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the NEWS

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Pro-Beijing
RED MEDIA

is like poison for the brain, members of the Taiwan Association of University Professors say, while calling on their government to ban Beijing's agents from Taiwan.

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ABOUT 90%

of vehicle battery manufacturers may soon go out of business in China, industry insiders say, with some companies already six months behind in staff wages.

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As
GANGSTERS

beat up residents in Yuen Long and the protests against an extradition bill with mainland China escalate, the situation in Hong Kong has entered a new phase, reports Cang Shan, Editor-in-Chief of The Epoch Times, Hong Kong.

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There are
3 DEGREES

of fake news, ranging from embellishments and honest mistakes to maliciously planned and executed attacks, writes Mark Hendrickson, fellow for economic and social policy at the U.S. Institute for Faith & Freedom.

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LAUREL CHOR/GETTY IMAGES

Pro-democracy protesters stand behind a makeshift barricade during a demonstration in the area of Sai Wan in Hong Kong on July 28, 2019.

HONG KONG

China Criticises Pompeo, Blames US for Hong Kong Protests

It's the first time that China has directly blamed the United States for Hong Kong's escalating protests

EVA FU

China has blamed the United States for the ongoing unrest in Hong Kong at a press briefing, in response to recent comments made by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in support of the protesters.

"Pompeo said the recent violent incidents in Hong Kong are appropriate because, as you all know, they are somehow the work of the U.S.," China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Hua Chunying said at a regular press briefing on July 30. She

added that Pompeo "obviously fails to put himself in the right position."

Blaming Western governments for fomenting dissent is a common tactic for Beijing to discredit critics of the Chinese regime.

Hua's remarks, referring to Pompeo's comments at the Economic Club of Washington, D.C., was the first time that China directly blamed the United States for Hong Kong's escalating protests.

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Blaming Western governments for fomenting dissent is a common tactic for Beijing to discredit critics of the Chinese regime.

TERRORISM

Trump Considers Declaring Antifa a 'Major Organisation of Terror'

JANITA KAN

President Donald Trump announced on July 27 that his administration may declare the far-left extremist group Antifa "a major organisation of terror."

"Consideration is being given to declaring ANTIFA, the gutless Radical Left Wack Jobs who go around hitting (only non-fighters) people over the heads with baseball bats, a major Organisation of Terror (along with MS-13 & others). Would make

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WIN MCNAMEE/GETTY IMAGES

Surrounded by first responders and their families, U.S. President Donald Trump signs H.R. 1327, an act to permanently authorize the Sept. 11 victim compensation fund, in the Rose Garden of the White House July 29, 2019.

SEPTEMBER 11

Trump Signs 9/11 Bill Extending Compensation for First Responders

BOWEN XIAO

President Donald Trump signed a bill on July 29 that authorizes the extension of a compensation fund for first responders who risked their lives during the Sept. 11, 2001, ter-

rorist attacks.

"Today, we come together as one nation to support our September 11 heroes, to care for their families, and to renew our eternal vow—never ever forget," President Trump said

Continued on A5

EU-CHINA

EU Calls on US for Unified Trade Front Against China

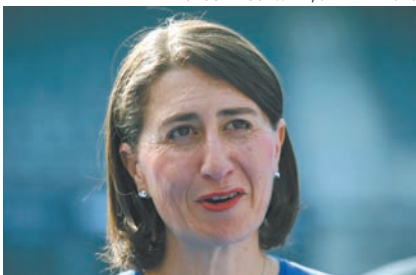
NICK GUTTERIDGE

BRUSSELS—The European Union has called for a joint approach with the United States to tackle China's "unfair trading practices" as part of a plea to de-escalate commercial tensions with Washington.

In a new report, the European Commission said it is "becoming increasingly important" for the two major powers to work together to counter an aggressive strategy from Beijing, which is aiming to shape future global standards "to their advantage." Officials suggested pur-

Continued on A3

JASON MCCAWLEY/GETTY IMAGES



NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian speaks to the media in Sydney, Australia, on Jan. 4, 2019.

LAW

NSW Premier Likely to Support Classifying Abortion as a Medical Procedure

MELANIE SUN

NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian says she will most likely be supporting a private members' bill seeking to remove abortion from the state's criminal laws.

Abortions are currently lawful in

Continued on A2

CHINA

China Food Price Inflation Threatening to Pick Up

CHRISS STREET

News Analysis

China's decade-long success in holding back food inflation may have come to an end, because of a combination of African swine fever, armyworms, extreme flooding, and heat waves.

Since China must feed over one-fifth of the world's population with only one-fifteenth of the world's arable land, managing food security during periods of extreme weather and natural disasters historically has played a crucial role in retaining a mandate to rule.

When it came to power in 1949, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) promised that "not one per-

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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.

NSW Premier Likely to Support Classifying Abortion as a Medical Procedure

CONTINUED FROM A1

NSW if performed with the consent of the woman and by a registered doctor who believes there are reasonable grounds that the woman's physical or mental health would be at risk from continuing the pregnancy. The woman's social and financial situation are also taken into account.

Medical abortions are available up to nine weeks from a woman's last period, and surgical abortions are an option up to the first 20 weeks of pregnancy. While current laws do not specify how late an abortion can be performed, services for later-term abortions are limited.

Outside of these conditions, termination of a pregnancy is considered a crime in NSW under the Crimes Act of 1900.

However, independent Sydney MP Alex Greenwich is proposing to change that to bring NSW laws in line with the rest of Australia.

Greenwich gave notice of his Reproductive Healthcare Reform Bill 2019 on July 30. The bill seeks to decriminalise abortions by classifying them as a medical procedure in the eyes of the law.

"NSW is the only state to not have decriminalised abortion," Greenwich said. "The bill ensures women in NSW have access to safe and lawful terminations without the threat of criminal convictions and provides doctors with the legal clarity they have long sought."

The bill seeks to legalise pregnancy terminations up to 22 weeks' gestation by a registered doctor, and later if two doctors consent given the medical, physical, social, and psychological circumstances.

Doctors will have the right to conscientiously object to performing abortions but must refer patients to another health practitioner who can

provide the service.

As a safeguard for the life of the unborn child, the bill proposes to create a new criminal offence under the Crimes Act for anyone who assists in pregnancy terminations without authorisation.

The premier said on July 29: "If the legislation contains what I think it does, I'll be supporting it."

She said that Coalition MPs will be given a conscience vote.

"I'd encourage all members of the parliament to look at the legislation, as I will be doing, to make sure they're comfortable with it and decide either way how they feel about it," Berejiklian told reporters.

The premier said that although she didn't begrudge MPs for holding strong personal view on the issue, she believes that it is not the role of lawmakers to pass judgement on the moral implications of abortions.

"It's important for that (abortion) to be a decision for the woman and for the state not to cast judgement on the morality of that decision," she said.

Liberal Health Minister Brad Hazzard is a co-sponsor of the bill. Along with Greenwich, he is one of 15 co-sponsors of the proposed legislation from across numerous political parties.

Hazzard said on Jul 29 that the issue of abortion should be between a woman, her partner, and her doctor, and not involve "possible criminal proceedings against them," saying that pregnancy termination was a "medical issue."

"We feel confident there will be a respectful debate," he told reporters. He added that personally, he was "hopeful" that the bill would pass.

The bill has backing of the NSW branch of the Australian Medical Association and Pro-Choice Alliance.

But not all voices in the community are in support of the proposed



A young girl sits on her parents shoulders during a pro-choice rally in Sydney, Australia, on June 9, 2019.

This is not about healthcare for women, this is a social issue from the left.

Dr. Rachel Carling, Right to Life NSW

decriminalisation.

Dr. Rachel Carling from Right to Life NSW told the ABC that she was disappointed the Liberal Health Minister would put his name to such a bill.

"This is not about healthcare for women, this is a social issue from the left."

"Women should be looked after during their pregnancies, whether they are unexpected or not, and just pushing abortion as the first option is not health care for women," she said.

According to NSW government estimates, somewhere between 70,000 and 100,000 abortions are performed in Australia each year. Controversy continues to exist surrounding issues of foetal rights, rights of the biological father, and late-term abortions in the face of medical technology advancements that can now detect foetal heartbeats from 4-6 weeks gestation.

A similar push to decriminalise abortion was seen in the NSW Parliament in 2017 when Greens Senator Mehreen Faruqi attempted to pass an Abortion Law Reform Bill. It was defeated in the upper house 25 to 14.

Greenwich said at a press conference that his bill has now been revised to have a clear legal framework based on the laws passed Victoria and most recently in Queensland, which voted to decriminalise abortion on Oct. 17 last year.

Greenwich was looking to introduce the bill on July 29 but conservative MPs have asked for more time for wider community consultations.

Greenwich now expects the bill to be introduced into the Legislative Assembly on Aug. 1 and debated from Tuesday next week.

With reporting by AAP.

Australians Stand With Hong Kongers in Fight for Freedom

HENRY JOM

MELBOURNE, Australia—Australians gathered at the steps of Victorian Parliament on July 28 to support ongoing protests in Hong Kong against Beijing's growing encroachment.

Simultaneous rallies were held across 6 Australian cities, with an estimated total turnout of 2000 people, according to the Australia-Hong Kong Link.

The rallies were a show of solidarity with millions of Hong Kongers who over the past few months have taken to streets to protest a controversial extradition bill that would allow people to be transferred to mainland to be processed in courts controlled by the Chinese Communist Party.

Around 400 people, mainly from the local Hong Kong community, attended the rally in Melbourne, which included speakers such as university students who participated in the Hong Kong protests and a famous Chinese artist.

Their message was clear—Australians need to stand with Hong Kong and protect core values such as freedom.

"It has already been months since June," event organiser Jane Poon said at the event. "We have not been given any response by the [Hong Kong] government to [meet] our five demands."

The five demands Poon referred to are: the complete withdrawal of the extradition bill; a retraction for calling June 12 a "riot"; an independent investigation into police use of force on June 12; the exoneration of individuals previously arrested; and universal suffrage for members of the Legislative Council including the position of chief executive, currently held by the city's top official Carrie Lam.

Violent Clashes

In recent days, calls for the government to completely withdraw the bill has morphed into greater frustration at police tactics and the government's response to protests.

Poon, referring to the July 27 clashes between protesters and police in Yuen Long, said police in Hong Kong are no longer serving the people.

The July 27 protests saw thousands of



Jane Poon, one of the event organisers for the Hong Kong rallies across Australia speaks in front of the Victorian Parliament in Melbourne on July 28, 2019.

[Young people are standing up] because they are just trying to get what they want. To get the freedom, to get their rights, the freedom of speech.

Elvis Ma, 19-year-old psychology student studying in Melbourne

protesters take to the streets to protest the delayed police response to a mob attack by suspected triad members at the local metro station a week earlier.

"The Hong Kong Police Force, and the government [have proven they do not] serve, protect or stand on the side of fellow ... Hong Kongers, who demand only their fundamental and inalienable freedom of speech and their human rights."

Elvis Ma, a 19-year-old psychology student studying in Melbourne, said he witnessed first-hand the brutality of the Hong Kong police who attacked student protesters.

"I hate what the Hong Kong police are doing to us since we are just students. We never try to attack them. Every single time they just [used] the tear gas or chemical weapons to ask us to leave," Ma told The Epoch Times.

Ma was in Hong Kong for one month and was a volunteer first aid officer at the front lines during the Hong Kong clashes.

He said he felt compelled to volunteer to protect the young protesters.

"[Young people are standing up] because they are just trying to get what they want. To get the freedom, to get their rights, the freedom of speech."

Ma said the Hong Kong government was not listening to the people.

"It is really sad to see that the Hong Kong government is doing nothing,

and even in Yuen Long there are some gangsters trying to attack people."

Closer to Home

Poon said the hijacking of a demonstration in support of the Hong Kong protests by pro-Beijing students at the University of Queensland on July 24 highlights a growing assault of free speech in Australia.

"In Queensland university, freedom of speech in Australia has been attacked. And we put zero tolerance on such an issue," she said.

"Anyone in Australia should believe that Australia is a place where we have freedom of speech, and we should protect these values."

The actions of the pro-Beijing students were praised by China's consul-general in Brisbane, Xu Jie, who said that "anti-China separatist" protesters had "ulterior motives," the Australian reported on July 27.

In response, Foreign Minister Marise Payne said in a statement that the right to free speech was protected in Australia "even on contentious and sensitive issues."

"The government would be particularly concerned if any foreign diplomatic mission were to act in ways that could undermine such rights, including by encouraging disruptive or potentially violent behaviour," she said.

Support From the Community

Henry Sze, an Australian citizen originally from Hong Kong praised the efforts of his fellow Hong Kongers in standing up to the government.

"They just want to have freedom of speech, have universal suffrage which is fairly reasonable—which the British government promised Hong Kong people," Sze said at the rally. "I see that overseas people are concerned about that, and they are giving support to Hong Kong people."

Tenzin Khangsar, president of the Tibetan Community of Victoria, said communist China has extended the persecution of Tibetans and other minorities into Hong Kong.

"We have been suffering for the last 60 years, and we don't want that to happen to the people of Hong Kong," Khangsar said.

"We have to unify together to collapse this communist regime, otherwise if we allow this, if we are not united, then it will continue to happen."

Alim Osman, president of the Uyghur Association of Victoria, said the Chinese regime's dictatorship was evident in its current policy in the northwestern region of Xinjiang, where more than 1 million Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities are estimated to be detained in internment facilities in a sprawling crackdown on "extremism."

"Once they get you into the dictatorship system, then there's no freedom. So Uyghur people now stand with Hong Kong people. We should stand together against China's Communist Party."

Ross Lineham, an Australian citizen inspired by the young protesters in Hong Kong, hopes that the protesters' demands will soon be met.

"I really hope to God that the young people get their needs met and that the world pays attention to the way the Chinese government treat, their human rights record is disgusting. It's absurd. And the people in Australia need to understand that they need to see the truth," Lineham said.

Epoch Times reporters Frank Fang and Eva Fu contributed to this report.

EU Strikes Conciliatory Tone With US on Trade, Calls for Unified Front Against China

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suings their “joint interest” in monitoring and curtailing China’s growing influence as a means to “lead the way toward a reduction of current trans-Atlantic trade tensions.”

Brussels issued the rallying cry in its first yearly progress update on a U.S.-EU deal that saw Europe agree to import more U.S. soybeans and liquified natural gas (LNG) in return for staving off import tariffs on its cars and auto parts.

“The EU and the U.S. are both concerned about the distortions caused by unfair trading practices, in particular by China. A strong EU-U.S. partnership is critical to effectively address such practices,” the document said.

It raised concerns over China’s actions on industrial subsidies and trade defense, including the state-financed “Made in China 2025” manufacturing programme, as well as forced technology transfers and restrictive foreign investment laws.

On the issue, the report describes China as a “particular challenge as the problem is systematic and widespread” and said the “EU and U.S. share similar concerns regarding the situation and are both pursuing them actively.”

“This cooperation is particularly important, given the increasing frequency with which certain third countries, such as China, seek to impose technology transfers through policy guidance as well as through different legal instruments and practices, including joint venture requirements, authorisation or licensing procedures, or insufficient protection or enforcement of intellectual property rights and trade secrets.”

The report highlights a number of

areas where the EU and the United States are working together to push China to change its ways and areas in which they have had success, such as getting Beijing to own up to state involvement in its biggest semiconductor subsidy funds.

“The EU and the U.S. are pushing for regulatory changes in China in the context of the review of China’s Foreign Investment Law. It is also in their joint interest to monitor the implementation of the new law through the follow-up regulations and the actual practice.”

The report represents growing European wariness of China’s actions on the world stage, and also represents a change of approach in trying to persuade U.S. President Donald Trump to curb his attacks on the EU, amid fears the current trade deal won’t hold much longer.

The agreement was struck between Trump and Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker in Washington in 2018, following a period during which tensions had threatened to spill over into a full-blown trade war.

Trump, who had already used national security concerns to apply tariffs to European steel and aluminium imports in March 2018, was threatening to do the same to car and auto parts—a major EU export to the United States.

However, following frantic last-minute talks, Trump agreed to postpone a decision, in return for a package designed to alleviate his concerns that the EU had “treated us unfairly on trade for years.”

The pair agreed to explore a limited trade agreement abolishing tariffs and quotas on non-auto industrial goods, and reducing barriers to trade in services, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, medical products, and soybeans.



President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker (L) talks to U.S. President Donald Trump as they attend a meeting on the digital economy at the G20 Summit in Osaka on June 28, 2019.

The report represents growing European wariness of China’s actions on the world stage.

Under the agreement, European imports of LNG from the United States have increased by more than 367 percent in a year, while purchases of soybeans have gone up by almost 100 percent.

“The European Union is delivering on what President Trump and I agreed on this day last year. We want a win-win situation on trade, which is beneficial for both the European Union and the United States,” Juncker said.

“Having one of the most important economic relationships in the world, we want to continue strengthening

trade between us based on the positive spirit of last July.”

However, EU officials and diplomats are still concerned that Washington may apply tariffs on European car exports in mid-November, when the current postponement ends, despite feeling that the deal has been a success.

EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom told the European Parliament that the bloc has drawn up a 35 billion euro (\$39 billion) hit list of U.S. products that will be triggered in response to an application of tariffs on EU cars.

Taiwan Professors Call Out Pro-Beijing Media

FRANK FANG

TAIPEI, Taiwan—The Taiwan Association of University Professors has called on the island’s government to stop using public funds to pay for subscriptions to local pro-Beijing media.

Founded in 1990, the nonprofit made the urgent call during a press conference in Taipei on July 29.

Lai Chen-chang, a former lawmaker and current association chairman, pointed out that many government agencies, as well as government-owned or -run companies, subscribe to the pro-Beijing daily newspaper China Times. Newspapers and magazines are usually purchased so that customers or other guests who visit their offices can peruse them.

According to Lai, these companies included Chunghwa Telecom, the island’s largest telecom provider; Chunghwa Post, Taiwan’s official postal service provider; Bank of Taiwan, a local commercial bank; Taiwan Power, an electricity provider; and city governments’ motor vehicle departments.

Lai says the owner of China Times, Want Want China Times Media Group, has exhibited a clear pro-Beijing stance through other media outlets it owns.

Lai warned that “red media” are a threat to Taiwan’s free society.

Locals refer to pro-Beijing Taiwanese media as “red media,” after the symbolic color of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). In June, thousands held a rally in Taipei calling for a nationwide ban on such media outlets.

In recent years, Beijing has stepped up its efforts to influence Taiwan, a self-ruled island it considers a part of its territory. To achieve the goal of swaying public opinion in favor of unification with the mainland, Beijing has sought to influence different segments of Taiwanese society, such as politics and media.

Lai added that blocking out “red media” is essential for the presidential election in January next year, as Beijing is prepared to interfere—as it has in past Taiwanese elections—by spreading fake news on social media, swaying media outlets’ coverage, and more.

Any Taiwanese media that choose to



A man reads a local newspaper in Taipei, Taiwan, on Jan. 8, 2015.

become Beijing’s mouthpiece would be seriously undermining the island’s national security, he said.

To stop Beijing’s influence, Lai also called on the island’s parliament, known as the Legislative Yuan, to quickly introduce and pass laws requiring foreign agents to register with the government.

In the United States, the Foreign Agents Registration Act, which was passed in 1938, requires all persons working on behalf of a foreign government or entity to disclose their funding sources and other information with the U.S. Department of Justice.

In early July, Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen said that passing a bill to ban Beijing’s agents in Taiwan should be a top priority in the next legislative session, to better protect the island’s democracy and freedom, according to local media. The new legislative session begins in September.

