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In the NEWS



On the 20th ANNIVERSARY

of the Chinese regime's persecution of Falun Gong, Professor David Flint AM calls for Australian leaders to hold communist China to account under rule of law.

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Iran's claim of CAPTURING 17

CIA spies and sentencing some of them to death is "totally false," according to a tweet by U.S. President Donald Trump.

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DISASTER RELIEF

efforts are used as a tool for gain by the Chinese communist regime, with the Chinese military's political priorities causing delays and costing peoples' lives, according to a U.S. Congress Report.

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Media ORGANISATIONS

have used a 1992 video showing Trump welcoming Jeffrey Epstein to a party at Mar-a-Lago in an attempt to tie the two together. The reports miss the context that Trump later barred Epstein from the resort, many years before allegations against Epstein surfaced.

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US President Donald Trump greets Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan at the White House on July 22, 2019.

PEACE TALKS

Pakistan Helping US to Push Taliban for Ceasefire

We desperately want peace, and we are happy President Trump has pushed this forward, says Pakistani PM Imran Khan

IVAN PENTCHOUKOV

President Donald Trump told reporters at the White House on July 22 that Pakistan is helping the United States to pressure the Taliban to commit to a permanent ceasefire and agree to talks that include the Afghan government. Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan and Trump met at the White

We've made a lot of great progress over the last couple of weeks. And Pakistan has helped us with that progress.

US President Donald Trump

House as part of an official state visit. The two leaders agreed that the United States is closer than ever to a peace deal with the Taliban in Afghanistan. According to the White House, Trump had planned to use the visit to urge Khan to ramp up a recent crackdown by Pakistan authorities on terrorist and militant groups. "And we hope that in coming days,

we will be able to urge the Taliban to speak to the Afghan and come to a political settlement," Khan told reporters in the Oval Office. "Apart from Afghanistan, the country that wants peace in Afghanistan is Pakistan," Khan said. "Pakistan needs stability. We have had 15 years of fighting this war on terror. ... We desperately want Continued on A3

BOWEN XIAO/THE EPOCH TIMES



Haika Mrema, a 17-year-old student from California, at the Turning Point USA Teen Student Action Summit in Washington on July 23, 2019.

US POLITICS

Trump Derides Growing Radical Left at Teen Student Action Summit

BOWEN XIAO

WASHINGTON—President Donald Trump spoke out against socialism and the growing radical left at Turning Point USA's Teen Student Action Summit in Washington on July 23. The president praised the young people in the room for putting America first. "You are the ones who will make this a turning point," he said to more than 1,000 high school and college students. "Your generation will make the light and the glory of America shine brighter than ever before." Students came from all 50 states to attend the four-day conference, held

from July 22 to 25 at the Marriott Marquis hotel, where they will hear from conservative politicians and leaders. Turning Point is a conservative non-profit organization that focuses on educating and organizing students. Some had stayed overnight hoping to get a good seat to see the president, who gave an hourlong speech. Benny Johnson, chief creative officer at Turning Point, said the median age of audience members was 16. The president touched upon multiple topics, including his "America First" agenda, but focused on the importance of free speech and how Continued on A8

BIG TECH

Researcher Says Google Can Shift Millions of Votes, Offers a Solution

PETR SVAB

A psychologist who has spent years researching Google's massive influence has suggested a way for the tech giant to avoid potentially crippling government intervention. The solution, a significant sacrifice for Google, would be to open its entire search index to the public. Google, which controls about 92 percent of the internet search market, has been fined more than \$8 billion by the European Union since 2017, and now, Continued on A9

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Accuracy & Integrity | The Epoch Times was founded in 2000 to provide honest and uncensored news coverage of China. Based in New York City, our newsroom is dedicated to restoring accuracy and integrity in media. We stand outside political interests and the pursuit of profit. And we stand against the systematic destruction of traditional culture by destructive ideologies such as communism.



Dr. Michael Fullilove (Left), the Executive Director of the Lowy Institute, in conversation with British foreign secretary Boris Johnson at Sydney Town Hall in Australia on July 27, 2017.

Boris ‘Unusually Close’ With Australia

Boris Johnson’s rise to power in the United Kingdom is good news for Australia, according to some Australian politicians—but maybe not for long. Australia has welcomed the flamboyant UK leader, praising his “unusually close” relationship with Australia after he was elected as leader of the UK Conservative Party and elevated to prime minister-designate overnight. But an expert in British politics cautions that the UK—and its new prime minister—could quickly be headed into a general election, depending on how the Brexit plans play out. “I can’t really see any way that they’re going to avoid a general election,” University of Sydney professor Simon Tormey told AAP on July 24. “I think Australians are going to have to sit tight and wait to see how this political crisis plays out, to see to what extent there’s actually going to be any impact in terms of British-Australia relations.” Liberal senator James McGrath—senior staffer to Johnson when he was London mayor—believes his old boss will be good for Australia.

“He’s been to Australia quite a few times, he’s a friend of Australia,” Senator McGrath told Sky News. “He’s prime minister now of our closest ally; it is good news for Australia.” Former foreign minister Julie Bishop says Boris Johnson has an “unusually close” relationship with Australia, and expects this bond to become even tighter. Prime Minister Scott Morrison congratulated Johnson via Twitter, saying he expects to meet him when they both travel to France for the G7 in August. Tormey sees an opportunity for Australia in the chaos around Brexit, with officials poised to negotiate a new trade deal as soon as the UK leaves the European Union. The British need that deal more than Australia does, he says, with the best they could hope for being that Australia rolls over the same arrangements it now has in place with the European Union.

By Katina Curtis and Daniel McCulloch
From AAP

I think Britain will actually have to cough something up in order to maintain the already very good trade agreement it has as being part of the EU.

Professor Simon Tormey, head of the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Sydney

\$5 Billion Future Drought Fund Set to Become Law

Drought-proofing projects will soon be given A\$100 million each year under a A\$5 billion future fund which has passed the Senate. Labor, which initially opposed the kitty because it repurposed dormant nation-building funds, fell in line with the government on July 24. The Future Drought Fund will initially be worth \$3.9 billion and is projected to rise to \$5 billion over the next decade. It will pay out \$100 million a year, starting from July 1 next year. Legislation passed the Senate on July 24 with a Centre Alliance amendment ensuring the committee advising the minister about grants has diverse membership. The government supported the

South Australia-based party’s push for a balance of gender, knowledge and skills, along with representatives from different drought-hit regions. The bill will return to the lower house to be ticked off before becoming law. Finance Minister Mathias Cormann told parliament the new revenue stream would not hurt the budget bottom line over the medium to long-term. “This Future Drought Fund will give farmers in rural and regional communities, which have been suffering years of unrelenting drought, the tools they need to prepare for, manage and sustain their businesses,” he said.

By Matt Coughlan
From AAP



Farmers Matt and Sandra Ireson checking bore water on their property during a severe and prolonged drought outside the town of Booligal in western New South Wales on Sept. 28, 2018.

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Pakistan Helping US to Push Taliban for Ceasefire

CONTINUED FROM A1

peace, and we are happy President Trump has pushed this forward.” Trump acknowledged Khan’s assessment.

“What the prime minister just said is a really big story, and it’s 100 percent true. We’ve made a lot of great progress over the last couple of weeks. And Pakistan has helped us with that progress,” Trump said.

In 2018, the Trump administration suspended more than \$1.2 billion in anti-terror aid for Pakistan in a bid to force the county to intensify the battle against terrorists who operate in its territory.

Speaking to reporters at the White House on July 22, Trump said Pakistan is “helping us a lot now” and noted that he will soon know if the progress has been significant enough to reinstate the aid.

“I think Pakistan could do a lot with respect to Afghanistan,” Trump said. “Pakistan could have done a lot, but they chose not to, and that’s because they did not respect U.S. leadership.”

The president revealed that he has a plan for possible military action in Afghanistan, but to avoid mass casualties, would rather not move forward with it.

“I could win that war in a week. I don’t want to kill 10 million people,” Trump said. “Afghanistan could be wiped off the face of the earth. I don’t want to go that route.”

Khan concurred with Trump.

“There is no military solution in Afghanistan. If you go all-out military, millions and millions of people will die,” Khan said.

A senior Trump administration official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told reporters on July 21 that the White House is monitoring Pakistan’s commitment to eradicating terror groups on its soil. The White House is “clear-eyed” about known links between Pakistan’s intelligence services and terror groups.

Pakistan has made initial steps to combat terror, including pledging to seize the assets of some ter-



Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan speaks during a meeting with US President Donald Trump in the Oval Office at the White House in Washington, DC, on July 22, 2019.

There is no military solution in Afghanistan. If you go all-out military, millions and millions of people will die.

Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan

rorist groups. On July 17, Pakistan arrested Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, a terrorist with a \$10 million U.S. bounty on his head. A senior Trump administration official noted that Saeed had been arrested and released six times since a major terror attack in India in 2001.

“So we would look to see that Pakistan is taking sustained action and actually prosecuting these people,” the official said.

Trump needs Pakistan’s help to end the United States’ military in-

volvement in Afghanistan. Khan was expected to use the visit to mend relations with Washington and attract much-needed U.S. investment.

“This is a critical time,” Khan said. “What we want is understanding between the countries. I can assure President Trump whatever we are saying, we will be straight with them. There will not ever be any doubt about Pakistan’s intent.”

Pakistan has yet to release Shakil Afridi, the jailed doctor believed to

have helped the CIA hunt down Osama bin Laden, the mastermind of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States.

Khan hinted that Afridi may soon be released. His imprisonment has long been a source of tension between Pakistan and the United States.

“President Trump, we will be giving you good news about the hostages.”

Reuters contributed to this report.

Trump: Report of Iran Capturing CIA Spies Is ‘Totally False’

JANITA KAN

President Donald Trump dismissed Iran’s claim on July 22 that it had allegedly captured spies working for the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), saying that the regime was spreading “more lies and propaganda.”

“The Report of Iran capturing CIA spies is totally false. Zero truth,” Trump wrote on Twitter. “Just more lies and propaganda (like their shot down drone) put out by a Religious Regime that is Badly Failing and has no idea what to do. Their Economy is dead, and will get much worse. Iran is a total mess!”

Iran announced earlier on July 22 that it had captured 17 spies working for the CIA and sentenced some of them to death, according to Iranian reports. This follows a June announcement where Iran said it had broken up an alleged CIA spy ring.

Iranian state television published images it said allegedly showed CIA officers who had been in touch with the suspected spies. The Ministry of Intelligence said the spies had been arrested in the 12 months to March 2019.

“The identified spies were employed in sensitive and vital private sector centers in the economic, nuclear, infrastructure, military and cyber areas ... where they collected classified information,” read a ministry statement.

An Iranian television documentary aired on July 22 purported to show a CIA officer recruiting an Iranian man in the United Arab Emirates. The woman spoke Persian with an accent which appeared to be American.

Trump’s reaction to the report echoed comments Secretary of State Mike Pompeo made earlier on July



CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES

22 to Fox & Friends. Pompeo did not specifically comment on the report about the alleged arrests but said the Islamic regime “has a long history of lying.”

“I can’t add much to it specifically,” Pompeo told the program. “I would urge everyone who’s reading that story that the Iranian regime has a long history of lying.”

“They lied about where they shot down the American UAV, they now lied about where they took down this tanker. It’s part of the nature of the Ayatollah to lie to the world,” he added, referring to Iran’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. “I would take with a significant grain of salt any Iranian assertion of Iranian actions taken.”

Longstanding tensions between the United States and Iran became more

US President Donald Trump speaks to media before departing the White House on Marine One en route to Bedminster, NJ, on July 19, 2019.

They lied about where they shot down the American UAV, they now lied about where they took down this tanker.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo

prominent in recent months following multiple confrontations in the region. Last month, Iran shot down an American surveillance drone claiming that it had violated Iranian airspace, a move that almost sparked a retaliatory air strike. The Pentagon at the time said that the drone was flying in international waters.

Then Trump announced last week that the U.S. Navy took defensive action by shooting down an Iranian drone near the Strait of Hormuz that had come too close.

“The Boxer took defensive action against an Iranian drone, which had closed into a near distance, approximately 1,000 yards,” Trump said July 18, referring to the USS Boxer, an amphibious assault ship that is often deployed in and around the Persian Gulf.

“The drone was immediately destroyed,” Trump continued, without giving further details.

“This is the latest of many provocative and hostile actions by Iran against vessels operating in international waters,” Trump said, according to a White House pool report.

More recently, Iran had seized a British oil tanker, Stena Imperio, near the Strait of Hormuz, for “not following international maritime regulations,” according to the regime. The seizure was seen as a retaliatory move against the UK after the British navy seized an Iranian tanker in Gibraltar on July 4 for allegedly breaching European Union sanctions by smuggling oil to Syria.

Khamenei said on July 16 that Iran would respond to Britain’s “piracy” over the Iranian tanker seizure. The UK is expected to release a response to the British tanker’s seizure in due course.

Iran is currently facing strong economic pressure after the United States withdrew from the Iran Nuclear Deal in 2018 and reimposed stringent sanctions against the Islamic country.

The Islamic regime recently began breaching uranium enrichment limits after the Trump administration withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal.

Trump said the deal didn’t do enough to stop Iran from building a nuclear weapon and that it also failed to address other grievances the United States has with the Islamic regime, such as ballistic missile development, support for terrorist groups and militias, threatening maritime shipping routes, and more.

Petr Svab, Jack Phillips, Mimi Nguyen-Ly and Reuters contributed to this report.

Foreign Companies Continue Exodus From China as Trade War Drags On

EVA FU

China is struggling to prevent a tide of foreign investment outflow amid a flagging economy and a continuing trade war.

More than 50 international companies, among them Apple, Nintendo, Microsoft, and Dell, are in the process of leaving their manufacturing bases in China, according to research by Japanese financial newspaper Nikkei Asian Review.

The world's second-largest economic power has seen its slowest growth in nearly three decades, with GDP growth at about 6.2 percent, according to the latest data released on July 15.

U.S. President Donald Trump referenced the data in a July 15 tweet, saying that the U.S. tariffs were “having a major effect” on the Chinese economy, as companies continue to move out of China to avoid paying the U.S. duties.

“This is why China wants to make a deal with the U.S., and wishes it had not broken the original deal in the first place,” Trump wrote in the tweet. He said that the United States is receiving billions of dollars from China, and there are “possibly much more to come.”

The United States has imposed a 25 percent tariff on \$250 billion worth of Chinese goods, including electronics and electronic parts.

Relocations

Because of rising costs to manufacture in China, 80 percent of U.S. companies and 67 percent of European businesses are seeking to lessen their reliance on China, turning to cheaper alternatives in Vietnam, Romania, and Portugal, according to a recent survey by the supplier audit firm QIMA. The survey was conducted with over 150 global consumer product manufacturers.

As a result of the U.S.-China trade war, inspection and audit demands



AFP/GETTYIMAGES

Chinese workers in the Foxconn factory in Shenzhen, in southern China's Guangdong province on May 27, 2010.

Apple is exploring to move 15 percent to 30 percent of its production line from China to Southeast Asia, while HP and Dell Technologies are looking to relocate as much as 30 percent of their production out of the country.

grew by 40 percent in Turkey and Africa, following a surge in manufacturing orders.

Xcel Brands, a New York-based clothing and consumer products company, moved from sourcing exclusively in China two years ago, to diversifying its production in Vietnam, Cambodia, Bangladesh, and Canada, according to The Associated Press. It plans to completely leave China by next year.

PC maker Dynabook, which manufactures nearly all of their notebook PCs in Hangzhou City in China's Zhejiang Province, is also feeling the pressure.

“We need permanent measures to avoid the risk of tariffs and be eligible for U.S. government procurement,” Kiyofumi Kakudo, CEO of Dynabook, told Nikkei. “Although

the fourth round of U.S. tariffs has been temporarily shelved, we cannot tell what will happen nor when.”

Trump had threatened to impose tariffs on another \$300 billion of Chinese goods, but agreed not to do so after meeting with Chinese leader Xi Jinping at the G-20 summit.

Meanwhile, Apple is exploring a move of 15 percent to 30 percent of its production line from China to Southeast Asia, while HP and Dell Technologies are looking to relocate as much as 30 percent of their production out of the country. Taiwan-based contract manufacturer Foxconn is also weighing options outside of China, saying in June that it has enough capacity to support Apple should the company request the move.

Southeast Asian countries such

as Thailand, Cambodia, India, and Vietnam have already become alternative production sites for many tech manufacturers.

China's Reaction

At a July 11 news conference, Gao Feng, the Ministry of Commerce spokesperson, tried to play down any impact that the trade war may have on foreign businesses in China.

“According to what we know at the moment, there has not been a situation where foreign investments are moving out of China on a large scale,” Gao said in response to a reporter's question about the impact of the trade war, according to China's state broadcaster CCTV.

Gao added that China won't repress or discriminate against any foreign companies.

China Has Agenda in Giving International Aid, Report Finds

FRANK FANG

In recent years, China has increased the number of humanitarian aid and disaster relief missions it participates in.

Behind the seemingly charitable effort, however, Beijing is using such missions to improve its military capabilities, while pushing its political agenda, according to a recent U.S. congressional report.

The report, issued by the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission (USCC) on July 11, explained that Beijing “routinely allows political considerations to guide its participation” in such missions.

“In some cases, China's approach to HA/DR [humanitarian aid and disaster relief] has undermined the effectiveness of multinational operations and possibly contributed to the avoidable loss of life,” the report stated.

Botched Missions

One example was the disaster relief mission in Nepal following a magnitude 7.8 earthquake that occurred on April 25, 2015. The eventual death toll was close to 9,000 people.

According to the USCC report, the Nepal government divided the quake-hit areas into three sections, for China, India, and the United States to lead the disaster relief effort in the designated areas.

When civilian aid organizations in China's section claimed that there was a “critical shortage of vertical lift needed”—meaning a shortage of aircraft that can take off without the need for a runway—Chinese military on the ground denied that there was such shortage.

The Chinese military, formally known as the People's Liberation Army (PLA), treated its section “like sovereign territory, rather than an area where they would lead the coordination of response.”

The report, citing an unnamed former official in the Pentagon, stated that Chinese aid responders were



NICOLAS ASFOURI/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Following a 7.8 magnitude earthquake that hit Nepal, a Chinese rescue team stands outside their camp at the UNESCO world heritage site of Bhaktapur on the outskirts of the capital of Kathmandu, on April 30, 2015.

The report pointed to a book published by the PLA's Academy of Military Science that revealed China's intention to use noncombat operations to advance its military capability.

“more concerned with the potential poor reflection on Beijing of U.S. aircraft operating in their sector than with saving lives.”

Putting politics above saving lives was also evident in November 2013, when the Philippines was hit by Typhoon Haiyan, one of the most powerful typhoons ever recorded, according to the report. The eventual death toll was more than 6,300.

The USCC report pointed out that Beijing's aid ship arrived more than two weeks after the typhoon made landfall, whereas U.S. military personnel were on the scene two days after the typhoon hit, and Japan arrived four days after landfall.

“Most observers linked the minimal and delayed response to tensions with Manila over South China Sea sovereignty claims,” the report said.

The relationship between China and the Philippines has been rocky at times due to territorial disputes in the South China Sea, as islands and reefs in the region are claimed not

only by the two countries, but also by Brunei, Taiwan, Malaysia, Vietnam, and Indonesia. Beijing has aggressively staked its claims by building artificial islands in the waters, some outfitted with military facilities.

“Beijing has proven willing to allow political considerations to outweigh humanitarian needs, suggesting Chinese leaders may view HA/DR less as a global good than an instrument of influence,” the report concluded, noting that Chinese officials have spoken publicly about the need to portray China as a “responsible stakeholder” internationally.

The Chinese regime also delayed aid efforts for its democratic neighbor Taiwan, which it views as part of its territory, despite the island being self-ruled. In September 1999, it refused to allow a Russian emergency team to fly through its air space en route to Taiwan, after the island was hit with a magnitude 7.6 earthquake.

The 1999 quake killed more than 2,400 people and destroyed or dam-

aged about 50,000 buildings.

Military

The USCC also found that Beijing exploited international aid missions “to learn combat skills from and gather intelligence on advanced militaries, particularly the United States and its allies and partners,” the report stated.

