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In
the NEWS

“I have a thorough understanding of the Chinese Communist Party’s judicial system, and this system has very serious problems. I hope that the international community can know more about it.”

Former Chinese supreme court judge and Toronto resident Xie Weidong

CHINA | A5

As the US-China

TRADE WAR

escalates, new tariffs applied on Sept. 1 and Dec. 15 will see virtually all Chinese imports to the United States being taxed.

US | A6

“Any force for freedom that doesn’t actively oppose communism is doomed to eventual failure. It is as impotent as a saint who won’t oppose sin, or a doctor who won’t fight disease.”

Author Trevor Loudon

OPINION | A8

SOCIAL CREDIT

rating systems, once thought to be the domain of authoritarian regimes, are now being replicated in Silicon Valley for application in the West, author Roger L. Simon writes.

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A woman holds a poster of Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam, against a proposed extradition law, before a candlelight vigil at Victoria Park in Hong Kong on June 4, 2019.

HONG KONG

Hong Kong Leader Announces Withdrawal of Extradition Bill

But many are saying it’s too little, too late

TOM OZIMEK

Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam has announced the withdrawal of an extradition bill that has triggered the largest protests in the city’s history.

Lam’s announcement was made in a pre-recorded television address just before 6 p.m. local time on Sept. 4.

“The government will formally withdraw the bill in order to fully allay public concerns,” Lam said in her address.

The withdrawal, a key demand of protesters, came after months of unrest as the government repeatedly refused to back down—igniting sometimes violent clashes with police and resulting in the arrests of more than 1,000 protesters.

Many are furious at perceived police brutality and the number of arrests—1,183 at the latest count—and want an independent inquiry into police actions.

But Lam insisted that an investigation by the city’s existing internal police watchdog would suffice.

“I pledge that the government will seriously follow up the recommendations of the IPCC’s (Independent Police Complaints Council) report. From this month, I and my principal officials will reach out to the community to start a direct dialogue ... we must find ways to address the discontent in society and look for solutions,” Lam said.

The protests began in March but snowballed in June and have since evolved into a push for greater democracy for the city which reverted from British to Chinese rule in 1997.

The bill would have allowed Hong Kong citizens to be sent to mainland China to face trial in the Chinese Communist Party’s opaque legal system, drawing widespread concerns

Continued on A5

Many are furious at perceived police brutality and the number of arrests—1,183 at the latest count—and want an independent inquiry into police actions.



View of a burnt area in the Amazon rainforest, near Porto Velho, Rondonia state, Brazil, on Aug. 25, 2019.

BRAZIL

Amazon Fires and the Politics

FERNANDO DE CASTRO

RECIFE, Brazil—Brazil has been affected by a wave of fires in the Amazon region since the beginning of August. Dry weather in the region has exacerbated the burning.

The fires began shortly after the federal government announced changes to the governance of the Amazon Fund, an initiative created in 2008 to raise funds from developed countries to fight deforestation in the Amazon.

While there are a high number of fires, the rate is about average for

this time of year, according to NASA.

Illegal Fires

The dry season that spans August and September is contributing to the increase in the fires, making preventive actions more difficult.

“It’s normal to have fires at this time of year, but I have never seen fires on such a large scale and as close to urban areas as now,” said accountant Taís Santos, a resident of Porto Velho, Rondonia, a state that has experienced more fires than average.

Continued on A2

COLOMBIA

Colombian Authorities Say Marxist Rebels Behind Killings of Political Candidates

LUKE TAYLOR

BOGOTA, Colombia—A candidate who aspired to become the first female mayor of a municipality in southwestern Colombia, a candidate running for city council, and four others were brutally killed by former members of the Marxist guerrilla group FARC, who refused to disarm during the country’s 2016 peace process, the government has said.

The bodies of mayoral candidate Karina Garcia and the others were found in a car incinerated on the side of the road in the Cauca region on Sept. 1. The assassination, which follows the alarming announcement by two former FARC leaders last week that they would return to war, is the first killing of a candidate during the campaign season for local and regional elections in October.

Experts monitoring an uptick in electoral violence across the country expect more to follow.

Garcia, who was 32, sensed that she was in danger from criminal groups eight days earlier, when four armed men threatened members of her campaign and ordered them to take down all electoral banners and posters. Posters touting the candidate

US and Afghan Taliban Reach an Agreement, Needs Trump’s Approval

MASOOMA HAQ

The Trump administration’s envoy to Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad, said on Monday the United States would withdraw almost 5,000 troops from Afghanistan and close five bases within 135 days. Top military officials must still approve the preliminary peace agreement with the Taliban extremists and it must still be signed off by President Trump.

In an interview with Tolo News, Khalilzad said that after months of negotiations with representatives from the terrorist insurgent

Continued on A7

HIGHER EDUCATION

University Taskforce Launched to Protect Free Speech

RICHARD SZABO

The Australian Government is setting up a new task force to protect freedom of expression at universities across the country, amid expressed concerns of foreign influence by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

The University Foreign Interference Taskforce will comprise representatives from universities, nation-

Continued on A2



Charles Sturt University Ethics Professor Clive Hamilton (R) speaks at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia, on Aug. 28, 2019.

“The assassination, which follows the alarming announcement by two former FARC leaders last week that they would return to war, is the first killing of a candidate during the campaign season for local and regional elections in October.

had been previously defaced by unknown actors with black spray paint.

But rather than backing down, Garcia continued to campaign for bringing political change to the municipality, requested assurances from the town’s mayor, and pleaded with rival candidates not to spread rumors that she said were putting her life in peril.

“Please, for God’s sake, don’t act so irresponsibly,” Garcia pleaded in a video she shared online on Aug. 24, refuting claims that she would bring paramilitaries or multinationals to the area. “This can bring fatal consequences for me.”

Eight days later, despite her pleas,

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University Taskforce Launched to Protect Free Speech Amid Concerns Over China Influence

CONTINUED FROM A1

al security organisations, and the Department of Education, federal Minister for Education Dan Tehan said in an address to the National Press Club in Canberra on Aug. 28.

Tehan said the new initiative will safeguard freedom of speech and academic freedom for all Australian university students and staff.

“Universities are at their strongest and most relevant when they provide a platform to a diversity of views and provide freedom from the pernicious threat of groupthink,” Tehan said.

“What is the value in freedom of speech if people are too afraid to say what they think? The sense that some students and staff at universities are self-censoring out of fear they’ll be shouted down or condemned for expressing sincerely held views and beliefs, or for challenging widely accepted ideas should concern us all.

“The test of our commitment to free speech is whether we are willing to tolerate the speech of others, especially those with whom we most disagree. We must foster the ability to listen to other’s viewpoints and encourage an environment where disagreement does not involve verbal attacks or threats,” he said.

The task force will develop “best-practice guidelines” to deal with foreign interference with a November deadline. The team will also update the national Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) survey questions to seek student feedback as to whether they feel encouraged to voice “non-conformist opinions” and have freedom of expression on campus.

“I believe universities want to know if students and staff are afraid to discuss certain topics,” Tehan said. “It is only through diversity of thinking, perspective, and intellectual style that we get innovation and problem-solving. This is the kind of thinking that universities are there to encourage [and] I ask the sector to also seek the views of their staff on this matter.”

Concerns About Chinese Communist Influence

Tehan’s announcement of the taskforce came on the same day Charles Sturt University ethics professor Clive Hamilton expressed concerns that Australian universities are failing to set boundaries for foreign influence.

“We have yet to see one Australian



ROHAN THOMSON/AAP IMAGES VIA AP

Australian Education Minister Dan Tehan speaks at the National Press Club in Canberra, on Aug. 28, 2019.

The sense that some students and staff at universities are self-censoring out of fear they’ll be shouted down or condemned for expressing sincerely held views and beliefs, or for challenging widely accepted ideas should concern us all.

Dan Tehan, Federal Minister for Education

university draw a line in the sand and make it clear that it is willing to take the pain in defence of our political freedom and free speech on campus,” Hamilton said at a public presentation held at the University of Queensland (UQ) in Brisbane on Aug. 28.

“A principle is worthless unless we are willing to make a sacrifice for it. Unless we are willing to make that sacrifice soon in defence of our political freedom, Australian universities will live under the ever-darkening shadow of Beijing,” he added.

Hamilton suggested that universities had not acted sooner because they rely on revenue from China and are influenced by Beijing’s United Front groups that exist in part to protect the CCP’s image abroad.

“Corporatisation of the tertiary sector and the extraordinary dependence of many universities on revenue from China, coupled with a sustained and highly effective influence campaign directed at senior university executives by various United Front bodies, has meant that many vice-chancellors and other senior executives have lost sight of the actual meaning of academic freedom,” he said.

Hamilton gave the example of UQ Vice-Chancellor Peter Hoj’s controversial support for Brisbane Chinese Consul-General Xu Jie to be appointed as an adjunct professor of language and culture at the university on July 15 for a 2.5-year term without pay.

He said the Chinese consulate website had uploaded a story, which has since been removed, stating that UQ’s adjunct professorship is given to “very few scholars who play unique roles and make significant contributions ... and to date are only given to a very few.”

“While defending the decision to appoint the consul-general, Professor Hoj reassured us by saying Professor Xu would not be doing any teaching,” Hamilton said. “Well, he is of sufficient authority to be a professor. Why can’t he give some lectures?”

Hamilton noted that UQ previously appointed then Consul-General Zhao Yongchen as an adjunct professor in language and literature back in 2014, and that Professor Yongchen gave a lecture at the university in 2015 on “China-Australian cooperation.”

Hamilton also pointed out how Hoj had recently been endorsed

by Hanban, the Beijing-backed authority that oversees the controversial Confucius Institutes hosted by universities around the world.

“In 2015, UQ news announced that Professor Hoj had been honoured by the Hanban as the outstanding individual of the year,” he said. “This prestigious award, as UQ called it, was in recognition of his contribution to the global Confucius Institute network. China’s last Vice Premier Madame Liu Yandong presented the award herself.”

Hamilton called out a recent example to illustrate the concerns regarding foreign interference, where several students who erected a mural on UQ campus to show their support for the anti-extradition protests in Hong Kong found their mural damaged by pro-Beijing sympathisers who claimed to have the Chinese consulate’s protection.

“A university security guard confronted a few men who were tearing down a Lennon Wall and then refused to show student IDs,” Hamilton said. “When the guard indicated that if they did not, he would call the police, the leader of these three men said, ‘I don’t care if you call the police, I will call the ambassador.’”

Amazon Fires and the Politics

CONTINUED FROM A1

According to environmental engineer Julianio Montaña, besides natural factors, the large number of fires in the region are likely the result of criminal actions such as illegal deforestation, especially in the Cerrado savanna.

“There are many occurrences of natural fires in the Cerrado area, but these events would not have grown to such a great extent if there was no criminal action,” he told The Epoch Times.

Investigations by Globo Rural magazine discovered that some of the fires were set deliberately to clear forest. The action was allegedly coordinated in a WhatsApp group of trade unionists, farmers, traders, and land-grabbers.

On Aug. 10, entitled “Day of Fire,” according to the Globo Rural report, the group hired people on motorbikes to set fire to land near Jamanxin National Forest, a 1.3 hectare (3.2 acre) environmental reserve.

Based on the information provided by the magazine, the minister of jus-

tice, Sergio Moro, announced an investigation led by the federal police to verify any criminal actions and arrest those responsible.

Due to the high number of fires in the Amazon region, the Ministry of Defense has ordered the deployment of 43,000 military personnel to reinforce firefighting efforts in the area, and dispatched two C-130 Hercules aircraft that can carry about 12,000 liters (3170 gallons) of water to douse the fires.

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro has issued a measure that bans land-clearing fires for 60 days. The decree was published Aug. 29.

NGO Fundraising

The president of Chile, Sebastian Piñera, has pledged to send aircraft to assist in fighting the fires.

In addition, the Brazilian president said that on Sept. 6, all countries that contain portions of the Amazon rainforest, except Venezuela, will meet to adopt a common policy to combat illegal deforestation.



JOAO LAET/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

A burnt area of forest in Altamira, Para state, Brazil, in the Amazon basin, on Aug. 27, 2019.

While money is being pledged to save the Amazon, one senator from the state of Amazonas has been questioning the fundraising efforts of NGOs. Sen. Plínio Valério of the Brazilian Democracy Social Party said in an interview with The Epoch Times that there’s no transparency in how the funds are distributed.

“The vast majority of these organisations take advantage of the Amazonian appeal to raise money, but do not pass it on to the forest population, especially the indigenous people,” he said.

In order to clarify information from the NGOs, Valério has obtained the signatures of 30 senators to open an inquiry in the Senate into the actions of these organi-

sations.

Use of Old Images

French President Emmanuel Macron has commented about the fires on Twitter and raised the issue on several occasions.

However, along with his comments, Macron tweeted an old photograph of Amazon fires as if it were a current image. The photograph posted was taken in 1989 by Loren McIntyre, an American photojournalist who died in 2003.

Macron had threatened in June not to sign the EU-Mercosur trade pact because of Bolsonaro’s antagonism toward the Paris Agreement. In his recent tweet, the French president said that the Amazon fires are an international crisis that should be discussed at the G-7 meeting.

Macron’s statement angered Bolsonaro, who said that the G-7 discussion in the absence of Brazil “evokes a misplaced colonialist mentality in the 21st century.”

President Donald Trump has offered help to Brazil to combat the fires. On Twitter, Trump said that Bolsonaro is “working very hard on the Amazon fires and in all respects doing a great job for the people of Brazil.”

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has also offered assistance in fighting the fires.

Colombian Authorities Say Marxist Rebels Behind Killings of Political Candidates

CONTINUED FROM A1

Garcia’s charred body was discovered alongside five others in a burned-out car on the side of the road.

The vehicle was hit by two grenades before coming under fire from another SUV and was then torched, a bodyguard who escaped the attack told local media.

Killed along with Garcia were a man and four other women, including local activists, a candidate for the city council, and Garcia’s mother.

Local residents held a candlelit vigil on Sept. 2 for the young politician, who leaves a husband and a 3-year-old daughter behind.

“They didn’t take the reports seriously,” the victim’s father told local press, denouncing the authorities for not protecting his daughter. He said his daughter “felt the need to help her community, in her veins.”

A peace agreement reached with Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) rebels in 2016 that formally ended a half-decade of conflict was supposed to open a new peaceful chapter in the country’s history. But while many areas witnessed a decrease in violence as 7,000 guerrillas put down their guns, in some regions, the violence continues, and targeted killings of human rights defenders and community leaders are surging.

“After 2016, the statistics on lethal and non-lethal violence have skyrocketed, and the situation is critical, not only for political actors but also for social leaders and human rights defenders that have been constantly attacked and murdered by these groups,” said Giorgio Londoño, researcher for the Peace, Conflict, and Postconflict department at the Bogotá-based research institute PARES.

Violence in the Cauca region is



The charred remains of the car in which mayoral candidate Karina Garcia and five others were shot and killed, in a rural area of Suarez, Colombia, on Sept. 2, 2019.

After 2016, the statistics on lethal and non-lethal violence have skyrocketed, and the situation is critical, not only for political actors but also for social leaders and human rights defenders.

Giorgio Londoño, researcher, PARES

driven by rampant drug production and its strategic proximity to the Pacific coast, from where drugs are shipped abroad. Its volatile security panorama is complicated by strong social movements from indigenous groups that criminal bands aim to silence with intimidation and violence.

Among the bands warring for control of the territory are guerrillas, paramilitaries, and several new fronts formed by FARC rebels who refused to disarm. All, which were previously minor actors, have strengthened since the FARC left its

power vacuum, analysts say.

The government has blamed the latest incident on FARC dissident rebels of the Sixth Front and offered a \$45,000 reward for information that could lead to the capture of the alleged perpetrator, alias ‘Mayimbu’—a FARC dissident known for dominating illegal marijuana production in the region.

As local and regional elections approach, violence committed by such groups is likely to spike in the coming months, experts say.

Since nominations for departmental and municipal elections were

submitted over a month ago, five applicants have already been killed, according to Colombia’s Electoral Observation Mission.

PARES reports eight threats, two killings, and three attempted murders to electoral candidates in Cauca since late October last year.

“Our research on electoral violence leads us to think that there could be more actions of this kind,” Londoño predicted, calling on the government to implement promises made in the peace agreement and offer better protection to those who report threats against them.

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Hong Kong Activists Appeal to US, Taiwan for Support

FRANK FANG

Several prominent Hong Kong democracy activists have turned to the United States and Taiwan to seek international support for the ongoing protests in their hometown.

On Sept. 3, Hong Kong's Civic Party announced on its Facebook page that five of its lawmakers—Alvin Yeung, Kwok Ka-ki, Dennis Kwok, Tanya Chan, and Jeremy Tam—have jointly signed a letter to U.S. lawmakers urging them to swiftly pass the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act of 2019.

The letter, dated Sept. 2, was addressed to U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.), Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.).

United States

The bill, which was introduced in both the House and Senate in June, proposes making Hong Kong's special trading status contingent on the issuance of an annual certification of Hong Kong's autonomy by the U.S. secretary of state.

Currently, the United States views Hong Kong as a separate entity from mainland China in matters of trade, commerce, and investments—owing to the high degree of autonomy granted to the city after it was transferred to Chinese rule from the UK in 1997. The Chinese regime promised that under the “one country, two systems” model, Hong Kong would retain its freedoms. But many locals have complained about the encroaching influence of Beijing since the handover.

“Given the deteriorating situation in Hong Kong, and the worrying developments in the abuse and restriction of human rights, and the continued suppression of democratic developments in Hong Kong, we sincerely implore your good selves and your colleagues for the swift passage of the bill into law as soon as possible,” the letter stated.

Congress is due to be back in session on Sept. 9.

All aforementioned lawmakers have made public statements in support of the Hong Kong protesters. In early August, Pelosi released a statement saying she was committed to working with her colleagues to pass the bill.

The protesters are hoping the bill will apply economic pressure to the Hong Kong government.

The pro-democracy lawmakers argue that the bill “will help safeguard the common values that we all share and uphold, including freedom, rule of law, and democracy,” according to the letter.



Democrat Alvin Yeung (centre R) gestures towards riot police as protesters occupy roads near the Legislative Council and government headquarters in Hong Kong on June 12, 2019.



Students take part in a school boycott rally in Central district in Hong Kong on Sept. 3, 2019.

Joshua Wong urged Taiwanese people to take to the streets to demonstrate their support for Hong Kong protesters before Oct. 1, when the CCP celebrates the anniversary of its takeover of China.

Protesters fear that a proposed extradition bill would endanger the city's autonomy. The bill would allow the Chinese regime to transfer individuals to be trialed in courts controlled by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)—notorious for an opaque judicial system that silences critics and punishes dissidents. The bill was suspended following widespread public opposition.

Protesters are demanding that the city government headed by Chief Executive Carrie Lam fully withdraw the bill, as well as establish an inde-

pendent commission to investigate instances of police violence against protesters; and enact reforms that allow for direct, free elections.

Taiwan

Meanwhile, Joshua Wong, the iconic student leader of Hong Kong's 2014 Umbrella Movement and secretary general of pro-democracy party Demosisto; pro-democracy lawmaker Eddie Chu; and Lester Shum, former student leader in the 2014 movement, visited Taiwan on Sept. 3 to meet with top officials from two local parties, the

New Power Party (NPP) and the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP).

Speaking to press in Taipei, Wong said that Hong Kong and Taiwan both face “the same suppression from Beijing,” and that what's happening in Hong Kong could one day happen to Taiwan.

Taiwan is a de-facto independent country with its own constitution, military, elected officials, and currency, but Beijing considers it a renegade province that will one day be united with the mainland, by military force if necessary.

In January, Chinese leader Xi Jinping suggested that the “one country, two systems” model could be used to bring Taiwan under the reign of Beijing, a suggestion that angered many in Taiwan. Thousands staged a protest in April opposing such a suggestion.

Wong urged Taiwanese people to take to the streets to demonstrate their support for Hong Kong protesters before Oct. 1, when the CCP celebrates the anniversary of its takeover of China.

He added that Hong Kong police have already arrested more than 1,100 people since the start of mass protests in June.

Taiwan has become a top destination for a number of Hong Kong activists seeking refuge, according to Wong. He said he hoped that the Taiwanese government would take measures to ensure their safety.

Radio Free Asia reported on July 18 that more than 10 Hongkongers were seeking asylum in Taiwan. All of them had taken part in storming the Hong Kong Legislative Council building on July 1.

Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen took to her Facebook page following a security council meeting about the Hong Kong situation on Sept. 3. She wrote that she has instructed the relevant central government agencies including the Ministry of Education to assist Hong Kong students currently studying in Taiwan.

She added that the Taiwanese government would help Hongkongers on humanitarian grounds.

Wong explained that it was also important for Taiwanese politicians to voice their concerns about the Hong Kong government's recent actions, including possibly declaring a state of emergency to quell the ongoing protests.

Lam hasn't dismissed the use of the Emergency Regulations Ordinance, which would grant the Hong Kong leader sweeping powers to make arrests, stop communications, and issue punishment during “occasions of emergency or public danger.”

Reuters contributed to this report.

As Economy Spirals, Beijing to Boost Consumers and Infrastructure

FAN YU

News Analysis

China's factory production activity fell in August for the fourth consecutive month as the world's second-largest economy continues to suffer from slowing economic growth.

August's purchasing managers index (PMI) fell to a reading of 49.5, according to official metrics released on Aug. 31 from the National Bureau of Statistics. That's 0.2 points below July's reading and below the 50-point mark that delineates a contraction. A sub-index to PMI which measures export orders picked up slightly to 47.2, but still remained firmly in contraction territory.

The PMI, which measures factory activity, is a leading economic indicator that indicates future demand for goods.

Continued weakness in the manufacturing sector is a symptom of the ongoing trade war with the United States, and the slowdown has had a significant impact on China's economic growth

Given the depressed sentiment by manufacturers, Beijing recently rolled out new stimulus measures specifically to boost consumer and retail spending.

projections.

Given the depressed sentiment by manufacturers, Beijing recently rolled out new stimulus measures specifically to boost consumer and retail spending.

Boosting Consuming Spending

The State Council—China's cabinet-like agency—in late August issued a slew of new stimulus measures to kickstart slowing consumer spending and retail sales.

In keeping with Beijing's long-term goals, the Chinese Communist Party is in the process of realigning China's economic model to other developed markets by focusing on consumption and services.

As part of that effort, a policy document was rolled out to upgrade shopping malls, improve shopping areas, and encourage online retailers to collaborate more with factories.

The policy document, which is a wide-ranging wish list peppered with buzzwords, included mandates to develop “cloud

computing” and “big data,” upgrade “traffic facilities” and “credit systems,” provide longer business hours to encourage night-time shopping, and help offline business entities “introduce new business philosophies, technologies, and designs” to take advantage of the digital economy, according to a statement from the State Council.

In another policy change, the State Council told local governments that have restrictions on auto sales to gradually relax or remove those curbs to encourage car purchases. This comes after China's automobile industry suffered its 13th consecutive monthly decline in July. July auto sales fell by 4.3 percent, the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers said on Aug. 12.

“Our revenue has fallen more steeply than last year,” an employee at a Geely dealership in China's southern Guangzhou province told the Nikkei Asian Review.

“It's because the economy is bad.”

Debt Funding for Infrastructure

In addition to boosting consumer spending, Beijing is once again looking to build its way out of the economic doldrums.

China's economy expanded 6.2 percent year on year in the second quarter, its slowest pace in nearly 30 years, according to official statistics. However, actual growth is likely a few percentage points lower. Michael Pettis, a professor of finance at Peking University's Guanghua School of Management, believes the real GDP growth rate is below 3 percent.

“The irony is that the worse the trade war gets, the higher the official GDP growth will probably be. In order to show that China is not affected by the trade war, they will show high growth rates,” Pettis told Swiss financial magazine The Market earlier this year. “But you must understand that the published GDP growth numbers do not measure the real performance of the system.”

But the trade war and accompanying manufacturing

activity decline and slow demand are only part of the story.

Beijing's infrastructure spending had also declined in recent periods in an effort to rein in China's debt burden. Infrastructure spending—government-mandated spending on roads, railways, and other real estate developments—was a key driver of economic and jobs growth over the past decade, but such spending has recently fallen to multi-year lows.

Historically, funding for infrastructure comes from issuance of local government bonds that were bought up by state-owned banks. But Beijing has in recent years reined in the amount of new debt issuance, especially at the local and regional level.

But that trend has reversed in recent months. China's debt-to-GDP levels increased to 249.5 percent at the end of June, according to data from the National Institution of Finance and Development. That's an increase from the 248.8 percent in March and 243.7 percent at the end of December 2018.

Toronto Resident and Former Chinese Supreme Court Judge Wants China’s Justice System Exposed

OMID GHOREISHI

TORONTO—After nearly a decade as a Supreme Court judge in China, Xie Weidong decided he had seen enough of the justice system under the Communist Party—at times even being told how to rule before the start of a trial—and stepped down as a judge in 2000.

Xie, a resident of Toronto who moved to Canada in 2014 and has been sponsored by his Canadian wife to become a permanent resident, is now being pursued by the same justice system he once worked for.

“I have a thorough understanding of the Chinese Communist Party’s judicial system, and this system has very serious problems. I hope that the international community can know more about it,” Xie told The Epoch Times.

Xie said he is a victim of a conspiracy by local officials in China’s Hubei province to deprive an entrepreneur of his business—a tangled story that involves the local police force and the courts, and includes Xie’s relatives and even a Canadian citizen among those targeted, some of whom are still in custody in China.

In 2015, Xie learned that police in China had requested Interpol to put him on its red notice list on charges of corruption and accepting bribes while serving as a judge.

But last month, Interpol told Xie’s U.S.-based lawyer that it had removed him from the list, saying there was a “predominant political dimension” to China’s request.

The statement cited a report by Human Rights Watch (HRW) on the methods employed by Chinese authorities to force those on its wanted list to return to China, adding that in Xie’s case they considered what HRW wrote about “unjustified detentions, threats of collective punishments, restrictions of movements, and financial measures” used against him.

“All these elements contribute to a body of corroborating evidence, which reinforce and support the Applicant’s arguments regarding extra-judicial measures applied on his relatives to coerce his surrender,” Interpol’s Aug. 12 statement said. “[T]here is a significant potential ... of [Interpol] being perceived as facilitating politically motivated activities.”

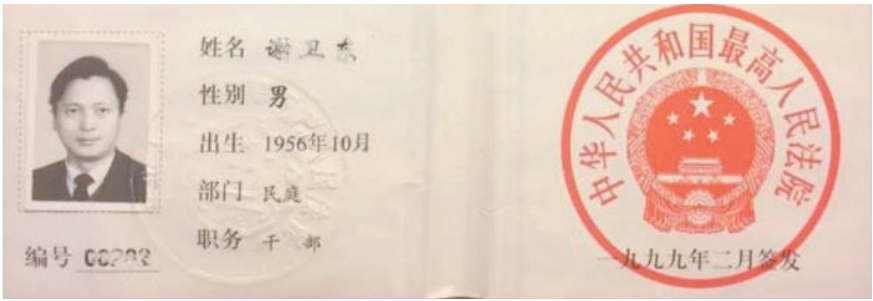
Xie said the red notice had also initially hindered his application for permanent residency in Canada, with authorities requesting his response to the notice and rejecting his application because it was not submitted in time.

After a Canadian court reviewed his case in 2017 and accepted his application arguing that the charges against him propelled by China are not based on evidence, immigra-



Xie Weidong, a former Supreme Court judge in China who now lives in Toronto, in a file photo.

In 2015, Xie learned that police in China had requested Interpol to put him on its red notice list on charges of corruption and accepting bribes while serving as a judge.



Xie Weidong’s ID from when he worked as a Supreme Court judge in China.

tion officials settled the case; his sponsorship application was eventually resumed and is currently in progress.

“The sound and effective legal system in the West has protected my legitimate rights,” Xie said. “A sound legal system can correctly identify facts and effectively protect people’s legal rights because it only believes in evidence.”

He adds that his experience proves the point he has been trying to drive home since he left China’s justice system: “Such a judicial system should be severely criticised.”

‘Seizing Other People’s Money’

According to Xie, who has become a vocal critic of China’s justice system, his ordeal originates in a civil lawsuit case in Hubei Province in the 1990s that he presided over as a supreme court judge.

The case involved business owner You Xiaolin, who ultimately won his lawsuit against another company, Securities Trading Department of Ping An Securities. Both the lower court and the supreme court ruled in Yu Xiaolin’s favour. Xie heard the

case as part of a three-member supreme court panel in 1999, before resigning his post in 2000.

In 2004, another company, Wuhan Securities Trading Department, launched a lawsuit against You Xiaolin, and this time the courts ruled against him. He was put under arrest and all his and his family’s personal and business assets were seized.

In 2005, local authorities charged You Xiaolin’s sister, You Ziqi, who immigrated to Canada in 2002 and is now a Canadian citizen, of attempting to take over her brother’s assets. Their mother, Deng Qing, alleges the authorities made this move to prevent You Ziqi from coming back to China and reclaiming the seized property.

You Ziqi, who didn’t know she was wanted, was detained upon setting foot in China in 2014.

Xie said he is now being pursued by the local authorities so he can be forced to testify that he accepted bribes by You Ziqi to rule in favour of her brother in 1999.

“The gangs of black and evil officials at all levels under the Chinese

Communist Party’s autocracy often resort to fraudulent cases to seize private property, and then try to silence the victims,” he said. “They put my name on the Interpol’s red notice list by bribing the superior officials.”

Both Xie’s son and his sister have been detained in China, an attempt to force him to return, he said. His son, who was detained in November 2016, has been denied bail and is still in custody. His sister, detained in September 2016, is released on bail, awaiting trial.

Since his time in Canada as well, Xie said there have been a number of instances in which acquaintances tried to have him return to China—where he fears he will be arrested and tortured—such as the time a lawyer who formerly represented his sister tried to meet with him in suspicious circumstances to push him to return.

He said such direct attempts in Canada stopped after the RCMP got involved, but notes that efforts to get to him continue, including hearing from friends back in China who were likely coerced by the authorities to try to persuade him to go to a third country so that he could be confronted by Chinese agents there.

“The relevant documents from the Interpol red notice said that they would sentence me to life imprisonment,” Xie said. “This way, they will seal your mouth, and their goal of seizing other people’s money will be achieved.”

With reporting by Allen Zhang

Hong Kong Leader Announces Withdrawal of Extradition Bill

CONTINUED FROM A1

that critics of the Chinese regime would be punished with impunity.

Following Lam’s announcement, convener of the city legislature’s pro-democracy camp Claudia Mo said at a press conference that Lam’s “so-called concession, has come too little too late. The damage is done, the scar, the wounds are still bleeding in Hong Kong. She thinks that she can use some garden hose to put out a hill fire, that is not going to be acceptable.”

She added that it would be up to the protesters to decide whether or not Lam’s latest decision would appease them. “It is up to the young protesters at the front line to decide how they should take it. My major impression is that they are adamant about the five demands being met before their fight would stop.”

Pro-democracy activist Joshua Wong, who recently called on German Chancellor Angela Merkel to raise the issue of Hong Kong protests during her upcoming visit to

China, took to Twitter to reveal his thoughts on Lam’s decision.

“Too little, too late,” said Wong, who was one of the leaders of the 2014 pro-democracy Umbrella Movement that was the precursor to the current unrest. “Carrie Lam’s response comes after 7 lives sacrificed, more than 1,200 protestors arrested, in which many are mistreated in police station.”

Pro-democracy lawmaker Au Nok-hin took to his Facebook page and wrote: “Five demands, not one less.”

In addition to the withdrawal of the extradition bill, the protesters have continually demanded: an independent inquiry into the protests; fully democratic elections; dropping the government’s previous characterization of the protests as “riots”; and exonerating all protesters who have been arrested so far.

Reuters and Epoch Times staff member Frank Fang contributed to this report.

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Trump Warns Beijing Against Stalling Trade Talks Until After US Election

CATHY HE

President Donald Trump said Sept. 3 trade talks with China were going well, but warned the Chinese regime against stalling until after the election. He warned that if he were to win re-election, the deal would get “much tougher.”

“We are doing very well in our negotiations with China,” Trump wrote in a tweet, adding that Beijing could not afford to drag its feet in talks given the damage that U.S. tariffs were inflicting on companies and jobs in China.

Trump said that while the Chinese regime “would love to be dealing with a new administration,” if the two sides could not resolve the dispute and he won re-election, the “Deal would get MUCH TOUGHER! In the meantime, China’s Supply Chain will crumble and businesses, jobs and money will be gone!”

In the latest escalation of the trade war with China, on Sept. 1, 15 percent tariffs on \$112 billion worth of Chinese goods went into effect. The new tariffs target a wide range of goods imported from China, including clothes, shoes, furniture, diapers, and chocolate. At the same time, the Chinese regime’s new retaliatory tariffs on U.S. crude oil went into effect.

On Dec. 15, a second round of 15 percent tariffs will take effect on roughly \$180 billion worth of Chinese goods. Once these tariffs take effect, virtually all goods imported



JOSHUA ROBERTS/REUTERS

President Donald Trump speaks during a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) briefing on hurricane Dorian at FEMA Headquarters in Washington, U.S., on Sept. 1, 2019.

from China will be tarified. The U.S. administration has also slapped 25 percent tariffs on \$250 billion of Chinese goods, mainly focused on industrial equipment and machinery.

Trump also hit back at critics who said he should work with the EU and other countries to tackle China, saying that those countries have also treated the United States unfairly

in trade.

“For all of the ‘geniuses’ out there, many who have been in other administrations and “taken to the cleaners” by China, that want me to get together with the EU and others to go after China Trade practices remember, the EU & all treat us VERY unfairly on Trade also. Will change!” he wrote.

For more than a year, the Trump

administration has been engaged in a trade dispute with China, seeking to compel the Chinese regime to reform a raft of longstanding unfair trade practices including intellectual property theft, forced technology transfer, and subsidisation of its domestic industries.

Trump on Sept. 1 said that the two sides were due to have in-person meetings in September.

US, Poland Sign Joint Agreement on 5G Technology Cooperation

BOWEN XIAO

The United States and Poland on Sept. 2 signed an agreement to cooperate on new 5G technology, as concerns about Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei continue to grow.

Days before the agreement was signed, a senior Trump administration official told reporters during a briefing that the deal was at “the top” of its list of priorities and noted it was imperative for national security.

“This is an incredibly important signal of the strength of our cooperation between the United States and Poland against what may be one of the preeminent, I guess I’ll just call it a threat, in the coming years,” the official said on Aug. 31. The official didn’t specifically identify a country or company.

The agreement comes amid worries over supply chain security, as there are “a number of suppliers that have links to hostile governments,” the official told reporters.

“It’s really not possible to contemplate a core network that can be protected, that’s contrary to the nature of the 5G network. And so having the kind of framework for 5G cooperation ... is going to allow us to address all of those issues,” the official stated.

The agreement was signed by Vice President Mike Pence and Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki in Warsaw. Pence filled in for President Donald Trump, who cancelled his trip due to Hurricane Dorian. The hurricane is tied with the 1935 Labor Day hurricane as the strongest Atlantic storm to make landfall.

Pence also met with Polish President Andrzej Duda on Sept. 2. The vice president wrote on Twitter that he was honoured to be in Poland, but added, “our hearts are home with the fami-



JANEK SKARZYNSKI/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

lies & communities in the path of Hurricane Dorian.”

The agreement endorses the principles developed by cybersecurity officials from dozens of countries at a summit in Prague earlier this year to counter threats and ensure the safety of next-generation mobile networks.

“Protecting these next-generation communications networks from disruption or manipulation and ensuring the privacy and individual liberties of the citizens of the United States, Poland, and other countries is of vital importance,” the agreement states.

Pence said the agreement would “set a vital example for the rest of Europe.”

The United States and Chinese state-controlled Huawei, the world’s largest manufacturer of network infrastructure equipment, are in the midst of a global battle over network security. The United States has been lobbying allies to ban Huawei from 5G networks over fears the Chinese Community Party could make Huawei give it access to data for cyberespionage. Huawei has previously denied such allegations.

While the United States has called for an outright ban on Huawei, European allies have balked at the idea. Huawei is being probed by federal U.S. prosecutors investigating alleged cases of technology theft, according to The Wall Street Journal, citing unnamed sources.

During a visit to Sweden on Aug. 29, Morawiecki said decisions were being taken that would make Swedish networking and telecommunications company Ericsson invest in 5G development in Poland.

Polish President Andrzej Duda (R) shakes hand with U.S. Vice President Mike Pence during a meeting in Warsaw on Sept. 2, 2019.

Protecting these next-generation communications networks from disruption or manipulation and ensuring the privacy and individual liberties of the citizens of the United States, Poland, and other countries is of vital importance.

Joint Agreement between United States and Poland

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

US-Japan Trade Deal Upends China’s Only Bargaining Chip in Trade Talks: Commentator

NICOLE HAO

U.S. President Donald Trump and Japan Prime Minister Shinzo Abe reached an agreement on Aug. 25, whereby the latter promised to import \$7 billion more of U.S. agricultural products. Although both Trump and Abe did not directly mention the U.S.-China trade talks, some observers have analysed that it would have a potential impact on Beijing’s negotiating tactics.

US-Japan Deal

Trump and Abe held a meeting on the sidelines of the G-7 Summit in Biarritz, southwestern France on August 25.

After the meeting, the two state leaders announced to media that they reached an agreement for a trade deal, which Abe said he hoped would be formally signed in New York next month.

“We still have some remaining work that has to be done at the working level, namely finalising the wording of the trade agreement and also finalising the content of the agreement itself,” Abe said. “[We’ll sign] the agreement on the margins of the UN General Assembly at the end of September.”

Trump applauded the deal. “It’s a very big transaction, and we’ve agreed in principle. It’s billions and billions of dollars. Tremendous for the [American] farmers,” he said.

U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer told media that currently, Japan imports \$14 billion worth of American agricultural products. Abe agreed to have Japan open up its market to more U.S.-made beef, pork, wheat, dairy products, and wine.

“It will lead to substantial reductions in tariffs and non-tariff barriers across the board,” Lighthizer said.

Abe said Japan’s private sector would be glad to purchase excess U.S. corn, because insect pests have affected the crop yield of some agricultural products in Japan.

“We believe that there is a need for us to implement emergency support measures for the Japanese private sector to have the early purchase of the American corn,” Abe said.

Analysis

U.S.-based China affairs commentator Tang Jingyuan believed that by Japan agreeing to buy up U.S. agricultural goods, Beijing would lose its chief bargaining chip—as it has imposed tariffs on those same U.S. crops.

After the United States announced tariffs on Chinese goods to punish the Chinese regime for its unfair trade practices, U.S. crops were the first category of goods that Beijing announced retaliatory tariffs on.

“American farmers will likely be voting for Trump to be re-elected in 2020. The Chinese regime has published advertisements and videos to these farmers to say that Trump’s trade war would hurt them and so on,” Tang said, referring to advertorials that Chinese state-run media ran in newspapers that publish in the American heartland states.

Tang noted that China’s trade negotiators have consistently used the promise of buying more U.S. agricultural products as a condition to exchange for Washington’s concessions. “This is the only effective card that the Chinese regime has in the U.S.-China trade talks,” Tang said.

Now that Japan has agreed to buy those crops from the United States, the latter has a steady customer. This has rendered Beijing’s bargaining chip useless, Tang added.



NICHOLAS KAMM/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe meets with U.S. President Donald Trump during a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in Biarritz, southwest France on Aug. 25, 2019.

Ocasio-Cortez Criticised After Saying Republicans Are Trying to Scare People Away From Socialism

JANITA KAN

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) was criticised after she attempted to downplay the threat of socialism by claiming Republicans are trying to scare people away from voting for Democratic candidates.

“The ‘old-fashioned red-baiting approach, familiar to those of us who lived through the Cold War, doesn’t seem to be working,’” Ocasio-Cortez said in a Twitter post accompanied by an article that argues the fear around socialism is beginning to recede.

“Drumming fear around socialism is the GOP’s big play, & it’s failing, bc capitalism = GoFundMe as our national healthcare system,” she added.

Many people called out Ocasio-Cortez trivialising the threat of a tyrannical political system that has caused destruction in many parts of the world, most recently in Venezuela.

“AOC’s message today: there’s never a reason to fear communism or socialism, despite the fact they’ve never worked,” Stand for America, an organisation founded by former United States Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley, posted

AOC’s message today: there’s never a reason to fear communism or socialism, despite the fact they’ve never worked.

