the mood in China after Xi Jinping abolished presidential term limits and the unrest that creates:

The Economist

Xi Jinping decides to abolish presidential term limits

BLOGGERS in China surpassed themselves in their ingenuity after the Communist Party announced its plan to get rid of presidential term limits, which would have required Xi Jinping to step down as head of state in 2023. One online commentator posted a picture of Winnie-the-Pooh hugging a jar of honey, with the caption "Find the thing you love and stick with it." The Bear of Very Little Brain is used in China as code for the portly Mr Xi—the post was swiftly deleted by humourless censors. Others posted mock condom advertisements with tag lines such as "Doing it twice is not enough" and "I like how you're always on top." (The manufacturer solemnly informed readers that these were fakes.) Other banned terms included "I disagree", "Animal Farm" (the novel), "emigrate", "board the plane" (*dengji*, which also sounds like "ascend the throne") and "Yuan Shikai", an early 20th-century warlord who declared himself emperor and died six months later.

Censorship makes judging public reaction in China hard. But there was more inventive mockery in response to the startling announcement on February 25th than there was during the country's biggest political event of the past few years, a party congress last October. There was also some unusual open dissent. A prominent former editor, Li Datong, and a well-known businesswoman, Wang Ying, both appealed to the legislature through WeChat, a social-media platform, demanding that it reject

what Ms Wang called an "outright betrayal". Many Chinese, it seems, regard scrapping term limits as a return to the bad old days of strongman rule.

Terms of art

Such limits may not matter much in themselves (they will be formally abolished at an annual session of the rubber-stamp parliament, which starts on March 5th). The presidency is a weak office. Mr Xi could stay in power as the party's general secretary and military chief, to which term limits do not apply. But the abolition is still important partly because it is the clearest evidence that Mr Xi does, in fact, plan to ignore convention that party chiefs step down after ten years, and keep all of his jobs after 2023. It also pierces the veil of politics and shows what kind of ruler he wants to be. At a time when he is trying to boost China's image globally as a modern, outward-looking and responsible state, the political system he governs seems premodern, opaque and treacherous.

The system itself is extremely unusual. China has two ladders of authority: the government and the party. The party hierarchy outranks the state one. In other countries, the ministers of finance and foreign affairs (government jobs) are usually the most important ones after the president or prime minister. In China, they are not even in the top 25. Neither man is a member of the Politburo, let alone its inner sanctum, the Politburo Standing Committee. Formally, the People's Liberation Army is controlled by the party, not the government. In one respect, though, Chinese politics is all too normal. As with other Leninist systems, it is bedevilled by the problem of leadership succession. Of the 11 party leaders since 1921 (seven since the party seized power in 1949), only one—Mr Xi's predecessor, Hu Jintao—has stepped down from all his posts in accordance with a timetable. Seven were executed or purged.

In the 1980s, reacting to the chaos of the Mao era, Deng Xiaoping tried to make the system more orderly and predictable by introducing new rules, norms and precedents. These included the reinstitution of the post of president (there had not been one since 1968), along with a two-term limit for the holder of that office as well as the vice-president. Mandatory retirement ages were also introduced. After Mao's one-man freak show, Deng argued that China needed "collective leadership". In a speech in 1980 he said the system should avoid an "over-concentration of power", which, he warned, was "liable to give rise to arbitrary rule". He said it should make a clearer separation between the party and the government. And it had to "solve the problem of succession in leadership". Before he resigned in 1989 as head of the party's Central Military Commission, Deng said his final task was to "take the lead in establishing a retirement system".

As the abolition of term limits shows, he failed—or at least, his reforms failed to rein in Mr Xi. Instead of avoiding an over-concentration of powers, the president has made himself chairman of everything. Instead of separating party from state, he has injected party control into areas which had once been relatively free of it, such as private companies (see article). Now he has cast aside Deng's efforts to introduce a system of succession by timetable.

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Subject: Big Dig 2.0 comes to New York, and the bill goes to everyone else

Why are New York and New Jersey politicians trying to get the rest of the country to finance the Big Dig 2.0?

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 8, 2018

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Big Dig 2.0 comes to New York, and the bill goes to everyone else

There is fight brewing in Congress over the funding of a local transportation project. Senators and House Members from New Jersey and New York are putting pressure on the administration to fund a massive multibillion-dollar local transportation project. President Trump and Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao are pushing back against that idea, not wanting to blow the entire transportation budget on one local project. Why are New York and New Jersey politicians trying to get the rest of the country to finance the Big Dig 2.0?

Trump, Sessions take critical stand against California's new nullification of federal immigration law

The suit against California's nullification of immigration law is an important move by Attorney General Jeff Sessions and President Donald Trump to restore the rule of law before it is too late to turn back, and they are to be commended. At the end of the day, we are a nation of laws. And we either have a country or we don't.

Daily Caller: 6 Revelations In That Christopher Steele Puff Piece

The piece does reveal numerous previously unknown facts about Steele and the dossier. Not all of the facts are favorable to the former MI6 officer and his infamous report.

Big Dig 2.0 comes to New York, and the bill goes to everyone else

By Printus LeBlanc

There is fight brewing in Congress over the funding of a local transportation project. Senators and House Members from New Jersey and New York are putting pressure on the administration to fund a massive multibillion-dollar local transportation project. President Donald Trump and Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao are pushing back against that idea, not wanting to blow the entire transportation budget on one local project.

Why are New York and New Jersey politicians trying to get the rest of the country to finance the Big Dig 2.0?

The Gateway project is the renovation and expansion of the rail line between Newark and New York City, known as the Northeast Corridor. The project was originally supposed to be completed in 2026 and double the train capacity from 24 per hour to 48 while allowing for the possibility of high-speed rail service. The estimated price range has been anywhere from $20 billion to $30 billion, but anyone familiar with the Big Dig knows the price could quickly skyrocket to $70 billion to $80 billion. And for some reason, both New York and New Jersey believe the project is so important the rest of the nation should pay for it.

On Tuesday, Secretary Chao was peppered with questions about the lack of commitment from President Trump while testifying before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Members from the New York and New Jersey area wanted to know where the funds for the local Gateway project are.

Chao would not take the Congressional beating lying down. Chao stood her ground, stating, "New York and New Jersey have got to up their local share… New York and New Jersey are two of the richest states in the country … They need to step up."

Perhaps the most significant line from the hearing was Chao stating, "New York and New Jersey can come up with larger than zero or five percent." The Secretary was noting the paltry $1.75 billion and $1.9 billion committed to by New York and New Jersey, respectively, in December.

This is not what the New York and New Jersey politicians wanted to hear. New York Governor Andrew Cuomo (D) believed there was a deal in place with the Obama administration for the Port Authority to finance half of the project through user fees and the federal government would fund the remaining 50 percent.

Chao was also asked about President Trump's involvement in the funding. It has been reported Trump asked House Speaker Pual Ryan to block funding for the project in the upcoming spending bill, which could amount to over $900 million. The Secretary stated, "The president is concerned about the viability of this project and the fact that New York and New Jersey have no skin in the game. They need to step up and bear their fair share. They are two of the richest states in the country. If they absorb all these funds, there will be no other funds for the rest of the country."

Not only do the President and Secretary Chao not want the feds to pay for the project, but Members of Congress from around the country are also voicing their disappointment with the possibility their communities could be forced to fund the project. Rep. Ted Budd (R-N.C.) stated, "North Carolina and the other 48 states should not have to foot the bill for this hall of fame earmark."

Two questions need to be asked of the New York and New Jersey politicians.

1. If the tunnels are over 100 years old and have needed repair and replacement for a while now, why didn't it get done when the Democrats controlled the House, Senate, and Presidency? Wasn't there a stimulus package for "shovel ready" jobs?

2. If Hurricane Sandy damaged the tunnels and bridges, what did they spend the $50+ billion of from the Sandy Relief bill on?

If New York and New Jersey cannot answer these simple questions, what is to stop this project from becoming another taxpayer-funded boondoggle?

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning stated, "Congress should not force President Trump's hand on funding the Gateway project without states passing legislation to fund the projects themselves at the levels the Trump administration, led by Chao, deems viable to work in a true partnership. Taxpayers from Texas to North Carolina should not have to pay for projects that not even the New York and New Jersey legislatures are willing to finance for their own peoples."

Anyone that has been in the political game for more than five minutes knows how this was going to work. The New York and New Jersey politicians were counting on the federal government to front the money to start the project. Once the project was past the point of no return, tell the federal government it cannot be completed without more federal funds, thereby forcing the American taxpayers to cover the rest of the project.

The whole country laughed at Boston's attempt at the most expensive highway project in the U.S., known as the Big Dig. The project ran a decade behind schedule and cost 190 percent more than the

original estimate. It was plagued by leaks, design flaws, poor execution, and even death. If New York and New Jersey want their own version of the Big Dig, they can have it. Just don't ask the rest of the country to pay for it.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

Trump, Sessions take critical stand against California's new nullification of federal immigration law

By Robert Romano

"Immigration law is the province of the federal government. This Administration and this Justice Department are determined to make it work effectively for the people. I understand that we have a wide variety of political opinions out there on immigration. But the law is in the books and its purpose is clear. There is no nullification. There is no secession. Federal law is 'the supreme law of the land.' I would invite any doubters to Gettysburg, and to the graves of John C. Calhoun and Abraham Lincoln."

That was Attorney General Jeff Sessions addressing the California Peace Officers' Association on March 7, making it clear in no uncertain terms that California's new "law" which makes it illegal for local law enforcement to assist federal officials in detaining illegal immigrants will not stand.

Under Sessions, the Justice Department is suing in federal court to overturn the California policy that prevents police from complying with detainer requests by federal immigration authorities.

It's the new nullification, an unconstitutional attempt by states and cities to claim a "right" not to follow federal law.

And, warns Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning, it is utterly dangerous. "The time of sanctuary states and cities is over. We either have laws or we have anarchy," Manning said.

"The central presumption that the Constitution rests on is the Supremacy Clause, that the Constitution and all laws made pursuant to it are the supreme law of the land. State laws must conform to the federal in cases where the federal government has constitutional authority. It is Congress, not the states, that have the power to make the nation's immigration laws, and states cannot constitutionally undertake an enterprise to defeat those laws," Manning added.

Following the law is not optional, Manning declared, suggesting, "This isn't even a grey area. It's explicitly in the Constitution. This case tests the very premise that we can have a national union, a Constitution and a uniform rule of law, or if we will have 50 sets of rules."

In the pre-Civil War era, there were many attempts by states to repeal or nullify federal laws that they disagreed with.

In 1832, President Andrew Jackson outlined the correct reading on nullification in his Proclamation to the People of South Carolina, a response to South Carolina's attempt to nullify tariffs enacted by Congress, leaving no ambiguity, "I consider, then, the power to annul a law of the United States, assumed by one State, incompatible with the existence of the Union, contradicted expressly by the letter of the Constitution, unauthorized by its spirit, inconsistent with every principle on which it was founded, and destructive of the great object for which it was formed."

Indeed, what other federal laws could states abolish that they disagree with, if following immigration law is optional? Could also states start printing their own money? Declaring their own wars? Providing and maintaining their own navies? Opting out of paying taxes?

It truly is a slippery slope. And if we're not careful, it could spill out into other areas — taking the rule of law with it.

Meaning, the U.S. could be precipitously close to the same crisis that consumed the nation in 1861, when secession by the South in the Civil War very much tested whether the Constitution would be a lasting proposition.

The suit against California's nullification of immigration law is an important move by Attorney General Jeff Sessions and President Donald Trump to restore the rule of law before it is too late to turn back, and they are to be commended.

At the end of the day, we are a nation of laws. And we either have a country or we don't.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from The Daily Caller, Chuck Ross dissects a puff piece in the New Yorker about Christopher Steele and how the piece does more damage to Steele than helps:

THE DAILY CALLER

6 Revelations In That Christopher Steele Puff Piece

By Chuck Ross

A new profile of dossier author Christopher Steele provided several new revelations about the creation of the salacious and unverified dossier.

The piece, from New Yorker reporter Jane Mayer, was widely hailed by mainstream and left-leaning journalists. MSNBC host Rachel Maddow touted it as a "staggering piece of reporting," citing it as the biggest bombshell in the revelation that Steele wrote a memo alleging the Kremlin intervened to block President Donald Trump from selecting Mitt Romney as his secretary of state.

The piece does reveal numerous previously unknown facts about Steele and the dossier. Not all of the facts are favorable to the former MI6 officer and his infamous report.

1. Steele likely knew who funded the dossier

Steele learned months after being hired by Fusion GPS that former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's campaign and the Democratic National Committee (DNC) were funding his investigation, according to Mayer. That is a new revelation and raises even more questions about why the FBI failed to disclose the dossier's funding sources in applications for spy warrants against former Trump campaign adviser Carter Page.

"Several months after Steele signed the deal, he learned that, through this chain, his research was being jointly subsidized by the Clinton campaign and the D.N.C.," Mayer reported.

Republicans have accused the FBI and Justice Department of abusing the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) process by failing to disclose that the Clinton campaign and DNC funded the dossier.

Instead, the application stated only that Fusion GPS, the opposition research firm that hired Steele, told him its client had a political bias against Trump.

"The identified U.S. Person never advised Source #1 as to the motivation behind the research into Candidate #1's ties to Russia," reads the FISA application.

2. Steele used dozens of paid confidential "collectors"

One of the burning questions of the dossier is whether Steele and his firm, Orbis Business Intelligence, paid sources and sub-sources to gather information about Trump.

Glenn Simpson, the founder of Fusion GPS, testified before Congress that Steele did not, but Mayer's reporting suggests he did pay intermediaries for his information.

"To serve its clients, Orbis employs dozens of confidential 'collectors' around the world, whom it pays as contract associates," Mayer reported. "Some of the collectors are private investigators at smaller firms; others are investigative reporters or highly placed experts in strategically useful jobs. Depending on the task and the length of engagement, the fee for collectors can be as much as two

thousand dollars a day." (RELATED: Former CIA Official Says No Evidence Of Trump Campaign Collusion)

The prospect of Steele paying intermediaries has been cause for concern for some former intelligence officials.

Former CIA Deputy Director Michael Morell was concerned about Steele paying for information because sources "are going to tell you truth and innuendo and rumor, and they're going to call you up and say, 'Hey, let's have another meeting, I have more information for you,' because they want to get paid some more," he said in 2017.

3. Work for Kremlin-connected oligarch?

Mayer's report briefly touches on possible links between Steele and Oleg Deripaska, a Russian oligarch with close ties to Vladimir Putin.

It recently emerged that Steele may have worked in the past for Deripaska. Iowa Sen. Chuck Grassley, a Republican, raised questions about any ties between the two, in a letter to Adam Waldman, an American lobbyist who has worked for Deripaska on visa issues since 2009.

Waldman exchanged text messages with Virginia Sen. Mark Warner, a Democrat, to set up a meeting with Steele. In those texts, published by Fox News, Waldman also mentioned possible immunity for Deripaska in exchange for his testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

Mayer suggests there is likely a connection between Deripaska and Steele. If so, it will likely raise questions about the former spy.

"If a financial trail between Deripaska and Orbis can be established, it is likely to raise even more questions about Steele, because Deripaska has already figured in the Russia investigation, in an unsavory light," Mayer reported. (RELATED: Russian Oligarch May Have Links To Christopher Steele)

Deripaska is a former business partner of Paul Manafort, the former Trump campaign chairman who special counsel Robert Mueller recently indicted. Manafort sent emails during the campaign offering briefings to Deripaska, to whom he reportedly owed nearly $20 million from a failed business venture.

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Subject: Armed guard in Maryland, police in Texas remind the nation sometimes the only way to stop determined killers is lethal force, not Democrat-organized walkout rallies

While Democrats are busy organizing turnout for the Congressional midterms with school walkout rallies — which will not stop a single determined killer — communities would be well advised to do the one thing that actually does work. Post guards to secure locations and shoot the killers first. Don't leave the children defenseless.

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 22, 2018

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Congress created the Grain Glitch, Congress should fix it

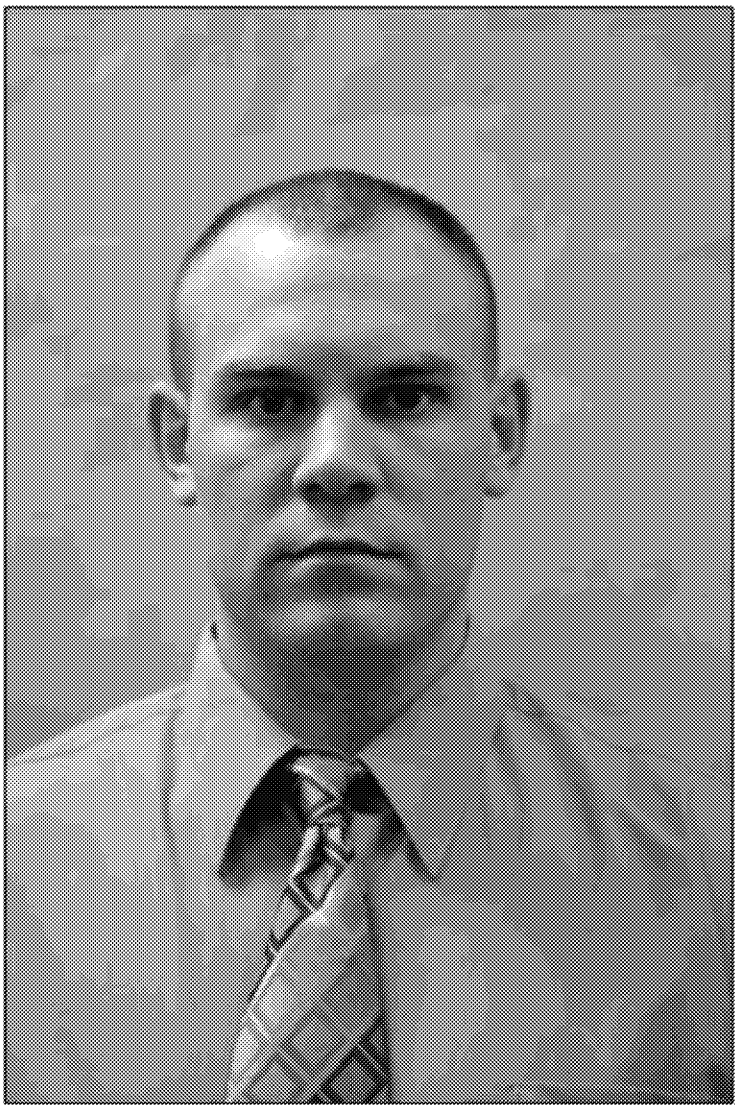
The time has come for Congress to fix a problem they created. With the passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, Republicans in Congress offered generous tax cuts to millions of Americans, but they also created an unfair "grain glitch" that undermines the foundations of competitive capitalism. As Congress focuses on spending measures this week and in the weeks to come, they must fix this glitch in the tax law.

George Neumayr: John Brennan's Thwarted Coup

"Out of power, these aging radicals can't help themselves. They had their shot to stop Trump, they failed, and now they are furious. The adolescent coup talk grows more feverish with each passing day. We have a former CIA director calling for the overthrow of a duly elected president, a former attorney general (Eric Holder) calling for a 'knife fight,' a Senate minority leader speaking ominously about what the intelligence community might do to Trump ('they have six ways from Sunday at getting back at you,' Schumer has said), and assorted former FBI and CIA officials cheering for a coup, such

as CNN's Phil Mudd who says, 'You've been around for 13 months. We've been around since 1908. I know how this game is going to be played. We're going to win.'"

Armed guard in Maryland, police in Texas remind the nation sometimes the only way to stop determined killers is lethal force, not Democrat-organized walkout rallies



By Robert Romano

An armed resource officer and first class deputy, Blaine Gaskill, responded with lethal force to stop a shooting at Great Mills High School in Lexington Park, Md. The gunman is dead and, sadly, the girl he shot remains in critical condition as of this writing, while another boy caught in the crossfire was listed as in stable condition with a bullet wound to the leg.

Far away, in Austin, Texas, as police surrounded the mail bomber responsible for six bombings that killed two and injured six others, ready to shoot him if necessary, the bomber killed himself, blowing himself up.

The school resource officer in Maryland and police in Austin are the real-life heroes who have reminded the nation that sometimes the only thing that can stop a determined killer is lethal force.

To prevent future shootings or bombings, then, will require armed guards to harden otherwise soft targets like schools to minimize the loss of life when these tragic incidents happen. If the question is how to save as many lives as possible when faced with a cold-blooded killer, it's to kill him first — every time.

It's common sense. In Latin, the saying was "Si vis pacem, para bellum." That is, if you want peace, prepare for war.

Some might not have the stomach for this sort of thing but that's what it will take. Every time.

If a potential killer thinks that if he tries to go to a school to shoot people, he'll be riddled with bullets, that can and will deter future attacks. Otherwise, the shootings stand out very much as copycat murders, exploiting the soft targets of gun-free zones.

As those charged with the responsibility of securing our own communities, as parents, we either heed these lessons and secure our schools or our kids could be next. This is a matter every city and town must address, as security is first and foremost the local community's responsibility.

Compare that solution with those apparent students who organized a national school walkout on March 14. What specific, life-saving proposals did they call for?

Every Town for Gun Safety, which walkout groups are promoting, vaguely proposes "common-sense public safety laws" that "respects the Second Amendment." But really, it's about more background checks that are already used in gun purchases, overturning concealed carry laws and inexplicably opposing armed guards to secure locations. The group doesn't want communities to defend their schools.

Why not? Even if one supported more gun control restrictions, there more than 300 millions guns in this country. If every proposal Every Town is calling for was enacted, somebody, whether a police officer or armed citizen, would still be needed to stop a determined killer dead in his tracks.

Nationalschoolwalkout.us, where students can organize their own walkouts — another is planned for April 20 — is even vaguer about what the call to action is, writing, "We're protesting the violence in schools and the lack of change that has occur[r]ed to stop that. The day is also a time for students to interact on an elevated platform they have never had before. It is a day of discourse and thoughtful sharing. Bringing together communities and students to get a national discussion rolling."

And if "action" doesn't happen, the group promises, "we won't tolerate any more inaction on this issue. And if cowardly politicians fail to act, young people will show them the consequences of letting so many Americans die by voting them out in November."

So, it's not about securing the schools, it's about mobilizing public outrage and generating a get out the vote operation for Democrats. How do we know it's partisan?

It's being organized by Indivisible.org, where students can go to organize their own school walkouts. It has published a guide, "Indivisible: A Practical Guide for Resisting the Trump Agenda." The group is composed of "former progressive congressional staffers who saw the Tea Party beat back President Obama's agenda."

You read that right. The group is based on the success of the tea parties in 2009 and 2010. On their site, they write, "Like us, you probably deeply disagree with the principles and positions of the Tea Party. But we can all learn from their success in influencing the national debate and the behavior of national policymakers."

The agenda is simple. Stall action on President Donald Trump's agenda in Congress this year, and then vote in the Democrats in November. The walkouts organized after the school shooting in Parkland, Fla. in February was simply an opportunistic reaction by Indivisible and other already-formulated groups.

What issues besides vague "gun control" do they support? Opposing tax cuts, opposing any deal with Trump on DACA, opposing the war in Yemen or any actions against Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons, and protecting Obamacare and expanding Medicaid.

So, really, the national school walkouts are a way of building the group's mailing lists for the big push in November for the Congressional midterms. The group's website clearly states, "National School Walkout is movement powered and led by students across the country. Event registration and a map of events for the April 20th school walkouts are hosted in-kind by the Indivisible Project team." Organize a walkout or participate in one put on by Indivisible and you'll probably be added to their database to receive action alert communications on their wheelhouse of issues.

Responsible school administrators can make up their own minds. But these walkouts are not tea parties being organized by adults in their spare time. They are disrupting educational activities to elect Democrats. It's absolutely partisan and they should not be occurring during school hours. These events should be cancelled and the organizers looked into for disrupting official government functions like public schools, a punishable offense in most states.

First Amendment rights notwithstanding, time and place restrictions on speech in public schools are there for this very reason, and State attorneys general and the Justice Department, which can look into the fact this is occurring across state lines, should investigate. Local communities need not tolerate their school districts being platforms to elect one political party over another.

In the meantime, while Democrats are busy organizing turnout for the Congressional midterms — which will not stop a single determined killer — communities would be well advised to do the one thing that actually does work. Post guards to secure locations and shoot the killers first. Don't leave the children defenseless.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Congress created the Grain Glitch, Congress should fix it

By Natalia Castro

The time has come for Congress to fix a problem they created. With the passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, Republicans in Congress offered generous tax cuts to millions of Americans, but they also created an unfair "grain glitch" that undermines the foundations of competitive capitalism. As Congress focuses on spending measures this week and in the weeks to come, they must fix this glitch in the tax law.

The "grain glitch," or Section 199A of the tax reform law, is a tax incentive granted to farmers who sell agricultural products to co-ops rather than independent, private buyers. When selling to co-ops, farmers can now deduct up to 20 percent of their total sales made; however, when selling to privately held or investor-owned companies, the farmers can now only deduct 20 percent of their income.

This gives farmers the potential to eliminate far more of their entire income tax liability when selling to co-ops, providing a clear incentive to move their business in that direction and destroying the natural competition in the market.

Senate Agriculture Committee member John Thune (R-S.D.) included the glitch to offset the removal of deductions on domestic grain production, but even Thune has since reversed his decision.

Ryan Wrasse, spokesman for Senator Thune, wrote in an email to Ag News' Farm Forum, "Ultimately, Sen. Thune believes that producers should make decisions about where and how to sell their products without the tax code unfairly tipping the scales in favor of marketing to one type of business entity or another."

If Senator Thune is serious about fixing his error, he must use the Senate's upcoming spending debate as a platform for removing the grain glitch.

Congress is heading toward another government shutdown on Friday if a spending bill is not passed. Up to this point, Congress has been passing short-term spending bills to fund the government for weeks at a time, but now Congressional Republicans are pushing for an omnibus bill worth over $1.3 trillion.

The Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council on March 5, 2018, explains, "One vehicle to fix the glitch is the pending budget bill, where the action will occur soon and which makes sense given the urgency of the matter. It would be a shame if Democrats use the issue as 'leverage' or to let it hang in order to inflict political damage on Republicans. Livelihoods and a critical sector of the economy may be upended as a result of the error."

By using the spending bill as a chance to fix the grain glitch, Congressional Republicans can prevent their mistake from inflicting further damage on the country's economy.

Karin Kerrigan of the Morning Consult on March 19, 2018, explained, "There's additional risk if those outside the agricultural sector begin to seize on cooperatives as a potential tax shelter. In this worst-case scenario, widespread use of a deduction on gross income becomes the Ice-Nine of tax reform's standing as a sensible reform initiative... We all make mistakes, although, honestly, most of us don't upend American industries with a typo. Congress needs to fix this problem before anyone else is harmed by this error."

Congress passed a historic tax reform package, but it was not perfect. They must now seize upon opportunities like the spending bill to fix their mistake. The grain glitch allows the government to pick winners and losers in the market, which should never be the government's role, so now it is up to Congress to remove that authority.

Natalia Castro is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

ALG Editor's Note: In the following featured column from the American Spectator, as former CIA Director John Brennan's attempt to overturn the results of the 2016 election become clearer, the more he doubles down:

John Brennan's Thwarted Coup

By George Neumayr

It was the Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky who coined the phrase the "dustbin of history." To his political opponents, he sputtered, "You are pitiful, isolated individuals! You are bankrupts. Your role is played out. Go where you belong from now on — into the dustbin of history!"

It is no coincidence that John Brennan, who supported the Soviet-controlled American Communist Party in the 1970s (he has acknowledged that he thought his vote for its presidential candidate Gus Hall threatened his prospects at the CIA; unfortunately, it didn't), would borrow from Trotsky's rhetoric in his fulminations against Donald Trump. His tweet last week, shortly after the firing of Andrew McCabe, reeked of Trotskyite revolutionary schlock: "When the full extent of your venality, moral turpitude, and political corruption becomes known, you will take your rightful place as a disgraced demagogue in the dustbin of history. You may scapegoat Andy McCabe, but you will not destroy America... America will triumph over you."

America will triumph over a president it elected? That's the raw language of coup, and of course it is not the first time Brennan has indulged it. In 2017, he was calling for members of the executive branch to defy the chief executive. They should "refuse to carry out" his lawful directives if they don't agree with them, he said.

Trump has said that the Russians are "laughing their asses off" over the turmoil caused by Obamagate. No doubt many of the laughs come at the sight of Brennan, a supporter of Soviet stooges like Gus Hall, conducting a de facto coup from the top of the CIA and then continuing it after his ouster. Who needs Gus Hall when John Brennan is around? This time the Russians don't even have to pay for the anti-American activity.

Another hardcore leftist, Samantha Power, who spent the weeks after Trump's victory rifling through intelligence picked up on his staff, found Brennan's revolutionary tweet very inspiring. "Not a good idea to piss off John Brennan," she wrote. Sounded pretty dark and grave. But not to worry, she tweeted later. She just meant that the former CIA director was going to smite Trump with the power of his "eloquent voice."

Out of power, these aging radicals can't help themselves. They had their shot to stop Trump, they failed, and now they are furious. The adolescent coup talk grows more feverish with each passing day. We have a former CIA director calling for the overthrow of a duly elected president, a former attorney general (Eric Holder) calling for a "knife fight," a Senate minority leader speaking ominously about what the intelligence community might do to Trump ("they have six ways from Sunday at getting back at you," Schumer has said), and assorted former FBI and CIA officials cheering for a coup, such as CNN's Phil Mudd who says, "You've been around for 13 months. We've been around since 1908. I know how this game is going to be played. We're going to win."

In all this unhinged chatter, the partisan origins of Obamagate become clearer. The same anti-Trump hatred on display in their tweets and punditry drove the political espionage. James Kallstrom, the former FBI Assistant Director, notes that the "animus and malice" contained in Brennan's tweet is "*prima facie* exposure of how he felt about Trump before the election."

All the key figures in the decision to open up a probe on Trump wanted him to lose — from Brennan to Peter Strzok, whose anti-Trump machinations included, according to the latest batch of texts with his mistress, plotting to manipulate a buddy on the FISA court. In one text, he wonders if he can finagle a meeting with his friend by inviting him to a "cocktail party." The impropriety aforethought on

display in that tweet is staggering, but of course the media has paid no attention to it, preoccupied as it is with Andrew McCabe's retirement income.