Huang Ching-jang, a professor emeritus with the Department of Biochemical Science and Technology at National Taiwan University, also spoke at the press conference. She compared “red media” to poisonous food, saying that since news information is much like food to the brain, it is important that there are regulations and measures to stamp out “the poison.”

Taiwanese lawyer Chen Yu-fan said that Beijing has exploited Taiwan’s democratic and legal systems, to “attack the island’s freedom of press and freedom of expression.”

Any Taiwanese media that choose to become Beijing’s mouthpiece would be seriously undermining the island’s national security.

Lai Chen-chang, former lawmaker and current chairman of the Taiwan Association of University Professors

Brazil Prison Riot Leaves 57 Dead, Including 16 Decapitated

JACK PHILLIPS

At least 16 prisoners were decapitated and dozens more were killed during a prison riot in Brazil.

At least 57 inmates died in the riots that involved criminal gangs in Para, located in the northern part of the country.

Two guards were also taken hostage as the rival gangs clashed, but were later freed, the AFP news agency reported on July 29.

The fight began at the Altamira Regional Recovery Centre at around 7 a.m. local time, according to a Para state official in the AFP report.

According to BBC, reports in Brazil said that many inmates died of suffocation when the prison was set on fire. A video posted by Brazilian media outlets showed smoke billowing from a prison building, and another showed prisoners on rooftops.

The prison has a capacity for 200 prisoners, but it was occupied by 311 inmates, Sky News reported.

Brazil has a prison population of 704,000, although there is only cell space for about 416,000 around the country, the report noted.

In May, some 55 inmates died at prisons in Amazonas state.

At one prison, 15 prisoners were found dead, with many being stabbed by makeshift knives and strangled, according to the report. Forty prisoners were found dead at another facility, and their reported causes of death were asphyxiation.

Two years before that, about 150 prisoners died during a several-week-long span of violence across several prisons. The violence was blamed on rival gangs.

According to Sky, the riots lasted weeks and were linked to the control of drug-trafficking networks in the area.

In May, Brazil’s justice and public security ministry said it was sending a federal task force to help local officials handle the situation.

“I just spoke with (Justice) Minister Sergio Moro, who is already sending a prison intervention team to

Brazil has a prison population of 704,000, although there is only cell space for about 416,000 around the country, the report noted.

the State of Amazonas, so that he can help us in this moment of crisis and a problem that is national: the problem of prisons,” Amazonas Gov. Wilson Lima said.

Several drug-trafficking and other criminal gangs in Brazil run much of their day-to-day business from prisons, where they often have wide sway. The 2017 slayings were largely gang-related, prompting authorities to increase efforts to separate factions and frequently transfer prisoners.

Authorities haven’t yet said whether gang wars were behind the latest blood-letting.

Moro had to send a federal task force to help tame violence in Ceara state in January that local officials said was ordered by crime gang leaders angered by plans to impose tighter controls in the state’s prisons.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.



Brazilian riot police prepare to invade the Puraquequara Prison facility at the city of Manaus, Brazil, on May 27, 2019.

New Pentagon Chief’s Views on China Threat Come Under Spotlight After Confirmation

FRANK FANG

Former Secretary of the Army Mark Esper has been confirmed as the new U.S. secretary of defense following a Senate vote, ending a more than seven-month vacancy at the Pentagon. How he will deal with the military threat from China is now under close scrutiny.

The U.S. Senate confirmed President Donald Trump’s nomination by a vote of 90–8 on July 23. Prior, the Pentagon had been without a permanent boss since Jim Mattis resigned in December last year. Since then, Deputy Secretary Patrick Shanahan has been the acting secretary, but he withdrew from the nomination process in June.

Esper served in the Army’s 101st Airborne Division and took part in the first Gulf War. He retired in 2007 after 10 years on active duty. He later became the deputy assistant secretary of defense for negotiation policy during the George W. Bush administration.

Before he became secretary of the Army in 2017, Esper was a lobbyist for Raytheon, one of the country’s largest defense contractors.

Following Esper’s confirmation, U.S. Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.) issued a statement applauding the new Pentagon chief.

“Nations around the world, including China and Russia, continue to make strategic and technological advancements to their military readiness. It’s essential that our nation doesn’t fall behind when it comes to investing in our national security,” Thune said.

Thune added that Esper’s extensive experience in foreign affairs and defense policy will “strengthen our military and keep Americans safe.”

Esper has been vocal about the potential threats posed by China—and what he perceives as the United States’ past failure to take those threats seriously.

“We may be a little bit late—we are late—coming to the recognition that we are in a strategic competition with China,” Esper said in an April interview with Reuters.

Esper added that he had witnessed the “evolution” of China’s capabilities over the past 20 years.

“Today, Russia and China are aggressively developing formations



NICHOLAS KAMM/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper speaks after he was sworn in as U.S. President Donald Trump looks on in the Oval Office at the White House in Washington, on July 23, 2019.

Esper has been vocal about the potential threats posed by China—and what he perceives as the United States’ past failure to take those threats seriously.

and capabilities and weapons systems that deny us that long-held advantage,” he said.

On June 24, Beijing responded to Esper’s confirmation. Chinese media reported that Wu Qian, China’s defense ministry spokesperson, said at a press conference that he hoped the military relationship between China and the United States would grow steadily under Esper.

US Allies

Esper’s confirmation will have a direct impact on three U.S. allies in East Asia—Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan—all of them dependent on U.S. military support in the face of potential Chinese military aggression in the region.

In Taiwan, local media have been quick to point out that Esper publicly supported U.S. arms sales to the island for its self-defense, during his confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee on July 16.

The United States currently has

no formal diplomatic ties with Taiwan, since Washington changed its diplomatic recognition in favour of Beijing in January 1979. Since then, the United States has maintained a non-diplomatic relationship with Taipei, in which it’s the island’s main arms supplier.

Taiwan’s chief military threat comes from China, which considers its democratic neighbour a renegade province that should be united with the mainland, with military force if necessary.

Esper said at the hearing that he’s “deeply concerned about China’s failure to renounce the use of force against Taiwan and increasing PLA [People’s Liberation Army, China’s military] exercises and operations in the vicinity of Taiwan.”

He added that he would ensure the United States would “resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that could jeopardise the security, or the social or economic system, of the people on Taiwan.”

Meanwhile, South Korea’s defense

minister Jeong Kyeong-doo has spoken by phone with Esper since his confirmation, South Korean media Yonhap News Agency reported. The two affirmed their commitment to a strong alliance, as well as diplomatic efforts for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

South Korea’s defense ministry, in a press release, said the two defense chiefs “expected to have a chance to meet in person soon,” according to Yonhap.

Just prior to Esper’s confirmation, Japanese media reported that Esper would visit Japan in early August.

Citing anonymous sources familiar with the plan, NHK said that Esper would travel to Japan for a two-day visit beginning Aug. 6, as part of a five-nation tour that will also include stops in South Korea and Australia. He is expected to meet with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Defense Minister Takeshi Iwaya, NHK reported.

The Pentagon has yet to confirm the trip.

Trump Says He’s Considering Declaring Antifa a ‘Major Organisation of Terror’

CONTINUED FROM A1

it easier for police to do their job!” Trump wrote on Twitter on July 27.

Trump’s announcement comes after Sens. Bill Cassidy (R-La.) and Ted Cruz (R-Texas) proposed a resolution in the Senate to condemn the acts of violence carried out by members of Antifa and to label the group as a domestic terrorist organisation.

The senators proposed the resolution following Antifa members’ brutal assault on independent journalist Andy Ngo late last month. Ngo, who is known for extensively documenting Antifa violence, was punched in the face, kicked, and had cups of a white substance thrown at him while he was covering one of the group’s protests in Portland, Oregon. Portland police later said the cups contained quick-drying cement mixed into milkshakes.

The attack left Ngo bloodied and bruised, with a torn ear lobe and a brain haemorrhage. He was required to stay in a hospital overnight due to the brain bleed. In a video after the attack, the journalist, who was shaken and covered in the white liquid, said his attackers also stole his camera equipment.

“Antifa is a terrorist organisation composed of hateful, intolerant radicals who pursue their ex-



CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES

treme agenda through aggressive violence,” Cruz said in a statement on July 19.

“Time and time again, their actions have demonstrated that their central purpose is to inflict harm on those who oppose their views. Like any terrorist organisation, they choose to pursue their political ends through violence, fear, and intimidation. They must be stopped. I am proud to introduce this resolution with Senator Cassidy to properly identify what Antifa are: domestic terrorists.”

Rich Valdes, the associate producer of the Mark Levin show and host

Antifa member protests in Washington, D.C. on Aug. 12, 2018.

Antifa is a terrorist organisation composed of hateful, intolerant radicals who pursue their extreme agenda through aggressive violence.

US Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas)

of “This is America,” responded to Trump’s Twitter post on July 27, calling on Trump to “stop their violence and intimidation before they become like F.A.L.N. and the Weather Underground.”

He told The Epoch Times that he thinks Antifa must be stopped because it uses “violence and intimidation toward an entire segment of our population in order to overpower the political speech of independent-thinking conservatives.”

“Wearing masks, carrying pipes as flagpoles, and pepper-spraying journalists and dissenters goes way beyond claiming free speech. They are troublemakers, terrorizing people, and they’re looking for a fight. They, by definition, are domestic terrorists,” he said.

Antifa’s origins can be traced back to the “anti-fascist” movement in Germany, which was part of the Soviet Union’s front operations to incite a communist revolution in the European country. In the United States, the group claims that its members are fighting fascism, but rarely do they confront actual fascists. Instead, their members, who are made up of communists, socialists, and other hard-left radicals, label parties and individuals who don’t align with their ideology as “fascists” to justify their use of

violence against them.

The group has frequently made headlines for its violent attacks on opposing groups, particularly Trump supporters, whom they have branded as “fascists.”

Trump has criticised the group, calling them “bad people” and “evil” at a rally in North Carolina on July 17.

“These are bad people. These are sick, bad people. These are bad people,” he told the crowd.

“They don’t get the bad press, the press doesn’t want to talk to them. They are very evil: they are hitting people over the head with sticks, I mean bats even. They’re whacking people with bats,” he said.

The president noted that Antifa members are often young and favour wearing masks to help evade identification by law enforcement when they commit crimes, such as assault or destruction of property.

“They’re very brave, they always show up with the mask and they’re covered, because then they go home to mum and dad, they don’t want mum and dad to know where they were,” the president said.

Epoch Times reporter Ivan Pentchoukov and NTD reporter Zachary Stieber contributed to this report.

Judge Dismisses Nick Sandmann’s Lawsuit Against The Washington Post

PETR SVAB

A federal judge in Kentucky dismissed a lawsuit against The Washington Post brought by Nick Sandmann, one of the students of Covington Catholic High School who, in January, were confronted by a Native American activist, prompting a whirlwind of media coverage, much of which, Sandmann alleged, was defamatory.

On Feb. 19, Sandmann’s lawyers, Lin Wood and Todd McMurtry, filed a lawsuit against The Post seeking \$250 million in damages. Several other lawsuits, including against CNN and NBC, followed.

District Judge William Bertelsman of the Eastern District of Kentucky tossed the first suit on July 26, saying The Post’s coverage of the incident didn’t use language derogatory enough, the alleged defamatory statements weren’t “objectively provable facts,” and many of them didn’t target Sandmann specifically.

Sandmann’s lawyers and family said in a release they will take a few days “to evaluate the court’s adverse decision” and then launch the process to appeal.

“The law must protect innocent minors targeted by journalists publishing click-bait sensationalized news,” said McMurtry. “This is especially true in the current hyper-partisan political environment.”

What Happened

The lawsuit stems from a Jan. 18 incident that took place after the March for Life anti-abortion event in Washington. Sandmann and other students from Covington Catholic High School in Kentucky were waiting for their bus near the Lincoln Memorial, when they were approached by several Native American activists.

The encounter was extensively covered by media, using short video clips that made it appear as though the students were chanting and cheering in mockery of one of the Native American activists, 64-year-old Nathan Phillips.

Longer video footage of the incident showed the students began to cheer and chant their school chant to drown out offensive remarks hurled their way by a small group of Black Hebrew Israelites nearby.

Some of the students, including Sandmann, were wearing hats with President Donald Trump’s



KAYA TAITANO VIA REUTERS

Nick Sandmann from Covington Catholic High School stands in front of Native American activist Nathan Phillips while the latter bangs a drum in his face in Washington on Jan. 18, 2019.

Sandmann’s lawyers and family said in a release they will take a few days “to evaluate the court’s adverse decision” and then launch the process to appeal.

campaign slogan, “Make America Great Again.”

While Phillips told media outlets that the students had surrounded and harassed him, the footage showed it was he who approached them, inserted himself into their crowd, and, for several minutes, banged a drum within inches of the face of Sandmann, who responded only by standing silently with a smile.

Opinion

Bertelsman, an appointee of President Jimmy Carter, ruled that several of The Post’s articles weren’t “actionable” because they didn’t name Sandmann, instead referring to the group of students as a whole. What the judge seemed to overlook was that a video was circulated with the articles, showing Sandmann face-to-face with Phillips, making apparent an association with Phillips’ comments that he “felt threatened” and that “that guy in the hat ... blocked my way.”

The judge further said it was “pure opinion” on Phillips’s part that the students “swarmed” him and that Sandmann “blocked” his way and

wouldn’t allow him to “retreat.”

“There were no undisclosed facts, and the reader was in as good a position as Phillips to judge whether the conclusion he reached—that he was ‘blocked’—was correct,” he said.

The judge didn’t address that The Post initially didn’t provide its readers the information from the longer videos that captured the incident from multiple angles, which showed Phillips was the one who approached Sandmann. Right behind Phillips were several people from his group or those who approached the students along with him, some of whom were capturing the moment on camera. If anybody could have blocked any “retreat” from him, it was them, the videos appear to show.

The judge pointed out that it’s not defamation if people “by an unreasonable construction” attach “a derogatory meaning” to words that are not by themselves defamatory.

He argued that Phillips’ statements that he “felt threatened” and that Sandmann “blocked” his way “would not tend to expose [Sandmann] to public hatred.”

“There is nothing defamatory about being party to a stubborn ‘impasse,’” he said, noting that defamation law isn’t “a question of the existence of some individual or individuals with views sufficiently peculiar to regard as derogatory what the vast majority of persons regard as innocent.”

Yet Phillips’s statements and The Post’s coverage did expose Sandmann to public hatred, as he demonstrated by presenting a sample of the response to the coverage on social media.

As for the language of the coverage, which used words like “taunting,” “ugly,” “smirking,” “disrespectful,” “jeering,” “aggressive,” and “anti-Native American sentiment,” the judge said they constituted an opinion and were thus “not actionable in libel actions.”

Sandmann’s family was disappointed with the ruling, the statement said.

“I believe fighting for justice for my son and family is of vital national importance,” said his father, Ted Sandmann. “If what was done to Nicholas is not legally actionable, then no one is safe.”

Trump Signs 9/11 Bill Extending Compensation for First Responders

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in the Rose Garden before signing the bipartisan bill, dubbed the “Never Forget the Heroes Act,” which passed the Senate on July 23 in a 97–2 vote.

Trump took a moment from his speech to respond to a recent incident at the California Garlic Festival, where three people were shot and killed. The president called the perpetrator a “wicked murderer,” and said of the victims: “We grieve for their families. ... We’re praying for those who are recovering right now in the hospital.”

“We will continue to work together as communities ... to stop evil,” Trump said.

During his remarks, Trump introduced his personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani, who was New York City’s mayor during the 9/11 attacks. The president said Giuliani was “our greatest mayor, in my opinion,” calling on him to stand up.

Trump told the many first responders in the audience that they “inspire all of humanity.”

“You lift up our communities and you remind us what it means to all stand united, one nation under God,” he said. “Today, we strive to fulfill our sacred duty to you.”



WIN MCNAMEE/GETTY IMAGES

According to the White House, the legislation authorizes federal funding until 2092 to compensate an estimated 18,100 victims and their relatives, according to government estimates.

Many first responders were exposed to toxic chemicals during the attack in which two jets flown by radical Islamic terrorists crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center.

“The whole world witnessed the might and resilience of our na-

First responders and their families celebrate as U.S. President Donald Trump signs H.R. 1327, an act to permanently authorize the Sept. 11th victim compensation fund, in the Rose Garden of the White House on July 29, 2019.

tion and the extraordinary men and women of the New York fire department and the New York police department,” Trump said. “Selfless patriots with unmatched character and devotion—I grew up with them, so I can tell you that’s absolutely true.”

Trump said he was “deeply honored” to be in the presence of more than 60 first responders. He asked them to stand, to ringing applause.

“The love and loyalty of our 9/11 responders knew no bounds,” he said. “They answered terror with the emotional strength of true American warriors.”

Trump noted the late New York City Detective Luis Alvarez, a 9/11 responder who was a major advocate of the bill. In June, Alvarez testified before Congress, which Trump said “touched the heart of our nation.” Alvarez passed away just days after his testimony due to cancer linked to the attacks.

Trump said he was privileged to have Alvarez’s brother, Philip; his wife, Elaine; and sons Tyler and Ben in attendance.

“Our whole nation prays and pays tribute to the incredible life and legacy of Detective Alvarez—how hard he worked and how much he suffered,” Trump said. “And we re-

The love and loyalty of our 9/11 responders knew no bounds. They answered terror with the emotional strength of true American warriors.

US President Donald Trump

ally want to thank him.”

After Trump closed his remarks and signed the bill, he received a standing ovation. For about 10 minutes, the president shook hands and took photos with attendees.

Other notable attendees at the event included Vice President Mike Pence, Deputy Attorney General Jeffrey Rosen, and a number of Republican senators.

A White House official noted that every member of Congress had been invited to attend the signing. No Democrat lawmakers attended the event.

JOHANNES EISELE/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Google Works on AI With Top Chinese University That Has Ties to Chinese Military

NATHAN SU

Google has been cooperating with a leading artificial intelligence (AI) research body at Tsinghua University, a prestigious Chinese academic institution that also conducts AI research for the Chinese military.

The U.S. internet giant has collaborated with Beijing’s Tsinghua University since June 2018, when it launched a new AI research body, the Tsinghua University Institute for Artificial Intelligence (TUIFAI).

Earlier that month, it was revealed that the university received significant funding from the Chinese military to work on an AI project aimed to advance the military’s AI capabilities.

The revelations come as the tech giant comes under growing scrutiny over its operations in China.

Google and Tsinghua

The university announced the opening of the TUIFAI on June 28, 2018, during a joint Google-Tsinghua symposium held in Beijing.

The institute, according to a statement by Tsinghua at the time, is focused on studies aimed to advance the industrialisation of AI. Zhang Bo, a professor of computer science at the university and fellow at the Chinese Academy of Sciences, was appointed as leader of the institute.

The university said at the time that the institute would deeply cooperate with Google on AI and cloud technologies.

During the symposium, Tsinghua University also announced the appointment of Jeff Dean, head of Google AI, as a member of the computer science advisory committee at the university.

According to Chinese media, Dean said at the event that Google is dedicated to solving big issues by using deep learning and AI techniques. As a member of Tsinghua University, Dean said he hoped to promote further exchange and cooperation between Google and China.

Zhang, Chinese media reported, said in a speech at the symposium that he wanted to build a world-class AI team, and that TUIFAI needs to attract at least 20 to 30 percent of its talent from foreign countries.