The report pointed to a 2013 edition of “The Science of Military Strategy,” a book published by the PLA's Academy of Military Science, that revealed China's intention to use noncombat operations to advance its military capability.

“PLA can use them [HA/DR and other noncombat operations] as an opportunity to test its organizational and command capabilities and examine and enhance its combat readiness,” the report stated, regarding a section of the 2013 PLA book.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 prohibits the U.S. military from engaging with the Chinese military in ways that would result in enhancing the latter's combat capabilities. However, the law contains an exception allowing for the two nations to carry out humanitarian operations or exercises.

Currently, China and the United States conduct a number of exchanges and exercises related to humanitarian aid and disaster relief, including the U.S.-China Disaster Management Exchange, an annual drill held between the U.S. Army Pacific and People's Liberation Army to practice search-and-rescue operations.

So far, the Pentagon hasn't identified such contacts as posing a national security risk to the United States. But the report warned: “The PLA almost certainly treats these exchanges as valuable opportunities ... and has routinely requested the U.S. side include information or drills, such as rapid runway repair, that have direct combat applications.”

Since 2011, the PLA has also conducted exercises with Australia, Cambodia, Germany, India, Malaysia, and New Zealand, according to the report.

Former Czech Huawei Staff Reveal Theft of Customer Data

FRANK FANG

Two former employees at the Huawei office in the Czech Republic have revealed that the Chinese tech giant instructed staff to secretly gather personal information on clients and government officials, then pass the data on to China.

The findings were the result of a recent investigation by public radio broadcaster Czech Radio, and the two former managers spoke to the media outlet on the condition of anonymity.

The two managers separately told the broadcaster the same thing: the company kept an internal database, which they had to constantly update with personal information on their clients, such as personal interests and financial situations.

Some of the personal information was gathered during business meetings, according to Czech Radio.

“Access to the information, which is stored in this customer relationship management system, is managed exclusively from the headquarters in China. It is very hard to find and

The manager added that it was “common practice” for Huawei employees to discuss client information at meetings with staffers at the Chinese embassy in the Czech Republic.



The inside of a ZTE smartphone.

CARLO ALLEGRI/ILLUSTRATION/REUTERS



People visit a Huawei stand during the Mobile World Congress in Shanghai on June 26, 2019.

prove who has access to this data and what they use it for,” one of the managers said.

The manager added that it was “common practice” for Huawei employees to discuss client information at meetings with staffers at the Chinese embassy in the Czech Republic. However, the manager couldn’t confirm whether those employees were spies.

It isn’t known why Huawei was having those meetings with Chinese embassy staff.

The second manager spoke of how he entered information on Czech officials, particularly those with a department-director position or deputy-ministerial position, into a computer document. That document was intended for Huawei’s management in both the Czech Republic and China.

Huawei used that document to make decisions on which Czech of-

ficials to invite to attend a conference or go on a trip to China, according to the second manager.

According to Czech Radio, the Czech intelligence was aware of such practices at Huawei, citing an unnamed source.

In response to the Czech Radio report, Huawei said in a written statement that it denies having engaged in any unlawful practices.

Czech Republic’s domestic national intelligence agency BIS has prepared special courses for the country’s civil servants and politicians in order to prep them for dealing with the kind of intelligence-gathering tactics allegedly used by Huawei, according to Czech Radio.

A BIS spokesman said that the course instructed participants to be careful at meetings, because anyone could be an intelligence officer, according to Czech Radio.

The U.S. government has been warning Western countries about the security risks associated with Huawei equipment, particularly in the realm of 5G technology, as it is set to be used in critical infrastructure.

On May 16, the U.S. Department of Commerce added Huawei and 68 affiliate companies to its “Entity List,” which means U.S. firms are banned from doing business with them unless granted special government approval.

In December last year, the Czech National Cyber and Information Security Agency issued a security warning to IT firms advising against using Huawei software and hardware, as well as products made by another Chinese tech giant, ZTE.

The warning stated that Chinese companies are required by law to cooperate with Beijing, including in intelligence-gathering.

Falun Gong Rally in Hong Kong Marks 20th Anniversary of China’s Persecution

FRANK FANG

Hundreds of Falun Gong practitioners marched through the streets of Hong Kong on July 21 to call for an end to the Chinese Communist Party’s persecution of the spiritual practice in mainland China.

The adherents, most of whom were dressed in yellow T-shirts, marched from King’s Road Playground in the North Point neighbourhood to the Liaison Office, Beijing’s representative office in Hong Kong.

Most in attendance were Hong Kong locals, while Falun Gong practitioners from other parts of Asia, including Taiwan, also participated. They held colourful giant banners, with phrases such as “The World Needs Truthfulness, Compassion, and Tolerance,” “Stop the Persecution of Falun Gong,” and “Put Jiang Zemin on Trial.”

Falun Gong, also known as Falun Dafa, is a spiritual practice that involves slow, meditative exercises and a set of moral teachings based on truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance.

Beijing’s persecution began on July 20, 1999, when Jiang Zemin, the leader of the Chinese Communist Party at the time, mobilised the country’s entire security apparatus to locate, arrest, and detain Falun Gong practitioners.

Jiang had viewed the practice’s enormous popularity—by 1999, practitioners numbered from 70 million to 100 million people, according to official estimates cited by Western media outlets at the time—as a threat to the Party’s rule.

Today, Falun Gong practitioners are still arrested and sentenced to prisons, labor camps, and brain-washing centres, where they are



Falun Gong practitioners hold up a giant banner with the words “Global Oppositi-on to Persecution” in a march in Hong Kong on July 21, 2019.

As Hongkongers have recently protested against a controversial extradition bill, they are becoming aware of how Beijing views all dissidents as “enemies.”

subjected to physical and psychological abuses in an attempt to force them to surrender their faith.

While Hong Kong reverted from British to Chinese rule in 1997, the city still safeguards freedom of religion, and people in Hong Kong are free to practice Falun Gong.

Prior to the march on July 21, a rally was held at Edinburgh Place, a public square in the Central district, to raise awareness about the plight of Falun Gong practitioners in mainland China.

Among the speakers was former Hong Kong lawmaker Leung Kwok-hung, who said that the Falun Gong persecution demonstrates that the Chinese regime’s nature is to sup-

press anyone who expresses dissent against the Party.

“What has happened to Falun Gong practitioners will also likely happen to other people,” Leung said, explaining that as Hongkongers have recently protested against a controversial extradition bill, they are becoming aware of how Beijing views all dissidents as “enemies.”

“More and more Hongkongers will then support and participate in efforts to challenge the Chinese regime’s authoritarianism,” Leung said.

Millions of Hongkongers have protested since mid-June against a legislative proposal that many fear

would place people of any nationality at risk of being extradited to China, where an opaque legal system often disregards rule of law and punishes Beijing’s critics.

Leung added that he admired Falun Gong practitioners’ steadfastness in raising awareness over the past 20 years.

Some passers-by stopped to express their support for Falun Gong, including a man identified as Mr. Wong, who said that in recent years, he had seen about eight Falun Gong marches in Hong Kong, all of them peaceful.

Another man, identified as Mr. Chen, 78, said he admires Falun Gong practitioners for their goodness. He added that it’s very important that they can express themselves freely in Hong Kong.

To mark the 20th anniversary of the persecution, parades and rallies have been held in cities around the world, including Sydney, Melbourne, Kyoto, Los Angeles, New York, Ottawa, Paris, Seoul, Taipei, Toronto and Washington.

In Taipei on July 20, more than 2,000 local Falun Gong practitioners held a candlelight vigil in front of the Taipei City government building to remember those who have lost their lives in the persecution.

According to Minghui.org, a clearinghouse of information about China’s persecution, there are 4,326 confirmed deaths of Falun Gong practitioners as of July 2019. The true number remains unknown, due to the difficulty of getting sensitive information out of China, and is likely much higher.

The Hong Kong bureau of The Epoch Times contributed to this report.

Trump Meets With Falun Gong Practitioner, Other Survivors of Religious Persecution

CATHY HE

WASHINGTON—A practitioner of the spiritual discipline Falun Gong who was persecuted in China for her faith was among 27 survivors of religious persecution who met with President Donald Trump at the White House on July 17.

Yuhua Zhang, 59, was repeatedly imprisoned and suffered torture in China for a combined period of 7 1/2 years for refusing to renounce her faith before escaping to the United States in 2015.

Falun Gong, a traditional Chinese meditation practice, has been brutally persecuted by the Chinese communist regime for 20 years. At any given time, hundreds of thousands of adherents are held in prisons, labor camps, and brainwashing centres, where many have been tortured in an effort to force them to renounce their faith, the Falun Dafa Information Centre estimates.

Trump met with Zhang, as well as other survivors from 17 countries, including China, North Korea, Iran, Pakistan, and Burma, to reaffirm his administration’s commitment to religious freedom, the White House said.

Zhang’s attendance at the event marked the first time a Falun Gong practitioner has met with the nation’s highest officeholder in an official engagement.

While gathered around Trump’s desk in the Oval Office, Zhang told the president that her husband, also a Falun Gong practitioner, is imprisoned in Suzhou Prison in Jiangsu Province, China.

“Forced organ harvesting still exists, so we should take action,” Zhang said. “Words don’t work.”

Zhang also told Trump about another practitioner imprisoned at the same facility who died one day after being released. Before the person died, he vomited a large amount of blood, she said.

“Each of you has suffered tremendously for your faith,” Trump said during the meeting. “Each of you has now become a witness to the importance of advancing



President Donald Trump shakes hands with Zhang Yuhua, a Falun Gong practitioner who survived persecution in China, at the White House on July 17, 2019.

Zhang, a former professor at Nanjing Normal University, said in a speech at the conference on July 17 that she was severely tortured while detained in China.

religious liberty all around the world.”

The survivors were in Washington to participate in the Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom hosted by the U.S. State Department. The three-day conference, held July 16-18, is the largest religious freedom event in the world.

U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom Sam Brownback said at the event that the administration will announce “additional measures” on religious freedom efforts at the conference on July 18, which will be covered in speeches by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Vice President Mike Pence.

Seeking Justice

Zhang, a former professor at Nanjing Normal University, said in a speech at the conference on July 17 that she was severely tortured while detained in China. That included enduring electric shocks, sleep deprivation, forced injections of unknown drugs, and being forced to run for hours under the baking sun.

Zhang’s husband, Zhengyu Ma, an engineer, is currently serving a three-year term in Suzhou Prison, Jiangsu Province, for sending letters to the regime’s top leaders calling on them to end the persecution. She hasn’t heard any news about him since his sentencing in 2017.

“I worry day and night about my husband,” Zhang said at the conference. “He could be tortured to death like thousands of other Falun Gong practitioners have been.”

“He could be killed for his organs like an unknown number of Falun Gong practitioners have been.”

Zhang was referring to longstanding allegations, based on evidence from a variety of sources, that the Chinese regime has been killing imprisoned Falun Gong practitioners to use their organs for transplant. These allegations were confirmed by independent researchers in a report issued in 2006, followed by further reports that confirmed with more detail a picture of widespread abuse.

Last month, an independent tribunal, after a one-year investigation, confirmed the allegations, finding that forced organ harvesting has taken place in China for years “on a significant scale,” and is still taking place. The judgment added that Falun Gong practitioners were likely the main source of such organs.

Zhang, who has tirelessly advocated for her husband’s release since arriving in the United States, called on the U.S. government to impose sanctions under the Global Magnitsky Act on Chinese officials “known to have illegally detained, tortured, and killed Falun Gong practitioners.”

Many of the perpetrators continue to work in China and have been promoted for their efforts in persecuting practitioners, Zhang said.

“I hope that the U.S. government, international media, and human rights groups can help free my husband and the hundreds of thousands of other innocent but jailed Falun Gong practitioners,” she said.

Trump Considers Action Against Guatemala for Balking on Safe-Third Country Deal

IVAN PENTCHOUKOV

President Donald Trump is considering options to punish Guatemala for walking away from a “safe third country” agreement, including a travel ban, tariffs, and a hike in remittance fees.

“Guatemala, which has been forming Caravans and sending large numbers of people, some with criminal records, to the United States, has decided to break the deal they had with us on signing a necessary Safe Third Agreement,” Trump wrote on Twitter on July 23. “We were ready to go. Now we are looking at the ‘BAN,’ Tariffs, Remittance Fees, or all of the above. Guatemala has not been good. Big U.S. taxpayer dollars going to them was cut off by me 9 months ago.

Guatemala President Jimmy Morales canceled a trip to Washington on July 14 that would have included negotiations for a safe third country. The agreement would require migrants from El Salvador and Honduras to seek asylum in Guatemala and allow the United States to deport migrants from those countries to Guatemala as they await a resolution of their asylum claims.

The day before Trump’s announcement, the Department of Homeland Security released a joint statement with Guatemala that highlighted several areas of cooperation between the two countries, but notably omitted any mention of the safe third country deal.

Prior to the Twitter message about



People crossing the international bridge over the Suchiate River between Hidalgo, Mexico, and Tecun Uman, Guatemala, on June 24, 2019.

Guatemala, Trump hadn’t publicly mentioned remittances since he was elected. Remittances are payments sent overseas by workers in the United States. Remittance payments from the United States are a top source of revenue for both Guatemala and Mexico.

On the campaign trail, Trump pitched a plan to pressure Mexico to pay for a wall on the southwest border by threatening to enact a rule that would prohibit illegal aliens in the United States from sending money internationally.

Guatemala received \$9.5 billion in remittances in 2018. Honduras and

The president has already used the threat of tariffs to force Mexico to step up its immigration enforcement efforts.

El Salvador received \$4.7 billion and \$5.4 billion, respectively.

The president has already used the threat of tariffs to force Mexico to step up its immigration enforcement efforts. The United States is one of Guatemala’s largest trading partners, according to the Department of State.

The president’s reference to a “ban” is least clear of the three options he listed, but likely refers to a travel restriction on Guatemalan citizens. Trump has previously banned travel from several nations with high concentrations of terrorists. The Supreme Court upheld a version of the order

in June 2018.

The White House didn’t respond to a request for comment.

The United States has attempted to negotiate safe third country deals with several Central American nations. Mexico has agreed to consider signing a safe third country deal if it fails to reduce migration flows to the United States.

The State Department is following through on an order from Trump by cutting \$550 million in aid to Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras, also known as the Northern Triangle.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in an interview on July 22 that the United States has broadened its economic engagement with the Northern Triangle, noting that in addition to direct migration from the three countries, many migrants who arrive on the U.S. border transit through the area.

“Many of the folks that we apprehend today at our southern border are not only from those three countries but are transiting through those three countries. They have an obligation,” Pompeo told conservative radio host Buck Sexton.

“It’s interesting—I saw some statistics on how many Guatemalans have left, how deep the level of migration is. This isn’t good for Guatemala to have their citizens leaving either. They need their people to want to stay in the country, and their leaders need to create rule of law and systems that will convince them that that’s the right thing to do.”

Media Use 27-Year-Old Video in Latest Attempt to Tie Epstein to Trump

Video taken years before Epstein island purchase and sexual misconduct allegations

JEFF CARLSON

News Analysis
Following the arrest of Jeffrey Epstein on charges of molesting underage girls and sex trafficking children, media organizations have tried to tie him to President Donald Trump.
On July 17, MSNBC’s “Morning Joe” program aired footage showing Trump at a party with Epstein. The footage had previously been aired by NBC News during the presidential election race in 2016.
Following the Morning Joe report, a number of other media, including The New York Times, The Washington Post, and CNN, also reported on the video.

What Does the Video Show?
The footage, taken nearly 27 years ago—shot before Trump converted the Mar-a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Florida, into a club—shows a party that featured the Buffalo Bills cheerleaders.
The video also shows Trump greeting four guests (not three as MSNBC reported), one of whom is Jeffrey Epstein.
In the video, Trump is seen chatting alternatively with Epstein and another, unidentified man. At several points, Epstein appears to turn to respond to Trump, only to find him engaged with the other man. But the two do appear friendly, with Epstein doubling over in laughter at one point from something Trump said.
This old video was promoted by the hosts of “Morning Joe” as evidence against the president’s recent claim that he was “not a fan of Epstein.” Co-host Mika Brzezinski

There were some complaints about Epstein at Mar-a-Lago. I spoke to the head of the spa there. ... She said she went to Trump, and he threw [Epstein] out of the club.

James Patterson, author

claimed that the president said that “he never liked Epstein.” Co-host Joe Scarborough chimed in, noting that Trump “looks like a big fan of Epstein” in the video.
But that quick summation fails to place the story into its proper context and timing.
Trump had known Epstein, who owns a house in Palm Beach, socially for years. At some point, however, the two had a falling out after Trump became aware of inappropriate behavior on Epstein’s part, leading Trump to ban Epstein from Mar-a-Lago.
Epstein wouldn’t face accusations of statutory rape and sexual abuse until 2005–13 years after the video had been recorded.
Epstein was indicted in 2007 on charges he abused underage girls, but reached a controversial plea deal in which he served only 13 months at a low-security facility that allowed him to work from his office each day.
This month, Epstein was charged with sex trafficking of minors and conspiracy to commit sex trafficking that may lead to him spending the rest of his life in prison. Justice Department officials have indicated that they expect the charges against Epstein to expand as they delve further into the case.
Contained within the federal indictment against Epstein is a short timeline of his offenses, which notes, “Beginning in at least 2002, Jeffery Epstein, the defendant, enticed and recruited, and caused to be enticed and recruited, dozens of minor girls to engage in sex acts with him.”
Some of Epstein’s accusers have told the Miami Herald that Epstein’s abusive actions began a year earlier, in 2001. Although future allegations may surface, there are no known official allegations against Epstein prior to 2001.
On July 9, in response to questions,



A screenshot from footage taken by NBC News in 1992 shows Donald Trump welcoming several guests, including Jeffrey Epstein, to a party at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Fla. Trump would later ban Epstein from the resort.



Assistant U.S. Attorney Alex Rossmiller (R) speaks as Jeffrey Epstein looks on during a a bail hearing in this court sketch in New York on July 15, 2019.

Trump commented about Epstein, saying: “Well, I knew him, like everybody in Palm Beach knew him. People in Palm Beach knew him. He was a fixture in Palm Beach.”
But Trump continued: “I had a falling out with him a long time ago. I don’t think I’ve spoken to him for 15 years. I wasn’t a fan. I was not—a long time ago, I’d say maybe 15 years. I was not a fan of his. That I can tell you. I was not a fan of his.”
Fifteen years ago would place Trump’s severing of relations with Epstein somewhere in 2004. The public allegations against Epstein, and the subsequent investigation began in 2005.

Trump Bars Epstein From Mar-a-Lago
Best-selling author James Patterson, who wrote a book on Epstein, titled “Filthy Rich,” has stated that Trump banned Epstein from Mar-a-Lago. In a recent interview on Fox News, Patterson said: “There were some complaints about Epstein at Mar-a-Lago. I spoke to the head of the spa there. ... She said she went to Trump, and he threw [Epstein] out of the club.”
A similar version of events was reported in a December 2018 article by The Washington Post, which noted that Trump had permanently banned Epstein from Mar-a-Lago “because Epstein sexually assaulted an underage girl at the club,” according to court documents filed by Bradley Edwards, who has represented many of Epstein’s underage accusers in civil suits against him.

The Washington Post article also noted that all sides agreed that Trump’s involvement in the Epstein case was only tangential and wouldn’t even require his testimony:
“Lawyers involved with the various Epstein cases said there is virtually no chance that the president will be required to testify in a matter in which both sides agree his involvement was tangential.”
In other words, nothing in the 1992 footage disproves anything that Trump has said about his relationship with Epstein.
Notably, at the time the 1992 footage was taken, Epstein hadn’t yet purchased his infamous island retreat in the Virgin Islands. Actually, Epstein has not one, but two, private islands. The more well-known is the 75-acre Little St. James Island, which Epstein purchased in 1998 for \$7.95 million, before putting millions more into renovations and upgrades. The second island, the 165-acre Great St. James Island, was purchased in 2016, reportedly for \$18 million.

