

THE
EPOCH
TIMES

TRUTH and TRADITION

COVERING
IMPORTANT
NEWS
OTHER
MEDIA
IGNORE

SUBSCRIBE TODAY
ReadEpoch.com.au
02 8988 5600

QUOTES *In the News*

“Ford Australia is committed to our operations here in Australia and we’re excited about what our future lies ahead for us here.”
Kay Hart, CEO of Ford Australia, on General Motors announcement that it will axe the Holden brand later this year.
AU | A2

“We are serving a certain purpose by making clear that these guys are part and parcel of the PRC Government. These are not independent journalistic outlets.”
A U.S. State Department official speaking on five major Chinese state-run media outlets in the United States
US | A5

“The virus came into that marketplace before it came out of that marketplace.”
Daniel Lucey, an infectious disease specialist at Georgetown University, challenges claims made by Chinese officials about the Wuhan coronavirus
CHINA | A8

“If we want to minimise the potential suffering and tragedy caused by the expanding COVID-19 outbreak, the one thing that must not be quarantined is information.”
James Gorrie writes on the Chinese regimes’ withholding information on the Wuhan coronavirus
OPINION | A10

INSIDE

AU.....	A2
World.....	A3
US.....	A5
China.....	A8
Opinion.....	A10

FEATURES	
Mind & Body.....	B1
Food.....	B8

DON'T DELAY.
SUBSCRIBE TODAY.
READ EPOCH.COM.AU
TEL: 02 8988 5600



Chinese police officers wearing masks stand in front of the Tiananmen Gate in Beijing, China, on Jan. 26, 2020.

CORONAVIRUS

Chinese Censors Deploy ‘Wartime Propaganda’ Amid COVID-19 Outbreak

An internal document reveals the regime has deployed 1,600 censors to suppress information about epidemic

CATHY HE & EVA FU

The propaganda department in virus-stricken Hubei Province has engaged more than 1,600 censors to scrub the internet of “sensitive” information relating to the coronavirus outbreak, according to an internal document obtained by The Epoch Times.

The internal report, dated Feb. 15, detailed the agency’s efforts to ramp up censorship measures. It was drafted after a speech given by Chinese leader Xi Jinping via video link on Feb. 10 to “frontline responders” of the coronavirus outbreak in Wuhan, the capital of Hubei, where the virus first broke out.

The revelations come as the Chinese regime tightens information controls over the worsening out-

break, as netizens have increasingly turned to the internet to vent their frustrations about the authorities’ response, or document what is happening on the ground.

The illness has seen a steadily growing official list of infections and deaths on a daily basis. Experts and commentators, however, believe the actual number of infections to be far greater, due to underreporting and shortages in testing kits and hospital beds—meaning many people are left undiagnosed.

1,600 Trolls Deployed
According to the document, the department has hired more than 1,600 trolls, known as the 50 cent army in

The trolls, through technological and manual screening, had identified as many as 606,800 posts online with ‘sensitive or harmful information.’



Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the US House of Representatives, at the 56th Munich Security Conference in Munich, Germany, on Feb.14, 2020.

HUAWEI

US House Speaker Pelosi Warns Allies Against Using Huawei

BRUSSELS—No NATO ally should succumb to the temptation of letting Chinese tech giant Huawei into their next-generation cellular networks, U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) said on Feb. 17 at Allied headquarters, turning U.S. opposition to Huawei into a bipartisan effort.

Pelosi said the invasion of privacy that would result from having Huawei integrated into Europe’s 5G communication networks would be “like having the state police, the

Chinese state police, right in your pocket.”

She insisted such technology was far too sensitive to turn over to Chinese interests, even though they can deliver such technology cheaper, thanks to the fact that the company relied on Western know-how to build its systems.

“While some people say that its cheaper to do Huawei—well yeah—it’s a People’s Liberation Army initiative using reversed engineering

Continued on A5

CORONAVIRUS

Experts Sound the Alarm Over North Korea Coronavirus Cases

JACK PHILLIPS

North Korea, which shares a lengthy border with virus epicenter China, has not yet reported a single case of coronavirus, officially known as COVID-19, but experts have sounded the alarm.

Despite no confirmed cases, state-run media have mentioned a fight against COVID-19, saying the regime is implementing a “propaganda project.”

“Through the national hygiene propaganda project system, data related to the prevention of communicable diseases [will be] distributed to the

CHINA ESPIONAGE

Hackers Indicted in Equifax Breach Are Part of China’s Electronic Warfare Program

JOSHUA PHILIPP

The FBI published a wanted poster and an indictment on Feb. 10 of four “Chinese military-backed hackers” for their alleged roles in the 2017 cyberattack against credit company Equifax.