Also in attendance at the symposium were Fei-Fei Li, then-vice president of Google Cloud and head of Google Cloud AI, and Jia Li, then-head of R&D of Google Cloud AI and head of the company’s Beijing AI centre.

A group picture taken during the symposium published by Tsinghua shows that Hua Jianmin, former vice chairman of China’s National People’s Congress, the regime’s rubber-stamp legislature, also attended the event.

This is not the only Chinese university Google has collaborated with. In July 2018, the company set up a joint AI laboratory with Fudan University, another top university based in Shanghai.

Google didn’t respond to a request for comment by The Epoch Times.

Tsinghua and the Chinese Military

China Education Daily, a state-owned newspaper run by the regime’s Ministry for Education, reported on June 8, 2018, that Tsinghua University received more than 100 million yuan (\$14.53 million) from the Science and Technology Committee of China’s Central Military Commission—a Party organ that oversees the military—to work on an AI project for the military.

The project is tasked with researching and developing AI for human-machine combat teaming, the report said.

Zhang Bo, the head of TUIFAI, was named as lead of that project. The report added that Zhang has been a leading figure involved in military

In leaked emails obtained by The Intercept, Fei-Fei Li was concerned about the optics of the deal, writing that it may stir up concern over the possibility that the company was weaponising AI.

MATT WINKELMEYER/GETTY IMAGES FOR WIRED25



Fei-Fei Li speaks onstage at WIRED25 Summit in San Francisco, California, on Oct. 15, 2018.



A man passes a Google sign at the World Artificial Intelligence Conference (WAIC) in Shanghai on Sept. 26, 2018.

AI research at Tsinghua University.

The report added that the work of the university’s military AI lab, called “Military Intelligent High-End Lab” established in 2018, would be “guided by military needs” and would help build China into an advanced AI country.

The university also established another military AI lab in spring 2017 called “High-end Military Intelligence lab.”

The project, the report said, was a result of a request from the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Central Committee.

The Chinese regime has set the development of AI as one of its top priorities. In July 2017, China’s State Council, a cabinet-like agency, published a detailed plan for China to become a “world leader” in AI by 2030. The plan aims to build a domestic AI industry worth \$150 billion.

Google Scientists

Fei-Fei Li and Jia Li have been widely reported by Chinese media as the Google scientists who led the company’s efforts to build its China AI operations.

The company opened an AI research centre in Beijing in December 2017.

Fei-Fei Li, who was at Google from January 2017 to September 2018, is currently a professor in the computer science department at Stanford University. Jia Li, who was at the company from 2016 to November 2018, was previously one of Fei-Fei Li’s students at Stanford.

At the launch event of Google’s AI Centre in China in December 2017, Chinese media portal Sina reported that Fei-Fei Li told the audience that she started pushing the idea to set up an AI centre in China with the CEOs of Google and Google Cloud right after she joined the company in January 2017.

Fei Fei Li was also quoted in a December 2017 report by Chinese news portal sohu.com as saying: “China is like a sleeping giant. When she wakes, she will tremble the world.”

She added that China had already awakened in the AI world, the report stated.

According to a CNN report, Fei-Fei Li is a U.S. citizen who immigrated to the United States from China with her parents in 1992 when she was 16.

She graduated from Princeton University in 1999 with a bachelor degree in physics, and completed a

doctorate at the California Institute of Technology in 2005.

She later served as the director of Stanford’s AI research lab from 2013 to 2018.

Many Chinese media and Chinese regime officials have heaped praise on Fei-Fei Li, touting her as an outstanding talent in the field of AI.

She was one of the winners of the 2017–2018 “You Bring Charm to the World Award,” an award sponsored by several Chinese media outlets presented to Chinese individuals who influence the world’s view of the country.

In December 2017, she was reportedly named by Chinese think tank Centre for China and Globalisation as among the 50 most successful Chinese who have studied abroad. The recognition was announced at a conference convened by several government agencies.

The Chinese regime has sought to use overseas-trained Chinese experts and professionals to expand its influence abroad.

In 2015, the Party’s United Front Work Department, a body tasked with running the regime’s influence operations overseas, specifically designated a new focus of working with Chinese individuals who have received foreign education, state-run media China Daily reported.

In 2008, the regime launched a recruitment programme called “Thousand Talents Programme,” aimed to lure accomplished Chinese and foreign professionals, experts, and entrepreneurs to work in China. The programme has come under intensified scrutiny in the United States in recent years for its role in facilitating the transfer of U.S. intellectual property to China.

In May 2018, Fei-Fei Li found herself the centre of internal debate within Google about whether it should proceed with Project Maven, a contract with the Pentagon to provide AI for analysing drone footage.

In leaked emails obtained by The Intercept, Fei-Fei Li was concerned about the optics of the deal, writing that it may stir up concern over the possibility that the company was weaponising AI.

“This is red meat to the media to find all ways to damage Google. You probably heard Elon Musk and his comment about AI causing WW3,” wrote Fei-Fei Li.

“I don’t know what would happen if the media starts picking up a theme that Google is secretly building AI weapons or AI technologies to enable weapons for the Defense industry,” she added.

Google later decided not to renew its contract with the Pentagon, reportedly due to backlash from the company’s employees.

Concerns over Google’s China Operations

Google has recently come under the spotlight for its AI operations in China.

In a speech at the National Conservatism Conference on July 14, billionaire investor Peter Thiel said Google should be investigated for the “treasonous decision to work with the Chinese military.”

The company has denied that it works with the Chinese military.

Thiel later raised concerns over the dual use of artificial intelligence.

“If it’s real, if this is a real thing, it obviously can also be used by the military, it’ll be weaponised in all sorts of ways, and it’s an important national security question as to who has it,” he said in a July 15 interview with Fox News.

“There’s this very peculiar background where Google is working with the Chinese communist government and not with the U.S. military; so the Project Maven decision was a decision not to work with AI with the U.S. military—but they’re working with the communist Chinese.”

Thiel suggested that Google’s touting of its DeepMind artificial intelligence project has made it susceptible to foreign interference.

“I think the Chinese are confident enough, the Ministry of State Security is likely to have infiltrated Google, and then I think the Google management has sort of a decision of either letting the software go out the front door, or figuring it will get stolen anyway and go out the back door.”

President Donald Trump in a tweet the next day said his administration would “take a look” into Thiel’s allegations.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, in an interview with CNBC on July 24, said he and the president looked into the matter and found no national security concerns about Google’s work in China.

Trump, however, on July 26 kept up the pressure on the tech giant, saying if there are any issues with its relationship with the communist regime, his administration would find out about it.

“There may or may not be National Security concerns with regard to Google and their relationship with China. If there is a problem, we will find out about it. I sincerely hope there is not!!!” Trump wrote in a tweet.

Google has had a bumpy time trying to enter the Chinese market.

The company ran a censored version of its search engine in China from 2006 to 2010, but exited after the company said a cyberattack originating from the country had targeted Google email accounts of dozens of Chinese human rights activists.

Then in 2018, information leaked that the company was secretly developing the censored app for the Chinese market as part of a project dubbed “Dragonfly.” The news prompted protests from both inside and outside the organisation.

The company publicly confirmed in July that it had ended the project.

Roger Robinson, chairman of nonprofit Prague Security Studies Institute and former chairman of the Congressional US-China Economic and Security Review Commission, echoed Thiel’s concerns about Google’s activities in China.

“I think Google’s activities with respect to China’s AI research are wrong-headed, and even scandalous, given the prominent sponsorship of such research by the Chinese military,” he said.

Nicole Hao contributed to this article.

TRISTAN FEWINGS/GETTY IMAGES FOR BARBICAN CENTRE



AI exhibition at the Barbican Curve Gallery in London, England, on May 15, 2019.

About 90 Percent of China’s New Energy Vehicle Battery Companies May Go Out of Business

OLIVIA LI

China announced a number of policy changes with regard to the new energy vehicle (NEV) industry this year. Along with the reduction of government subsidies, China re-opened its market to Japanese and Korean NEV battery makers. Industry insiders believe about 90 percent of Chinese NEV battery companies will go out of business as a result.

The Three Factors

On March 26, China’s Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Science and Technology, and other agencies jointly announced changes to the subsidy program for new energy cars, slashing subsidies by 67 percent.

In addition, subsidies for new energy vehicles will be phased out completely after 2020.

Secondly, the cost increase of raw materials places further pressure on the capital chain of China’s NEV battery companies.

Thirdly, China’s Ministry of Industry and Information Technology announced in June that it would end the “white list” of recommended battery suppliers. The white list policy, issued in March 2015, was significant to NEV sellers, as using batteries from the listed battery suppliers, all of them domestic enterprises, was the prerequisite for NEV makers to get subsidies.

Ending the white list policy is equivalent to opening the Chinese market to Japanese and Korean battery makers, such as Samsung, LG, and Panasonic. These companies are much more competitive than the Chinese companies because their technologies are more advanced, and the price differences compared to Chinese-made batteries are not as notable as before.

Wang Binggang, director of China’s New Energy Vehicle Technology Innovation Alliance, admitted to the China Automotive News that even the first-tier Chinese battery companies cannot be compared with Japanese and Korean battery giants. He predicted that small-sized battery makers would be gradually eliminated from market competition, because they are not competent enough in research and development and have no advantage in cost control.

In a recent interview with Secu-



Workers assemble electric cars in a factory in Zouping in east China’s Shandong Province on Sept. 16, 2014.

Two employees from a leading lithium battery research and manufacturing company in China recently told Chinese financial publication Securities Daily that many employees in the company’s Beijing headquarter have not been paid in the past six months.

rities Daily, Fang Jianhua, former head of Guoxuan High-Tech Power Energy, pointed out that some start-up battery companies operate in a speculative mode and have experienced “wild growth” in recent years. It seems that they have a high production capacity; however, automakers will not use their products. “About 90 percent of battery companies will go out of business in the future,” Fang predicted.

Leading Battery Company Struggling to Pay Workers

Two employees from National Battery Technology, a leading lithium battery research and manufacturing company in China, recently told Chinese financial publication Securities Daily that many employees in the company’s Beijing headquarter have not been paid in the past six months.

Customers of the company also reported to Securities Daily that in many cities in China, battery repair shops had discontinued service for batteries manufactured by National Battery.

The company released a public

announcement on July 22, saying that it currently has 1.2 billion yuan (\$175 million) of uncollected payments from customers, therefore the company is unable to pay salaries, compensations, or business reimbursements on time. It will try to resolve the problem by paying part of the compensations on July 31, and all overdue salaries by Aug. 31.

Many Battery Companies Will Go Out of Business

In China’s NEV battery industry, National Battery is not the only company struggling with financial problems.

Optimum Nano Energy Co., Ltd. is ranked fifth in the world and third in China in NEV battery sales. In April last year, its parent company defaulted on 2 billion yuan (\$291 million) in bond funds, while its total debt was as high as 22.1 billion yuan (\$3.22 billion).

Hu Bo, General manager of Shanshan Tech’s Shanghai branch, explained to Securities Daily that many companies in the NEV battery industry will go out of business sooner or

later due to three factors: reduction in government subsidies, higher cost of raw materials, and lower prices for final products.

Shanshan Tech is a company focused on materials for various battery cell components. Its Shanghai branch is dedicated to the research and manufacturing of anode materials used in lithium batteries.

“In recent years, new energy vehicle battery companies have faced tremendous pressure from the increasing cost of raw materials. Materials for the cathode, such as cobalt, nickel, and manganese, and materials for anode, have had significant price hikes,” Hu said.

According to China Automotive News, the number of China’s NEV battery companies plummeted from 135 to 90 in 2018. Industry insiders believed that with the intensified market competition and accelerated integration of the industry chain, there will be only 20 to 30 NEV battery companies left by 2020.

Epoch Times reporter Zhou Xin-jian contributed to this report.

China Food Price Inflation Threatening to Pick Up

CONTINUED FROM A1

son would starve to death,” but the Great Leap Famine of 1958 to 1962 that killed 30 million remains one of the most lethal famines in both Chinese and world history.

Since the 1980s, China’s economic reforms expanded agricultural production and urbanized about a third of farmers. Other than a 5.7 percent food inflation scare during the 2008 global financial crisis, the communist authorities have succeeded in keeping the closely watched China Agricultural Product Price Index little changed over the past decade.

But inflation is about to break through the Chinese regime’s rigidly enforced 1 percent inflation ceiling, due to a combination of extreme flooding in the south and heat in the north, African swine fever leading to the slaughter of millions of pigs in all provinces and regions, and fall armyworms voraciously munching a path across 19 corn-producing provinces.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture published a foreign agriculture report on April 30, explaining that the crop-eating pest was first detected in China in late January, entering from nearby Burma. It doesn’t have natural predators in China.

China’s summers usually mean droughts in the north and mild



Chinese customers select goods at a supermarket in Qingdao, in east China’s Shandong province on Sept. 9, 2016.

floods in the south. But the Ministry of Emergency Management reported that northern regions have suffered increased drought conditions this year, while the heaviest rains since 1961 struck China south of the Yellow River.

The ministry reported on July 11 that this year’s summer flooding affected 19.91 million people, collapsed at least 34,000 homes, and damaged 4.34 million acres of crops. Flooding has killed at least 61, forced 1.3 million people to be relocated, and left 582,000 in need of emergency aid. Water-saturated soil also caused landslides in Guizhou

on July 24 that killed another 14, and have left 48 missing.

The water department in northern China’s Hebei Province reported that severe drought has affected almost 2 million acres of crops, and left 15,700 people and at least 3,000 domestic animals facing a water shortage.

The Chinese wheat, rapeseed, corn, cotton, and soybean harvests are usually over by mid-August. But flooded farmlands threaten huge production losses this year.

China’s National Meteorological Center is forecasting heavy rains over the north, east, and southwest this week. The moisture will bring some relief to the Beijing and Tianjin areas after a multi-week heatwave that pushed temperatures to 35 to 40 degrees Celsius (95–104 degrees Fahrenheit).

With temperatures climbing to the second-highest tier in China’s four-tier system, a dry spell for water-drenched areas south of the Yangtze River may allow farmers to save some of their crops.

With U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin set for negotiations with Vice Premier Liu He on July 30 and July 31 in Shanghai, Chinese state media recently stated that China’s purchases of agricultural products from the United

Since China must feed over one-fifth of the world’s population with only one-fifteenth of the world’s arable land, managing food security during periods of extreme weather and natural disasters historically has played a crucial role in retaining a mandate to rule.

States are part of “unremitting efforts to show goodwill.”

But with U.S. soybean prices down by about 18 percent and corn prices slumping by about 12 percent since the Sino-U.S. trade war began in mid-2018, Chinese negotiators facing a production disaster and spiking food inflation may be ready to buy huge amounts of U.S. crops.

Chriss Street is an expert in macroeconomics, technology, and national security. He has served as CEO of several companies and is an active writer with more than 1,500 publications. He also regularly provides strategy lectures to graduate students at top Southern California universities.

‘Hong Kong Withstand’: Comic Artist Uses Brush to Support Hong Kong Protesters

EVA FU

The image has become an emblem of the Hong Kong protests.

A young woman wielding a yellow umbrella shields a girl from a torrent of tear gas fired by riot police.

The Chinese words “Hong Kong Withstand” emblazoned at the top of the poster have become a rallying call for the city’s protesters, who are now months into large-scale demonstrations against an extradition bill that they see as another blow to the city’s autonomy.

Recent demonstrations has seen throngs of protestors, including popular cantopop singer Denise Ho, waving the poster and chanting its slogan, as they demand the full withdrawal of the bill.

Illustrated by award-winning Canada-based comic artist Guo Jingxiong, the image was Guo’s way to support the cause.

“As I watched them [Hong Kong protesters] marching on the street on television, I felt that they need something to hold in their hands, so I thought I will sketch something out for them,” Guo told The Epoch Times.

‘Last Front’

Guo, who also goes by Daxiong, has spent over two decades in the comics industry and is popular among Chinese and European comic fans. He owns his own studio called Flag Art in New York, and has illustrated for comics including Star Wars Adventures.

The mainland-China born comic said he felt a special connection to Hong Kong owing to the city’s special culture.

“I belong to the generation born following China’s Cultural Revolution, when virtually all aspects of tradition were extinguished in the mainland save the Chinese Communist Party’s culture of struggle,” Guo said.

The 43-year-old said that it was Taiwan and Hong Kong that preserved Chinese traditional culture through music and films, which allowed him to connect with Chinese traditions, a culture that “connects humankind with nature.”

“Hong Kong is the last front of defense for traditional Chinese culture,” Guo said.



VIVEK PRAKASH/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Protesters gather before a march to the West Kowloon railway station holding posters made by Canadian artist Daxiong Guo during a demonstration against a proposed extradition bill in Hong Kong on July 7, 2019.

I belong to the generation born following China’s Cultural Revolution, when virtually all aspects of tradition were extinguished in the mainland save the Chinese Communist Party’s culture of struggle.

Guo Jingxiong, Canada-based comic artist

Guo left China in 2008 just as Beijing escalated its crackdown on dissidents in the lead up to the Summer Olympics, and after some of his artworks expressing criticism of the Chinese Communist Party drew the ire of authorities.

Before flying to the United States on a special talent visa, Guo made a stop in Hong Kong, and recalled observing elements of China’s traditional culture—such as the spirit of brotherhood—in the residents’ habits and lifestyle.

Since then, the Chinese communist regime has stepped up its pressure on the city, Guo said.

“I think Hong Kongers today live a very compressed life with ever diminishing political space—even the Cantonese language is on the verge of being lost,” Guo said.

With Youth and Hope

Guo said the scale of the protests in Hong Kong is unheard of to people

of his generation in the mainland.

“What Hong Kongers ask for is to protest the legal system and the integrity of the rule of law, and they are doing it the non-violent way,” he said.

As an artist, Guo felt compelled to produce works that stood on the side of the righteous.

“Seeing that they all held my work in hand and chanted the words inscribed on the poster, I felt that I was making an imperceptible impact on their ways of expression and their direction,” Guo said.

“It reminds me to be more prudent in my words and not bring them danger. The messages I deliver need to be even more positive.”

Guo said he chose to make youths the focus in his artworks because they represent a sense of hope.

“Adults are mature, but slick, glib, and shrewd,” he said. “Youth are full of spirit, they have ideals and the pursuit for the beauty of the

world.”

Guo has dedicated five paintings for Hong Kong in the past month, with more to come.

In one of them, a girl wearing a white dress holds a purple-tinged bauhinia flower—the emblem of Hong Kong—and a yellow umbrella. She looks at the fully geared riot police in front of her with a serene look. In the background is the message: Love My Hong Kong.

Guo said that the largely peaceful protests are a noble way for Hong Kongers to “counter lawlessness with principle.”

“The Chinese Communist Party as we know is rooted in violence, so no violence or lies of any kind in the world can be their match, but will only conform to their characteristics and merge with them,” Guo said.

He added that what the Chinese regime fears the most is the opposite of violence: truth, calmness and rationality.

China Criticises Pompeo, Blames US for Hong Kong Protests

CONTINUED FROM A1

Calls for Democracy

Hong Kong citizens have become increasingly vocal in light of what they perceive as China’s creeping intrusion into Hong Kong affairs. In recent months, demonstrations have taken place on a large scale across the city as protesters opposed a Beijing-backed controversial extradition bill that they feared could be used by China to retaliate against dissidents.

Pompeo on July 29 urged China to “do the right thing” and respect the agreement to preserve Hong Kong’s autonomy, made at the time when the former British colony was transferred back to China’s sovereignty in 1997.