Political Donations by Epstein
Attempts to make damning connections between Epstein and Trump from a 1992 video may ultimately prove to be problematic for the media. since Epstein’s ties appear to fall primarily in Democrat circles.
According to OpenSecrets—the Center for Responsive Politics, Epstein donated more than \$139,000 to Democratic federal

candidates and committees from 1989 to 2004, while giving roughly \$18,000 to Republican candidates and groups during the same period.
Hillary Clinton was one of the biggest recipients of Epstein’s contributions, receiving \$20,000 from Epstein in 1999 during her Senate campaign. According to ABC News, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) “received approximately \$22,000 from Epstein through his House and Senate campaigns and other affiliated joint fundraising committees between 1992 and 1999.”
Other notable recipients of Epstein’s donations included former President Bill Clinton and Democrats John Kerry, Richard Gephardt, and Chris Dodd.
The contributions came to an abrupt halt during the investigation into allegations of Epstein’s sexual exploitation of underage girls, but they resumed in 2016, with all \$8,100 in donations going to Democrats.

Clinton Activities at Time of 1992 Video
At the same time that Trump was pictured with Epstein in 1992, Bill Clinton was making news of his own. In January of 1992, shortly after announcing his candidacy for president, Gennifer Flowers alleged that she had a 12-year affair with then-Gov. Clinton.

Got a lot of problems coming up, in my opinion, with the famous island, with Jeffrey Epstein. A lot of problems.

Donald Trump in 2015 on Bill Clinton

Two months later, on March 8, 1992, The New York Times broke the story on the Clintons’ “Whitewater” partnership with the McDougals. On March 20, 1992, The Washington Times disclosed that Hillary Clinton had been placed on a \$2,000-per-month retainer with Madison Guarantee.
Bill Clinton would face a series of allegations of sexual assault and harassment from several women, including Kathleen Willey, Juanita Broaddrick, and Paula Jones.
Clinton later became a frequent passenger aboard Epstein’s private jet, which has been called the “Lolita Express” in media reports, following a 2002 trip to Africa. The trip aboard Epstein’s jet included actors Kevin Spacey and Chris Tucker.
In a 2016 article, Fox News reported that, based on a review of flight logs, Clinton had made “at least 26 trips” aboard Epstein’s private jet. The flight logs indicate that Clinton flew without a Secret Service detail for at least five of the flights.
According to the article, these same flight logs “show Clinton flying aboard Epstein’s plane to such destinations as Hong Kong,

Japan, Singapore, China, Brunei, London, New York, the Azores, Belgium, Norway, Russia, and Africa.”
The article also notes that those regularly traveling with Clinton included “Epstein’s associates, New York socialite Ghislaine Maxwell and Epstein’s assistant, Sarah Kellen, both of whom were investigated by the FBI and Palm Beach Police for recruiting girls for Epstein and his friends.”
Clinton’s repeated presence on Epstein’s plane also was noted during an Oct. 15, 2009, deposition of Epstein pilot Larry Visosky:
Q: “You had Bill Clinton on the airplane ten or twenty times, right?”
Visosky: “Yeah. He’s my main focus. I remember him being on the aircraft, sure.”
At the February 2015 Conservative Political Action Conference, in the runup to the 2016 presidential election, Trump indicated to Fox News’ Sean Hannity that Bill Clinton’s connections to Epstein would prove problematic for the former president:
“Nice guy. Got a lot of problems coming up, in my opinion, with the famous island, with Jeffrey Epstein. A lot of problems.”

Epstein Scandal Expands
The ongoing investigation of Epstein is likely to implicate others as it progresses, and the scandal may have already impacted an Israeli election. On July 11, 2019, Israeli media Haaretz reported that Epstein “partnered with former Prime Minister Ehud Barak to invest in the former prime minister’s startup.”
Just weeks prior, on June 26, Barak announced his intention to return to politics and challenge current Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the upcoming elections.
In a subsequent interview with the Daily Beast, Barak said that he had met with Epstein “more than 10 times and much less than a hundred times, but I can’t tell you exactly how many. I don’t keep count. Over the years, I’ve seen him on occasion.”
Barak continued, noting that he “never attended a party with him. I never met Epstein in the company of women or young girls.” Barak also has admitted to visiting Epstein’s private island, although he said he hadn’t been to any parties or met any girls there.

On July 16, the Daily Mail published a series of photos of Barak entering Epstein’s New York mansion in January 2016. In the photos, Barak, who has admitted he is the one pictured, had covered his face up to his sunglasses with a camo-patterned “gaiter.”
The Daily Mail reported that “a bevy of young women were also seen going into the multi-millionaire’s lavish seven-story home on the same day that Ehud Barak was snapped.” It isn’t clear if Barak was still present at Epstein’s home when the “young women” arrived.
The photos of Barak are of some note as they were taken in 2016 by Probe-Media, described on its website as “an elite agency that offers a bespoke service to international News outlets, intelligence agencies, and corporate and individual clients.”
It’s worth asking why these pictures are only coming out now, and how Probe-Media knew that Barak would be present at the Epstein residence on that particular day. Why did they choose to wait outside Epstein’s mansion for the entire day, in the cold New York weather, to capture photos of the female visitors?
Although the Epstein investigation is still in the early stages, it’s suspected that more individuals will be caught up in the unfolding scandal. Epstein was denied bail on July 18 by Judge Richard Berman, who noted, “I am not suggesting that a different bail package would be appropriate because I doubt that any bail package can overcome the danger to the community.”
Perhaps the new investigation will provide answers and accountability in relation to the early investigation that allowed Epstein to escape with a light punishment for his crimes.

Chinese House Christian Uniting Faiths Against Communist Persecution

JOSHUA PHILIPP

Standing up for religious freedom under the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is no easy task, and Bob Fu, president and founder of China Aid, knows this all too well.

Fu began his journey as a student leader of the democracy movement in China, which came to a brutal end on June 4, 1989, during the infamous Tiananmen Square Massacre. Their peaceful chants were met with the regime's brutality, and their hopes that the CCP could change were silenced by gunfire, and crushed beneath the treads of tanks.

According to Fu, he and others in the student movement were disappointed to see that "the so-called 'people's government' would send the so-called 'People's' Liberation Army to use tanks and machine guns to kill its own people.

This disappointment turned into disillusionment with the CCP, and Fu turned from hope in politics to faith in heaven.

"That's how I became a follower for Jesus Christ, a Christian," he said, and noted after turning to religion he came to realise that by its nature, the CCP aims to exert complete control over all society, and attempts to destroy anything without total loyalty to the party.

Switching from politics to religion also came with its costs, however. Under the communist system of the Chinese regime, religion is tightly regulated. During the Cultural Revolution, it launched campaigns to destroy temples and churches, killed priests, and established its own state-run versions of the religions that put the Party above heaven.

Fu refused to follow the state-run version of Christianity, and instead turned to the "house Christian" movement in China for those who still follow the religion as it exists outside China—a religion that the CCP still persecutes.

"My wife and I were then imprisoned," he said.

CCP Control of Religions

Fu explained that religious people in China, including Christians and Catholics, "want to be independent in their faith" and to recognise God



Dr. Bob Fu, China Aid President, speaks at the event "China Threat Briefing: Unrestricted Warfare: The Chinese Communist Party's War against America and the Free World" organised by the Committee on the Present Danger in Washington DC on May 2, 2019.

The next day, the Ten Commandments became the Nine Commandments.

Dr. Bob Fu, President of China Aid

as the highest power, rather than be forced to place the Communist Party above God.

Seeing that they would not be able to practice their beliefs in China without facing imprisonment, or worse, Fu said he and his wife decided to leave China. And after facing persecution himself, he began to look towards others who faced similar persecution under the CCP.

He noted that in China, even human rights lawyers face harassment, torture, and imprisonment for trying to uphold the written Chinese law. Yet, like these human rights lawyers, Fu realised that when it comes to defending faith, "how can we be silent in the face of this kind of evil?"

It was that thought—a willingness to stand up not just for his own faith, but also for the faiths of others—that led Fu to create China Aid. He said it holds "a mission to advance religious freedom and rule of law for all in China by exposing abuses and persecution," and by encouraging those

who have been abused by the CCP to stand up for their freedoms.

The Communist Party is an atheist system, and it attempts to force this atheism on religions by requiring people to recognise no power higher than its own. Under the CCP, the Dalai Lama of Tibetan Buddhism is required to have government permission to reincarnate, pictures of communist leaders are hung in churches, and its demolition of temples and churches continues.

In churches, Fu said, "everybody is mandated to sing the national anthem, and the Church would have to take down the cross and have it replaced with a portrait of a chairman of CCP."

He noted that last year in China's Hunan Province, the CCP sent "a so-called religious affairs inspector" to investigate the churches. After seeing a copy of the Ten Commandments on a wall, the inspector declared it was not in line with Communist Party doctrine and demanded the removal

of the First Commandment which requires Christians and Jews to place no God before their own.

Fu said, "the next day, the Ten Commandments became the Nine Commandments." By the CCP removing the First Commandment, Fu questioned whether the regime's altered version of Christianity can still be called Christianity.

Defending Faith

While Fu has taken a stand for his own faith, and for his own right to believe, however, his organisation also stands up for the rights of other faiths in China. He believes this is needed, and the joining of people of different beliefs to challenge religious persecution is helping them take a stronger stance against the tyranny of the CCP.

After he left China, and after "being accepted in this land of the free in the United States," Fu said he began to realise that people of other faiths are also being persecuted by the CCP. He noted these include Tibetan Buddhists, Uyghur Muslims, and Falun Gong practitioners.

He said that were he to only speak out against the persecution of his own faith, and ignore the persecution of others, then the communist regime could use this to its advantage by dividing people and driving them into conflict.

In addition, he said, "it is the right thing to do for our faith."

"How can we turn a blind eye too by keeping silent when we see a Falun Gong practitioner, simply for practicing his or her own faith, he or she would be arbitrarily detained—would be tortured and many even tortured to death, and some even have their organs harvested alive?"

"It's a crime against humanity," he said. "We're all created in the image of God. So as a fellow human being, this is fundamental, a human rights issue. That's why we are much more powerful, stronger, if we are fighting together and join hands together."

Fu said his organisation in Washington aims to "send a strong message" to the CCP, that they will no longer tolerate the persecution, imprisonment, or torture of people for their faith, and they will also "fight for the freedoms of each other, so they cannot take advantage and divide us anymore."

Trump Derides Growing Radical Left at Teen Student Action Summit

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the radical left is increasingly shaping the Democratic Party and silencing conservatives.

He mentioned a video he saw of Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.) screaming and being dragged out of a Trump rally before she was elected.

"This is not a sane person folks, and this is what we are up against," Trump said. "The Democrats are forced to back her, I call it AOC plus three. The party are having to embrace them."

"The Democrats ... are being dragged into this radical left with these people that I believe ... hate our country," Trump said, referring to the four congresswomen known as "The Squad."

The congresswomen include Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.), Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.), Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.), and Ayanna Pressley (D-Mass.).

"This is representing us? This is not what we want representing us and I think that's why we will have a tremendous victory in 2020," Trump said.

The president said there are other Democrats "worse" than the squad and that he could be naming them in the future.

"I don't know what they are going to do, they have a big problem," Trump said, referring to the Democratic Party. "They have others than these four, I could name another 20 right now without looking at any notes. They are worse in some ways. At some point, we will be naming them."

The radical left, Trump said, has "nothing but contempt for America's



President Donald Trump listens to Ryan Zink as he speaks at the Turning Point USA Teen Student Action Summit in Washington on July 23, 2019.

heritage" and sees citizens as "subjects to be controlled." He said they have one fundamental objective—that of power—the power to control citizens and the power to destroy the foundation of the republic.

Socialism, he said, is nothing short of empty promises of free things. Trump pointed out that most of the current 2020 Democratic field support giving illegal immigrants health care. He said illegal immigrants are also coming out to vote.

"They vote many times, not just twice, not just three times. It's a rigged deal," he said. "The radical left is waging an assault on the rule of America. They want to get rid of our borders, abolish ICE, and now they want to abolish Homeland security."

Socialism, he said, is nothing short of empty promises of free things.

But the people of the United States forcefully reject these "hate-fueled" attacks, he said.

Trump went off script at multiple points in his speech. At one point, he praised newly elected UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson, and in another, he derided what he called the "fake news" for saying he had built no new border wall.

He often commended the young people in the room for sticking with their values, touted that youth wages were up 10 percent, and that the "economic revival" under his administration is great news for anyone graduating.

Free Speech

The president spoke about censor-

ship from social media giants such as Facebook, Google, and Twitter and college campuses that stifle the voices of conservative students.

He said these campuses won't be getting "billions" of dollars from the government.

On that note, Trump invited Ryan Zink on stage, a student who was pepper-sprayed by a leftist at a Turning Point event.

"We believe that free speech in our schools is at stake," Zink said after shaking hands with Trump. "Conservative students in many cases are being silenced and shut down by schools, teachers, friends. We cannot be silenced."

The president said his administration is "looking into a lot of things" in this arena, and they are exploring "every regulatory solution." Trump signed an executive order on March 21 instructing colleges across the nation to protect free speech on their campuses—or else risk losing federal research funding.

"They have not treated us fairly," Trump said about liberals. "Everyone who speaks the truth is de-platformed, shut down ... and, in many cases, assaulted."

But he said it's starting to change.

"The silent majority is silent no more," Trump told the crowd.

Trump also invited Hunter Richard to the stage, a student who was assaulted at a fast food restaurant for wearing a "Make America Great Again" hat. The assailant was later arrested.

"I proudly wear my hat every time I go out of my house," Richard said.



Google's "Go Vote" reminder.

Researcher of Google Bias: Make Google Search Index a Public Utility

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U.S. authorities are considering the idea that the company has an antitrust issue. Robert Epstein argues that by opening its index, Google can avoid more drastic regulatory measures, such as being carved up into many smaller companies, which may undermine its usefulness.

The search index is a database of all web pages known to Google, including detailed data about each page that allows Google to determine what's on the page and how it should be categorized.

Users currently can only peek into the index one search at a time. Epstein proposes for Google to allow unlimited access to the entire database.

"If entities worldwide were given unlimited access to Google's index, ... within a year or two, thousands of new search platforms might emerge, each with different strengths and weaknesses," he wrote in a July 15 Bloomberg op-ed.

That, according to Epstein, would solve some of the most pressing problems of Google's monopoly.

'Manipulate the Thinking'

Epstein established a network of volunteers that share with him data about their Google searches. Based on the results, he determined that the company has an "unprecedented ability to manipulate the thinking of 2.5 billion people, soon to be 4-plus billion."

"The methods that they're using are invisible. They're subliminal. They're more powerful than most any effects I've ever seen in behavioral sciences and I've been in behavioral sciences for almost 40 years," he testified to a Senate Judiciary subcommittee on July 16.

The core issue: "People blindly trust high-ranking search results over lower ones."

Google's influence is so vast, it can shift undecided voters—four out of five of them in some demographics, he said.

"In 2016, Google's search algorithm likely impacted undecided voters in a way that shifted at least 2.6 million votes to Hillary Clinton, whom I supported," he testified. "I know this, because I preserved more than 13,000 election-related searches prior to Election Day and Google's search results were significantly biased in favor of Secretary Clinton."

For the 2018 election, Epstein further expanded his monitoring system, concluding that in the weeks leading up to Election Day, "bias in Google search results may have shifted upwards of 78.2 million votes, spread across many races, to the candidates of one political party."

Moreover, the "Go Vote" reminder that Google displayed on its home page in 2018 "gave one political party at least 800,000 more votes than it gave the other party," he said.

"That reminder was not a public service; it was a vote manipulation."

He warned that tech companies such as Google and Facebook were "overconfident" in 2016, but "in 2020, you can bet that all of these companies are going to go all out."

"If these companies all support the same candidate, they will have the power to shift 15 million votes to that candidate," he said.

Epstein is now fundraising to set up an even more extensive monitoring system for 2020, but suggests that making Google open up its index could preempt many of the problems.

"At the moment, it's entirely up to Google to determine which bubble

you're in, which search suggestions you receive, and which search results appear at the top of the list; that's the stuff of worldwide mind control," he wrote in the op-ed. "But with thousands of search platforms vying for your attention, the power is back in your hands."

He drew a parallel to the 1956 consent decree that made AT&T share its patents.

"There's precedent both in law and Google's business practices to justify taking this step," he said.

He concluded the testimony warning that "democracy, as originally conceived, cannot survive big tech as currently empowered."

Google representatives have previously dismissed Epstein's research methodology as "flawed," but didn't say how.

Google didn't respond to a request for comment regarding Epstein's proposal as put forward in the op-ed.

Political Preferences

Google has repeatedly claimed political neutrality.

"We operate a number of platforms and they are constructed and operated to be politically neutral or apolitical," said Karan Bhatia, Google's vice president for Government Affairs and Public Policy, during the July 16 hearing.

That position, however, has been undermined by a growing pile of evidence to the contrary.

Project Veritas, a right-leaning investigative journalism nonprofit, published on June 24 a video showing Google employees and internal documents backing the allegation that Google infuses its political worldview into its products without disclosing that to its users.

The exposé corroborated from multiple sources that Google uses a doctrine of "fairness" to tweak its products in order to surreptitiously push its users toward its preferred political worldview. On June 25, Project Veritas published

an internal email that shows a Google employee calling conservative voices such as Ben Shapiro and PragerU, led by Dennis Prager, as "Nazis using dog whistles." It also labeled Canadian psychologist Jordan Peterson as such. All three are outspoken critics of Nazism.

At the moment, it's entirely up to Google to determine which bubble you're in, which search suggestions you receive, and which search results appear at the top of the list; that's the stuff of worldwide mind control.

Robert Epstein, psychologist

"Two of three of these people are Jewish, very religious Jews, and yet, you think they're Nazis," said Rep. Dan Crenshaw (R-Texas) while questioning Derek Slater, Google's global director of information policy, during a June 26 hearing. "It begs the question: What kind of education do people at Google have so they think that religious Jews are Nazis?"

More overtly, Google and other major tech platforms, including Facebook and Twitter, have publicly endorsed a model of content policing that reflects certain political leanings.

All of them, for instance, prohibit "hate speech," a concept much more broadly adopted by the political left, a 2017 Cato survey showed.

Moreover, the concept is so subjective it's impossible to enforce fairly and impartially, said Nadine Strossen, a law professor and former president of the American Civil Liberties Union.

"Even if we have content moderation that is enforced with the noblest principles and people are striving to be fair and impartial, it is impossible," she said, testifying at the June 26 House hearing. "These so-called standards are irreducibly subjective. What is one person's hate speech ... is somebody else's cherished loving speech."

University of Missouri Sued for Failing to Hire Conservative Economists

MATTHEW VADUM

The University of Missouri is being sued by Michigan-based Hillsdale College for allegedly failing to honor the wishes of a late benefactor who willed the university \$5 million to fund six professorships on the express condition they be held by believers in laissez-faire economics.

Financier Sherlock Hibbs, who died at age 98 on July 5, 2002, graduated from the University of Missouri—which is often referred to as Mizzou—in 1926.

To guarantee his donor intent was respected after his death, Hibbs created an enforcement mechanism. Under it, Mizzou would have to certify to Hillsdale every four years that each professorship—three chairs and three distinguished professorships—was populated by "a dedicated and articulate disciple of the Ludwig von Mises (Austrian) School of Economics." If the condition went unmet, the remaining money would be forfeited to Hillsdale.

Hillsdale has a special connection to Mises, the Austro-Hungarian-born author of "The Anti-Capitalistic Mentality" and "Human Action," whose

writings bolstered the libertarian movement in the United States and who died in 1973. The economist donated his personal library to the college, where it is available to researchers.

Hillsdale is a small liberal arts school in southern Michigan that is renowned for its emphasis on teaching American civic virtue and the nation's Greco-Roman-Judeo-Christian roots, as well as for resisting political correctness in the academy. Founded in 1844, Hillsdale is known for its principled refusal to accept federal or state taxpayer subsidies, even indirectly in the form of student grants or loans.

"Wheel of Fortune" host Pat Sajak was named chairman of the board of trustees of Hillsdale College in April. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas has reportedly described Hillsdale as "a shining city on a hill for conservatives."