Stand for America

Then presidential candidate Donald Trump hugs the American flag as he arrives for a campaign rally in Tampa, Florida, on Oct. 24, 2016.



JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES



ALEX WROBLEWSKI/GETTY IMAGES

U.S. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) speaks as Reps. Ilhan Omar (D-MN) and Ayanna Pressley (D-MA) listen during a news conference at the U.S. Capitol on July 15, 2019.

in response. “We don’t need to go back 30 years to see what’s happening in Venezuela today. #NeverSocialism.”

Will Estes, who has penned pieces for the National Review and Washington Examiner, wrote: “If the ‘fear around socialism’ has begun to recede, it’s thanks to a public education system that has failed to impart the cruel lesson of its privations on every people who’ve been subjected to it. Which, frankly, explains much of your popularity too.”

“I fought against Communism for 23 years in the U.S. Army,” Dr. Rich Swier, a retired army lieutenant colonel and a publisher of the DrRichSwier.com e-magazine, wrote. “This corrupt and failed system must be resisted at all costs. As a member of Congress it’s your sworn duty to protect and defend our Constitution.”

This comes as several Democratic presidential candidates are openly pushing for socialist policies as their leading agenda in the 2020 race.

As part of his campaign, Rep. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) is promoting a range of socialist policies like “Medicare for All,” free college tuition, and a \$15 minimum wage. These policies are being endorsed by other Democratic candidates includ-

ing Sen. Kamala Harris (D-Calif.), Sen. Cory Booker (D-N.J.), and Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.).

Meanwhile, Ocasio-Cortez is pushing her own socialist policy, the Green New Deal, to tackle climate change. It calls for a Soviet-style 10-year mobilisation to take all gas-engine cars off the road and upgrade or replace every home and commercial building in the country. It would also cost U.S. taxpayers up to \$93 trillion over the course of the mobilisation, according to one estimate.

Trump Communications Director Tim Murtaugh has described the Democratic field of candidates as “one big socialist organism with 22 heads,” which was later changed to “one big socialist organism with 23 heads” when New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio announced his presidential bid.

President Donald Trump, Vice President Mike Pence, and other GOP leaders have repeatedly warned about the rise of socialism. Moreover, Trump, a fierce critic of socialism and communism, has previously vowed that “America will never be a socialist country.”

“Here, in the United States, we are alarmed by new calls to adopt socialism in our country,” Trump

said during the annual State of the Union address in February. “America was founded on liberty and independence—not government coercion, domination, and control. We are born free, and we will stay free.”

A Gallup poll released in May found that over 40 percent of Americans say socialism would be a good thing for the United States—an alarming increase since 1942. The polling data found that while 51 percent of Americans say socialism is a bad thing, 43 percent believe it would be a good thing.

This is an 18 percentage point increase since 1942, where 40 percent of Americans thought socialism was a bad thing, while 25 percent believed it was a good thing, according to the Roper/Fortune survey, as noted by Gallup.

Socialism, which takes the form of progressivism in the United States, is a precursor to communism and has already infiltrated U.S. politics, higher education, and culture, according to The Epoch Times series How the Spectre of Communism is Ruling Our World.

Epoch Times reporter Ivan Pentchoukov contributed to this report.

US and Afghan Taliban Reach an Agreement, Needs Trump’s Approval

CONTINUED FROM A1

movement, a deal was reached. But it must still be approved by President Donald Trump before it can take effect.

“Yes, we have reached an agreement in principle,” Mr. Khalilzad told Tolo News, “Of course; it is not final until the U.S. president [Donald Trump] agrees on it. So, at the moment, we are at that stage.”

In exchange for the steady withdrawal of U.S. troops, the Taliban would have to commit to preventing Afghanistan from being used by militant groups such as al Qaeda or ISIS terrorists as a base for attacks on the United States and its allies.

Senator Lindsay Graham said on Aug. 29, “The United States cannot contract out the American people’s security to the Taliban who—in exchange for a U.S. withdrawal—simply ‘promise’ to guarantee that al-Qaeda and ISIS-K are denied haven.” Khalilzad did not say how long the rest of the approximately 14,000 U.S. troops would remain in Afghanistan after the initial withdrawal.

Taliban extremists took responsibility for an explosion in Kabul late Monday, just a short time after a U.S. negotiator shared the details of a deal with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani to remove thousands of American troops from Afghanistan. President Ghani has seen the draft of the accord and will give an opinion after looking at the details of the agreement. Presidential spokesman Sediq Sediqqi said, “Afghan government has the details of

In exchange for the steady withdrawal of U.S. troops, the Taliban would have to commit to preventing Afghanistan from being used by militant groups such as al Qaeda or ISIS terrorists as a base for attacks on the United States and its allies.

the agreement. We will consult and comprehensively study this [document] and will try to formulate our observation based on our national interests.” Mr. Sediqqi continued, “The efforts of the U.S. and our allies will lead to a result when the Taliban enter into direct negotiations with the Afghan government and when we witness a ceasefire and end of violence.”

Khalilzad said the goal of the draft accord was to end the war and reduce violence, but that there was no formal ceasefire agreement. Any ceasefire would be up to Afghans themselves to negotiate. Ceasefire negotiations remain uncertain because the Taliban thus far refuse to deal directly with the current western-backed Afghan government. They consider it illegitimate and are in rebellion against it.

The talks might be held in Norway to reach a broader political goal and an end to the fighting between the Taliban and the government in Kabul.

Keeping a US Presence in Afghanistan

A key challenge in solving the problem in Afghanistan and bringing all U.S. troops home is that the Taliban are not a one-headed monster, but rather multiple groups with different ideologies and different goals. Some Taliban groups may want to work with the national government and take a conditions-based approach. But other factions take a more hard-line approach and want all foreign troops out immediately. The NATO coalition is training the

Afghan military and police who are trying to defend the country against the Taliban.

According to the U.S. defense department, The United States “maintains a counter-terrorism effort in the nation, targeting ISIS extremists and al-Qaeda. ISIS has made gains in the eastern and northern parts of the country. The group is actively seeking recruits, and officials label it as a threat to external attacks in Europe and the United States.”

In an Aug. 28 Pentagon press briefing, General Dunford answered questions about withdrawing troops from Afghanistan if the peace accord is signed. Dunford said, “When I think about Afghanistan, I think ... We do not want Afghanistan to be a sanctuary from which the home-

land can be threatened. From which the American people and our allies can be threatened. The other thing is the peace and stability in Afghanistan. The president and secretary have been clear to me that as the negotiations progress, we are going to ensure that our counter-terrorism objectives are addressed. So, I think it is premature; I am not using the word withdraw.”

He concluded by saying that if the accord were signed, they would re-evaluate their counter-terrorism strategy after assessing the entire situation and then make recommendations.

The war in Afghanistan has cost more than 2,300 American lives and hundreds of billions in taxpayer dollars.

CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES



Then-Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump (L) is welcomed to the stage by former U.S. Ambassador to Iraq and Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C. on April 27, 2016.

NBC’s Unfair Attack on The Epoch Times

RONALD J. RYCHLAK



NBC News thinks that The Epoch Times is not a real newspaper, but more like a newsletter for a pro-Trump religious cult. Or, as lead story reporter Brandy Zadrozny said on MSNBC, it’s an “anti-Chinese government propaganda outlet.”

Zadrozny and her co-reporter, Ben Collins, authored a story on the emergence of The Epoch Times, its associated media, and the spiritual discipline Falun Gong, practiced by the paper’s founders. Various NBC-related outlets have given it a lot of attention. The problem is that the story is so poorly sourced, misleading, and unclear that it seems closer to disinformation than actual news reporting.

First, a little background: Falun Gong is a spiritual practice with ties to ancient Asian religions. It consists of a set of five exercises, much like the tai chi and qigong that many Chinese practice.

Its popularity in China exploded in the 1990s after Li Hongzhi began publicly teaching what had been a practice passed down in a lineage manner to only a few disciples. The communist regime in China came to resent Li’s influence and the movement’s open defiance of the regime.

Serious persecution (which continues today) soon followed. Followers were imprisoned, forced underground, or left China. Li moved to the United States.

In the year 2000, a number of Chinese Americans in Atlanta founded The Epoch Times “as an antidote to communist propaganda.” Originally, it was published only in Chinese; today, it is published in 21 languages. The founders believed in the principles of Falun Gong, including truthfulness. Because of that truthfulness, shortly after the first issues hit the newsstands, staff members in China were jailed and tortured for their reporting.

Maddow Attacks

For about a decade, The Epoch Times was aimed primarily at Chinese expatriates. Eventually, however, The Epoch Times expanded. It is associated with a media

Because of that truthfulness, shortly after the first issues hit the newsstands, staff members in China were jailed and tortured for their reporting.

group, Epoch Media Group (EMG), whose New Tang Dynasty TV produces audio and video content for a worldwide audience. As is common in these situations, however, the media group is a separate legal entity from the newspaper.

In her segment on this story, MSNBC’s Rachel Maddow looked to programming from EMG, especially the entertainment show “Edge of Wonder,” which is all about conspiracy theories. Maddow, however, conflated news content from The Epoch Times with programming about conspiracies and used the show to condemn the paper in a most unfair manner. Judging NBC News on the basis of NBC’s “American Ninja Warrior” show would make about as much sense.

Maddow devoted roughly half of the segment to an incident that took place 20 years ago, when a female Chinese immigrant, who wrote for The Epoch Times, disrupted a joint press conference with President George H.W. Bush and Chinese leader Hu Jintao.

Maddow directed much of her commentary to the importance of maintaining good relations with China and on how embarrassing this incident was to Bush. It seemed a bit inconsistent with the deep concern she has frequently expressed about colluding with Russia, a country also run by communists.

Maddow dismissed The Epoch Times’ coverage of the Obama administration’s alleged actions against Trump’s 2016 presidential campaign as “something about Donald Trump saving America from ‘satanic Democratic pedophiles.’” It may seem like Maddow was just trying to be cute, but actually this was just part of her smear attack on The Epoch Times.

She clearly tried to portray Falun Gong as a cult. For the record, there are no fees associated with the practice. The books and materials are free online. People of various faiths engage in the exercises, and no one is required to work or stay anywhere against their will.

Li lives a quiet life in the United States. He is not associated with the newspaper and does not meet with some board of leaders of Falun Gong (which does not have a hierarchy, anyway). That did not, however, dissuade Maddow from ridiculing him.

She snidely repeated claims that he may have made more than 20 years ago about his training and abilities. She also recounted statements he made about aliens taking over the earth. She did not mention that—again, 20 years ago—he explained that these statements were intended as “metaphors of ancient Buddhist thought.” Maddow also did not explain that the People’s Republic of



China wrote and released a biography of him for propaganda purposes. That biography complicates reporting about him, because it does not match well with the facts.

That did not stop Maddow and the NBC News reporters. As Epoch Times publisher Stephen Gregory wrote, “NBC’s characterisation of Falun Gong puts its beliefs in a false light, is similar to the Chinese Communist Party’s propaganda attacking Falun Gong, and has the surely unintended effect of helping the CCP justify its 20-year-long persecution of Falun Gong.”

Political Bias

According to the NBC narrative, in 2016, The Epoch Times decided to change from being a small Chinese/religion paper and go mainstream (albeit conservative). The paper hired reporters not associated with Falun Gong and allegedly told them “their content was to be critical of communist China, clear-eyed about the threat of Islamic terrorism, focused on illegal immigration and at all times rooted in ‘traditional’ values, they said. This meant no content about drugs, gay people, or popular music.”

I started writing columns for The Epoch Times on a regular basis in 2018. I’m Catholic and most of my prior columns were written for Catholic outlets. I

It’s Not Enough to Be Pro-Freedom; We Must Also Be Actively Anti-Communist

TREVOR LOUDON



A recent NBC report criticising The Epoch Times repeatedly emphasised that the publication is anti-communism, with the clear implication that this stance is anachronistic, paranoid, or unwarranted. Unfortunately, such views are commonplace in today’s West, certainly on the left, but also on much of what is considered the “right.”

The NBC article included this amazing paragraph: “In 2005, The Epoch Times released its greatest salvo, publishing the ‘Nine Commentaries,’ a widely distributed book-length series of anonymous editorials that it claimed exposed the Chinese Communist Party’s ‘massive crimes’ and ‘attempts to eradicate all traditional morality and religious belief.’”

Multiple reputable sources, including the famous “Black Book on Communism,” written mainly by academic ex-communists, assert that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has been responsible for at least 65 million deaths during its 70 years of bloody reign. This adds to the full death toll of communism, which the authors show was at least 100 million.

In the first chapter, titled “Introduction: The Crimes of Communism,” academic Stéphane Courtois states that “communist regimes turned mass crime into a

full-blown system of government.” By comparison, Nazism, while its crimes were also reprehensible, was “distinctly less murderous than Communism,” with a death toll of 25 million innocents.

Currently, 100 million Chinese citizens identify as Christians, and there are many others who are Tibetan Buddhists, Uyghur Muslims, or Falun Gong practitioners. These groups are subjected to ongoing, intense persecution under the CCP.

To The Epoch Times’ credit, it is one of the very few publications in the United States that is not just “pro-freedom” but actively anti-communist, a very important distinction, which was brought home recently in a conversation I had with a senior Epoch Times staffer. He related to me how some Epoch Times journalists had attended a conservative gathering in Washington and were surprised to find they were not universally well-received.

There were some comments that the presence of Epoch Times people, well-known for their opposition to the Communist Party of China, “might damage our trade relations with China.”

Bear in mind that many of these critics were veterans of the Reagan presidency. They had seen how Reagan’s tough anti-communist stance had forced the Soviet Union into a major retreat (not a “collapse,” but a strategic retreat)—something decades of appeasement and East-West

Communism is the highest expression of organised evil this world has ever seen. How is feeding this beast going to produce good results?

trade under previous presidents had failed to achieve.

These “conservative” leaders were all about free trade between nations and liberty at home. However, the thought that they should be opposing “communism” in this day and age was completely foreign to many of them.

What Is Communism?

This view stems from a failure to understand that communism is not just another political system. Communism is a form of organised crime justified by the cult of Marxism-Leninism. It’s basically a combination of criminal inclination coupled with uncontrolled political power.

Like all crime, communism is parasitic. It produces nothing of value itself; it must rely on force, propaganda, torture, intimidation, threats, and espionage to survive. Like cancer, communism consumes its host. Except that in communism’s case, it will only die when the whole planet is consumed.

Must we let things get to that point?

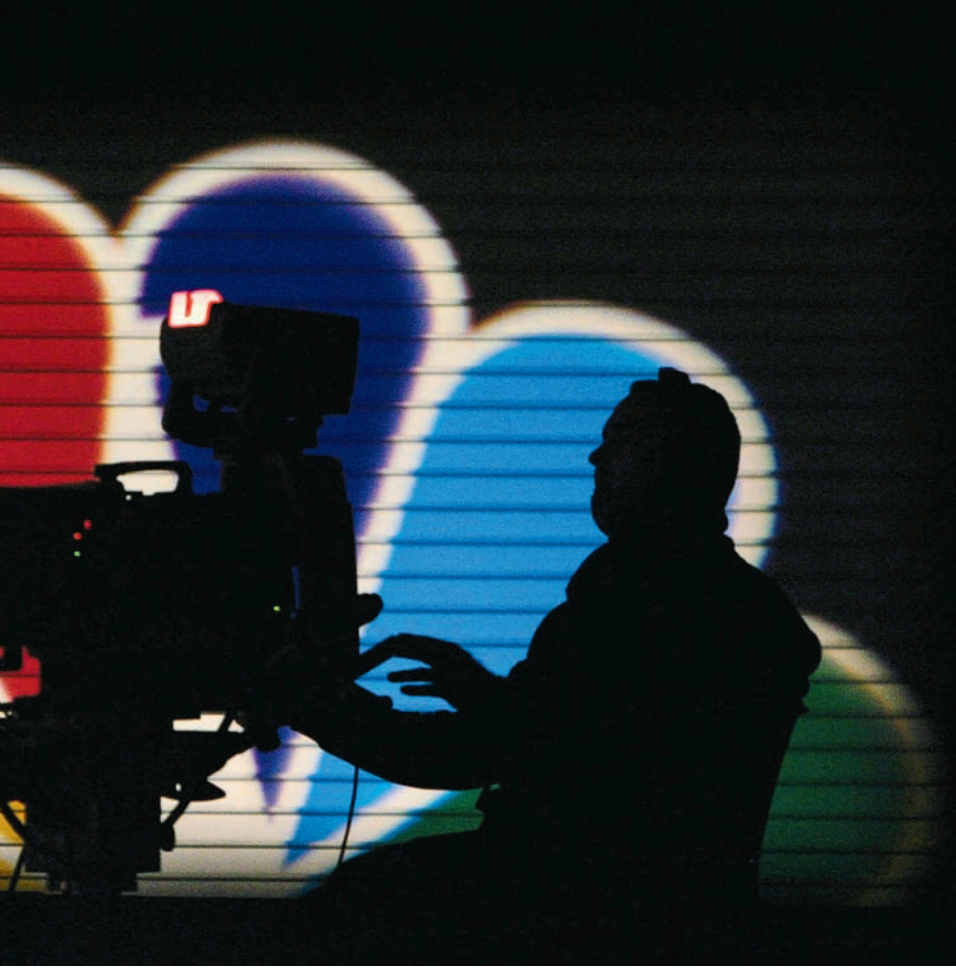
It’s Not Enough to Advocate for Freedom

Most would agree that it’s not enough to merely advocate for a lawful society. A so-



A Chinese landowner is executed by a communist soldier in Fukang, China.

SHAUN HEASLEY/GETTY IMAGES



don’t fully understand Falun Gong, but I respect its practitioners. I’m pretty sure that I was solicited to write because I had edited a book and written some articles on the persecution of Christians in the Middle East. I’ve also studied and written about disinformation.

As to the content of my writings, I was very clear that I did not want restrictions. I have now written about 45 columns for The Epoch Times. I have covered football, gambling, the space race, Saturday Night Live, a Halloween movie, politics, law, religion, and more. Two of my pieces have been rejected. One of them was perhaps too local. The other was sort of “inside Catholic.” I disagree with those editorial decisions, but they in no way were prompted by the kind of concerns that NBC News set forth in its report.

According to Zadrozny, most of the people who work at The Epoch Times, with the exception of seven or so reporters hired in 2016, “do so for free as part of their spiritual practice.” I have been assured that’s not true. I have toured the building that houses the Epoch Media Group and met several of the people who work there. They all seemed happy and friendly.

The Epoch Times certainly has a viewpoint, but newspapers are permitted to have those. Clearly, it is anti-communist. Given the collusion narrative that NBC

An MSNBC camera operator in Des Moines, Iowa, on Nov. 24, 2003.

has been trumpeting for the past two or more years, that would seem to be a good thing (and inconsistent with the alleged pro-Trump agenda).

Zadrozny made no effort to hide her political bias. She said at first that The Epoch Times “looks like a regular conservative outlet because it just keeps getting crazier and crazier, the regular conservative ecosystem.” However, she said, it ultimately got worse. She likened it to “a Russian troll farm.”

When asked whether there was any “coordination or acknowledgement” between the paper and Trump’s reelection campaign team, Zadrozny indicated that there was because the paper interviewed members of the Trump family and was a presence “at CPAC, interviewing everybody from Candace Owens to sitting congressmen.” Doesn’t that just show that The Epoch Times reporters were, well, reporting?

Advertising

NBC News was also pretty casual in the way it categorised advertising money. According to the report, The Epoch Times “spent \$1.5 million over the last six months to run 11,000 pro-President Trump ads on Facebook.” That is said to be “more than most Democratic presidential candidates have spent on their own campaigns.” One might question the numbers, but the bigger problem here is the characterisation of the advertisements as “pro-President Trump ads.”

The advertisements in question are seeking newspaper subscribers, not votes for any particular candidate. I saw them in my Facebook feed!

They promise fair coverage of the president and draw a distinction between The Epoch Times and news outlets that have been unfair to Trump and other conservatives. That does not, however, make these ads political in nature.

They are the result of savvy business decisions in a nation where, according to The Associated Press, Trump won a majority of the votes in 2,626 out of 3,113 counties. That’s a big market. Recognition of that, and crafting advertisements to reach that market, is part of the reason why The Epoch Times is now the fastest-growing newspaper in the nation.