“We’ve been pretty clear: protest is appropriate,” Pompeo said. “We always support freedom of expression, freedom to practice one’s religion, to live out one’s conscience. We hope that for every citizen of the world.”

“I think everyone understands the U.S. position,” Pompeo added.

Pompeo also said that he made it a priority to update himself on China matters. “Every morning the first thing I do is read about China,” Pompeo said.

China Tells US Not to ‘Play With Fire’

Pompeo’s open advocacy for Hong Kong protesters did not sit well with the Chinese regime, which had de-



LAUREL CHOR/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Protesters standing amid U.S. flags hold up placards that read “President Trump, please liberate Hong Kong” as they gather at Victoria Park to participate in an anti-extradition bill march in Hong Kong on July 21, 2019.

nounced Hong Kong protesters as “radicals” who “deliberately create violent incidents” and reiterated its support of the Hong Kong government.

The July 29 press briefing made no mention of the use of violence by Hong Kong police to clear the crowd—an issue that has alarmed Hongkongers, government officials, and international human rights groups. Tear gas, rubber bullets, and foam grenades used over the weekend protests have led to at least 40 injuries.

Recounting a list of previous incidents where U.S. officials appeared to have shown support for the protesters—such as Vice President Mike Pence, Pompeo, and National Security Advisor John Bolton who have met with pro-democracy advocates in July—the Chinese regime cautioned the United States not to “play with fire” by interfering with China’s internal affairs, repeating a phrase that the regime has used on multiple occasions to criticise other western governments that were sympathetic with the protesters.

We’ve been pretty clear: protest is appropriate. We always support freedom of expression, freedom to practice one’s religion, to live out one’s conscience. We hope that for every citizen of the world.

Mike Pompeo, U.S. Secretary of State

“We saw some American faces among the violent demonstrators in Hong Kong. We even saw the U.S. national flag on some occasions. We all have this question: what role has the U.S. played in Hong Kong recently?” Hua said, adding that “the U.S. owes the world an explanation.”

Although the Chinese Communist Party has insisted that Hong Kong is “China’s Hong Kong” and vehemently opposed any country to interfere, Hong Kong democracy activists said that it’s within the right for other governments to step in and voice concern for their nationals living or doing business in the region that is known as a leading international financial hub.

So far, only North Korea has openly supported the Chinese regime’s stance on Hong Kong.

Hong Kong Turbulence Presents a Major Turning Point for Beijing

CANG SHAN

Commentary

As gangsters beat up residents in Yuen Long and the protests against the extradition bill escalate, the situation in Hong Kong has entered a new phase. Its development affects Hong Kong and China politics. It may even shape the future of international politics.

A major feature of authoritarian regimes is that the administrative power comes from the highest level of the pyramid. Due to the complexity of the affairs of a large country, those in power have to rely on the layers in the bureaucratic systems to govern. Therefore, the political evolution in a large authoritarian country follows its own specific rules. The bureaucratic systems launch campaigns when they want something different than the highest power, or when they want the highest power to give in to their demands.

Such backlash to the highest power is often revealed in specific incidences. The Lei Yang case in 2016 was such an incident.

Beijing resident Lei Yang was detained on his way to the airport on suspicion of soliciting prostitution and died later on the same day at the age of 29. The police stated that Lei died of a stroke upon being caught at a foot massage parlor. State broadcaster China Central Television even aired the testimony of a prostitute, who claimed to have offered Lei sex services. The family found injuries on Lei's body and suspected that Lei was beaten to death by the police. The police didn't keep any records about the arrest and detention. The Chinese public was angry over the young man's death and demanded an investigation.

As a result of the public outcry, Chinese leader Xi Jinping and Wang Qishan, then Secretary of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, ordered a thorough investigation. Beijing police were indignant, and 4,000 local police officers co-signed a resignation letter, resisting the investigation. The central authority of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) rely on these police officers for the security in Beijing. Under pressure, Xi chose to quickly compromise. The Lei Yang case was not investigated, and the policemen involved were not held accountable.

The man at the center of the backlash was Fu Zhenghua from the Beijing Public Security System. Fu,



BILLY H.C. KWOK/GETTY IMAGES

Anti-riot police fired tear gas at protesters during a demonstration in the district of Yuen Long in Hong Kong on July 27, 2019.

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If Beijing can manage the corruption in the Hong Kong system on a fundamental level, give the power of governance back to the Hong Kong people, and through this, accumulate experience of managing an open social system and migrate it to the Mainland, it may find a way out.

Cang Shan, Editor-in-Chief of the Hong Kong bureau of The Epoch Times

then deputy minister of the Ministry of Public Security and concurrently a member of the Central Political and Legal Affairs Committee, led the severe suppression of human rights lawyers and dissidents. He also spearheaded the “Transparent Beijing” project, a project to monitor all possible political opponents of the highest powers.

Although Xi made a compromise on the incident, he no longer trusted Fu, originally transferred from the faction of Jiang Zemin, former head of the CCP. Fu was removed from the Central Political and Legal Committee in August of the same year. He was kicked out of the Ministry of Public Security last year and became the Minister of Justice, a largely cosmetic position in China's judicial system.

Even though Xi took care of Fu, his compromise opened a new door to Chinese politicians. They realized that if they exerted pressure out of regime safety and political interests, even the highest power would have to compromise. After 2016, more members of the public security system assumed positions in local and central Political and Legal Committees. Local laws and policies

rose again, and the various ministries and commissions in Beijing took a tougher and tougher stance in terms of following Xi.

The Lei Yang incident was a turning point for Xi's administration. Xi's power was on the rise before. It started declining following the Lei Yang case.

The current situation in Hong Kong is quite similar to that of the Lei Yang case.

The traditional CCP system has its own views and positions in governing Hong Kong. It also has its own traditional and customary tools of governance. Most importantly, it has its own huge interests. Such a system urgently needs Xi to provide clear instructions and authorization to handle the protests. Obviously, it has not yet received the authorization it wanted, so it has resorted to various means to intensify the situation to force Xi to accept its terms.

The scale, the negative economic impact of the Hong Kong situation, and the implication to domestic and international politics are over 100 times of that of the Lei Yang case. If Xi chooses to compromise again, he has then effectively announced the death of his new policies. It also

means that Xi's central authority doesn't go beyond Zhongnanhai, just the same as with Jiang and Hu Jintao.

Let's set clashes of political philosophies aside. The economic downturn, the loss of popular support, and the resentment of officials will lead to the outbreak of social conflicts. Xi's anti-corruption campaigns made the entire system represented by many corrupted officials as his enemy. Even a peaceful resignation may not be an option.

If Beijing can manage the corruption in the Hong Kong system on a fundamental level, give the power of governance back to the Hong Kong people, and through this, accumulate experience of managing an open social system and migrate it to the Mainland, it may find a way out.

From this perspective, the Hong Kong situation is certainly a challenge for Beijing, but it is also an opportunity. Although the chance that Beijing will take the opportunity is extremely slim.

Cang Shan is the editor-in-chief of the Hong Kong bureau of The Epoch Times.

Former Chinese Regime Leader Jiang Zemin Gifted Huge Areas of Chinese Land to Russia and Other Countries

WANG YOUQUN

Commentary

With the island dispute in the South China Sea heating up, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) ought to explain to the Chinese people why former Chinese dictator Jiang Zemin gave away swaths of land 47 times the size of Taiwan to Russia and other neighboring countries—without ever being challenged.

In the Diaoyu Islands dispute between China and Japan, the CCP has insisted that the Diaoyu Islands have been China's territory since ancient times. Then, isn't it true that Vladivostok, which is equivalent to more than 40 times the size of the Diaoyu Islands, has also been China's territory since ancient times? The Chinese name for Vladivostok is Haishenwei, a name from the Manchu language, meaning “a small fishing village by the sea.” In June 1860, it was occupied by the Russian army and renamed Vladivostok, meaning “Conquering the East” or “Ruling the East.” Its Russian name clearly indicates that it was robbed from China to show off Russian military power, and to humiliate China.

According to the Sino-Soviet Friendship and Alliance Treaty signed by the Soviet Union and the Republic of China in 1946, Vladivostok was to

be returned to China 50 years later, in 1996. However, by 1996, the CCP seemed to have forgotten about recovering Vladivostok. And more outrageously, in December 1999, Jiang Zemin gifted Vladivostok unconditionally to Russia!

Since the Opium War of 1840, what country has invaded Chinese territory the most? Not the United States, not Japan, but the Soviet Union and later Russia to the north of China. Chinese territories occupied by the Soviet Union include:

(1) Heixiazi Island, which is 70 times larger than the Diaoyu Islands, was occupied by the Soviets on September 29, 1929.

(2) Tuvan Uriankhai, measuring 170,000 square kilometers, or equivalent in size to China's Guizhou Province, became part the Soviet Union in 1944.

(3) Sakhalin Island, which is twice the size of Taiwan, was occupied by the Soviet army in August 1945.

During the Qing Dynasty, Russia occupied large swaths of Chinese territory:

(1) On May 28, 1858, the Russian government forced the Qing government to sign the Treaty of Aigun, which allowed Russia to forcibly occupy more than 600,000 square kilometers north of Heilongjiang and south of the Xing'an



NEW TANG DYNASTY TV

On Dec. 9, 1999, former Chinese leader Jiang Zemin and then Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed a Sino-Russia border agreement, which fully acknowledged a series of unequal treaties between Russia and the Qing government and unconditionally gave away more than 1 million square kilometers of land in northeast China to Russia.

Mountains.

(2) On November 14, 1860, Russia forced the Qing government to sign the “Beijing Treaty” and seized more than 400,000 square kilometers east of the Ussuri River.

(3) In 1864 and 1881, Russia forced the Qing government to sign the “Distribution of the Northwest Territories” and seized 583,500 square kilometers of land in northwest China. The Chinese territory encroached by Russia, and later the Soviet Union, totaled more than 1.7 million square kilometers!

On Dec. 9, 1999, Jiang Zemin and then Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed a Sino-Russia border agreement, which fully acknowledged a series of unequal treaties between Russia and the Qing government, and unconditionally gave away more than 1 million square kilometers of land in northeast China to Russia. As a result, the Tumen River estuary was

allocated to Russia, and China no longer has an estuary to the Sea of Japan. In addition, Tuvan Uriankhai, which was occupied by the Soviet Union in 1944 without a treaty, was also given to Russia.

In July 2001, Jiang and Yeltsin decided to split the Heixiazi Island, which used to belong to China 100 percent, and gave half of it to Russia.

Jiang also signed a number of border agreements with other countries to unconditionally give away more than 500,000 square kilometers of land in northwest China to several Central Asian countries, including Tajikistan. Part of the Laoshan Mountain, Zheyin Mountain in Yunnan Province and Faka Mountain in Guangxi Province, as well as Bach Long Vi Island, the largest island among all South China Sea islands, were also unconditionally given to Vietnam by Jiang Zemin!

Altogether, Jiang Zemin surrendered 1.7 million square kilometers of land to other countries, equivalent to 47 Taiwan islands in size. How has he been able to get away with that?

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

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

The Impeachment Hearings Are Cancelled Until Further Notice

BRIAN CATES



Commentary
Going into the long-anticipated congressional testimony of former special counsel Robert

Mueller on July 24, Democrats were desperately hoping that somehow Mueller’s comments to the House committees would be a game-changer.

Oh, Mueller’s testimony changed the game, all right. Just not in the way that Democrats were hoping. The hearings were a complete and utter disaster for anyone hoping it would provide any real momentum toward impeachment hearings.

Over the past two and a half years, a picture of Mueller was created by the political establishment of a crack investigator, a sharp, competent prosecutor up to the task of leading a special counsel’s office. Instead, viewers of the hearings found themselves looking at an aged, weary-looking elderly fellow who was often confused, couldn’t seem to hear his questioners, constantly had to have questions repeated to him, and seemed clueless about what was in the official report that bears his name.

This actually happened several times. I’m not exaggerating. Mueller was asked a question about something, he answered he didn’t know or it wasn’t within his purview, only to look confused when he was told he was being asked about something that was contained in his own final report.

Rep. Jim Jordan (R-Ohio) probably elicited the clearest example of this when he questioned Mueller about Maltese professor Joseph Mifsud’s role in helping to launch the FBI’s counterintelligence investigation of the Trump campaign. While pointing out that Mueller’s special counsel team had no problem prosecuting people such as George Papadopoulos and Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn for even minor acts of perjury, Jordan demanded to know why Mifsud was never charged for telling multiple lies to the FBI.

Mueller seemed to be not at all familiar with Mifsud’s name or what Jordan was referring to. Jordan then attempted to walk Mueller through why Mifsud’s perjury mattered. Mueller looked completely lost. When Jordan asked, “Who told Papadopoulos?” that the Russians had “dirt” on Hillary Clinton, Mueller said he couldn’t “get into the evidentiary file,” and then appeared shocked when Jordan told him it was in his own report.

The guy who just spent more than two years investigating all of this appeared to have no grasp of the sequence of events that triggered the start of the FBI’s investigation of the Trump campaign in July 2016. How is that possible?

In case anyone shares Mueller’s obvious confusion on this, I’ll explain it.

Mifsud’s Key Role

Here’s the sequence of events that occurred:

1. Mifsud approached Papadopoulos with claims of being very connected to the Russian government. At one meeting he had with Papadopoulos, Mifsud brings a woman with him who is purported to be Russian President Vladimir Putin’s niece.
2. Mifsud tells Papadopoulos that Russian government officials want to help the Trump campaign win the 2016 election. He tells the young adviser that the Russians have “dirt” on



(L-R) Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) speaks with House Judiciary Committee Chairman Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-NY) during a press conference in New York City on March 20, 2019.

Hillary Clinton that they are willing to share.

3. Later, FBI asset Stefan Halper meets with Papadopoulos and specifically inquires about any untoward or unusual Russian activity that Papadopoulos has encountered. When he relates the Mifsud offer to him, Halper inquires as to whether Papadopoulos intends to accept the offer. Papadopoulos very strongly tells Halper in no uncertain terms that it would be treason.
4. Papadopoulos is later approached by Australia’s High Commissioner to the UK, Alexander Downer. Papadopoulos had never met Downer before and his suspicions were immediately aroused when Downer turned the conversation to Russia.
5. Despite his misgivings, it appears Papadopoulos relates Mifsud’s offer of Russian aid to the Trump campaign. This information makes its way to the FBI, and as a result, FBI Director James Comey, Deputy Director Andrew McCabe, and top agent Peter Strzok launch the FBI’s Crossfire Hurricane investigation into the Trump campaign on July 31, 2016.

Jordan wanted an answer as to why this key, central figure whose activity in approaching Papadopoulos literally launched three years of all of this—the FBI investigation and then the special counsel investigation—was allowed to lie multiple times to

federal investigators and then walk away scot-free. Mueller had no answer.

Mueller especially didn’t want to address questions about whether Mifsud, far from being a real Russian agent, was actually sent to Papadopoulos by the FBI to make a fake offer, so as to entrap him.

Mueller also appeared to not be familiar with the political operative firm Fusion GPS, something that many people find simply incredible, given the central role the firm played in hiring Christopher Steele to create his now-infamous anti-Trump dossier.

Two Main Stages of the Collusion Hoax

People need to remember how we got here.

We didn’t learn about Papadopoulos’s drunken bar chat with Downer being the “trigger” for the Crossfire Hurricane investigation into the Trump campaign until early 2018.

Prior to that, it was speculation and allegations leaked from the notorious Steele dossier during the 2016 campaign and then the publication of the dossier itself by BuzzFeed in January 2017 that launched the full-blown Trump-Russia collusion hoax in the mainstream media.

One “stage” was launched by the Clinton campaign hiring Fusion GPS to create the Steele dossier and then paying Steele and Fusion GPS co-founder Glenn Simpson to shop the allegations to U.S. news media all during the campaign cycle.

The other “stage” was the launch of the investigations into the Trump campaign, based on very shaky evidence.

Mueller’s team appears not to have looked into either the Steele dossier or the antics of Mifsud, Halper, and Australia’s then-High Commissioner to the UK, Alexander Downer.

It was widely assumed that the special counsel’s office spent the past two years thoroughly investigating both stages of the collusion hoax. If Mueller’s report itself hadn’t made it crystal-clear this was not the case, his testimony on July 24 certainly did. Mueller’s team appears not to have looked into either the Steele dossier or the antics of Mifsud, Halper, and Downer.

A Final Conclusion to Impeachment Hysteria
The expectation was that after Mueller testified and dropped a bombshell or two that the Democrats could move full-speed-ahead to impeachment hearings in the House.

And now? House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has had to rebuff House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler (D-N.Y.) and firmly put the brakes on any movement to impeachment hearings since the Mueller testimony turned out to be the opposite of what they expected.

It was almost two weeks ago that a resolution introduced onto the House floor to begin impeachment proceedings against President Trump went down to a most embarrassing lopsided defeat. How bad was it? One hundred thirty-seven Democrats crossed the aisle to vote with Republicans against the resolution.

After that train wreck of a hearing, I don’t see the Democratic leadership allowing another impeachment vote any time soon.

Brian Cates is a writer based in South Texas and author of “Nobody Asked For My Opinion ... But Here It Is Anyway!” He can be reached on Twitter at @drawandstrike

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

High Commissioner of Australia to the United Kingdom Alexander Downer arrives at Downing Street in central London on March 22, 2017.



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ABOUT US

The Epoch Times is a media organisation dedicated to seeking the truth through insightful and independent journalism.

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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.)

For complex historical reasons, including social and individual, some groups have a lower political and socio-economic position, which cannot be simply explained as oppression. But political correctness draws an artificial boundary in people’s minds. It sets up a binary, positing that only those who agree with the claims of political correctness are to be considered moral, while those who dissent are accused of being racist, sexist, homophobic, anti-Islam, and so on.

Universities, which should promote a culture of free expression, have become prisons for the mind. The world is silenced and unable to openly and sincerely grapple with a number of issues in politics, economics, and culture. Under the name of political correctness, some organizations further push traditional religion out of the public sphere. Furthermore, some countries have expanded the definition of “hate speech,” implemented this expanded definition in law, and thus used the law to force schools, media, and internet companies to conform. This is a step toward the same strictures on speech as found in communist states.

After the 2016 U.S. presidential election, the United States became further divided. Protest marches erupted in major cities, and violations of freedom of speech occurred with greater frequency.

In September 2017, an appearance by conservative author Ben Shapiro, who had been invited to speak at the University of California–Berkeley, was derailed due to Antifa’s threats to provoke violent conflict. Berkeley police stood ready and dispatched three police helicopters; the security expenses were estimated to be more than \$600,000. A reporter asked a young student protester, “What about the First Amendment?” The student said it was no longer a relevant document.

Within the Socialist International, socialist democracy and democratic socialism were almost identical. They both promoted the idea that socialism is the new system that will replace capitalism.

Ironically, one signature event that marked the start of the student movement in 1964 was a fight for freedom of speech at Berkeley. These days, the Left uses the right to speech in its attempts to deprive others of having a legitimate outlet for their own voice.

In March 2017, American social scientist Charles Murray was invited to speak at Middlebury College in Vermont. While there, he was physically assaulted and an accompanying professor at the college was injured. In March 2018, tenured professor Amy Wax of the University of Pennsylvania School of Law was relieved of some teaching duties after publishing a “politically incorrect” article. Other organizations, acting

under the banner of opposing hate speech, have labeled regular conservative groups as “hate groups.” In addition, there have been cases of conservative authors and scholars being threatened regarding speaking at or attending various events.