McCabe, by the way, has removed all doubts about his capacity for partisan lying with his post-firing statement, which rests entirely upon it. With all of its anti-Trump special pleading, the statement reads like it was cobbled together by Rachel Maddow. Like so many other ruling-class frauds, McCabe seeks absolution for his perjury and leaking through liberal politics. I stand with the liberal powerful against Trump, you can't touch me — that's the upshot of his defense. Comey has taken the same tack. The title of his forthcoming book should be: *How the Law Doesn't Apply to the Self-Appointed Ruling Class.*

What an amazing collection of entitled creeps, who long ago convinced themselves that the "rule of law" is identical to what they see as their sacred right to exercise power in any way they see fit. All the blather about Trump's violation of the law is simply a projection of their own lawlessness. So far the coup has been thwarted. They had hoped to stop him in the campaign through political espionage. But that didn't work. Then they tried to upend him through spying during the transition, holding out hope until the very last moment, as evidenced by Susan Rice penning her sham exculpatory note only after Trump's swearing-in. Now they join Brennan in seeking to bury Trump in Mueller's dustbin.

Trotsky would have understood the shorthand of all the tweets, polemics, and posturing perfectly. Nothing in this show trial bears any relationship to reality or justice. It is simply an expression of power politics, which doesn't always end well for its exponents. As even an old Gus Hall supporter like John Brennan must know, and perhaps his fulminating panic indicates a dawning awareness of it, those who talk the loudest about their enemies heading for the ash heap of history often end up in it.

Americans for Limited Government
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Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Both candidates backed Trump's tariffs

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 14, 2018

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Trump's tough trade stance big winner in Pennsylvania special election

In the western Pennsylvania Congressional district special election, both the Democrat and Republican candidates nominally backed Trump's 25 percent tariff on steel and 10 percent tariff on aluminum, with more than 99 percent of the vote going to the candidates who favored trade protection. If there is any silver lining to the close result, it is that President Trump's trade policies remain overwhelmingly popular in Pennsylvania, a state along with Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin that he owes his presidency to.

Why is George Soros buying District Attorneys?

Last week the effort to turn Texas Blue failed in spectacular fashion. For weeks, the Democrat party believed they would be able to turn out more primary voters in Texas than Republicans. The leading Democrat to challenge Sen. Ted Cruz (R) in the general election believed he would come close to or equal the primary numbers of Cruz. When the election was over it was a slaughter, but a local District Attorney race in Bexar County, county with San Antonio, is the most interesting race in the state. Why is George Soros buying District Attorneys around the country?

If the Rosenstein-Mueller investigation has gone outside the scope of the 2016 election, it should be ended

Americans for Limited Government President: "If, per Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein, Special Counsel Robert Mueller is 'not an unguided missile,' then we can safely assume that Rosenstein has signed off on all of Mueller's prosecutions, including those that fall outside the scope of the 2016 election campaign. Attorney General Jeff Sessions' original recusal was for anything to do with the 2016 election. Given Rosenstein's expansive view of the recusal, it's time for the Attorney General to have a direct conversation with him and explain that Mueller does not have free rein to investigate anything before or after the elections and related the campaigns."

Daily Caller: Obama Campaign Hired Fusion GPS To Investigate Romney

"The Barack Obama presidential campaign hired Fusion GPS in 2012 to dig up dirt on Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney, according to a book released on Tuesday. The Obama campaign hid its payments to Fusion GPS through its law firm, Perkins Coie. The arrangement is similar to the one that the Clinton campaign and Democratic National Committee used to pay Fusion for its investigation of then-candidate Donald Trump in 2016."

Trump's tough trade stance big winner in Pennsylvania special election

By Robert Romano

The Republican versus Democrat split in the Pennsylvania 18th Congressional District special election shows a virtual tie between Rick Saccone and Conor Lamb, with Lamb with the slight edge.

It was a district that President Donald Trump carried by 20 points, but on the other hand, is one with a slight voter registration advantage for Democrats.

It's also a district that is being eliminated by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's latest redistricting scheme. Come November its geography won't matter for the Congressional midterms.

So, what is the takeaway from this race? President Trump's trade policies remain overwhelmingly popular in Pennsylvania.

Beneath the razor thin margin between the two parties is an overwhelming consensus in western Pennsylvania in favor of Trump's call for "fair and reciprocal" trade. A mandate. Trump owes his presidency to Pennsylvania, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin, and the silver lining in this result is that he should be in solid shape in these states headed into 2020. Trump remains popular in the district.

Both candidates nominally backed Trump's 25 percent tariff on steel and 10 percent tariff on aluminum, with more than 99 percent of the vote going to the candidates who favored trade protection.

If there was a candidate in favor of the globalist position on trade, it was Libertarian candidate Drew Miller, who drew less than 1 percent of the vote. In western Pennsylvania, there is almost no constituency for that line.

If Saccone had not adopted the Trump position on trade, and if Trump and the national party had not come to the rescue for the campaign for funds and crowds, he would have been shellacked.

Also at play was Lamb's more moderate stance on the Second Amendment and at least a professed pro-life stance on abortion compared to other Democrats. He ran on infrastructure and jobs and used union politics to his advantage. That plus an energized Democrat base — always the case for opposition parties when the midterms come around — made a huge difference for Lamb.

It tells Democrats how they might want to run their races in 2018, running more Blue Dog, Joe Manchin-style Democrats that were once prevalent in their caucus. Time will tell how that plays out in the coming months, as the national Democrat party moves further to the left.

For Congressional Republicans, who in Washington, D.C. remain deeply divided on Trump's trade politics — unlike Republican voters who support it decisively — there is a tougher slog. They do not have much of a record on the issue, and their rhetoric following Trump's announced tariffs sounded nominally like outright opposition.

White House Chief Economic Advisor Gary Cohn resigned over the issue.

Could that gut reaction by the GOP establishment against the President have made a difference in Pennsylvania? By all accounts, Saccone was an underwhelming candidate who lacked fundraising ability, organization and did not have any momentum to speak of until Trump came to the district the weekend before the election.

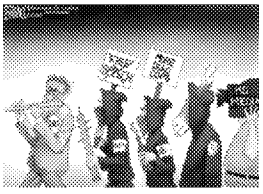
If you were a voter on the fence in Pennsylvania's 18th District, Saccone's appeals could have sounded insincere. His campaign website and letter does not even mention the trade issue. The material hardly mentioned jobs too. Instead it was more a boilerplate Republican platform, not something tailor made for Pennsylvania.

To win, Saccone needed to pick up many of the Democrat votes that Trump carried in 2016, bringing the Trump base out but also having that crossover appeal that helped Trump win in Pennsylvania. Again, in this district, Democrats had a slight voter registration edge. This could have been an easy win but it required more targeting of Democrats and Independents who have voted Republican in the past few election cycles. Remind voters that Democrats have not delivered on their rhetoric.

At the end of the day it's about in-roads. In Pennsylvania's 18th Congressional District, Lamb with a more moderate platform was able to bring Democrat votes home in a more conservative area. The lesson for Republicans in 2018 is to pay attention *and in these swing districts* build their coalitions beyond the traditional Republican base the way Trump did in 2016, and rally to the President, or pay the price in November.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Why is George Soros buying District Attorneys?



By Printus LeBlanc

Last week the effort to turn Texas Blue failed in spectacular fashion. For weeks, the Democrat party believed they would be able to turn out more primary voters in Texas than Republicans. The leading Democrat to challenge Sen. Ted Cruz (R) in the general election believed he would come close to or equal the primary numbers of Cruz. When the election was over it was a slaughter, but a local District Attorney race in Bexar County, county with San Antonio, is the most interesting race in the state. Why is George Soros buying District Attorneys around the country?

Over the last few years, progressive billionaire George Soros has dumped millions of dollars into district attorney races around the country. Soros has used his considerable finances and political clout to challenge district attorneys that do not fit into his progressive ideological agenda.

- 2015, Scott Colom and Robert Shuler Smith Miss., $400,000
- 2016, Andrew Warren, Hillsborough County, Fla.
- 2016, Kim Foxx, Cook County, Ill.
- 2016, Kim Ogg, Harris County, Texas $600,000
- 2016, Aramis Ayala, Orlando, Fla., $1.4 million
- 2017, Larry Krasner Philadelphia, Pa., $1.45 million
- 2018, Joe Gonzales Bexar County, Texas, $958,000

There is a noticeable pattern in the races. The Soros groups come in and dump large amounts of money in the final moments of the campaign. The link between the Soros funds and the candidate are only discovered after the election is held.

Another pattern is the noticeable politics of the elected officials. These are not law and order politicians. Not only are they Democrats, but they are also hard left progressives. Soros contributes the funds through his Open Society Foundation and the over 100 organizations his money controls:

1. American Immigration Council: This non-profit organization is a prominent member of the open-borders lobby. It advocates expanded rights and amnesty for illegal aliens residing in the U.S.
2. Fair Immigration Reform Movement: This is the open-borders arm of the Center for Community Change.

3. Faithful America: This organization promotes the redistribution of wealth, an end to enhanced interrogation procedures vis a vis prisoners-of-war, the enactment of policies to combat global warming, and the creation of a government-run health care system.

4. Immigration Advocates Network: This alliance of immigrant-rights groups seeks to "increase access to justice for low-income immigrants and strengthen the capacity of organizations serving them."

5. National Council of La Raza (Now Unidos US 55): This group lobbies for racial preferences, bilingual education, stricter hate-crime laws, mass immigration, and amnesty for illegal aliens.

6. National Immigration Forum: Opposing the enforcement of present immigration laws, this organization urges the American government to "legalize" *en masse* all illegal aliens currently in the United States who have no criminal records, and to dramatically increase the number of visas available for those wishing to migrate to the U.S. The Forum is particularly committed to opening the borders to unskilled, low-income workers, and immediately making them eligible for welfare and social service programs.

These are just a few of the more high-profile organizations, but they all have similar missions. They want open borders, amnesty for all illegal immigrants in the U.S., and want to free criminals from prison in the shape of prison reform. None of the positions are very popular, which is why officials do not campaign on them and the Soros money comes in late in the game. By the time people realize Soros is backing their official, the election has already happened.

If you want to know how the communities are doing that are under the thumb of Soros controlled politicians there are examples all around the nation:

- Recently in Denver, an illegal immigrant was released by local law enforcement despite an ICE detainer after being arrested for a hit and run that killed the other driver.

- The Mayor of Oakland acted as a gang lookout for hundreds of illegal immigrant criminals by warning them of an impending ICE raid. Illegal immigrants convicted of child sex crimes, assault, and drug trafficking.

- Alternative charges and sentencing of illegal immigrants to avoid reporting criminals to ICE. This creates two justice systems, one for citizens and one for illegal immigrants in which the illegal immigrants are given lesser punishments.

And let us not forget California, a state wholly owned by Soros, was just named the state with the worst quality of life by U.S. News. Sounds like wonderful communities to live in don't they.

District Attorney races do not usually garner much national attention, but the Republican National Committee should start paying attention. George Soros is spending millions to destroy the U.S. justice system. If he cannot do it through Congress or the Presidency, he will do it through local law enforcement. His bought and paid for politicians are releasing criminal illegal immigrants onto the streets to continue targeting innocents. They are turning cities like San Francisco and Los Angeles into open sewers of human feces and drug paraphernalia. George Soros and his organizations may be the most dangerous non-governmental entities in the world.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

If the Rosenstein-Mueller investigation has gone outside the scope of the 2016 election, it should be ended

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning issued the following statement expressing continued concern that Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein's direction of Special Counsel Robert Mueller is well outside the scope of the 2016 election campaign:

"If, per Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein, Special Counsel Robert Mueller is 'not an unguided missile,' then we can safely assume that Rosenstein has signed off on all of Mueller's prosecutions, including those that fall outside the scope of the 2016 election campaign. Attorney General Jeff Sessions' original recusal was for anything to do with the 2016 election. Given Rosenstein's expansive view of the recusal, it's time for the Attorney General to have a direct conversation with him and explain that Mueller does not have free rein to investigate anything before or after the elections and related the campaigns.

"Rosenstein, by his own admission, approved the targeting of Michael Flynn for legal activities that occurred after the election, and whose only crime was telling the truth to the FBI and running out of money to defend himself from a political prosecution. This is particularly troubling given reports that the FBI agents who interviewed Flynn did not believe he lied. Attorney General Sessions' recusal was the right thing to do from a legal perspective, but only in the narrow scope of the campaign. We're far beyond that now. Rosenstein's guided missile at the President is flying well outside the space where it was sanctioned. It is time for Rosenstein to either confine the scope of Mueller's seemingly unending investigation to the period of the election or step aside. This is particularly true given the House Intelligence Committee's impending conclusion that there was no collusion between Russia and the Trump campaign, putting an end to Rosenstein's stated rationale for the special counsel. It's time for the country to move forward."

Permalink

ALG Editor's Note: In the flowing piece from Daily Caller, Chuck Ross details a new book from Michael Isikoff that implicates President Obama hired Fusion GPS in 2012 through the same law firm the DNC and Clinton campaign used in 2016

THE DAILY CALLER

Obama Campaign Hired Fusion GPS To Investigate Romney

By Chuck Ross

The Barack Obama presidential campaign hired Fusion GPS in 2012 to dig up dirt on Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney, according to a book released on Tuesday.

The Obama campaign hid its payments to Fusion GPS through its law firm, Perkins Coie. The arrangement is similar to the one that the Clinton campaign and Democratic National Committee used to pay Fusion for its investigation of then-candidate Donald Trump in 2016.

"In 2012, Fusion GPS was hired to do opposition research on Mitt Romney for Barack Obama's reelection campaign," reads "Russian Roulette: The Inside Story of Putin's War on America and Donald Trump's Election."

The book is written by Michael Isikoff and David Corn, two veteran reporters who met during the 2016 campaign with Steele and Fusion GPS founder Glenn Simpson. (RELATED: New Book Raises Questions About Steele Dossier Source)

"As had become standard practice in the shadowy world of 'oppo' research, the Obama campaign's payments to Fusion GPS were never publicly disclosed; the money paid to the investigative firm was reported on campaign disclosure reports as legal bills to the campaign's law firm, Perkins Coie," the book reads.

The Obama for America committee paid Perkins Coie around $3 million during the 2012 election cycle, according to filings with the Federal Election Commission, A vast majority of the payments were earmarked for "Legal Services."

It is not clear how the law firm paid Fusion GPS for its research on Romney, a former Massachusetts governor.

Click here for the full story.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

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Subject: Trump's steel tariffs protect national security, put end to $8 billion foreign aid to Canada, Mexico, South Korea and Brazil every year

If U.S. trade partners don't like it, they might consider not dumping subsidized steel and aluminum here in violation of U.S. law

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 6, 2018

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Trump's steel tariffs protect national security, put end to $8 billion foreign aid to Canada, Mexico, South Korea and Brazil every year

Allowing rampant flooding of U.S. markets by foreign steel is not only harming a domestic industry's profitability, in the process it is weakening that industry's ability to defend the national security of the United States in the event of war. To be a strong nation, we need a vibrant domestic steel industry.

Cartoon: Protection

President Trump is protecting national security by protecting American steel production from foreign dumping.

Section 199A of the tax reform bill needs to be fixed

Section 199A of the tax reform law provides additional tax incentives to farmers who sell agricultural products to co-ops rather than independent private buyers. When selling to co-ops, farmers can now deduct up to 20 percent of their total sales made; however, when selling to privately held or investor-owned companies, the farms can now only deduct 20 percent of income. This sort of market distortion in the tax code, picking winners and losers, should not happen and Congress must remedy this errant provision.

Ladar Levison: The FBI's secret warrant to surveil Carter Page should scare all Americans and spur reform

"It has become clear that a secret, non-adversarial system of judicial review is an insufficient check to our intelligence agencies and law enforcement. When express disagreement on a foreign policy issue — namely the current sanctions against Russia — form even part of the basis of an allegation which meets the bar for a probable cause warrant, there is something terribly wrong with the current system.

The health of our political system depends on the ability to express an unpopular opinion without official recrimination."

Trump's steel tariffs protect national security, put end to $8 billion foreign aid to Canada, Mexico, South Korea and Brazil every year

By Robert Romano

President Donald Trump is keeping the promise he made in 2016 and is protecting the American steel industry, instituting a 25 percent tariff across the board on steel imports. No nations are excluded.

The move comes as the U.S. imported 34.5 million metric tons from around the world, a 16 percent increase from 2016 when it was 30 million metric tons.

In comparison, while America's steelworks are heating up once again, they comparatively only grew by 3.4 percent in 2017 according to the International Trade Administration to 81.6 million metric tons from 78.5 million metric tons.

This flooding of U.S. markets is designed to drive down prices here by dumping subsidized steel products here, making it harder for domestic producers to maintain market share. The imported steel is much cheaper.

In the event of war, keeping U.S. productive capacity at high levels is critical, to prevent shortages at a time when production would be needed the most and imports cannot be guaranteed.

As the Commerce Department noted in its recommendation for instituting the tariffs: "Domestic steel production is essential for national security applications. Statutory provisions illustrate that Congress believes domestic production capability is essential for defense requirements and critical infrastructure needs, and ultimately to the national security of the United States."

That is one reason the Commerce Department in its findings suggested that the U.S. use at least 80 percent of its annual capacity including imports. Right now, that number is only at 72.3 percent because of the flooding of domestic markets. The report found "Utilization rates of 80 percent or greater are necessary to sustain adequate profitability and continued capital investment, research and development, and workforce enhancement in the steel sector."

In other words, allowing rampant flooding of U.S. markets by foreign steel is not only harming a domestic industry's profitability, in the process it is weakening that industry's ability to defend the national security of the United States in the event of war.

Here, the circumstances surrounding the tariff matter a lot. Allowing foreign dumping weakens the entire sector and makes sustaining a war effort harder. To be a strong nation, we need a vibrant domestic steel industry.

Foreign dumping of steel is eating the domestic market share, and in the future it could harm us at a time when we can afford it the least. We never know when war will come.

Even if the tariffs resulted in less consumption of imported steel, the U.S. steel industry appears ready to pick up any slack. Indeed, the whole point is to stimulate demand for U.S.-made steel.

Yes, it's a tax. But there are few other tools available to address increasing dependence on foreign steel and foreign dumping onto domestic markets. This happens to be one of the tools that's actually in the Constitution.

To ignore violations of trade agreements does not strengthen free trade, it weakens the argument for it. Again, it is not conservative to allow for rampant breach of contracts, it is corrupt.

Critics will argue that the tariffs will result in reciprocal tariffs on U.S. steel. But we import far more than we export, as the rest of the world does not return the favor. All it does is send its subsidized steel here. It's not nearly as interested in buying ours.

Others will complain that taxing Canada and Mexico will harm North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). 16 percent of U.S. imports of steel come from Canada. 9 percent comes from Mexico.

However, if every nation was not included in the tariff, there would be a perverse incentive for companies to ship their steel to Canada and Mexico, and then dump it here to avoid the tariffs.

This is something that has already been seen in recent years with dumping of aluminum in Mexico by China to circumvent NAFTA.

In fact, China currently has a 50 percent global market share in steel. How much of that excess capacity is being passed through global markets and into U.S. markets via free trade zones? It is hard to say, since such abuses are hard to catch. Steel is often recycled, making it tough to trace its origins when imports finally arrive here. With an across-the-board tariff, any incentive for such shenanigans ceases.

Moreover, one wonders what other domestically produced materials needed for national security the U.S. should outsource? Rare earths? Already done. Uranium? We'd be stupid to become dependent on foreign sources of the commodity needed for nuclear weapons.

Why should steel be treated any differently? Having a robust, domestic and, yes, profitable steel industry is critical to defending this nation. Letting foreign economies dump here without reciprocal action constitutes a threat to national security.

Others still will raise objections simply out of general opposition to any and all tariffs. However, they might consider that it is reciprocity in reducing tariffs that has led to freer trade historically. Dumping, subsidies and tariffs beget more tariffs. Which is key to point out. These tariffs are in response to actions by foreign trade partners. They're the ones provoking us.

The tariff is expected to raise $9 billion in revenue and increase U.S. domestic market share. The Commerce Department report predicts, "According to the Global Trade Analysis Project (GTAP) Model, produced by Purdue University, a 24 percent tariff on all steel imports would be expected to reduce imports by 37 percent (i.e., a reduction of 13.3 million metric tons from 2017 levels of 36.0 million metric tons). This tariff rate would thus result in imports equaling about 22.7 million metric tons, which will enable an 80 percent capacity utilization rate at 2017 demand levels (including exports)."

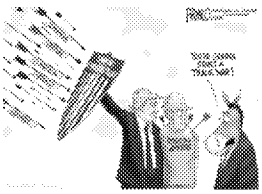
Overall, the 25 percent steel tariff ends what amounts to $8 billion of foreign aid every year — when the value of the decreased imports are taken into account — to other countries to increase their global market shares in one of the world's most valuable commodities.

President Trump promised reciprocity in trade. Sometimes that means tariffs when trade partners cheat. If U.S. trade partners don't like it, they might consider not dumping subsidized steel and aluminum here in violation of U.S. law. To keep America safe, we need to keep American steel strong.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Cartoon: Protection

By A.F. Branco



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Section 199A of the tax reform bill needs to be fixed

By Natalia Castro

Within the last month, more than 160 million Americans opened their bank accounts to find that the recently passed Republican tax plan provided them with a more substantial paycheck and more economic mobility.

But one area of the tax code appears to have had unintentional consequence of picking winners and losers in agriculture.

Despite the overwhelming benefits for families and small businesses a provision within the tax plan could have far-reaching negative consequences on agricultural products sold to private buyers. This provision, seemingly entered as a last-minute mistake, must be rectified during the March funding debate in order to provide equal competition to the market.

Section 199A of the tax reform law provides additional tax incentives to farmers who sell agricultural products to co-ops rather than independent private buyers. When selling to co-ops, farmers can now

deduct up to 20 percent of their total sales made; however, when selling to privately held or investor-owned companies, the farms can now only deduct 20 percent of income.

Jacob Bunge and Richard Rubin of the Wall Street Journal put this into context, "Consider a simplified example of a wheat farmer with $500,000 in annual grain sales and $80,000 in profit. A farmer selling grain to a cooperative could deduct 20 percent of sales, wiping out the entire income-tax liability. By contrast, if the farmer sells grain to an independent grain operator, the farmer's deduction would be limited to 20 percent of the profit, or $16,000, leaving that farmer with up to $64,000 in taxable income."

This provision removes natural competition from the market by financially coercing farmers to sell to co-ops rather than private entities.

David Fiebiger, general manager of the private grain elevator on the western edge of Aberdeen, South Dakota, told Ag News in January, "Unintended consequences of Section 199A give the farmer incentive to sell to a co-op versus a nonco-op... Over the past couple weeks, a lot of the people that sit at the table have realized the unintended consequences and have been in agreement that something needs to happen to change that to get the playing field back to even."

Several news agencies and politicians have begun calling this the "grain glitch" for its far-reaching negative consequences on the US grain industry. Scott Greenburg of the Tax Foundation has noted that this glitch could create a hole in the tax system, allowing some household and business to shield their income entirely from taxes through the use of co-ops.

The worst part is that this provision has no reason to be included in the tax reform legislation. After revisions to the bill did away with deductions on domestic grain production that was available to both manufacturers and farm co-ops, Senate Agriculture Committee member John Thune (R-S.D.) added Section 199A to offset the removed deductions.

Negative feedback from farmers has caused Senator Thune and other agriculture state Senators, such as Senator John Hoeven (R-N.D.), to rethink the provision. Ryan Wrasse, a spokesman for Thune, told the aforementioned Ag News that the senator is working on tweaking the law to better even the playing field.

"Ultimately, Sen. Thune believes that producers should make decisions about where and how to sell their products without the tax code unfairly tipping the scales in favor of marketing to one type of business entity or another," Wrasse wrote in an email.

Additionally, 86 members of the House of Representatives sent a letter to Speaker of the House Paul Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell urging Congress to address the provision. The letter reads, "Unfortunately, Section 199A goes too far and has created a tax advantage for producers who sell to cooperatives instead of private and independent businesses... We're concerned this provision unfairly distorts the marketplace with the potential to reduce competition, directly harm small and independent businesses, and increase consolidation in the agriculture industry."

With government funding set to expire on March 23, the next government funding bill could be a vital opportunity to solve this mistake.

As Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning noted in a March 2018 press release, "Congress needs to take action immediately in the next funding bill to restore fair competition

between farm co-ops and private and independent businesses… Government should not be picking winners and losers like this in the tax code."

The tax cuts are and will continue to be a win for most Americans, but for it to truly allow for fair competition in the agricultural sector and to stop distorting markets, Section 199A must be altered. With funding discussions coming this month, Congressional members must listen to the numerous House representatives and members of the agricultural community urging change and rectify this harmful provision.

Natalia Castro is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

ALG Editor's Note: In the following opinion piece from NBC News, Ladar Levison discusses what all civil libertarians are talking about and that is the surveillance of an American citizen based on spotty investigating and reporting:

The FBI's secret warrant to surveil Carter Page should scare all Americans and spur reform

By Ladar Levison

As technology makes state scrutiny increasingly easy, America has seen a corresponding increase in the abuse of its surveillance tools. With a legal framework, first created in the 1970s — before the widespread use of computers, email or cell phones — the few safeguards we have are evaporating rapidly. The curious case of Carter Page, where the FBI used a Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court warrant to surveil the virtually unknown, unpaid foreign policy adviser to the Trump campaign, is only the latest example of a larger, existential threat to the American system of political discourse.

When a physical search occurs in accordance with American criminal law, law enforcement must show probable cause and obtain permission from a judge, and then present a given suspect with a warrant, and a receipt for the items removed. When law enforcement wants to obtain a criminal wiretap, they similarly have to show probable cause to obtain a warrant, carefully collect information related to potential crimes, and then disclose that information if charges are wrought. The key difference, is that with the latter, the suspect will only discover they've had their privacy violated after they've been indicted. With a FISC warrant, it's possible a suspect will never find out, even if charges are eventually filed.

In the case of Carter Page, his private life was monitored, for almost a year, without his knowledge, and then placed on display for strangers at the FBI to peruse, all based on a suspicion that he was colluding with Russia. On the basis of hearsay, business associations, and possibly Page's political opinions, the FBI received a classified surveillance warrant and then renewed it three times. And yet, Page was never officially charged — suggesting that, even given the ability to surveil him in ways that

might make the general public cringe, the FBI was never able to find enough evidence for a single crime.

It has become clear that a secret, non-adversarial system of judicial review is an insufficient check to our intelligence agencies and law enforcement. When express disagreement on a foreign policy issue — namely the current sanctions against Russia — form even part of the basis of an allegation which meets the bar for a probable cause warrant, there is something terribly wrong with the current system. The health of our political system depends on the ability to express an unpopular opinion without official recrimination.

Unfortunately the growing number of transgressions against people, like Carter Page, remain hidden behind a veil of secrecy. Officials speak of safeguards, but it's clear that a secret process, and a complacent judiciary, which has elevated prosecutors and members of law enforcement onto a dangerous perch, provides no safety. The FISC, where the warrant for Page was issued, has grown particularly notorious for granting broad surveillance authority based on little, or in some cases, no evidence. Out of more than 39,000 applications presented to the FISC through the end of 2016, only 51 have been rejected, with the majority, 34, of those rejections coming in 2016.

While most FISC warrants remain classified, the few which have emerged through leaks, or been forced into the public domain by First Amendment lawsuits, paint a rather bleak picture. These warrants tell us the FISC has issued “mass” warrants which permit government surveillance based on statistical “selectors.”

These documents also tell us the FISC routinely includes authorization in their warrants for the government to surveil people in contact with their target, and people in contact with the contact; in a scheme referred to as “chaining,” these authorizations will include 2 or 3 “hops.” While the text of the Carter Page warrant application, and court approval, remain a secret, one shudders to think this authority was used to spy upon other members of the Trump campaign team who were in contact with Page. (The memo of the House intelligence committee’s Democrats about the warrant suggests that some unknown number of Trump campaign advisors were the subject of FBI “sub-inquiries.”)

Regardless of what the FBI and DOJ claim was the basis for the Carter Page warrant, the fact remains that he was never officially charged. Had there been evidence of a crime, one would assume there would have been charges. It becomes hard to reconcile his innocence with four separate findings of “probable cause.” The inevitable result is that we must question the court's definition of the word “probable.”

Yet Page is one of the lucky ones: While he still lacks access to the warrant application that prompted his surveillance, he does have proof he was indeed spied upon. He also knows the duration within which his privacy was assaulted, and the degree to which his life was violated. For the vast majority of Americans who've been placed under this microscope — and had their life dissected by faceless government agents — the origin, and methods used to defile their privacy remain a mystery.

Click here for the full story.

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Subject: After Supreme Court takes pass on DACA, the President should enforce immigration laws

President Trump must do primary the job of the executive- enforce the law

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

Feb. 28, 2018

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After Supreme Court takes pass on DACA, the President should enforce immigration laws

President Trump must do primary the job of the executive- enforce the law. With increased pressure from the courts surrounding Trump's immigration plans, he truly only has one option- enforce the law to the best of his ability to get unsafe, illegal immigrants off the streets. The Supreme Court is fumbling over how to handle the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, but that does not mean violent former recipients of the program need to be kept in the country.

Workers Defeat UFCW

On February 7th, the UFCW suffered another setback. On that day, there was an ambush unionization election at a co-op grocery store in Northfield, Minnesota, a Democratic-leaning city about 40 miles south of Minneapolis. While the workers who supported unionization had the backing of UFCW Local 1189, the workers who opposed the union were on their own. The co-op's management remained neutral; and no third-party organization intervened. In the end, however, the union's opponents didn't need help; they were able to defeat the UFCW — one of the largest and wealthiest unions in the country — with over 55% of the vote.

President Trump and CFIUS must block Singapore's Broadcom takeover of Qualcomm

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning: "The federal government should immediately reject attempts by Singapore's Broadcom company to acquire San Diego, California-based Qualcomm Corporation. National security threats take many forms, and one area of increasing concern is the attacks on U.S. companies who are instrumental in building the nuts and bolts of the modern Internet. Qualcomm, out of San Diego, CA, is one such company. The developer of both 3G and 4G technology, Qualcomm is at the cutting edge of creating the next technological leap to 5G. The future leap will see machines talking to and directing the activities of other machines pushing society into a world where driverless vehicles are the norm, and many aspects of life are literally on

automatic pilot. We simply cannot afford to have foreign governments through their managed corporations, have the ability to claim exclusive control the 5G technology that will be running the economy of the future."