A Thriving News Outlet

Talking about conspiracy theories, according to reporter Collins (appearing on MSNBC), “The end goal of the spiritual group is to bring about a judgement day that will pit, send communists to hell and anyone who is sympathetic to them to heaven, and they think Donald Trump is the guy helping bring that about.” Say what?

The idea that Falun Gong practitioners see Donald Trump as a savior who will

bring about the end times is a smear, not an honest attempt to understand Falun Gong. This outrageous claim does not appear in any official Falun Gong literature. It seems to come from a single source, a disgruntled former practitioner named Ben Hurley, who, according to full-time staff of the Australian edition of The Epoch Times, was associated with the paper from 2005 to 2013, but for years was on the margins. Hurley worked for another media company and was forbidden by contract from publishing elsewhere. He apparently told the NBC reporters that The Epoch Times is “rabidly pro-Trump” because the most devout Falun Gong followers “believe that Trump was sent by heaven to destroy the Communist Party.”

Might someone actually think that? I’ve never heard it said or seen it written elsewhere. I have a hard time believing that the feeling is widespread. Zadrozny and Collins certainly have not set forth enough evidence to justify the kind of allegations that they made.

Hurley is a disgruntled former practitioner who was upset that a friend of his who practiced Falun Gong died. One can appreciate his loss and even understand his resentment, but any serious reporter should question his reliability, unless the objective is simply to spread disinformation.

Li has expressly disavowed any effort to topple the Chinese government. Nevertheless, NBC News reports that the practitioners are dedicated to the takedown of China’s government. In fact, the NBC reporters almost side with the Chinese persecutors in this struggle.

Unsurprisingly, when talking about persecution of Falun Gong, the NBC News report no longer looks to the disgruntled Hurley. That’s because Hurley himself wrote that China conducted a “brutal campaign against [Falun Gong]—a campaign that continues to this day and has killed thousands.”

The bottom line is that The Epoch Times is thriving at a time when other newspapers are dying. It’s doing that by aggressively pursuing the truth, even when that takes them where others won’t go. Other news outlets should do the same.

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

ciety must also actively work to suppress crime and punish criminals.

Most would agree that it’s not enough to advocate for a healthy population. When cancer appears, for example, it must be starved of nutrients and removed as quickly as possible from its host.

Similarly, it’s not enough to simply advocate for freedom. It is not enough to support free markets, the rule of law, freedom of speech and religion, and private property. Liberty will not be assured unless men and women of goodwill fight against that which threatens it.

As long as we remain imperfect beings, some iteration of communism will always be with us. Communism is the politicised, malignant distillation of the evil that’s in all of us. Marx, Lenin, Mao, and other communist leaders saw this flaw in man and sought to organise and legitimise it, awarding their evil ideas with a scientific veneer.

Communism is the highest expression of organised evil this world has ever seen.

How is feeding this beast going to produce good results?

History

Before World War II, Nazi sympathisers in the United States and Britain worked to steer their governments away from confronting Hitler. Big business in many Western nations made fortunes feeding the Nazi war machine.

During the Cold War, leftists in the West were constantly pushing for accommodation of the Soviet Union, even as it swallowed up much of Europe, Africa, and Asia. Some Western big businesses were more than happy to line their pockets with blood-stained rubles.

Nazism was ended with a huge loss of life, after years of appeasement had failed.

In the 1980s, Reagan avoided war by pushing the Soviet Union into full retreat through massive economic pres-

sure. Had that pressure been maintained until the KGB was completely removed from power, we might now be friends with a free Russia instead of facing the nuclear weapons of a superior neo-Soviet regime now confronting us.

The United States has a similar choice with China. We can make billions trading with China (while gutting our own industrial base), then spend trillions defending ourselves from the monster we created when the inevitable war comes—not to mention the millions of casualties and the very real possibility of defeat and communist occupation of the lower 48 and Hawaii.

Or we can isolate China economically until the Communist Party is destroyed by internal pressures, and a new government, or governments, arise. That is our only hope for both a free China and a free United States.

Recently, President Donald Trump said in a tweet that U.S. companies “are hereby ordered to immediately start looking for an alternative to China, including bringing your companies HOME and making your products in the USA.”

There is no doubt that Trump has the authority to make such a call.

According to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), signed in 1977 by Democratic President Jimmy Carter, the president has the power to restrict trade once a “national emergency” is declared.

According to the Washington Examiner:

“‘The president can impose a virtual embargo on a nation under IEEPA,’ said John Yoo, director of the public law and policy program at the University of California at Berkeley and a former official in George W. Bush’s Office of Legal Counsel.

“The law has been used in the past to enact sanctions on hostile regimes such as Cuba, Iran, North Korea, and Syria. The Trump administration is now sug-

gesting using it as a trade negotiation tool. On Sunday, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said China was an ‘enemy’ of the United States on trade.”

China is the United States’ enemy on every front, Secretary Mnuchin, not just in trade.

Let’s hope Trump is prepared to use IEEPA not just as a “bargaining chip,” but as the first step in doing to communist China what Reagan did to the Soviet Union.

The only peaceful way to achieve any real change in China, and to curb the regime’s criminal behavior and foreign and military policies of expansion, is to use U.S. economic leverage.

President Richard Nixon and communist China’s “best friend in America,” former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, opened up U.S.–China trade in the 1970s in a grossly misguided attempt to play communist-ruled Beijing against communist-ruled Moscow. That is the moral and practical equivalent of the FBI allying with the Italian Mafia to defeat the Russian mob.

Had the United States and the West economically blockaded Soviet Russia and communist China from the very beginning, both criminal regimes would have collapsed in a relatively short time. Millions of lives would have been saved, and the West could have spent trillions less on defending itself from the monsters they were economically supporting.

The Current State of Affairs

Today, the heavily nuclear-armed and FSB (KGB)-run Russia is in a formal military alliance (the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) with communist-run China, which is now the world’s second-largest economy. Communism is closer to destroying this planet than it ever has been.

Communism is the plague of our times.

After a setback in the Reagan era, communist and semi-communist parties now rule Russia, China, Vietnam, Laos, North Korea, Cuba, Nepal, South Africa, Namibia, Mozambique, the Congo, Mexico, Nicaragua, Venezuela, and, only half in jest, California.

Communist ideology has deeply penetrated every Western nation, and in the United States, it dominates the universities, organised labor, Hollywood, and the new Democratic Party. And still most Western conservatives and libertarians refuse to become active anti-communists.

Any force for freedom that doesn’t actively oppose communism is doomed to eventual failure. It is as impotent as a saint who won’t oppose sin, a pastor who won’t condemn the devil, a policeman who won’t arrest criminals, or a doctor who won’t fight disease.

The Epoch Times is one of a handful of pro-freedom publications in the West that actively works to expose and oppose communism. We will never fully defeat communism, but if we refuse to oppose it, it will inevitably defeat us. If you aren’t fighting communism, you are in effect enabling its eventual terrifying victory.

The Epoch Times is proudly and actively anti-communist. All of us who love liberty, regardless of our spiritual beliefs, should support The Epoch Times in this noble endeavor.

Trevor Loudon is an author, filmmaker, and public speaker from New Zealand. For more than 30 years, he has researched radical left, Marxist, and terrorist movements and their covert influence on mainstream politics.

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American Maoists Send 4 Delegations to Venezuela in Less Than 6 Months—Is This Legal?

TREVOR LOUDON



Commentary
For the fourth time since April, U.S. Maoists from the Freedom Road Socialist Organisation (FRSO) have sent a delegation to Venezuela.

These delegations are clearly in support of Venezuela’s Marxist regime. They organise support and solidarity for the regime and clearly propagandise in its favour. They also clearly side with the Maduro regime against President Donald Trump.

Is this legal under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA)? Are any of these delegates registered with the U.S. government as agents of Venezuela? If not, why not? Are there grounds for prosecution under FARA?

The latest FRSO trade union delegation travelled to Caracas, Venezuela, for the “1st International Meeting of Workers in Solidarity with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, its Government and Its People,” which started on Aug. 29.

Delegates included labor delegations and trade union leaders from Chile, Bolivia, Brazil, Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Nicaragua, Colombia, Honduras, El Salvador, Argentina, Nigeria, Portugal, France, the UK, and Spain.

According to FRSO’s FightBack! News:

“On opening day, the international delegates joined their Venezuelan trade union comrades and travelled to the Plaza Bolivar in the centre of Caracas. Delegates, special guests and workers from across Venezuela joined in a ‘No mas Trump!’ rally. Francisco Torrealba, the president of the Venezuelan Workers Confederation, kicked off the rally with a rousing speech.

“Attendees signed a declaration against U.S. imperialism and Trump’s blockade, demanding respect for international law and the sovereignty of Venezuela. Delegates and people from the street joined in chanting, ‘No more Trump!’ and ‘Que viva Venezuela! Que

They’re organising with other communist entities, including North Korean diplomats, to counter U.S. sanctions.



Freedom Road Socialist Organisation supporters join around 200 people in an anti-Trump protest on the second anniversary of his inauguration in the Cedar-Riverside area of Minneapolis on Jan. 20, 2018.

Viva Maduro! Respeto por Venezuela!”

On Aug. 31, labor union activists from 25 countries gathered again “for the ultimate goal of building solidarity with the working class, the people and the government of Venezuela” and to coordinate opposition to “the criminal economic sanctions put in place by U.S. President Donald Trump.”

Both FRSO delegates Jared Hamil from Los Angeles and Gabriela Killpack from Salt Lake City, Utah, are active in Teamsters United, an alliance working to build Maoist power in the Teamsters Union. Both have histories in organised labor and the U.S. Maoist movement.

The latest FRSO delegation comes hard on the heels of another FRSO delegation to Venezuela that attended a major international communist gathering, Foro de São Paulo (São Paulo Forum), in Caracas in late July. “Delegations to the Foro de Sao Paulo committed in the final declaration to act together in solidarity with Venezuela, Latin America and other countries of the world against U.S. aggression,” according to FightBack! News.

Among the 1,200 delegates were leaders of socialist and communist parties “from every Latin American country, most of Central America and the Caribbean, as well as Mexico.”

They were joined by leaders of the Communist Party of the Philippines-aligned National Democratic Front, the North Korean ambassador to Venezuela, several far-left Palestinian groups, European communists including Basque and Irish militant, and the FRSO delegation led by Grand Rapids, Michigan-based comrade Tom Burke.

Among other socialist dignitaries, Burke, as FRSO organisational secretary, had a photo-op with Alfredo Valdívieso of the Communist Party of Colombia Central Committee.

In late April, Burke also led a four-member FRSO delegation to Venezuela to celebrate May Day. On their first day, the comrades held a two-hour meeting with “members of Communist Party of Venezuela (PCV) Central Committee and leaders of the Communist Youth of Venezuela,” according to FightBack! News.

The comrades also met Venezuelan Minister of Communes Blanca Eckhout, who had just made a “triumphant speech about building 2.6 million new homes.” Eckhout quoted Hugo Chavez, saying, “Our new society cannot be capitalist because capitalism is designed to destroy our homeland, our society, and our people.”

Between the two events, long-time FRSO supporter and Chicago Teachers Union activist Richard Berg led an unofficial teachers union delegation to Caracas in mid-July.

According to FightBack! News, “Their goals were to learn what they could from Venezuela’s Bolivarian Revolution, exchange views on effective education and to show solidarity with the students, teachers and social movements of Venezuela.”

The Trump administration has clearly signalled that it wants to oust the Maduro regime in favour of the legitimate interim President Juan Guaidó.

On Jan. 23, President Donald Trump wrote on Twitter:

“The citizens of Venezuela have suf-

fered for too long at the hands of the illegitimate Maduro regime. Today, I have officially recognised the President of the Venezuelan National Assembly, Juan Guaido, as the Interim President of Venezuela.”

Since then, the U.S. government has instated ever-stronger sanctions on Venezuela to drive the Russian-, Chinese-, and Cuban-backed Maduro regime from power.

Yet all through this, U.S. communists have been regularly travelling to Caracas to meet with government officials and Communist Party leaders. They’re organising with other communist entities, including North Korean diplomats, to counter U.S. sanctions. Then they hold meetings on U.S. soil to propagandise for the Maduro regime all over the country.

If these FRSO Maoists are all registered under FARA as Venezuelan agents, they’re only morally guilty for supporting a tyrannous regime. If they’re not registered as Venezuelan agents, are they acting illegally?

Perhaps if the Justice Department isn’t too busy investigating the president, they might look into this matter.

Trevor Loudon is an author, filmmaker, and public speaker from New Zealand. For more than 30 years, he has researched radical left, Marxist, and terrorist movements and their covert influence on mainstream politics.

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Silicon Valley Matches China in Thought Control

ROGER L. SIMON



Commentary
Silicon Valley has long had a romance with China. Much of this was, and is, motivated by the great lure of profit from the world’s most populous nation.

But when you do business with a totalitarian state, perhaps inevitably some of its ideology seeps into you.

This is especially true on our increasingly high-tech planet, where many parties are competing for the latest advances and the money that flows from them. China, however, is utilising these advances for particularly dangerous ends. In a manner that’s eerily similar to that predicted many years ago in George Orwell’s “Nineteen Eighty-Four” and Aldous Huxley’s “Brave New World,” China has been instituting a social credit system.

This programme, being rolled out across that country with a population approaching 1.5 billion, measures the obedience of its citizens in areas from their religion (the Chinese don’t like it) to whether they jaywalk. These same citizens are then rewarded or restricted in almost all aspects of their lives (such as being able to travel abroad or obtain a mortgage) according to the scores they have received.

This is Big Brother taken to the nth degree. It will homogenise people to an extent that Mao only dreamed of

Some call the social credit score “authoritarianism gamified.”

If there’s an emergency in our society, it’s not global warming but this growing thought control.

during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, because it will happen without people even realising what’s being done to them. It’s all seemingly in the spirit of competitive online fun. This is why some call the social credit score “authoritarianism gamified.”

But China is far from alone. Google, Facebook, and others are right behind them—possibly even in front of them—in the race for an obedient, homogenised society, even though the tech giants claim the reverse. (It was Google, after all, that was allegedly designing a politically censored search engine for the Chinese, until the tech behemoth pulled back under heavy criticism.)

And this approach is being adopted by a variety of sources, not just the Google and Facebook giants. The likes of insurance companies and restaurant suppliers are employing these new technologies to survey social media or shared lists to give potential clients their own version of a “score.”

We’re all being monitored all the time, almost always without knowing it’s actually happening. Only lip service is paid. But we’re all getting social credit scores of one sort or another.

This ominous trend is motivated in part by the ideological uniformity of management and employees we see at Google, Facebook, and so on. They think they’re doing the right thing. But unchecked global (i.e., cross-border) corporate greed is equally at play, one reinforcing the other.

Whatever the motivations, the results constitute a serious, possibly even terminal, threat to democracy as we know it. In an important article on Fast Company, Mike Elgan writes that Silicon Valley is replicating the equivalent of China’s social credit system for the United States and the larger Western audience.

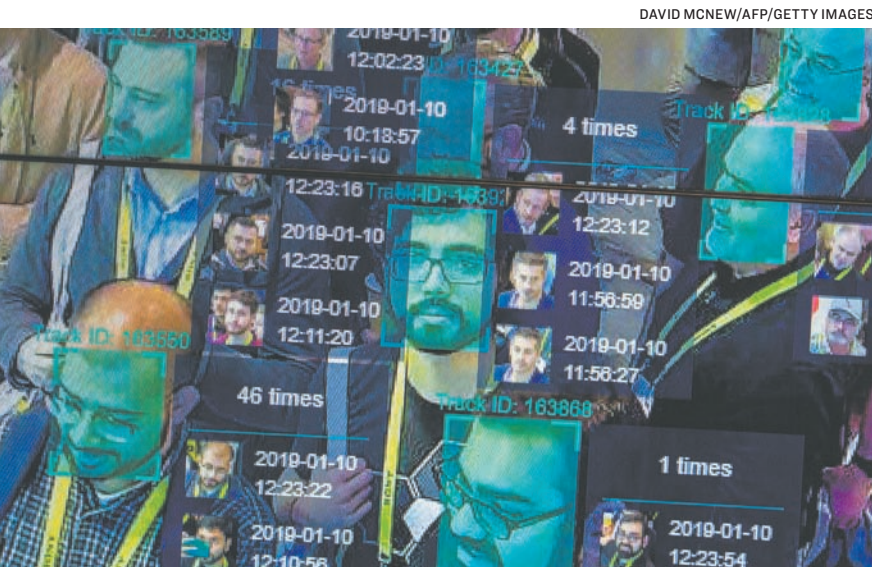
“Many Westerners are disturbed by what they read about China’s social credit system. But such systems, it turns out, are not unique to China. A parallel system is developing in the United States, in part as the result of Silicon Valley and technology-industry user policies, and in part by surveillance of social media activity by private companies,” Elgan writes.

If there’s an emergency in our soci-

ety, it’s not global warming, but this growing thought control. The Chinese and Big Tech have indeed turned authoritarianism into a game we’re all playing. The fun is at our own—and our freedom’s—expense.

Roger L. Simon, co-founder and CEO emeritus of PJ Media, is an award-winning author and an Academy Award-nominated screenwriter. His new novel, “The Goat,” is available on Amazon Kindle. Paperback and hardcover to follow on Sept. 1.

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



A live demonstration uses artificial intelligence and facial recognition in dense crowd spatial-temporal technology at the Horizon Robotics exhibit at the Las Vegas Convention Center on Jan. 10, 2019.

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ABOUT US

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

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

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

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

We report respectfully, compassionately, and rigorously.

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

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

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

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SPECIAL SERIES

How the Spectre of Communism Is Ruling Our World

The Revolt Against God

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

Chapter Six (Cont.)

3. The Twisted Theology of the Communist Spectre

In the past century, various distorted theologies gained currency as communist thought swept through the religious world, subverting clergy and infiltrating and subtly corrupting orthodox religions. Clergy shamelessly interpreted the scriptures according to their whims, distorting the righteous teachings left by enlightened beings from orthodox religions. Especially in the 1960s, “revolutionary theology,” “theology of hope,” “political theology,” and other distorted theologies saturated in Marxist thought sowed chaos in the religious world.

Many priests in Latin America were educated in European seminaries in the last century and were deeply influenced by the new theological theories that had been altered by communist trends. “Liberation theology” was active in Latin America in the 20th century during the 1960s to 1980s. Its main representative was the Peruvian priest Gustavo Gutiérrez.

This theology introduced class struggle and Marxian thought directly into religion, and it interpreted God’s compassion for humanity to mean that the poor should be liberated—and, thus, that religious believers should take part in class warfare in order for the poor to attain equal status. This school of thought used the Lord’s instruction for Moses to lead the Jews out of Egypt as the theoretical basis for the belief that Christianity should liberate the poor.

This emerging theology, which emphasises class warfare and the establishment of socialism, was greatly praised by Fidel Castro, the leader of the Communist Party of Cuba. Although the traditional Catholic Church has resisted the proliferation of these so-called emerging theologies, the new pope, appointed in 2013, invited the representative of liberal theology, Gutiérrez, to attend a press conference in the Vatican on May 12, 2015, as the main guest, thus showing the present-day Catholic Church’s tacit acquiescence and support of liberation theology.

Liberation theology first spread through South America and then through the world. In various parts of the world, many emerging theologies similar to liberation theology have appeared, such as “black theology,” “women’s theology,” “Death of God theology,” “liberal theology,” and even “queer theology.” These distorted theologies have greatly disrupted Catholic, Christian, and other orthodox beliefs around the world.

During the 1970s, in the United States, the leader of the infamous Peoples Temple of the Disciples of Christ (“Peoples Temple” for short), who called himself the reincarnation of Lenin, was a Marxist believer and set the original teachings of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought as the doctrine of the Peoples Temple. He claimed that he was proselytising in the United States in order to achieve his communist ideals.

After killing American congressman Leo Ryan, who was investigating allegations against the cult, the cult leader knew that it would be difficult for him to escape, so he cruelly forced his followers to commit mass suicide. He even killed those who were unwilling to commit suicide with him. In the end, more than 900 people committed suicide or were killed. This cult tarnished the reputation of religions and adversely affected the righteous faith people had in orthodox religions. Thus, it had a serious negative impact on people in general.

4. Religious Chaos

The book “The Naked Communist,” published in 1958, lists 45 targets in the United States for communism to destroy. Astonishingly, most of the goals have already been achieved. No. 27 in the list states: “Infiltrate the churches and replace revealed religion with ‘social’

religion. Discredit the Bible. ...”