The intrusion on freedom of speech by the Left is not part of normal debate between people with differing ideas. Instead, it’s about the specter of communism using people with ill intent, provoking them to obscure the truth and suppress righteous, or at least normal, voices. Political correctness, in essence, is about substituting deviant political and moral standards for righteous ones; it is the devil’s thought police.

9. The Spread of Socialism in Europe

The Socialist International grew from the Second International, founded by Engels in 1889. At the time of establishment of the Second International, there existed more than 100 political parties around the world that were founded on Marxism. Of them, 66 were ruling parties that adhered to socialism in their respective countries. The name “Socialist International” originated in 1951 after World War II and consisted of social democratic parties from around the world.

There are socialist parties descended from the Second International everywhere in Europe, with many of them even becoming ruling parties. The early socialists included Lenin, who encouraged violent revolution, and people like Karl Johann Kautsky and Eduard Bernstein, who promoted progressive reform. Within the Socialist International, socialist democracy and democratic socialism were almost identical. They both promoted the idea that socialism is the new system that will replace capitalism. Currently, the Socialist International consists of more than 160 organizations and members. It is the largest international political organization in the world.

The European Socialist Party, active in the European Parliament, is also an alliance organization of the Socialist International. Its members are the social democratic parties of the EU and surrounding countries. It is also a political party within the European Parliament, established in 1992, whose membership comprises the majority of European organizations, including the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the European Council.

As of now, the European Socialist Party has 32 party members from 25 countries of the EU and Norway, eight associate members, and five observers, for a total of 45 political parties. It engages in an immense range of activities. The main objectives claimed by the European Socialist Party itself are to strengthen the socialist and social democratic movement within the EU and throughout Europe and to develop close cooperation between member parties, parliamentary groups, and the like. Essentially, it works to vigorously promote the socialist cause.

The Swedish Social Democratic Party, the ruling party of Sweden, openly claims that it uses Marxism as its theoretical guide. During the several decades under its rule, it promoted the socialist ideologies of equality and welfare. Portraits of Marx and Engels still hang in the party’s halls today.

The guiding principles of the UK’s Labor Party are based on Fabian socialism. As discussed earlier, Fabian socialism is simply another version of Marxism, but stresses using

gradual methods to effect the transition from socialism to communism. It also advocates high taxes, high welfare benefits, and other socialist ideas. The Labor Party became the ruling party of England many times in recent decades and has always advocated Fabian socialist ideas.

The British Communist Party has also been very active in trying to influence British politics, even running its own newspaper, The Morning Star. The British Communist Party was established in 1920, and during its peak, had Party members elected into the House of Commons. At the start of recent elections in England, the British Communist Party suddenly announced that it intends to support the leading left-wing politician of the Labor Party.

Non-communist countries in Europe are all intentionally or unintentionally promoting and hosting communist ideologies and policies. To say Europe is ‘in enemy hands’ is not an exaggeration.

One important member of the Labor Party has spent 40 years promoting nationalization of assets and socialism. In September 2015, he became head of the Labor Party, with an overwhelming lead of 60 percent. This politician has for years been a prominent participant in LGBT events and activities. When a BBC reporter enquired about his views on Marx, he praised Marx as a great economist and a “fascinating figure who observed a great deal and from whom we can learn a great deal.”

The Socialist Party is France’s largest center-left political party and a member of the Socialist International (SI) and Party of European Socialists (PES). Its presidential nominee was elected to lead the country in 2012.

Italian veteran communist Antonio Gramsci not only founded the Communist Party of Italy in 1921, but also served as its general secretary. Up until the 1990s, the Communist Party of Italy was very active, for a long time maintaining its position as the second-largest political party. In 1991, the party was renamed the Democratic Party of the Left.

Germany is no exception; it is the birthplace of Marx and Engels, and home to the influential Frankfurt School, another expression of Marxism.

Other European countries, like Spain, Portugal, and others all have very active communist political parties with significant influence. All of Europe, not only Eastern European countries, is dominated by communism. Non-communist countries in northern Europe, southern Europe, and Western Europe are all intentionally or unintentionally promoting and hosting communist ideologies and policies. To say Europe is “in enemy hands” is not an exaggeration.

See next week’s edition for the next installment.

The Degrees of Fake News

MARK HENDRICKSON



Commentary

Fake news has been around for a long time. Mark Twain once quipped, “Those who do not read newspapers are uninformed; those who do read newspapers are misinformed.”

Indeed, the problems of accuracy and veracity aren’t confined to newspapers but infect every media today. Remember the old saying that the victors get to write history? How true. History books rarely present balanced, impartial accounts of the past, but inevitably are tinted by the beliefs, prejudices, perspectives, and agendas of whoever tells the story.

Even if writers aren’t in thrall to a particular ideological orientation, there’s the “Rashomon effect,” named after a famous Japanese movie. “Rashomon” showed how different characters witness the same event and come away with vastly different perceptions and accounts of what happened. The moral: Human testimony is highly subjective and often unreliable.

My own dealings with journalists have convinced me that most reports contain inaccuracies and distortions. The crucial factor is discerning when those distortions are innocuous and unintentional, and when they’re deliberate and malicious. Following are three personal experiences:

A national reporter came to my home to interview me about a nationally prominent individual who went to school with me. When I heard his finished report on the radio, it contained three factual errors that contradicted what I had told him. In this case, the motive wasn’t malicious; the reporter simply wanted to embellish his story. There were no misrepresentations of the public figure. Still, I felt



DON RYPKA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Reporter Helen Thomas as she questions former US President Ronald Reagan during a press conference at the White House on March 19, 1987.

uncomfortable, because anyone who went to school with me and the other fellow might have thought that I was the one doing the embellishing when I wasn’t.

A second incident happened during the financial crisis of 2008. A regional television reporter drove to my home to interview me. In that election year, I went to great lengths to explain that both parties shared the blame. Imagine my shock, then, when I watched the reporter’s story on TV. Rather than playing back our recorded interview, his “summation” of my thoughts twisted my meaning so radically that I came across like a partisan loyalist. It definitely was fake news. After I cooled down, though, I concluded that the intent wasn’t malicious. It was simply the unfortunate and unavoidable product of my message being filtered through that reporter’s perception of the world.

A third personal experience demonstrated the dangerous type

of fake news. In the mid-1980s, while visiting Washington, D.C., I stopped by the editorial offices of a publication for which I had done some writing. They asked if I’d like to use their press credentials to attend a press conference with leaders of the Nicaraguan Contras later that afternoon. Since I had been following developments in Central America closely, I jumped at the opportunity.

What an eye-opener that press conference was! Sitting among the Washington press corps before the Contras arrived, I felt like I was witnessing a gang of thugs plot an ambush. There was no pretense of impartiality. Many of the reporters there were openly enamored of Nicaragua’s Marxist ruler Daniel Ortega—he of the cool mustache and designer eyeglasses—whose major “achievement” had been to redistribute wealth from friends of Somoza to friends of Ortega, even as Nicaragua’s economy languished.

Ortega’s media allies didn’t even bother paying attention to what the Contra leaders said during the press conference. The reporters were too busy chomping at the bit, waiting to trash the Contras and to bash President Ronald Reagan for supporting the Contras’ anti-communist insurgency. The reporters had an agenda. Objectivity and truth-telling were no part of it. They were rude and blatantly scornful toward the Contras. They couldn’t wait to file their stories painting Nicaragua’s anti-communist resistance in the most unflattering light. It was sickening. It wasn’t just unprofessional; it was journalistic malpractice.

Those reporters in the D.C. press pool were propagandists, the kings and queens of fake news. And so are many of their successors today. They’ve abandoned any pretense of balanced reporting. They consider themselves the vanguard of righteous political causes. They no longer respect their audience enough to report the two (or more) sides of important issues, but instead arrogantly try to tell people what to think. Sad to say, there’s a lot of fake news out there.

In the Gospel of John (8:32), Jesus says, “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” Today, there are journalists with illiberal agendas who don’t want us to be free, and so they do their best to obscure the truth. As the Romans would say, Caveat lector (Let the reader beware).

Mark Hendrickson, an economist, recently retired from the faculty of Grove City College, where he remains a fellow for economic and social policy at the Institute for Faith & Freedom.

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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EXPLORING CRETE

My Heraklion in a Day

There's nothing more deeply honest and authentically Cretan than these neighborhoods where cafe culture rules.

See B4



PHIL BUTLER



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INTERPERSONAL

Empathy Doesn't Make You a Pushover

Study finds prosocial people are less aggressive in competition—but win in the long run.

See B10

AUGUST 1-7, 2019 B1

LIFE

THE EPOCH TIMES

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Hunter, the author's nephew, flips off the side of the boat.

LEAPING

Into the Blue

A family trip through the Greek Islands

TIM JOHNSON

M ILOS, Greece—Hunter, age 10, had awaited this moment for months—leaping from a moon-scape, into the endless, deepest blue, since the second he saw it on brochure back home. Shipping out from Piraeus a few days before, standing on the top deck, the hillside lights of Athens fading in the background, I had asked my niece and nephew what they most anticipated on the voyage. Brooke, 13, gave an answer that was almost poetic. “The beautiful white buildings, and the beaches, and a new something to see, every day,” she told me. Hunter, 10, was much more straightforward. “Jumping off the rocks,” he said, without hesitation.

But now, standing on the precipice of the lunar landscape at Sarakiniko Beach on the quiet island of Milos, Hunter is having second thoughts. After a morning of gleefully flipping off the forward decks of a wooden sailboat, the long—much-longer—drop down a small cliff is giving him pause. Striding to the edge to look off the precipitous edge, he retreats back to get a pep talk from his mom. And then, a minute later, having crouched and flexed and otherwise drummed up his courage, Hunter ran, and leapt, the cheers of other swimmers rising up as he dropped, safely and with a splash, into the cold Aegean waters below.

On the first day, we rent four-wheeled all-terrain vehicles, going a little off-script—and off-road.

I’m sailing through the Greek Islands with family. Accustomed to solo sojourns—I’ve traveled to all seven continents, often alone—this is a rare treat to be joined by my sister, Lisa, brother-in-law, Jeremy, and Brooke and Hunter. Sailing round-trip from the Athenian port of Piraeus, we’re aboard the Celestyal Crystal. Smaller than most cruise ships, the Crystal is a vessel designed for the

destination, remaining much longer in port and visiting more islands than many others. We make five stops along the way, staying longer and later than bigger ships, which weigh anchor and sail away while the Crystal remains—in Mykonos, our first port-of-call, we remain overnight, allowing us to take an

Continued on B2

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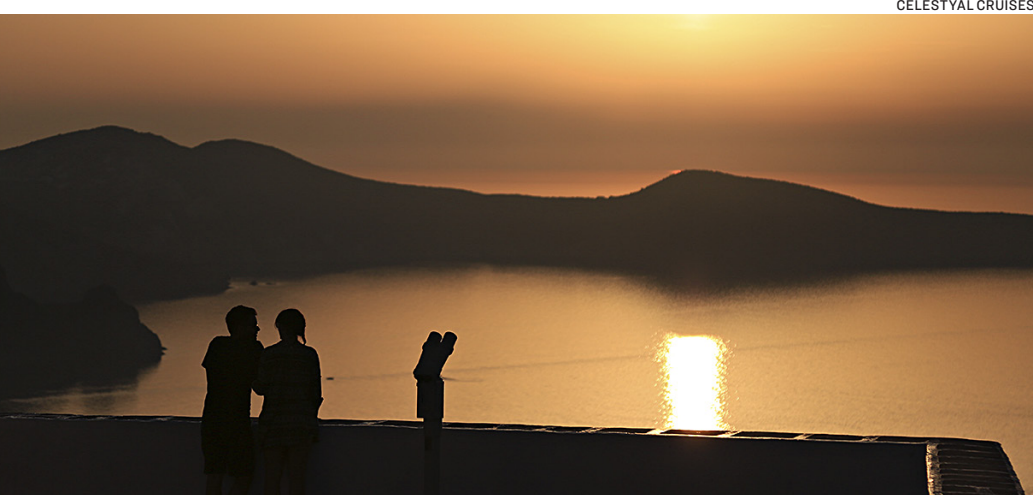


The windmills on Mykonos.

LEAPING *Into the Blue*



A fresco at the Knossos Palace in Crete.



Sunset view from Milos.

Continued from B1

evening culinary tour. After a morning of walking around Little Venice and exploring windmills, we spend the afternoon relaxing at Mykonos Theoxenia Hotel, lounging by the pool, eating a huge feta-filled lunch, and otherwise enjoying the sun.

As the day fades, we drum up more appetite and join a small group, making our way into the maze of streets in the island's main town—so-designed, our guide tells us, to confuse pirates, who once frequently raided here. We visit a bakery built into an old home—the walls thick, to keep it cool—trying both spinach and cheese pies handmade with phyllo and baked in a wooden oven (Brooke and Hunter both preferred the cheese). We also sample traditional Mykonian sausage in a table set up in the municipal gardens, as well as a generous spread of local food gathered from farmers, outside a shop near the top of the town, fig spread and cheeses and olives, Hunter's favorite. As we part ways with the guide, I attempt to shake her hand at the precise moment she turns away to answer a question from another guest, leaving me hanging. "Nice one," Brooke says, ever-watchful, and always happy to give her uncle a hard time, sporting a bit of a smug smile. "That was awkward."

We continue on to Milos, and then Santorini, where the ship remains anchored for two whole days. On the first, we rent four-wheeled all-terrain vehicles, going a little off-script—and off-road. My sister has never driven one, and she is tentative during the initial lesson, looking nervous, revving the engine unevenly. "Would the lady like another lesson?" the rental shop owner asks us, a little nervous himself, eyeing his expensive machine.

But soon we're off, anyway, Brooke riding behind Lisa, Hunter piggybacking on Jeremy's four-wheeler, winding through Fira town and down a spiraling street,

headed for the beach. Lisa and Brooke drive in front of me, and Brooke routinely turns her head, gazing behind—I'm told, later, at the behest of her mother, to spot any fast cars coming up behind us. I notice that they knock helmets every so often, chatting between them. I ask Lisa, later, what Brooke was telling her. "She said it's amazing, that she's so glad we're doing this!" my sister recalled. "And she kept yelling out, 'We're in Santorini! On ATVs!'"

We arrive at the black-sand beaches that line the east side of the island, the kids dashing into the blue water for a swim, all of us later taking a walk along the picturesque village of Kamari, passing hotels and restaurants lining a beachside boardwalk. The next day, we climb to the top of the still-active volcano that sits in the middle of the Santorini's caldera, then swim to nearby hot springs. Later, we see the famous fading light at Oia, home to some of one of the world's most photographed sunsets.

Our family develops regular routines on board the ship, too. For dinner almost every night, we dress up and dine at one of two formal restaurants, enjoying multiple courses, little Hunter always getting a little extra attention from the staff (on the first day, he leaned over to me and said, with a huge smile, "I'm getting treated!"). We take a tour of the bridge, and the kids learn how to chart a course. In the evening, we become regulars at the nightly karaoke sessions. None of us talented singers, we nonetheless get up and belt out "Summer of '69" and "Livin' on a Prayer" with Brooke and Hunter and a friend they made on board performing a three-part rendition of a song they know well—"Jingle Bells."

We tour the famous Palace at Knossos on Crete, spending the rest of the day at the beach, then spend a day at Ephesus, in Turkey, exploring the reconstructed ruins. En route back to Piraeus on our final evening at sea, I reflect on the fact that, while this was the first visit to Greece for my family, it was ultimately a journey of discovery,

At every port of call, Brooke and Hunter pointed out things I would've never noticed alone.



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A family photo on the top deck of the Crystal.

TIM JOHNSON



Oia town in Santorini.

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WHEN YOU GO

CELESTYAL CRUISES, a Greece-based line, focuses on the destination, with two mid-sized ships that visit various Greek Islands. Ships stay longer on each island—our seven-day itinerary included two full days (and one night) off Santorini, long evenings in most islands (including Mykonos), as well as visits to quieter, less-crowded places like Milos. They also offer an all-inclusive experience, with drink packages and select excursions included.



The view from the balcony.

CELESTYAL CRUISES

THE FOUR SEASONS ASTIR PALACE is one of Athens' most storied hotels, host to movie stars and royalty at its apex, recently reopened and re-flagged this spring after a massive, top-to-bottom renovation. The property features bungalows with private plunge pools, three beaches, and multiple pools, right on the Aegean Sea.

TURKISH AIRLINES connects the United States and Canada with Greece, including New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Toronto. Flights connect in Istanbul at the city's brand-new airport, set to become the world's largest hub. Business class includes lie-flat beds and access to their lounge, which includes multiple food stations, roving massage therapists, and private suites larger than some hotel rooms.

for me, seeing sometimes familiar destinations in a new way. At every port-of-call, Brooke and Hunter pointed out things I would've never noticed alone—cats and dogs, often, but also small details, along with flowers and butterflies, in one case, a tortoise. They also pushed me to do things I wouldn't try if I were on my own. Like, for example, jumping off the deck of the Odyssey on Milos. I'd tried to stay dry, taking photos of the rest of the family, my book ready to read once the rest of them got into the water.

But the kids weren't having it. "Uncle, you need to jump in!," they encouraged me, rather persistently—until I did. Climbing up to the flat railing, I peered over the edge, and gathered up my own bit of courage for the jump. And then, I went—my right foot slipping on the wood, in the process. I dropped like a rock, all turtled up, and entered the water at an unflattering angle. Objectively, it wasn't the finest moment of my life—a little embarrassing, actually. But splashing up in that blue Aegean water, refreshed, surrounded by people I love, I felt very happy.

Toronto-based writer Tim Johnson is always traveling, in search of the next great story. Having visited 140 countries across all seven continents, he's tracked lions on foot in Botswana, dug for dinosaur bones in Mongolia, and walked among a half-million penguins on South Georgia Island. He contributes to some of North America's largest publications, including CNN Travel, Bloomberg, and The Globe and Mail. He was a guest of Celestyal Cruises.



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(Left) A fish taverna overlooks the Old Venetian Harbor. (Right) Koules, the Venetian fortress guarding the harbor.

(Top L) The Lions Square and Morosini Fountain. (Top R) A waiter at Philosophies, where the bougatsa is a must-try. (Above) A narrow city street in the center of Heraklion.

My Heraklion in a Day

MIHAELA LICA-BUTLER

This is my Heraklion: I wake up and after all the usual morning routines I cross the street and greet the baker whose eyes are so disturbingly blue that turquoise makes no sense. Her son has the same eyes, and they contrast beautifully with his tan and a perfect smile. Then, mother and son say “Kalimera”—which is “good morning”—all so normal, but when it’s said with so much joy of life, it’s pure logic and it makes your day. I buy the usual – cheese pie, loukanikopita (possibly the equivalent of a “pig in a blanket”), donuts, and bread so white and fluffy you’d think you are biting into air. I get some other baked goods on the house, because, you see, while it’s customarily OK to tip on Crete, the norm is for them to show how much they appreciate doing business with you by giving you a small complimentary token. And they are very generous about it.

Heraklion may not be fascinating for tourists in its residential parts, where traffic jams happen, and scooters zoom by unexpectedly, but it’s epic. There’s nothing more deeply honest and authentically Cretan than these neighborhoods where kafeneío (cafe) culture rules and small mom-and-pop mini-market owners welcome you with an open smile and that jolly kalimera that sounds like the strums of the lyra.