The school of Austrian economics itself emphasizes free markets, private property, the rule of law, and limited government, and is significantly different from the Keynesian—founded by John Maynard Keynes, an influential British economist who



Ludwig von Mises, the most famous of the Austrian economists.

died in 1946—and other schools of economic thought that, among other things, call for greater government intervention in the economy.

Jay Nixon, a former Democratic governor of Missouri and Mizzou alumnus, is leading the legal team suing the university.

"I believe both from my time as governor and my time as [Missouri] attorney general that donor intent is important. It's especially important when folks are as specific as Mr. Hibbs was," Nixon told RealClearPolitics.

"Missouri University never embraced Mr. Hibbs' intent, and consequently students aren't getting the exposure to intellectual philosophies necessary for broad-based education."

Internal university documents obtained by Nixon's team in the course of the litigation indicated that future Chancellor Brady Deaton resisted

Hibbs's donor intent, expressing concerns that honoring it would amount to the institution being "held hostage by a particular ideology."

Bruce Walker, a dean at Mizzou, emailed his colleagues in 2006 stating that because "the Austrian School of Economics is quite controversial ... [we] didn't want to wade into that controversy, so we focused on some Austrian tenets that are compatible with what we do in our business school."

The lawsuit contends that despite Mizzou certifying compliance with Hibbs's wishes, no "disciple" of Austrian economic thinking was ever hired.

Deaton and Walker "swallowed hard, and you may need to as well, about attesting to the 'dedicated and articulate disciple' part," Walker wrote in an email, "[but] he and I, and hopefully you, believe that using the exact wording from Mr. Hibbs' will ... is the route we need to follow. If we don't deal with the stipulation directly, I believe we increase the likelihood of a challenge from Hillsdale College."

The Epoch Times contacted the University of Missouri for comment but didn't hear back by press time.

However, Christian Basi, the university's media relations director, recently spoke about the case with progressive website Talking Points Memo.

"We are very adamant about fulfilling the explicit wishes of every donor whenever we accept a gift," Basi said.

BENJAMIN CHASTEEN/EPOCH TIMES



“Mum where are you?” by Li Jinyu at an exhibition presented by Artists Against Forced Organ Harvesting on May 10, 2016.

Elites for an Evil Empire

DAVID FLINT



Australians have been extraordinarily fortunate since the settlement in 1788. This is not only because the continent was gradually colonised by Great Britain, a world-wide power whose first governor brought with him the rule of law and also came with unique instructions to protect the Aboriginal people and to live with them in “amity and kindness.” This was also an empire in which even her recently lost American colonies had been the freest the world had seen.

Unlike the Bourbons, the British learned from the American War of Independence and delivered self-government first to the settled colonies as soon as they were ready, and later to most others.

But in addition, Australians have had the good fortune to live in a world in which the dominant power, first Britain, then the United States, shared the same language and the same values and has been protective of our very existence.

Yet now, some key Australian elites want us to slip ever so gradually into the orbit of a communist power which has long shown itself to be impatient with Hong Kong retaining the freedoms bequeathed by the British.

Perhaps those pro-Beijing elites had once naively thought that the introduction of a fascist-style corporate state by Deng Xiaoping indicated they would go down the democratic path. But this was no more than a last-ditch attempt to save the regime after Mao Zedong’s brutal and disastrous dictatorship.

That the communists never intended to liberate the Chinese people was made absolutely clear twenty years ago. With a paranoia worthy of Stalin and Mao, they showed they would never tolerate any association, even a spiritual or religious one, not under their rigorous and dictatorial control.

So just as they had targeted both the house-church Christians who refuse to join the communist-front ‘patriotic’ churches and the Muslim Uyghurs, so the regime on July 20, 1999, declared the politically innocu-

ous and intensely spiritual Falun Gong movement to be ‘heretical.’ But rather than being political, Falun Gong does no more than combine the practice of slow-moving exercises and meditation with a moral philosophy emphasising truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance. This is an association dedicated to doing good; Aristotle would have approved.



A painting shows Chinese police and doctors harvesting the organs of a living Falun Gong practitioner. Investigators believe thousands of Falun Gong adherents have had their organs harvested by Chinese authorities.

What terrified the communists was that the number involved, up to 70 million, far exceeded the size of the communist party. Clearly, the Chinese people want more than the barren official atheistic Marxism which even party bosses do not believe.

Being the undisputed heirs of what Churchill described as a ‘bacillus plague,’ the communists decided they would never tolerate so many people falling outside of their vice-like grip. To demonstrate their total moral depravity, the communists decided to extend to the Falun Gong a disgusting practice they applied to those found guilty of a capital crime.

Bear in mind that being found guilty in a communist republic is meaningless. Criminal justice there operates under the principle enunciated by Stalin’s secret police chief, Lavrentiy Beria: “Show me the man and I’ll find you the crime.”

With a rate of conviction of over 99.9 percent, many of those executed are clearly innocent. To compound this evil, the communists monetized these killings by selling off their organs to satisfy an increasing demand for

transplants.

Dr. Enver Tohti recently gave evidence as to how he is still haunted by the memory of operating on a prisoner who had been shot in the right side of his chest.

Cutting into the body, he realised the man’s heart was still beating. Nevertheless, he was ordered to remove the liver and both kidneys, sew the body back up, and “remember that today, nothing happened.”

With the Falun Gong, the dictatorship has dispensed with the façade of a trial and made them mass victims of the vile practice of organ harvesting.

This is not a wild, unsubstantiated accusation. Shocking under-cover footage, broadcast last May by Fox, shows Falun Gong believers imprisoned, seriously mistreated, and tortured with damaged victims handcuffed to beds. That Falun Gong, while still alive, have their organs cut out from their bodies has been confirmed by several reliable sources.

One unanswerable fact is that the availability of organs on demand in China vastly exceeds the small number of registered donors together with the number of executions. The difference must obviously come from another source. The inescapable conclusion is that this comes from the Falun Gong.

Extrapolations from the extraordinary number of transplant operations undertaken in China indicates the number involved is large, with one estimate from a reliable Cana-

dian source concluding that there have been around one and a half million victims.

Now, the extensive forced medical examinations of both the persecuted Muslim Uyghurs and house-Christians suggest that the regime may well be planning to profit next from further acts of what can only constitute the crime of genocide.

An important and rigorous report into Beijing’s organ harvesting by an independent expert tribunal was recently handed down in London. This was chaired by Sir Geoffrey Nice QC, a leading human rights lawyer who had led the prosecution of the former Yugoslavian President Slobodan Milosevic at the International Criminal Tribunal.

In its meticulous report, the tribunal indicates that it is satisfied unanimously and beyond reasonable doubt that crimes against humanity had been committed under the authority of the People’s Republic. These include acts of torture, with enemies of the state being medically tested and killed for their organs.

The Tribunal concludes that the People’s Republic is a “criminal state,” warning that business or other entities involved in doing business with the People’s Republic should know whom they are dealing with.

The Australian apologists for the Beijing communists clearly have nowhere to go. Our destiny cannot be to become a satellite of any power, and certainly not of such an evil empire.

As for those Australians in public life, politicians including retired superannuated ones, financiers, and people in business dealing with these criminal offenders, the words of the great Edmund Burke could not be more appropriate:

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”

David Flint AM is a former chairman of the Australian Press Council and Australian Broadcasting Authority and is an emeritus professor of law.

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

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Standing outside of political interests and the pursuit of profit, our starting point and our goal is to create a media for the public benefit, to be truly responsible to society.

We endeavor to educate readers about today’s most important topics, seeking to broaden and uplift minds. We believe that rational, balanced debate is key for fostering a healthy democracy and a compassionate society.

As an independent media outlet, we use our freedom to investigate issues overlooked—or avoided—by other media outlets. We seek to highlight solutions and what’s good in society rather than what divides us.

We report respectfully, compassionately, and rigorously.

We stand against the destruction wrought by communism, including the harm done to cultures around the world.

We are inspired in this by our own experience. The Epoch Times was founded in 2000 to bring honest and uncensored news to people oppressed by the lies and violence in communist China.

We still believe journalism is a noble vocation, but only when it genuinely seeks to serve its communities and help them to flourish. In all that we do, we will hold ourselves to the highest standards of integrity. This is our promise to you.

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SPECIAL SERIES

How the Specter of Communism Is Ruling Our World

Infiltrating the West (Part II)

The Epoch Times here serializes a translation from the Chinese of a new book, “How the Specter of Communism Is Ruling Our World,” by the editorial team of the “Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party.”

Chapter Five (Cont.)

7. The Left’s Long March Through the Institutions

It was Antonio Gramsci, a prominent Italian communist, who promoted the idea of carrying out a “the long march through the institutions.” He found that it’s difficult to incite people with faith to initiate a revolution to overthrow a legitimate government, and so in order to bring about a revolution, communists rely on a large number of foot soldiers who share their dark vision of morality, faith, and traditions. The revolution of the proletariat, then, must begin with the subversion of religion, morality, and civilization. After the failure of the street revolutions in the 1960s, the rebels began entering academia. They obtained degrees, became scholars, professors, government officials, and journalists, and entered the mainstream of society to carry off the “long march through the institutions.” Thus they infiltrated and corrupted the institutions of Western society, which are crucial for the maintenance of morality in the society. This includes the church, government, the education system, legislative and judicial bodies, the art world, the media, and NGOs.

The rebels of the 1960s infiltrated and corrupted the institutions of Western society, which are crucial for the maintenance of morality in the society.

The United States after the 1960s has been like a patient with an affliction who cannot identify the cause. Para-Marxist ideas have seeped deep into American society and have been metastasizing.

Among the many revolutionary theories and strategies that have been put forward, the Cloward–Piven strategy proposed by two sociologists of Columbia University became among the most well-known and has been tested out, with some degree of success.

The core concept of the strategy is to use the public welfare system to force the government to collapse. According to U.S. government policy, the number of people eligible for welfare benefits is far greater than the number of people actually receiving benefits. As long as these people are encouraged or organized to take benefits, they will soon use up the government’s funds, so the government will be unable to make ends meet.

The specific implementation of this strategy is the National Welfare Rights Organization. According to statistics, from 1965 to 1974, the number of single-parent families receiving benefits surged from 4.3 million to 10.8 million—more than doubling. In 1970, 28 percent of the annual budget of New York City was spent on welfare expenses. From 1960 to 1970, the number of people receiving benefits in New York City rose from 200,000 to 1.1 million. In 1975, New York City was almost bankrupt.

The Cloward–Piven strategy is intended to create a crisis. It thus can be regarded as another implementation of Alinsky’s theories, one of which is to “make the enemy live up to its own book of rules.”

Since the Bolshevik Revolution led by Lenin, the Communist Party has been

good at intrigue and scheming. With a very small number of people, it created powerful “revolutions” and “crises” that it could then take advantage of.

Similar things happen in American politics. For example, some of the Left’s ideas in the United States are so radical that they seem incomprehensible to most people. Why, for instance, do lawmakers and elected officials seem to represent only the voice of extreme minorities (such as transgender people), but ignore the important issues of livelihood of the majority? The answer is simple: They are not representing real public opinion.

Lenin once said that labor unions are “the transmission belts from the Communist Party to the masses.” The communists found that as long as they control the labor unions, they control a large number of votes. As long as they control the votes, they can make elected officials and lawmakers do their bidding. Therefore, communists seek to gain control of labor unions, thereby controlling a large number of parliamentarians and elected officials to turn the communists’ subversive political program into the political program of left-wing politics.

W. Cleon Skousen wrote in his book “The Naked Communist” that one of the communists’ 45 goals is to “capture one or both of the political parties in the United States,” and this is achieved through such an operation. Ordinary workers are forced to join the labor unions in order to maintain their basic rights and interests, and thus they become the unions’ pawns. An identical principle is at work when paying protection fees to organized crime gangs.

Researcher Trevor Loudon’s analysis of how communist parties hijack democratic countries speaks to this point. He divides the process into three steps:

STEP ONE: POLICY FORMATION. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union and its allies formulated policies aimed at democratic countries. The purpose was to infiltrate and disintegrate these countries, transforming them peacefully from within.

STEP TWO: INDOCTRINATION. During the Cold War, thousands of communists from around the world received training every year in the Soviet Union and Eastern socialist countries. The training focused on how to use labor movements, peace movements, churches, and non-governmental groups to influence leftist parties in their own countries.

The communists have found that as long as they control the labor unions, they control a large number of votes. As long as they control the votes, they can make elected officials and lawmakers do their bidding.

STEP THREE: IMPLEMENTATION. After the Cold War, local socialist and communist groups in Western countries began playing a more dominant role. A large number of Americans influenced by communist ideology entered the social mainstream. They either engaged in politics, education, or academic research, or entered the media or non-governmental organizations. They use the

experiences accumulated over several generations to transform the United States from within, and the United States has almost fallen into their hands.

The systems of democratic countries were originally designed for individuals of a certain moral disposition and standard. For those who use all means to achieve evil ends, this system has many loopholes. There are numerous superficially legitimate ways to subvert a free society.

There is a saying in China that goes, “we are not afraid of thieves stealing; we’re just afraid of them thinking of it.” Communists and those who ignorantly act on their behalf try to subvert the political and social system of free societies in any way they can. After decades of planning and operation, the governments and the societies of the United States and other Western countries have been severely eroded, as communist thinking and elements have entered the U.S. body politic.

8. Political Correctness: The Devil’s Thought Police

Communist countries practice strict control over speech and thought. However, since the 1980s, another form of speech and thought control has appeared in the West. These thought police use the banner of “political correctness” to run amok in the media, society, and education system, using slogans and mass criticism to restrain speech and thought. Even though many have already felt the evil power of its control, they have not grasped its ideological origins.

Phrases such as “political correctness,” together with “progress” and “solidarity,” have long been used by communist parties. Their superficial meaning is to avoid using discriminatory language toward minorities, women, the disabled, and others. For example, “black people” are to be called “African Americans,” American Indians are to be called “Native Americans,” illegal immigrants are to be called “undocumented workers,” and so on.

However, the hidden implication behind political correctness is to classify individuals into groups according to their victim status. Those who are the most oppressed should, therefore, be accorded the most respect and courtesy. Regardless of individual conduct and talent, this judgment is rendered solely on one’s identity, and is thus the basis of what’s called “identity politics.”

This style of thinking is extremely popular in the United States and other Western countries. According to such logic, black lesbians, who are oppressed along vectors of race, sex, and sexual preference, are ranked at the forefront of victimhood. On the contrary, white, heterosexual males are considered the most privileged and, in the logic of victim politics, should be at the bottom of the totem pole.

This type of classification is identical to what goes on in communist countries, where individuals were classified within the “five classes of red” or the “five classes of black” according to their wealth and class status before the revolution. The Chinese Communist Party eliminated and oppressed landowners and capitalists because of their wrong class status, attacked intellectuals as the “Stinking Old Ninth” and chanted that “the poor are the smartest; the nobles, the dumbest.”

See next week’s edition for the next installment.

Retired Officials Are Sabotaging Xi’s Foreign Policy to Prolong Communist Party Rule

WANG YOUQUN

Commentary

Two years ago, Chinese leader Xi Jinping said: “We have a thousand reasons to ensure the success of U.S.-China relations, and not a single reason to ruin those relations.”

The United States is the world’s most powerful country. If Xi can close a trade deal with Washington and mend Sino-U.S. relations, he will be able to pull the country out of crisis.

On April 4, U.S. President Donald Trump met with Chinese vice premier Liu He in Washington, and Liu brought him a personal letter from Xi Jinping. Trump described the letter as “beautiful,” meanwhile, Chinese state mouthpiece Xinhua reported that intensive negotiations over the course of the previous month had led to “new and substantial” progress on key issues.

Xi stated his desire for negotiations to be finished as soon as possible, and expressed willingness to maintain close communications with Trump, who for his part, had said that the two countries had reached agreement on some of the most challenging issues in the deal. On April 25, Trump told White House staff that he and Xi would soon meet to finalise the trade agreement.

Days later, the situation took an abrupt turn, when Beijing reneged on its prior agreements. The trade war resumed, with the Trump administration imposing new tariffs of 25 percent on \$250 billion worth of Chinese export goods.

Where did things go wrong?

In my view, the setback in negotiations—as well as a host of other problems that Xi faces—stem from the unresolved nature of his anti-corruption campaign. Since coming to power, the Xi leadership has disciplined more than 1 million officials, yet his most powerful rivals remain at large.

At the core of the anti-Xi elements in the Chinese regime are former Chinese Communist Party (CCP) head Jiang Zemin and his fixer Zeng Qinghong, who served as vice president and in other key posts. Though retired, both men still wield considerable influence throughout the CCP establishment, having had decades

Since March 2018, Chinese state media have run a campaign of extreme left-wing propaganda, boasting of China’s “confidence” in the trade war and pushing a bombastic ultranationalist narrative to pump up anti-US sentiment in Chinese society.

The Australian apologists for the Beijing communists clearly have nowhere to go.

David Flint AM, emeritus professor of law and former chairman of the Australian Press Council and Australian Broadcasting Authority

ligence, and diplomatic institutions. Xi’s anti-corruption campaign has barely touched the diplomatic and intelligence organs that have long been controlled by his rivals. Zeng’s confidants in these agencies continue to exercise the Jiang faction’s will, most recently undermining the Xi administration by interfering with Sino-U.S. relations.

Were the Trade Talks Sabotaged?

From March to December 2018, senior Party leaders were in tense negotiations with the U.S. government amid the trade war. On Dec. 1, Xi agreed to make concessions when he met with Trump at the G-20 summit in Argentina.

Just two days later, an overseas Chinese-language media group, Duowei, published an article, titled “Xi Jinping Should Take Responsibility for the Extreme Leftism That is Tearing Apart China.”

In a Twitter post, U.S.-based Chinese economist He Qinglian wrote: “An overseas media outlet [Duowei] associated with the national security organs seems to be signalling a call to overthrow Xi.” The Duowei article, she noted, presented its criticism of Xi as a matter of the CCP’s survival or fall.

Duowei, originally founded as an independent Chinese-language news website in New York, is now regarded as a pro-Beijing outlet associated with the Jiang faction.

“Only two possibilities: One; [the Jiang faction] is ready to fight until both sides are exhausted, or two; they are confident in their success [in taking down Xi],” He wrote.

The determination of the Jiang faction to oppose Xi may have had a hand in the breakdown of Sino-U.S. trade talks, on the eve of a potential deal. On May 5, Trump announced that new tariffs would soon go into effect, restarting the trade war.

The next day, the overseas Chinese-language media World Journal cited a source close to Beijing as saying the Chinese negotiation team’s proposal to make a deal with more concessions had been rejected by Xi. According to the source, Xi had told the negotiating team that he would “take full responsibility for any possible result.”

For Xi, the trade talks are of the utmost priority. From the Xi-Trump summit on Dec. 1 last year to May 1, when the U.S. and Chinese negotiating teams wrapped up their 10th round of talks, Beijing and Washington had reached consensus on 95 percent of the issues. On the Chinese side, the positions Vice Premier Liu He took during the talks reflect Xi’s own positions.

Multiple media quoted the World Journal report as proof that Xi was responsible for China’s backtracking on the agreements. But in my opinion, the report was very suspicious, and may be the result of disinformation concocted by those in the CCP leadership who don’t want to see Xi reach a deal with Trump.

Extreme Leftism and Growing Social Unrest

Who stands to lose from a successful trade agreement between China and the United States? In past decades, CCP elites leveraged the uneven trade system and loopholes in the state-heavy Chinese economy to amass huge fortunes. Among the most corrupt is Zeng Qinghong’s family. His son, Zeng Wei, reportedly acquired Lu Neng Group, the biggest enterprise in Shandong Province, for just 3.7 billion yuan (about \$536.7 million), although the energy firm is valued at 73.8 billion yuan.

Ahead of this year’s Beidaihe meetings—the informal annual gatherings of CCP leaders and retired leaders at a seaside resort a few hours’ drive from Beijing—speculation has been circulating that regime elites may attempt to sideline Xi or depose him in a coup.