In the religious sector today, the three original orthodox religions in particular—Christianity, Catholicism, and Judaism (together referred to as the revealed religions)—have been demonically altered and controlled by the communist spectre, and have lost the functions they had in their original forms. New denominations established or demonically altered with communist principles and concepts have become even more direct promulgations of communist ideology. Religions were important cornerstones in maintaining the smooth and normal operations of the Western world, yet they have been deformed beyond recognition by the communist spectre.

In the churches of various religions nowadays, many bishops and priests simultaneously promulgate deviated theologies, while also corrupting and consorting with their followers in a non-stop series of scandals. Many believers go to church because they think it’s a civilised thing to do or even a form of entertainment or social life, but they’re not genuinely committed to cultivating their character.

Religions have been corrupted from within. The result is that people lose their confidence in religions and their righteous beliefs in Buddhas, Daos, and gods. Consequently, they end up abandoning their beliefs. If man does not believe in the divine, gods will not protect him, and ultimately, humankind will be destroyed.

On June 29, 2017, the Victoria Police Department in Australia hosted a brief press conference to announce that “because of charges made by multiple plaintiffs,” the Australian Cardinal George Pell would confront allegations related to sexual offenses. Pell became the archbishop of Melbourne in 1996 and cardinal in 2003. In July 2014, under assignment by Pope Francis, Pell took responsibility for supervising all financial transactions in the Vatican. He wielded enormous power and was the No. 3 person at the Vatican.

In 2002, the Boston Globe carried a series of reports on Catholic priests’ sexual molestation of children in the United States. The reporters’ investigation revealed that over several decades, close to 250 Boston priests had molested children, and that the church, in an attempt at covering it up, shifted clergy members around from one area to another, rather than informing the police. The priests continued to molest children in the new areas, thus creating more victims.

Similar events quickly spread across the United States. The revelations extended to priests in other countries with a Catholic presence, including Ireland, Australia, and others. Other religious groups began to publicly denounce the corruption of the Roman Catholic Church.

Eventually, under public pressure, Saint John Paul II was compelled to hold a conference in the Vatican for U.S. Catholic cardinals, at which the Vatican admitted that the sexual molestation of children is a crime and stated that the administrative structure of the church would be reformed. Further, the church would expel priests who had sexually molested children, and the criminals would be jailed. The church has, so far, paid more than \$2 billion in settlements for the abuses.

Skimming money off believers in the name of religion has also been a common occurrence. For example, in China, various religions have rampantly embezzled money by taking advantage of believers’ faith in Buddhas, Daos, and gods, effectively turning religion into a business. Money is charged for religious ceremonies and for worshipping by burning incense, with fees sometimes running up to 100,000 yuan (\$15,000). More churches and temples have

been built, looking all the more splendid on the surface, while righteous belief in God diminishes. Disciples who genuinely cultivate are fewer and fewer. Many temples and churches have become gathering places for evil spirits and ghosts, and temples in China have turned into commercialised tourist sites where monks earn salaries, and Buddhist and Daoist abbots preside as CEOs.

During the so-called wave of studying the report of the Chinese Communist Party’s 19th Congress, the deputy chairman of China’s Buddhist Association claimed at a “Training Program for the Spirit of the 19th Congress” that “the 19th Congress Report is the contemporary Buddhist scripture, and I have hand-copied it three times.” He also stated, “The Chinese Communist Party is today’s Buddha and Bodhisattva, and the 19th Congress report is contemporary Buddhist scripture in China, and it shines with the glowing rays of the Communist Party’s belief.”

There were also people who called upon Buddhist believers to follow his example and apply the method of hand-copying scriptures to hand-copy the 19th Congress report with a devout heart so that they could experience enlightenment. When this news report was published in the Nanhai Buddhist Institute in Hainan Province, it led to enormous controversy and was ultimately deleted. The report nevertheless spread widely on the internet.

This incident shows that official Buddhism in China is full of politician-monks and is fundamentally not a cultivation community. Instead, China’s official Buddhism has become a tool used by the CCP for its United Front work.

For more than a thousand years, bishops around the world were directly appointed or recognise by the Vatican. The 30 or so bishops previously recognised by the Vatican in the Chinese region have not been acknowledged by the CCP. Likewise, the Vatican and the Catholics loyal to it in China (particularly the underground believers) have not acknowledged the Communist Party-appointed bishops. However, under constant coercion and enticement by the CCP, the new pope has recently begun conversations with the CCP that appear set to provide Vatican recognition for the CCP-appointed bishops. Thus, bishops previously appointed by the Vatican would be sidelined.

The church is a faith community whose purpose is to enable believers to cultivate, uplift their morality, and ultimately return to Heaven. When deals are done in the human world with an evil spirit in revolt against God, where the communist spectre is allowed to arrange and appoint bishops and thus take charge of matters concerning the belief of tens of millions of Catholics in China, how would God look at the matter? What will the future hold for the tens of millions of Catholics in China?

In China, a country with a rich traditional culture, the spectre of communism painstakingly arranged a system that violently destroyed traditional culture, demolished orthodox religions, and annihilated people’s physical bodies, while simultaneously demoralising society and severing the connection between man and gods—all with the purpose of completely destroying people.

In the West and other parts of the world, the spectre used deception and infiltration to demonise orthodox religions and to confuse and mislead people so as to have them give up orthodox beliefs. They thus drift further away from gods until they face total destruction. No matter what means were used by the spectre, the ultimate goal is the same: to destroy humankind.

This concludes Chapter Six.

See next edition for the next installment.

NICOLAS ASFOURI/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Will China Be Expelled From the WTO?

FRED MCMAHON



Companies globally are developing contingency plans in case China's appalling behaviour—international aggression, violation of treaties, holding foreigners hostage (including two Canadians), and violent internal suppression—affects operations there and the firms need to withdraw or reduce their presence.

They also need to prepare for the “worst-case scenario”—China expelled from the global trade system. International trade was doing nicely before China joined the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 2001. Global support for free trade was at historic highs, and trade and prosperity were growing at unprecedented rates.

Global trade can do just fine without China.

A number of things slammed into the rolling good news of the late 20th century. One of them was the great mass of China crashing into the world trading system.

China would have been hard to swallow even had it acted in good faith. China's huge, well-disciplined, well-educated workforce was bound to cause painful global adjustments, pulling low-skill jobs from poor nations and manufacturing from rich economies, although long-term gains would have much outweighed temporary disruptions.

However, the disruptions were exacerbated by China's stunning bad faith: theft of intellectual property, subsidised industries, predatory loans to impoverished nations to build projects to benefit China's imperialistic dreams, use of slave labour, currency manipulation, barriers to foreign ownership, and use of the “rule of law”—or rather “rule by law”—as a weapon to punish or evict foreign companies, among other abuses.

Now, add to the economic mix the escalating political misbehaviour under dictator-for-life Xi Jinping, including vicious internal suppression, external imperialism, hyped-up nationalism, interference with nations around the globe (most notably Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, though with ramped-up interference elsewhere, including the United States), and use of the Chinese diaspora and students as a weapon against dissent abroad.

It's China's political misdeeds that could lead to a boot from the WTO. Had China been part of the global trading system at the time of the 1989 Tiananmen massacre, it would likely have been expelled—and China is up to far worse by its own admission; and in the international arena, unlike Tiananmen, which was a domestic horror.

China has publicly committed to subjugating Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the South China Sea. The Taiwanese, Hongkongers, and nations with real legal claims to the sea reject the advances of this unwanted suitor.



Workers at the Beijing Automotive Group weld SUV parts on an assembly line in Beijing on Aug. 29, 2018.

China has exhausted all the goodwill that greeted its entry to the world economy.

Taiwan has no appetite to join authoritarian China, given that it's inconceivable that China could guarantee the continuation of Taiwan's liberal democracy. China constantly threatens invasion of Taiwan, which would be bloody. Taiwan is an ocean-bound fortress with a powerful military and committed population.

Hong Kong is much in the news today. China has consistently violated the “one country, two systems” treaty it made for the 1997 handover of Hong Kong. It dashed its pledge to popular elections and created a puppet legislature and executive, kidnapped dissidents in Hong Kong (and other nations), interfered in academic freedom, and moved to extend mainland legal power to Hong Kong, including the extradition treaty that sparked the most recent protests.

Even if the current crisis is resolved, China will continue to attack the “two systems” agreement and Hongkongers will persist in pushing back. If China waits until 2047, when the “one country, two systems” treaty expires to impose its will, it will face an energised and angry population, so it is hard to see China waiting.

China's leadership faces an internal devil of its own creation, a vicious nationalism that it no longer controls. Rather than braking imperialism, popular sentiment would be an accelerant—one the leadership could find particularly appealing to rally

popular support if the economy weakens, which is already happening.

China has exhausted all the goodwill that greeted its entry to the world economy. Global reaction to an invasion of Hong Kong or Taiwan would be intense, as would escalating military enforcement of its claims to the South China Sea, perhaps strong enough to lead to an expulsion from the WTO.

Such a series of unraveling catastrophes remains a worst-case scenario. China's leadership is arrogant and aggressive but not dumb, and so will try to go right up to the line but not over. If it does step over, a weakened WTO and distracted West might limit its response to nasty words and some sanctions.

Yet, only violence will enable China to achieve its publicly stated goals of subjugating Hong Kong and Taiwan, and taking the South China Sea, among other imperial ambitions. This creates massive uncertainty, including the possibility of a world trade system without China.

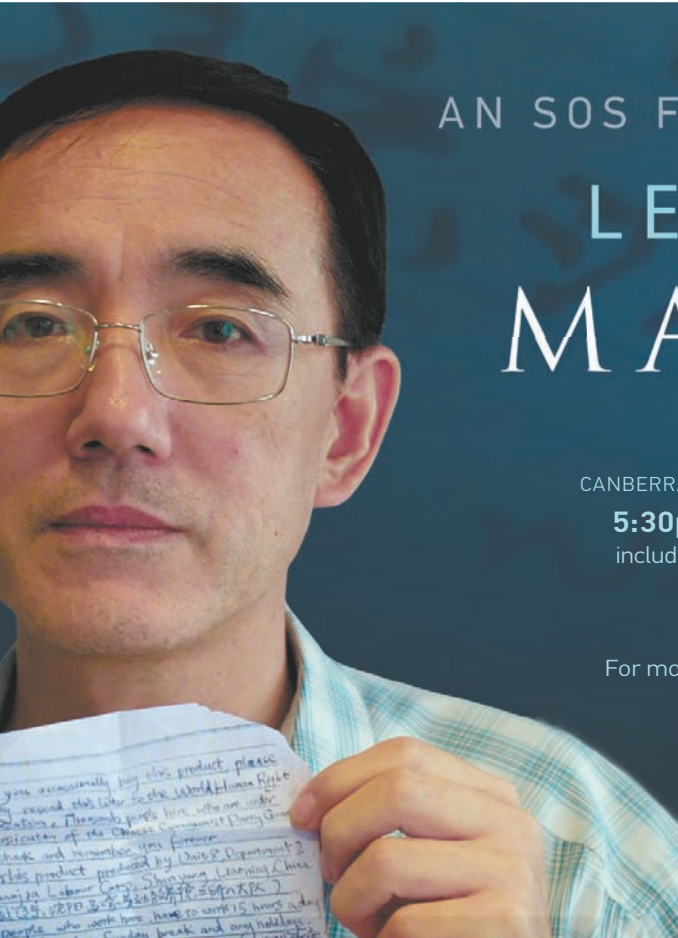
Fred McMahon manages the Fraser Institute's Economic Freedom of the World Project and is resident fellow, Dr. Michael A. Walker Chair in Economic Freedom.

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

FABRICE COFFRINI/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



A World Trade Organisation sign at its headquarters in Geneva on Sept. 21, 2018.







AN SOS FROM ACROSS THE WORLD

LETTER FROM MASANJIA

DENDY CINEMA
CANBERRA CENTRE, 148 BUNDA STREET, CANBERRA ACT 2601
5:30pm for 6 - 8pm Tues 17 Sept 2019
including a Q&A session after the film of 77 minutes.
(Refreshments at 5:30pm)

Booking: masanjia-act.eventbrite.com
For more information please contact Holly on 0481 527 513





Having recently qualified for the 2019 Oscars, the award-winning feature documentary **Letter from Masanjia** is coming to the Dendy Cinema in Canberra! It tells the story of how a desperate SOS note from a Chinese prisoner is found by a US mom in her Halloween decorations, and the incredible events that led to the shutdown of China's labor camp system.

It begins when mom of two, Julie Keith, finds an SOS note in a box of "Made in China" Halloween decorations from an Oregon Kmart. The desperate note was written by a political prisoner named Sun Yi from inside China's notorious Masanjia labor camp. On the crumpled page that travelled over 5000 miles, he details being jailed for his spiritual beliefs and how he is being subjected to torture and brainwashing tactics. His message goes viral and miraculously leads to the closure of China's entire labor camp system. But their story is far from over.

Peabody-winning Canadian filmmaker Leon Lee is not welcome in his native country because of his prior films about China's human rights abuses. So, in Letter from Masanjia, he teaches Sun Yi to use camera equipment via Skype. For over a year, Sun Yi secretly captures harrowing footage of his daily life as a human rights defender, leading up to his tense run from the Chinese authorities. Meanwhile, just outside Portland, Julie Keith is struggling with her own dilemmas as a mother newly embroiled in this cause. Together, these unlikely heroes expose China's ongoing persecution against millions whose ideology differs from the Chinese government.

Sherry, From Dry to Sweet

Spain's famous fortified wine boasts a rich history and impressive range of styles.

See B3



The Ridiculously Awesome Practice of Surrendering

Our efforts at control can blind us to the moment spread out before us.

See B5

LIFE

THE EPOCH TIMES

What You Can Do If Your Child Is Addicted to Screens

Screen addiction can leave kids struggling, but there are ways to help them get past it



DEWALD KRISTEN/SHUTTERSTOCK

Typically, behavioral addictions don't apply to children under the age of 12 years.

JACKSON A. SMITH & DILLON THOMAS BROWNE

Luke's parents gave him a cellphone last year for his 10th birthday. Since then, the amount of time he spends playing video games on and off his phone has increased. Luke has gained weight and recently started refusing to play on his sports team after school, preferring to stay home and interact with peers online. His grades at school have also declined. Recently, Luke and his younger brother got into a physical fight after Luke's brother "killed" his character in

When someone is addicted, the source of their addiction becomes their priority.

a first-person shooter game. With summer break in full swing, parents like Luke's are concerned about their children spending more and more time on their devices. They are worried about how this might affect their child's health. They wonder when (and if) they should draw the line. They often ask us, as psychology researchers and clinicians, "Is my child addicted to screens?" A few important considerations emerge in response to this question. Addictions Are Not Limited to Drugs Addiction is often characterized by a recur-

ring desire to continue to take a substance despite harmful consequences. While the term addiction has traditionally been used in relation to substances such as alcohol and drugs, nonsubstance addictions—including behavioral addictions such as sex, gambling, and "video gaming"—are now recognized. When someone is addicted, the source of their addiction becomes their priority. Other important life activities (for instance sleeping, eating, and bathing) are neglected.

Continued on B4

ALL IMAGES BY SHUTTERSTOCK

NAVIGATING AGING

The Secret to Chronic Happiness as You Age

A mind inclined toward gratitude the best defense against age-related anxiety and depression

BRUCE HOROVITZ

By all rights, Fletcher Hall shouldn't be happy. At 76, the retired trade association manager has endured three heart attacks and eight heart bypass operations. He's had four stents and a balloon inserted in his heart. He has diabetes, glaucoma, osteoarthritis in both knees, and diabetic neuropathy in both legs. He can't drive. He can't travel much. He can't see very well. And his heart condition severely limits his ability to exercise.

On a good day, he can walk about 10 yards before needing to rest.

Yet the Brooklandville, Maryland, resident insists he's a genuinely happy guy—in part because he appreciates what he can do. "There's no question that as age impinges on your life, you do have 'black dog' days," said Hall. "I fight aging every day. But I never, ever give up. You have to work at keeping happy."

Hall focuses on the things that bring him joy: writing and listening to music and audiobooks. By juggling those pastimes throughout the day—every day—he ultimately feels a sense of contentment. "Every one of those things requires that I use my mind—which is a good thing."

Geriatric experts agree that Hall has pretty much figured out the right formula. "You have to be willing to accept your new reality—and move forward," said Dr. Susan Lehmann, director of the geriatric psychiatry day program at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. "Aim to have the best life you can where you are right now."

Living with chronic disease often complicates life. The majority of adults 65 and over have multiple chronic conditions that contribute to frailty and disability, according to a 2013–14 report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The percentage of people 65 and over with various chronic conditions has increased over time, too. The percentage of people reporting hypertension, asthma, cancer, and diabetes was higher in 2013–14 than in 1997–98, the CDC reports.

Chronic conditions can have a devastating impact on both men and women, according to the CDC report. About 57 percent of women and 55 percent of men age 65 and up reported hypertension. Another 54 percent of women and 43 percent of men reported arthritis. And a full 35 percent of men and 25 percent of women reported dealing with heart disease. At the same time, older women were more likely to report clinically relevant depressive symptoms than were older men. In 2014, 15 percent of women 65 and older reported depressive symptoms, compared with 10 percent of men.



You have to be willing to accept your new reality—and move forward.

Dr. Susan Lehmann, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine



It's the small things in life that end up mattering most of all.

Dr. Susan Lehmann, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

Chronic pain, in fact, more frequently leads to depression than does anxiety, said Dr. Kathleen Franco, associate dean at the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine. That depression then leads to additional pain and suffering, she said. "So you have an emotional and physical component."

That's why Hall clings dearly to his greatest passion: writing. When he retired at 65, his original plan was to travel with his wife, Tracey. His physical limitations curbed those goals, so he circled back to what has brought him the most happiness. He stays engaged in daily news by writing for two blogs—including one at-large column in which he espouses what he calls his "compassionate conservative" values.

Hall also adores reading, even though glaucoma has made it all but impossible. Not one to give up, he uses his Amazon Echo smart speaker to order audiobooks. He loves sitting on his balcony in the sunshine and listening to books such as *The Guns of August*. Similarly, he enjoys streaming both classical and country music, especially the Oak Ridge Boys and the country-rock group Alabama.

Hall also has learned to use Alexa, the Echo's built-in digital assistant, to help with seemingly simple tasks that are difficult with poor eyesight. To tell time, he simply asks Alexa.

Beyond that, he avoids getting trapped in any frustration loops, such as trying to troubleshoot computer issues. During a recent technological tussle, he simply shut down the machine and turned on PBS and Charlie Rose. "Watching that show keeps my mind active," he said. After taking time to de-stress, he was able to solve the tech issue.

Hall finds some excuse to get out of his house every day. Sometimes, he runs an errand, or he'll meet a friend for lunch. As a bird lover, he might just sit in a park listening to birds singing. "If I can combine a pleasant venue with the sound of bird symphonies, I'm a happy camper," he said.

This is Hall's version of what some experts call "mindfulness." Mindfulness, which often involves deep, slow breathing that's aimed at lowering your heart rate and calming you down, can be highly effective on older, ailing people, said Franco. "It's simple. It doesn't cost anything. You can do it and no one even knows you're doing it."

One other thing often works like magic: helping others. "Once you start giving to others, you tend not to get stuck in your own aches and pains," said Franco.

Anne McKinley knows this firsthand. Even at 85, she still volunteers for an ag-

ing advocacy group and sits on its board of directors.

McKinley copes with the debilitating effects of lifelong scoliosis. She, too, battles glaucoma, and her difficulties with visual perception affect her balance. She's had both knees replaced and more recently needed emergency surgery for an infection she contracted in the hospital following parathyroid surgery, which also affected her vocal cords.

The Evergreen, Colorado, resident said that keeping a very positive attitude—and constantly reaching out to family and friends—keeps her content.

"Feeling like I have control of my life is very important," she said. "The key is not to feel rushed. I can accomplish one thing in a day and feel good about it."

It's been a tough road since her husband, Cameron, died four years ago after 59 years of marriage. But with her master's degree in social work and experience as a social worker, she knew how to utilize social services for older people in her community. That includes a service that performs house-keeping and other chores for a modest fee.

McKinley still visits family in Florida—though she must use a cane or walker to get around. Her grandchildren frequently come to visit, "and we feast whenever they do," she said, typically on the cookies and pies she loves to bake. Above all, she said, she's always getting out of the house. She gets her hair cut every week. "It's my best-remaining feature," she said.