Heraklion, with its melodic name derived from Heracles, must be of celestial descent. Granted, it only appeared on the map in the 820s, thousands of years after the glorious rule of the Minoans at Knossos, but it’s the throbbing heart of the island. There must be a reason why Cretans cluster around the Morosini Fountain after they walk all the way up the 25 August Street from Koules—the Venetian fortress guarding the Old Harbor—past the fish market, and then lazily browsing from one souvenir shop to the next, until they reach the most happening square in town. As rich and deep as the history of the plaza goes, sometimes, I think it’s just the bougatsa.

Bougatsa is either a cinnamon-powdered semolina phyllo-pastry dessert or a savory snack—and that’s what makes it so appealing to different people. It’s a foodie must-try in Heraklion, and Philosophies serves wonderfully melt-in-your-mouth bites. Literally nothing—but nothing—beats its location.

The Morosini Fountain is one of Heraklion’s cherished city symbols. If you are a first-time visitor, you’ll notice the architectural features; they are reminiscent of so many Italian artesian landmarks. It’s Venetian, after all, named for Francesco Morosini, the Dodge of Venice and Duke of Crete who ordered it built to bring fresh water to the city from the countryside. The Loggia across

It may be annoying for some, but I favor the Cretan ‘siga siga’ (slowly-slowly) philosophy.



The author, with fishing boats in the background.

the street is a Morosini too. But maybe you are not here to reminisce about Heraklion’s rich and glorious Venetian past. Whatever brings you here, the Lions Square is quintessentially Cretan: all surrounded by taverns, loud, and busy, with people rushing on or strolling by from all directions, not counting the five-minute rotation of beggars interrupting your meal often enough to make you a little uncomfortable but not enough to leave. You’ll understand the appeal of the site soon after you sit down and the waiter brings to the table a glass of fresh water.

“I didn’t order this,” you think if you are a first-time visitor. The complimentary glass of ice-cold water is a common courtesy in the summer. You’ll get it everywhere, from the neighborhood tavernas to the central kafeneío. Every establishment worth a salt will welcome you with a glass of fresh water. As far as taking your order any time soon ... well, that’s another story. There’s always a waiter or a maitre d’ of sorts in front of the tavern rushing to lure you in, but when his job is done, the service provided by the rest of the staff is not always up to par—it doesn’t matter where you go.

It may be annoying for some, but I favor the Cretan “siga siga” (slowly-slowly) philosophy. Waiting gives me time to notice the little toddler wobbling behind a pigeon; young teenagers with Rapunzel-like hair rushing to catch the next sale; and the elderly couples walking hand in hand, their heads facing upwards to contemplate some architectural details no one else cares about. Nothing beats people watching at the Morosini Fountain.

There’s an intoxicating vanilla aroma in the air from the several cafes and vaflaki (waffle) shops around. You’ll also see huge stray dogs with eyes like icons. They are not dangerous, and contrary to what you may believe, they don’t live unhappy lives. They are a part of life here and people—shop owners, residents, and even tourists—care for them deeply. These large beasts are uncannily meek, but they go crazy when cats cross them. Ordinarily, you will not see the Cretan cats around the strays.

From here I go shopping. I can hardly resist the souvenir boutiques lining the avenue left and right along the way. The aggressivity of the sellers makes me cringe: for how do you say no to that kalimera I told you about and their bright eyes and smiles? And, they will always give you “a special deal, just for you.”

There’s nothing I need in a souvenir shop, but I usually end up buying an overpriced olive wood spoon or a kitchen cloth just because these people are so intoxicatingly kind, cheerful, and friendly. Somehow, I make it through the tourist area, and I find the “normal” local shops, where Heraklion residents happen to spend long minutes

touching every item of clothing or looking for the special deals. Watching them is a lesson in courtesy and propriety. These are also the best shops: they have loads of made in Greece items that are not priced for tourists.

There are also scores of second-hand stores selling garments for something in-between 2 and 5 euros each. If you are into vintage—and I love my vintage—there are so many unique treasures on these shelves. You just need time and patience to search, albeit you may not always get lucky. This is OK, and if you still feel like spending a small bill, the perfume shops peppered around the city will sell you counterfeit fragrances for pennies per bottle. Unless you have the nose of a bloodhound, the scent will fade in about an hour or so.

I end my day with a stop at Elektra’s mini-market. Maybe I’ll be buying locally-grown avocados that are as small as a baby’s fist or oranges and lemons for juicing. This stop is another highlight of my day; Elektra owns the shop, but now she’s pregnant, and her brother, Mihalís, takes care of business. He doesn’t speak English, and, as you guessed it, I don’t speak Greek. And here come the kalimera, the smiles, the “parakalo” (“please” or “you are welcome” depending on the context), and the point-at-it-if-you-cannot-say-it habits that make life in Heraklion so deeply personal and fun. You’ll want to buy at such a mom-and-pop mini-market and not from the chain supermarkets because the service is better, and the produce is fresh and comes from local farms. Plus, there’s something spiritual about interacting face to face with Cretan people.

My Heraklion is larger than life, strong, vibrant, and loud. It’s my neighbor’s laundry hanging off the rail of her balcony out in the open where we can all see her towels, underpants, and fancy dresses. Heraklion is the colorful bougainvilleas annoyingly clawing at walls and fences like weeds that learned a trick or two to make us believe in the magic of fuchsia. This city is the restaurant around the corner, where you can eat until you burst for 15 euros including drinks while tourists pay 50 euros at Peskesi. My Heraklion is also Thanos, the taxi driver who brings my mom from the airport every time she comes to visit and doesn’t charge me a dime. Because you don’t make mommas pay.

My city has a big heart but if you don’t open yours, you may miss its beating warmth. My city is walking barefoot on the beach and taking in that air that brings back a decade of life wasted adulthood. It’s swimming until your face scorches under the sun. To understand Heraklion, you must learn to understand “siga siga”—that “take it easy” or “slowly slowly” philosophy that opens your eyes to the magic of the moment. Get off the beaten path, smile, be open, and don’t forget “kalimera” and “parakalo.”

A former military journalist, Mihaela Lica-Butler is a senior partner at Argophilia Travel News. Besides her work as a PR pro and travel journalist, she spends her time writing children’s fairy tales and cookbooks.

ALL PHOTOS BY CHANNALY PHILIPP/THE EPOCH TIMES



The French Quarter.

Insider’s Guide to New Orleans

CHANNALY PHILIPP

If New Orleans is in your traveling plans, recommendations and tips from locals can come in handy. Here, three New Orleans residents weigh in with suggestions, from iconic experiences to under-the-radar gems. Erika, Hattie, and John-Michael also offer more insights on Cool Cousins, an app that connects visitors with personalized recommendations from vetted locals in 100 cities around the world.

Erika, 28, artist

What Are the New Orleans Spots a First-Time Visitor Can’t Miss?
Frenchmen Street for live music, Royal Street for art galleries, a streetcar ride through the Garden District, boiled seafood from one of the Cajun Seafood locations, beignets from Cafe du Monde, charbroiled oysters, Creole cuisine from Neyows, and I suppose checking out Bourbon Street to see what all the fuss is about. There are many tours to choose from but if you can book a swamp tour that place can be pretty magical. Don’t forget your bug spray!

Which Neighborhood Is Best to Experience During the Day? And Night?
If we’re talking about a one-stop shop for all things from shopping, eating, drinking, and partying, I would have to go with the French Quarter. During the day grabbing a coffee or cocktail and taking a stroll down Royal Street to dip in and out of art galleries is a great option to start. There are many restaurants that offer great lunch specials such as Sobou, which is a part of the Commander’s Palace family. Around the corner, you will find Nola Cycles where you can rent a bike or scooter to get off your feet for a bit and explore the quarter faster. Watch out for potholes! Happy Hours galore and lots of dinner options abound!

“**Tipping is crucial, but the service is outstanding and the prices are reasonable, so it’s breezy to tip well in the Big Easy.**

John-Michael, musician and recording studio owner

What’s the One Place in New Orleans You Think Is Underrated?
I would have to say my current neighborhood of Mid-City. There really are a lot of hidden gems like Katie’s Restaurant, Evangeline Lounge, Vessel, and Bayou Wine and Beer Garden that are awesome spots to check out.

Hattie, 33, artist and creative consultant

What Are the New Orleans Spots a First-time Visitor Can’t Miss?
The notable spots of the city, like the Carousel Bar, Galatoire’s, Tipitina’s, the St. Charles Streetcar, and Audubon Park are all amazing landmarks of our city. But I’d suggest traveling a bit off the beaten path—go have my favorite dinner at Ye Olde College Inn (wedge salad, cup of gumbo, dirty martini), rent a Blue Bike and ride down Esplanade from NOMA to the French Quarter, catch a show at d.b.a., snack on beignets from Morning Call in City Park. There are so many little gems throughout the city that offer a true glimpse of what life is like here.

Where Do You Take Your Guest When You Want to Impress?
Commander’s Palace for lunch—25 cent martinis can’t be beat.

Tomorrow’s Your Last Day in New Orleans. How Do You Spend It?
Up early, beignets at Morning Call, walk through Audubon Park, 3-martini lunch at Commander’s Palace, bar hopping in the Quarter, hopefully there’s a Saints game that evening to watch at Fat Harry’s, dinner at



Ye Olde College Inn, drinks at Henry’s Bar on Magazine to end the night.

John-Michael, 33, musician and recording studio owner

Do’s and Don’ts in New Orleans
Pay attention, trust your gut. Don’t walk with your head down on your phone. When your intuition tells you to talk to a stranger during the day, take the time to stop and make a new friend. And then if you’re out at night and it tells you to keep it moving, listen. Look people in the eyes and say hello, and lose track of time. Also, two-thirds of our economy is based on hospitality and tourism, so we are very much a service-industry city. Tipping is crucial, but the service is outstanding and the prices are reasonable, so it’s breezy to tip well in the Big Easy. Get a drink to-go in between stops.

Which Neighborhood Is Best to Experience During the Day? And Night?
Daytime: Algiers Point, just across the River on the ferry. Nighttime: Oak Street Uptown.

Where Would You Take a Date for a Romantic Night Out?
Mona Lisa on Royal Street in the French Quarter. My grandfather grew up across the street and would sleep out on the balcony during the summer nights, so it’s a special block for me for sure from May-September.

Special Views That Mainstream Tourists Don’t Know About

The observation deck at the Omni Royal Orleans hotel in the French Quarter on Royal Street. Take the elevator up to the pool and bar and then up the stairs to the deck. Next is in between the Crescent City Connection bridges that cross the Mississippi River. Last would be anywhere along Lake Pontchartrain for sunset. We have several restaurants in the area, too (e.g. Blue Crab).

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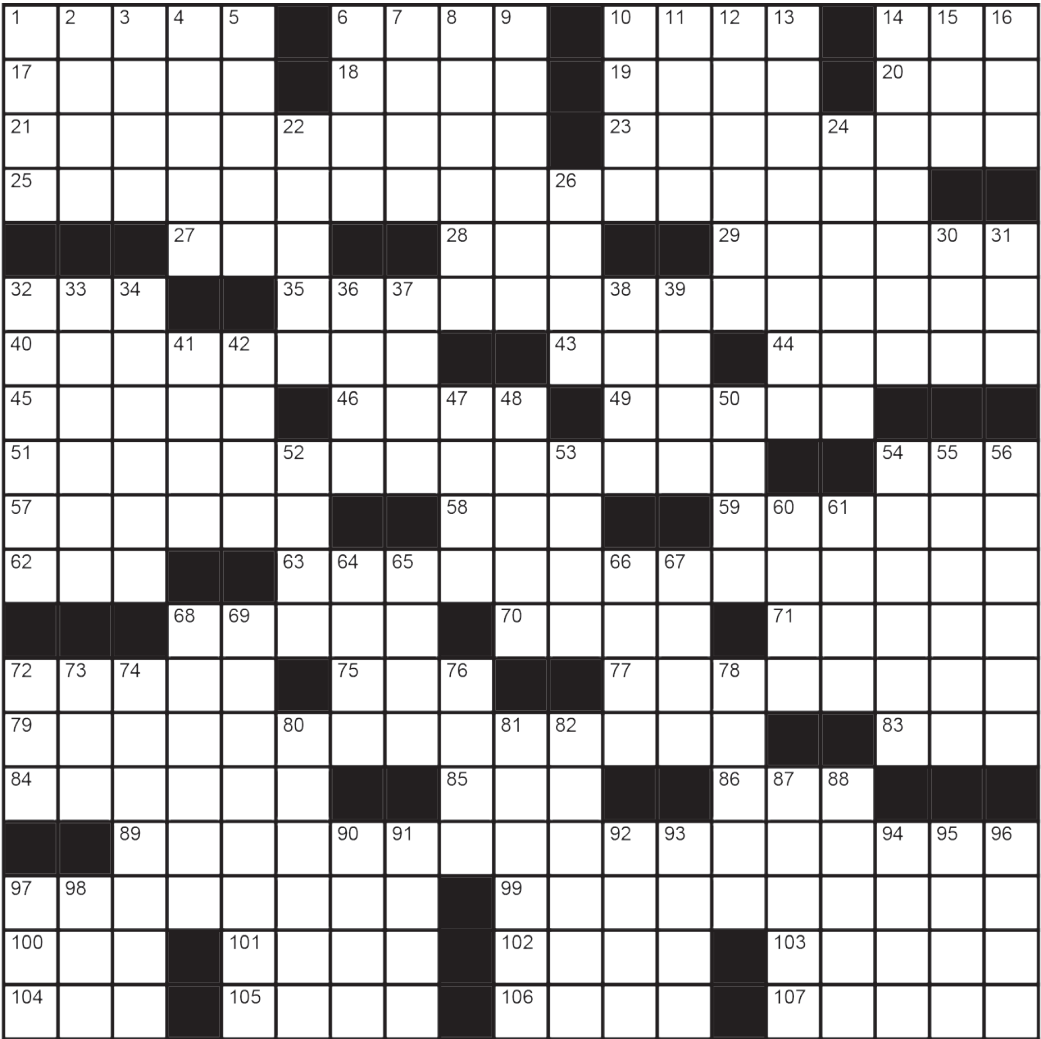
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* Use American spelling to enjoy these puzzles made by our parent company in New York.

CROSSWORD

CONSTRUCTED BY TOM HOUSTON
EPOCH TIMES STAFF



Across

1. Russian dish served with caviar
6. Court order
10. Slugger Williams
14. 100 lbs.
17. Toxic bean protein
18. A shot
19. Something often twisted apart
20. Yellowfin tuna
21. Doctor, at times
23. Sign of cheap vino?
25. Methohexital or Propofol, e.g.
27. Pitcher, of a sort
28. Belief
29. Audible
32. Earth Summit site
35. One was at Gettysburg
40. Americano starter
43. Go a-courting
44. Bottom deck
45. Carry on
46. Easy gait
49. Cinnabon treat
51. New Year skylight
54. Canal locale
57. Christmas decoration
58. ____ particle
59. A dangerous thing to fall into
62. Actors' union
63. Obstacle training

locations

68. "Ziegfeld Follies," for one
70. Case for a seamstress
71. Part of a turtle shell
72. Peachy city
75. Lawyer's thing
77. Bucolic
79. 1/4 or 3/5, but not 4/3
83. Capital of Louisiana?
84. Biological categories
85. Damp and chilly
86. Driver's license, fingers, irises
89. Gandhi strategy
97. World's largest volcano
99. Toddler
100. Dummy
101. Verification
102. The life of Riley
103. Queued (with "up")
104. Coin- ____ (laundromats)
105. Scots Gaelic
106. Dark loaves
107. Egret descriptor

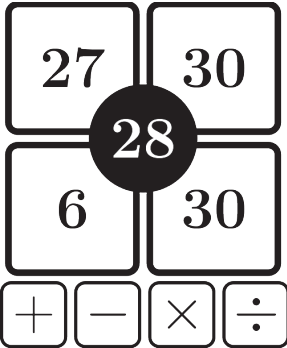
Down

1. AWOL swab's quarters
2. "What's your sign?" once
3. Computer image
4. Warmer and sunnier
5. Get used (to)
6. Prosperity
7. Hindu Festival of Lights honoree
8. Representative
9. Separate wheat from chaff
10. The bulk
11. Shoe part
12. Mezzo Berganza
13. One way to slug it out
14. Jeer
15. "Teenage Wasteland" artist with "The"
16. Hint
22. Arctic dwellers
24. Bitterly cold
26. Old World duck
30. "Classical" start
31. Cooking meas.
32. Participates in another take
33. Bay of Naples isle
34. ____ out
36. A beach may surround it
37. Cat's-paw
38. ____ coin
39. Philistine
41. Montezuma's revenge
42. It has a three-sided blade
47. Perry Como's " ____ Loves Mambo"
48. Follow as a result
50. "Hold ____ your hat!"
52. Czech or Serb
53. A Don Quixote joust
54. Guarantee
55. Alcohol solvent
56. Scalp, say
60. Iron patina
61. Big name in oil
64. "Shoot the curls"
65. Soothsayer
66. Brazilian people
67. "So long!"
68. Entice
69. Demoralize
72. 18, for a '99 Park Avenue
73. "You ____ here"
74. Bean
76. An Indian may be in it
78. Malicious
80. Loud complainer
81. Director's job, at times
82. Bilateral
87. Disappearing phone features
88. Canary cousin
90. Depreciation
91. Go out after a pass?
92. Big name in audio
93. Surveys
94. Jaywalking, e.g.
95. Skein
96. Water whirl
97. Encouraged the execution of landlords
98. Egyptian snake

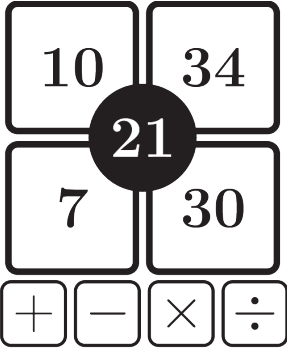
4NUMBERS

CONSTRUCTED BY C. CHANG
AT 4NUMS.COM

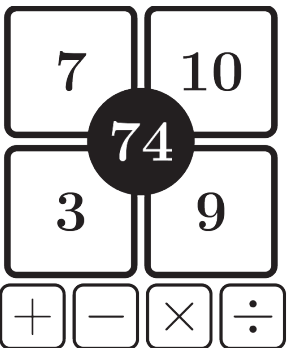
Use the four numbers in the corners, and the operands (+, -, X, and ÷) to **build an equation** to get the solution in the middle. There may be more than one "unique" solution but, there may also be "equivalent" solutions. For example: 6 + (7 X 3) +1 =28 and 1+ (7 X 3) + 6 =28



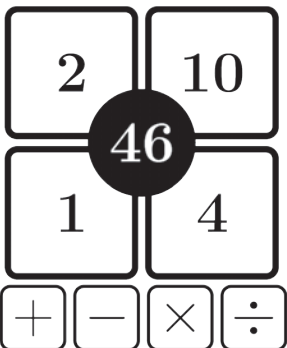
Hard 1 - 1 Solution



Hard 2 - 1 Solution



Easy 1 - 1 Solution



Easy 2 - 1 Solution

WORDSEARCH

CONSTRUCTED BY TOM HOUSTON
EPOCH TIMES STAFF

Help with Today's Crossword Puzzle?