The biggest targets of Xi’s leadership, of course, are Jiang, Zeng, and their factional associates. At the



Xi Jinping delivers a speech as members of the new Politburo Standing Committee: (L-R) Liu Yunshan, Zhang Dejiang, Li Keqiang, Yu Zhengsheng and Wang Qishan, stand at the Great Hall of the People on Nov. 15, 2012 in Beijing, China.

peak of the anti-corruption campaign, two open letters circulated on the Chinese-language internet that demanded Xi’s resignation. One included three threats to the safety of Xi and his family.

Since March 2018, Chinese state media have run a campaign of extreme left-wing propaganda, boasting of China’s “confidence” in the trade war and pushing a bombastic ultranationalist narrative to pump up anti-U.S. sentiment in Chinese society. As the Communist Party used this hardline ideological approach to counter a national crisis, conflicts and tensions built up during the era of the Jiang faction’s political dominance came to a head.

The deterioration of the Chinese economy in recent years has caused a variety of disturbances to inflame social anger. Some examples include fake vaccines, the crash of peer-to-peer (P2P) lending platforms, the fall of China top actress Fan Bingbing for tax evasion, the sex scandal involving the head of the CCP-controlled Buddhist Association, or the Jiangxi provincial government’s heavy-handed exhumation of bodies to enforce cremation-only laws.

Last September, the CCP mouthpiece China Daily bought a four-page supplement in the Des Moines Register in Iowa to try to defame Trump. A full-page article, titled “Dispute: Fruit of a President’s Folly,” slammed the Trump administration for the trade war and encouraged local farmers to not vote for Trump and the Republicans during the midterm elections.

Iowa was the destination of Xi’s first official visit to the United States in 1985. In 2012, shortly after coming to office, Xi made another trip to Iowa while in the United States. Trump is aware of Xi’s connections with the state, which is one of the reasons why he chose former Iowa state Governor Terry Branstad as the U.S. ambassador to China. That China Daily picked Iowa to run its insert more or less shows that someone intended the move to embarrass Xi.

Resisting Xi to Preserve the Party

Despite being touted as the most powerful CCP leader since Mao Zedong, Xi Jinping is hemmed in by uncooperative officials who resist his directives, and are protected by the Jiang faction. Resistance to Xi is intended to preserve the Party’s political system, which enables their corruption.

On May 13, 2014, Xi voiced his objection to illegal construction of luxury villas in the Qinling mountains, part of Shaanxi Province in western China. But when provincial Party secretary Zhao Zhengyong received the instruction, he neither circulated the instructions to his leadership committee, nor started an initiative to address the issue. The only action he took was to order the provincial Inspection Office and the Xi’an municipality to investigate the matter and report back to the CCP central authorities. It wasn’t until June 10 that Xi’an set up an investigation team.

A month later, the province reported to the central government that all 202 illegal constructions had been investigated; however, it was later discovered that more than 1,000 properties had been left out of the

investigation report. Xi then issued three more orders between October 2014 and February 2016, only to receive more fake reports from Zhao.

Zhao received protection from the Jiang faction, giving him the confidence to defy Xi. Earlier this year, he was placed under investigation by the CCP anti-corruption agency, but there is more to that story.

On Dec. 26 last year, Wang Linqing, a judge working for the Supreme People’s Court of China entrusted ex-CCTV host Cui Yongyuan with publicising evidence of corruption in a 2016 case involving a multi-billion-yuan mining industrial dispute in Shaanxi Province.

According to Wang’s expose, which went viral, supreme court chief Zhou Qiang had dispatched people to steal documents related to the case, affecting the judgement. On Jan. 15, 2019, Zhao Zhengyong was placed under investigation, indicating that he had been taken down as a result of his own connection with the 2016 derailment of justice, and by extension, Zhou.

Zhou has done the Jiang faction’s bidding in his capacity as supreme court head since coming to his position in 2013. He has maintained a hardline stance on the banned spiritual practice of Falun Gong, which the CCP persecuted on Jiang Zemin’s orders since 1999.

As a result of his high rank, and association with the Jiang faction, Zhou seems to have escaped punishment for his role in the Shaanxi mining scandal.

On Feb. 22, the Party’s investigators announced that the court documents had been stolen by none other than Wang Linqing himself, something that hardly anyone watching the events could believe. The term “Linqing loses the documents” became an internet meme mocking the situation.

Since May of 2015, following a judicial reform allowing everyday citizens to file legal complaints to the court, over 210,000 Falun Gong practitioners and supporters of Falun Gong have submitted litigation against Jiang for ordering the anti-Falun Gong campaign. If Zhou Qiang were to fall, Jiang and Zeng’s hold over the judicial system would be weakened, which suggests that the Jiang faction engineered the outcome of the supreme court scandal in order to protect Zhou.

Under the direction of Zeng Qinghong, the Jiang faction has been using the ideology of the CCP to cover for their resistance against Xi’s foreign and domestic policy efforts, and are shifting responsibility for the Party’s crimes to Xi. They have taken advantage of the fact that thus far, Xi has relied on the CCP system to secure and maintain his political power as leader of China.

Wang Youqun graduated with a Ph.D. in Law from the Renmin University of China. He worked as an aide and copywriter Wei Jianxing (1931–2015), a member of the CCP Politburo Standing Committee from 1997 to 2002.

Leo Timm contributed to this report.

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



PETER PARKS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

to cultivate their factional network.

Now 93, Jiang is ailing and can’t personally cause much trouble; the present “leadership” of the Jiang faction thus falls to Zeng.

Zeng’s factional ties intersect many cliques, including the Shanghai and Jiangxi “gangs,” as well as the Chinese oil industry and red princeling community. Between 1989 and 1999, as chief of the CCP General Office, Zeng was Jiang’s most important aide.

From 1999 to 2007, Zeng accumulated an array of high-profile roles, including vice president of China, head of the Party’s Organisation Department, executive secretary of the CCP Central Committee, membership in the Politburo Standing Committee, president of the Central Party School, and leader of the CCP’s leading group on Hong Kong and Macau affairs.

In his varied capacities, Zeng planted a multitude of confidants into Party, government, military, intel-

China’s former vice president Zeng Qinghong (R) congratulates newly elected Vice President Xi Jinping (L) in the Great Hall of the People on March 15, 2008.

Your Bed Could Be Watching You

Have you ever thought of buying a 'smart bed' to optimise your sleep? Here's some things to consider before jumping in.

See B9



You Control the Intensity

Spice up your pantry with herbs, vegetables, or spices infused into you favourite oil.

See B4

LIFE

THE EPOCH TIMES

SAMIRA BOUAOU/THE EPOCH TIMES; ART-SONIK/SHUTTERSTOCK (ILLUSTRATION)



The Greek Mediterranean diet is based on simple, fresh, and seasonal ingredients—and more than 2,000-year-old wisdom.

Secrets From the Greek Kitchen for Health, Beauty, and Happiness

Inspired by ancient wisdom, chef Maria Loi shares seven essential ingredients of the Greek diet

CRYSTAL SHI

Chef Maria Loi wants to teach the world how to live healthier, happier, and longer. The key to doing that, she says, lies in Greek cuisine and its more than 2,000 years' worth of wisdom. Loi is a passionate ambassador for Greek food and the Mediterranean diet, which has increasingly gained the spotlight as one of the healthiest in the world. She's authored several cookbooks on the subject, including "Ancient Dining," the official cookbook of the 2004 Olympics in Athens, and the best-selling "The Greek Diet." At her restaurant Loi Estiatorio, in

Manhattan, New York, she continues to spread the gospel of Greek cuisine, along with her longtime corporate chef Dara Davenport (who, she jokes, "is becoming Greek"). Loi draws upon her childhood in Nafpaktos, Greece, granules of wisdom passed down from her grandmother and grandfather, "the doctor in the house" despite never having formally studied; and farther back, to the teachings of the ancient Greeks, who believed, as Hippocrates famously said, that "food is medicine." In her latest project, she's teamed up with Harvard professor and nutrition expert Dr. Stefanos Kales to research and further spread the health benefits of the Greek diet. Their findings, she

said, have only confirmed the wisdom of the ancients. But Loi's mere presence is compelling evidence enough: she's endlessly warm and spirited, eyes always sparkling behind her glasses, and prone to breaking out in song and dance mid-conversation, sashaying and twirling her arms to the music playing on the speakers in the middle of her restaurant. If you are what you eat, Greek food must be pure joy. "This kind of food that we're eating, it's very good, it's very healthy, and it doesn't have side effects," unlike more processed foods that may contain hidden toxins, Loi said.

Continued on B2

Secrets

From the Greek Kitchen

for Health, Beauty, and Happiness

Continued from B1

Greek food is based on simple, seasonal, and high-quality ingredients, including an abundance of fresh produce and wild greens, herbs and spices, fiber-rich beans and pulses, and heart-healthy

fats such as olive oil, nuts, and seafood. Balance is key—that’s another piece of ancient Greek wisdom Loi pulls from: “Métron áriston,” “everything in moderation.” “It’s everything together, it’s a mixture of all these foods. That’s what gives

you the good life, the healthy life,” she said. In the spirit of spreading that good life, she and Davenport shared their essentials for stocking a Greek kitchen, from olive oil to Greek yogurt—the building blocks for making healthy, nourishing

food for both body and soul. “This is knowledge that goes from one to the other, that’s how I got it as well,” Loi said. “And now, I’m lucky enough to give it to many people... I’m really so happy to do that. Because we have to teach the world how to eat healthy.”



Greek Olives and Olive Oil

Dubbed “liquid gold” by Homer and “the great healer” by Hippocrates, olive oil has long been a cornerstone of Greek culture and cuisine. As a Greek myth goes, the olive tree was a gift to humanity from Athena, the goddess of wisdom, presented in a competition with Poseidon for patronage of the then-unnamed city of Athens. (You can guess the victor.) Extra-virgin olive oil—good olive oil, the kind that’s a fresh, vibrant green in color and makes the back of your throat tingle when it goes down—forms the foundation for the much-lauded, heart-healthy Mediterranean diet. Many of the diet’s health benefits can be traced back to its generous use of olive oil.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Many of olive oil’s health benefits can be traced, in turn, to its concentration of polyphenols, naturally occurring compounds that act as powerful antioxidants and anti-inflammatory agents. They’re the compounds responsible for that peppery, throat-tickling sensation you’re after. Recent studies have especially highlighted phenol oleocanthal for its potential in helping prevent cancer, as well as Alzheimer’s and other age-related memory loss and cognitive decline. Olive oil is also full of the antioxidant vitamin E, as well as monounsaturated fats—the healthy kind—which can help lower blood cholesterol and reduce the risk of heart disease, according to the American Heart Association. As Davenport put it, “they’re the good fats that fight bad fats.”

USES

“I use olive oil in everything,” Loi said—stirred into soups and stews, drizzled over vegetables and fish, even baked into chocolate cake. “My desserts, they use olive oil. People don’t believe that,” she said. (She never uses butter, she adds emphatically.) When it comes to cooking, good quality, extra-virgin olive oil has a high heat resistance and a smoke point—the temperature at which an oil starts to burn, smoke, and degrade—of somewhere between 390 and 405 degrees Fahrenheit, Davenport said, making it suitable for anything from light sautéing to even deep-frying. (The key to safely frying with olive oil, or any oil, she adds, is to keep your oil temperature consistent, and generally no higher than 380 degrees F.) Olives, meanwhile, are a great way to add salt to a dish; or, simply enjoyed on their own, a satisfying, savory snack.

Greek yogurt topped with honey and a flurry of crushed walnuts.



Greek Yogurt

Thicker and tangier than regular yogurt, and packed with protein and gut-friendly probiotics, Greek yogurt has become known as a nutritional darling. In Greece, it was traditionally made with sheep’s milk, though cow’s milk is now more common. “Good yogurt, when you turn the spoon [upside-down], it doesn’t fall down. That’s good yogurt,” Loi said. Her Greek yogurt, strained of almost all its whey until thick and creamy—the way her grandmother made it—passes the test with flying colors; she serves it in a bowl in three proud, perfectly spherical mounds, one stacked on top of the other two like scoops of ice cream. Loi has another requirement for her yogurt: it has to be full fat. Davenport recalled that when she first saw Loi making Greek yogurt and asked about the fat percentage of the milk, she was met with a blunt response: “My grandmother never met a skim cow.”

HEALTH BENEFITS

Greek yogurt has less sugar, due to lactose being strained out with the whey; and double the protein of regular yogurt, which helps you fill up quickly and stay full, and can contribute to healthy weight loss. It also contains a host of other nutrients, including calcium, iodine, potassium, and vitamin B-12. Most notably, Greek yogurt is full of probiotics, good bacteria that keep your gut and digestive system balanced, healthy, and happy. A healthier, happier gut means a healthier, happier body overall—the ancient Greeks surmised as much (“All disease begins in the gut,” Hippocrates said), and recent studies have suggested links between gut health and immune, heart, and even brain and mental health.

USES

Though traditionally used as a base for tzatziki dip, or eaten as a snack or dessert topped with honey or other sweet or savory toppings, Greek yogurt is extremely versatile, especially as a healthy substitute in cooking and baking. Its creamy texture and pleasantly tart flavor make it a great swap for mayonnaise in sandwiches and chicken salads; for sour cream atop baked potatoes and tacos or in dips, creamy sauces, or cakes; and for buttermilk in pancakes and other baked goods. Try mixing it with your favorite herbs and spices and using it to marinate and tenderize meat, especially chicken or lamb. Outside of the kitchen, Greek yogurt can be used as an all-natural, moisturizing face mask or soothing cream for irritated or burned skin. “In the summertime in Greece, we never had anything like cream when we [got] sunburned, so we put yogurt,” Loi recalled.



Greek Oregano

The Greek name for oregano, perhaps the cuisine’s most beloved and essential herb, translates to “joy of the mountains,” or “brilliance of the mountains.” It was believed to have been created by the goddess Aphrodite, grown in her garden on Mount Olympus, to bring health, happiness, and joy to the people. “Greek oregano is completely different from other oregano you find over here,” Loi said. Grown wild in the mountains of Greece, and recognizable by its distinctive white flowers, the herb has an incredibly bright, citrusy, woody aroma. It’s dried directly on the branch in bundles, concentrating the oils and thus the flavor, and broken off as needed to add to just about any savory dish.

HEALTH BENEFITS

The ancient Greeks recognized the preventative and curative benefits of oregano early on: Hippocrates used it as an antiseptic for cuts and skin infections, and a cure for digestive and respiratory problems, from stomach-aches to asthma. Now, studies have shown oregano to have powerful antibacterial, antioxidant, and anti-inflammatory properties; some research has also pointed to its potential in fighting cancer cells. Oregano tea has also long been a home cure and preventative measure for colds and coughs. Loi is an ardent ambassador: “Make oregano tea and you’ll never have a cold again!” she proclaimed. Davenport is also a reluctant supporter: “I do not enjoy oregano tea. It is not delicious to me. But it works—it is an amazing expectorant. It also helps decrease inflammation in your lungs.”

USES

In Loi’s cooking, dried Greek oregano is second only to olive oil in ubiquity; few dishes are spared at least a sprinkling. Add it to salad dressings or atop salad greens themselves; stir it into soups and stews; use it to season any variety of meats and fish. To make oregano tea, simply add a spoonful of the dried herbs to cold water and bring it to a boil. Drink a cup every two or four hours, “the way you would take DayQuil or NyQuil,” Davenport said. She and Loi suggest making a big batch of tea to store in the fridge, pouring out a cup to heat up whenever you’re in need of a boost.

MARKET TIP

An Award-Winning Olive Oil From Crete

When asked how to identify good olive oil, Loi is quick to answer: “First of all, it has to be Greek.” Her newest product, Loi Ladi extra-virgin olive oil, provides a worthy option—it was just crowned winner of the Specialty Food Association’s 2019 soft award for “Best New Product” in the olive oil category. Cold-extracted and unfiltered, the olive oil is made from koroneiki olives harvested from a small family grove in Crete. Loi Ladi is available at Whole Foods Market, joining pasta, dips, and two types of honey in the Loi product line.



Loi Ladi extra-virgin olive oil.

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PATRYK KOSMIDER/SHUTTERSTOCK



Beans

Beans are “severely underrated,” Davenport said, despite their star qualities: they’re versatile, inexpensive, easy to prepare, and extremely good for you. Greeks have traditionally made them into soups and stews, Loi added, as an economical way to stretch ingredients.

In Loi’s kitchen, they’re heartily embraced as the powerhouses they are. She and her restaurant staff essentially run on fasolada, a simple but nourishing Greek soup made with creamy cannellini beans and a healthy pour of olive oil. (“I had it for breakfast this morning,” Davenport revealed; Loi flagged down a passing waiter for confirmation, and he confessed he was headed to the kitchen for a bowl right at that moment.) Full of satiating fiber and protein, the beans keep them full, without feeling heavy, throughout their busy days.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Beans are an excellent source of plant-based protein and iron, especially helpful for vegetarians. Their high concentration of both soluble and insoluble fiber keeps your digestive system running smoothly, makes you feel full while eating less, and helps lower cholesterol.

Beans also have a low glycemic index score, meaning that the carbohydrates in them are digested and absorbed more slowly into your bloodstream, helping to regulate blood sugar levels.

USES

The culinary uses for beans are as varied as the types of beans available: chickpeas, black beans, kidney beans, navy beans, and so on. Cooked dried beans are better than their canned counterparts, in terms of both taste and texture, but canned beans work just fine in a pinch, so long as you thoroughly rinse them before use, to wash off excess sodium.

Then, eat them on their own as a hearty side; toss them into salads to add protein and heft; use them to thicken sauces; or cook them into luscious soups. They’ll release starch while cooking, adding richness and creaminess without a drop of dairy.



Barley Rusks (Dakos)

Greek rusks, also known as paximadia, are a frugal peasant food turned beloved pantry staple. The hard, crunchy, twice-baked biscuits (“like the biscotti of Greece,” Davenport said) are made in a variety of different shapes and sizes, using a variety of flours, across different regions of Greece. Cretan barley rusks, or dakos, are one of the country’s most famous versions.

Dakos were born from practicality: After making a loaf of bread, home bakers would cut it into slices and bake them a second time to dry them out, thus preserving them for months ahead. They only needed to be softened slightly in water, oil, or wine before enjoying.

Fishermen often packed the hardened biscuits with them on long seafaring journeys, along with olive oil and canned tomatoes. Along the way, Loi said, “They would dip the dakos into the sea, and then add some olive oil and tomatoes, and it was like a full meal.”

HEALTH BENEFITS

Made with whole grain barley flour, dakos are high in dietary fiber, especially beta-glucan, a soluble fiber that has been linked to lower cholesterol and lower blood sugar. They’re also a good source of vitamins and minerals, including vitamin B1, selenium, calcium, phosphorus, and chromium.

USES

Dakos are most commonly used to make a Cretan salad of the same name, consisting of dakos briefly softened in water, drizzled with olive oil, and topped with freshly grated tomato, tangy feta, and briny capers or olives. The olive oil and tomato juices further soften the rusks.

Davenport, long obsessed with dakos for their supreme crunch and nutty, earthy flavor, puts them “in everything, on everything”—as croutons for her village salad, for instance, or as thickeners at the bottom of a bowl of soup.



Greek Mountain Tea

Mild and fragrant, with a long-lasting sweetness, Greek mountain tea is an herbal infusion made from the stems, leaves, and flowers of the sideritis plant, a hardy perennial native to mountainous regions across the Mediterranean. Greek shepherds would brew tea from the plants while tending to their flocks in the mountains, earning the drink its other common name of “shepherd’s tea.”

Though the healing tea is especially fitting during cold season, Loi drinks it every day.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Sideritis has antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and anti-microbial properties, and has been used since ancient times as a panacea for a wide range of ailments, including the common cold, digestive and respiratory issues, and allergies. Yet another one of its names, “ironwort,” is related to its past use for treating wounds inflicted by iron weapons. “Malotira,” the name of the variety of mountain tea specific to the island of Crete, literally means “to extract a bad thing.”

Greek mountain tea also works as a calming sleep aid; Loi prescribes a cup every night for better sleep.