Then, there's her Siamese cat, Frankie, who joins McKinley every evening at 6 p.m. to watch the evening news while McKinley makes herself a snack and a martini. "My favorite part is the olives," she said.

She expresses how particularly grateful she is for what she has—including a home with a 20-foot-high ceiling on an 18-acre site, where she can look out any window and see the surrounding beauty.

The real key to happiness at every age and stage—particularly old age—is not material things, but gratitude for life's simple blessings, such as laughter among friends or watching a sunset with a loved one, said Lehmann, the Johns Hopkins doctor. "It's the small things in life that end up mattering most of all."

Bruce Horovitz is a freelance journalist and regularly writes for Kaiser Health News, which first published this article. KHN's coverage related to aging and improving the care of older adults is supported in part by The John A. Hartford Foundation.



Living with chronic disease often complicates life.

The real key to happiness is gratitude for life's simple blessings.

Pineapple
for digestive
enzymes.



Coconut oil
helps with the
absorption of
antioxidants.



ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK

Sauerkraut
for probiotics.



FOOD IS MEDICINE

How to Better Absorb Vitamins and Minerals

Simple tips to get more of the good stuff out of your food and into your body

DEBORAH MITCHELL

You are what you absorb. That includes the good (vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients) and the bad (environmental toxins, food additives, etc). Let’s focus on the good; that is, effective ways to better absorb vitamins and minerals.

The amount of vitamins and minerals you absorb from the foods you eat can range from 10 percent to 90 percent. Why is the range so large? Several factors have an impact on the percentage of nutrients you actually get from your food, including (but not limited to): how the food is prepared, any drugs or supplements you may be taking, your age, health status, time of day, and other foods you are eating at the same time.

To make it even more confusing, the amount of vitamins and minerals in any given food can vary greatly, depending on the variety, weather and growing conditions, storage conditions, and natural variation.

For example, although the National Nutrient database reports that a medium banana contains 422 milligrams of potassium, that figure is just an average determined from 14 samples. The actual range of potassium found in those samples was 364 mg to 502 mg per banana, as noted in a recent Scientific American article.

Taking all of these factors into account, you might be thinking it’s difficult to know if you are getting enough nutrients. Actually, the recommended intakes for vitamins and minerals and the dietary guidelines allow for the fact that we don’t absorb everything from our food.

However, that doesn’t mean you shouldn’t do all you can to help ensure you do absorb the maximum amount of nutrition. One way, of course, is to choose fresh, unpro-

cessed, natural, organically grown foods whenever possible.

Here are five other ways to better absorb vitamins and minerals from your food:

Digestive Enzymes
Digestive enzymes are active protein (amino acids) compounds that assist with digestion and metabolism. Common digestive enzymes, including amylase, lactase, lipase, and protease, are produced in the gastrointestinal tract. Their task is to metabolize food into digestible nutrients for absorption and use by the body.

Although digestive enzymes are produced in the body, they are also found in unprocessed, raw foods such as bromelain (in pineapple) and papain (in papaya). Digestive enzymes sold as supplements, however, are subjected to your gastric enzymes and therefore are probably not going to help enhance vitamin and mineral absorption.

Probiotics
Probiotics (beneficial bacteria) produce many different enzymes, including types that can help with digestion and absorption. Beneficial bacteria are available in supplement form and in fermented foods, such as kefir, kimchee, sauerkraut, yogurt, and tempeh.

Friendly Nutrients
If you combine certain foods, you can boost your absorption of specific nutrients. For example, foods that are high in vitamin C can enhance your ability to absorb iron, especially from plant-based foods. One

example would be to drink orange juice with an iron-fortified breakfast cereal or a handful of raisins. B vitamins are better absorbed when they are consumed along with vitamin C and dietary fat.

Coconut oil, which has a large proportion of medium chain fatty acids (MCFAs), helps with the absorption of antioxidants and other nutrients from your food. MCFAs are smaller than the fatty acids found in most other oils, which means they are better able to enter cell membranes.

The B vitamin folic acid, which is the form added to foods, is typically more bioavailable than the form of the vitamin found in food (folate). To boost absorption of this B vitamin, foods rich in folate (e.g., green leafy veggies) can be consumed along with foods that are fortified with folic acid.

Prebiotics
Prebiotics are essentially carbohydrates (soluble fiber) that your body cannot digest. However, they are super “food” or nutrients for the beneficial bacteria in your gut. Therefore, these prebiotics stimulate the growth and activity of probiotics and make it easier for you to absorb vitamins and minerals from your food.

Prebiotics have names that don’t roll off the tongue too easily; namely, oligofructose, fructooligosaccharides (FOS), galactooligosaccharides (GOS), xylooligosaccharides, and inulin, among others. The good news is that you can probably get all the prebiotics you need by eating plenty of fresh veggies rich in soluble fiber, such as broccoli, cauliflower, kale, spinach, chard, and

other leafy greens, as well as garlic, onions, leeks, asparagus, and bananas. Beans are also an excellent source of soluble fiber, as are oats, barley, sweet potatoes, flax seeds, hemp seeds, and many fruits.

Aloe Vera
You may know aloe vera as a handy plant to have in your kitchen to handle minor burns and cuts. However, this succulent also can help with vitamin absorption. In a study from the UC Davis Medical Center, researchers evaluated the use of aloe vera inner leaf gel and whole leaf gel in healthy volunteers to see how they affected the bioavailability of vitamin C (500 mg) and vitamin B12 (1 mg). Water was used as a control. Both aloe vera gels significantly increased levels of both vitamins and enhanced their bioavailability and antioxidant potential.

In another study, use of a polysaccharide-enhanced aloe vera juice product showed that study participants experienced a 20-fold increase in their absorption of vitamin C supplements when they consumed 2 ounces of aloe vera juice. The research was conducted by Lily of the Desert (Naturally Savvy’s sponsors).

You are what you absorb. If you begin with natural, fresh, organic foods, you are off to a running start. Then you can enhance the nutritional benefits by boosting the absorption of vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients from those foods.

Deborah Mitchell is a freelance health writer who is passionate about animals and the environment. She has authored and co-authored more than 50 books and thousands of articles on a wide range of topics. This article was first published on NaturallySavvy.com

Foods that are high in vitamin C can enhance your ability to absorb iron, especially from plant-based foods.

Do You Really Need to Stretch?

Stretching has become somewhat controversial, but it shouldn’t be

EMILY LUNARDO

You’re often told that before and after exercise, you should stretch, but why?

Sometimes, you’re on a time crunch and simply don’t have time to stretch, so you get in the gym, go through your workout, and head out. Maybe you feel fine after and think you don’t need to stretch. So, the question remains, do you really need to stretch?

It has long been believed that stretching prior to exercise helps prepare the muscles for activity. Stretching after a workout helps aid in recovery.

Jan Schroeder, chair and professor of fitness in the department of kinesiology at California State University, Long Beach, explained, “There’s a lot of controversy surrounding stretching right now.”

Schroeder said stretching recommendations from the American College of Sports Medicine have changed frequently because they



MICHAEL JUNG/SHUTTERSTOCK

Stretching prior to exercise helps prepare the muscles for activity.

are still learning a lot about it.

Devon Blackburn, registered kinesiologist, said, “Stretching allows our bodies to achieve resilience and mobility. Health Canada tells us that we need to get cardiovascular exercise for heart health and that women need to work with

weights to prevent osteoporosis, but we don’t hear about stretching. From my perspective, if we don’t have the flexibility [afforded by stretching], we can’t do the cardio or muscular strength training. It’s foundational in terms of movement.”

There are two main types of stretches: dynamic and static. Dynamic stretching is often completed prior to a workout and static stretching post-workout. Dynamic stretching helps stimulate the nervous system where static stretching promotes relaxation of the muscles.

Dynamic stretching can help reduce the risk of joint injuries. Dynamic stretching involves going through motions that the activity you’re about to perform requires. For example, you will often see basketball players performing shots prior to a game. Dynamic stretching should adhere to whatever activity or exercise you’re about to perform. For example, if you’re about the play soccer, perform stretches that target the legs.

Static stretching allows for the release of muscle tension. Tense muscles take longer to recover, so you can feel sore for much longer. Furthermore, studies have shown stretching can improve muscle

growth as well.

Yoga has seen a great boost in popularity as many people are now beginning to recognize the benefits of stretching as it can improve range of motion, flexibility, blood flow, and reduce aches and pains. In fact, many bodybuilders have started doing yoga to enhance muscle growth, along with preventing injury.

All age groups can benefit from stretching. Whether you’re an athlete or an occasional gym-goer, stretching does have importance in daily life and should be conducted for all the reasons listed above. So, although you may think it is a tedious task, you will feel much better overall if you incorporate stretching into your life.

Emily Lunardo studied medical sociology at York University with a strong focus on the social determinants of health and mental illness. This article was first published on Bel Marra Health.

What You Can Do If Your Child Is Addicted to Screens

Screen addiction can leave kids struggling, but there are ways to help them get past it

Continued from B1

Interests such as playing soccer or spending time with family and friends fall by the wayside. And when the source of the addiction is cut off, this triggers intense, negative, emotional reactions.

A Teenager Can Have an Addiction
Typically, behavioral addictions don't apply to children under the age of 12 years. This is because the principle of addiction implies two important factors. First, the person has insight into the problematic nature of their use, requiring a sophisticated capacity for self-reflection. Second, the person must have the cognitive maturity and capacity to be expected to inhibit their behavioral responses. Stated differently, we would expect young children to have meltdowns in response to turning off a device and thus wouldn't describe this as indicative of addiction. However, if a young person with a more developed capacity for reflection and self-regulation responded the same way, such as a 16-year-old, it means something very different.

Addiction is also an extreme form of dependence and the term should not be used lightly.

Screen Addiction Is Complex
According to the World Health Organization and many independent clinical scientists, human beings can be addicted to screens. "Gaming disorder" was introduced into the 11th revision of the International Classification of Diseases, in 2018. Other prominent researchers have argued that digital addiction is a myth. However, as clinicians, it is our ethical obligation to take parents' and children's concerns seriously when they present them at the clinic with worries about problematic media use.

We need to be mindful of how we integrate these technologies into our lives and of the consequences they have on ourselves, our relationships, and our children.

The issue of being addicted to screens is complicated. First, the term "addiction" is loaded and is off-putting for some. There are also many sources of screens (smartphone, tablet, laptop, television), many types of media (social media, TV shows, games) and



ALEXHANEY/UNSPLASH

many ways to use them (active or passive, solitary or social). Addiction is also an extreme form of dependence and the term should not be used lightly. A comprehensive understanding of an individual's context, behaviors, and the consequences of their actions is needed. Research into what makes some people more susceptible to addictions shows there are many possible pathways, including genetic and socio-relational factors such as stress. It is important to remember, however, that an increased risk for addiction doesn't mean that one is destined to become addicted. Many individual, social, and environmental factors can protect an individual from developing an addiction.

Recommended Screen-Time Limits
The American Academy of Pediatrics and Canadian Paediatric Society have both published guidelines for promoting healthy screen use. The following limits on screen time are recommended for young children: no screen time for children younger than two years (except for video-calling with friends and family); less than one hour per day of routine or regular screen time for children two to five years old; avoid screens for at least one hour before bedtime; maintain

▲ 'Gaming disorder' was introduced into the 11th revision of the International Classification of Diseases, in 2018.

daily "screen-free" times, especially for family meals and reading books. Research on the impacts of screen time in older children and adolescents is still developing. Therefore, guidelines for school-aged children focus less on time limits and more on curating healthier engagement with digital media, but low to moderate screen time (under four hours per day) is encouraged.

What You Can Do as a Parent
The guidelines include helpful recommendations for parents:

- 1. Manage screen use.** You can achieve this by creating a family media plan with individualized time and content limits and learning about parental controls and privacy settings. Other tips include co-viewing and talking about content with your children, discouraging the use of multiple devices at once, obtaining all passwords and log-in information, and discussing appropriate online behaviors.
- 2. Encourage meaningful screen use.** This involves prioritizing daily (non-screen) routines over screen use and helping children and teens to choose age-appropriate content and to recognize problematic content or behaviors. You can become part of your children's media lives and advocate for schools and child-care programs to consider developing their own plan for digital literacy and screen use.
- 3. Model healthy screen use.** Review your own media habits and plan time for alternative play and activities. Encourage daily "screen-free" times. Turn off your own screens when they are not in use (including background TV). Avoid screens at least one hour before bedtime and discourage recreational screen use in bedrooms.
- 4. Monitor for signs of problematic use.** These signs include complaints about being bored or unhappy without access to technology and opposi-

tional behavior in response to screen-time limits. Screen use that interferes with sleep, school, face-to-face interactions, offline play, and physical activities is also problematic, as are negative emotions following online interactions.

Integrate Screens Mindfully
We are fortunate to live in a time of such rapid technological innovation. These technologies open up tremendous opportunities for most (if not all) domains of life, including new and different opportunities for families to connect, engage, and bond.

But we do need to be mindful of how we integrate these technologies into our lives and of the consequences they have on ourselves, our relationships, and our children.

Many individual, social, and environmental factors can protect an individual from developing an addiction.

If you are concerned about digital media use in your family, we recommend that you develop a family media plan. You can also see your family physician or a clinical psychologist to discuss your concerns.

Jackson A. Smith is a graduate student in clinical psychology and research assistant in the Whole Family Lab at the University of Waterloo in Canada. Dillon Thomas Browne is an assistant professor at the University of Waterloo. This article was first published on The Conversation.



ALEXANDER DUMMER/UNSPLASH

VANNISTOCK/SHUTTERSTOCK

THINK WELL, WORK WELL

Making Confident Career Choices

Be clear on whether you are going to stay and work it out, or leave a job and move on

JEFF GARTON

Your ability to swiftly make and act on career decisions can be short-circuited by thoughts that feed fear, worry, and doubt. Avoid this by motivating yourself with thoughts that produce the emotions of courage and confidence.

A healthy work-life often begins by being in a job you want to be in, or leaving one you don't want to be in.

Here was one of the peculiar things I observed while working in HR. When an employee spoke to me about whether they should make a job or career change, there was a 50 percent chance their supervisor was simultaneously thinking about replacing them.

This urge to part ways wasn't always due to performance issues or the supervisor's style. Often times, both parties sensed it was time for a change. They were becoming increasingly detached from each other and weren't sure what to do.

Stalemates like this can't be ignored. At risk is the cost of turnover, a decline in productivity, or the employee's apathy might spread to others in the department. This requires an intervention to motivate some type of corrective action.

I had to determine if the employee was receiving a career calling and what the hold-up was in answering it. We believed if an employee's motivation was more toward leaving than doing their job, then leaving was best for everyone. Why didn't they pull the plug?

The reason for this inertia was explained to me by a former colleague. He said, "Only when the pain of staying exceeds the fear of leaving will an employee make the move." His wisdom outlines the path toward resolution.

I would create an atmosphere where the employee felt safe talking about their individual plans and goals. Then I would guide

them to look at their fear and how to face it with greater confidence. I assured them it was okay to pursue their individual plans and they had an obligation to themselves to do so.

This was usually enough to influence an employee's decision to either make a move or delve more optimistically into their decision. At this point, they might even feel confident enough to engage their supervisor in this process.

My son Brian accepted a personal trainer job after graduating from college. When his supervisor started burdening him with administrative tasks, this took him away from training and severely cut his income from commissions.

It took Brian two months to decide the pain of staying exceeded the fear of leaving. Within three weeks of his decision to leave, he was offered a much better corporate job in logistics. But rather than cut ties and move on from the gym, he negotiated to work evenings and weekends. He

didn't want to hurt anyone's feelings.

I told him easing out like this was a mistake. Loyalties were already severed and there's nothing wrong with making changes to your career. Move on. The only reason you look back is to retain friendships and protect your references.

Sure enough, it wasn't long before his supervisor and coworkers began to ignore and exclude him from activities. This hurt Brian's feelings in ways he never anticipated.

People who decide to stay when others leave don't like watch-

I assured them it was okay to pursue their individual plans and they had an obligation to themselves to do so.

Leaving a job can be a healthy way to deal with a work situation that isn't working.



LIGHTFIELD STUDIOS/SHUTTERSTOCK

ing sloppy and indecisive departures. They prefer to see that the person leaving is confident, happy, and excited. Then they usually forget about them within a day or two. Oh blah dee, life goes on.

Here was the rule of thumb I was provided. The most confident moves are motivated by thoughts of running toward what you want with enthusiasm. The least confident moves involve thoughts of running away from what you don't want with doubts and hesitation.

My son made the mistake of focusing his thoughts on running away. They produced the emotions of worry and fear that held him back. Just as easily, he could have focused his thoughts on running toward a better career field that he had no doubts about wanting.

Another low confidence indicator is resigning with the request of a counteroffer to stay. Even if this subtle extortion delays your departure, you run the risk of being remembered as disloyal. Then the next time you're involved in a controversy, others may say, "They should have left when they threatened to."

You have good reason to be confident in making a move when you think you are...

- Making this decision on your own accord rather than to please someone.
- Resolved in knowing what you want and what you will accept.
- Certain you have honestly considered all the pros and cons.
- Feeling increasingly upbeat, positive, lighter, and self-assured.
- Hearing more encouragement than discouragement from within.
- Absolutely certain there is nothing else you would rather be doing.
- Feeling proud, happy, and inclined to tell the world about it.

Here was the lesson my son learned from his first real transition: While changing jobs ranks high on the Holmes and Rahe stress scale, prolonging the inevitable can potentially add more stress to everyone involved. Cut the cord when you decide to.

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.

WISE HABITS

The Ridiculously Awesome Practice of Surrendering

Our often futile efforts at control can blind us to the amazing reality spread out before us

LEO BABAUTA

This world presents us with a shaky, uncertain, constantly changing landscape. Our response is to try to get control.

We create lists, systems, routines, schedules, comfort foods, and comfortable environments. We try to build our whole lives and identities around comfort and control.

And it doesn't work. You can't get a firm grasp on the fluidity of life. And so we get stressed, procrastinate, feel hurt, get depressed or anxious, get angry or frustrated, lash out or complain.

Into this craziness, I'd like to suggest the ridiculously awesome practice of surrendering.

What does this mean? It means letting go of some of our efforts to get control or try to make the world exactly as we like it. Surrendering means we relax into the shifting landscape and smile with friendliness at the world as it is, beautiful and amazing.

Surrender Versus Control Strategies
"Surrender" sounds lame or even scary to many people. It's the opposite of the ideal of winning or conquering that our hyper-competitive society tends to uphold. As individuals, we seek control to alleviate the pain of uncertainty and surrender



DUDAREV MIKHAIL/SHUTTERSTOCK

Giving up the illusion that we can control things beyond our control can let us see the inherent beauty of how things are.

sounds terrible.

After all, we control our day with routines, schedules, and systems to be effective and responsible. We create systems for our work to keep things running smoothly and try to control our health through new diets or exercise programs. We take similar measures for our finances, recreation, and even our relationships.

And there's nothing wrong with any of this, it's just that it's futile to try to control the uncontrollable. It's like trying to knit a sweater from water. Some things are simply too fluid to be held to strict controls or patterns.

So control is a strategy that isn't actually effective if held to too tightly.