Wired: How Trump conquered Facebook – without Russian ads

"During the run-up to the election, the Trump and Clinton campaigns bid ruthlessly for the same online real estate in front of the same swing-state voters. But because Trump used provocative content to stoke social media buzz, and he was better able to drive likes, comments, and shares than Clinton, his bids received a boost from Facebook's click model, effectively winning him more media for less money."

After Supreme Court takes pass on DACA, the President should enforce immigration laws

By Natalia Castro

President Donald Trump must do primary the job of the executive under Article II of the Constitution — enforce the law. With increased pressure from the courts surrounding Trump's immigration plans, he truly only has one option, enforce the law to the best of his ability to get unsafe, illegal immigrants off the streets. The Supreme Court is fumbling over how to handle the Deferred Action for Childhood

Arrivals (DACA) program, but that does not mean violent former recipients of the program need to be kept in the country.

On Monday, the Supreme Court denied a request from President Trump to hear a case surrounding DACA before an appellate court has heard the case, in hopes of receiving a ruling on the program before it is set to expire in March. By refusing to listen to the case early, the Supreme Court upholds an earlier decision which keeps the program open until litigation concludes, temporarily preventing Trump from ending the program.

The program, created by President Obama in 2012, provided legal status to illegal immigrants brought to the U.S. as minors and those of parents with U.S.-born children in a sister program. Despite the President having no authority to grant amnesty to millions of immigrants violating Congressional law, Obama implemented this system and gave these "dreamers" a new sense of false hope.

The unconstitutionality of this law was confirmed when President Obama attempted to implement a second program entitled Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) which protected illegal immigrants that came into the country as adults and had children.

The Fifth Circuit Court immediately ruled DAPA as unconstitutional and noted that Obama's decision to simply not enforce the law by deporting these illegal immigrants "does not transform presence deemed unlawful by Congress into lawful presence and confer eligibility for otherwise unavailable benefits."

The Supreme Court chose not to hear the case and upheld the lower court's ruling that the President had no authority to override the laws of Congress. With DACA facing similar legal challenges, President Trump elected to wind down the program and called upon Congress to enact legislation protecting the DACA recipients that deserve protection.

As Attorney General Jeff Sessions explained in a Sept. 2017 press release, "The executive branch, through DACA, deliberately sought to achieve what the legislative branch specifically refused to authorize on multiple occasions. Such an open-ended circumvention of immigration laws was an unconstitutional exercise of authority by the Executive Branch... If we were to keep the Obama Administration's executive amnesty policy, the likeliest outcome is that it would be enjoined just as was DAPA... Congress should carefully and thoughtfully pursue the types of reforms that are right for the American people."

As a result, DACA has become a centerpiece of the immigration reform debate. But while Democrats like House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi call these DACA recipients "innocent young people in communities across America," she paints a wildly inaccurate picture of the group she is protecting.

The Washington Times's Stephen Dinan reported on Jan. 2018, Border Patrol agents in San Diego arrested two illegal immigrant "dreamers" for their roles in separate smuggling operations. This has been a common trend, Dinan also reports on a Texas highway checkpoint which arrested several more dreamers in smuggling operations last year. These are only some of the cases which led to some 2,139 dreamers having their DACA status revoked as of this summer.

In his September statement, Sessions also noted, "The effect of this unilateral executive amnesty, among other things, contributed to a surge of unaccompanied minors on the southern border that yielded terrible humanitarian consequences. It also denied jobs to hundreds of thousands of Americans by allowing those same jobs to go to illegal aliens."

Inevitably, with the promise of amnesty given to millions of young people, security cannot be maintained.

Most recently, Frank Miles of Fox News has reported, just days after the shooting of 17 students in Parkland, Florida, a 21 year old DACA recipient, Abigail Hernandez, posted to the East High School Facebook page, "I'm coming tomorrow morning and I'm going to shoot all ya b-----es".

Police found a shotgun in her home during the arrest.

Not only was Hernandez living in the country under the protection of the DACA program, but the city where she resides, Rochester, N.Y., is considered a sanctuary city, so Hernandez will likely not be deported.

Despite DACA being held up in courts, this is where Trump can act now to protect the American people. For those who violate the terms of the DACA program, having been arrested for a felony offense, nothing is preventing President Trump from enforcing the law and deporting these individuals. Dare the left to challenge that in court.

President Trump must show the American people that not all DACA recipients are the "innocent young people" and "dreamers" that the left describes. The dangerous, violent illegal immigrants residing in this country, often protected by their local municipalities must be deported.

President Obama may have attempted to usurp congressional authority by enacting DACA and DAPA, but now President Trump must restore the rule of law and the separation of powers. By deporting illegal immigrants who have broken the laws of this country while living under Obama's protective veil, Trump will send the strong message that the President will always do the executive's one true job: enforce the law.

Natalia Castro is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

Workers Defeat UFCW

By Richard McCarty

In recent years, the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) has experienced a number of setbacks. Since 2001, the union has lost over 100,000 members. In addition to declining membership, the union has experienced unwanted press attention over the past few years. For example, after a 2015 indictment, UFCW's organizing coordinator for the marijuana industry was sentenced to prison for fraud and other crimes late last year. Another UFCW boss, Mickey Kasparian, has been mired in a scandal involving sexual harassment and discrimination for over a year. In January, two officials at two different UFCW locals were indicted for crimes, including racketeering; both men are alleged to have had ties to the Mafia.

On February 7th, the UFCW suffered another setback. On that day, there was an ambush unionization election at a co-op grocery store in Northfield, Minnesota, a Democratic-leaning city about 40 miles south of Minneapolis. While the workers who supported unionization had the backing of UFCW Local 1189, the workers who opposed the union were on their own. The co-op's management remained neutral; and no third-party organization intervened. In the end, however, the union's opponents didn't need help; they were able to defeat the UFCW — one of the largest and wealthiest unions in the country — with over 55% of the vote.

The secretive unionization effort began last summer, but it took until last month for the union to finally collect the 12 signatures that it needed for an election. Pathetically, the unionization campaign still resorted to using dishonest tactics to gather these few signatures. For example, some co-op employees were told that signing a union authorization card only meant that they wanted more information. (In actuality, signing such a card gives a union the right to represent an employee.) Co-op workers were also falsely told that over two-thirds of the staff had already signed the cards.

Many co-op employees were unaware of the UFCW's campaign until the posting of the Notice of Petition for Election in January. There was no agreement among union supporters as to why exactly the store needed a union. Some workers wanted higher pay, while others claimed the co-op had engaged in unspecified unfair labor practices. The union organizer claimed the co-op was hiding money from its workers and could afford to pay them more. It's unclear how she would know this.

Several co-op employees decided to fight the union. One of the union's opponents, Bob N., managed to get a copy of the contract that the UFCW negotiated with a Minneapolis co-op grocery store. Bob posted this contract in his store's break room. It turns out that the Northfield co-op's wages and benefits were as good as — and in some ways better than — the compensation package that the UFCW had negotiated with the co-op in the much larger city. Of course, unlike the employees of the Minneapolis store, the workers at the Northfield store don't have to pay union dues. Bob also wrote several newsletters and put up a number of posts from the UFCWMonitor.com, a blog that chronicles the activities of the union, for his co-workers to read.

Although the UFCW had the advantage of both time and resources, it still lost the ambush election. It appears the UFCW would like to try to unionize the Northfield co-op again next year. The good news is that next time, the union's opponents will have had an entire year to prepare for the election, rather than less than three weeks. Bob and his co-workers who opposed the UFCW are a great example of how regular people, with very little time to organize, can still defeat a powerful union when they're armed with the facts.

Richard McCarty is the Director of Research for Americans for Limited Government Foundation.

President Trump and CFIUS must block Singapore's Broadcom takeover of Qualcomm

Feb. 28, 2018, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement urging President Donald Trump and the Committee on Foreign

Investment in the United States (CFIUS) to block the hostile takeover of Qualcomm by Singapore's Broadcom:

"The federal government should immediately reject attempts by Singapore's Broadcom company to acquire San Diego, California-based Qualcomm Corporation.

"National security threats take many forms, and one area of increasing concern is the attacks on U.S. companies who are instrumental in building the nuts and bolts of the modern Internet. Qualcomm, out of San Diego, CA, is one such company. The developer of both 3G and 4G technology, Qualcomm is at the cutting edge of creating the next technological leap to 5G. The future leap will see machines talking to and directing the activities of other machines pushing society into a world where driverless vehicles are the norm, and many aspects of life are literally on automatic pilot.

"Qualcomm is one of the companies most likely to create the software to make this system run, but China's Huawei and South Korea's Samsung are among those competing to be first. This matters because whoever wins the battle in developing 5G, will be providing the guts of the world's industrial future. It can be expected that an unscrupulous company controlled by a foreign government would use this advantage to put backdoors into various systems making the world's economy vulnerable to blackmail.

"Given the national security importance of Qualcomm's continuance as a U.S. company, the federal government's Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, should immediately meet and block any takeover of the company by its foreign rival.

"In 2016, President Obama succeeded in giving away operational control over the Internet's domain name system to a foreign focused vendor, now it is up to the Trump administration to deny the foreign takeover of the one company in America that is building the guts of how business will use the Internet in the future. With all the threats around the world, this little discussed one is as important over the long-run as the nuclear threat posed by North Korea and others. We simply cannot afford to have foreign governments through their managed corporations, have the ability to claim exclusive control the technology that will be running the economy of the future."

Permalink here.

ALG Editor's Note: In the following investigative report from Wired Magazine: Antonio Garcia Martinez investigates the impact Russian Facebook ads compared with Trump Facebook ads had on the election:

WIRED

How Trump conquered Facebook – without Russian ads

By Antonio Garcia Martinez

IT'S NOT EVERY day that a former work colleague gets retweeted by the president of the United States.

Last Friday, Rob Goldman, a vice president inside Facebook's Ads team, rather ill-advisedly published a series of tweets that seemed to confirm the Trump administration's allegations regarding the recent indictments of 13 Russian nationals by Special Counsel Robert Mueller. To wit, the tweets said that the online advertising campaign led by the shadowy Internet Research Agency was meant to divide the American people, not influence the 2016 election.

You're probably skeptical of Rob's claim, and I don't blame you. The world looks very different to people outside the belly of Facebook's monetization beast. But when you're on the inside, like Rob is and like I was, and you have access to the revenue dashboards detailing every ring of the cash register, your worldview tends to follow what advertising data can and cannot tell you.

From this worldview, it's still not clear how much influence the IRA had with its Facebook ads (which, as others have pointed out, is just one small part of the huge propaganda campaign that Mueller is currently investigating). But no matter how you look at them, Russia's Facebook ads were almost certainly less consequential than the Trump campaign's mastery of two critical parts of the Facebook advertising infrastructure: The ads auction, and a benign-sounding but actually Orwellian product called Custom Audiences (and its diabolical little brother, Lookalike Audiences). Both of which sound incredibly dull, until you realize that the fate of our 242-year-old experiment in democracy once depended on them, and surely will again.

LIKE MANY THINGS at Facebook, the ads auction is a version of something Google built first. As on Google, Facebook has a piece of ad real estate that it's auctioning off, and potential advertisers submit a piece of ad creative, a targeting spec for their ideal user, and a bid for what they're willing to pay to obtain a desired response (such as a click, a like, or a comment). Rather than simply reward that ad position to the highest bidder, though, Facebook uses a complex model that considers both the dollar value of each bid as well as how good a piece of clickbait (or view-bait, or comment-bait) the corresponding ad is. If Facebook's model thinks your ad is 10 times more likely to engage a user than another company's ad, then your effective bid at auction is considered 10 times higher than a company willing to pay the same dollar amount.

A canny marketer with really engaging (or outraging) content can goose their effective purchasing power at the ads auction, piggybacking on Facebook's estimation of their clickbaitiness to win many more auctions (for the same or less money) than an unengaging competitor. That's why, if you've noticed a News Feed ad that's pulling out all the stops (via provocative stock photography or other gimcrackery) to get you to click on it, it's partly because the advertiser is aiming to pump up their engagement levels and increase their exposure, all without paying any more money.

During the run-up to the election, the Trump and Clinton campaigns bid ruthlessly for the same online real estate in front of the same swing-state voters. But because Trump used provocative content to stoke social media buzz, and he was better able to drive likes, comments, and shares than Clinton, his bids received a boost from Facebook's click model, effectively winning him more media for less money. In essence, Clinton was paying Manhattan prices for the square footage on your smartphone's screen, while Trump was paying Detroit prices. Facebook users in swing states who felt Trump had taken over their news feeds may not have been hallucinating.

(Speaking of Manhattan vs. Detroit prices, there are some (very nonmetaphorical) differences in media costs across the country that also impacted Trump's ability to reach voters. Broadly, advertising costs in rural, out-of-the-way areas are considerably less than in hotly contested, dense urban areas. As each campaign tried to mobilize its base, largely rural Trump voters were probably cheaper to reach than Clinton's urban voters. Consider Germantown, Pa. (a Philly suburb Clinton won by a landslide) vs. Belmont County, Ohio (a rural county Trump comfortably won). Actual media costs are closely guarded secrets, but Facebook's own advertiser tools can give us some ballpark estimates. For zip code 43950 (covering the county seat of St. Clairsville, Ohio), Facebook estimates an advertiser can show an ad to about 83 people per dollar. For zip code 19144 in the Philly suburbs, that number sinks to 50 people an ad for every dollar of ad spend. Averaged over lots of time and space, the impacts on media budgets can be sizable. Anyway ...)

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Subject: Time for the nation to have an honest dialogue about violence

Rather than infringe on everyone's rights, perhaps they should try to come together around some things that could be done

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

Feb. 27, 2018

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Time for the nation to have an honest dialogue about violence

The "we have to do something" argument remains the worse possible reason to ban guns, yet it remains the only argument for the left to cling to. The media selected student spokespersons coming out of the Florida murders basically offer this argument and little more with an emotional tinge. Of course, because they have not thought deeply about the subject, the simplistic "something" is to ban certain firearms. Rather than infringe on everyone's rights, perhaps they should try to come together around some things that could be done.

Cartoon: Dereliction of Duty

Why does government never accept responsibility for its actions?

Andrew McCarthy: The Schiff Memo Harms Democrats More Than It Helps Them

"The FBI and the Justice Department heavily relied on the Steele dossier's uncorroborated allegations. You know this is true because, notwithstanding the claim that "only narrow use" was made "of information from Steele's sources," the Democrats end up acknowledging that "only narrow use" actually means significant use — as in, the dossier was the sine qua non of the warrant application. The memo concedes that the FISA-warrant application relied on allegations by Steele's anonymous Russian hearsay sources that…"

Time for the nation to have an honest dialogue about violence

By Rick Manning

Almost twenty-five years ago, my almost nine-year tenure as a state lobbyist with the National Rifle Association came to an end. After fighting with every ounce of my being to stop encroachments on the right to keep and bear arms, I was done, vowing that I would spend my energy on other worthwhile political pursuits.

While, over time, I have occasionally written an article or made a statement related to firearms, most notably releasing a report demonstrating how Florida's concealed carry law has saved hundreds upon hundreds of lives, my goal to avoid talking about semi-auto firearms in the future was pretty much kept intact.

Until last week's Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC), where I was scheduled for more than fifteen guest appearances on radio and television stations across the nation hitting more than 500 markets. And suddenly, I was in a time warp talking about the Second Amendment once again. Here is what I learned.

Rifles still are almost never used in homicides, never were and still aren't.

The arguments remain virtually the same. The only differences are that those who wish to ban guns are slightly more honest in their talking points, and they have virtually abandoned the idea that the mere possession of a gun ratchets up the likelihood of violence, as state after state has passed handgun carry laws and the predicted flood of violence has not only not happened, but homicide rates have gone down.

Finally, the "we have to do something" argument remains the worse possible reason to ban guns, yet it remains the only argument for the left to cling to. The media selected student spokespersons coming out of the Florida murders basically offer this argument and little more with an emotional tinge. Of course, because they have not thought deeply about the subject, the simplistic "something" is to ban certain firearms.

Rather than infringe on everyone's rights, perhaps they should try to come together around some things that could be done.

Every state across the nation could provide educators a choice of whether to carry a gun on campus with the requirements set by the state. Those who choose to carry concealed on campus could receive additional compensation to cover their costs for on-going training, ammunition and even their handgun and holster to avoid out of pocket costs if the school district was so inclined. After all, coaches and other teachers involved in extra-curricular activities receive stipends for their trouble, certainly those teachers who volunteer to protect the children in the event of what amounts to a terrorist attack should be treated similarly.

For those school districts who worry about the additional costs to them for providing the same type of stipend that sports or extracurricular activity teachers receive, the choice seems simple. If it comes down to whether you will have a tennis team or a safer campus, cut the tennis team. If you need bigger savings, then eliminate high school football and use the savings to fund this and other district wide school safety measures. Obviously, no school will do this, and the resources will be found from the metaphorical couch cushions of the district budget, but the priority should be clear.

Another element to this idea would be to provide a veteran's preference for school hiring. The obvious advantage would be that veterans have combat training and would be able to provide a panoply of skill sets that hopefully would never need to be used. What's more, they would be much more likely to run toward gun fire rather than cowering behind vehicles outside the building.

And finally, it seems reasonable that a child's juvenile record be included in the background check database when considering whether, as an eighteen-year old, they are allowed to purchase a long-gun. If they have a violent juvenile record, they should be denied, at least until they turn twenty-one years old, when their actions as adults becomes the only consideration on purchasing.

Of course, the last suggestion would not have had any impact on the situation in Broward County, Florida, due to the county's decision to bury all violent juvenile crime in a stream of warnings reportedly to improve the standing of the school district in various quality ratings.

In Broward County, Florida, no matter the reason, there was a choice made to ignore glaring, flashing warning signs with three dozen real reports that the same child was in trouble. It was these decisions that failed everyone this past Valentine's Day. If only Broward County had been more concerned with Nikolas Cruz' mental health from day one, he likely would either have chosen a different path or would have been removed from society and Stoneman Douglas High School would have remained in relative anonymity.

Mental health issues are extremely difficult, and they should be. Mental health professionals worry about the stigmatism attached to seeking help and rightfully do not want seeking psychiatric services criminalized. And civil libertarians are rightfully concerned that simple acts like calling a suicide hotline as a teen could be used as a permanent block for future exercise of constitutional rights.

A middle ground pathway needs to be found which protects the rights of the individual against being falsely accused or permanently stained by an accusation, while allowing for the enforcement of the federal Gun Control Act of 1968 which denies those adjudicated mentally incompetent the ability to purchase a firearm.

These are the discussions and dialogue that is worth having. But as long as the left is stuck on demanding the elimination of the individual right to keep and bear arms as the something that must be done, nothing will be.

The NRA is already at the table with suggestions that most people should be able to embrace, but unfortunately, working toward honest solutions is not nearly as sexy for those who fund the gun confiscation movement as is their default impulse to never let a good crisis go to waste. And so long as this is true, real dialogue and action on honest solutions will tragically fall by the wayside.

Rick Manning is the President of Americans for Limited Government.

Cartoon: Dereliction of Duty

By A.F. Branco

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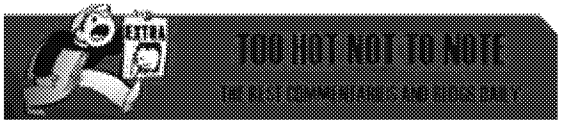

ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from National Review, Andrew McCarthy breaks down the Schiff Memo and describes how it actually bolsters the claims in the Nunes Memo:

NATIONAL REVIEW

The Schiff Memo Harms Democrats More Than It Helps Them

By Andrew McCarthy

Maybe Adam Schiff has more of a sense of humor than I'd have given him credit for. The House Intelligence Committee's ranking Democrat begins his long-awaited memo — the minority response to the Nunes memo that was penned by staffers of the committee's Republican majority — by slamming Chairman Devin Nunes's unconscionable "risk of public exposure of sensitive sources and methods for no legitimate purpose." The Schiff memo, which has been delayed for weeks because the FBI objected to its gratuitous effort to publicize highly classified intelligence, including methods and sources, then proceeds to tell its tale through what appear to be scores of blacked-out redactions of information Schiff pushed to expose.

Heavy Reliance on Steele Dossier Confirmed

The FBI and the Justice Department heavily relied on the Steele dossier's uncorroborated allegations. You know this is true because, notwithstanding the claim that "only narrow use" was made "of information from Steele's sources," the Democrats end up acknowledging that "only narrow use" actually means *significant* use — as in, the dossier was the *sine qua non* of the warrant application. The memo concedes that the FISA-warrant application relied on allegations by Steele's anonymous Russian hearsay sources th
at:

Page met separately while in Russia with Igor Sechin, a close associate of Vladimir Putin and executive chairman of Roseneft, Russia's state-owned oil company, and Igor Divyekin, a senior Kremlin official. Sechin allegedly discussed the prospect of future U.S.-Russia energy cooperation and "an associated move to lift Ukraine-related western sanctions against Russia." Divyekin allegedly disclosed to Page that the Kremlin possessed compromising information on Clinton ("kompromat") and noted the possibility of its being released to Candidate #1's [i.e., Donald Trump's] campaign. . . . This closely tracks what other Russian contacts were informing another Trump foreign policy adviser, George Papadopoulos.

This passage puts the lie to two of the main Democratic talking points:

1. This was obviously the most critical allegation against Page. The Democrats attempt to make much of Page's trip to Moscow in July 2016, but the uncorroborated Sechin and Divyekin meetings, which Page credibly denies, are the aspect of the Moscow trip that suggested a nefarious Trump–Russia conspiracy. *That's what the investigation was about.* Far from clandestine, the rest of Page's trip was well publicized and apparently anodyne. And saliently — for reasons we'll get to in due course — Page was clearly prepared to talk to the FBI about the trip if the Bureau wanted to know what he was up to.

   Moreover, because Page was an American citizen, FISA law required that the FBI and the DOJ show not only that he was acting as an agent of a foreign power (Russia), but also that his "clandestine" activities on behalf of Russia were a likely *violation of federal criminal law*. (See FISA, Section

1801(b)(2)(A) through (E), Title 50, U.S. Code.) It is the Steele dossier that alleges Page was engaged in arguably criminal activity. The Democrats point to nothing else that does.

2. Democrats implausibly insist that what "launched" the FBI's counterintelligence investigation was not Steele's allegations but intelligence from Australia about George Papadopoulos's contact with what Democrats elusively describe as "individuals linked to Russia." As we learned when Papadopoulos pled guilty, though, it is anything but clear that these "individuals linked to Russia" had much in the way of links to Putin's regime: London-based academic Joseph Mifsud, who is from Malta and apparently does not speak Russian; an unidentified woman who falsely pretended to be Putin's niece; and Ivan Timofeev, a program director at a Russian-government-funded think tank.

   Even if we assume for argument's sake that these characters had solid regime connections — rather than that they were boasting to impress the credulous young Papadopoulos — they were patently not in the same league as Sechin, a Putin crony, and Divyekin, a highly placed regime official. And that, manifestly, is how the FBI and the DOJ saw the matter: They sought a FISA warrant *on Page*, not Papadopoulos. And, as the above-excerpted passage shows, they highlighted the Steele dossier's sensational allegations about Page and then feebly tried to corroborate those allegations with some Papadopoulos information, not the other way around. (More on that when we get to Schiff's notion of "corroboration.")

Concealing the Dossier's Clinton-Campaign Origins

Another major takeaway from the Schiff memo is that the FBI and the DOJ withheld from the FISA court the fact that Steele's work was a project of the Clinton campaign. Naturally, the reader must ferret this admission out of a couple of dense paragraphs, in which Democrats risibly claim that the "DOJ was transparent with the Court about Steele's sourcing."

How's this for transparency? The FISA warrant application says that Steele, referred to as "Source #1," was "approached by" Fusion GPS founder Glenn Simpson, referred to as "an identified U.S. person," who

indicated to Source #1 that a U.S.-based law firm had hired the identified U.S. Person to conduct research regarding Candidate #1's [i.e., Trump's] ties to Russia. (The identified U.S. Person and Source #1 have a longstanding business relationship.) The identified U.S. Person hired Source #1 to conduct this research. The identified U.S. Person never advised Source #1 as to the motivation behind the research into Candidate #1's ties to Russia. *The FBI speculates that the identified U.S. Person was likely looking for information that could be used to discredit Candidate #1's campaign.* [Emphasis in Schiff memo, p. 5]

The first thing to notice here is the epistemological contortions by which the DOJ rationalized concealing that the Clinton campaign and the DNC paid for Steele's reporting. They ooze consciousness of guilt. If you have to go through these kinds of mental gymnastics to avoid disclosing something, it's because you know that being "transparent" demands disclosing it.

Next, Schiff — again, hilariously enough to make you wonder if it's done tongue-in-cheek — accuses Nunes of hypocrisy for condemning the omission of Mrs. Clinton's name after having rebuked the Obama administration's "unmasking" of American names. Of course, the two things have nothing to do with each other.

"Unmasking" refers to the revelation of American identities *in intelligence reports*. These are Americans who, though not targeted as foreign agents, are incidentally intercepted in surveillance. In marked contrast, we are talking here about *a FISA warrant application*, not an intelligence report. In a warrant application, it is the DOJ's honorable practice, and the judiciary's expectation, that the court must be informed about the material biases of the sources of the factual allegations that the DOJ claims amount to probable cause.

As the Democrats' own excerpt from the FISA application illustrates, unmasking has nothing to do with it, because there is no need to use names at all: Note that Simpson is referred to as "an identified U.S. person"; Perkins-Coie is referred to as "a U.S.-based law firm." The dispute here is not about the failure to use the words "Hillary Clinton." They could have referred to *"Candidate #2."* To state that "Candidate #2" had commissioned Steele's research would have been just as easy and every bit as appropriate as the DOJ's reference to a "Candidate #1," who might have "ties to Russia." Had DOJ done the former, it would not have "unmasked" Hillary Clinton any more than Donald Trump was unmasked by DOJ's description of him as "Candidate #1"; but it would have been being "transparent" with the FISA court. By omitting any reference to Clinton, the DOJ was being the opposite of transparent.

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Subject: Agree or disagree with the steel and aluminum tariffs, trade warfare is already being waged against the U.S.

Obviously, no one wants a trade war, but how do you know the other side isn't in a trade war already?

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 9, 2018

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Agree or disagree with the steel and aluminum tariffs, trade warfare is already being waged against the U.S.

Last week the Trump administration announced it would impose a 25 percent tariff on imported steel and a 10 percent tariff on imported aluminum. Many in the media and were quick to lose their mind as usual. Before judging President Trump's actions, those criticizing should look at the real world instead of the utopian society they want to live in. In the real-world trade is used as a weapon and it is time the U.S. wake up to that reality.

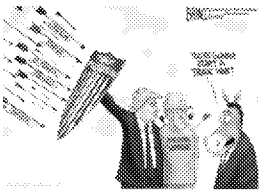
Republicans in Congress continue to dismantle oppressive regulations

Republicans in the House of Representatives have spent this week breaking down the oppressive regulatory regime the previous administration put into place. President Obama dramatically expanded the influence of the executive branch through agencies like the Environmental Protection Agency(EPA). House Republicans are now working to pass legislation that mitigates the impact of overreaching federal policies, but barriers in the Senate could make this a difficult task.

Foreign Policy Magazine: China's Long Arm Reaches into American Campuses

"While many countries, including the United States, fund educational activities abroad, the Chinese government's direct support for, and control over, student groups appears to be unique. Beijing's influence over these groups is also beginning to raise questions and concerns among students on American campuses, who fear they will be accused of being agents of espionage. The growing ties are also concerning U.S. government officials, who are wary of China's political and economic reach in the United States."

Agree or disagree with the steel and aluminum tariffs, trade warfare is already being waged against the U.S.



By Printus LeBlanc

Last week the Trump administration announced it would impose a 25 percent tariff on imported steel and a 10 percent tariff on imported aluminum. Many in the media and were quick to lose their mind as usual. Before judging President Donald Trump's actions, those criticizing should look at the real world instead of the utopian society they want to live in. In the real-world trade is used as a weapon and it is time the U.S. wake up to that reality.

A 2014 White Paper from U.S. Army Special Operations Command on Unconventional Warfare discusses different methods of warfare being used by various adversaries. With regards to China, it states, "China will use a host of methods, many of which lie out of the realm of conventional warfare. These methods include trade warfare, financial warfare, ecological warfare, psychological warfare, smuggling warfare, media warfare, drug warfare, network warfare, technological warfare, fabrication warfare, resources warfare, economic aid warfare, cultural warfare, and international law warfare."

This is more than abstract theory. There is actual recent historical evidence to prove nations use trade and economic warfare to accomplish a goal.

The U.S. and Saudi Arabia used the oil trade as a weapon against the U.S.S.R. in the 1980's. The Soviets, as the Russians are today, were wholly dependent upon revenue from the fossil fuel industry to fund the government. President Reagan's administration issued National Security Decision Directive 66 (NSDD-66) titled East-West Economic Relations & Poland-Related Sanctions. The actions targeted included:

- No new contracts to buy Soviet natural gas;
- Accelerate development of an alternate supply to Soviet gas for parts of Europe;
- A plan to substantially raise interest rates on credit to the U.S.S.R; and
- The requirement of higher down payments and shorter maturities on Russian bonds.

Officials calculated that for every $1/barrel drop in the price of oil, it would cost the Soviets between $500 million and $1 billion in lost revenue. At the time the price of oil was in the mid $30s, and a drop below $20/barrel would have a catastrophic impact on the Soviet economy. In 1986, the price of oil dropped down to $12/barrel, and we know what happened to the Soviet Union after that. Oil would not get back above $20/barrel until Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait.

Rare Earth Elements (REEs) are another example of trade being used as a weapon. The group of 17 elements with unusual properties is key to modern life. It is impossible to find technology that does not have one of these elements in them. Everything from lightbulbs and windmills to LED screens and cell phones have REEs in them.

The U.S. military enjoys an immense technological advantage against any foe it goes up against, and that technology has an Achilles' heel, REEs. Writing for Breaking Defense, Richard Whittle noted the importance of REEs in the defense industrial base:

- Each nuclear-powered SSN-774 Virginia-class fast attack submarine requires about 9,200 pounds of REEs;
- Each DDG-51 Aegis destroyer needs about 5,200 pounds;
- Each F-35 Joint Strike fighter needs about 920 pounds; and
- REEs are also essential to precision-guided munitions, lasers, satellite communications, radar, sonar and other military equipment.