USES

Greek mountain tea is packaged as whole, dried stems, with leaves and flowers attached. To brew, break a few stems into small pieces and add them to a teapot, fill the pot with cold water, and bring the water to a boil—you want the tea to steep from the beginning, to enhance the flavor. The longer you let it simmer, the stronger the tea will be.

Serve the tea strained or with stems and all, adding honey and lemon or milk if desired. Loi suggests letting it cool, then refrigerating it for at least an hour and enjoying it cold.



Honey

In Loi’s book of sweeteners, honey reigns supreme; she casts white sugar away with the same disdain as she does butter.

“When I was a kid, every night, our grandfather used to give us a spoonful [of honey] before we went to sleep,” she said, like natural antibiotics. “It balances the system before you go to sleep, and it relaxes you.” (For mornings, he prescribed a spoonful of olive oil.)

HEALTH BENEFITS

Honey is rich in antioxidants and may help lower cholesterol, blood pressure, and blood triglycerides, a risk factor for heart disease in high concentrations. The ancient Greeks used it as a topical treatment for wounds and burns, effective due to its antibacterial and anti-fungal properties.

USES

Loi uses honey instead of sugar in all of her desserts. Since it’s sweeter than sugar—just half a tablespoon of honey is equivalent in sweetness to a tablespoon of sugar—you can use less of it. For a classic Greek treat, drizzle it in sticky ribbons over mounds of thick Greek yogurt, and top with crushed walnuts.

Here’s a bonus beauty tip from Loi: Thanks to its antibacterial properties, honey works great as a spot treatment for skin blemishes, especially mixed with a bit of olive oil. Rinse it off with warm water after about 15 minutes.

Please consult your doctor before making any major changes to your diet.



Good yogurt, when you turn the spoon [upside-down], it doesn’t fall down. That’s good yogurt.’

Maria Loi, chef



ART-SONIK/SHUTTERSTOCK (ILLUSTRATIONS)

SECRET INGREDIENT

Infused Oils to Spice Up Your Pantry

CRYSTAL SHI

In this series, we ask chefs about the secret ingredients they love—and how you can use them at home. Here, executive chef Michael C. Brown of Barrel Republic and Jalisco Cantina in San Diego shares an easy DIY ingredient to spice up your guacamole, and more.

Secret Ingredient: I enjoy using oils that are infused with herbs, vegetables, or spices—the sky is the limit! Infused oils are widely used around the world and are very versatile. My current favorite is the charred jalapeño oil that I make from scratch. I also often reach for spinach and poblano oils.

Although infused oils can be purchased at specialty shops, they are fairly simple and inexpensive to make at home with the help of a blender, heat, time, or all of the above. You are in control of the flavor of the oil, so infuse away with any herb, spice, or vegetable you wish. Oil in general picks up flavor very easily, so you are in control of the intensity.

When talking about the charred jalapeño oil specifically, I prefer to use a more tasteless oil—I personally use a canola-olive blend. For other recipes, I recommend using extra-virgin olive oil. Once you get comfortable with one infused oil recipe, you can start experimenting by adding other spices and herbs and mixing oils.

How to Use It: The charred jalapeño-infused oil can be added to just about any dish for aroma and flavor. Pour a little in your soup, drizzle some over your pasta, or even mix it in with your favorite salad dressing to turn up the flavor. I use it to add flavor and heat to Jalisco Cantina’s signature spicy shrimp guacamole.



CHARRED JALAPEÑO OIL

MAKES 1 CUP

2 jalapeño peppers

1 cup neutral-tasting oil, such as a canola-olive oil blend

Sea salt, to taste

Char the jalapeño peppers. Essentially, you are just blistering them; the jalapeños should be black on the outside but only slightly cooked inside. If you are an avid home cook and have access to a kitchen torch, then that’s the easiest way to get the job done. Otherwise, you can achieve the same flavor by throwing the jalapeños on a grill, or an open flame of your gas stove top. The times can vary depending on your source of fire, but it’s easy to eye it—just be on the lookout for the char on the outside.

Puree the charred jalapeños with oil and sea salt in a blender.

Recipe courtesy of chef Michael C. Brown

With infused oils, the sky’s the limit.



LIGHTFIELD STUDIOS/SHUTTERSTOCK

SECRET INGREDIENT

Fennel Pollen, Culinary Fairy Dust From a Flower

CRYSTAL SHI

In this series, we ask chefs about the secret ingredients they love—and how you can use them at home. Here, executive chef Mindy Oh of Mora Italiano in Encino, California, shares her love for fennel pollen. The versatile spice is harvested from wild fennel, whose tiny, bright yellow flowers bloom through the summer, and can be dusted over just about anything.

Secret ingredient: Fennel pollen is my go-to spice for steak, fish, chicken, vegetables, grains, and almost anything else I can sprinkle it on top of. It will add notes of citrus and licorice to dishes. It’s a subtle flavor that’ll confuse people as to what that aftertaste is, or where that depth of flavor is coming from.

My first experience with fennel pollen was at my very first kitchen job. I needed to braise some pork belly and my chef advised me to use some fennel pollen. [The combination of] braised pork belly, oranges, fennel pollen, and pineapple just blew my young culinary mind.

How to use it: I love using it in purees, roasted vegetables, or proteins. It really lends itself well to pork dishes and fish dishes. I usually have to refrain myself from putting it in all of my dishes at Mora and at home.

Since it is a little expensive, I cut it with salt to make a fennel pollen salt, which extends its shelf life. Thankfully, a little bit of fennel pollen will go a long way with your dishes.

The best place to buy fennel pollen would be at a specialty grocer shop, or the internet. A lot of people I know in California will forage their own fennel flowers and hang them upside down for the fennel pollen. I did it once and completely forgot that flowers usually come with little friends. That being said, fresh fennel pollen has a much brighter flavor profile than dried fennel pollen does.



SHANVOOD/SHUTTERSTOCK

A little bit of fennel pollen will go a long way with your dishes.

homemakers

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MEDICINAL HERBS

GINGKO BILOBA

A ‘Living Fossil’ With Life-Extending Properties

SAYER JI

Those hoping to enhance their longevity may want to look to Ginkgo biloba, a plant sometimes considered a “living fossil” thanks to its ability to survive conditions that would otherwise kill or dramatically shorten the lifespan of most other species.

Ginkgo biloba is the world’s oldest living plant and is known as a living fossil because it has no close living relatives, and appears to be the same as a plant species dating back 270 million years (Permian) in the fossil record. It is also one of a rare few (6 percent) dioecious flowering plants, meaning it has distinct male and female organisms.

Not only has this exceptionally hardy species survived three mass extinction events over the past quarter of a billion years, but it was found to be the only surviving plant species near the epicenter of the August 6th, 1945 Hiroshima atomic bomb blast. In September 1945, the area around the blast center was examined and six Ginkgo biloba trees were found standing. They bud-ded shortly after the blast without major deformations and are still alive to this day.

Interestingly, the same plant that survived radioisotopes released by nuclear blast, including radioiodine-131, is capable of conferring radioprotective properties to humans exposed to at least one of the same elements.

Graves’ disease patients receiving radioiodine-131 therapy, which is known to cause chromosomal damage, have been found to experience reduced damage to their DNA by receiving a ginkgo biloba supplement before treatment. According to the study published in 2007 in the Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism:

“Ginkgo not only has a reputation for longevity, with some plants living to over 1,000

years, but it appears willing to confer longevity to those who use consume it extracts of it.”

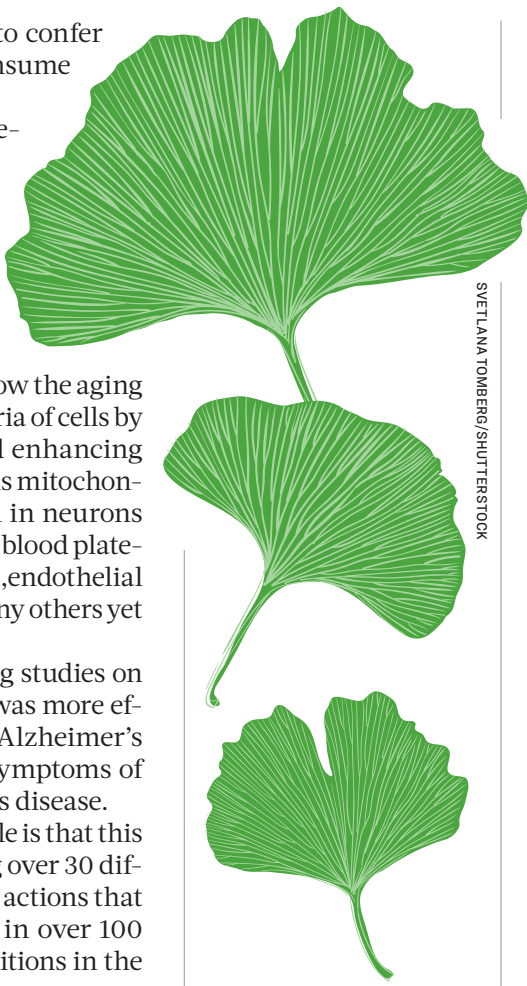
Indeed, a solid body of pre-clinical and clinical research indicates that it is useful in age-associated cognitive decline, e.g. Alzheimer’s disease, dementia, as well as age-associated visual disturbances such as glaucoma.

Other research find it may slow the aging process within the mitochondria of cells by reducing oxidative stress and enhancing mitochondrial respiration. This mitochondrial anti-aging effect is seen in neurons and other cell lineages such as blood platelets, and fibroblasts, liver cells, endothelial cells, heart cells, and likely many others yet to be investigated.

One of the most encouraging studies on ginkgo biloba showed that it was more effective than the blockbuster Alzheimer’s drug donepezil for treating symptoms of mild-to-moderate Alzheimer’s disease.

What is even more remarkable is that this plant is capable of articulating over 30 different beneficial physiological actions that may be of therapeutic value in over 100 health conditions. Those conditions in the “A” group are listed below:

- Aging
- Aging: Brain
- Allergic Airway Diseases
- Allergic Conjunctivitis
- Aluminum Toxicity
- Alzheimer’s Disease
- Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis
- Anosmia
- Arterial Thickening
- Arteriosclerosis
- Aspiring-Induced Toxicity
- Asthma



SVETLANA TOMBERG/SHUTTERSTOCK

A solid body of clinical research indicates that it is useful in age-associated cognitive decline.

- Attention Deficit Disorder
- Attention Deficit Disorder with Hyperactivity
- Autism Spectrum Disorder

To view the list of all 100+ potential medical applications, from A–Z, visit Green Med Info’s ginkgo biloba research page online.

A word of caution for those who wish to use ginkgo biloba. Its seeds contain physiologically significant levels of a naturally occurring neurotoxin known as ginkgotoxin. This antivitamin is structurally related to vitamin B6 and can cause neurological problems in vulnerable people deficient in B6, or who consume high amounts. The leaves are generally considered harmless, but it never hurts to be careful, especially if there is a history of seizures.

Also, many herbs are subject to “cold pasteurization” with gamma radiation, indicating that they could contain formaldehyde and formic acid, as well as unique radiolytic byproducts that can be toxic. Ask the manufacturer if they have tested their raw material for such exposure, or opt for a certified organic brand if accessible.

Finally, remember that accelerated aging and cognitive decline is not caused by a lack of herbs like ginkgo biloba, and therefore it is always best to first embark on significant lifestyle and dietary changes, including gentle detoxification strategies, than to fall prey to the allure of “magic bullets,” even natural ones.

Sayer Ji is the founder of Greenmedinfo.com, a reviewer at the International Journal of Human Nutrition and Functional Medicine, co-founder and CEO of Systome Biomed, vice chairman of the board of the National Health Federation, and steering committee member of the Global Non-GMO Foundation.



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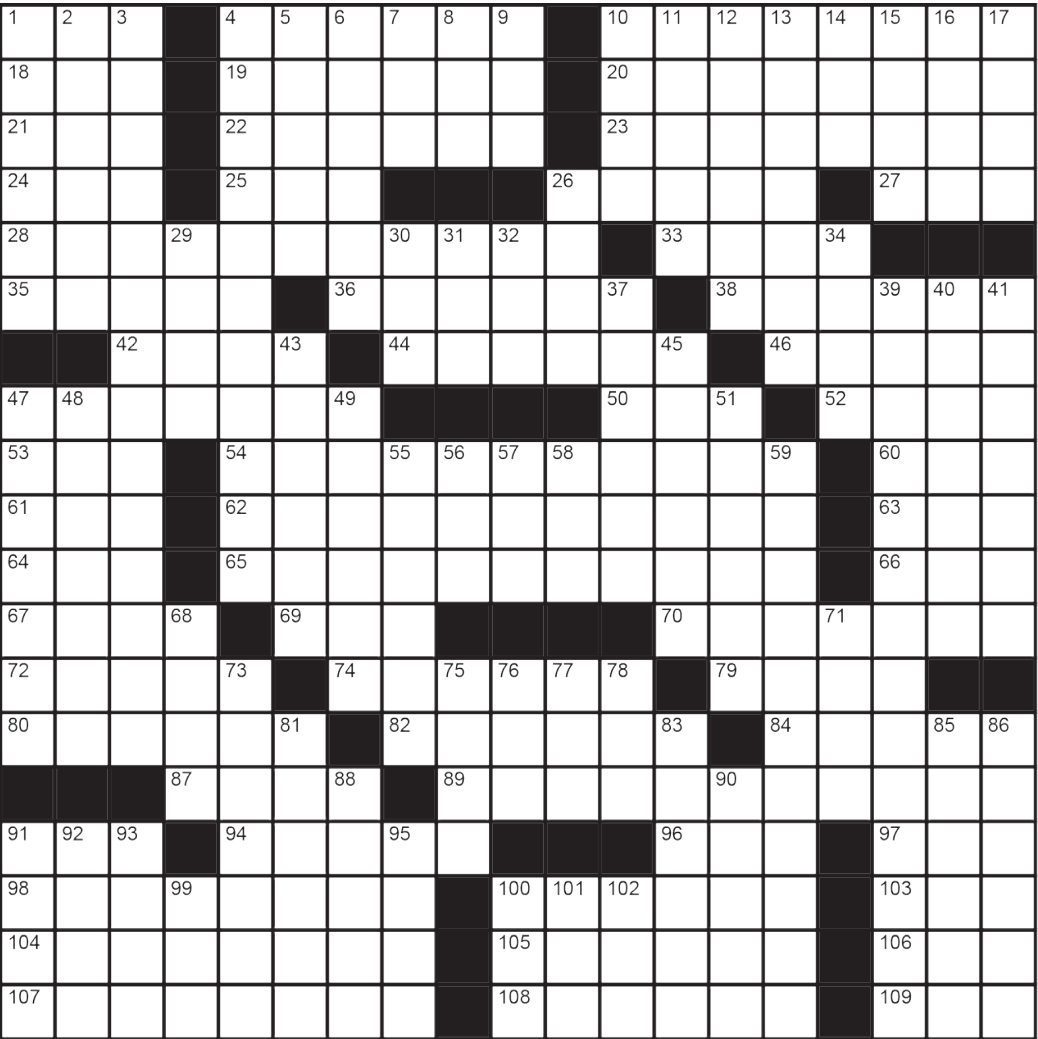
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Across

1. UN Trade org.

4. Became engaged

10. Complete collections of Dickens and Chaucer

18. Pool tool

19. More painful

20. Veto a veto

21. Poet’s preposition

22. By a narrow margin

23. Colt

24. U.S. Army Command based in Quantico, VA

25. Black gunk

26. Shoot

27. Gasteyer of “Mean Girls”

28. It’s has a grain
33. Native of Novi Sad

35. Old Finnish coin

36. Russia’s GLONASS is a ____ system

38. Affection

42. Mount Olympus dwellers

44. Two-seater

46. Native New Zea-lander

47. “Rain Man” family name

50. Oolong, for one

52. Cinch

53. Flutter

54. Korean plank

60. Connections

61. Best seller

62. Iconoclasm

63. 67.5 degrees, to mariners

64. Quick-witted

65. “Dad and I both won the Preakness”

66. “Sounds good to me”

67. The blue in blue cheese

69. “____ the fields we go”

70. Covers up

72. Eastern economic bloc

74. Sniff out

79. Hokkaido people

80. Six-line poem

82. Payback

84. Ponderer

87. Vast

89. Ace bandage, e.g.

91. 1969 Peace Prize recipient: Abbr.

94. Milk-Bone biscuit, e.g.

96. Piece

97. “Game of Thrones” character ____ Stark

98. Bill Paxton horror film of 1984

100. Double-reed player

103. Coast Guard officer: Abbr.

104. Partygoer

105. Mezzo Berganza

106. Trial lawyer’s advice

107. Acts of wrongdoing

108. Detonator com-pound

109. Vacation location

Down

1. Polar feature

2. Brand of artificial tears

3. Diaper bag items

4. May cause hearing loss

5. Brilliant display

6. Bakes a brunch dish

7. That guy

8. It may be smoked

9. Like some martinis

10. Biz abbr.

11. Cricket term

12. Amazon.com posting

13. Computer routine

14. theepochtimes.com, e.g.

15. Part of the Hindu trinity

16. Scene of a fall

17. Antitoxins

26. Bunch

29. High-hatter

30. ‘One Wild ____’ (1951 comedy)

31. ‘Harper Valley ____’

32. What a keeper may keep

34. ‘60s protest symbols

37. Bill killer

39. Tomfoolery

40. Neophyte

41. Cool

43. Two-part

45. Hardly Mr. Nice Guy

47. “Thunderball” setting

48. Animal fat

49. Toyota model

51. Secrets

55. Brat

56. First mate?

57. Abbr. after a former military leader’s name

58. Lingerie item

59. Bad

68. Go out with

71. “...have mercy ---”

73. Planet with 14 moons

75. Small change

76. Actress Olivia dAe’ ____ of “Code Black”

77. Whip but good

78. Pilot’s announce-ment, briefly

81. Rant

83. Comparatively intense

85. Square

86. View from Jidda

88. Wrapped for burial

90. Brazen one

91. Arabic word for “guide”

92. “An Iceland Fisher-man” author Pierre

93. After-dinner scraps

95. Some votes

99. “The Mary Tyler Moore Show” character

100. Baseball’s Master Melvin

101. Spell-off

102. “A Thing ____” (Beach Boys song)

4NUMBERS

CONSTRUCTED BY C. CHANG
AT 4NUMS.COM

Use the four numbers in the corners, and the operands (+, -, X, and ÷) to **build an equation** to get the solution in the middle. There may be more than one “unique” so-lution but, there may also be “equivalent” solutions. Forexample: 6 + (7X3) +1 =28 and 1+ (7X3) +6 =28

21

33

66

2

27

+

−

×

÷

Hard 1 - 1 Solution

15

33

86

13

20

+

−

×

÷

Hard 2 - 1 Solution

3

10

43

3

4

+

−

×

÷

Easy 1 - 1 Solution

7

9

54

5

7

+

−

×

÷

Easy 2 - 1 Solution

WORDSEARCH

CONSTRUCTED BY TOM HOUSTON
EPOCH TIMES STAFF

Help with Today’s Crossword Puzzle?