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

CASTER
CONCUSS
DIALS
ENSUE
ENSURE
GENERA
GOOEY
ICONIC
INURE
ISCHIA
LAPPS
LINED

MACON
NICER
OPTING
ORLOP
RAILER
REACTS
RESELL
REVUE
RICIN
ROPE IN
SCUTE
SERIN

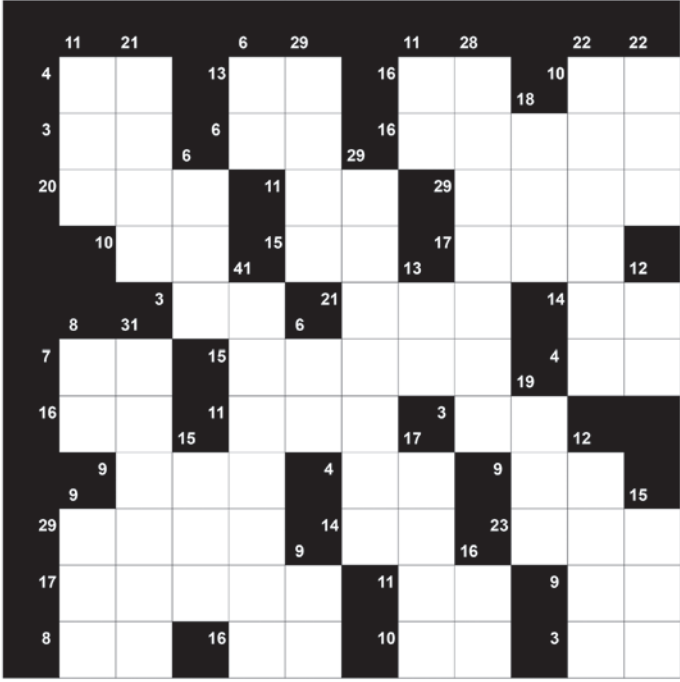
SNIDE
SNOWY
TERESA
THRESH
TINSEL
TRANCE
ACETAL
BLINI
CATCALL
ENERVATE
INOCULATOR
PASTORAL
WINTRY

KAKURO

CONSTRUCTED BY EPOCH TIMES STAFF

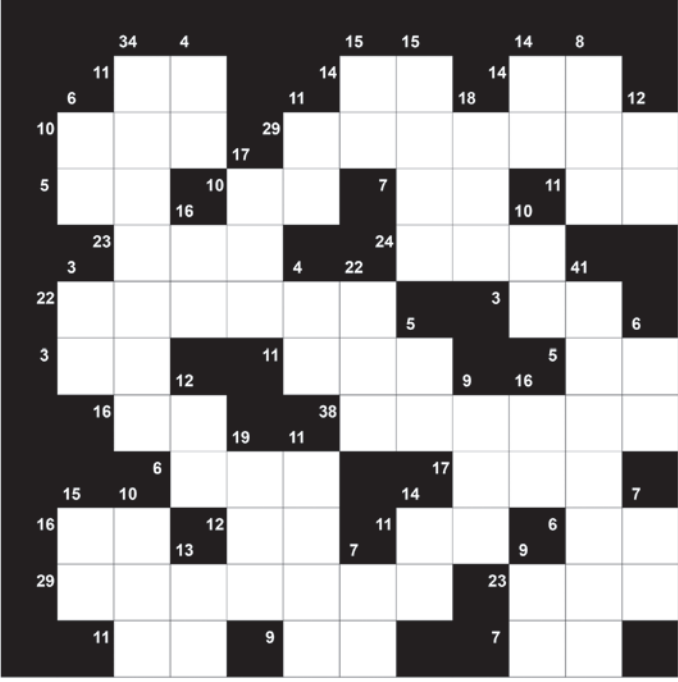
Kakuro puzzles are like crosswords that use numbers instead of words. The goal is to fill the blank squares associated with a clue (called a "run") with the numbers 1-9 so that the numbers add up to the corresponding clues. Like Sudoku, digits in a run cannot repeat. When the grid is filled, the puzzle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

Large: Hard



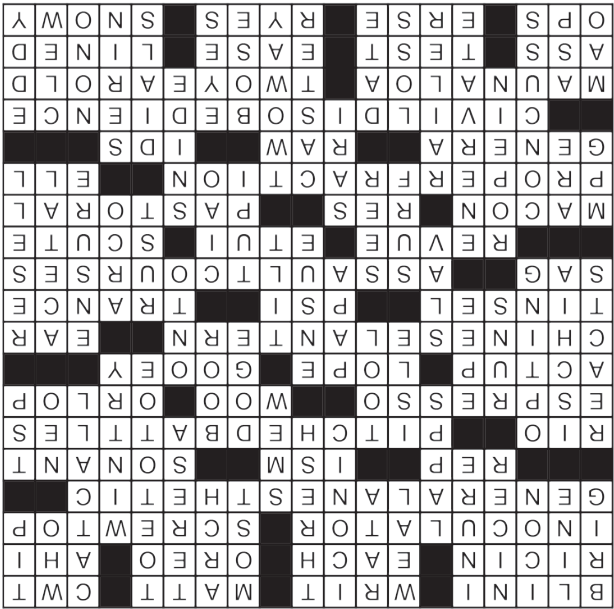
WORK SPACE

Large: Easy

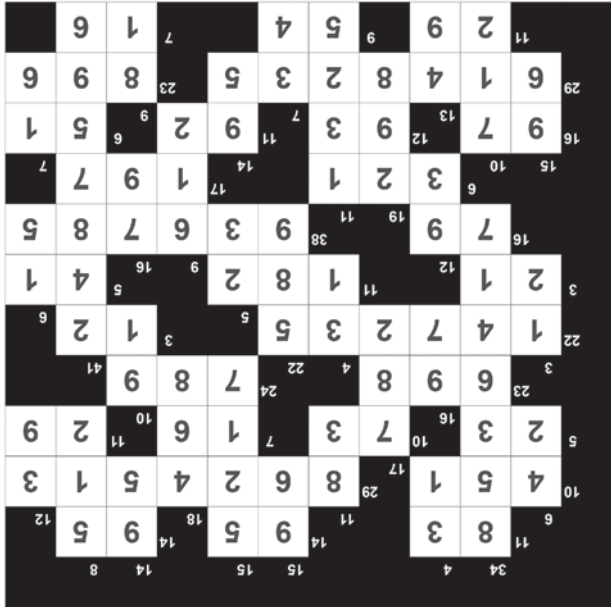


SOLUTIONS

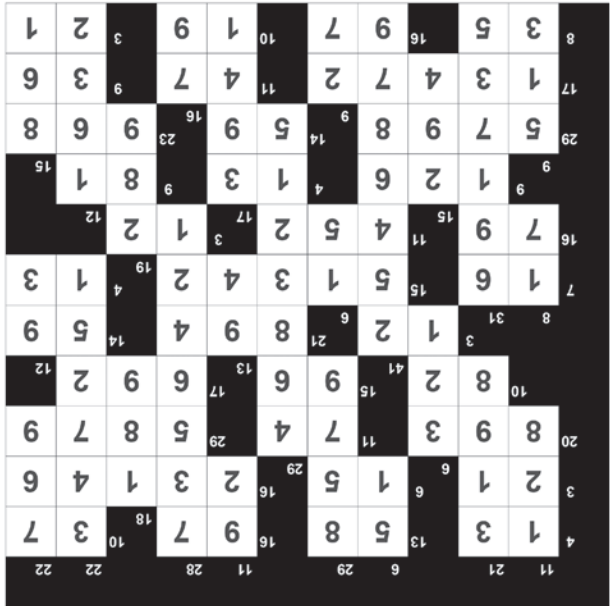
CROSSWORD



KAKURO LARGE: EASY



KAKURO LARGE: HARD



4 NUMBERS

- HARD 1**
(27 - 03) ÷ 9 - 6 = 28
- HARD 2**
34 + 10 + 7 - 30
- EASY 1**
(9 + 3) × 7 - 10
- EASY 2**
(10 + 1) × 4 + 2

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF JILL WINGER UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE



1. Farm-fresh eggs. 2. Fresh produce from the garden. 3. Farm raised cows. 4. Growing your own food cultivates an incredible sense of pride. 5. The satisfaction of baking your own bread can't be store-bought. 6. On the homestead.

WHY Homestead?

The Case for Being Old-Fashioned on Purpose

JILL WINGER

The familiar buzz of my iPhone reverberated through my pocket, and my hand instinctively fished the thin rectangle from my coat. My thumb swiped to answer the call before my brain could even register what was happening. I heard the voice of a friend, and we fell into our usual banter.

It's an unremarkable scene that plays out millions of times per day in a society run by these incredible pocket computers. But instead of lounging in a hipster coffee shop or strolling through the mall as I nonchalantly chatted about the week's events, I was sitting under my 1,200-pound Brown Swiss milk cow, squeezing streams of frothy, golden milk into a stainless steel bucket and dodging a swinging tail and impatient foot stomps, with my phone wedged between my ear and shoulder.

There are few times my life feels as paradoxical as when I'm milking my cow and talking on one of our world's most powerful pieces of technology at the same time.

According to some definitions, I'm a millennial. Born in 1985, I fall in the early side of the category, according to some, and in a smaller pre-millennial subset (called Xennials), according to others. But regardless of my official generational labeling, my penchant for old-fashioned skills and homegrown food makes me rather unusual for my age group.

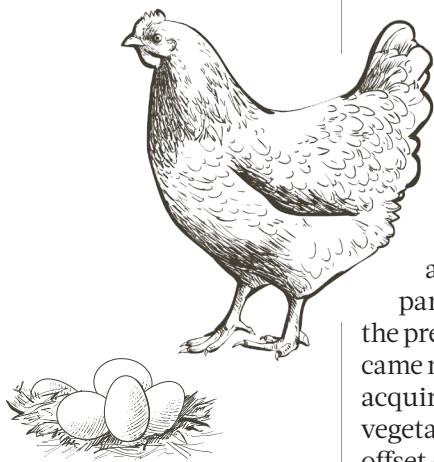
A Life of Intentionality

I live with my husband, Christian, on a 67-acre homestead on the wide-open prairies of rural Wyoming. Along with our three children, we raise beef cattle, dairy cows, chickens, and as many vegetables as our short summers will allow. Considering that Christian and I both grew up as city kids, our lifestyle choices have raised more than a few eyebrows over the years.

Homesteading, an all-encompassing term for folks who yearn for increased self-sufficiency and more



Jill Winger.



ALL ILLUSTRATIONS BY SHUTTERSTOCK

natural food options, has shifted from merely occupying the fringes of rural communities to infiltrating suburban backyards and apartment balconies from coast to coast. While the idea of keeping backyard chickens and hoarding Mason jars may strike some as a bizarre, this movement, which prizes timeless skills and old-fashioned practices, is resonating with our modern society in a profound way.

However, when we personally plunged ourselves into this lifestyle 10 years ago, we weren't even aware that homesteading was a "movement"; we just knew we couldn't stomach the thought of dutifully joining the rat race in an effort to fit in. We found ourselves craving the notion of a life rich with intentionality and purpose, and while we didn't know exactly what that would look like, we decided that purchasing a local 100-year-old, tumble-down farmstead as our first home would be a logical first step (even though friends and family tended to disagree).

As we moved into our new home and sorted through the piles of old car parts and crumbling fence lines left by the previous residents, our vision slowly became more clear: We would make our newly acquired property productive by growing vegetables and beef to feed our family and offset our ever-bursting budget. It felt like a simple, yet noble plan.

But before long, that humble spark of an idea rapidly turned into a roaring flame, as I become enamored with the intricacies of composting, keeping chickens, and growing vegetables. As thrilling as it was to build the inaugural compost piles and drive home from town with chickens squawking in a crate in the backseat, there was one particular aspect of our new lifestyle that kept me coming back for more; I couldn't ignore the sense of intoxication and deep satisfaction that would engulf me whenever I learned a new skill.

The first time I made a batch of from-scratch tortillas? I was on top of the world. The moment when I brought in the first eggs from our humble flock of hens? Utter ecstasy. The evening when we sat down to a meal grown entirely on our property, from the seeds we planted and the animals we had raised? I walked on air for at least 24 hours afterward.

In my fervor to restore our farmstead to its former glory, I inadvertently stumbled upon the reason the homesteading movement is growing by leaps and bounds each day.

Remembering Our Roots

As quaint as it may seem at first glance, this intentionally old-fashioned lifestyle deeply

fulfills an intrinsic craving in the human spirit: the desire to grow, to produce, to make things, to create.

In a world of apps, buttons, and gadgets, our lives are easier than ever. And while I am far from a Luddite (I run online businesses that require my laptop and phone to be my near-constant companions), I wholeheartedly subscribe to the belief that, in our race to make our lives as push-button as possible, we've left some crucial components back on the farm.

In the name of convenience, we substitute homemade meals for fast food and just-add-water dinners. In the name of productivity, we spend our days and weeks under artificial lighting and forego precious moments to soak in nature and plunge our hands into the soil. And in the name of efficiency, we opt for buttons and apps and rarely allow ourselves to experience the utter joy that accompanies the process of creating with one's own hands.

Our world spins faster and faster, yet feels shallower than ever before, and it's no mystery to me why more and more folks are looking backward as a way to move forward.

We're drawn to planting tomatoes in buckets on the deck because deep inside, something is satisfied as we sift the soil between our fingers. We mash heads of cabbage so we can experience the magic of fermentation first hand, as the juicy bits transform themselves into tangy sauerkraut.

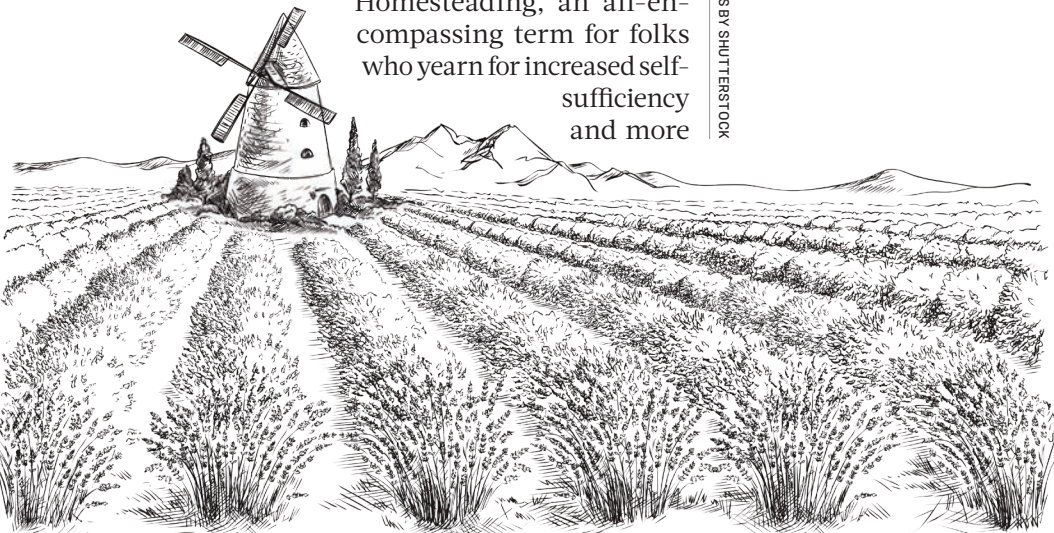
We spend hours learning to make the perfect loaf of crusty sourdough bread, not because the bakery down the street doesn't have fine loaves, but rather because we seek the thrill that floods our souls as we pull the steaming loaf from the oven.

Homesteading is more than the sum of its parts. These old-fashioned skills are the very fiber of our human existence, and have been for millennia. And even in our age of technology, they promise to provide us with the deep, lasting satisfaction that accompanies a job well done. They cannot be forgotten, because if they were, we would forget a vital part of ourselves in the process.

So the next time you feel an inexplicable urge to bake, sauté, simmer, grow, craft, or knead, follow it. See where it leads.

At the very least, you'll end up with a crusty loaf of bread or steaming pot of soup on your table. And at the most? You may find yourself with a flock of chickens pecking in the backyard and a new sort of delight in your soul.

Jill Winger is the founder of *ThePrairie-Homestead.com*, where she helps folks who are uninspired with modern life learn how to grow their own food and master old-fashioned skills.



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FOOD IS MEDICINE

The Future of Nutrition Is Personal

Gut bacteria is unique to each person, which means everyone processes fat and sugar differently



TIM SPECTOR

Humans are complicated, and there are many things that influence our health. There are things we can't change, like our age or genetic makeup, and the things we can, such as our choice of food and drink. There are also the trillions of bacteria that live in our guts—collectively known as the microbiome—that have a significant impact on our health and digestion. The foods we eat are mixtures of many nutrients that affect the body and microbiome in different ways, so unraveling the relationship between diet, metabolism, and health is no simple matter. A new study from the University of Minnesota adds yet another layer of complexity, showing that foods that have comparable nutritional profiles can have very different effects on the microbiome.

Feeding the 5 Trillion

While we know that a more diverse microbiome is usually an indicator of better gut health, we understand little about how specific foods affect the abundance of different microbial species. In their recent study, the Minnesota team asked 34 healthy volunteers to collect detailed records about everything they ate over 17 days, mapping this information against the diversity of microbes in daily stool samples. As expected, although there were several foods that were eaten by most of the participant—such as coffee, cheddar cheese, chicken and carrots—there were plenty of choices that were unique. The researchers found that while each participant's food choices affected their own microbiome, with certain foods boosting or reducing the abundance of particular bacterial strains, there wasn't a straightforward correlation that carried over between people. For example, beans boosted the proportion of certain bacteria in one person but had far less effect in another. Intriguingly, although closely related foods

Less than 30 percent of the variation between people's sugar responses is due to genetic makeup and less than 20 percent for fat.



Identical twins shared only around 37 percent of their gut microbes.

(such as cabbage and kale) tended to have the same impact on the microbiome, unrelated foods with very similar nutritional compositions had strikingly different effects. This tells us that conventional nutritional labeling may not be the best way of judging how healthy a food is likely to be. The results also show that making dietary recommendations for improving the microbiome won't be simple and will need to be personalized, taking into account a person's existing gut microbes and the effects of specific foods on them. **Go Large** The microbiome is probably the hottest topic in nutrition and health right now, with researchers keen to map and manipulate our bacterial friends. But it's not the whole story. My team at King's College London is collaborating with researchers at Massachusetts General Hospital and a company called ZOE to run PREDICT, the largest nutritional science study of its kind anywhere in the world. The aim of PREDICT is to unpick all the complex interacting factors that affect our unique responses to food, especially the regular peaks in sugar and fat levels in the blood that are linked to long term to weight gain and disease. We've been studying personal nutritional responses to food in 1,100 volunteers from the United Kingdom and the United States, including hundreds of pairs of twins, measuring their blood sugar (glucose), insulin, fat levels (triglycerides) and other markers in response to a combination of standardized and freely chosen meals over two weeks. We also captured information about activity, sleep, hunger, mood, genetics and, of course, the microbiome, adding up to millions of data points. The initial results, presented at the American Diabetes Association and American Society for Nutrition meetings earlier this month, came as a big surprise. We discovered that individuals have repeatable, predictable nutritional responses to different foods, de-

pending on the proportions of protein, fat, and carbohydrates. But there were wide variations between people (up to eightfold), making a mockery of "averages"—even among identical twins who share all their genes. Less than 30 percent of the variation between people's sugar responses is due to genetic makeup and less than 20 percent for fat. Unexpectedly, there was only a weak correlation between the two: having a bad response to fat couldn't predict whether someone would be a good or bad responder to sugar. We also discovered that identical twins shared only around 37 percent of their gut microbes. This is only slightly higher than that shared between two unrelated people, underscoring the modest effect of genes.