As important as these elements are, the production of REEs is controlled by one country and has been used as an economic weapon recently. China produces more than 90 percent of all REEs used today. In a dispute over uninhabited islands that resulted in Japanese detention of a Chinese fishing captain, China halted shipments of REEs to Japan. The action sent a shockwave around the world. Suddenly, China had the power to bring the economy of a foreign power to a grinding halt.

After years of disputes in the WTO over the actions, China decided to flood the market with REEs. Flooding the market with cheap REEs ensured no other mines in the world could compete with China, including a U.S. mine, Mountain Pass mine owned by Molycorp, that would go bankrupt in June of 2015. China now controls the rare earth market.

China was able to turn an industry valued at $4.3 billion in 2012, expected to reach $10.9 billion in 2020, and turn it into the base for its technology manufacturing industry, valued at $4.8 trillion. China was also able to demand the manufacture of products with REE components be relocated to China along with the transfer of Intellectual Property (IP). China did not get to be the second largest economy in the world by obeying the rules. China used trade warfare, and lawfare to rival the U.S. and the least policymakers can do is recognize that.

These are just two recent examples of trade warfare. It is a tactic that has been used since the beginning of time. Those complaining about what the administration did should study history. It is impossible to have a conversation about the issue if both sides cannot even admit that trade has been used as a weapon in the past. Obviously, no one wants a trade war, but how do you know the other side isn't in a trade war already?

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

Republicans in Congress continue to dismantle oppressive regulations

C/O American Energy Alliance

By Natalia Castro

Republicans in the House of Representatives have spent this week breaking down the oppressive regulatory regime the previous administration put into place. Former President Barack Obama dramatically expanded the influence of the executive branch through agencies like the Environmental Protection Agency(EPA). House Republicans are now working to pass legislation that mitigates the impact of overreaching federal policies, but barriers in the Senate could make this a difficult task.

The House has taken up two pieces of legislation this week to combat EPA overreach.

First, the Satisfying Energy Needs and Saving the Environment Act or SENSE. The legislation exempts certain coal power plants from 2012 environmental regulations in order to foster growth within the industry.

Pennsylvania Representative Keith Rothfus explained in a press release, "Huge piles of low-quality… 'waste coal'… have become fixtures of our natural landscape. With the invention of circulating fluidized bed (CFB) technology, however, the private sector has been able to process this coal and use it to generate cheap, domestic energy…. Unfortunately, facilities that utilize CFB technology will soon be forced to shut down as a result of the compliance costs associated with the Environmental Protection Agency's Mercury and Air Toxics Standards rule… the Satisfying Energy Needs and Saving the Environment Act… provides existing CFB facilities with relief from the unattainable hydrogen chloride and sulfur dioxide limitations of the MATS rule."

Innovation within the private sector to lower national energy costs should be encouraged, not regulated out of existence. This is not a new idea. In fact, in 2013, just after the Obama Administration implemented ridiculous compliance demands, the House passed a nearly identical version of SENSE; however, the legislation lost momentum in the Senate when Obama announced his plans to veto the bill.

Additionally, the Blocking Regulatory Inference from Closing Kilns Act "prohibits the Environmental Protection Agency from requiring compliance with Clean Air Act rules concerning national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants with respect to brick and structural clay products manufacturing or clay ceramics manufacturing until judicial reviews of the rules are complete." Since EPA rules are

so often challenged in the courts, this prevents companies from paying compliance costs just for a regulation to be removed.

Unlike the controversy surrounding SENSE, this Act has already received bipartisan support Senators such as Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) and Joe Donnelly (D-Ind.).

The Brick Industry Association (BIA), president and CEO Ray Leonhard, explained in testimony before Congress last September, "It's critical to complete the full legal review before manufacturers must spend millions for controls that may not be needed and could force some of them out of business."

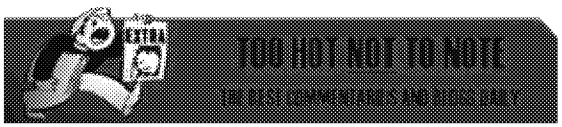
BIA executives believe industry leaders have invested over $100 million in EPA regulation since 2003 which have been later overturned in courts.

The second piece of legislation's bipartisan support in the Senate should mean easy passage, garnering the 60 votes necessary to pass most measures has proven consistently difficult. Even without President Obama to call for a veto on SENSE, the Act will inevitably struggle to find nine or ten Democrats willing align with the Republican agenda.

The best strategy for passing legislation right now for the Senate is an attachment to the funding bill coming in late March. With an omnibus spending rule, Republicans can attach critical items like these as amendments to the legislation to institute comprehensive and passable reforms.

The House's decision to combat the growth of the EPA regulatory regime could assist in protecting U.S. energy production and lowering energy costs, but only if they find an avenue to pass the legislation through the Senate as well. Senate Republicans should force Democrats to vote to close U.S. businesses and raise energy costs. But if and when that fails, attaching these items to the funding bill could be the only viable path forward.

Natalia Castro is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following report from Foreign Policy Magazine: Bethany Allen-Ebrahimian reports on how China is influencing American educational institutions and injecting its brand of communism:

China's Long Arm Reaches Into American Campuses

By Bethany Allen-Ebrahimian

When Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Washington on Sept. 24, 2015 on a state visit, hundreds of Chinese students lined the streets for hours, carrying banners and flags to welcome him. It was a remarkable display of seemingly spontaneous patriotism.

Except it wasn't entirely spontaneous. The Chinese Embassy paid students to attend and helped organize the event. Working with Chinese Students and Scholars Associations (CSSAs) at local universities — a Chinese student organization with branches at dozens of schools around the country — government officials from the office of educational affairs at the Chinese Embassy in Washington collected the contact information of about 700 students who had signed up to attend. Embassy officials communicated with students via WeChat, a Chinese messaging app, during the event and into the night, responding to messages as late as 3 a.m.

According to a Chinese student at George Washington University who attended the event, participants each received about $20 for their effort, distributed through the CSSA a few months later.

This wasn't an isolated example of paid political mobilization. A similar arrangement had occurred in February 2012, when Xi visited Washington as vice chairman. In that case, it took almost a year for the embassy to transfer the promised funds to the George Washington CSSA. In January 2013, the student group sent a message, recently reviewed by Foreign Policy, to its members saying the compensation from Xi's welcome the previous year was finally available, and they could come pick up the cash at the campus community center if they brought a photo ID. The George Washington CSSA did not respond to a request for comment.

And when then-President Hu Jintao visited Chicago in 2011, the University of Wisconsin-Madison CSSA bused in Chinese students, excited about a free trip to the city and a chance to glimpse the president. The association also surprised the students at the conclusion of the trip with a small cash payment. The CSSA president told students not to speak to the media about the money, according to one student who attended. The association did not respond to a request for comment.

The embassy-sponsored welcome parties, which lend an aura of power and popularity to the visiting leaders, are just one example of the close relationship that the Chinese government maintains with Chinese student groups across the United States. That relationship often focuses on student safety and well-being. But in the past few years, as Xi has strengthened the party's control over every aspect of Chinese society and sought to extend his power abroad, consular officials have markedly increased their efforts to exert ideological influence over students — leaving some CSSA members wary to speak out against what they see as unwanted government intrusion.

While many countries, including the United States, fund educational activities abroad, the Chinese government's direct support for, and control over, student groups appears to be unique. Beijing's influence over these groups is also beginning to raise questions and concerns among students on American campuses, who fear they will be accused of being agents of espionage. The growing ties are also concerning U.S. government officials, who are wary of China's political and economic reach in the United States.

At a security hearing last month, FBI Director Christopher Wray said that American universities are naive about the intelligence risk of Chinese "nontraditional collectors, especially in the academic setting," and claimed that China poses a "whole-of-society threat."

Those comments have alarmed some Chinese students. Several Georgetown University student representatives wrote an open letter to the university president, asking the school to disavow Wray's statements and calling the comments a "witch-hunt" and a "McCarthyist craze." The article also cited FP's recent report revealing that the Georgetown CSSA has received Chinese government funding.

Although the extent of Chinese government funding and oversight of these organizations is not entirely clear and appears to vary from group to group, it seems to be more significant than previously known — and growing. FP spoke to more than a dozen members of the group across the country (including four current or former presidents), was given access to internal messages and documents, and reviewed the publicly available charters of dozens of these groups, in Chinese and English. All of the students who spoke to FP requested anonymity for fear of potential reprisals.

FP found that CSSAs regularly accept funds from their local consulates and many officially describe themselves as under the "guidance" or "leadership" of the embassy. Internal correspondence reviewed by FP also show that consular officials communicate regularly with CSSAs, dividing the groups by region and assigning each region to an embassy contact who is responsible for relaying safety information — and the occasional political directive — to chapter presidents. A few CSSAs explicitly vet their members along ideological lines, excluding those whose views do not align with Communist Party core interests.

The Chinese Embassy did not respond to a request for comment on any of the issues raised in this article.

Chinese Communist Party influence within the United States is a real concern, and the vessels of that influence "should be transparent and it should be disclosed," says Bill Bishop, author of the influential Sinocism newsletter, which offers insights into Chinese politics and government. But it's important not to conflate party influence with all Chinese people, which is exactly what Wray's comments did, says Bishop.

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Subject: There is no Trump-Russia collusion and there never was any

Was any of it real, or was the nation deliberately led on a false trail?

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 13, 2018

Permission to republish original op-eds and cartoons granted.

There is no Trump-Russia collusion and there never was any

It takes Saturday Night Live to tell the nation what most of us already know, which is that "we need to come together as a country right now, and like, stop hoping for things that might not happen." Here it is, for those still deluding themselves. There is no Trump-Russia collusion and there never was any. Donald Trump won the election. He is the President. And he is going to serve out his term and maybe even win another four-year term after that. Get over it.

Potential Trump and Kim meeting stuns foreign policy elite

Late last Thursday night, the world was rocked by the sudden announcement President Trump accepted a meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. The mainstream media and foreign policy gurus were in shock. How could an unsophisticate such as Trump possible be taken seriously by the Kim regime? After the unbelievers pick their jaws up off the floor, they should study history and see President Trump is following the mold of President Reagan and practicing an age-old philosophy: Peace through strength.

President Trump puts America first in blocking Broadcom takeover of Qualcomm

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning: "President Trump is 100 percent correct to stop the attempt by Singapore-owned Broadcom to take over Qualcomm Corporation. The transfer of Qualcomm's technology innovations including its strides toward 5G to a foreign company posed a real danger to our nation's security and as the Internet of Things is developed would have permanently destroyed our technological advantage. Every American should call the White House and thank President Trump for this smart, forward looking decision that puts America first."

IBD Editorial: Full Employment? Even With 313,000 New Jobs, We're Not There Yet

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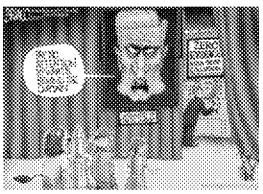
No Trump-Russia collusion and there never was any



By Robert Romano

Not even Saturday Night Live believes there was any collusion between President Donald Trump and Russia to win the 2016 election.

In a surprisingly candid skit featuring Kate McKinnon playing Special Counsel Robert Mueller, who is in the process of breaking up with his "girlfriend," Becca K., who represents Democrats expecting the President to be charged by Mueller with espionage or treason with Russia. The segment was a spoof of the reality television show The Bachelor.

When Becca senses a breakup in the works, she demands to know, "So, what? You don't have Trump on collusion?"

"I can't commit to collusion right now," Mueller says, with the girlfriend going through various stages of grief over President Trump remaining in power.

When Mueller suggests he perhaps wants to pursue obstruction of justice instead as an alternative path, Becca draws the line, saying, "Collusion is literally the only thing I've been looking forward to for the past year… I'm done." And then she storms off for short while.

Upon returning, Becca still cannot believe Trump will remain in power: "So, that's it? He's just going to be president?... I have to wait two more years for him to be out of office."

To which, Mueller warns, "Honestly, probably six."

At the end of the segment, Mueller states, "I feel like we just need to come together as a country right now, and like, stop hoping for things that might not happen."

Here, via pop cultural icon Saturday Night Live, is an obviously political message. It indicates that the mainstream media and more broadly Democrats have given up hope that there ever was anything to do with Trump-Russia collusion narrative, and the perhaps insurmountable difficulties politically in attempt create a bridge to other accusations such as obstruction, when the first string of allegations was false.

The well-timed skit comes as the House Select Committee on Intelligence prepares to release its findings that there was no such collusion by Trump.

The original allegations by Fusion GPS and former British spy Christopher Steele — paid for by the Democratic National Committee (DNC) and the Clinton campaign — were that the Trump campaign had helped Russia hack the DNC emails and put them on Wikileaks. The dossier, which did not name its sources, produced no evidence to support its contentions. Nonetheless the Obama Justice

Department used the dossier to get a Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) court warrant to spy on the Trump campaign.

After Trump won the election, the Justice Department doubled and tripled down on its investigation, setting the stage to carry it over in the Trump administration after he was sworn into office in Jan. 2017.

All to prove what we now know was a lie, produced by the Clinton campaign to give it an extra talking point on the campaign trail, and then dangled as some means of delegitimizing the election of President Trump and ultimately somehow unseating him.

Now, more than a year into Trump's presidency and almost a year into Mueller's investigation, and the collusion narrative has fallen to pieces as the American people learned of the political origins of the investigation and the absolute political perversion of the U.S. national security apparatus and FISA court.

We still know almost nothing about who Steele's sources were — if they even existed. Did they represent Russian government interests? If so, then apparently it was the Clinton campaign and then, ironically, the FBI that coordinated with Russian intelligence operatives to undermine the election and then our democratic system as a whole.

On the other hand, so far, nobody has named any Russian government officials used by Steele that the public can evaluate to determine if they were in a position to know the things the dossier alleges they knew. As the dossier is written, it offers second and third-hand unverifiable accounts. It had Trump in a Moscow hotel room with prostitutes at a beauty pageant in 2013. It had former Trump campaign advisor going to Moscow in 2016 on instructions of then-campaign manager Paul Manafort to work on the Wikileaks disclosures. It had Trump Organization attorney Michael Cohen traveling to Prague afterward to deal with the fallout of the conspiracy. The latter of these was directly proven to be inaccurate based upon passport and other verified documentation.

Was any of it real, or was the nation deliberately led on a false trail?

As a result, the credibility of the investigation, and federal investigators, is in tatters. This witch hunt was initiated under false pretenses. And anything that comes out of it will forever be tainted as being fruit of the poisoned tree: A politically engineered national security investigation into the opposition party during an election year.

When the original collusion couldn't be proven, the President's opponents tried to "move on" to a different narrative that Trump had somehow obstructed the tainted investigation by professing his innocence and attempting to lead the country forward.

In the meantime, there was no collusion. There was no obstruction.

This big lie was simultaneously every bit as evil as Nazi attempts in the 1930s to label Jews and others in Germany as foreign collaborators and as idiotic as the birther movement that former President Barack Obama's birth certificate was somehow falsified by Hawaii state officials to hide the "truth" of his birth overseas.

And it takes Saturday Night Live to tell the nation what most of us already know, which is that "we need to come together as a country right now, and like, stop hoping for things that might not happen."

So, here it is, for those still deluding themselves. There is no Trump-Russia collusion and there never was any. Donald Trump won the election. He is the President. And he is going to serve out his term and maybe even win another four-year term after that. Get over it.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Potential Trump and Kim meeting stuns foreign policy elite

By Printus LeBlanc

Late last Thursday night, the world was rocked by the sudden announcement that President Donald Trump had accepted a meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. The mainstream media and foreign policy gurus were in shock. How could an unsophisticate such as Trump possible be taken seriously by the Kim regime? After the unbelievers pick their jaws up off the floor, they should study history and see that President Trump is following the mold of President Reagan and practicing an age-old philosophy: Peace through strength.

Peace through strength has been around for millennia, but President Ronald Reagan made it famous in his battle with the Evil Empire, the Soviet Union. Reagan believed you could only achieve peace by

building up your military and showing prospective adversaries that it would not be wise to test the military might or resolve of the U.S.

Many in the mainstream media and foreign policy establishment have spent the days after the announcement blasting the President for accepting the meeting. It should be remembered the elite of past administrations spent decades trying to solve the North Korean conundrum only to make matters worse by giving in to demands and allowing the regime to stall for time.

What seems to be different this time, is the North Koreans are offering concessions to talk. As noted above, in previous talks nations went to North Korea with offers in hand begging them to stop what they are doing. This time, Kim Jong-un has said he will stop testing missiles if the U.S. meets with North Korea. Additionally, the regime reportedly wishes to discuss denuclearization and normalizing of relations with the U.S.

President Bill Clinton capitulated to the North Korean regime in 1994. The hermit kingdom threatened to abandon its commitment to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), after refusing international inspections. The Clinton administration panicked and sent the modern-day Neville Chamberlain, former President Jimmy Carter, to negotiate a deal to keep the regime in the NPT.

The deal reached became known as the Joint Framework Agreement. The agreement was nothing more than diplomatic extortion. North Korea got $4 billion in economic benefits along with two light-water nuclear reactors. The regime never followed through with any of its promises in the agreement and continued to advance its nuclear and ballistic missile technology.

President George Bush also tried the appeasement method when dealing with North Korea. Bush famously labeled North Korea as part of an “axis of evil” in his 2002 State of the Union speech. Despite the harsh rhetoric, the same policies of nonconfrontation continued to dominate. It was during the Bush presidency, 2006, that North Korea detonated its first nuclear weapon, announcing to the world it cheats on every deal it has ever signed.

The Obama administration tried nothing new with North Korea. They tried multilateral talks, they tried bribery, and they tried bluster, nothing worked. What the Obama administration did that no other administration did, was finance the regime by way of Iran. The disastrous Iran deal gave billions to the largest financiers of terror in the world, who in turn gave millions to North Korea to carry out a parallel nuclear program for themselves. Many intelligence officials have hinted this sudden influx of Iranian money could explain the recent rapid development of ballistic missile technology by North Korea.

So, it seems pretty obvious appeasement is not working. Enter President Trump. From day one in power, the President made it known that he viewed North Korea as the preeminent threat facing the U.S. and its allies. The Trump budget called for a massive increase in defense spending, including a plan for a 355-ship navy. The President personally threatened North Korea on Twitter and in press briefings over its continued nuclear and missile tests. Trump also pushed some of the harshest sanctions known against the terrorist regime. Many so-called experts believed we were headed for war.

Then it happened. The North Koreans reached out, and with no preconditions that we know about, have asked for direct talks with the U.S. to discuss the possible denuclearization of the peninsula. Why are they doing this now? Why not when they were being lavished with gifts from previous presidents? The answer is simple, peace through strength.

Because President Trump refused to back down, because he refused to beg the regime to play nice, and because it was believable he would not hesitate to decapitate the regime the leadership of North Korea, the enemy saw no alternative. President Trump has studied world dictators and understands one simple thing about them, and that is when you back down to a bully or dictator that is a sign to them you are weak, and they will continue to prey on you.

Obviously, the regime is not to be trusted. As peace through strength brought the U.S. and North Korea to this point, another Reagan saying must also be used going forward, trust but verify. Perhaps the pundits that worked on previously failed policies should sit back and see what happens, after all, they had their chance and made things worse. Give President Trump a chance.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

President Trump puts America first in blocking Broadcom takeover of Qualcomm

March 12, 2018, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement praising President Donald Trump and his administration for blocking the foreign hostile takeover of Qualcomm by Singapore-based Broadcom:

"President Trump is 100 percent correct to stop the attempt by Singapore-owned Broadcom to take over Qualcomm Corporation. The transfer of Qualcomm's technology innovations including its strides toward 5G to a foreign company posed a real danger to our nation's security and as the Internet of Things is developed would have permanently destroyed our technological advantage. Every American should call the White House and thank President Trump for this smart, forward looking decision that puts America first."

Permalink here.

ALG Editor's Note: In the following editorial from Investor's Business Daily, the board shows the economy still has plenty of room to grow:

INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY

Full Employment? Even With 313,000 New Jobs, We're Not There Yet

Employment: The February gain in jobs — 313,000 — was impressive on a number of levels. But it also confirms something we've been saying for some time: We aren't anywhere near **full employment**.

If you're looking for good news in the latest **jobs numbers**, it's hard to know where to start.

First, 313,000 was 50,000 more than expected, and is the biggest monthly gain in jobs in a year and a half.

In fact, since the recession ended in June 2009, there have only been six months in which job gains beat this number — which doesn't say much for President Obama's **economic performance**.

Better still, these employment gains were across the board. In fact, almost a third of the increase was in goods-producing industries, which climbed at a rate more than twice as fast as the overall job market.

The only part of the economy that didn't grow was government, which can also be seen as good news. The federal workforce, in fact, dropped in February, and is now 14,000 lower than when Trump took office

At 4.1%, the overall unemployment rate is at a 17-year low, while the unemployment rates among blacks and Hispanics remain at historic lows.

But the employment numbers also show why, despite these strong gains, the economy is still far from "full employment."

The reason is simple: During the tepid economic recovery under Obama, 14.5 million people dropped out of the labor force, most of whom were able-bodied people who'd simply given up looking for work.

What the February data make clear is that the stronger economy under Trump is creating enough new jobs that it's now pulling many of these people off the sidelines and back into the labor force.

In fact, the data show that 653,000 people *rejoined* the labor force in February, the biggest monthly increase in more than a decade.

The number of people who aren't in the labor force but want a job now dropped by 40,000 in February, after coming down by 137,000 in January.

As a result, the employment-to-population ratio climbed to 60.4% in February. That's higher than it ever got during Obama's eight years in office. Better still, the employment-to-population ratio among those of prime working age jumped to 79.3%, its highest level in almost a decade.

And the labor force participation rate — the share of people looking or who have jobs — is now up to 63%, after having fallen steadily during Obama's years (it went from 65.7% when he took office to 62.7% when he left).

This is all good news. Even so, there are still 5.1 million people who aren't in the labor force but want a job now — a massive pool of ready-and-willing workers.

The fact that wage growth was mild in February — up just 2.6% from the year before — is further evidence that the labor market isn't at full employment.

As good as the latest jobs numbers are, too many people who should have jobs don't.

The last thing they need is for the **Federal Reserve** to panic and try to slow economic growth out of a misplaced fear that the economy is at risk of "overheating."

Click here for the full story.

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Subject: Thank you for the crumbs, Mr. President

Ending regulations and tax cuts rebuild American hope

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 12, 2018

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Thank you for the crumbs, Mr. President

Ending regulations and tax cuts rebuild American hope.

The GOP still doesn't get President Trump and the American people on trade

One of the principal reasons President Donald Trump won the Electoral College in 2016 was the tough stance he took specifically on global trade issues and their detrimental impacts on the U.S. economy and American workers. Trump's blue collar economic message resonated in the Rust Belt, putting the President over the top in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin, without which Hillary Clinton would be president today. But can Republican Congressmen take advantage of this fact?

Wilber Ross: Why We Imposed the Metal Tariffs

"President Trump announced Thursday that he is imposing tariffs of 25 percent on steel imports and 10 percent on aluminum imports, with exemptions for Canada and Mexico. The president acted because steel and aluminum imports have helped erode the domestic industry to the point that it threatens national security. Unfair trading practices from countries like China have distorted the global steel and aluminum markets. It is time to halt the damage."

Thank you for the crumbs, Mr. President

By Rick Manning

"Thank you, President Trump, for the crumbs." That is what the sign that hung over a small electrical business in North Beach, Maryland read.

The message was clear, the tax cuts which former Speaker Nancy Pelosi called "crumbs" are making a positive difference in the small town located on the western shore of the Chesapeake Bay.

And in the first employment report since the tax cuts took effect, private employers reported that they had created an additional 287,000 jobs in February alone. Most significantly, 100,000 of these jobs came in what the Bureau of Labor Statistics calls the "goods producing" sector. The mining, logging and manufacturing are all advancing and growing in the wake of a combination of the federal regulatory boot being lifted off their collective throats.

Why should you care?

Because when America makes things, wealth is created. The self-fulfilling fallacy of the Obama economic policy was that the mature U.S. economy could not grow much beyond inflation. This notion was maintained in spite of the enormous productivity increases brought on by the complete adoption of technology allowing savings and reinvestment in faster, better ways of taking ideas to the marketplace.

Yet, in spite of leading the way in innovating to a new economy, Americans were told by their government over the past few years that they had to lower their expectations to a new normal of stagnant wages, fewer opportunities and less nationwide economic growth.

What these politicians never dared tell the people was that the new normal was the direct result of federal government policies designed to export wealth creation. The politicians and administrative state regulators ignored or flat out lied about the costs of regulations with high minded sounding names which had the intended effect of making investment in resource development in the United States impractical. When combined with the highest corporate tax rate in the developed world, job creators in the United States were hamstrung and the only miracle is that the economy didn't flat line completely.

One year into the Trump Administration businesses report having created more than 2.2 million jobs, including 324,000 new manufacturing jobs. The beginning of America's manufacturing revival is no mistake. And it will accelerate over the next few years due to the changed environment for making things domestically.

While the tax cuts are just beginning to have an impact, Trump's regulatory changes have created new cost certainty for businesses looking to expand or put an additional plant into production, and the February increase in "goods producing" jobs is likely much more heavily driven by these regulatory changes than the just felt tax changes. It is reasonable to expect that the re-shoring of more than a trillion dollars of U.S. company profits that have been stranded overseas due to archaic tax laws will create a debt-free capital infusion equal to about 5percent of the entire economy.

Without the regulatory breathing room, the investment choices would be harder. But continued, expanded regulatory relief, combined with mid-range corporate tax rates, available capital, and states willing to compete for the next generation of manufacturing a perfect storm for a transformative economic surge has been created.

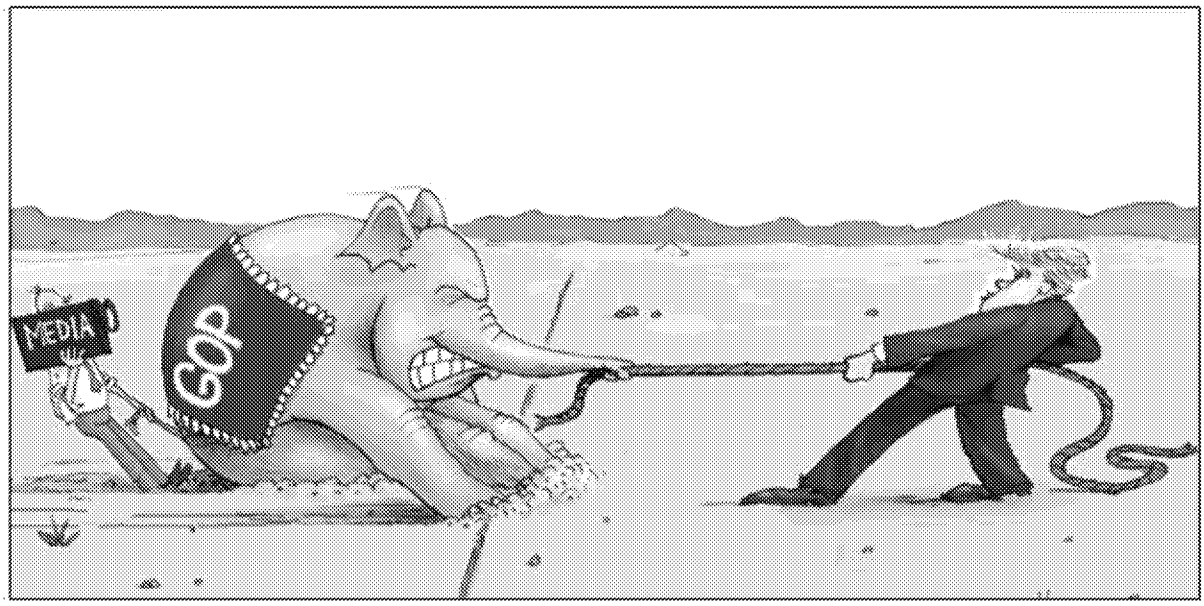
Prior to President Trump, America had 20th Century regulations designed to solve problems from a 19th century economy, strangling the development of her 21st century economic future. As the President's administration continues to clear away the debris of a regulatory regime which encouraged moving manufacturing overseas, the creation of between 40,000 and 50,000 new goods producing jobs a month could seem like small potatoes.

Free enterprise works, and unless the voters screw it up by electing those who view capitalism as the problem, our economy will roar and the American dream will be remembered, renewed and recaptured for our children and grandchildren.

Thank you for the crumbs, Mr. President.

Rick Manning is the President of Americans for Limited Government.

The GOP still doesn't get President Trump and the American people on trade



By Robert Romano

One of the principal reasons President Donald Trump won the Electoral College in 2016 was the tough stance he took specifically on global trade issues and their detrimental impacts on the U.S. economy and American workers.

Trump's blue collar economic message resonated in the Rust Belt, putting the President over the top in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin, without which Hillary Clinton would be president today.

Meaning no Neil Gorsuch on the Supreme Court. Instead, it's Merrick Garland or some other liberal justice, tipping the balance of power on the nation's highest court.

Clinton would be stacking the lower courts, too.

Also, no Scott Pruitt at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

So, instead of replacing the Obama Clean Power Plan, it would stay in place, including the new and existing power plant regulations.

The U.S. would still be a part of the Paris Climate Accord.

The tax cuts would have never passed.

The Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines would not be in the process of finally being built.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge would not have been opened for drilling.

The Obamacare individual mandate would not have been repealed.

The U.S. would never have recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

The U.S. would still be working to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Several Obama midnight regulations would have not been repealed by Congress.

We would have never found out about the abuses of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) court by the Obama administration to spy on the opposition party, the Trump campaign, in 2016.

The Justice Department would not be releasing Fast and Furious documents now.

Immigration law would remain unenforced. Deferred Action of Childhood Arrivals (DACA) would not be in the cross hairs.

It is doubtful the U.S. would be on the verge of a breakthrough with North Korea on denuclearization.

The military would be continuing its decline as social welfare priorities took precedence over combat readiness.

It is questionable the GOP would have retained the Senate without Trump on the ballot, running tough on trade.

Trump broke the blue wall, and he did it on an issue that had been a staple of Democratic union politics for a generation: trade.