A H B D Y L B A H A M A S H M
N I A P Y W A R M T H A V H E
H P T R O S T S U M I A O S A
S N T O B E E H R U E R R R N
A E E G O C E I I S I O A M I
T S N R I R T R N E R V P D E
N S D A S E E R E R R E I R E
A M E M T T R S E U E T T E M
V A E A G A B T Y N V O C D O
I G B I S R O B I B E E E S N
Z E R E G I A A O C R R T E P
R P R U D A R E V I E W R A E
S E S T E T D Z E C N C E T N
T E R C E L Q J R É C L A T N
S L I M L Y M E S H E D T P I

- BAHAMAS

ÉCLAT

HIPNESS

ICE CAP

IRREVERENCE

MAORI

MEANIE

MESHED

MURINE

MUSER

OBOIST

OVERS
- PENNI

PROGRAM

REBATE

RED SEA

REVIEW

SAT-NAV

SECRETARIAT

SESTET

SHIRRS

SLIMLY

SPRIG

TEETERBOARD
- TERCEL

TERESA

TERROR

TETRYL

TIRADE

TRAINEE

TREAT

VETOER

WARMTH

ATTENDEE

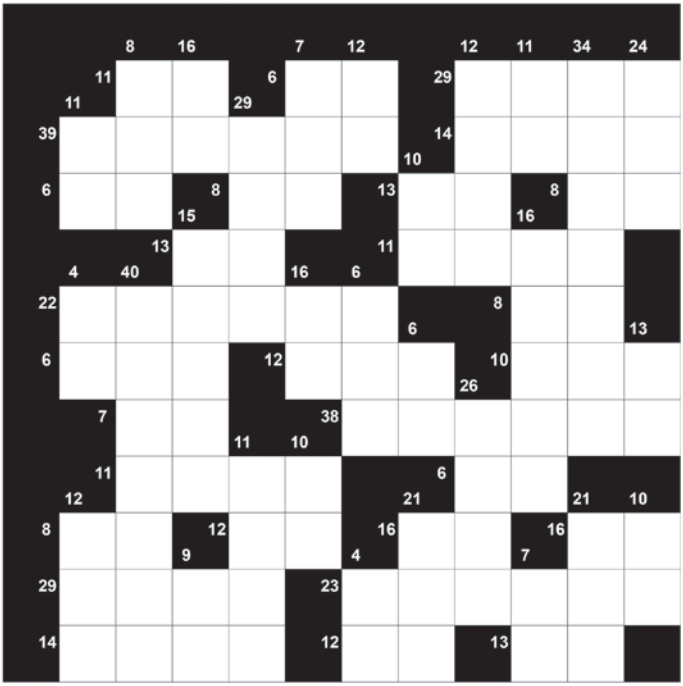
CERED

KAKURO

CONSTRUCTED BY EPOCH TIMES STAFF

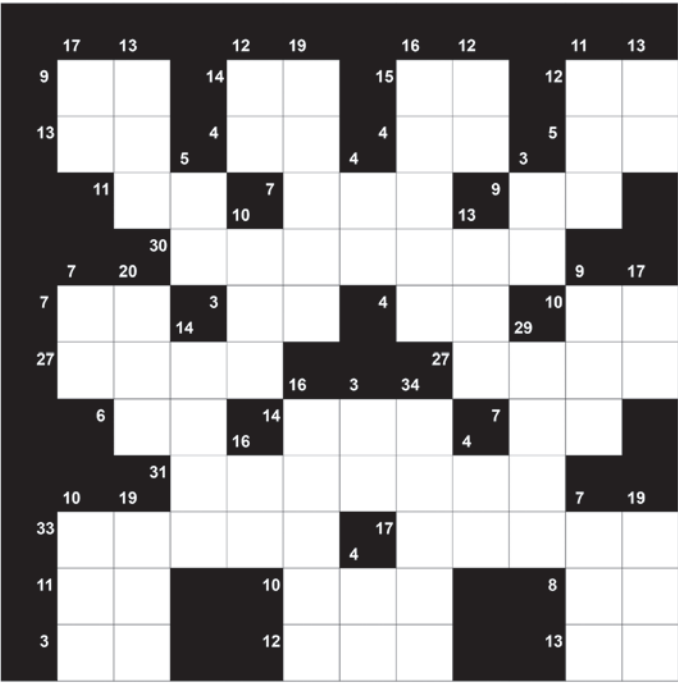
Kakuro puzzles are like crosswords that use numbers instead of words. The goal is to fill the blank squares associated with a clue (called a “run”) with the numbers 1-9 so that the numbers add up to the corresponding clues. Like Sudoku, digits in a run cannot repeat. When the grid is filled, the puzzle is complete.

Large: Hard



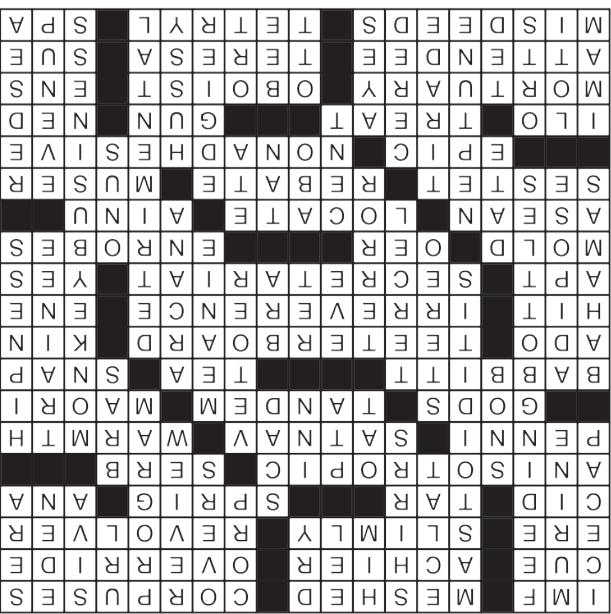
WORK SPACE

Large: Easy

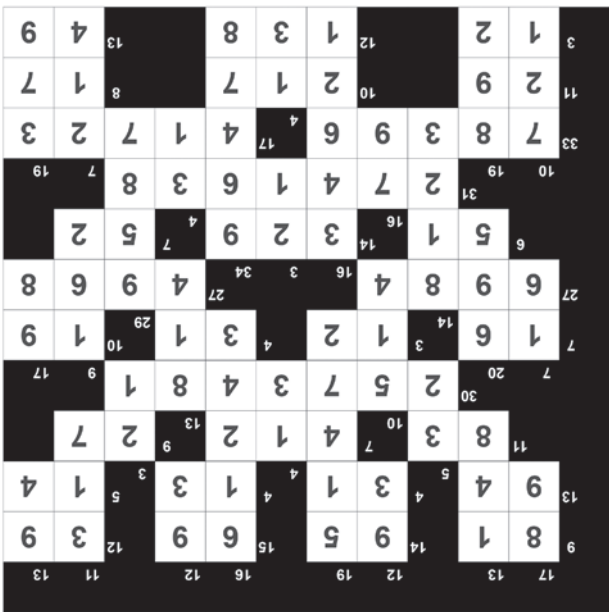


SOLUTIONS

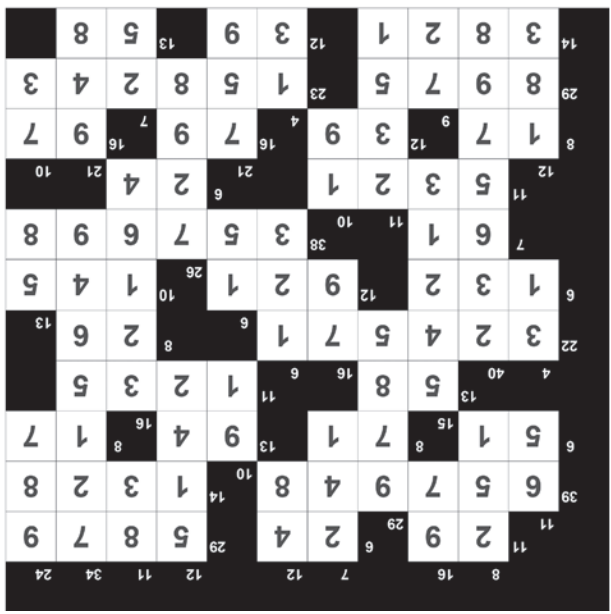
CROSSWORD



KAKURO LARGE: EASY



KAKURO LARGE: HARD



4 NUMBERS

- HARD 1

27 × 2 + 33 − 21
- HARD 2

15 − 13 + (8 − 20 + 33 + 20)
- EASY 1

(10 + 3) × 3 + 4
- EASY 2

(7 ÷ 7 + 5) × 9

The Case for Discussing Spirituality in Schools

Research suggests that spirituality may be a natural developmental process—so what does this mean for secular schools?

VICKI ZAKRZEWSKI

“I believe in reincarnation because it just makes sense!” exclaimed 10-year-old Jesse in the middle of a lesson that was on anything but reincarnation.

This wasn’t the first time one of my students had brought up a topic related to spirituality or religion. In fact, I’ve found during my years of teaching that most of my students were both curious about and eager to discuss these subjects—a bit of a conundrum when schools generally consider these to be taboo subjects.

Interestingly, however, scientists are beginning to find that just like cognitive, physical, and emotional development, spirituality may also be a universal developmental process—which, given that teaching is informed by child development, raises the question: Can spirituality play a role in secular education?

What Is Spirituality?

Before I go any further, though, I want to fully acknowledge how divisive and tricky the topic of spirituality in education can be for very legitimate reasons. That is why I am approaching the subject through a scientific lens.

To start, there is no definitive agreement among researchers on the separation between spirituality and religiosity. In general, however, spirituality is viewed as beliefs, practices, and experiences that shape and create a way of knowing and living that may or may not be informed by religious ritual, tradition, and doctrine. A person often inherits religion, but makes the conscious choice to practice spirituality by seeking answers about the self, universe, and meaning of life.

While numerous scientists propose that spirituality is a developmental process, they disagree on how the process occurs. Some suggest we are born with spiritual capacity that is cultivated (or not) through interaction with parents, teachers, and/or our culture. Others think spiritual development occurs in stages as we integrate our beliefs with our feelings and actions.

To determine if there is a universal developmental process of spirituality, the Search Institute—led at the time by Peter Benson, an expert in positive youth development—collaborated with scientists from around the world to study the spiritual and religious beliefs and practices of young people. The Search Institute took their definition of spirituality from a paper published in 2003 by the journal Applied Developmental Science:

Spiritual development is the process of growing the intrinsic human capacity for self-transcendence, in which the self is embedded in something greater than itself, including the sacred. It is the developmental “engine” that propels the search for connectedness, meaning, purpose, and contribution. It is shaped both within and outside of religious traditions, beliefs, and practices.

Almost 7,000 persons aged 12–25 from Australia, Cameroon, Canada, India, Thailand, Ukraine, the UK, and the U.S. took part in the study that included surveys, focus groups, and in-depth interviews. The sample represented a broad range of educational and socioeconomic backgrounds, and every major religion as well as Paganism, Sikhism, Native or Traditional Spirituality, atheism, agnosticism, other religions, and those who did not identify as religious.

What they found strongly suggests that a spiritual development process exists that transcends the boundaries of culture and religion and that does not necessarily require engagement in religious practices.

For example, approximately 64 percent of the



STOCKFOUR/SHUTTERSTOCK

▲ Students are curious about and eager to discuss spiritual subjects—a bit of a conundrum when schools generally consider these to be taboo.

Spirituality is viewed as beliefs, practices, and experiences that shape and create a way of knowing and living.

sample indicated that they were actively pursuing spiritual development without strong adherence to a religious path—with more than half stating that they had grown in their spiritual identity in the last two years. Their main means for spiritual growth included creating positive relationships through prosocial (kind, helpful) beliefs and actions, discovering meaning in life, practicing mindfulness, and aligning values with actions.

Findings also suggested that the majority of young people would welcome the opportunity to explore the topic of spirituality in a safe, caring, and non-judgmental setting.

What Does This Mean for Teaching?

Many consider the sole purpose of schools to be cognitive development. Yet, any effective teacher will tell you that every student is a “whole package” of thoughts, emotions, beliefs, family, culture, economics, etc., (and now, potentially, spirituality)—all of which directly influence a student’s learning. For example, science has clearly determined that a child’s social and emotional skills impact academic success.

So here comes the tricky question: If spirituality is indeed a universal developmental process, how do teachers account for this process in their classroom where separation of church and state is paramount? Interestingly, many teachers are probably already doing it—without even realizing it.

If we use the definition of spiritual development given above, then teachers who:

- provide experiences of awe for their students through art, music, nature, or studying great people are helping their students connect to something larger than themselves.
- teach prosocial skills such as gratitude, compassion, empathy, mindfulness, and altruism are helping their students develop positive relationships.
- relate the content of their classes to students’ lives and who take the time to get to know and cultivate their students’ interests and passions are helping their students develop meaning and purpose.

- incorporate service learning into their curriculum are providing opportunities for students to make a worthwhile contribution to society and grow their empathy and compassion for others.

How to Talk About Spirituality With Students

But what about the finding that says young people are deeply interested in discussing spirituality? When students do bring these topics up, understanding that spirituality may be developmental can help teachers respond in ways that are both respectful and affirming to students’ growth process.

For example, a simple response to Jesse’s newfound belief could include first asking him how he came to that conclusion and then validating his thinking about the larger questions of life as a positive and natural thing many people do.

A more formal example is the Passageworks program developed by the late Rachael Kessler. After years of listening to students’ stories and questions, Kessler wrote in her book *The Soul of Education* that “certain experiences—quite apart from religious belief or affiliation—had a powerful effect in nourishing the spiritual development of young people.”

These experiences came through students’ needs for connection, silence, meaning, joy, transcendence (sometimes mystical, but also through extraordinary arts, athletics, academics, or relationships), and initiation into the next stage of life. Passageworks helps teachers establish a classroom environment in which students feel safe to explore these needs.

Spirituality in education is a potentially contentious area, and yet recent scientific findings on spiritual development encourage us, at the very minimum, to ask the question: Do we need to pay attention to this? Perhaps it is apropos of the topic that there are no definitive answers—only big questions.

Vicki Zakrzewski, Ph.D., is the education director of the Greater Good Science Center. This article was first published in the *Greater Good Magazine* online.

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Your Wake-Up Call on Smart Beds and Sleep Apps

Smart products collect personal data that can be collated or shared in unpredictable—and invasive—ways

JULIE APPLEBY

Your bed could be watching you.

OK, so not with a camera.

But if you have any of a variety of “smart beds,” mattress pads or sleep apps, it knows when you go to sleep. It knows when you toss and turn. It may even be able to tell when you’re having sex.

Sleep Number, one company that makes beds that can track heart rate, respiration, and movement, said it collects more than 8 billion biometric data points every night, gathered each second and sent via an app through the internet to the company’s servers.

“This gives us the intelligence to be able to continue to feed our algorithms,” CEO Shelly Ibach told attendees at a Fortune Brainstorm Health conference in San Diego in April.

Analyzing all that personal data, Ibach continued, not only helps consumers learn more about their health, but also aids the company’s efforts to make a better product.

Still, consumer privacy advocates are increasingly raising concerns about the fate of personal health information—which is potentially valuable to companies that collect and sell it—gathered through a growing number of internet-connected devices.

“We don’t know what happens to all that data,” said Burcu Kilic, director of the digital rights program at Public Citizen, an advocacy group in Washington.

The information “is also relevant and important to pharmaceutical companies and those that make hospital-related technology,” Kilic said.

Nonetheless, consumers are flocking to mattresses and under-mattress sensors aimed to quantify sleep as well as sleep-tracking devices; sleep apps are among the most popular downloads on Apple and Android smartphones.

The Sleep Number bed is one of the most heavily marketed of such products, with press releases and ads often equating good sleep with a better life. Sales of the beds grew 6 percent from 2017 to \$1.5 billion in 2018, company filings show. Early this year, the company signed a partnership with Ariana Huffington’s Thrive Global, a corporate wellness firm she launched after leaving The Huffington Post in 2016. In 2018, the bed maker began a multiyear partnership with the NFL, in which the company gives its Sleep Number beds to players.

The company says it goes to great lengths to protect its customers’ data.

“To be clear, Sleep Number does not share any Sleep IQ or biometric” data outside the company, Sleep Number spokesperson Julie Elepano said in an email exchange.

Still, that differs from the company’s privacy notice, which clearly states that personal information—potentially including biometric data—“may” be shared with marketing companies or business partners. They, in turn, could send out pitches for Sleep Number or offers to participate in partner product loyalty programs. The policy also says

personal information could be given to partners for “research, analysis or administering surveys.”

Finally, the privacy policy says Sleep Number can “exploit, share and use for any purpose” personal information with names or addresses withheld or stripped out, known as “de-identified” data.

When asked about the seeming difference between what the privacy policy states and her comments, Elepano didn’t address that directly, but reiterated that the company doesn’t share even de-identified biometric data.

Details From Dreamland

Starting with when you turn in and when you wake up—and many things in between—these beds know a lot.

And because it’s a bed, there’s an inescapable salaciousness factor.

“I can’t imagine it wouldn’t be possible to look at that data and say, ‘Oh, that looks like sex,’” said Lee Tien, senior staff attorney at the Electronic Frontier Foundation, talking about the whole range of sleep-tracking tools.

“The raw data may not tell you that, but what they do is take the raw data and try to interpret it.”

Smart beds and other types of sleep trackers have different sensors. Sleep Number beds have movement sensors, for instance, which can inflate, deflate or otherwise adjust the mattress for comfort.

Some sleep apps and devices made by other firms even use microphones to track snoring.

In late 2018, there was a collective social media freakout when bloggers noticed a quirk in the Sleep Number bed privacy policy that seemed to indicate those beds had a microphone.

But they don’t, the company was quick to note.

Instead, Sleep Number beds gather data through tiny changes in the mattress’s air pressure, said Pete Bils, Sleep Number’s vice president of sleep science and research.

That data—along with goals each consumer sets for sleep—go into creating what the firm calls a Sleep IQ Score, a term devised to assess how well a consumer slept and is used heavily in the company’s marketing. Over time, the score can show if a person is deviating from their averages.

If consumers don’t want to track what’s going on in bed, they can flip on a “privacy mode” setting, which halts transmission but also limits what a consumer can learn about their sleep patterns, which is presumably one reason they bought the bed in the first place.

“The more you use the bed, the more it knows you,” said Bils.

From what is spelled out in privacy policies for these beds and apps, it’s clear the data could be useful in other ways, too.

For example, the French company Withings, which makes an under-mattress monitor that can

track movement, heart rate, snoring, and other factors, said it shares anonymous and aggregated data “with partners such as hospitals, researchers or companies, as well as to the public in blog posts and data studies.”

According to the Sleep Number privacy policy, it collects personal information, which can include names and information about a consumer’s age, weight, height, and gender. If a consumer creates a user profile on the bed’s app, that personal information is expanded to include specifics about movement, positions, respiration, and heart rate.

That is also true for children if parents create a user profile for them.

The policy also notes that personal data might be stored

indefinitely, even “after you cancel or deactivate” user accounts.

It’s More Than Just Zzzs

The privacy policies of many devices that track and transmit personal information allow for the sharing of data that has been stripped of personal identifiers.

But privacy experts have shown it’s not terribly difficult to use or combine such information to “re-identify” people.

“You are left with the impression that, ‘Don’t worry, no one will be able to point to you,’ but they don’t actually say that,” said Tien. “I don’t know how they actually could say that.”

Unlike personal data collected in a doctor’s office or a sleep clinic, the information gathered by sleep trackers is not protected by federal privacy rules.

Some sleep trackers or apps can connect with other “smart” devices in your home, such as a thermostat or coffee maker.

Nifty, for sure, because as you wake up, your heater can kick on and the coffee maker can start doing its thing. But it also can mean those devices are sharing your information. Sleep Number said its beds can import information from other devices but does not share customer information with them.

Still, the interconnectedness exposes more vulnerabilities.

“We connect all these devices to each other,” noted Kilic at Public Citizen. “If hackers want to get into the system, [they] can easily do so and collect all this info from you: How do you use your bed? How often do you have sex? This is very sensitive information.”

Privacy experts recommend encryption and the use of strong passwords and additional authentication whenever possible.

The goal of the data gathering, Sleep Number and other companies say, is helping sleep-deprived Americans do a better job at, well, sleeping.

But do consumers really need an app—or a bed that can cost thousands of dollars—to tell them how rested they feel in the morning?

Such tools are “great because it makes people more aware of sleep, but it’s a slippery slope,” said Dr. Seema Khosla, a pulmonologist and medical director of the North Dakota Center for Sleep, a sleep study facility in Fargo. Khosla, who uses a few trackers herself, is also the lead author of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine’s position paper on sleep apps.

One unexpected consequence: Consumers so attuned to their data may experience anxiety—and an inability to sleep.

“We call it orthosomnia,” she said. “They get all this data and get upset about having a perfect number. We tell them to put it away for a couple of weeks.”

Julie Appleby is a senior correspondent who reports on the health law’s implementation, health care treatments and costs, trends in health insurance, and policy affecting hospitals and other medical providers. This article was first published on Kaiser Health News.