Constantly trying to get control results in:

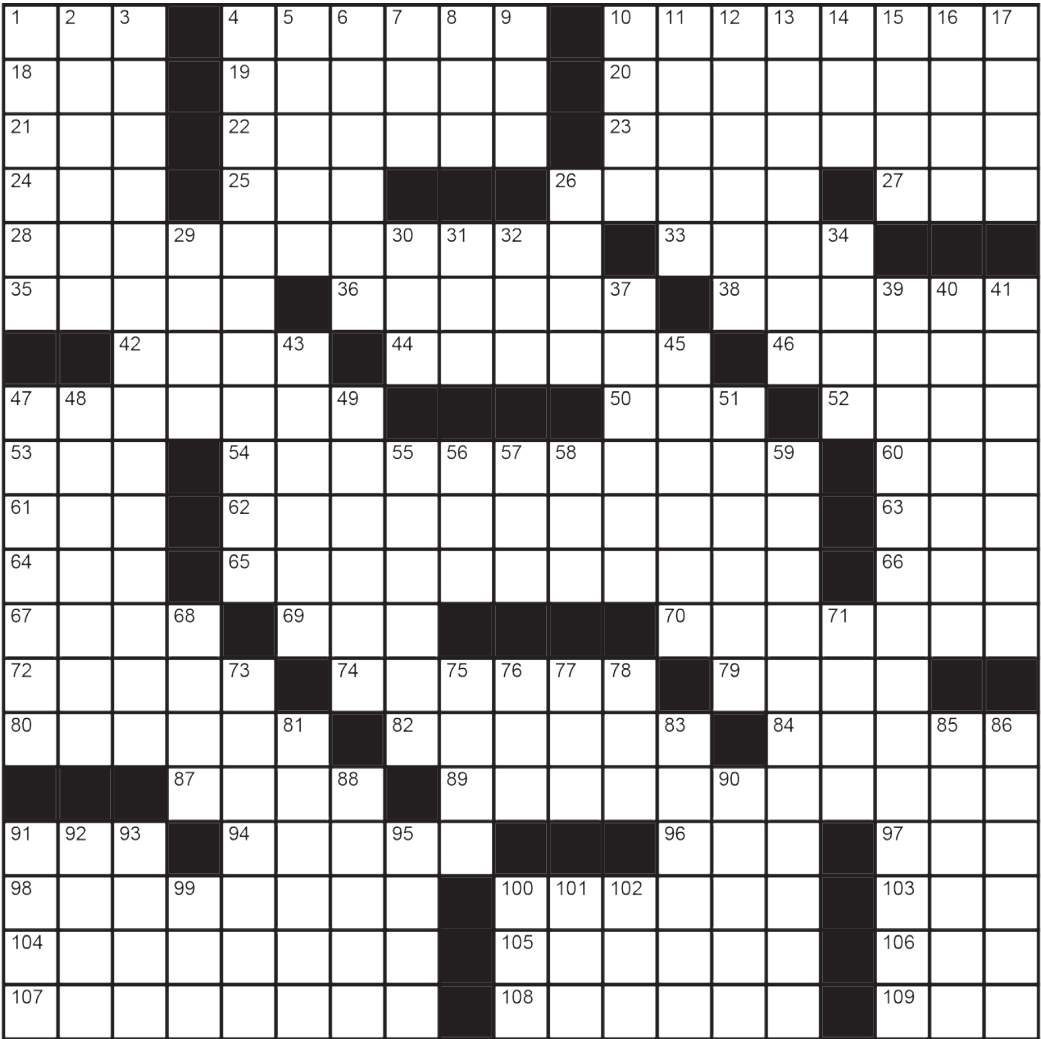
- Stress and anxiety about not having control
- Being driven by fears
- Not being happy with how things are (because they're not in control)
- Striving for more control and suffering anxiety
- Lashing out at others when they interfere with your control
- Spending time, money, and energy seeking control
- Feeling lost, depressed, and unhappy with your inevitable failure at control

Continued on B8

* 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. “You Are Here” chart
- 4. Golden Horde member
- 10. Champion of the common man
- 18. Off one’s feed
- 19. Dodges
- 20. “Christmas” or “Easter”
- 21. ___ mode
- 22. Gear characteristic
- 23. Rush hour subway behavior
- 24. Family member
- 25. “A Rainy Night in ___” (1946 hit)
- 26. “___ Calloways” (Disney film)

- 27. Expanse
- 28. Particular order of procedures
- 33. Branch
- 35. “I’m outta here!”
- 36. Mexican cabbage
- 38. Discriminating
- 42. ___-Cola
- 44. Cal Poly city
- 46. Armistice
- 47. Sack
- 50. Kind of user
- 52. “Classroom” for Zeno
- 53. Low-fat meat
- 54. Vaccines, e.g.
- 60. “Catch-22” pilot
- 61. “4,” sometimes: Abbr.

- 62. Putin re: Ukraine?
- 63. Cry of disgust
- 64. Minor player
- 65. Amusement park ride
- 66. “The Joy Luck Club” author
- 67. “...a kid’ll eat the middle of an ___ first”
- 69. “... ___ a lender be”
- 70. Cut
- 72. Weeper of myth
- 74. Music genre
- 79. Home on the range: Var.
- 80. Balance
- 82. Kuwaiti cash
- 84. Short pants

- 87. Asian tongue
- 89. Backstretch at Tal-ladega
- 91. ___ Khan
- 94. ___ time
- 96. Small songbird
- 97. Special ___
- 98. Nickname
- 100. Inherent character
- 103. Sing
- 104. Sermon on the Mount
- 105. Acclimatizes
- 106. Soapmaking need
- 107. Dependent
- 108. Eastern European culinary specialty
- 109. Public works project

Down

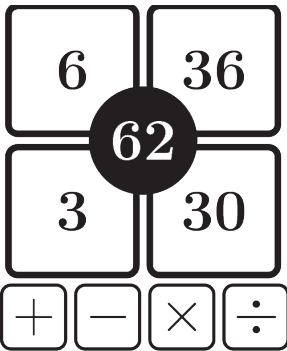
- 1. Stench
- 2. In cahoots
- 3. Does bridge reductions?
- 4. Visible to the naked eye
- 5. Not perfectly round
- 6. Worn out
- 7. The new economy
- 8. Keats piece
- 9. Timothy Leary stash
- 10. Sumptuous
- 11. “Celebrate the Kid Inside” snacks
- 12. 3.26 light-years
- 13. City SSE of Amsterdam
- 14. Myrna of “The Thin Man”
- 15. “A Severed Head” author Murdoch
- 16. Fourier series function
- 17. Roman robe
- 26. Apprentice
- 29. Dunker’s target
- 30. Edge
- 31. “OBO” in the UK

- 32. Beauty
- 34. Rocky peaks
- 37. “A Moon for the Misbegotten” playwright Eugene
- 39. Like a space alien?
- 40. Smeltery leavings
- 41. Time to close the books
- 43. Flyboy
- 45. “Looney Tunes” props
- 47. Bishop’s underlings
- 48. Centers of commerce
- 49. A neutral one is called a neutrino
- 51. Remove the NaCl
- 55. Deviated
- 56. Go wrong
- 57. Bite
- 58. End of a rum cocktail
- 59. Most linear
- 68. Final notice
- 71. Small fight
- 73. Aboveboard
- 75. Hip
- 76. Aardvark’s morsel
- 77. Predatory fish
- 78. Great time
- 81. “Joltin’ Joe” or “The Mick”
- 83. Six-pack sculptors
- 85. Yellow fruit
- 86. Solar ___
- 88. Notions
- 90. Circumference
- 91. Eastern nurse
- 92. Reason for an R rating
- 93. Detailed study: Abbr.
- 95. Vases
- 99. Angel’s opposite
- 100. Seize
- 101. “Without further ___...”
- 102. Blacken

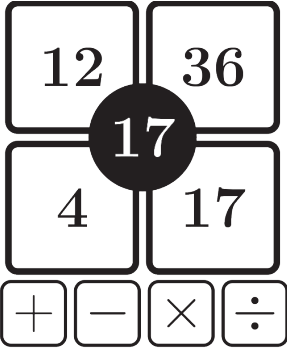
4NUMBERS

CONSTRUCTED BY C. CHANG
AT 4NUMS.COM

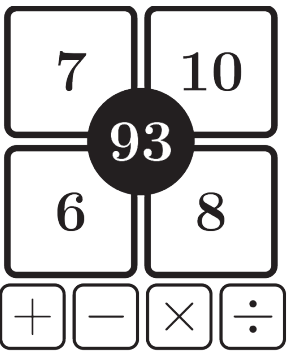
Use the four numbers in the corners, and the operands (+, -, X, and ÷) to **build an equation** to get the solution in the middle. There may be more than one “unique” solution but, there may also be “equivalent” solutions. For example: 6 + (7X3) +1 =28 and 1+ (7X3) +6 =28



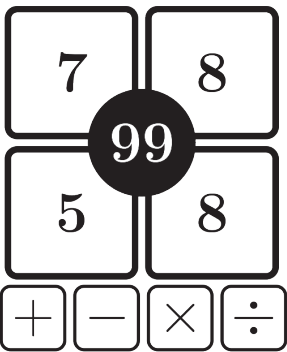
Hard 1 - 1 Solution



Hard 2 - 1 Solution



Easy 1 - 1 Solution



Easy 2 - 2 Solutions

WORDSEARCH

CONSTRUCTED BY TOM HOUSTON
EPOCH TIMES STAFF

Help with Today’s Crossword Puzzle?

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

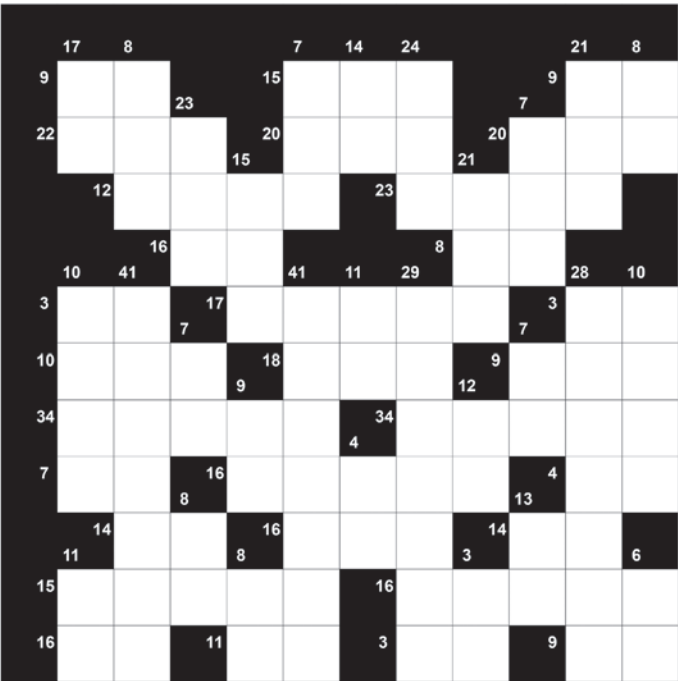
- | | | |
|----------|-------------|---------|
| AIRMAN | LEPTON | SANITY |
| ALLIED | MACROSCOPIC | SCORIAE |
| ANVILS | MIASMA | THOSE |
| ARAMAEAN | MONICKER | TRUCE |
| BORSHT | NATURE | UTRECHT |
| CHOOSY | NIOBE | VEERED |
| DINARS | OREOS | YANKEE |
| DINERO | OVOID | ADAPTS |
| GASPS | PAPAYA | ADIOS |
| GIRTH | PARSEC | O’NEILL |
| IDEAS | POMONA | SYSTEM |
| INDUE | POPULIST | |

KAKURO

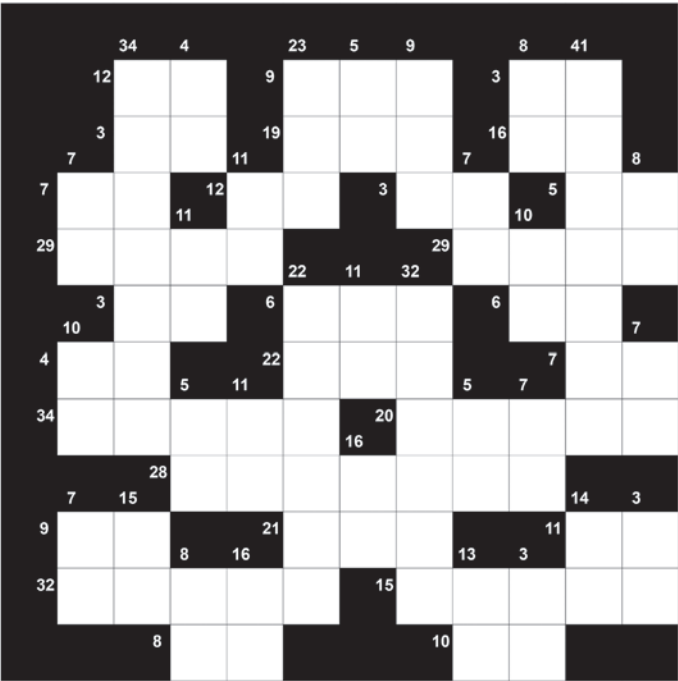
CONSTRUCTED BY EPOCH TIMES STAFF

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



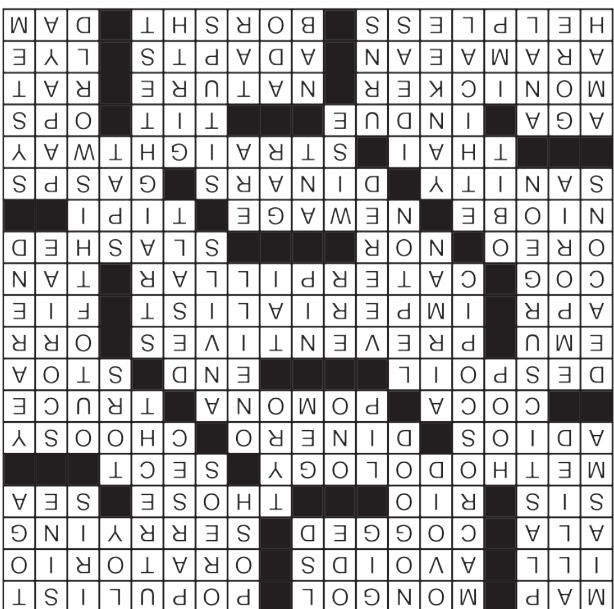
Large: Easy



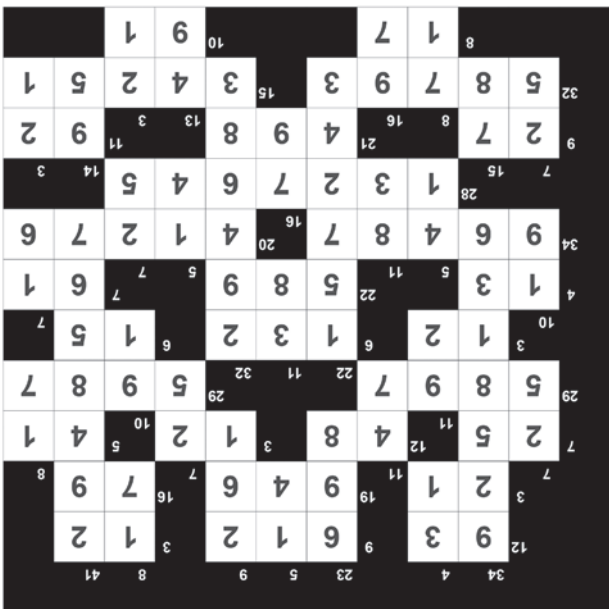
WORK SPACE

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



KAKURO LARGE: EASY



WISE HABITS

The Ridiculously Awesome Practice of Surrendering

Continued from B5

I'm not saying we should never try to get control. There are helpful ways of getting control, but often it's more helpful to shift the focus from forcing control to harmonizing with the way things are. This can transform a competitive act into an act of compassion. Taking care of yourself can be a loving act rather than an attempt to gain control over your health, for example.

Why Surrender Is Ridiculously Awesome

Surrender can alleviate our need to constantly think and analyze and allow us to be fully present in this moment. And if we can accept how things are, we might even see new opportunities and benefits hidden from us when we were trying to control things.

We tune in to how we're feeling. We notice the sensations of the moment, both in our bodies and all around us. We become present to whoever is in front of us. When we do a task, we pour ourselves fully into it.

We open to the uncertainty of the moment. We see what we can learn from it, with an open mind, with curiosity and a stance of not-knowing instead of a fixed viewpoint.

We start to appreciate the moment in front of us, fully. There is something immensely awesome about the moment in front of us if we stop trying to have it conform to our idea of how things should be. And it takes so much less energy than control.

How to Practice Surrender

We are not talking about giving up all control. That could lead to financial ruin, loss of relationships and unemployment.

But before we grasp for control, we can try surrender as an approach with whatever comes up. Before reacting, we can practice accepting things as they are.

For example, I might feel like my health is out of control and be anxious about it. I want to go on a diet and set up an exercise plan to get everything under control. These are not bad intentions, but this kind of fear-based approach often doesn't work. In fact, anxiety could make it harder to make good diet decisions.

So instead, I practice surrendering and feel the fears coming up for me. I relax a bit and see that I'm suffering, that I could use some self-love. I can set an intention to love myself with nourishing food and movement and relish the thought of the joy these could bring.

Surrendering doesn't mean I don't take action—it means that I accept things as they are, and bring a loving intention into the equation.

And even if I never take that loving action in the future, the present is transformed. This moment is completely different for me if I'm not grasping for the illusion of control, but instead loving what is.

So here are some ways to practice surrender:

- Notice that you're looking to control things, and instead pause. Drop into your body and notice the fear, uncertainty, anxiety that is causing you to want to get control. Stay with this physical sensation in your body, the energy of uncertainty that causes you to grasp for control. Be with it fully, allowing yourself to feel it. Relax and surrender to it.
- Open yourself to the rest of the moment, noticing how freaking amaz-



MEDIAGROUP_BESTFORYOU/SHUTTERSTOCK

Surrendering means we relax into the shifting landscape and smile with friendliness at the world as it is.

ing this moment is if you open up and pay attention. See it with fresh eyes, as if you've never experienced this moment before. Bring wonder and curiosity into this new viewing of the world.

- Let yourself rest in openness—you don't need to control things, you don't need to know exactly what will happen, but instead, you can find ease in the openness of this moment, the unknown quality of a beautifully shifting landscape.
- How can you love yourself and everything around you in the middle of this openness? Can you fall in love with this moment?
- What loving intention can you set for yourself in this situation? Coming from a place of love instead of fear, what would be the best next small step to take?

What a world we live in if only we can fully see it. Surrendering is the way to move into that.

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

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Sherry, From Dry to Sweet

Spain’s famous fortified wine boasts a rich history and impressive range of styles

MELANIE YOUNG

One of the many pleasures of visiting Spain is sipping a chilled glass of dry sherry while nibbling on tapas, the little bar dishes served throughout the country in the late afternoon. Meeting for tapas is the essence of Spanish social culture and a way to tide oneself over before dinner, which is usually a late-night affair.

Sherry is an aged, fortified wine made exclusively in D.O. Jerez-Xérès-Sherry, a wine region in southern Andalusia, Spain. The region, also called the Sherry Triangle, is bordered by three cities: Sanlúcar de Barrameda, Jerez de la Frontera, and Puerto de Santa Maria.

The climate is hot and dry—nearly 300 days of sunshine—and the land is covered with a chalky white soil called albariza. That soil, which has been compared to that of Champagne and Burgundy in France, is beneficial for cultivating Palomino Fino, the primary variety of white grapes used to make all sherry, for a few reasons.

First, albariza retains moisture, which helps nourish the grapevines. Such is crucial in this hot, dry climate, especially since D.O. Jerez-Xérès-Sherry doesn’t allow irrigation.

The soil’s composition includes chalk, limestone, and sediments from fossils and plankton (the area was once covered by the sea), which are beneficial for making wines with good age-ability, and can add a salty, mineral character to drier styles. Its whiteness also reflects the sun, to allow for even maturation of the grapes.

A Complex Process

Sherry isn’t just one wine. There are seven styles, ranging from bone-dry Fino and Manzanilla, to toasty Amontillado and semi-dry Oloroso, to sweet Pedro Ximénez and cream sherry. Palo Cortado is a rare dry sherry, prized by connoisseurs.

The process to make sherry is complex. Only three white grapes are used: Palomino Fino is the base grape for all styles, while sweeter sherry styles may also contain Moscatel or Pedro Ximénez.

Grapes are crushed and the juice is fermented in either steel tanks or barrels filled only three-quarters full, to allow for air to flow in and oxidize the wine. Producers refer to this as “dos puntos,” or “two fists of air,” wine educator Karen MacNeil notes in “The Wine Bible.”

During this time, wild yeasts, called flor, form on the fermented juice. These yeasts help preserve the wine’s freshness, which is essential for drier styles of sherry.

Sergio Martínez, cellar master for sherry producer Bodegas Lustau, explained: “This veil of flor naturally grows on the surface of the wine, protecting it from excessive oxidation and creating a balance between the sugar and alcohol levels. This differentiates Fino and Manzanilla sherry from other fortified wines, and creates their crisp, toasted almond character.”