Exposing the Democrats' continued vulnerability on this issue, following President Trump's announcement of a 25 percent tariff on steel imports and a 10 percent tariff on aluminum, Trump was showered with praise from Democrat representatives in the House.

"Hundreds of thousands of workers and communities, as well as critical infrastructure and defense supply chains in America, depend upon the steel industry. They deserve real enforcement of our laws to hold bad actors accountable, and the Administration is correct in taking the actions outlined today," U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.) declared.

"[W]e are hopeful today's announcement will put an end to a long series of delays to much-needed action against a rigged global steel market. Our steelmaking businesses and workers need relief so they can compete on a fair playing ground," U.S. Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio) stated.

In short, the Trump trade agenda today presents the same golden opportunity for Congressional Republicans and the Republican Part more broadly to make the same in-roads with working class voters that Trump did in 2016.

So, what is the GOP establishment up to? They're apparently going out of their way to alert voters that whatever Trump is doing on trade, it has nothing to do with them, effectively telling voters if they're with Trump on trade, they should just vote Democrat.

107 House Republicans fired off a letter, although reasonably calling for tariffs to be specifically tailored toward trade violators, was seized upon by media outlets — who do not have Republican majorities' best interests in mind — to cast a far less-nuanced message.

"107 GOP reps send letter to Trump asking him not to do his tariff plan," CNBC blared.

"More than 100 Republicans sign letter urging Trump to back off on tariffs," CBS News reported.

"107 House Republicans express 'deep concern' about Trump tariffs," The Hill noted.

White House chief economic advisor Gary Cohn quit in a huff over the tariff issue, which one thinks he would have been well-aware of when he took the job.

The Republican actions all but assured that congressional Republicans in Congressional would get zero credit for Trump's bold move.

Again, to be fair, House Republicans' message was actually pretty nuanced. As he rightly acknowledged the dumping and transshipping of steel and aluminum by foreign trade, House Speaker Paul Ryan called for "a more surgical approach" to the tariffs. It probably struck the right tone in the GOP's Capitol Hill Club, but it was not the message that was widely received at all.

Instead, the media went out of its way to ignore the actual position House leaders attempted to stake out, and cast Republicans as lockstep opposed to the President. What does that tell you? The mainstream media and the Democrats they're shilling for are scared.

President Trump exposed a deep vulnerability of Democrats on this issue in 2016. One that Republicans should be able to exploit in the coming months and replicate in Congressional races. But to do it, they need to not only stand with President Trump, but with their own constituents, on trade. They need to offer a full-throated defense of his approach.

At the end of the day, Trump opted for a more surgical approach, excepting NAFTA trade partners Canada and Mexico from the steel and aluminum tariffs while renegotiations are ongoing as leverage. Now, they should praise him, and embrace the politics behind it. It's a winner.

In a March 2016 poll by Pat Caddell commissioned by Americans for Limited Government found that a full 68 percent of Republicans supported the use of tariffs under certain circumstances.

72 percent of Republicans believed trade deals gave an unfair advantage to other countries.

71 percent of Republicans believed trade negotiators and corporate interests have allowed U.S. manufacturing to decline, close, or move.

73 percent of Republicans believed we should put American jobs first even if it means paying a tiny bit more for products made in America.

And so forth. As it turned out, Republican voters were even more in favor of protection on trade than Democrats were, although clear majorities of Democrats and Independents stood with Trump on these issues as well in 2016.

In short, the poll predicted not only that Trump would win the Republican nomination, but would go on to win the general election, thanks in no small part to the tough stance he took on trade.

Since then, President Trump obviously has assumed office. In the Politico-Morning Consult poll on the Trump tariffs, once again 65 percent of Republicans support the move, with only 14 percent opposed.

Conversely, 24 percent of Democrats like it and 54 percent are opposed. This is not an unexpected result. Voters of the opposition party tend to disapprove of anything the incumbent party does, even if it's an issue they agree with. Trump did it, so instinctively they oppose it. But if Obama had done it, for example, they would've supported it.

Still, the significant number of Democrats who still agree with the stance and are willing to tell a pollster they approve of it tells you Democrats remain deeply divided on this issue. As for the 54 percent of Democrats who disapprove of it, when they hear their representatives supporting Trump's position on the issue, it's like nails on the chalkboard, creating dissonance between elected Democrats and a majority of their base voters.

In many ways, Democrats in office have the same problem on trade with Trump that they have on DACA and immigration with Trump. While a portion of their constituency truly cares about the issue, a

far greater percent of partisans simply cannot fathom any bargain that provides legitimacy to the Trump presidency.

Democrats have created their own trap after a year of demonizing Trump on everything in every way.

So, how might Republicans take advantage of this issue? By running with Trump on trade issues in 2018. For example, there are 25 House Democrats still in Congress who voted to give former President Barack Obama trade promotion authority in 2015 to get the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). They can be targeted.

Sens. Bill Nelson (D-Fla.), Heidi Heitkamp (D-N.D.) and Claire McCaskill (D-Mo.) — all in states Trump carried in 2016 — voted to advance the TPP. This should be easy to exploit on the campaign trail.

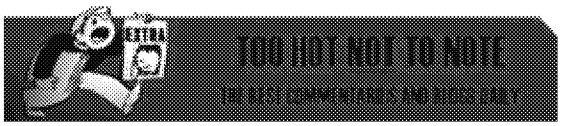
Or, perversely, praise Democrats that have publicly stated support for Trump's position on tariffs. Partisans who simply hate Trump will be disenchanted.

This is not rocket science. Voters want their representatives to put America first. Trade is an issue where about two-thirds of the voters regardless of their political stripe actually agree with President Trump. It's a slam dunk.

Even for skeptics, the answer is that if you like tax cuts and constitutionalist judges on federal courts, Trump's approach to trade is necessary to keep the coalition that elected the President together.

It is time that the Republican Party finally come to terms with the fact that trade is the reason Trump won in 2016. Republican Congressmen should realize that the real reason they even have an opportunity to accomplish the rest of their agenda, is because of the stand Trump took in 2016. They can either learn from it, or miss a rare historic opportunity to overcome the odds and keep their majorities in the upcoming midterms.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following opinion piece from the Wall Street Journal, Secretary of Commerce Wilber Ross details reasoning behind the recent tariff announcements:

WSJ

Why We Imposed the Metal Tariffs

By Wilber Ross

President Trump announced Thursday that he is imposing tariffs of 25 percent on steel imports and 10 percent on aluminum imports, with exemptions for Canada and Mexico. The president acted because steel and aluminum imports have helped erode the domestic industry to the point that it threatens national security. Unfair trading practices from countries like China have distorted the global steel and aluminum markets. It is time to halt the damage.

Since 1998, countless steel mills and aluminum smelters have closed. More than 75,000 steel jobs alone have disappeared. Today the U.S. has only one steel mill that can produce the advanced alloys used in armored-vehicle plating; one aluminum smelter that makes the high-grade aluminum needed for defense aerospace applications; and one steel mill that makes the materials needed for infrastructure like electrical transformers.

These tariffs aim to reverse this sorry state of affairs. Companies that produce steel and aluminum have said these tariffs will allow them to reopen mills, expand operations, attract new workers, and maintain critical steel- and aluminum-making skills.

It is true that higher steel and aluminum costs could mean price increases for American consumers. But they should be small for individuals and families. Monthly payments for a typical mass-market car might increase by $4 because of the tariff, according to Commerce Department estimates. Is that a fair price to pay for protecting national security? We think so.

Will it start a trade war? It shouldn't. The U.S. isn't the only country that has expressed concern about the types of unfair trade practices that are prevalent in the steel and aluminum industries. Countries like China have provided massive subsidies to their companies, and this is harming markets world-wide.

The U.S. has tried to work with others to address these problems. Unfortunately, mechanisms like the Global Steel Forum have fallen woefully short of their aims, with other countries failing to adhere to even basic transparency commitments.

The president will not stand idle while unfair practices erode America's steel and aluminum industries and threaten national security. Other countries understand that.

Further escalating this issue is counterproductive. Rather, countries should take responsibility for their unfair practices and work together to address the underlying problems facing these industries. The U.S. is ready and willing to engage in such efforts.

The president has the authority to adjust or exempt countries from these tariffs at any time based on circumstances and national security considerations. That is why he is exempting Canada and Mexico. We expect continuing negotiations to create more national-security benefits than the tariffs.

Meanwhile, we will not hesitate to continue standing up for American families, American businesses and American workers.

Mr. Ross is U.S. secretary of commerce.

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Subject: Mr. President, you don't win midterm elections without keeping your political base intact

Trump needs to persuade the American people that his side is right, and his coalition will grow

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 2, 2018

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Mr. President, you don't win midterm elections without keeping your political base intact

President Trump coming out in favor of blowing up the federal budget deficit, proposing higher fuel taxes, adopting a "take guns first, due process second" stance, and supporting DACA citizenship amnesty is endangering GOP midterms in 2018.

Is Congress really concerned about foreign involvement in U.S. elections? Then get illegal immigrants off the voter rolls

Multiple congressional committees and a Special Counsel have spent millions of taxpayer dollars to investigate foreign interference in the 2016 election and have come up with some Facebook memes from Russia. Meanwhile, recent reports from several states indicate there is real foreign influence in U.S. elections being ignored by Congress and the Special Counsel: Illegal immigrants voting.

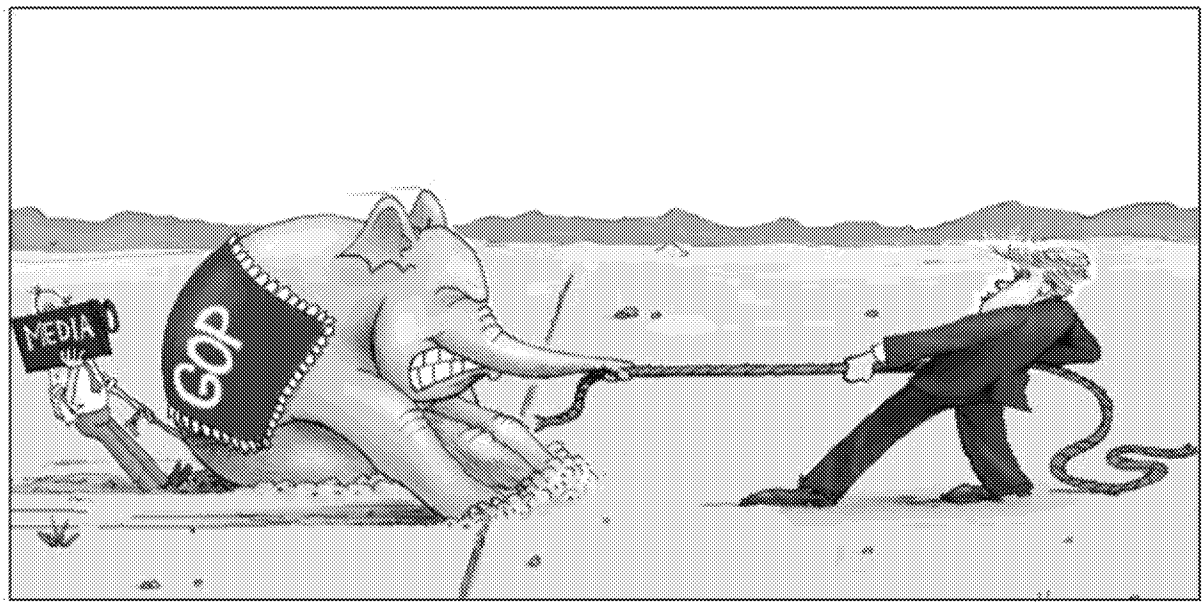
Trump needs to reverse due process attack

Americans for Limited Government President Rick: "President Trump's statement that he wants to take away guns first and have due process later flies in the face of basic constitutional principles under the Fifth Amendment. The President knows better than anyone that a person is innocent until proven guilty, and to deny those basic rights is unacceptable under any circumstance."

Vice News: Bernie Sanders colluded — with the Australian Labor Party

While the Russia investigation continues to swirl around President Donald Trump and the members of his entourage, the Federal Election Commission (FEC) has confirmed another instance of illegal meddling in the election: Bernie Sanders' presidential campaign illegally accepted contributions from the Australian Labor Party, which paid for volunteers to fly across the globe to volunteer on his campaign, according to a ***ruling filed earlier this month****.*

Mr. President, you don't win midterm elections without keeping your political base intact



By Robert Romano

"To go to court would have taken a long time. So you could do exactly what you're saying, but take the guns first, go through due process second."

That was President Donald Trump at the White House on Feb. 28, outlining a proposal to skip going to court when determining if an individual, deemed mentally ill in some other capacity, is denied access to firearms purchases.

Let's leave aside the politics for a moment, which are perilous for the President's party, the Republicans, in November.

For those left scratching their heads wondering who would deem a person, legally, mentally ill such that that person would then be added to the FBI's federal gun database barring gun purchases, without due process and court involvement, you're not the only one.

Not only does the Fifth Amendment state that no person can be denied liberty without due process of law, including all of the rights stipulated in the Bill of Rights, which includes the Second Amendment individual right to keep and bear arms, if a court is not to be the venue to adjudicate some form of mental incapacity, what other would there be?

Local police perhaps? Certainly there are sheriffs across the country responsible for blocking gun licenses on far more arbitrary grounds. But even there, they'd hardly be qualified to issue a mental health diagnosis.

Doctors, then? If medical records, particularly mental health records, were no longer legally confidential, and subjected to federal databases — which might not be secure — there would be a perverse incentive for those mentally ill to not seek treatment, for fear of being discriminated against, not only on gun purchases, but also professionally and personally if the information were to get out

into the open. The doctors themselves might not wish to divulge the information to keep their patients' confidence — and business.

The fact is, without a violent or felonious criminal background, a mere trip the psychiatrist's office or even an anti-depressant prescription will most likely never be a disqualifying criterium for purchasing a firearm. In the case of Nikolas Cruz in Broward County, Florida, if he had been arrested and convicted all the times the cops were called on him, he might have been disqualified from firearms purchases under existing law and received necessary interventions that could have prevented his bloody rampage.

So, it is hard to see how practical the President's proposal really is. Compelling doctors to furnish medical records of individuals who have not committed a crime to federal authorities is going to be a really tough sell, not just in Congress, but in the courts.

And then there's the politics. Trump ran on a platform where he promised to protect law-abiding gun owners from just this sort of end-run around the Fifth Amendment and due process protections. He signed a law that repealed an Obama era regulation that did much the same for individuals with certain mental disorders who had collected disability and required assistance in applying for it.

Gun-owners were a significant part of the coalition that elected Trump in the first place. And in 2018, if they stay home — as they are most likely to do if anything resembling what he spoke of passes — Republicans run a significant risk of being politically devastated in the midterms. Why?

These proposals dispirit the President's Republican base. They are a form of voter suppression. Midterms are already fraught with peril for presidents. Incumbent parties rarely win them. One thing's for certain, though, you don't win midterm elections by suppressing your own vote. Which is potentially what Trump is doing here.

Adding fuel to the fire, Trump has just signed a budget deal that significantly increases both defense and non-defense spending by $296 billion over the next two years. This could result in a $1 trillion deficit being reported when the fiscal year ends on Sept. 30, right in time for the midterm elections.

Fiscal conservatives, already disappointed with the $20 trillion deficit, have little to support with the debt once again exploding, with Republicans in charge. Again, all that is needed for Democrats to do extremely well in November is for their turnout to be up and Republican turnout to be depressed.

Then there is President Trump's call to increase the federal gasoline tax from 18.4 cents a gallon to reportedly 43.4 cents a gallon, the largest gas tax increase in American history since 1983. This is said to almost completely offset the tax cuts for average Americans that just got enacted into law and come at a time when fuel prices are once again starting to rise.

Trump ran on tax cuts, and so supporters will rightly be disappointed and maybe even dismayed by this new development.

Finally, there is the Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals, which Trump is now embracing via legislation and is even willing to grant citizenship to not only the 800,000 who were part of the program, but another million who were eligible but did not participate. He spoke about it prominently in the State of the Union Address. Trump ran against DACA, and while he has supported such a deal in exchange for an end to chain migration, the visa lottery and building the wall, no such proposal has passed Congress.

Put together, this could be a recipe for electoral disaster in November. This could be a wave election.

To offset losses among conservatives in the coalition, Republicans will have to pick up votes elsewhere, but that will be difficult, since Democrats are already all fired up to vote in November after losing the House, Senate and White House in 2016. It is possible that less conservative Republicans will turn out to vote in exchange for conservatives who stay home, but to win Trump and the GOP Congress really need both to turn out. Or that by going to the left, somehow Republicans pick up Democrats. But that is far less likely.

Acrimonious losses politically in midterms also can portend badly for presidential reelections should they engender a significant primary challenge. By exposing his flank, President Trump could face a primary challenge from the right in 2020, weakening his chances of being reelected, and endangering the entire enterprise.

That is why Trump needs to reverse course. You don't win midterms by ceding ground to the other side. Historically, you win them by getting the other side to cede ground to you.

That's what Republicans did in 2002 when they picked up seats with Democrats supporting the Iraq War.

That's how Franklin Roosevelt did it in 1934. Republicans voted for New Deal programs to "save" themselves — more Republicans voted for the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933 than against — and were nearly brought to political extinction in 1934.

Presidents, few and far in between, who overcome the midterm jinx — where the White House incumbent party tends to lose House seats in midterm elections 89 percent of the time dating back a century, with losses averaging 35 seats, and tend to lose Senate seats about 71 percent of the time, with losses averaging about 6 seats — do so by making serious inroads and changing public opinion on an issue or issues, compelling the other side to cave. Trump, so far, appears to be doing the opposite. His approach has helped unify Democrats, and splinter Republicans.

Not all is doom and gloom, of course. The President's tax cut plan is popular. And conservatives do have a lot to cheer in the areas of deregulation. Trump left the economy-killing Paris Climate accord. Trump got Neil Gorsuch on the Supreme Court and other constitutionalists onto lower federal courts. More broadly, the President's electoral coalition in the rust belt that supported his trade policies, Republican and Democrat alike, should be cheered by the scrapping of the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the renegotiation of NAFTA. On balance, the President has a pretty conservative record in terms of the things he has actually done.

But that could change.

In other words, although there is cause for concern, it is not too late for Trump to flip the script on the midterms. But the way he will do that is by keeping his side united, and forcing the other side to move in his direction. With the House, Senate and White House, he has the advantage to set the agenda in Congress. He needs to do that this year.

Considering the longer odds against picking up seats in the midterms, he could benefit by being more aggressive to get more conservative policy wins out of Congress. The upcoming omnibus spending bill could provide such an opportunity to achieve major policy objectives like the southern border wall he ran on. Force the other side to defund Planned Parenthood. Make them take a tough vote on trade policy. Stuff like that.

In the meantime, the President needs to assure his supporters concerned about his stances on guns and immigration that he is not capitulating. At the end of the day, they will remember what he did more so than what he has said. But once he has a record and signs bills into law, those are set in stone.

To succeed this year and moving forward, President Trump needs to keep his political base intact — and add to it. Trump needs to persuade the American people that his side is right, and his coalition will grow. He will not accomplish that by telling his side that they are wrong.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Is Congress really concerned about foreign involvement in U.S. elections? Then get illegal immigrants off the voter rolls.

C/O Legal Insurrection

By Printus LeBlanc

Multiple congressional committees and a Special Counsel have spent millions of taxpayer dollars to investigate foreign interference in the 2016 election and have come up with some memes from Russia. Meanwhile, recent reports from several states indicate there is real foreign influence in U.S. elections being ignored by Congress and the Special Counsel. Voter fraud is a far more significant threat to our democracy than $300 in Facebook ads for Pennsylvania, and it is time for Congress, the Department of Justice, and the Special Counsel to go after the real foreign influence.

On Monday, the Public Interest Legal Foundation (PLIF) filed a lawsuit against Pennsylvania officials for failing to comply with the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA). The PLIF is seeking records related to registered voters for inspection, which the NVRA makes legal. The foundation is seeking

the information to ensure the Pennsylvania voter rolls are clean and have good reason to think otherwise.

In December, Philadelphia Election Commissioner Al Schmidt told state lawmakers there was a glitch in the state's motor voter system. Schmidt also told the lawmakers that after the Pennsylvania Department of State completed the Noncitizen Matching Analysis more than 100,000 driver's license numbers associated with noncitizens are a match voter registration records.

The lawsuit identified eight examples of noncitizens voting. One of the more rampant instances of voter fraud was Othman Alamoudi. He registered to vote in Allegheny County and 2005 and was taken off the rolls in 2012 after it was discovered he was a noncitizen. Alamoudi registered again in 2014 and 2016, voting in both elections. He is still on the voter rolls despite being a noncitizen and illegally voting in elections.

Why have charges not been brought against Alamoudi? Why have deportation proceedings not begun against Alamoudi? *In Matter of Margarita Del Pilar Fitzpatrick* it was ruled, "An alien who has voted in an election involving candidates for Federal office in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 611(a) (2012) is removable under section 237(a)(6)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1227(a)(6)(A) (2012), regardless of whether the alien knew that he or she was committing an unlawful act by voting." It seems like the law is pretty straightforward on the matter.

As if Pennsylvania not wanting to investigate the possible 100,000 noncitizen voters on its rolls wasn't asinine enough, the city of Chicago is moving to register noncitizens to vote. The crime-ridden city unveiled a new ID card called "CityKey." Everyone in Chicago is eligible for the new ID, including illegal immigrants.

The troubling issue is the ID does not indicate citizenship. This will give noncitizens in Chicago the ability to register to vote, because under Illinois law a person doesn't need to prove citizenship to vote, only provide an ID card, and check a box stating "Yes, I am a citizen." Anyone with knowledge of Illinois voter history has every right to be frightened by this recent action. The state has a long history of dead people voting, now it appears it is trying to get noncitizens to vote next to zombies.

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning stated, "Voter integrity is important to ensure that people accept election results. The willful inclusion of illegal votes undermines the democratic system and needs to be prevented by the federal government."

If the leaders of these lawless communities are encouraging and allowing noncitizens to vote, why should the votes of those communities pollute the votes of the rest of the U.S.? Furthermore, if the mainstream media, Congress, and Robert Mueller are looking for foreign influence in U.S. elections, they should start at the place where noncitizens actually influence elections, the ballot box.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

Trump needs to reverse due process attack

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning issued the following statement responding to President Donald Trump's statement that he favored an approach to "take the guns first, go through due process second":

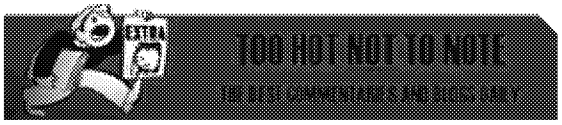
"President Trump's statement that he wants to take away guns first and have due process later flies in the face of basic constitutional principles under the Fifth Amendment. The President knows better than anyone that a person is innocent until proven guilty, and to deny those basic rights is unacceptable under any circumstance. If he pursues legislation that tramples on due process, he will have cast aside constitutional protection of basic liberties in favor of perceived political expediency.

"The mental health issue is extremely challenging from a legal perspective, but one thing is clear, if the laws in place had been followed in Broward County, Florida, Nikolas Cruz would have received intervention that would have prevented this tragedy either for being adjudicated mentally incompetent, as the Gun Control Act of 1968 provides for, or being prosecuted for making terrorist threats.

"The great danger of President Trump's confiscate first, ask questions later proposal is that it presumes that the possessor or potential purchaser of a firearm is mentally unstable and should be subjected to thousands upon thousands of dollars of legal fees, allowing simple allegations to be weaponized. This is why no person may be denied liberty without due process. To prevent this very thing from happening.

"When President Trump tries to figure out who's right on this issue, he should look closely at those applauding him who have wished his political demise and wonder why. Without due process, and the presumption of innocence, the U.S. Constitution might as well be lit on fire because it would be worth less than the paper it was printed on."

Click here for the full press release.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from Vice News, Alex Lubben details the efforts of collusion between Bernie Sanders and the Australian Labor Party:

VICE News

Bernie Sanders colluded — with the Australian Labor Party

By Alex Lubben

Between Bernie Sanders and the Australians, there was collusion.

While the Russia investigation continues to swirl around President Donald Trump and the members of his entourage, the Federal Election Commission (FEC) has confirmed another instance of illegal meddling in the election: Bernie Sanders' presidential campaign illegally accepted contributions from the Australian Labor Party, which paid for volunteers to fly across the globe to volunteer on his campaign, according to a **ruling filed earlier this month**.

The volunteers, who were participating in a government-funded education program, even got $8,000 in stipends from their native country to campaign for the popular Vermont senator in his 2016 run for the White House.

The FEC ruled that the Sanders campaign accepted about $25,000 in in-kind donations from the Australians. Bernie's been ordered to fork over $14,500 in civil penalties for violating campaign law.

Sanders' campaign staffers told the FEC they knew that some of the Australian volunteers were getting stipends, but they thought — "mistakenly," the FEC has pointed out in their ruling — that the volunteers were doing legal work. After initially pushing back against the FEC, the Sanders campaign has agreed to pay up.

A campaign spokesperson told VICE News that the campaign accepted the fine to avoid an expensive legal fight with the FEC but noted that it did not admit to any wrongdoing.

"During the course of the campaign, thousands and thousands of young people from every state and many other countries volunteered. Among them were seven Australian young people who were receiving a modest stipend and airfare from the Australian Labor Party so they could learn about American politics," the spokesperson said. "The folks on the campaign managing volunteers did not believe the stipend disqualified them from being volunteers.

William O'Brien, the Republican former New Hampshire House speaker, filed the complaint with the FEC that led to the fine, according to **local radio station WMUV**, which first reported on the ruling. O'Brien had seen a video, filmed by Project Veritas, of Australians pulling up yard signs during the campaign. As it turns out, O'Brien's hunch was right.

Click here for the full story.

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Subject: Don't let Schumer, Pelosi add the $63 billion to the non-defense domestic spending baseline in 2018

If this money is going to be spent no matter what happens, why cannot it not at least be for things that would engender widespread public support?

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 1, 2018

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Don't let Schumer, Pelosi add the $63 billion to the non-defense domestic spending baseline in 2018

In the last continuing resolution, Congress increased baseline non-defense discretionary spending by $131 billion over the next two years. This was in exchange for $165 billion of new defense spending over that same period. But rather than add to the existing baseline budget on the domestic side — adding tens of thousands of new federal employees to the bureaucracy or increasing entitlement spending — Congress could choose to only spend it once. If this money is going to be spent no matter what happens, why cannot it not at least be for things that would engender widespread public support?

What could possibly go wrong with the government having access to real-time tracking data of every U.S. citizen with a car?

As the Trump administration looks for ways to fund infrastructure projects, the Economic Report to the President hinted at one of the options the administration may be looking at. Pages 184-186 highlight a program in Oregon that charges drivers based on the miles driven instead of being taxed at the gas pump. This is a horrendous idea that will more than likely lead to government overreach and more wasteful spending.

Polizette: Pennsylvania Officials Accused of Hiding Data on Noncitizen Voting

Pennsylvania state elections officials are hiding data on noncitizen voters, obscuring what could be as many as 100,000 illegal voters in the crucial swing state, according to a federal lawsuit filed Monday.

Don't let Schumer, Pelosi add the $63 billion to the non-defense domestic spending baseline in 2018

By Robert Romano

In the last continuing resolution, Congress increased baseline non-defense discretionary spending by $131 billion over the next two years. This was in exchange for $165 billion of new defense spending over that same period.

But rather than add to the existing baseline budget on the domestic side — adding tens of thousands of new federal employees to the bureaucracy or increasing entitlement spending — Congress could make a different choice, albeit one that is less than ideal.

Instead, it could choose to spend the money on one-time expenditures. And then it won't get added to the baseline.

For example, President Donald Trump has proposed a new infrastructure plan. Why would Congress vote to increase domestic spending in the upcoming omnibus spending bill and then come back to vote for massive infrastructure bill costing a few hundred billion more dollars?

They probably won't. Congressional Republicans will already be reeling from increasing the spending baseline for domestic agencies. Asking for tens of billions of more dollars on top of that may be a bridge too far — meaning none of them will get fixed with new transportation dollars allocated by Congress.

So, Congress could decide, if they're going to spend the money anyway, to create funding for Trump agenda items he is otherwise asking for.

Infrastructure having already been mentioned, there is also the southern border wall.

Other important things that could be done in the area of building include hardening the nation's electric grid against an electromagnetic pulse for, say, $7 billion. Without such hardening, if a nuclear explosion went off, it might be able to knock out the electric grid for months, meaning no water processing, no refrigeration, no food. Millions could die.

Congress could also decide to set aside about $20 billion or so to lay fiber optic cables alongside the interstate highway system and otherwise lay the groundwork for the coming 5G revolution that will make driverless cars and trucks and other gizmos possible.

Such work via the interstate highways could also readily make high-speed broadband more accessible across the rural frontier.

Create a lottery similarly to the cell phone tower lottery in the 1980s for portions of that Internet pipeline to create competition in the high-speed Internet arena.

Such a plan might also include funding for similarly running fiber optics via electric utilities, to ensure that urban and suburban residential areas get a piece of the 5G pie as well.

Another $10 billion could be put toward a new Apollo program to put a man on Mars and modernizing our space fleet.

In short, if this money is going to be spent no matter what happens, why cannot it not at least be for things that would engender widespread public support?

Or, you know, we could spend the money hiring new federal workers and doling out new federal worker health care plans and pensions.

Fiscal conservatives in Congress, in a well-intentioned but ultimately futile bid to veto the new spending, could surrender their votes to Nancy Pelosi and Chuck Schumer, since if House Speaker Paul Ryan cannot get a Republican majority has to go to the left for votes.

Meaning, Schumer and Pelosi will get more of what they want out of the $131 billion of new domestic baseline spending over the next two years.

To be clear, the limited government position is to not spend this money at all. But if that is not a viable option, and the money is going to be spent anyway, the fallback must be to spend it only once.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

What could possibly go wrong with the government having access to real-time tracking data of every U.S. citizen with a car?

By Printus LeBlanc

As the Trump administration looks for ways to fund infrastructure projects, the Economic Report to the President hinted at one of the options the administration may be looking at. Pages 184-186 highlight a program in Oregon that charges drivers based on the miles driven instead of being taxed at the gas pump. This is a horrendous idea that will more than likely lead to government overreach and more wasteful spending.