Listening to Music May Ease Cancer Patients’ Pain

Listening to music at home may reduce cancer patients’ pain and fatigue and ease symptoms like loss of appetite and difficulty concentrating, according to research in Taiwan.

In the study, breast cancer patients assigned to listen to 30 minutes of music five times a week had “noticeably” reduced side effects of cancer and its treatment over 24 weeks, researchers report in the European Journal of Cancer Care.

The patients said the music helped their physical and psychological wellbeing because it distanced them from negative thoughts about cancer.

“Music therapy is convenient, does not involve invasive procedures, and can easily be used by people in the comfort of their homes,” said senior study author Kuei-Ru Chou of Taipei Medical University.

“Home-based music interventions can also be used with no cost,” Chou told Reuters Health by email. “Healthcare services have become expensive at the present time.”

The researchers recruited 60 breast cancer patients and randomly assigned half of them to a group that would listen to music at home on an MP3 player provided by the study team with a selection of classical, parlor, popular, Taiwanese and religious music to choose from. The other patients were also given a player

“**Music therapy is convenient, does not involve invasive procedures, and can easily be used.**

Kuei-Ru Chou, senior study author, Taipei Medical University

and the same instructions about how often to listen, but their selections were various types of ambient music, mainly consisting of environmental sounds, which research has shown does little to reduce pain or symptoms, the study team notes.

Before the women had surgery, and after six, 12 and 24 weeks of music listening, all patients rated the severity of 25 physical symptoms on a five-point scale, as well as rating five categories of fatigue on a separate five-point scale, and the level of pain they felt on a 100-point scale.

The average symptom severity scores of the music therapy group had dropped by five points at the six-week assessment, seven points at 12 weeks and nearly nine points after 24 weeks. Pain scores and overall fatigue scores fell at each assessment as well.

For those listening to music, physical and mental fatigue had also dropped at six weeks but not later.

In contrast, pain and symptom severity scores in the control group increased and remained higher than at the start of the trial.

Based on the results, music therapy may not relieve long-term physical and mental fatigue, the study

authors caution. And future studies should use objective measures of pain and fatigue, in addition to the subjective measures used in this study, Chou said.

The researchers are also interested in learning how and why music therapy reduces symptoms and pain. Because listening to music promotes endorphins, dopamine, and serotonin in the brain, the chemicals may spark joy and positive emotions that distract patients from negative emotions, the study authors speculate.

Music could affect functions of the

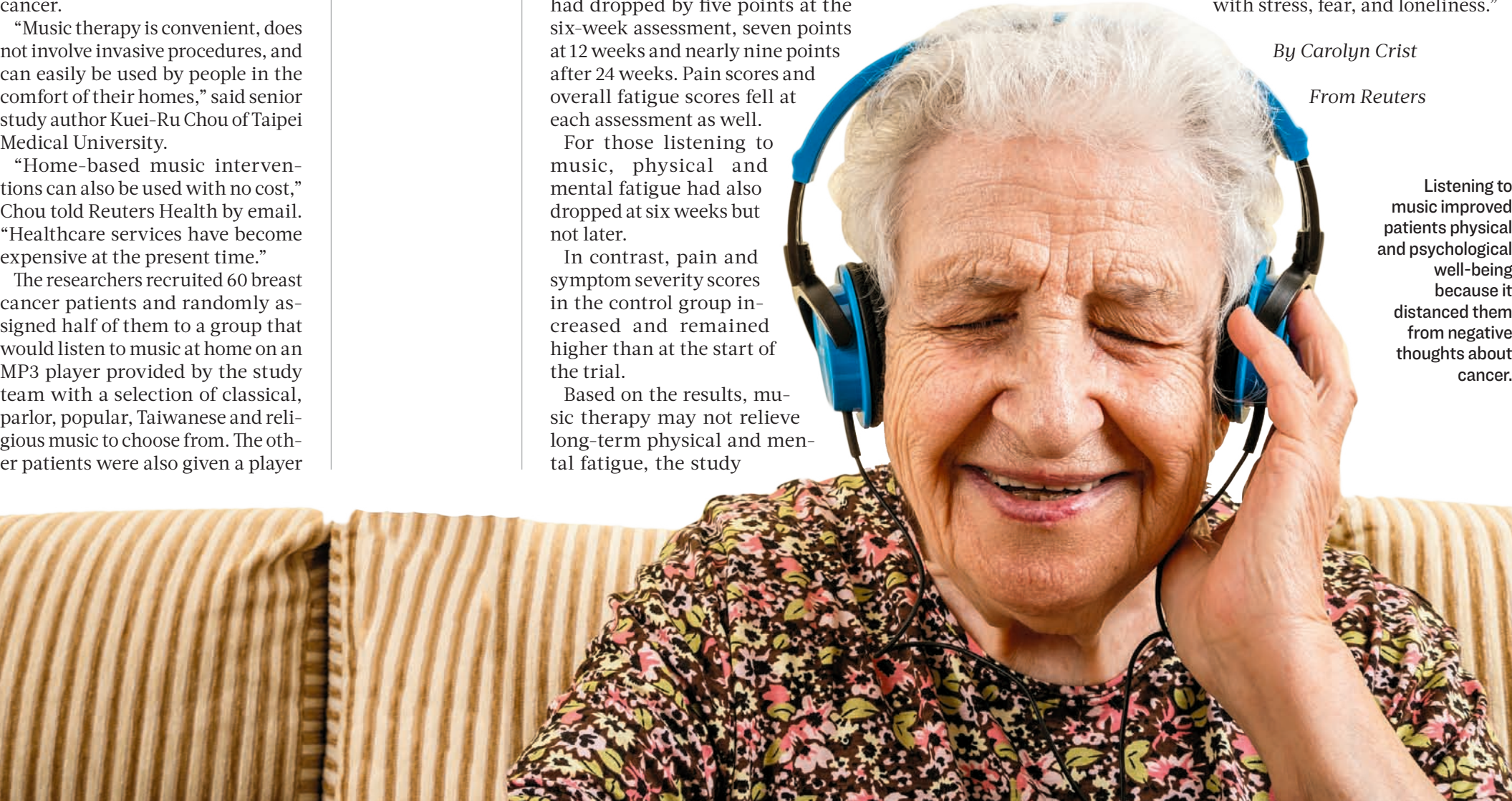
cardiovascular, respiratory, muscular, skeletal, nervous and metabolic systems as well, relieving muscle tension and pain, they add.

“From the neurophysiological point of view,” said Tereza Alcantara-Silva of the Federal University of Goias in Brazil, music-evoked emotions can modulate activity in a variety of brain areas.

“Music plays a major role in the self-regulation of emotional contexts,” said Alcantara-Silva, who wasn’t involved in the study, by email. “Music therapy can bring several benefits to cancer patients, helping them to find ways to deal with stress, fear, and loneliness.”

By Carolyn Crist
From Reuters

Listening to music improved patients physical and psychological well-being because it distanced them from negative thoughts about cancer.



BERNA NAMOGLU/SHUTTERSTOCK

How You Can De – Stress in 5 Minutes

DEVON ANDRE

You probably hear a lot about how diet and lifestyle, like getting exercise and better sleep, can help relieve stress and anxiety. But you can’t exactly go for a run or take a power nap at a moment’s notice. When stress hits, sometimes you need to calm your nerves fast. Here are a few things that you can do to take the edge off in about five minutes.

Focused Breathing: Taking a moment to step back from what’s causing you stress and recalibrate is an important part of quick stress relief. Remove yourself from the situation, go somewhere quiet, and start to breathe. Put all of your focus on taking long, deep breaths and allow nothing to break your concentration. If it helps, look at your stomach as it expands and deflates with each inhalation and exhalation.

Guided Imagery: Closing your eyes and daydreaming for five-



Going outside for a short walk or even pacing around the house can help you de-stress and re-focus.

minutes can also be an effective stress relief tool. Visualize yourself being somewhere or doing something you enjoy and the feelings and experiences that come along with it. It can be a fantasy or memory—just lock into it and transport yourself. Putting on headphones or earplugs may enhance the experience.

Movement: Getting up and doing a quick five-minute walk or even just pacing around your house can help. But if you find the exercise makes you feel anxious, you can follow up with a yoga move called tree-pose. Stand up straight, then breathe and focus on bending one knee to lift your foot off the ground. Rest the heel of that foot against the inner thigh of your other leg. Close your eyes and breathe deeply for a minute before switching legs.

Repeat a Mantra: If the guided breathing isn’t helping, try reciting a mantra while you do it. This could be one word,

a sound like a hum, a phrase, or something affirming that makes you feel good.

Look Out The Window or Get Outside: Stepping outside to sit on a quiet bench or somewhere else that provides solace can help knock stress down a notch. If you can’t get outside, take a look through the window and take in the view. Even the sight of smiling people, a blue sky, or some leaves glistening in the sun can produce calm.

Taking five minutes to de-stress can help you refocus or save you from doing something you may regret. It can also provide a quick reminder that you can control your emotions. When time is of the essence, try these, or a combination of them, to regulate and refocus.

Devon Andre holds a bachelor’s in forensic science from the University of Windsor in Canada and a Juris Doctor from the University of Pittsburgh. This article was first published on Bel Marra Health.

To Change How You Feel, Put On a Smile

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Smiling really can make you feel happier, report researchers.

The paper looked at nearly 50 years of data testing whether posing facial expressions can lead people to feel the emotions related to those expressions.

“These findings address a critical question about the links between our internal experience and our bodies—whether changing our facial expression can alter the emotions we feel and our emotional response to the world,” says coauthor Heather Lench, an associate professor and head of the psychological and brain sciences department at Texas A&M University.

“Conventional wisdom tells us that we can feel a little happier if we simply smile. Or that we can get ourselves in a more serious mood if we scowl. But psychologists have actually disagreed about this idea for over 100 years” says lead author Nicholas Coles, a researcher from the University of Tennessee.

These disagreements became more pronounced in 2016 when 17 teams of researchers failed to replicate a well-known experiment

demonstrating that the physical act of smiling can make people feel happier.

Now, however, using a statistical technique called meta-analysis, the team combined data from 138 studies testing over 11,000 participants from all around the world. According to the meta-analysis, posing facial expressions has a small impact on our feelings. For example, smiling makes people feel happier, scowling makes them feel angrier, and frowning makes them feel more sad.

“We don’t think that people can ‘smile their way to happiness’. But these findings are exciting because they provide a clue about how the mind and the body interact to shape our conscious experience of emotion” says Coles.

“We still have a lot to learn about these facial feedback effects, but this meta-analysis put us a little closer to understanding how emotions work.”

The paper appears in Psychological Bulletin.

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UOHRAL SANJAADORJ/UNSPLASH

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK



When our mind and emotions conspire to distract or demotivate us, it's time to dig into our psychological tool box.

WISE HABITS

The Discipline of Mastering Mental States

Our mind can get tangled in a feeling, but that doesn't have to stop us from getting things done

LEO BABAUTA

I'm far from mastering this skill, but one thing I've been playing around with is how important mental states are to our productivity, happiness, focus, health habits and more.

For example, if you're tired or feeling down, there's a good chance you're not going to focus on your meaningful tasks, and instead will look for distractions and comfort.

If you're feeling frenetic and in quick-task mode, you're not likely to focus on deep work, but instead will look for easy busywork to do.

Mental states will usually affect whether we exercise, eat healthy food, binge watch TV shows, drink alcohol, eat junk food, or are open-hearted (or rude) with the people we love.

So it's really important to monitor mental states. It's also an incredible skill to be able to move into the proper mental state to do focused work, to create, to meditate, to exercise, or do whatever you find meaningful.

In this article, I'll share some ways to get better at moving into the mental state you need to be in to do that meaningful work. But I'll also share an advanced skill—being able to do what you need to do, no matter what your mental state. I think of this as an “antifragile” skill (in the terminology of Nassim Nicholas Taleb).

Getting Good at Moving Into a Mental State

Let's say you want to do some writing, or other focused work, and to do that you want to be in a calm, focused, energetic, positive mental state.

But right now, you're feeling frazzled and distracted. How do you move from one state to the other?

First, you have to recognize that you're in the wrong mental state. You recognize that your current state is not likely to lead to a calm focus. Instead, it will likely lead to you doing busywork or seeking distraction.

Second, you have to experiment to find a set of actions that can help you move into the right mental state. This is going to be different for each person, even for each different mental state that you're in or that you want to get to. But with some experimentation, you can discover things that work for you.

An antifragile system wouldn't require the right mental state or actions in order to get the work done.

It's also an incredible skill to be able to move into the proper mental state to do focused work.

For example, some common actions that often help move into a better mental state:

- Meditating
- Going for a walk
- Getting up and moving around
- Talking to someone
- Taking a power nap
- Getting into a quiet, uncluttered environment
- Turning off your Wi-Fi router
- Using full-screen writing apps
- Playing calming music
- Reading an inspirational quote or article
- Bringing playfulness to the task

There are many other possibilities, of course, but you get the idea.

Another idea is to look at whether you're feeling discouraged or encouraged. If life has conspired to discourage you from a project, habit, or meaningful task then you'll want to find ways to encourage yourself. The power encouragement has to change your mental state can't be overstated.

This is a skill you can practice every single day. Throughout the day. Bring mindfulness to your current mental state, ask yourself what you'd like to be doing and what mental state would help you do that, and then experiment until you find a way to move into that mental state.

Practice and experiment until you get good at moving into the right mental state. Mastery will take daily practice and constant play.

The Advanced Antifragile Skill
Once you've played with the ideas above, you can get a lot better at changing your mental state as needed.



However, lately, I've been playing with what I think of as a more “advanced” skill. I think of it as advanced because I think it's better to practice the skills mentioned above first. Then move on to this one.

Here's the advanced skill: learn that you don't need to change your mental state to do what you're committed to doing.

If you need the perfect mental state and the perfect set of circumstances to do your commitments, this is a fragile system. Anything that keeps you from doing the actions you need to do to get into the right mental state throws you off and prevents you from doing your meaningful work.

An antifragile system wouldn't require the right mental state or actions in order to get the work done. You'd just do the work, no matter the conditions.

That's much easier said than done, of course. But I believe we can train ourselves to do it.

Here's how I've been practicing:

1. Recognize that I'm not in the ideal mental state to do the thing I need to do. I'm tired, frazzled, distracted, sad.
2. Ask myself if I'm committed to this or not. If it's not that important, I can put it off until I get into the right state. If I'm very committed, I'll do it if at all possible, though it's not always possible depending on circumstances.
3. Make it happen, despite the mental state. If I'm tired, that's OK. I don't need to be fully rested to meditate or write or exercise. If I'm distracted, that's OK too. I can write when I'm distracted—even if it's not the ideal writing, I still am committed to doing it.

If I'm in a bad mood, for example, I can still do whatever needs to be done. I just need to let the bad mood inhabit the same space as my meaningful action. I've found I can do anything in any mood, even if it's not ideal.

An important caveat: self-care is still important. I know that I need to rest, I need to take care of my body and mind, and sometimes I need to stop working and have some solitude. I need these things for long-term happiness and health. But at this moment, if I need to do something I'm committed to doing, I can do it no matter what. And with practice, I can even love the moment that is filled with tiredness, distractedness, frustration, or sadness.

Leo Babauta is the author of six books, the writer of “Zen Habits,” a blog with over 2 million subscribers, and the creator of several online programs to help you master your habits. Visit ZenHabits.net

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Ancient Chinese Stories

Great Achievements Begin With Small Steps

EPOCH TIMES STAFF

Start by Sweeping Your Own House

“The Book of the Later Han,” which covers Han Dynasty history from A.D. 6 to 189, has a story about a proud chap named Chen Fan. Chen was ambitious and wanted to achieve great things, but he didn’t bother keeping his own life in order. As a result, his room was constantly filthy and chaotic.

One day, Xue Qin, a friend of Chen’s father, came to visit. When he saw how dirty Chen’s room was, he asked Chen, “Why don’t you clean up your room?”

Chen replied, “As a man of great ambition, why should I waste time on trivial things like sweeping my room, when I should be focusing on sweeping the world off its feet?”

Xue Qin mused, “How can one achieve great things when one can’t even keep his living space clean?” His remark left Chen speechless.

‘A Journey of 1,000 Miles Begins With a Single Step’

Ancient Chinese philosopher Laozi once said: “A massive tree—so wide that it takes two men to wrap their arms around it—began as a tiny sapling. A nine-story pagoda began as a pile of dirt on its foundation. A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”

In his book “Wei Xue” (“To Learn”), Qing Dynasty writer Peng Duanshu tells the story of a rich monk and a poor monk who lived in Sichuan Province in southwestern China. Both wanted to make the pilgrimage across the South

Sea to India to pay their respects to Buddha.

The rich monk said to the poor monk: “I’ve tried for several years to hire a ship to sail across the sea. My plans have yet to reach fruition. What do you have to rely on for making the trip?”

A year later, the rich monk still hadn’t left his home, while the poor monk had already returned from his pilgrimage. The poor monk told the surprised rich monk, “Throughout my journey, I relied only on my water bottle and begging bowl. They were all I needed to fulfill my wish.”

The poor monk achieved his goal by taking one step at a time, relying only on courage and will. By contrast, the rich monk held on to his dream like a castle in the air, talking about his aspirations but failing to act. Their different mindsets produced quite different outcomes.

Leveling Vast Mountains

The Taoist text “Liezi” tells a story about Yu Gong, age 90, who leveled two mountains by sheer faith and perseverance.

Yu Gong lived near two mountains on the north bank of the Yellow River. They were over 700 miles wide and several thousand feet high. People traveling to or from the river had to take a long detour around the mountains.

After years of witnessing this, Yu Gong finally decided that the only solution was to move the mountains. He and three sons and grandsons went to the mountains to break up the stones and dig up the earth. They then transported the stones and earth to the banks

of the Bohai Sea.

Zhi Sou, who lived on the river bend, laughed at Yu Gong. “With such minuscule manpower, how can you hope to level two mountains?”

Yu Gong replied: “Even after I’ve passed on, my sons will continue this work. They will have grandsons, who will have great-grandsons. My family will always have future generations to carry on, while these mountains won’t grow any bigger. They will be leveled one day. What have I to worry about?”

Zhi Sou was at a loss for words. Despite his advanced age and limited strength, Yu Gong had no doubt that his lofty goal would be attainable with steady, continuous efforts.

Indeed, his faith and determination touched the Heavenly God, who instructed mighty deities to help him move the mountains. From then on, travelers could reach the Yellow River without any obstruction.

Grave Defeats Begin With Minor Flaws

In daily life, our minor habits and thoughts are not insignificant. Those that are positive have a good chance of helping us ultimately fulfill our goals. Similarly, those that are bad can magnify and multiply over time, manifesting as grave consequences in the end.

“Shi Ji” (“Records of the Grand Historian”), completed around 94 B.C. by early Han Dynasty official Sima Qian, recorded that King Zhou, the last king of the Shang Dynasty (about 1556–1046 B.C.), once received a pair of ivory chop-

sticks that he adored.

Seeing this, his adviser Qi Zi sighed and said, “The more the king cares about these chopsticks, the more he might think they can only be paired with bowls made of rhino horn and cups made of white jade.

“With such fine wares, he will want them to hold only the best delicacies. Being used to such delicacies, he will desire only the most expensive silk robes and majestic palaces.

“The luxuries within our borders will eventually prove insufficient, and the king will wish to acquire rare, exquisite items from other countries. From these chopsticks, I can already see what will unfold. I can’t help but worry for the king.”

Qi Zi’s prediction indeed came true. King Zhou’s fancies grew and grew. He abandoned his duties and indulged in luxuries and drunken orgies. He levied heavy taxes to build opulent residences with pools of wine and forests of meat. He thus lost the people’s respect and support, leading to the Shang Dynasty’s overthrow.

After his defeat, King Zhou set fire to his palace and treasures and committed suicide by throwing himself into the flames.

Instead of curbing his desires while they were still small, King Zhou let his greed swell untamed. What was once a minor flaw became a major catastrophe, which ultimately cost him his kingdom and his life. His story conveys an important lesson: One would be wise to constantly reflect upon and rectify one’s shortcomings before they turn into serious issues or even disasters.

In daily life, our minor habits and thoughts are not insignificant.

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