The base wine is then fortified with a neutral grape spirit, usually from the native white Airén grape, to raise the alcohol level. To make medium-dry and sweeter sherry styles, the alcohol level is raised to 17 percent or higher, eliminating



COURTESY OF THE CONSEJO REGULADOR D.O. JEREZ-XÉRÈS-SHERRY



COURTESY OF THE CONSEJO REGULADOR D.O. JEREZ-XÉRÈS-SHERRY



WILLIAMXEREZ/SHUTTERSTOCK



ROBERT F. LEAHY/SHUTTERSTOCK

- 1 The styles of sherry range from bone dry to sweet.
- 2 Sherry is made exclusively in the Jerez-Xérès-Sherry region of Spain, where the land is covered with a chalky white soil called albariza.
- 3
- 4 Flor, a thin surface layer of wild yeast cells, naturally forms during the winemaking process.

any remaining flor and allowing for more oxidation.

“The length of oxidation varies depending on the character of the wine you are looking to achieve,” Martínez said. “To our standards at Lustau, an oxidative wine should have at least eight years of aging, and much longer, 30 years or more, for our very old and rare sherry (V.O.R.S).”

The Perfect Blend

Sherry is made through a unique blending method called the solera system. Dark barrels (called botas) of unblended wines of varying vintages are stacked, oldest wines on top and youngest on the bottom, so that the older wines slowly drip downward through the barrels, blending with the younger ones.

“The blending enables maximum quality, while maintaining a consistent personality with the wine’s [style],” Martínez said.

The blending process started as a way for sherry bodegas—the name for wineries in Spain—to produce, age, and sell more wine to keep up with growth during the 19th century, notably for countries like England and Holland, Martínez said.

Eventually, “this became the standard system for making all sherry,” he said, though “there still is a small percentage of sherry wines that are barrel-aged from a single vintage.”

All sherry is aged for at least three years in oak casks—and much longer, even decades, for finer and rarer styles. Since the wines are blended, the bottles don’t contain specific vintage dates; however, rarer sherries can be designated V.O.S. (aged over 20 years) and V.O.R.S. (aged over 30 years).

Global Rise and Fall

The designation Jerez-Xérès-Sherry reflects the global heritage of this region and its

strategic location near the port of Cadiz.

Ancient Phoenician ship merchants referred to the region as Xera, the Romans called it Cere, and the Moors from North Africa called it Sherish. The Spanish adopted the name Jerez, a nod to Jerez de la Frontera, which served as the border between Moorish Spain and the north; while British merchants referred to it as Sherry, which was easier to pronounce. They also called it sack, after “sacar,” the Spanish word for “to take.”

And “take” they did! In 1264, after King Don Alfonso X reclaimed Spain following five centuries occupied by the Moors, Spain and Great Britain enjoyed a robust business relationship trading British wool for Spanish sherry.

However, when political relations between the two countries disintegrated in the 1500s, British sea captain Sir Francis Drake attacked the port of Cádiz and took a haul of sherry back to England for his countrymen to enjoy, according to Jesus Anguita, archivist and historian for sherry bodega Gonzalez-Byass.

The British brought their drinking customs to colonial America—including sherry. In 18th- and 19th-century America, sherry was considered both a stylish libation and a curative tonic. “In days of yore, pharmacists often prescribed sherry as a nerve tonic, or as an antidote to insomnia,” wrote mixologist Warren Brown in his book, “Apothecary Cocktails.”

In 1933, sherry became one of Spain’s first wines with a “denominación de origen” (“designation of origin”) status, which established strict guidelines, from where the grapes are cultivated to the methods of production. This was important to ensure that no other country or region could produce and label a wine as “sherry.”

Throughout the first half of the 20th century, wars and political unrest in Spain and the rest of Europe affected the sherry economy. Another factor was American Prohibition, which banned the commercial sale of all alcohol in the country. Over time, consumer taste preferences changed, and sherry took a back shelf at many bars.

The Sherry Revolution

But not for long.

What many producers refer to as “the sherry revolution” began toward the start of the 21st century. The revival was led by producers like Gonzalez-Byass, which created the international Copa de Jerez forum and competition to educate bartenders, sommeliers, and chefs on sherry’s diversity, both as a cocktail ingredient and as a wine to pair with food.

This movement coincided with a growing interest in Spanish food and wine, thanks to innovative Spanish chefs such as Ferran Adrià, Juan Mari Arzak, and Joan Roca; as well as U.S.-based chefs, including Jose Andrés, who helped bring modern Spanish cooking to his restaurants in America.

As the saying goes, “What’s old becomes new again.”

This is certainly the case with sherry, a beverage that has both endured the test of time and endeared itself to new generations of wine consumers who appreciate its history, heritage, and range of styles.

Melanie Young writes about food, wine, travel, and health. She co-hosts with husband David Ransom the national radio show, The Connected Table LIVE, featuring engaging conversations with thought leaders in food, wine, and hospitality around the world.

A GUIDE TO SHERRY STYLES

Thanks to its range of styles, sherry can be enjoyed throughout a meal and with many dishes. Here is a quick overview.

Manzanilla is a dry sherry with flavor notes of blanched raw almonds, apple essence, and chamomile flowers, which are grown in the area called Sanlúcar de Barrameda where this specific sherry is produced. Enjoy with creamy cheeses like Brie and Brillat-Savarin.

Fino, also dry, tastes of roasted almonds with a hint of brine. It’s the most widely produced dry sherry and traditionally paired with Spanish jamón, toasted nuts, and olives. It also pairs well with sushi, especially oilier fish like mackerel and tuna.

Amontillado is a dry sherry with more aging, resulting in a slightly more oxidized style. The result has a toasty aroma and nutty flavor. Pair with creamy fish chowders and Asian curries.

Palo Cortado is a dry aromatic sherry with a deep amber color and notes of roasted walnuts and orange peel. Enjoy with seafood paella, roasted pork, and hard aged cheeses.

Oloroso is an aromatic semi-dry, mahogany-colored sherry with notes of allspice, toasted walnuts, and dried currants and fig. Pair with duck and game, savory casseroles, and aged hard cheeses like Gouda and aged Manchego.

Pedro Ximénez is a dark, sweet sherry. The grapes are first air-dried on straw mats to achieve an intense sweetness, before being made into wine. Pair with crumbly blue cheeses or drizzle over vanilla or chocolate ice cream.

Cream sherry is a sweetened Oloroso. Styles can range from chocolate and licorice to sweet roasted figs. It’s popular served chilled on the rocks, and is also delicious drizzled over warm butter cake or French toast.

Drink dry, medium-dry, and cream sherry well-chilled in a wine glass or small copita (sherry glass). Oloroso and Pedro Ximénez should be served slightly chilled.

Once opened, bottles of dry sherry should be consumed within a few days; semi-dry styles can last a few weeks if refrigerated or stored in a cool place.



STOCKCREATIONS/SHUTTERSTOCK

A glass of sherry with tapas is a quintessential Spanish snack.



SECRET INGREDIENT

Dukkah, an Egyptian Spice Blend to Put on Everything

CRYSTAL SHI

In this series, we ask chefs about the secret ingredients they love—and how you can use them at home. Here, Jackson Stamper, executive chef at The Kitchen at Atomic in Las Vegas, shares his love for dukkah, a crunchy, aromatic, and versatile Egyptian spice blend.

Secret Ingredient: My secret ingredient is dukkah. It's a traditional nut, seed, and spice mixture from Egypt that has a rich history, typically used as a dip with pita or various

other breads for snacking. It comes from an Egyptian word that means “to pound” or “to crush,” because it’s typically made by grinding all the ingredients with a mortar and pestle. The ingredients require being toasted beforehand, giving the mix a unique texture somewhere between dry spices and paste once ground.

How to Use It: You can use dukkah almost like a seasoning ingredient, sprinkling it into a salad or any grilled or sautéed vegetable to give it texture and more depth of flavor. I particularly like it with sweet

vegetables. It goes wonderfully with grilled corn or fennel, roasted sunchoke or parsnip. Sprinkling the mixture over roasted beets immediately takes the simple vegetable into another realm of flavor. It can also add a texture to a creamy soup, like butternut squash.

How to Make It: Dukkah is extremely versatile, with as many recipes to make it as there are grandmothers in all of Egypt, each one varying ever so slightly. With the plethora of ingredients to choose from (peanuts, walnuts, almonds, pistachios, sesame seeds, nigella seeds, cumin, coriander, sumac, citrus zest, the list goes on and on), you can really adapt it to whatever dish you’re making. My favorite version is very simple: roasted pistachios, toasted sesame seeds, toasted coriander, sumac, and orange zest. Dukkah allows you to be as creative as you want, letting the culinary artist in you play. I recommend trying a new way of making it as often as possible and recording which ones really stand out to you. It truly has endless potential.



(Left) A sprinkling of dukkah can enliven any dish. Chef Jackson Stamper especially likes pairing it with sweet vegetables.
(Above) Dukkah is traditionally made with a variety of toasted nuts, seeds, and spices ground in a mortar and pestle.

PISTACHIO DUKKAH

- 1/4 cup pistachios
 - 2 tablespoons sesame seeds
 - 1 tablespoon coriander seeds
 - 1 teaspoon sumac
 - Zest of 1 orange
- Roast the pistachios in an oven at 350 degrees F, with a sprinkle of olive oil and salt, approximately 5 to 10 minutes or until golden. Separately toast the sesame and coriander seeds in a sauté pan on medium heat. The sesame seeds should turn golden, while the coriander should only darken slightly, but they should both give off a more fragrant aroma when ready. Allow all ingredients to cool back to room temperature. Roughly chop the pistachios. Use a mortar and pestle to grind the sesame seeds until they're broken apart, but stop before they become a paste; it should be somewhat powdery. Grind the coriander until the pods are just coming apart and turning into flakes. (If you don't have a mortar and pestle, I would recommend using a rolling pin. Place the seeds on a large cutting board or flat hard surface, like a marble countertop, and gently crush them.) Combine all the ingredients into a small bowl and stir using a spoon until mixed. Salt to taste.
- Recipe courtesy of Jackson Stamper*

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How to Get Your Kids to Eat Well

MAREYA IBRAHIM

I’ve observed a very dramatic shift in kids’ diets somewhere between baby food and most children’s menus. When our little ones start transitioning to solid food, they start with fruits and veggies—peas, carrots, spinach, green beans—you name it. Yet, somehow, from that point when they reach the children’s-menu age, the color fades from the plate.

From a palette of red, orange, green, purple, and blue, we introduce white and brown foods and somehow forget all the gorgeous colors we once had. Hot dogs, pizza, hamburgers, chicken nuggets, and fried this or that.

By this point, kids and parents seem conditioned to accept this as the norm. The question is: Why do we settle for plates without substance, and are we taking them to the point of no palate return?

It’s time to get the substance back onto their plates.

Teaching the Taste Buds

Taste buds are like muscles. They need to be conditioned, tested, and strengthened so they can take on new flavors.

I’m talking taste buds like Popeye’s, that love the sour, bitter, and umami flavors of spinach, celery, seaweed, citrus, fish, mushrooms, and tomatoes. No wimpy Olive Oil

arms here, drooping under the pressure of sweet and salty. That’s just too easy.

The idea that kids don’t have the taste buds for certain foods is a matter of how they were conditioned. It only takes looking around the world at what other kids eat for a traditional breakfast to see.

In Japan, it’s seaweed, rice, and raw fish. In China, it’s congee, a rice porridge that can be seasoned with mushrooms and pork. In Egypt, it’s stewed brown fava beans with hummus, tahini, and pita bread.

Get the Kids Involved

I love teaching kids’ cooking classes at Whole Foods. When I ask for volunteers to help me at the “chef’s table,” everyone’s hand goes up. They have such a desire to help, be creative, and be a part of the process. They have no qualms about adding handfuls of spinach to a sauce or throwing broccoli into a sauté.

Studies confirm that one of the most important ways of getting children to make sound food choices is involving them in the process. Children will be much more apt to try something if they’ve picked it or helped prepare it.

As much of a challenge as it can be to haul your kids to the store or the farmer’s market, it’s a critical part of their connection to what you’re feeding them.

When my daughter was 1 year old, I’d sit her in the front of the grocery cart and hand her different fruits and veggies to hold and

One of the most important ways of getting children to make sound food choices is involving them in the process.



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How can you get your kids to eat a salad bowl full of nutrients? Through a straw!

MAKES TWO 8-OUNCE SERVINGS

2 cups coconut water

2 tablespoons flaxseed

1 cup fresh spinach

1/2 banana

1 teaspoon powdered peanut butter

1/2 cup crushed ice

Wash the spinach first. Put all ingredients in a blender and process until smooth. Sip and enjoy.

smell, and say their names so she could repeat them.

By the age of 3, I would hand her a bag and ask her to pick a few of her favorite fruits. When we got home, I’d be sure to have her help wash one, and we’d immediately cut it up so she could try it. There’s pride in that.

It seems so simple, but there’s something about perception and the effort she took in picking just the right ones. And if she did it, well, of course she was going to try it.

It just takes time, trial, patience, and a little creative energy—but it pays off in spades when it comes to health.

Veggies, Many Ways

Try It Raw

Try to get as much raw produce as you can onto your children’s plates, so they can really appreciate the pure flavors. The good news here is that kids love crunch, and it’s a big time-saver because it’s one less thing to cook.

Carrots, celery, cucumber, jicama, sugar snap peas, and bell pepper are all great veggie options. Some veggies, like broccoli and cauliflower, get more palatable with a light steaming.

Just Dip It

Offering a low-fat, high-flavor dunker for your veggies is the perfect way to get kids to indulge. It’s also fun. Remember, kids love to be creative, and taking a carrot stick to a spread is like dipping a paintbrush.

Make-ahead dips like cucumber and dill Greek yogurt, sun-dried tomato hummus, and spinach pesto spread are great options that also pack a nutritious punch.

Get Saucy

One of the easiest ways to slip in a ton of veggies is into a versatile sauce. I combine fresh spinach, kale, zucchini, bell pepper, tomato, garlic, and onion to make the base for my pizzas, pasta, bakes, soups, and stews.

You’ve got supercharged nutrition in there, but no chunks. Make extra and freeze it in ice cube trays for smaller servings.

Bake ‘Em In

You can’t imagine the shock on people’s faces when I tell them I put beets and sweet potatoes in baked goods. The great thing is that veggies can substitute for fat and sugar in a lot of cases. By exchanging fat for veggies, trading whole sugar for natural sugar-free alternatives, and substituting whole grains for white flour, you can transform baked goods into functional foods.

Get Your Blender On

I can take coconut water or almond milk, throw in a couple of cups of fresh spinach, fresh blueberries, some high-quality protein powder, a little flax seed, and some crushed ice, and I’ve got serious satiation in a glass in a minute flat.

We’re talking texture here. It’s smooth and cool and goes down really easily. You can also make blender smoothies and freeze them for a decadently delicious dessert.

Mareya Ibrahim is *The Fit Foody*, an award-winning chef on *Everyday Health’s* Emmy-nominated show “Recipe Rehab,” and author and founder of *EatCleaner.com*

You Are Who You Eat With

DAVID EVANS

Why do we make food?

The obvious answer is so we can have food fights.

Joking aside, when I reflect on my experience with the culinary arts—whether carefully crafting *Buche de Noel* for Christmas or whiling away a summer afternoon making flakey scones—food is ultimately about people and community.

Yet it appears that I have cuisine all wrong. As I learned in a review of “Midnight Chicken,” a new semi-autobiographical cookbook that provides “the peculiar warm comfort of good food writing,” we should approach “food as refuge, food as sanctuary, food as an affirmation of life.”

Now, what is striking about “Midnight Chicken” is not the fact that we should be eating chicken at midnight (which sounds both risqué and exciting), but this notion of “food as an affirmation of life.”

It sounds quite nice, but it’s also vaguely meaningless, for affirming life is quite distinct from affirming lives.

In many ways, we are already treating

food as if it affirms but one life: our own. According to The Atlantic:

“Americans rarely eat together anymore. In fact, the average American eats one in every five meals in her car, one in four Americans eats at least one fast food meal every single day, and the majority of American families report eating a single meal together less than five days a week.”

I’m not blaming cookbooks such as “Midnight Chicken” for this cultural development. But I think it is a telling symptom of an isolated world. Because if we’re increasingly eating alone any-

way, why not turn to food as a “refuge” and “sanctuary”? Why not make it “an affirmation of life”?

But in doing so, are we missing something important?

The Atlantic continues:

“In many countries, mealtime is treated as sacred... In many Mexican cities, townspeople will eat together with friends and family in central areas like parks or town squares. In Cambodia, villagers spread out colorful mats and bring food to share with loved ones like a potluck.”

Contrast this with the individualized

indulgence found in “Midnight Chicken,” where there are no table conversations, no bumping elbows at the table, nor a collective sigh at Uncle Ernie’s propensity for belching.

In short, no community.

Frankly, this is rather sad, for as noted in the Atlantic, “eating alone can be alienating,” particularly at midnight.

By contrast, “The dinner table ... [which acts] as a unifier, [is] a place of community. Sharing a meal is an excuse to catch up and talk, one of the few times where people are happy to put aside their work and take time out of their day.”

There is nothing wrong with enjoying good food by oneself. But in an age where we already struggle to build strong interpersonal relationships, do we really need to chip away at one of the few remaining institutions (preparing and sharing a meal) with cookbooks geared toward individual enjoyment of both book and bread?

Is it time to focus instead on rebuilding community around stove and table?

David Evans is from Minnesota. This article was originally published on *Intellectual Takeout*.

The dinner table is a place of community.



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The Chinese Ruler Who Set an Example of Goodwill

SU LIN

King Wen of Zhou (around 1152–1056 B.C.) was a paragon of virtue and a model ruler. His personal name was Ji Chang, and he was born in present-day Qishan, in Shaanxi Province. His father was a duke during the Shang Dynasty. After his father’s death, Ji Chang took over his position.

Throughout the thousands of years of Chinese history, whenever an emperor was wimpy or the country underwent trials and tribulations, people would look back and remember the society under the reign of King Wen of Zhou, where harmony and goodwill prevailed. During that time, farmers renounced their claims to land, officials relinquished their positions, and everybody was benevolent and observed propriety. King Wen of Zhou set an example for future generations.

Giving Up Land for His People
King Zhou of the Shang Dynasty (not to be confused with King Wen of Zhou) invented the Cannon Burning Punishment. Prisoners were made to walk on a hollow bronze cylinder that was stuffed with burning charcoal, and they’d burn to death. His favorite concubine, Daji, enjoyed watching people tortured like this.

The punishment filled the vassal state rulers and people with disgust, and Ji Chang offered King Zhou the land west of the Luo River in the state of Zhou in exchange for the abolishment of the Cannon Burning Punishment. King Zhou agreed, and Ji

Chang won the support of the vassal states.

Resolving Disputes for Vassal States

According to the “Records of the Great Historian—the Basic Annals of Zhou,” there were disputes between the vassal states of Yu and Rui. The leaders thought of asking Ji Chang to play mediator.

On reaching the state of Zhou and seeing how modest and courteous the people there were, the representatives from Yu and Rui were ashamed of themselves. “We are fighting, but the people of the state of Zhou see fighting as a disgrace. We’re humiliating ourselves.”

The men apologized to each other and left. People from the other states learned about it, and everybody went to Ji Chang to settle their disputes.

Ji Chang was only Count of the West at that time, but during his reign, his subjects were so gentlemanly that the two vassal state representatives felt ashamed of themselves and decided to make peace. If a leader sets an example, it will be followed by his subordinates. The people of Zhou were of a kindly disposition under his influence.

The incident of Ji Chang mediating indirectly was symbolic. He became a model of sanctity, a figurehead for the rest of the state kings to emulate. They looked up to him as their king and gave him the mandate to overthrow King Zhou of the Shang Dynasty.

Giving a Decent Burial

When Ji Chang was Count of the



King Wen ruled the Zhou kingdom by virtue. There is a story of disputing officials who, seeing the gentlemanly state of his people, resolved their differences.

West, he gave the order to build a pavilion 30 li (about 9 miles) from present-day Hu County, in Shaanxi Province. When the construction workers were digging to make a pond, they uncovered skeletal remains.

The official in charge reported the matter to Ji Chang. Out of benevolence, Ji Chang ordered that the skeletons be buried. The official said that since the passing of time made the identification of the skeletal remains impos-

sible, nobody was responsible for them.

Ji Chang replied: “I’m the ruler of this state, and these skeletal remains were found in my state. That makes me responsible for them.” He ordered a decent burial for the remains.

Everybody was moved by Ji Chang’s benevolence. “The Count of Zhou is virtuous! He would even give the dead his blessings and protection,” and they pledged their allegiance to him.



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