Coincidently, Oregon introduced the first gas tax in the nation at $0.01 per gallon in 1919. Within ten years all states instituted a gas tax. The federal government got into the act with the passage of the Revenue Act of 1932 by taxing multiple items including gas. Since then the federal government has raised the gas tax several times to where it stands today at $0.184 for gas and $0.244 for diesel. States have also continued to increase the tax with Pennsylvania leading the nation at $0.582 per gallon. This tax revenue goes into what is known as the Highway Trust Fund, which pays for highway maintenance and new transportation projects.

Now many states and the federal government are saying this is not enough. There are a few problems with is this argument. The first is the states and the federal government instituted regulations that were going to decrease the amount of gas consumed by consumers.

In response to the 1973-74 oil embargo, Congress established the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards in 1975 when it passed the Energy Policy and Conservation Act. The legislation was an attempt to increase the fuel economy of U.S. vehicles thereby reducing dependence on foreign oil. It accomplished the feat by gradually raising fuel efficiency levels of the various vehicle categories.

As fuel economy increased, CAFÉ standards had the unintended consequence of putting people on the road longer, increasing the wear and tear on the road system, while not collecting extra revenue. Greater fuel efficiency means fewer fill-ups, which equals less revenue.

The second problem with the highway fund is the money is not being spent on road projects, with approximately 25 percent of the fund being diverted to non-highway projects. The Mass Transit Account spends billions on buses, streetcars, and other boondoggles that do not have a return on investment. In fact, it is next to impossible to find mass transit project in the U.S. that is not hemorrhaging funds. The District of Columbia is considering scrapping its streetcar project after spending hundreds of millions over several years on the barely used rail line.

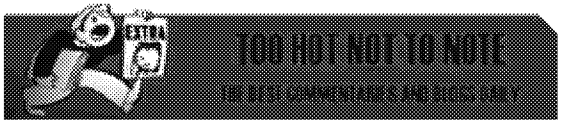
The Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG), formally the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), is another account siphoning from the HTF. The STBG is responsible for hundreds of millions in bike paths, recreational trails, and scenic overlooks. Gas taxes have gone to grants for squirrel sanctuaries ($112,000), driving simulators ($198,000), and resurfacing of bike paths ($900,000). Once again, projects that should be the responsibility of the local government and not the federal government.

To make up the spending gaps, the Trump administration has highlighted the pilot program in Oregon. The program charges $0.017 per mile driven on state roads. Chairman of the White House Council of Economic Advisors, Kevin Hassett described the program as "innovative" in a recent conference call.

The problem with the program is the only way to know when someone is on a state road or a federal highway is to track them with GPS. Do the American people really want to give governments the ability to track their every move?

Governments at all levels instituted regulations that reduced gas tax revenue while wasting funds on non-highway projects, and the response is to institute a tracking program that collects data on when and where people drive. What could possibly go wrong with allowing the government to track your every movement?

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.



ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from Polizette: Brendan Kirby reports on efforts of the Public Interest Legal Foundation to investigate an estimated 100,000 illegal voters on the Pennsylvania voting rolls and the lack of cooperation by Pennsylvania authorities:

PoliZette

Pennsylvania Officials Accused of Hiding Data on Noncitizen Voting

By Brendan Kirby

Pennsylvania state elections officials are hiding data on noncitizen voters, obscuring what could be as many as 100,000 illegal voters in the crucial swing state, according to a federal lawsuit filed Monday.

The Public Interest Legal Foundation (PILF), which promotes "clean" voter registration rolls across the country, has sought records from Pennsylvania required under the so-called motor voter law. The law, formally known as the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), allows members of the public to inspect records related to registered voters.

Pennsylvania twice rejected PILF's request, triggering Monday's lawsuit.

"For months, Pennsylvania bureaucrats have concealed facts about noncitizens registering and voting — that ends today," PILF President and general counsel J. Christian Adams said in a statement. "Before this lawsuit, the state admitted to a 'glitch' that exposed thousands of driver's license customers to voter registration offers despite their noncitizen status since the 1990s."

Adams noted that the secretary of state abruptly resigned in October. Adams added that his organization "hopes to finally get answers about the true scale of noncitizen voting in Pennsylvania and assist lawmakers in crafting reforms that fix it."

The civil complaint names acting Secretary of State Robert Torres and Jonathan Marks, the commissioner of the Bureau of Commissions, Elections and Legislation, as defendants. A spokeswoman for the secretary of state's office said the office does not comment on pending litigation.

PILF has been highlighting voting irregularities since at least 2015, when it *reported* that 86 registered voters in the city of Philadelphia asked elections officials between 2013 and 2015 to be removed from the rolls because they were not U.S. citizens.

Al Schmidt, a Philadelphia city commissioner, later testified before a state legislative committee that 220 noncitizens successfully registered to vote between 2006 and 2017, and that 90 of them had cast 277 ballots.

Schmidt blamed it on a "glitch" in the driver's license system.

Marks testified that his agency had found 1,160 canceled voter registrations from 46 counties due to voters alerting officials that they were noncitizens and should not be on the rolls. Of that group, 248 people from 30 counties voted at least once.

According to Schmidt's testimony, the Department of State has completed the Noncitizen Matching Analysis pointing to more than 100,000 matches, meaning that more than 100,000 noncitizens could be registered to vote in the state.

Hans von Spakovsky, a former member of the Federal Election Commission (FTC), who served on President Donald Trump's voter integrity commission, said Schmidt's estimate for the number of illegal voters is troubling if it is close to accurate.

"That's a lot of illegal votes," he told LifeZette.

Von Spakovsky, who serves as manager of the Election Law Reform Initiative at the conservative Heritage Foundation, said there is no excuse for withholding information about voter registration.

"Transparency was built into this by both federal law and most state laws," he said.

Von Spakovsky said he could think of only one explanation.

"The only reason for a state to want to avoid providing that information … is because they want to avoid embarrassment over allowing it to happen," he said.

The lawsuit includes eight exhibits detailing actual voters who had been removed from the rolls because they were not citizens. Some of them were able to register again after their removal.

For instance, one record indicates that Othman Alamoudi registered to vote in Allegheny County in 2005 through the driver's license office. In 2012, officials canceled Alamoudi's voter registration after determining he was not a citizen. But then in 2014, he re-registered as a voter, this time through an application in the mail, and voted in the 2014 general election.

County officials canceled his registration a second time after he moved to Mercer County. After relocating, he registered a third time — and currently is an active voter, who cast a ballot in the 2016 election.

As another example, the suit points to Susan Hermanoche, who registered in Allegheny County, was canceled in 2006 because she was not a citizen and then registered to vote two more times. Records show she voted in the 2008 primary and the general elections in 2010, 2012 and 2016 — all after officials initially flagged her as a noncitizen. She remains an active voter today, according to the suit.

PILF argues the problem could be bigger since there is no systemic effort to identify and remove ineligible voters.

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Subject: Trump, stop this foreign takeover of US tech giant

Qualcomm is at the point of the spear in creating the next technological leap to 5G

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 5, 2018

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Trump, stop this foreign takeover of US tech giant

A Singapore-based technology company — moving to attempt a hostile takeover of Qualcomm — an American technology firm based in San Diego, Calif. Under normal circumstances, such an acquisition would be a fact of life in a free market economy. However, a hostile takeover of the one U.S. company on the cutting edge of 5G technology by a foreign company raises serious national security concerns.

House passes sex trafficking bill, but faces uphill battle in the Senate

In a rare bipartisan push, the House of Representatives has voted to pass legislation making it more difficult for online users to engage in sex trafficking and empower victims to fight against web makers that facilitate inappropriate online content. However, this bill is no stranger to controversy and has sparked outrage from some lawmakers and technology companies. While this bill takes a necessary step in combating a growing problem, it also might create a few new ones.

The National Interest: The World Cries Wolf on U.S. Tariffs

It is likely that few, if any, of these experts have read the two detailed Commerce Department reports that prompted the tariff decision, or the Defense Department memo endorsing their findings. The goal of the tariffs proposed by Commerce and endorsed by the president isn't to punish Chinese dumping or put an end to free trade. It's to ensure that the United States retains any domestic steel and aluminum production at all. Like President Barack Obama's controversial auto industry bailout in 2009, these tariffs are about keeping an industry for the future, not about making it profitable today.

THE HILL

Trump, stop this foreign takeover of US tech giant

By Richard Manning

In our globalized world, national security threats take many forms, and one area of increasing concern is the attacks on U.S. companies who are instrumental in building the nuts and bolts of the modern Internet. America's free market economy, our way of life, can easily come under threat from foreign nations whose national interests do not align with ours if we are not careful about what happens to American-based companies and their intellectual property.

There is no better example of this dilemma than Broadcom — a Singapore-based technology company — moving to attempt a hostile takeover of Qualcomm — an American technology firm based in San Diego, Calif. Under normal circumstances, such an acquisition would be a fact of life in a free market economy. However, a hostile takeover of the one U.S. company on the cutting edge of 5G technology by a foreign company raises serious national security concerns.

The fact of the matter is, Qualcomm has played an integral role in the development of smart phone technology. Perhaps most famous as the developer of both 3G and 4G technology, Qualcomm is at the point of the spear in creating the next technological leap to 5G. The future leap will see machines talking to and directing the activities of other machines, pushing society into a world where driverless vehicles are the norm and many aspects of life are literally on automatic pilot.

Qualcomm is one of the companies most likely to create the software to make this system run, but China's Huawei is among those competing to be first. An immediate review by the United States Government's Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) of the attempted takeover of Qualcomm by Broadcom is of the utmost importance because whoever wins the battle in developing 5G, will be providing the guts of the world's industrial future. It can be expected that an unscrupulous company controlled by a foreign government would use this advantage to put backdoors into various systems, making the world's economy vulnerable to blackmail.

The Chinese technology company, Huawei, is already reported by news outlets such as Reuters to be on the verge of major 5G breakthroughs. Given Broadcom's suspected business ties with China, the access Chinese companies could have to Qualcomm's intellectual property and 5G development

would guarantee the dominance of the global Internet by an authoritarian regime and competitor to the United States.

CFIUS is a specialized institution within the U.S. Department of Treasury designed to handle financial deals of such grave national security importance, such as this hostile takeover of Qualcomm. President Trump and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin must immediately engage the CFIUS process to ensure that American interests are being met. CFIUS was designed to prevent dangerous technology transfers through both sales of computers and other products, but also through the sale of companies with the patents and know-how which transfer of control over would have potential disastrous consequences.

Generally, when one company moves to acquire another, it is a perfect example of our capitalist system at work. Investors benefit along consumers and we see a greater efficiency in the market. However, we must not ignore the interests of America as a whole either. When major acquisition deals threaten our national security, there is a necessary and important constitutional role for our government to play to ensure that American citizens will continue to remain free. The Broadcom attempt to takeover Qualcomm fits this criteria to a tee.

In 2016, President Obama succeeded in giving away operational control over the Internet's domain name system to a non-profit vendor without ties to the U.S. government, a move which candidate Donald Trump wisely opposed. Now it is up to the Trump administration to deny the foreign takeover of the one company in America that is building the guts of how business will use the Internet in the future.

With all the threats around the world, this little discussed one is as important over the long-run as the nuclear threat posed by North Korea and others. We simply cannot afford to have foreign governments through their managed corporations, have the ability to claim exclusive control the 5G technology that will be running the economy of the future.

Rick Manning is the president of Americans for Limited Government.

House passes sex trafficking bill, but faces uphill battle in the Senate

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 1865

AN ACT

To amend the Communications Act of 1934 to clarify that section 230 of such Act does not prohibit the enforcement against providers and users of interactive computer services of Federal and State criminal and civil law relating to sexual exploitation of children or sex trafficking, and for other purposes.

By Natalia Castro

In a rare bipartisan push, the House of Representatives has voted to pass legislation making it more difficult for online users to engage in sex trafficking and empower victims to fight against web makers that facilitate inappropriate online content. However, this bill is no stranger to controversy and has sparked outrage from some lawmakers and technology companies. While this bill takes a necessary step in combating a growing problem, it also might create a few new ones.

The legislation H.R. 1865, or the Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act of 2017, removes immunity from liability for online actors who "promote or facilitate the prostitution of another person... promotes or facilitates the prostitution of 5 or more persons; or acts in reckless disregard of the fact that such conduct contributed to sex trafficking". Currently, the 1996 Communications Decency Act (CDA) protects websites from liability for material posted by third parties; this allows these websites to evade criminal and civil lawsuits.

Missouri Republican Ann Wagner introduced this legislation due to a Congressional investigation taking place against the website Backpage. The Senate report on the website concludes, "Backpage has maintained a practice of altering ads before publication by deleting words, phrases, and images indicative of criminality, including child sex trafficking... Backpage also knows that advertisers use its site extensively for child sex trafficking, but the company has often refused to act swiftly in response to complaints about particular underage users—preferring in some cases to interpret these complaints as the tactics of a competing escort."

Representative Wagner called the issue of online sex trafficking a problem "hiding in plain sight" and hopes the act will empower victims and the legal system to take action against websites that facilitate this crime.

Although the legislation passed through the House on a 388-25 bipartisan vote, the Senate expects an entirely different obstacle.

As Evan Engstrom, leader of an Internet startup advocacy group named Engine that represents companies like Reddit and Pinterest, explains to NPR of Feb. 2018, the CDA was integral in protecting websites like YouTube, Facebook, and Yelp which would have otherwise been sued out of existence. As NPR reports, "Engstrom argues this could prove counterproductive. He says websites, especially small ones, might decide to not even know at all what happens on their platforms to avoid liability."

The legislation broadly allows for litigation against any website that promotes or facilitates illegal prostitution or sex trafficking, which has raised concerns over widespread implementation and over litigation.

Conservative organizations faced similar questions regarding the limitations to the First Amendment this bill presents since it encourages companies to censor material that could produce liability. Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning notes, "The implementation of this law could have the effect of encouraging Facebook or other internet entities to engage in a delete first, ask questions later policy to protect themselves from liability. Given Google's hiring of the Southern Poverty Law Center to monitor YouTube content, it is not difficult to see how this good idea could turn into a disastrous result."

As the Congressional investigation into Backpage suggests, online sex trafficking and criminal activity is a serious issue that must be addressed but discovering the best method to address the issue has proved challenging. While this legislation could empower victims to fight against pages which facilitate crime, it could also open a stream of litigation which redefines how our internet functions.

Natalia Castro is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from The National Interest, Salvatore Babones looks at the trade tariffs announced by the U.S. and tells everyone to breathe and calm down:

The World Cries Wolf on U.S. Tariffs

By Salvatore Babones

When U.S. president Donald Trump announced sweeping new tariffs of 25 percent on imported steel and 10 percent on aluminum Thursday, the world's commentariat broke out in a frenzy of condemnation. Trump was accused of playing politics in a way that could "destabilize the global economy." It was said that Trump's actions could "bring global trade growth to a halt" (notwithstanding the fact that levels of global trade have already been declining since 2011). His critics screamed "trade war." Canadian and European leaders immediately threatened retaliation. China didn't, but American China experts predicted that Beijing soon would.

It is likely that few, if any, of these experts have read the two detailed Commerce Department reports that prompted the tariff decision, or the Defense Department memo endorsing their findings. The goal of the tariffs proposed by Commerce and endorsed by the president isn't to punish Chinese dumping or put an end to free trade. It's to ensure that the United States retains any domestic steel and aluminum production at all. Like President Barack Obama's controversial auto industry bailout in 2009, these tariffs are about keeping an industry for the future, not about making it profitable today.

If China has merely expressed concern over Trump's plans, it's because China is not really the target of the planned tariffs. China's massive state-owned steel and aluminum firms may ultimately lie behind the world's glutted markets, but Chinese products account for only a fraction of U.S. imports (2.2 percent for steel and 10.6 percent for aluminum). The real problem is that other countries—including allies like Canada and the European Union—have responded to years of Chinese dumping by subsidizing their own industries and imposing broad tariffs on Chinese steel. American antidumping measures have traditionally been more narrowly focused. In a sense, Trump is only catching up with what the rest of the world is doing already.

The simple fact is that the world produces much more steel and aluminum than it needs. A global shakeout is inevitable, and every country wants to make sure that its own industries are the ones that survive. The only question is: who will blink first? If one country has done a lot of blinking over the last twenty years, it's the United States, as the Commerce Department report amply documents. Embracing a free-market approach, being reluctant to provide subsidies, applying very selective tariffs and never even thinking about nationalizing its strategic industries, the United States has consistently ceded market share to its statist rivals overseas. The Trump tariffs bluntly but effectively draw a line under twenty years of creeping retreat.

In its evaluation of the Commerce Department reports, the Defense Department flatly concluded that "the systematic use of unfair trade practices to intentionally erode our innovation and manufacturing industrial base poses a risk to our national security" and agreed with the Commerce Department's conclusion "that imports of foreign steel and aluminum based on unfair trading practices impair the national security." Of the three national-security responses offered by Commerce, DoD preferred the second option, targeted tariffs, over the first (global tariffs) and third (global quotas). But that's a question of strategy, not principle.

The DoD is, obviously, a military organization, not an economic one. It is "concerned about the negative impact on our key allies" of a broad, uniform tariff. So the DoD prefers targeted tariffs on countries that, except for South Korea, are not U.S. allies. But as the DoD memo admits, targeted tariffs raise complicated enforcement challenges due to the international transshipment of steel and other jurisdiction-shifting exercises. The Commerce report estimated that targeted tariffs would have to be at least 53 percent on steel and 23.6 percent on aluminum to be effective. Trump's flat tariffs of 25 percent and 10 percent would be easier to implement and harder to avoid.

A single, global tariff also sends a simple, universally understood message that this time, the United States is not going to blink first. This dispute is not about the World Trade Organization, playing by the rules, commitment to globalization or the much-hyped international liberal order. It's about the fact that some countries are going to have to give up their steel and aluminum industries. The United States should not be one of them. Countries that have historically made high steel and aluminum output a matter of national policy should act responsibly to dismantle their bloated industrial bases. Until they do (and there are no signs that they will), the U.S. government should act to ensure a fair price for those few American producers that remain.

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Subject: Robert Mueller's Michael Flynn misconduct may be the key to his dismissal

Mueller should be removed from Special Counsel immediately for prosecutorial misconduct

The Power Beat Daily

All The News That Doesn't Fit the Page

March 20, 2018

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Robert Mueller's Michael Flynn misconduct may be the key to his dismissal

If Special Counsel Robert Mueller knew former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn didn't lie to FBI about his conversation with Russian ambassador Sergei Kislyak in Dec. 2016, and withheld exculpatory evidence from him and his attorneys, Mueller should be removed from Special Counsel immediately for prosecutorial misconduct.

Cartoon: Clinging Hillary

Some people just don't know when it's over.

These are not schools; they are Stalinist indoctrination camps

It has been almost a week since the "student" walkout over school safety. After studying the event and the aftermath, it has become increasingly clear the walkout was nothing more than a political stunt. It had nothing to do with safety; it had nothing to do with allowing students to voice their opinions, it was all about progressives in national politics and the schoolhouse using children as political props. This begs the question, why are we funding these political indoctrination camps?

Daniel Ashman: Robert Mueller has been botching investigations since the Anthrax Attacks

"Under Mueller's management, the FBI launched an investigation lasting ten years. They now brag about spending 'hundreds of thousands of investigator hours on this case.' Let's take a closer look at Mueller's response to understand the context of the investigation — who his people investigated, targeted, and found guilty."

Robert Mueller's Michael Flynn misconduct may be the key to his dismissal

By Robert Romano

Did former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn ever even lie to the FBI on Jan. 24, 2017 about his Dec. 22, 2016 conversation he had with Russian ambassador Sergei Kislyak?

The Washington Examiner's Byron York reported on Feb. 18 that the FBI did not think so, reporting, "[Former FBI Director James] Comey told lawmakers that the FBI agents who interviewed Flynn did not believe that Flynn had lied to them, or that any inaccuracies in his answers were intentional."

Ultimately, lying to investigators was exactly the charge brought by Special Counsel Robert Mueller that Flynn has pled guilty to. But now, Flynn's sentencing has been delayed amid reports that the Mueller was compelled to turn over exculpatory evidence to Flynn's attorneys. Before that, the judge that was overseeing the case was similarly compelled to recuse himself after it was revealed he was the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) court judge who had authorized surveillance on one-time Trump campaign advisor Carter Page.

The Flynn matter is also presumably what Mueller or Congress will most likely be bringing against President Donald Trump for removal on a fanciful charge of obstruction of justice.

I write "fanciful" because nobody at the time thought that Flynn had done anything wrong by having the conversation with Kislyak — including the FBI which investigated the conversation concluding no crime had been committed, the Washington Post reported a day prior to his questioning on Jan. 23, 2017 — even if the conversation did mention the Obama administration's midnight implementation of sanctions against Russia. That was no crime.

Meaning, as of Jan. 24, 2017, there was no crime for the FBI to have been investigating Flynn for having committed, by the FBI's own account, nor one to have questioned Flynn about. If the reporting by the Washington Post on Jan. 23, 2017 is correct, there should be a record of the FBI inquiry into

the legality of the Flynn conversation with Kislyak, calling into question what the purpose of the interview was.

Was the Justice Department trying to set Flynn up with a process crime by interviewing him? Either way, the public and Congress should be allowed to review the transcript of the interview in its entirety immediately so we can make up our own minds about what really happened. No more guessing.

Since that time, the American people have learned that it was Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates who was obsessed with the idea that Flynn had committed a violation of the Logan Act by talking with Kislyak.

As the Examiner's York reported on Dec. 3, 2017, "Former Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates has told Congress that the Logan Act was the first reason she intervened in the Flynn case — the reason FBI agents were sent to the White House to interview Flynn in the Trump administration's early days. It was that interview, held on Jan. 24, 2017, that ultimately led to Flynn's guilty plea."

But the Justice Department's interest in the Logan Act might have predated the Kislyak phone call. As York reports: "Starting in the summer of 2016 and intensifying in the transition period, the Logan Act, while mostly unknown to the general public, became a hot topic of conversation among some Democrats. A number of lawmakers, former officials, and commentators called on the Obama administration to investigate the Trump team for a possible Logan Act violations — and to do it while Democrats still controlled the executive branch."

So, what if the Logan Act investigation had actually begun months prior to the Flynn's conversation? After all, the investigation of Trump campaign "collusion" with Russia was already active as early as July 2016 based on public reporting.

And while the public has been primarily focused on figures such as George Papadopoulos or Carter Page as having been the nexus of this investigation, one other figure, almost mentioned in passing in the Christopher Steele dossier was Michael Flynn.

Flynn appears in the Steele dossier because of his speaking engagement, which was really an interview led by a Russian reporter, Sophie Shevardnadze, in a public forum, at the Russia Today 10-year anniversary in Moscow in Dec. 2015. Steele wrote in Aug. 2016: "Kremlin engaging with several high profile U.S. players, including... former DIA Director Michael Flynn... and funding their recent visits to Moscow."

Apparently, it was not all that controversial at the time of his visit, since Flynn apparently briefed the Defense Department both before and after the event and had his security clearance reupped in April 2017 after the fact.

Raising the question of what eventually made it so suspicious to the Justice Department later? York's reporting puts the interest in the Logan Act dating back to the summer of 2016, not Dec. 2016. Perhaps the interest was to justify an ongoing criminal or counterintelligence investigation into Flynn with ongoing surveillance. Like the Page FISA warrant, Flynn's mention in the Steele dossier might have fueled the inquiry into Trump's top foreign policy advisor. Flynn was the main target all along.

Then there was the topic that Flynn spoke of at the Russia Today event, which was the potential for U.S.-Russian cooperation to defeat Islamic State, focusing on "mutual interests" and restoring "strategic stability" to the Middle East.

Flynn was there to sell the idea that the U.S. and Russia had a common enemy in Islamic State and more broadly radical Islam, a proposal candidate Trump would adopt in 2016.

Flynn stated, "This back and forth, and I do appreciate it… and I respect it, because we have to have this debate, we absolutely have to have this debate, and we have to have it now. And we can't—the United States—and I'm speaking as a really a private citizen—the United States can't sit there and go, Russia, you're bad, and Russia can't sit there and say, the U.S., you're bad. What we have to do, like we have done in the past, and I could go into a couple of historical examples where Europe would not be the Europe that it is today, thriving, had it not been for Russia and the United States working together 75 years ago, and in other places [is] where we have worked together. So, this idea of us not being able to work together is a misnomer, and I think we have to step back and we have to say, okay, what are the common interests, and then, what are the common goals that we want to achieve, and those goals I believe the number one goal is to… eliminate the cancerous idea that exists inside of the Islamic religion, we must do that."

Flynn called on Arab leaders to work with the U.S. and Russia toward that end, and added, "the second common goal is to then, to keep some level of stability in the Middle East that creates a new set of economic conditions, to deal with these… frankly, theses 15-to-35-year-old young men that exist…"

So, in Flynn's perspective, the destabilizing proxy wars in the Middle East have done much to foster the very conditions that are favorable to groups like al Qaeda and Islamic State. So, his program was to change the paradigm in the region.

Speaking emphatically to both Russia and the U.S., on how to generate trust between the two countries, Flynn flatly stated, "Stop being like two bullies in a playground. Quit acting immature… with each other and know that I have… a disagreement with you, you have a disagreement with me. You know, this is a funny marriage between Russia and the United States, but it's a marriage… whether we like it or not. And, that marriage is very, very rocky right now, and what we don't need is we don't need that marriage to break up. We've had our break ups in the past, but we need to… look at this, I mean, I'm deadly serious about this, because I know this enemy… and I think there's some in this country that know this enemy from having dealt with it in Chechnya and Dagestan and other places. This is a very, very deadly enemy."

Finishing out his interview, Flynn expressed hope that his idea for cooperation would be accepted in both Washington, D.C. and Moscow to defeat their common enemy and to avoid a larger conflict: "My wish and my hope is that we figure out a way strategically to work together, I think that that's the way ahead. Whether or not we work together 20 years from now, I don't know, but I know if we don't work together right now, the potential for going to a larger conflict against each other or the potential for this enemy to do far more damage than they already have is very, very real."

Can you imagine anyone proposing such cooperation today in the midst of hysteria over all things Russia? Moreover, think of the level of advice that President Trump was denied at a time when escalation versus Russia would absolutely become a problem in the very regions that Flynn worried about in his Russia Today talk.

The conversation was initiated with a question about the incident of NATO member Turkey shooting down a Russian helicopter. Flynn warned that because of all the "converging interests" in Syria that such incidents were likely and needed to be warded off before they turned into something bigger.

After last month's killing of more than 200 Russian soldiers by U.S. forces in Syria after they attacked a U.S. base, clearly Flynn's warnings have turned out to be prophetic.

And at the time in Dec. 2015 and the early days of 2016, Flynn's ideas might have been seen as heresy. They implicate not only U.S.-Russian relations but also the Iran nuclear deal — Iran in many ways is a client state of Russia's — which Flynn opposed. In a similar vein, you don't deal with radical Islam in the region without dealing with Iran. Finally, during the transition it was reported by Reuters on Jan. 5, 2017 that Flynn wanted to reorganize the nation's intelligence agencies. Together, this could amount to a major motive to take out Flynn.

As Trump's advisor on foreign affairs in the campaign, clearly Flynn had an impact, as the candidate Trump talked up the possibility of working with Russia to destroy Islamic State. The Iran deal was in the crosshairs. The National Security Council was about to be headed by somebody who had bucked the national security establishment. All these things were real possibilities — threats from the establishment's perspective — after Trump won the election headed into 2017.

Which may be what motivated somebody in the Obama administration to leak the Kislyak conversation to the Washington Post's David Ignatius, setting forward the chain of events that would ultimately lead to the appointment of Robert Mueller. Likely, if it was not lying to investigators, it would have been the Logan Act or something else. Anything to justify an ongoing investigation that Trump would be available to "obstruct."

In context, though, it is hard not to wonder if the plan was to stop Flynn's radical bid for U.S.-Russian cooperation that Trump embraced in the 2016 campaign, to keep the Iran deal intact and to protect the status quo in the deep state.

The real question might be *when* was Flynn put under surveillance by the Obama administration? After all, how did the FBI get the transcript of the Kislyak conversation? Can Congress find out? Will Mueller tell us?

What if Michael Flynn was not unmasked?

We know based on public reporting that the FBI investigators had a transcript of Flynn's conversation with Kislyak when they went to talk to him. At the time, the Washington Post reported that "The calls were picked up as part of routine electronic surveillance of Russian officials and agents in the United States, which is one of the FBI's responsibilities, according to the U.S. officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss counterintelligence operations." Based on that account and others, everyone tends to assume that Flynn was unmasked.

When you boil it down, the transcript of Flynn and Kislyak likely came into being in one of two ways. Either, A) as is widely believed, Kislyak was under Section 702 surveillance, Flynn was minimized, and then unmasked via procedures approved by the Attorney General; or B) like Carter Page, Flynn himself was under surveillance under Title I of FISA.

When Section 702 was reauthorized, Congressional officials went out of their way to beat back opposition to renewing FISA by noting that all the abuses we've seen have come out of the FISA court abuse scandal — i.e. the Carter Page warrant that used the Steele dossier as evidence — have come about because of domestic surveillance, not foreign.

If that proves true in 100 percent of the matters we are considering, then the abuse against Flynn might not have been based on foreign surveillance, but based on domestic surveillance.

So far, over a year in Congress' intelligence committees looking into the Obama era investigation in Trump and Russia, nobody has publicly produced evidence of Flynn being unmasked and if so by who.

Meaning, Flynn might have been under surveillance himself. Perhaps there was more than one FISA court-ordered surveillance that was abused by federal officials. Recall the fact the conversation had occurred was almost instantaneously leaked to the news media. That was clearly a crime, a leak of classified information.

Now, whether it was an unmasking gleaned from surveillance of a foreign actor like Kislyak or was targeted directly on Flynn is a highly substantive matter, since it implicates how Special Counsel Robert Mueller's case against Flynn came into being. Was it incidental, or intentional surveillance?

Right now, we don't know. But Flynn, Congress and ultimately the American people clearly have a right to know. If this is what is going to be used to conjure a B.S. charge of obstruction of justice against the sitting President of the United States and overturn the 2016 election, we should everything there is to know about it, even and especially if certain aspects of how that investigation go started are currently classified. There is simply no other way to tell if the investigation into Flynn was politically tainted as the other parts of the Russia investigation, even as it appears highly likely it was.