You Do You

We all have personal tastes and preferences when it comes to food, so it makes sense to assume that our personal metabolisms and responses to the foods we eat should be different too. But we're only now coming to the point where scientific research is catching up with this gut feeling, proving that everyone is unique and that there is no one true diet that works for all. This research shows that if you want to find the foods that work best with your metabolism, then you need to know your personal nutritional response—something that can't be predicted from simple genetic tests. Of course, there are healthy eating messages that apply to everyone, such as eating more fiber, increasing diverse plant-based foods, and cutting down on ultra-processed products. But the take-home message is that there is no one right way to eat that works for everyone, despite what government guidelines and glamorous Instagram gurus tell you. *Tim Spector is a professor of genetic epidemiology at King's College London in the UK. This article was first published on The Conversation.*

If you want to find the foods that work best with your metabolism, then you need to know your personal nutritional response.

Breathe Easier With Raspberry and N-Acetylcysteine

Treat or prevent COPD naturally with some dietary changes that can provide an added layer of protection

KAT CARROLL

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a frightening and disheartening diagnosis. And while there is no cure, there are natural options to help treat the disease that can be taken alone or alongside medication. COPD is characterized by ongoing breathing problems, restricted airflow, and productive coughs. The disease usually grows worse, leading to long-term disability and early death. It is both wise and vital to protect your lungs against COPD. Both indoor and outdoor air pollution have strong correlations to COPD. Smoking can exacerbate the disease by generating oxidant

radicals capable of modifying the structure of the respiratory tract and increasing lung inflammation in COPD. The 1960s saw the tobacco industry expand the smoking market by targeting women. Perhaps not coincidentally, more women now die from COPD than men, though research indicates that is likely due to women having smaller lungs and more estrogen, a hormone that may exacerbate lung disease. COPD is also often diagnosed too late when the disease has become advanced. Early warning signs such as shortness of breath are often written off as "just a part of aging." That's unfortunate because COPD is the third leading cause of



UNSPLASH

death by disease in the United States. Over 11 million people have been diagnosed with COPD and many others have the disease but don't realize it.

Levels of inflammatory cytokines are raised in COPD and oxidants play a strong role in the development of the disease. A diet rich in antioxidant vitamins such as N-acetylcysteine (NAC) can counter oxidative stress and may protect against developing COPD. High-dose oral NAC is also used alongside COPD medication as an additional therapy for COPD patients. The antimicrobial and antibacterial activity of fruits, such as raspberries, is well documented in research. Compounds in raspberries significantly alter cytokine and antioxidant production. *Corynebacterium diphtheriae* and *Moraxella catarrhalis* proved to be the most sensitive to raspber-

ry extracts. The pharmacological actions of raspberries also helped with pneumonia, lower respiratory infections, and treat ear infections. These two simple additions, NAC and raspberries, can provide nutritional upgrades that can potentially stave off COPD. *Kat Carroll is executive director of the National Health Federation and managing editor of the National Health Federation's magazine, Health Freedom News, and is on the board of directors of the National Health Federation Canada and the advisory board for GreenMedInfo. This article was originally published on GreenMedInfo.com*

THINK WELL, WORK WELL

The Backlash to Brainwashing With ‘Job Satisfaction’

Employers are creating problems for themselves by telling employees to have

JEFF GARTON

Your work experience has a major influence on your well-being. There’s a reason businesses invest in good wages, benefits, and so forth to make employees satisfied. They may say it’s because they care about workers, but this is often only partially true. The more complete truth is that employers want to keep employees engaged and productive.

But guess what? Brainwashing employees with the carrot of being made satisfied can cause the very problems employers are trying to avoid. Over time, the repeated emphasis on job satisfaction has conditioned employees to become reward oriented, to expect certain treatment, and to complain or quit if their expectations are not met. Furthermore, millennials report they feel manipulated by such tactics. Employers have not only been playing with fire but fanning the flames. They neglected the three reasons employees don’t stay satisfied for very long:

1. A person’s needs, wants, and desires are always evolving as they age and their circumstances change. What made us satisfied today may not work tomorrow.
2. People are oriented to continuous improvement. Not long after we get what we want, we eventually want more or something new to keep us satisfied.
3. We live and work in an imperfect world where conflicts between people are inevitable and disappointments are unavoidable.

Even great employers can’t do enough to keep employees constantly satisfied. Consequently, by attempting the impossible, employers become snared in a “Catch-22,” a conundrum created when the solution contributes to the problem. In this case, the catch is being obligated to make employees satisfied when doing so fuels expectations that may contribute to their dissatisfaction. There is one way out of this catch. If the goal is to keep employees in their jobs and productive, then stop doing things that invite their complaints. First, acknowledge that while making employees satisfied is essential, it’s also problematic since dissatisfactions are inevitable. Next, begin the process of helping employees think about their work in a more productive way. If you think changing how employees think is silly, you may not be aware of the psychological significance of how people’s thoughts affect how well they feel and perform.

Brainwashing employees with the carrot of being made satisfied can cause the very problems employers are trying to avoid.

Employee motivation is not activated by making employees satisfied, but by how they think about being made satisfied.



Advances in medical scanning technology during the 1990s enabled psychologists to discover that people are motivated by emotions that are created by their thoughts. Stated another way, employee motivation is not activated by making employees satisfied, but by how they think about being made satisfied. More recently, psychologists found that an employee’s neutral and positive thoughts about work establish the emotional foundation for improving their motivation, productivity, creativity, and retention. If employers want engaged and productive employees, they would be well advised to provide them training on how to think in a more productive manner about their work. Employers should acknowledge that dissatisfactions are inevitable to every job, and that a human being has an inherent ability to choose their perspective of thoughts. Focusing on the negative will inevitably lead to negative feelings. Employers and employees need to face this fundamental fact about the human

experience and stop pretending that better lighting or casual Fridays will be what decides how employees feel about their job. Now comes the million-dollar question. If an employee’s thoughts are not focused on expecting satisfaction, what in the world should they be encouraged to think about? An employee is naturally oriented to want what they believe will give them contentment with their career. But discovering what this is for a specific employee is a process they must go through for themselves. Career contentment is the emotional bi-product created when employees think the work they have can fulfill their most important purposes for working. An employee’s purposes can change over time and may be linked to factors on the job, or off the job. Their core purpose for work may be to support their family or fulfill their personal expectations of a certain lifestyle. Or it may be because their work relationships and interactions are important to them. As such, an em-

Being Empathic Doesn’t Make You a Pushover

Study finds prosocial people are less aggressive in competition—but tend to win in the long run

JILL SUTTIE

Looking back at the financial collapse of 2008, I often wonder: How could investors have been so greedy? It seems as if they were so bent on “winning” that they made pretty dumb investments, which cost them—and the rest of us—dearly. In fact, history is filled with examples of people behaving aggressively for short-term gain, only to pay a long-term cost. Why do we keep behaving this way? My question is at the heart of a new study by Carsten de Dreu and colleagues published in the Journal of Experimental Psychology. Their findings give us insight into the relationship between aggression, empathy, and decision making.

In the study, participants played an investment game called “Predator-Prey Contest”—similar to the old board game Risk—which measures how much people will invest to win money off of others versus defending their own holdings. Participants were paired up with different players and given up to 10 euros to invest in each round—half the time playing the role of “attacker,” half the time acting as a “defender” (though these labels were not used in the experiment’s setup to avoid leading people one way or another). Attackers won a round if they invested more money than a defender and kept whatever they and their defender hadn’t spent. So, for example, if an attacker invested 6 euros and the defender invested 5, the attacker “won” and ended up with 9 euros

(the 4 they saved + the 5 the defender didn’t spend). However, if attackers invested the same amount or less than defenders, they lost what they’d invested. The researchers used how much people invested in either role as a measure of their aggressiveness. The researchers wanted to understand what influenced aggressive investing and how that determined players’ winnings. In particular, they looked at whether being prosocial (other-oriented and empathic) affected people’s aggression. They also considered whether deliberating longer or being stressed influenced investment choices. In initial analyses, the researchers observed that participants were generally less willing to invest in attacking another for gain than they were in defending their

own earnings. This fit with a longstanding economic theory around decision making. “People are more motivated—they’re willing to invest more—to protect against loss than they are to increase wealth or prosperity,” says de Dreu. They also found, unsurprisingly, that more prosocial people tended to attack others less aggressively for gain than people who were less prosocial—though they were just as fierce at defending against loss. This suggests that prosocial people might be less aggressive, but they aren’t pushovers, either. “When you have higher levels of empathy and a more prosocial orientation, you are more cooperative and leave other people at peace, unless these people are a threat to you,” says de Dreu.

Employees

unrealistic expectations



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ployee’s desire stays in a job they believe can make them content may have nothing to do with being made satisfied. And helping employees to realize this isn’t manipulative or misleading. Employees only stand to gain by focusing on what drives them to come to work each day and can motivate them to make a meaningful contribution. Career contentment is the true Holy Grail of employment. This potent emotion can motivate an employee to engage, cope with conflicts and disappointments, and maintain productive thoughts and feelings toward their job. But there’s another good reason why employers should want employees to become knowledgeable about how to utilize their career contentment. Employees are directly motivated by their thoughts, not by an employer’s programs and incentives. So if an employee’s thinking remains unproductive, an employer’s programs are destined to work inconsistently or not at all. This is why many employers find their job satisfaction programs are ineffective, with

employees left unappreciative or with insatiable demands. Job satisfaction breeds a mindset that says, make me happy or I’ll complain and quit, and employers have developed a fear of this happening. Career contentment, however, asks an employee to focus on the reasons they want to work. It teaches them to focus on their own purpose. In doing so, career contentment presents an opportunity for employees to take ownership of their core motivation, without the threat of developing expectations that someone else will keep them happy. In short, career contentment empowers employees to find contentment that is of their own making—and within their own control. *Jeff Garton is a Milwaukee-based author, certified career coach, and former HR executive and training provider. He holds a master’s degree in organizational communication and public personnel administration. He is an originator of the concept and instruction of career contentment.*

MARKUS MAINKA/SHUTTERSTOCK

In one experiment, de Dreu and colleagues measured the time it took to make the decisions in each role and how that related to aggression. In the second, they cognitively stressed people to see how that affected decision-making time and aggression—by, for example, having them look through a text and cross out the letter “e,” but only when the “e” was followed by a vowel or was a letter away from a vowel. Through these manipulations, the researchers found that aggression works best in concert with some degree of thoughtfulness: Participants who took longer to make investment decisions in the attacker mode



were more strategic. They won rounds without spending as much money—while participants who were cognitively stressed made poorer decisions. However, here the prosocial people had an advantage. They generally slowed down their decision making and so made better choices, resulting in more money for them at the end of the game. “If we shorten the time people have to think or demotivate them by making them tired, then they become more irrational,” says de Dreu. “The irony is that you can win a competition; but if you spend all of your money and effort on winning, you don’t have anything left in your pocket at

the end of the day.” De Dreu realizes these economic games are not “real life.” But, he insists, they can still give us insight into how people respond in real-world competitions, like in business or war. We’ve all seen instances where people compete to the point where no one has anything left, he says—for example, “when you win the battle, but your army is so weakened that a small army on the other side could come in and eradicate you.” It seems we can make better choices about investing our resources if we consider others and take more time to deliberate, especially since we’ll still defend ourselves aggressively when that’s required. “If we have this in the forefront of our minds when we face these kinds of competitions, we’ll more quickly think, Maybe I should not engage in this much or at all,” he says. In future studies, de Dreu hopes to understand why people are aggressive in the first place. After all, in the economics

game, not investing any money in attacking another means you go home with your full 10 euros. “If you can be cooperative and not invest in attacking another person, why shouldn’t you?” says de Dreu. He speculates that reward centers in our brains may light up when we “win,” driving competitive impulses despite the costs. His next study will consider this question. In the meantime, he says, embracing empathy and taking our time when making decisions could help us all to cut down on unnecessary aggression and still win out...at least economically speaking, if not in other avenues of life. “Empathy is a way to tone down the need to win and keep it in check,” says de Dreu. *Jill Suttie holds a doctorate in psychology. She is Greater Good Magazine’s book review editor and a frequent contributor to the magazine. This article was originally published in the Greater Good Magazine online.*

WISE HABITS

Dealing With a Negative Person

When someone can’t stop complaining and criticizing, it gives you a special opportunity

LEO BABAUTA

We’ve all, at some point, felt frustrated by someone who seems constantly negative, who complains, gets offended by small things, or is often angry or pessimistic. They can drain us of energy and even turn our minds towards negativity as well. One commonly suggested solution is to cut these people from your life. And yes, if they are harming you, or you just cannot get to a healthy mental place with them, that may be a necessity. But there’s another option: learning to find an opportunity for growth in this negative person. This person may be a loved one who is hurting. And you know what it’s like to hurt. You may be hurting right now (because of them). When this person is critical of you, you feel stung—otherwise, you wouldn’t be frustrated or irritated with them for being negative. You’re reacting to them in the same way they’re reacting to you—with negativity. You’re both feeling similar pain and frustration. You see how their negativity affects you. And it’s reasonable to expect you don’t want to do the same to others. You can also see how this negativity festers and makes them unhappy, and you don’t want that for yourself. And so the change must start with you. If you don’t want to be negative, can you be loving and positive towards this person?

A Practice for Neutralizing Negative People
Here’s how you might work with the energy of a negative person:

- 1. See this person’s pain with compassion.** They’re feeling stress, pain, unhappiness, insecurity, uncertainty, and so on. You know what it’s like to feel these things. See the negativity as an old habit that is masking their pain. See if you can feel compassion for their suffering.
- 2. See that they have an old pattern that is unhelpful.** Their pattern, when they feel this pain, is to lash out, complain, criticize, or stew in negativity. You can see, with compassion, that they are stuck in this old pattern. And you, just like everyone else, have old unhelpful patterns that are tough to get rid of. In this way, the two of you are connected.
- 3. Feel love for them.** If this person is a loved one, it’s especially helpful to practice pouring your love out to them, even if you say nothing. Just feeling it in your heart is enough. Whether they feel it or not, it transforms you. You then shift how you are towards them, coming from a place of love. If this person is a col-

league or even a person you don’t know well, you still have a chance to feel compassion for them. This heart-opening shift is worth the discomfort. It is growth. **4. See the beauty in them, and love that as well.** They have negativity, but they also have a beautiful heart and amazing qualities that are obscured by the negativity. See this beauty, behold their hurting heart, and truly see the miracle of this human being. **5. See the deliciousness in their negative energy.** When someone is being negative, there is an energy that is pouring from them to you. We may not like it, but that can change. We can open up to this energy, savor it, and learn to appreciate its nuances. We can find the deliciousness in it, drop our repulsion of it, and see it anew. It’s just an experience, like the sensations of basking in the sun, or a breeze on your skin. Relish this experience, and you’ll be open to a much wider range of experience than before.

It’s a transformative practice that will shift your relationship with others. And when someone gives you negative energy, you can delight in the opportunity this gives you to practice.

Very Important Caveats
With all that said, there are some important counterpoints to remember:

- It’s absolutely OK to set boundaries.** If you need to protect yourself from getting hurt, or need time alone, speak up for your boundaries. It’s OK to protect yourself. It’s only from this place of being protected and having boundaries that we can do this work.
- You can also gift them with honesty.** If the person is overly negative, critical, playing the victim, and so on, it’s OK to tell them how their negativity affects others. This honesty can be done from a place of compassion and non-judgment.
- You can do the same kind of work for yourself.** When you see your own pain, your own negativity, feel love for yourself, and see the deliciousness in your own energy.
- It’s OK to not practice this “perfectly.”** You might not always find their negative energy delicious. You might not always find compassion for them. That’s OK. See if you can find glimpses of compassion, flashes of love, nibbles of deliciousness. Practice in whatever capacity you can, and see what happens!

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

CHINESE MEDICINE

The Healing Power of Plants

Getting outside and feeling the natural world offers a long list of health benefits

LYNN JAFFEE

I grew up mostly outdoors surrounded by plants. Our house sat on a hill covered with blueberry bushes, daffodils, flowering crabapple trees, and an asparagus patch. I spent those years playing in the orchard behind the house, exploring nearby brooks, and scouring the woods for salamanders and other treasures.

Some of my best memories were when my parents packed up the car with us kids and a picnic lunch and headed to a local state park. There, we hiked wooded trails, explored waterfalls, or kicked around a soccer ball. As an adult, when I'm stressed and struggling with the realities of life, my default is to go outdoors. Plants and forests and bubbling brooks are what pull me off the ledge.

I understand the power that nature has, specifically plants and trees, to heal. Here are a few ways they can improve your health:

Food. The Chinese say that food is medicine that you get to eat three times a day. This is especially true if most of your food comes from plants, in the form of fruits and vegetables. Nutrients from the soil are delivered to you through plants.

Through your digestion, those plants are converted to energy and nutrients that your body needs to power every biological system that propels you through life. You could say that plants are the conduit between the Earth and every cell in your body. (Eating animal protein is also a conduit, but indirectly. The nutrients make a few more stops and tend to be altered in the process.)

Gardening. Along with being medicine you eat, growing food, flowers, or herbs is good for your soul. There's something so fulfilling about watching tiny sprouts pop through the soil in the spring, or seeing the seedlings that you started indoors take off and actually produce tomatoes or peppers.

Getting your hands dirty in the garden also helps boost your immune system. All those microbes in the dirt make you hardier and more resistant to outside invaders, such as bacteria, viruses, and allergens.

Aromatherapy. Lilacs blooming, fresh cut grass, or newly picked basil all have distinctive smells which affect your brain in different ways. Smell is also considered the strongest sense when it comes to evoking memories.

The theory behind aromatherapy is that different scents are used for different purposes based on how they affect you. Lavender is relaxing and promotes sleep. Citrus scents are uplifting and energizing, and floral scents are calming. Eucalypts, such as mint or menthol, open up your sinuses. The power of smell to heal may be subtle, but it is also effective.

Herbs. Many herbs, whether Chinese or otherwise, are the basis for a number of medications on the market today. Researchers and drug companies are exploring what the traditional cultures have known for millennia; herbs are medicine with a powerful ability to heal.

Many of those herbs are growing right outside your door. For example, mint can benefit your eyes, calm irritability, and soothe your liver. The bitter and cold properties of dandelion can help to clear heat, and can also be used for urinary tract infections. Tea made from chry-

santhemum flowers can ease a cold or the flu, especially if you're running a fever. They can calm down red, dry, and painful eyes, and soothe headaches and dizziness.

Outdoor Therapy. Also known as forest bathing, or shinrin-yoku by the Japanese, dozens of research studies have documented that getting outside and spending time in nature is good for your health. Scientists have discovered that outdoor therapy can lower your blood pressure, decrease your stress, improve your immunity, and ward off depression.

One of the theories as to why walking in the woods has health benefits is because there are subtle scents given off in nature, most notably from evergreens, but from other trees and plants as well. The effects of spending time outside is so compelling that some doctors are now writing nature prescriptions—instructions to spend time in a local park or woods.

My back deck looks out over a small oak forest that I can watch as the seasons change. Throughout the year I hear owls, wild turkeys, and songbirds that are sheltered by the trees. For me, sitting on the deck and looking into the forest is therapeutic. It's calming after a busy day and good for my soul. And it's a testament to the healing power of plants.

Lynn Jaffee is a licensed acupuncturist and the author of "Simple Steps: The Chinese Way to Better Health." This article was originally published on AcupunctureTwinCities.com

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Incense Making Class

Dao of Incense is the ancient art of appreciating incense and a way to enjoy scents to relax and sooth anxiety, and to calm down mind and body deeply and thoroughly. Incense has been highly regarded and used and for medicinal and purification purposes for thousands of years and across many cultures and religions.

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