Recall, by Jan. 23, 2017, per the Washington Post, the FBI had already concluded Flynn did nothing illegal by talking to Kislyak. A day later, the FBI was sent to question him at the White House by Yates. Months later, we learn via the Examiner's York that the FBI did not think Flynn had lied at that meeting. And now, the judge overseeing Flynn's case has ordered exculpatory evidence to be turned over to Flynn.

The misconduct of the Justice Department against Flynn does not suddenly end the moment Mueller was appointed. The transcript of the conversation was taken by the nation's intelligence agencies before President Trump was sworn into office and therefore prior to Flynn's appointment as National Security Advisor. Mueller used all this evidence against Flynn.

If Flynn was under surveillance, federal investigators would have had to demonstrate probable cause that Flynn was working as a foreign agent. But what if the evidence for doing so was the same as Carter Page? That is, the infamous Steele dossier, which similarly named Flynn as having been overseas in Moscow? Or rested on some oddball legal interpretation of the Logan Act?

Either way, the fact that Flynn had been in Moscow to speak at the Russia Today 10-year anniversary was already a matter of public record. Financial disclosures about it notwithstanding — those can be amended — this was not something worthy of a national security investigation. Anyone could have just gone to Youtube to see him speaking in a public interview. This was not collusion. It was an interview with foreign media. And, again, by April 2016, the Obama administration had renewed Flynn's security clearance.

Somewhere along the way, something changed in the posture toward Flynn. By the time the Russia investigation, or should we say, hysteria, was in full swing, Flynn was swept up just as was Trump, Page, Papapdopoulos, Paul Manafort and even Attorney General Jeff Sessions. They needed something they could stick to Trump — to stop him and the agenda Flynn was pursuing.

This all smells bad. It looks like a dirty trick. If it turns out Mueller deliberately withheld exculpatory evidence from Flynn and his attorneys to extract a guilty plea under duress, that guilty plea should be

thrown out, Flynn should be pardoned and perhaps even reinstated, and Mueller should be removed as Special Counsel for yet more prosecutorial misconduct.

Because at the end of the day, it sure is looking a whole lot like Michael Flynn was set up as the means to take out President Trump and overturn the result of the 2016 election — come hell or high water.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Cartoon: Clinging Hillary

By A.F. Branco

Click here for a higher resolution image.

These are not schools, they are Stalinist indoctrination camps

C/O Legal Insurrection

By Printus LeBlanc

It has been almost a week since the “student” walkout over school safety. After studying the event and the aftermath, it has become increasingly clear the walkout was nothing more than a political stunt. It had nothing to do with safety; it had nothing to do with allowing students to voice their opinions, it was all about progressives in national politics and the schoolhouse using children as political props. This begs the question, why are we funding these political indoctrination camps?

The students didn't walk out over cellphones and driving. The students didn't walk out over bullying which leads to thousands of teen suicides each year. No, the students walked out over the Second Amendment which the progressive left has been trying to eliminate for decades. Following the horrendous events in Florida, progressives seized on the opportunity to use the children to get what they wanted. A few examples across the nation show just how political the walkout was.

A student in Hilliard, Ohio made the decision he did not want to get involved in the politics of the anti-gun debate. He chose to stay in class. The student should be celebrated for wanting to concentrate on education instead of skipping class time for a political reason. Not so in today's education system. The student was suspended for not partaking in political speech.

What type of message does that send? What kind of bullies run a school system that force students to participate in political speech?

The bullies in Ohio must be the same type in California. Julianne Benze, a teacher at Rocklin High School in Rocklin, California, was a victim of this bullying. Before the student walkout, Benze discussed the situation with her class. The teacher asked the question, "[If] a group of students nationwide, or even locally, decided 'I want to walk out of school for 17 minutes' and go in the quad area and protest abortion, would that be allowed by our administration?"

This was too much for the administration; no one is allowed to stray from the progressive dogma. Benze was suspended for the imagined infraction, not the students that skipped class. Seems hypocritical for school administrators to bully a teacher for not adhering to progressive ideals while hosting anti-bullying campaigns themselves.

Perhaps the most crystal-clear example of the children being used as political pawns comes from Baltimore. Just this past January the Baltimore Teachers Union sent a letter to the CEO of Baltimore City Public Schools, Sonja Brookins Santelises, complaining about the lack of heat in many classrooms. The teachers called the conditions "inhumane."

But apparently, there is plenty of money to pull children out of school for the day and send them to Washington D.C. to participate in political activities. It is estimated the city spent $100,000 to send the children to protest. Is that really the best use of taxpayer money? The people of Baltimore believe their schools are in disrepair, but the administration somehow finds money for political events.

The actions of the teacher's unions, progressive leftists, and education officials are not surprising. The most disturbing event to take place involving politics and schools didn't happen with this walkout; it happened when Chicago teachers walked out on their students in 2012. The highest paid teachers in the country didn't think they were earning enough and went on strike.

They marched through the streets chanting the usual union slogans, but the shirts they were wearing stole the show. Teachers, the people Americans entrust their children to, were wearing shirts with Che Guevara on them.

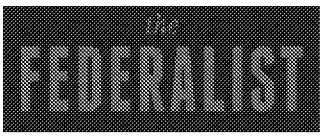
In case you don't know, Guevara was a racist, homophobic mass murderer trying to spread communism throughout Latin America including Cuba. Not only did he personally execute people without a trial, but he also tried to convince the Soviet Union to use nuclear weapons on New York, Los Angeles, or Washington D.C. to bring about war. Teachers were celebrating this man by proudly wearing his image in front of students they are supposed to be educating.

Is there any wonder the U.S. education system is failing?

The purely political acts prove the U.S. school system has nothing to do with education and everything to do with political indoctrination. That is why it is clearly time to get the federal government out of the education system and return this function to the states. By all measures it has failed. Look at what it has wrought: it is overtly political while failing to educate our students. It is time to end federal control of education and give the money back to the taxpayers — and end the propaganda mills once and for all.

Printus LeBlanc is a contributing editor at Americans for Limited Government.

ALG Editor's Note: In the following piece from The Federalist, Daniel Ashman destroys the myth of the honorable Special Counsel Robert Mueller. He points to investigations botched by Mueller and the lack of accountability:



Robert Mueller has been botching investigations since the Anthrax Attacks

By Daniel Ashman

Mystery surrounds Robert Mueller and his investigation into Russia and President Trump. Some think he is the ultimate professional, others that he is a Democrat lackey, still others maintain he is working on Trump's side.

We can see how he works if we look at how Mueller ran his second-most important investigation as FBI Director. In September of 2001, an entity began mailing anthrax through the US Postal system, hitting such prominent targets as NBC and Senator Daschle's office. The terrorist attacks killed five and left others hospitalized. The world panicked.

Under Mueller's management, the FBI launched an investigation lasting ten years. They now brag about spending "hundreds of thousands of investigator hours on this case." Let's take a closer look at Mueller's response to understand the context of the investigation — who his people investigated, targeted, and found guilty.

The anthrax letters began just a week after the 9/11 attack. While planning the airplane hijackings, Al-Qaeda had been weaponizing anthrax, setting up a lab in Afghanistan manned by Yazid Sufaat, the same man who housed two of the 9/11 hijackers. Two hijackers later sought medical help due to conditions consistent with infection via anthrax: Al Haznawi went to the emergency room for a skin lesion which he claimed was from "bumping into a suitcase," and ringleader Mohamed Atta needed medicine for "skin irritation." A team of bioterrorism experts from John Hopkins confirmed that anthrax was the most likely cause of the lesion. Meanwhile, the 9/11 hijackers were also trying to obtain crop-dusting airplanes.

So how did Mueller's investigative team handle the case?

Mueller issued a statement in October of 2001, while anthrax victims were still dying: the FBI had found "no direct link to organized terrorism." The John Hopkins team of experts was mistaken, the FBI continued, Al Haznawi never had an anthrax infection. The crop-dusting airplanes they needed was possibly for a separate and unrelated anthrax attack.

A few weeks later, the FBI released a remarkable profile of the attacker. FBI experts eschewed analysis of the content of the letters, where it was written in bold block letters, "Death to America, Death to Israel, Allah is Great." Instead, they focused on a "linguistic analysis," stating that the letter's writer was atypical in many respects and not "comfortable or practiced in writing in lower case lettering." The FBI therefore concluded that it was likely a disgruntled American with bad personal skills.

The investigators hypothesized that the attacker was a lonely American who had wanted to kill people with anthrax for some undefined time period, but then became "mission oriented" following 9/11 and immediately prepared and mailed the deadly spores while pretending to be a Muslim.

Mueller's FBI honed in on Steven Hatfill as the culprit — a "flag-waving" American, who had served in the Army, then dedicated himself to protecting America from bioterrorist threats by working in the United States Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases.

There was no direct link from Hatfill to the attacks, by the FBI's own admission, and the bureau never charged Hatfill. The FBI did however spy on, follow, and harass him non-stop for years. The Department of Justice also publicly outed Hatfill as the possible terrorist.

While Hatfill's dignity and life was being trampled on by America's secret police, Mueller took a stand. But on a different topic. He made front page news for threatening President Bush he would resign over NSA policy. All while *his own team* was trampling on the rights of an American in the FBI's largest-ever investigation.

Hatfill successfully sued the government for its unlawful actions. He won almost $6 million dollars.

After the Hatfill investigation blew up in the FBI's face, they moved on to Bruce Ivins, another Army researcher who had actually volunteered to help the FBI investigate this case, and had been doing so for years. It wasn't until five years after the attack that Mueller's men decided Ivins was a target.

The FBI case against Ivins, once again, was based on circumstantial evidence.

The prosecution stated Ivins purposefully gave a misleading sample of anthrax spore, but Frontline documented this was not true. Ivins was "familiar" with the area from which the anthrax letters were mailed, the FBI said, but Pulitzer Prize winning ProPublica lays out the accepted facts of the case showing it was impossible for Ivins to make the trip to mail the letters.

The spores used in the attacks were a similar type to the laboratory spores where Ivins worked, but that ignored the fact that the anthrax letters had a unique additive — so sophisticated and dangerous a scientist commented, "This is not your mother's anthrax" — that was likely produced by a nation state or Al-Qaeda.

Ivins was never indicted, just given the Hatfill treatment. His house was raided, and he was threatened with a death sentence, or as his lawyer put it, put under "relentless pressure of accusation and innuendo." He committed suicide.

One week later, U.S. Attorney Jeffrey Taylor stated Ivins was guilty "beyond a reasonable doubt," and they were "confident that Dr. Ivins was the only person responsible for these attacks."

Democratic Sen. Patrick Leahy, one of the intended victims of the anthrax terror attacks, did not believe that Ivins was the sole actor. Mueller ordered an independent audit of the FBI's case by the National Academy of Science, then formally closed the case in 2010, sticking with the conclusion that Ivins, and Ivins alone, committed the terror attack. One year later the NAS released their results and confirmed what many scientists had been repeating for years: the FBI's science and conclusions were not solid.

A former FBI official involved in the investigation sued the FBI, alleging the FBI concealed evidence exculpatory to Ivins.

Mueller made his position known, saying, "I do not apologize for any aspect of this investigation," and stated that the FBI had made no mistakes.

Click here for the full story.

Americans for Limited Government
10332 Main Street # 326None
Fairfax Virginia 22030
United States

This email is intended for abboud.michael@epa.gov.
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Message

From: Western Caucus Foundation [info@westerncaucusfoundation.org]
Sent: 1/30/2018 7:05:43 PM
To: Western Caucus Foundation [info@westerncaucusfoundation.org]
Subject: Western Caucus Foundation: Details for Tonight
Attachments: 2018 Taste of the West invitation.pdf

Good afternoon!

We are very excited to host this evening's event: Taste of the West. Due to the popularity of the event we are past RSVP capacity and must stress to all:

The Invitation for tonight is exclusively for Members of Congress, staff for Western Caucus Members (no interns), Foundation supporters, sponsors, and special invited guests only.

Please note there will be a check-in at the door, we are anticipating a large crowd, and appreciate everyone's patience as we all come together to celebrate Taste of the West.
Thanks!
The Western Caucus Foundation

WESTERN CAUCUS FOUNDATION

THE HONORABLE STEVE DAINES
HONORARY CO-CHAIR

THE HONORABLE PAUL GOSAR
HONORARY CO-CHAIR

2018 "Taste of the West"

A Reception Prior to the State of the Union Address

PRESENTED BY: LUCAS OIL

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 30, 5:30–7:00 P.M.
2044 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

Come have a ball with our guests, the Members of the Congressional and Senate Western Caucus, Congressional Staff, and others at our annual "Taste of the West" reception. Enjoy Rocky Mountain Oysters and other Western fare.

For event sponsor information or other questions, please email info@westerncaucusfoundation.org.

RSVP HERE

*Invitation exclusively for Members of Congress, staff for Western Caucus Members (no interns), Foundation supporters, sponsors, and special invited guests only.

Western Caucus Foundation | 400 N. Capitol St., #382-B | Washington, DC 20001 | info@westerncaucusfoundation.org

****** This event is planned to fully comply with Congressional Ethics Rules and other applicable laws ******

The Western Caucus Foundation (WCF) is a charitable and educational organization organized and operated under Section 501(c)(3). Contributions to the WCF are deductible from income taxes as allowed by federal and state laws. It will provide education and communications to policy makers and the public to further enhance, sustain, and preserve the West's dynamic and unique culture.

Message

From: Western Caucus Foundation [info@westerncaucusfoundation.org]
Sent: 12/13/2017 3:24:52 PM
To: Abboud, Michael [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b6f5af791a1842f1adcc088cbf9ed3ce-Abboud, Mic]
Subject: Reminder: Holiday Reception Tonight @5pm – Please RSVP asap!

Join us for our Holiday Reception!

WESTERN CAUCUS FOUNDATION

THE HONORABLE STEVE DAINES
HONORARY CO-CHAIR

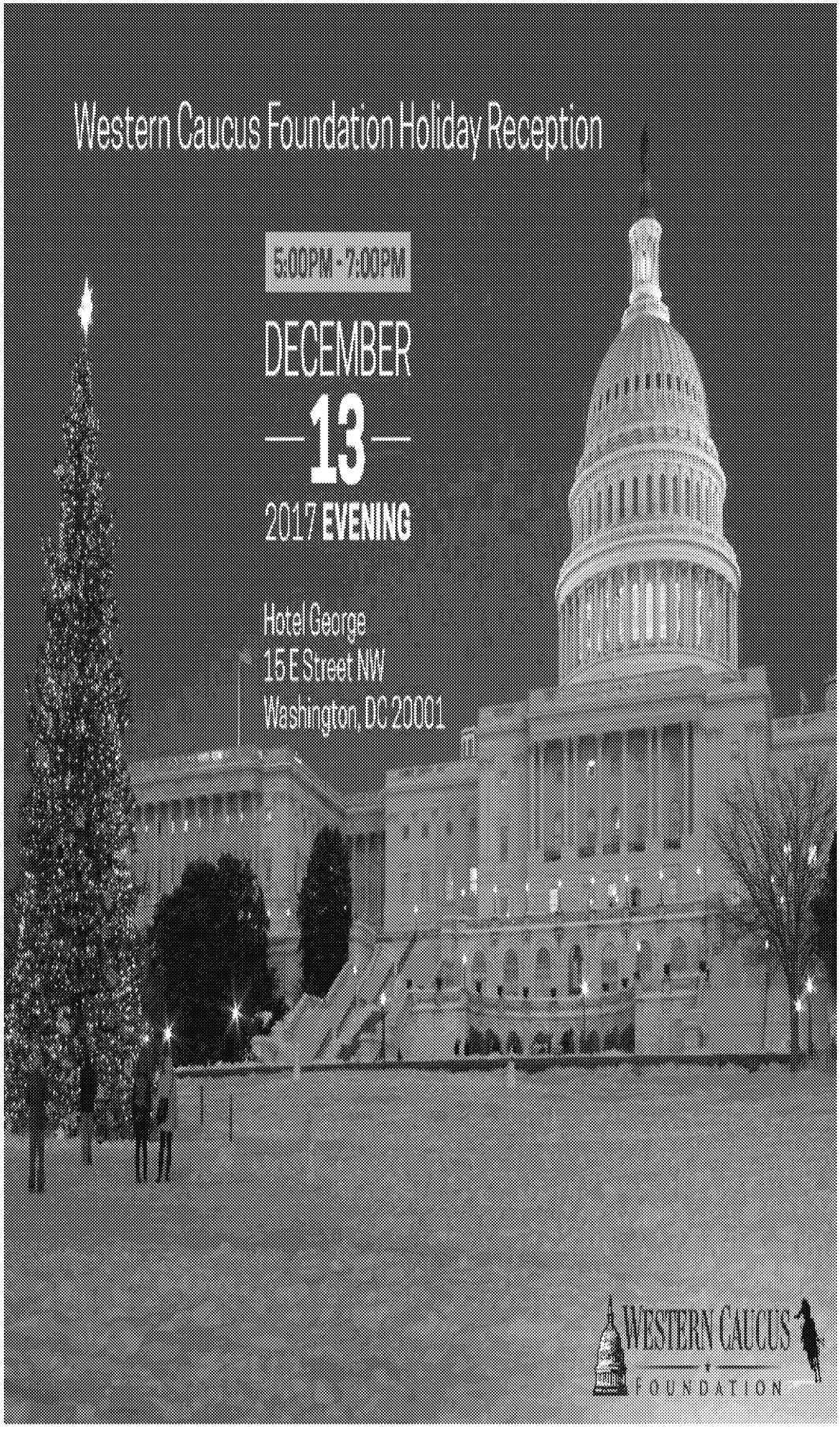
THE HONORABLE PAUL GOSAR
HONORARY CO-CHAIR

Holiday Reception

With our invited guests: Members of the Senate and Congressional Western Caucuses

Wednesday, December 13, 2017
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

At the Hotel George in Washington, D.C.


Western Caucus Foundation Holiday Reception
5:00PM - 7:00PM
DECEMBER
13
2017 EVENING
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FOUNDATION

RSVP HERE!

The Western Caucus Foundation (WCF), a 501 (c)(3), is a cultural exchange organization committed to educating public policy makers and communicating with the public in an effort to enhance, sustain, and preserve the West's dynamic and unique culture. The Foundation provides support, education, and networking opportunities to advance the public policies important to the West, and offers members a non-partisan and non-political organization to facilitate discussion of critical Western issues through a robust agenda of meetings, conferences, and programs.

To learn more about the Western Caucus Foundation please visit: ***http://westerncaucusfoundation.org***

Like us on Facebook at **www.facebook.com/westerncaucusfoundation/**
and follow us on twitter **@WestCaucusFoundReception to Celebrate**

Western Caucus Foundation | 400 N. Capitol St., #382-B | Washington, DC | 20001

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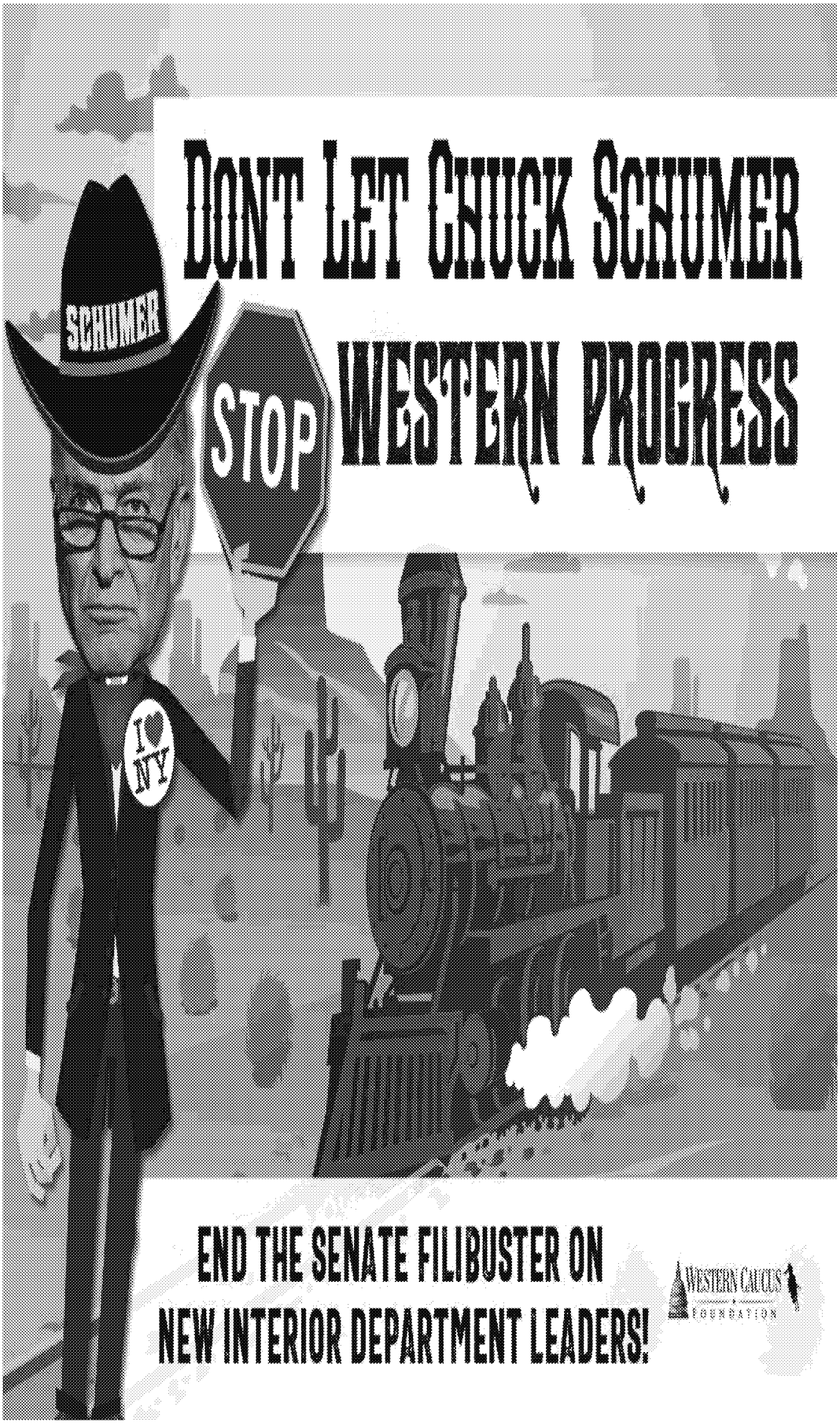
Message

From: Darrell Henry [info@westerncaucusfoundation.org]
Sent: 11/22/2017 4:22:00 PM
To: Abboud, Michael [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b6f5af791a1842f1adcc088cbf9ed3ce-Abboud, Mic]
Subject: Don't let NY Stop Western Progress!

Michael,

Chairman of the Senate Western Caucus, U.S. Senator Steve Daines, was joined by 15 leading members of the Senate Western Caucus calling for the confirmation of nominees important to the West.

New York Senator and Democrat Leader Chuck Schumer and his liberal elite friends in the Senate are hell-bent on holding up the West by blocking nominations for the new Interior Department leadership, which we in West need after the past 8 years!


DONT LET CHUCK SCHUMER
STOP WESTERN PROGRESS
SCHUMER
I ♥ NY
END THE SENATE FILIBUSTER ON
NEW INTERIOR DEPARTMENT LEADERS!
WESTERN CAUCUS
FOUNDATION

Enough is enough! This anti-Western bias coming from New York and its liberal elites MUST stop!

We must object to the Senate filibuster on new leadership and tell New Yorker Chuck Schumer to stop holding up Western progress!

If you agree, share this post on social media right now!

If you are not with us on social media:
Like us on FB: www.facebook.com/westerncaucusfoundation
Follow us on Twitter: @WestCaucusFound

Help us fight for the West!

Darrell Henry
www.westerncaucusfoundation.org

Western Caucus Foundation | 400 N. Capitol St., #382-B | Washington, DC | 20001

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Message

From: Henry, Darrell [dhenry@roqstrategies.com]
Sent: 11/20/2017 6:43:21 PM
To: info@westerncaucusfoundation.org
Subject: Invitation: Western Caucus Foundation Annual Winter Policy meeting Las Vegas, NV, Dec 8th & 9th.

On behalf of our Honorary Co-Chairs Senator Steve Daines (Chairman of the Senate Western Caucus) and Representative Paul Gosar (Chairman of the Congressional Western Caucus), we invite you to join Western Caucus Foundation for our annual winter policy meeting with members of the Senate and Congressional Western Caucuses at the Wynn Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada, on December 8th and 9th.

Click here for event information on the event, hotel information, and link to the agenda.

The Winter Western Policy Roundtable & Public Lands Forum will promote a dialog with attendees and official policy makers on current and upcoming 2018 Western Caucus priorities. The roundtables will discuss Administration and Congressional priorities, provide information and facts to policy makers, and promote a dialog with attendees and officials on issues related to the various topics on the agenda.

The two day meeting will consist of a staff policy roundtable on Friday morning followed by a Public Lands Summit in the afternoon. On Saturday, there will be a Caucus Member led Western Policy Roundtable in the morning, a key note speech, and an optional field tour in the afternoon. The format is set up so that it will encourage engaging Q&A and cross table dialogue beyond the time slotted for prepared remarks.

Attending the Foundation's events will be Members from the Congressional and Senate Western Caucuses, Congressional Staff, and Foundation stakeholders and guests. To date, we will be joined by Senate Western Caucus Chairman Senator Steve Daines, Senator John Barrasso; Senator Dean Heller, Congressional Western Caucus Chairman Rep. Paul Gosar, Agriculture Committee Chairman Rep. Mike Conaway; Rep. Mark Amodei; Rep. Kristi Noem, Rep. Dan Newhouse, and others caucus members to be announced – plus their staff.

The Western Caucus Foundation (WCF), a non-profit organization that provides education and communications to policy makers and the public to further enhance, sustain, and preserve the West's dynamic and unique culture. The WCF is committed to advancing the following key principles: promoting economic growth; protecting private property; strengthening local control; and increasing America's energy independence and mineral production. The Foundation also assists the efforts of the Senate and Congressional Western Caucuses efforts to enhance, sustain, and preserve the West's dynamic and unique culture.

Please **click here for event information**. You may contact Darrell Henry, Executive Director, Western Caucus Foundation at 202-487-8727 or info@westerncaucusfoundation.org for further information.

Western Caucus Foundation | www.westerncaucusfoundation.org
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WESTERN CAUCUS FOUNDATION

******This event is planned to fully comply with Congressional Ethics Rules and Other Applicable Laws******
The Western Caucus Foundation (WCF) is a charitable and educational organization organized and operated under Section 501(c)(3). It will provide education and communications to policy makers and the public to further enhance, sustain, and preserve the West's dynamic and unique culture.

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Message

From: Richard Manning [rmanning@getliberty.org]
Sent: 5/15/2018 2:43:28 PM
To: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: Please send the documents you handed out yesterday

Unfortunately, I had staff out and was unable to attend the announcement. Can you provide me with the original docs you handed out?

Thanks,

Rick Manning
President
Americans for Limited Government

From: EPA Press Office <press=epa.gov@cmail19.com> **On Behalf Of** EPA Press Office
Sent: Tuesday, May 15, 2018 10:16 AM
To: Richard Manning <rmanning@getliberty.org>
Subject: Bloomberg Environment: Pruitt Adds New EPA Office to Further Efficiency Effort

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

WWW.EPA.GOV/NEWSROOM

BLOOMBERG ENVIRONMENT

Pruitt Adds New EPA Office to Further Efficiency Effort

Bloomberg Environment
By Abby Smith
May 14, 2018
https://news.bloombergenvironment.com/environment-and-energy/pruitt-adds-new-epa-office-to-further-efficiency-effort

EPA head Scott Pruitt's efficiency push throughout the agency will get its own office, the administrator announced May 14.

"That which is measured improves," Pruitt said, announcing the formation of the Office of Continuous Improvement during an event at Environmental Protection Agency headquarters. Pruitt's approach aims to eliminate waste of time and resources.

Henry Darwin, the EPA's chief of operations and assistant deputy administrator, has been leading the push. The new office will report to him and will be housed under the EPA's policy shop.

Darwin told reporters the EPA already has begun implementing the "lean management" approach, which strives to eliminate waste of time and resources to maximize the value organizations get out of their operations, across program and regional offices. For example, he said, the agency is using the process to speed the permitting process for its air pollution and stormwater programs, underground oil and gas wells, and new chemicals.

...

Staffing From Within

The Office of Continuous Improvement has about five full-time employees with a budget of less than $1 million dollars, Darwin said. The goal is to bump the office up to between 10 and 15 staffers, and Darwin said he wants career EPA employees to fill those positions.

The office will aim to implement lean management in 80 percent of the EPA by Sept. 30, 2020, according to the agency.

Serena McIlwain, a performance improvement officer who has worked at the EPA since 2014, will lead the office.

McIlwain previously served as the assistant regional administrator for region 9, which serves California, Arizona, Nevada, and Hawaii. Before that, she worked at the Department of Energy from 2009 to 2014, the latter two years as the chief operating officer of the fossil energy office.

She told reporters she has been working with Darwin for seven months to set the office up.

So far, that work has mostly been outlining specific goals for each part of the agency consistent with priorities laid out by Pruitt in the EPA's strategic plan for fiscal years 2018-2022, McIlwain said.

"This is a process that we do together. It's not just Henry. It's not just Serena," she added. "It's the whole agency coming together and brainstorming."

To continue reading click here.

Visit The EPA's Newsroom

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue Northwest
Washington, D.C. 20004

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Message

From: Paul Balserak [pbalserak@steel.org]
Sent: 8/2/2018 1:04:54 PM
To: Konkus, John [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=555471b2baa6419e8e141696f4577062-Konkus, Joh]; Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: RE: RSVP to 9am call

Hi John. I emailed that address at 8:30 and still haven't heard. But I guess I'll just wait. Thanks very much,
Paul

From: Konkus, John [mailto:konkus.john@epa.gov]
Sent: Thursday, August 02, 2018 9:04 AM
To: Paul Balserak; Press
Subject: RE: RSVP to 9am call

To participate, please RSVP to NHTSAmedia@dot.gov. You will be provided the dial-in number at that time.

From: Paul Balserak [mailto:pbalserak@steel.org]
Sent: Thursday, August 2, 2018 9:03 AM
To: Press <Press@epa.gov>
Subject: RSVP to 9am call

I still don't' have the phone in #. Please send

Paul Balserak
Vice President, Environment

American Iron and Steel Institute
25 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20001
Ex. 6 (office)
(mobile)

Message

From: Trump Headquarters [contact@action.gop.com]
Sent: 11/29/2017 8:44:29 PM
To: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: BEFORE time runs out

Make sure you name is on the list. |

Friend,

The desperate Democrats are looking for any excuse to criticize President Trump's supporters - and they're keeping a close eye on our numbers.

We've got to show them that the patriots of this nation are still willing to SUPPORT the President's vision for America!

We're preparing to send a list of Sustaining Members to the President TONIGHT, but our records show that your name is NOT on our list, and we only have a FEW hours till closing time…

2017 Sustaining Membership

Email: press@epa.gov
2017 Sustaining Membership: PENDING

Account Number: 35301280

Renewal Deadline: 11:59 PM TONIGHT

CONTRIBUTE $250

CONTRIBUTE $100

CONTRIBUTE $75

CONTRIBUTE $50

CONTRIBUTE $35

CONTRIBUTE OTHER AMOUNT

---------- **Forwarded Message** ----------
From: Donald J. Trump
Date: November 20, 2017
Subject: Membership Pending
To: press@epa.gov

Friend,

I didn't run for office to win favor from the liberal media. I ran to fight for the forgotten men and women of America. I ran for *you.*

So no matter what vicious attack is hurled at me by the media or liberal Senate obstructionists, I will NEVER -- *EVER* -- walk away from our fight to put America FIRST.

Before 2017 comes to an end, I am hoping to have your name in the books as a Sustaining Member of our movement to Make America Great Again!

2017 Sustaining Membership

Email: press@epa.gov
2017 Sustaining Membership: PENDING

Account Number: 35301280

Renewal Deadline: 11:59 PM TONIGHT

CONTRIBUTE $250

CONTRIBUTE $100

CONTRIBUTE $75

CONTRIBUTE $50

CONTRIBUTE $35

CONTRIBUTE OTHER AMOUNT

Please contribute $35 to renew your Sustaining Membership for the 2017 year.

Thank you,

Donald J. Trump
President of The United States

P.S. I have requested a list of every person who steps up and renews their 2017 Sustaining Membership before 11:59 PM TONIGHT. I hope to see your name.

CONTRIBUTE $100

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www.GOP.com

You are receiving this email at press@epa.gov
Republican National Committee (RNC), 310 1st St SE Washington, DC, 20003-1885, US

We believe this is an important way to reach our grassroots supporters with the most up-to-date information regarding the efforts of the Republican Party and President Trump, and we're glad you're on our team. It's because of grassroots supporters like you that we will Make America Great Again, and we appreciate your support. Thank you for all that you do!

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Message

From: Donald J. Trump [contact@action.gop.com]
Sent: 11/30/2017 4:44:27 PM
To: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: Last chance

Make sure you name is on the list. |

Friend,

I didn't run for office to win favor from the liberal media. I ran to fight for the forgotten men and women of America. I ran for *you.*

So no matter what vicious attack is hurled at me by the media or liberal Senate obstructionists, I will NEVER -- *EVER* -- walk away from our fight to put America FIRST.

Before November comes to an end, I am hoping to have your name in the books as a Sustaining Member of our movement to Make America Great Again!

2017 Sustaining Membership

Email: press@epa.gov
2017 Sustaining Membership: PENDING

Account Number: 35301280

Renewal Deadline: 11:59 PM TONIGHT

CONTRIBUTE $250

CONTRIBUTE $100

CONTRIBUTE $75

CONTRIBUTE $50

CONTRIBUTE $35

CONTRIBUTE OTHER AMOUNT

Please contribute $35 to renew your Sustaining Membership for the 2017 year.

Thank you,

Donald J. Trump
President of The United States

P.S. I have requested a list of every person who steps up and renews their 2017 Sustaining Membership before 11:59 PM TONIGHT. I hope to see your name.

CONTRIBUTE $100

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The liberals have gone way too far. |

Message

From: Donald J. Trump [contact@action.gop.com]
Sent: 11/28/2017 6:12:04 PM
To: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: A total joke

Friend,

The loony Democrats have taken things way too far.

From illegal immigration to the National Anthem, they've made it clear that they'll put ANYTHING over the pride and well-being of patriotic AMERICAN CITIZENS.

But that's exactly why I ran, Friend. I got tired of seeing how liberals and politicians were treating the people of the country you and I love. Now we're showing them just what we're made of - and we've got to stay strong!

I'm asking you personally to help me fight by making a contribution before our End-of-Month deadline, Friend.

CONTRIBUTE $250

CONTRIBUTE $100

CONTRIBUTE $75

CONTRIBUTE $50

CONTRIBUTE $35

CONTRIBUTE OTHER AMOUNT

YOUR support has always been the core of this movement. Let's show the liberals just how great the American people are when they come together for our nation.

Please contribute before the FEC end-of-month deadline.

Thank you,

Donald J. Trump
President of the United States of America

CONTRIBUTE $35

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We'll be sure to pass this along to President Trump. |

Message

From: Trump Headquarters [contact@action.gop.com]
Sent: 11/10/2017 7:17:35 PM
To: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: Response: PENDING

Friend,

The President has asked us to reach out to some of our top supporters for a one-question poll, and as one of our best, you've been chosen to participate.

Please take a moment to choose one of the options below to answer the following:

The President's job performance has been…

GREAT

GOOD

OKAY

OTHER

Thank you for your input, Friend.

We'll be sure to pass it along to President Trump.

Presidential Polling
Team Trump

>> TAKE THE POLL <<

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You were the reason we won in 2016. |

Message

From: Trump Headquarters [contact@action.gop.com]
Sent: 11/21/2017 9:45:27 PM
To: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: FW: did you see this email from the President?

Friend,

The President wants to be sure you had the chance to renew your Sustaining Membership for the 2017 year.

The year is almost over and this is your chance to etch your name into our records as a member of our historic presidency. We truly are making history, Friend.

Please contribute $35 to renew your Sustaining Membership for the 2017 year.

CONTRIBUTE $250

CONTRIBUTE $100

CONTRIBUTE $75

CONTRIBUTE $50

CONTRIBUTE $35

CONTRIBUTE OTHER AMOUNT

Thanks,

Trump Headquarters

CONTRIBUTE $100

---------- **Forwarded Message** ----------
From: Donald J. Trump
Date: November 20, 2017
Subject: I ran for you
To: press@epa.gov

Friend,

I didn't run for office to win favor from the liberal media. I ran to fight for the forgotten men and women of America. I ran for *you.*

So no matter what vicious attack is hurled at me by the media or liberal Senate obstructionists, I will NEVER -- *EVER* -- walk away from our fight to put America FIRST.

Before 2017 comes to an end, I am hoping to have your name in the books as a Sustaining Member of our movement to Make America Great Again!

2017 Sustaining Membership

Email: press@epa.gov
2017 Sustaining Membership: PENDING

Account Number: 35301280

Renewal Deadline: 11:59 PM TONIGHT

CONTRIBUTE $250

CONTRIBUTE $100

CONTRIBUTE $75

CONTRIBUTE $50

CONTRIBUTE $35

CONTRIBUTE OTHER AMOUNT

Please contribute $35 to renew your Sustaining Membership for the 2017 year.

Thank you,

Donald J. Trump
President of The United States

P.S. I have requested a list of every person who steps up and renews their 2017 Sustaining Membership before 11:59 PM TONIGHT. I hope to see your name.

CONTRIBUTE $100

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caught in another humiliating lie. |

Message

From: Trump Headquarters [contact@action.gop.com]
Sent: 11/15/2017 7:27:11 PM
To: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: CNN has mud on its face

Friend,

CNN is at it again. Their latest phony poll claims that 64% of Americans have less confidence in President Trump than they did one year ago. **Yet of more than 1,000 people interviewed, just 24% were Republicans.**

The media has proven again and again that their disdain for President Trump's America First policies is preventing them from reporting on President Trump's many great accomplishments. **Now we want to hear from you: what do YOU think about President Trump's leadership of our country so far?**

How would you rate President Trump's job so far?

TREMENDOUS

GOOD

OKAY

OTHER

These media companies must be exposed for what they are: for-profit corporations run by coastal elites who have little understanding of how the rest of America lives.

We can't rely on these liberal echo chambers to speak for us any longer.

Now we are asking all of you -- the forgotten and silenced voices of America -- to step up and SPEAK OUT louder than EVER before.

Please participate in the Presidential Approval Poll today.

Thank you,

Team TRUMP

TAKE THE POLL

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I want to hear what you have to say. |

Message

From: Donald J. Trump [contact@action.gop.com]
Sent: 11/13/2017 10:39:43 PM
To: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: Let's have breakfast

Friend,

I've been in office for almost one year and I want to make a point of finishing the year how I started it - listening to what REAL Americans have to say. **This time, I'm doing it over breakfast.**

I would like to invite you to enter for the opportunity to meet me for breakfast in New York City and talk about the direction of our country.

Just be sure to make a contribution of $3 or more before the November 27 deadline to be automatically entered.

CONTRIBUTE $3

It's always so nice to meet with the American people. The media is CLUELESS when it comes to understanding what voters think about our country. That's why I want to hear it directly from you. So important!

Make sure you contribute $3 by November 27 to be automatically entered to win.

Looking forward to it,

President of the United States

CONTRIBUTE $3

NO PURCHASE, PAYMENT, OR CONTRIBUTION NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN. Contributing will not improve your chances of winning. Void where prohibited. You may enter by contributing to Trump Make America Great Again by clicking here Alternatively, you may enter without contributing by clicking here Entries must be received between November 8, 2017 at 12:00 a.m. Eastern Time and November 27, 2017 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received. One (1) winners will receive round-trip transportation and accommodations and tickets to attend the December 2, 2017 Holiday In Manhattan Breakfast in New York, NY(approximate retail value $3000). The Promotion is open only to U.S. citizens, or lawful permanent U.S. residents who are legal residents (green card holders) of the 50 United States, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia and are at least 18 years of age (or the age of majority under applicable law). Winner must be 18 or older (or of majority under applicable law) and meet other requirements as described in the Official Rules. Promotion subject to Official Rules and additional restrictions on eligibility may apply. Visit here for full details and Official Rules. Sponsor: Trump Make America Great Again Committee, 138 Conant Street, 2nd Floor, Beverly, MA 01915.

Contributions to the Trump Make America Great Again Committee are not deductible for federal income tax purposes.

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We're outraising them every month, let's keep winning... |

Message

From: Donald J. Trump [contact@action.gop.com]
Sent: 10/31/2017 8:16:09 PM
To: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: This is your last chance

Friend,

No matter what the Fake News Media reports, we're working to advance our agenda ***every day.***

In the first 10 months alone, we've delivered on our promises and have proven we're ready to fight for what we believe is right for the future of this great country.

We did it together in 2016, and there's no doubt in my mind we have the momentum to keep it going. But I need to know you're committed to our movement, Friend.

This is your last chance to update your record before our end-of-month deadline, and I'm hoping you'll do so by renewing your Sustaining Membership:

2017 Sustaining Membership

Email: press@epa.gov
2017 Sustaining Membership: PENDING

Account Number: 35301280

Renewal Deadline: October 31, 11:59 PM

CONTRIBUTE $250

CONTRIBUTE $100

CONTRIBUTE $75

CONTRIBUTE $50

CONTRIBUTE $35

CONTRIBUTE OTHER AMOUNT

Please contribute to renew your Sustaining Membership for the 2017 year.

We cannot allow the Fake News Media and obstructionist Democrats to flood the airwaves and mislead the American people, Friend, and they are our *strongest opponent yet.*

So please, be sure to renew your 2017 Sustaining Membership before the October 31 deadline.

Thank you,

Donald J. Trump
President of The United States

P.S. - I've requested a list of every person who steps up and renews their 2017 Sustaining Membership before the October 31 deadline. **I hope to see your name on the list.**

CONTRIBUTE $100

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Message

From: Trump Headquarters [contact@action.gop.com]
Sent: 10/20/2017 8:40:17 PM
To: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: re: No entry

President Trump is looking for TWO guests for dinner. |

Friend

TONIGHT at 11:59 PM is your final chance to enter to win dinner with President Trump in Dallas, Texas.

Don't worry -- we'll take care of getting you and a friend to Dallas and putting you up at a hotel...

...You just have to decide who to bring along for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Contribute at least $3 by 11:59 TONIGHT to be automatically entered to win.

CONTRIBUTE $3

Thanks,

Scheduling and Events Team
Trump Headquarters

CONTRIBUTE $3

---------- Forwarded Message ----------
From: Donald J. Trump
Date: October 20, 2017
Subject: Are you coming to Dallas?
To: press@epa.gov

Friend,

We're doing a big league dinner in Dallas and I would love to see you there.

That's why my team has put together an incredible sweepstakes for you to join me in Texas.

DINNER WITH THE PRESIDENT

What: Dinner & Photo with President Trump
When: October 25th, 2017

Where: Dallas, Texas

Email's Entry: PENDING
ENTER TO WIN

And MIDNIGHT TONIGHT is your final chance to enter to win.

Friend, all it takes for your automatic entry to win is any contribution between NOW and MIDNIGHT TONIGHT.

CONTRIBUTE $3

I hope to see you there!

Good Luck,

Donald J. Trump
President of the United States

P.S. – I'd love to see you there. **Contribute at least $3 for your chance to win before MIDNIGHT TONIGHT.**

CONTRIBUTE $3

NO PURCHASE, PAYMENT, OR CONTRIBUTION NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN.** Contributing will not improve your chances of winning. Void where prohibited. You may enter by contributing to Republican National Committee by clicking here. Alternatively, you may enter without contributing by clicking here . Entries must be received between October 12, 2017 at 12:00 a.m. Eastern Time and October 20, 2017 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received. One (1) winners will receive round-trip transportation and accommodations and tickets to attend a dinner with President Trump at the October 25, 2017 Trump Victory Dinner in Dallas (approximate retail value $3000). The Promotion is open only to U.S. citizens, or lawful permanent U.S. residents who are legal residents (green card holders) of the 50 United States, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia and are at least 18 years of age (or the age of majority under applicable law). Winner must be 18 or older (or of majority under applicable law) and meet other requirements as described in the Official Rules. Promotion subject to Official Rules and additional restrictions on eligibility may apply. Visit here for full details and Official Rules. Sponsor: Republican National Committee, 310 First St. SE, Washington, D.C. 20003.

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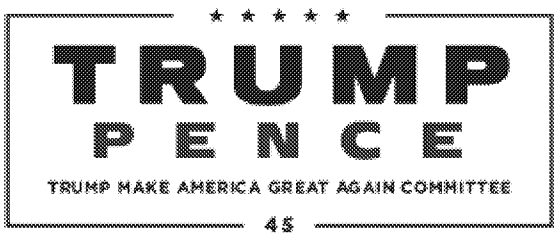
Can I get your thoughts? |

Message

From: Donald J. Trump [contact@action.gop.com]
Sent: 10/27/2017 5:09:47 PM
To: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: I need your input



Friend,

I've said it before and I will say it again: ***the Mainstream Media is out to bring down my Administration.***

It's a 24/7 barrage of hit jobs, fake stories, and absolute hatred for everything we stand for as a movement.

It's time to once again release our Mainstream Media Accountability Survey to show them that the American people are fed up with the Fake News machine.

I need you to take the MEDIA ACCOUNTABILITY SURVEY to do your part to fight back against the fake news attacks and deceptions.

TAKE THE SURVEY

They don't care about the truth. They don't care about what's right. They only care about propping up the liberal Democrats they worship and destroying anyone who wants to put America First.

There is nothing they won't do to stop us.

This is a fight we can't afford to lose. The future of America hangs in the balance. Our country is at stake.

Please take the Mainstream Media Accountability Survey to do your part to fight back against the media's attacks and deceptions.

Thank you,

Donald J. Trump

TAKE THE SURVEY

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Message

From: Trump Headquarters [contact@action.gop.com]
Sent: 10/10/2017 7:41:16 PM
To: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: Do you support a simple and fair tax plan?

This will be quick, share your thoughts… |

Friend,

This is truly a once-in-a-lifetime chance to make a difference that will impact families for generations to come.

So it's important we get this done right.

That's why the President has asked for your input on our Official Tax Reform: Supporter Survey.

Official Tax Reform: Supporter Survey

Supporter: press@epa.gov
Survey Status: PENDING

TAKE THE SURVEY

Hardworking Americans deserve a tax code that's simple, fair, and benefits the middle-class; not a rigged system that benefits the wealthy and special interest groups.

So please, make your voice heard on this long-awaited, long-needed tax reform by taking the Official Tax Reform: Supporter Survey today.

The President wants to hear what you think, Friend.

Thank you,

Trump Headquarters

TAKE THE SURVEY

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Message

From: Donald J. Trump [contact@action.gop.com]
Sent: 10/16/2017 7:00:11 PM
To: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: Join me in Dallas

Would you like to have dinner? |

Friend,

YOU have always been the core of what my presidency is about.

That's why it's always a great pleasure for me to take some time to meet with the Americans who have supported me since the beginning.

I'm hosting a wonderful dinner on October 25th for my loyal supporters, and I hope you'll attend, Friend.

All it takes is a contribution of at least $3 to be automatically entered to win.

CONTRIBUTE $3

I'm looking forward to meeting the lucky winner.

See you there!

Donald J. Trump
President of the United States

CONTRIBUTE $3

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Message

From: Newt Gingrich [contact@action.gop.com]
Sent: 9/27/2017 8:22:44 PM
To: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: Let's get the job done

Turn $50 into $150? |

Friend,

The President is working around-the-clock to enact the agenda YOU voted for.

Now, our critically important end-of-quarter deadline is only 3 days away, and President Trump has asked me to reach out to top supporters like you.

Democrats are against our progress at every turn, and it's going to take every resource we have to keep fighting for our AMERICA FIRST agenda.

Since we have to report our fundraising publicly, a group of generous donors has agreed to step up and **DOUBLE-MATCH ALL DONATIONS THROUGH MIDNIGHT SATURDAY.**

CONTRIBUTE $250 = $750

CONTRIBUTE $100 = $300

CONTRIBUTE $75 = $225

CONTRIBUTE $50 = $150

CONTRIBUTE $35 = $105

CONTRIBUTE OTHER AMOUNT

This is our fight, our movement, our agenda.

So let's get the job done, Friend.

With only 3 days until our end-of-quarter deadline, please contribute $250, $100, $75 $50, $35 or even just $5 today to be DOUBLE-MATCHED and help us meet our goal.

Thank you,

Newt Gingrich

CONTRIBUTE $100 = $300

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Message

From: Donald J. Trump [contact@action.gop.com]
Sent: 9/15/2017 5:46:30 PM
To: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: re: tax reform

Can I get your opinion on this? |

Friend,

It's time to simplify the tax code. By doing so, we will boost consumer spending, encourage savings and investment, and maximize American economic growth.

So it's important we get it done right.

That's why, as a hardworking American, I'd like to know what you think.

Please take a moment to share your input on our country's financial future by taking my Official Tax Reform Survey today.

SHARE YOUR INPUT

We're getting to work on one of the country's biggest issues, Friend, and I'd really appreciate your thoughts.

Together, we will…

- Provide tax relief for middle-class Americans.
- Simplify the code and reduce filing complications.
- GROW THE AMERICAN ECONOMY!

So please, take just 5 minutes and fill out my Official Tax Reform Survey today.

Thank you,

Donald J. Trump

SHARE YOUR INPUT

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Message

From: Trump Headquarters [contact@action.gop.com]
Sent: 9/29/2017 6:27:22 PM
To: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: The President has requested a list...

Did you see this email from the President? |

Friend,

We wanted to be sure you knew this is your last chance to update your record before our end-of-quarter deadline at 11:59 PM TOMORROW.

President Trump is counting on top supporters like you to step up and become 2017 Sustaining Members to combat the flood of fake news and obstructionist attacks from the Left.

All it takes is a contribution of $250, $100, $65, $50, $35, $20, or $10 before 11:59 PM TOMORROW to renew your Sustaining Membership for the 2017 year.

The President has requested a list of of every person who renews their membership, and we wanted to be sure your name was on that list, Friend.

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Thank you for your continued support,

Team Trump

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: Donald J. Trump
Date: September 28, 2017
Subject: I've requested a list
To: press@epa.gov

Friend,

No matter what the Fake News Media reports, we're working to advance our agenda ***every day.***

In the first 9 months alone, we've delivered on our promises and have proven we're ready to fight for what we believe is right for the future of this great country.

We did it together in 2016, and there's no doubt in my mind we have the momentum to keep it going. But I need to know you're committed to our movement, Friend.

This is your last chance to update your record before our end-of-quarter deadline, and I'm hoping you'll do so by renewing your Sustaining Membership:

2017 SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP

Email: press@epa.gov
Account Number: 35301280
2017 Sustaining Membership: PENDING
Deadline: September 30, 11:59 PM

CONTRIBUTE $250

CONTRIBUTE $100

CONTRIBUTE $75

CONTRIBUTE $50

CONTRIBUTE $35

CONTRIBUTE OTHER AMOUNT

Please contribute $250, $100, $75, $50, $35, or $10 to renew your Sustaining Membership for the 2017 year.

We cannot allow the Fake News Media and obstructionist Democrats to flood the airwaves and mislead the American people, Friend, and they are our strongest opponent yet.

So please, be sure to renew your 2017 Sustaining Membership before the September 30 deadline.

Thank you,

Donald J. Trump

President of The United States

P.S. - I've requested a list of every person who steps up and renews their 2017 Sustaining Membership before the September 30 deadline. **I hope to see your name on the list.**

CONTRIBUTE $100

Paid for by the Republican National Committee
Not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee.
www.GOP.com

You are receiving this email at press@epa.gov
Republican National Committee (RNC), 310 1st St SE Washington, DC, 20003-1885, US

We believe this is an important way to reach our grassroots supporters with the most up-to-date information regarding the efforts of the Republican Party and President Trump, and we're glad you're on our team. It's because of grassroots supporters like you that we will Make America Great Again, and we appreciate your support. Thank you for all that you do!

Privacy Policy | Unsubscribe

Message

From: Trump Headquarters [contact@action.gop.com]
Sent: 8/24/2017 4:45:51 PM
To: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: Official Approval Poll

This will just take two seconds. |

Friend,

The President has asked us to reach out to some of our top supporters for a one-question poll, and as one of our best, you've been chosen to participate.

Please take a moment to choose one of the options below to answer the following:

The President's job performance has been…

GREAT

GOOD

OKAY

OTHER

Thank you for your input, Friend.

We'll be sure to pass it along to President Trump.

Presidential Polling
Team Trump

TAKE THE POLL

Paid for by the Republican National Committee
Not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee.
www.GOP.com

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Republican National Committee (RNC), 310 1st St SE Washington, DC, 20003-1885, US

We believe this is an important way to reach our grassroots supporters with the most up-to-date information regarding the efforts of the Republican Party and President Trump, and we're glad you're on our team. It's because of grassroots supporters like you that we will Make America Great Again, and we appreciate your support. Thank you for all that you do!

Privacy Policy | Unsubscribe

Message

From: Donald J. Trump [contact@action.gop.com]
Sent: 8/1/2017 6:17:32 PM
To: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: Turning off the noise

This is so necessary. So important. |

Friend,

Politicians have spent too much time bickering and not enough time listening. Enough!

I want to hear from YOU.

I want to hear from the American heartland -- the REAL America that lives outside of the DC-media fantasy bubble.

Now that we've passed the six-month mark of our presidency, I want you to take the Listening to America Survey to tell me the true sentiments, concerns, and interests of REAL America.

The mainstream media and Hollywood love to tell you "how America is feeling." But they know nothing. They live in a world where you get to keep your job even if you fail to get anything done.

It's time to tune them out. It's time to shut off the noise and just LISTEN.

Just like on the campaign, I always like to go directly to the people. I asked our supporters to help prepare for our three big debates against Hillary. I asked what issues we should address. I asked for help creating our platform.

So please take this moment to turn off the very loud noise of Washington and take the Listening to America Survey.

Thank you,

Donald J. Trump

TAKE THE SURVEY

Paid for by the Republican National Committee
Not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee.
www.GOP.com

You are receiving this email at press@epa.gov
Republican National Committee (RNC), 310 1st St SE Washington, DC, 20003-1885, US

We believe this is an important way to reach our grassroots supporters with the most up-to-date information regarding the efforts of the Republican Party and President Trump, and we're glad you're on our team. It's because of grassroots supporters like you that we will Make America Great Again, and we appreciate your support. Thank you for all that you do!

Privacy Policy | Unsubscribe

Message

From: Abboud, Michael [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=B6F5AF791A1842F1ADCC088CBF9ED3CE-ABBOUD, MIC]
Sent: 8/3/2018 8:57:05 PM
To: Rmanning@getliberty.org
Subject: RE: CAFE Talkers
Attachments: CAFE Talking Points 8.2.2018.docx; ATT00001.htm

Attached talking points above. At the link below, you can also find some additional factsheets that are helpful in explaining the proposed rule.

https://www.epa.gov/regulations-emissions-vehicles-and-engines/safer-and-affordable-fuel-efficient-vehicles-proposed

The Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient "SAFE" Vehicles Rule

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are announcing a joint-proposal (The Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient "SAFE" Vehicles Rule) to address the current corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) and greenhouse gas emissions standards and provide more appropriate alternatives that balance economics (such as affordability, consumer choice, and safety), technology, energy conservation and pollution reduction.

What this is:

- A federal Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) that asks for public comment and input on a variety of options to replace the 2012 standards.
- A proposal resulting from over one year of transparent, facts-based analysis performed by expert career staff using reliable data. The Agencies are seeking public feedback on both the findings and the scientific process.

What this isn't:

- A final rule or implementation of new regulations
- A "rollback" of fuel standards – fuel economy standards will continue to increase in the years ahead and no option in the proposal would lower them from today's requirements.

Overview of the Proposed Rule

- EPA and DOT are jointly proposing a rule to establish fuel economy and greenhouse gas emissions standards for model years 2022-2026. In addition, the two agencies are proposing to modify fuel economy and greenhouse gas emissions standards for model year 2021.
- The proposed rule offers a range of options from a steep increase in fuel economy that would require the electrification of many new vehicles (the previous administration's approach), to a less stringent option that preserves consumer choice, affordability and safety.
- Our goal is to get this right—to create one national standard that is technologically feasible and economically practicable, while promoting energy conservation, environmental goals, and preserving consumer choice.
- The Administration's preferred option would lock in the 2020 standards until 2026, because the analysis of our agencies suggests that those standards strike the appropriate regulatory balance between vehicle improvements, environmental benefits, and safety.
- The joint proposal seeks comments on this range of options as well as compliance credits and related flexibilities.
    - The rule also seeks comments on technical matters such as the engineering methods available to improve fuel economy, the costs of re-engineered vehicles,

and the safety and other impacts of modifying the new car fleet to achieve each stringency option.

- Public comment will be sought for a period of 60 days once published in the Federal Register. In an effort to provide transparency for public review, both agencies will make available modeling, input files, technical supporting documents and other materials and will offer WebEx briefings and public hearings.
- The proposal represents continuity with the prior Administration's goal of achieving one national standard of fuel economy and vehicle greenhouse gas emissions regulations issued by EPA and NHTSA, and benefitting consumers by reducing the costs of compliance with separate or conflicting programs across states.

Background

- In 2010, The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) established a coordinated program for Federal standards for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) for passenger cars and light-duty trucks.

  In 2012, the two agencies issued a rule establishing fuel economy and emissions standards for Model Years 2017-2021, and in that same rule EPA (alone) also established emissions standards for Model Years 2022-25.

- This proposed rule seeks public comment on the next phase of that program, in which the two Agencies will establish stringency of the national standard for fuel economy and GHG emissions.
- This action meets the commitment made by the two Agencies in the 2012 rulemaking for EPA to conduct a Midterm Evaluation (MTE) of the GHG standards established for MYs 2022-2025. That Midterm Evaluation has been performed and the two agencies are proposing standards that reflect that evaluation as well as the most current information regarding emerging technology, consumer needs, prices, and the need of the nation to conserve energy.
- NHTSA must set the stringency at a level that is 'maximum feasible' considering:
  - Technological feasibility
  - Economic practicability
  - The effect of other motor vehicle standards of the Government on fuel economy, and
  - The need of the United States to conserve energy.

What are the Benefits?

NHTSA's proposed CAFE standards will save thousands of lives and deliver major economic benefits by modernizing the Nation's vehicle fleet and enabling Americans to afford cars and light trucks that on average are newer, safer, cleaner, and more fuel efficient.

- Revising the standards will result in **roughly $500 billion** worth of economic benefits for the United States. It will be one of the largest regulatory reform measures in history and key to continuing our economic success.

- Already, the previous standards have helped drive up the cost of new automobiles to an average of $35,000 or more—out of reach for many American families. Indeed, keeping in place the standards finalized in 2012 would add $2,340 to the cost of owning a new car, and impose more than $500 billion in regulatory costs on the U.S. economy.

- As a result, NHTSA estimates that the proposed new standards will save approximately half a trillion dollars in regulatory costs for the U.S. economy and will save approximately 12,700 lives over the lifetime of the vehicles covered by the new rules (well more than 1,000 lives saved per year).

How this differs from previous approach

- In the approach proposed in the last Administration, an ambitious path towards increasingly stringent standards was proposed. Because the standards are unlikely to be achieved in the real world, a complex system of credits was established so that vehicle fleets that could not meet the standards could use various credits and offsets to avoid enforcement of the stringent standards.

- The current proposal seeks to take a hard look at reducing reliance on complex credits and offsets and identify a level of stringency that can be achieved by safe, affordable vehicle fleets.

- The approach taken in the last Administration included a closed-door negotiation between automotive executives and politicians, resulting in a fuel economy target that did not take into account either consumer needs or American innovation in energy development. In contrast, this proposal provides for an open, public process that is based on facts and sound science, without back-room deals and secret negotiations.

- Consumers continue to demand new vehicles that will not meet the steep increase in stringency. The proposal seeks to allow consumers to choose vehicles that best meet their needs, including performance, safety and affordability.

- Furthermore, the proposed standards would improve the competitiveness of American manufacturing and job growth in a historically American industry – automotive transportation.

Next steps

- The proposal will be published in the Federal Register and public comments are solicited on all aspects of the rule. The 60-day public comment period allows comments to be submitted electronically to the docket.
- NHTSA and the EPA expect to issue the final rule this Winter.