The Equifax breach exposed personal data of 145 million Americans, including Social Security and driver’s license numbers. The FBI described the breach as “the largest known theft



U.S. Attorney General William Barr participates in a press conference at the Department of Justice in Washington on Feb. 10, 2020.

INVESTIGATION

The Illusion of Transparency

IVAN PENTCHOUKOV

The man who shot and killed 26 people at a church in Texas in 2017 used guns he wouldn’t have been able to purchase if the Air Force had properly managed its records.

On six occasions, military officials failed to send Devin Kelley’s records to the FBI while the Air Force investigated, court-martialed, and imprisoned him for abusing his wife and stepson. Had the FBI received the records, the killer would have been barred from buying the weapons used in the massacre.

While the Air Force case may appear unique, federal records management failures are behind some of the biggest national headlines in recent years. The largest breach of government systems in the history of the United States in 2015 was quantified specifically by the number of records stolen from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM)—21.5 million. Similar failures figured in the scandal of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) selectively auditing conservative groups and then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s use of an unauthorized private email server.

Rather than being an anomaly, the preventable failures that contribut-

You don’t have a democracy without accountability and transparency. You don’t have accountability and transparency without records management.

Don Lueders, former government contractor and certified records manager

ed to the Sutherland Springs, Texas, massacre are a symptom of a vast problem spanning the entire federal government, according to two experts with decades of experience with the electronic records management application standard that undergirds virtually all records management software deployed in agencies across the government.

A task force at the Pentagon’s Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) created the standard, the 5015.2 Electronic Records Management Software Applications Design Criteria, in 1995. Three years later, the National Archives endorsed the standard for use by all government agencies. Over the more than two de-

Continued on A6

Morrison Announces \$2 Million for Coronavirus Research

MIMI NGUYEN LY

Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced that the federal government is putting \$2 million into a grant fund for researchers to develop a vaccine for the new coronavirus, also known as the virus that causes COVID-19.

“We’re going to put \$2 million through the Medical Research Future Fund, and we’re going to be putting that money into a competitive program to find a vaccine,” Morrison told reporters at the Peter Doherty Institute in Melbourne on Tuesday.

“There are many research projects that are going on around the world to do this very task, and Australia is going to play its part in that process,” he added. “Already here at Doherty, there is much work going on in this area, and we continue to support that work, and we want to get as many of the brightest and smartest minds in Australia working on this task.”

Researchers from across the country can apply for money from the Medical Research Future Fund. The grant will add to the work being undertaken by the institute, CSIRO, and the University of Queensland.

The Medical Research Future Fund is set to finalize details of the grant process this week and will advise the government on the merit order of the research.

Australian Health Minister Greg Hunt said that the government is currently contributing \$50 million through NHMRC grants to the institute. He said that the government is hoping the additional \$2 million



Scientists work in one of the high security laboratories of the Friedrich-Loeffler Institute on the island of Riems in Germany on Dec. 2, 2019.

in funding “will encourage even further work.”

“We’re hoping that that funding will encourage even further work. That’s the key point,” Hunt told reporters on Tuesday.

Last month, researchers at the institute were first to develop a lab-grown version of coronavirus outside of China successfully. The institute said that the lab-grown virus sample could help generate an antibody test to help detect the virus in asymptomatic patients.

We’re hoping that that funding will encourage even further work. That’s the key point.

Greg Hunt, Australian Health Minister

“Unless you’re subject to self-isolation because you’ve been in mainland China for the last 14 days, then you should feel free to move around because Australia has been successfully containing the coronavirus to date.”

He added that of the cases presented, “many of them now [have] left hospital and they’re getting on with their lives and so we need to continue to deal with this issue very regularly.”

Ford to Stay in Australia After GM Shuts

Ford Motor will commit \$500 million to the Australian market in 2020 and is likely to hire more staff as global automotive giant General Motors prepares to quit by the end of the year.

After closing the company’s local manufacturing operations in 2017, GM will now “retire” the Holden brand in both Australia and New Zealand, axing about 600 jobs.

But Ford Australia & New Zealand president and CEO Kay Hart says the company is “committed to Australia” and will spend about \$500 million investment in 2020, as well as hire new staff.

Hart says Ford has a big design and engineering team in Australia and is “hiring at the moment.”

“I am sure there is some great talent in that Holden team. We would

definitely be looking for that skill set that would fit with us and there may well be opportunities for that team at Ford in the future,” she told ABC radio on Tuesday.

However, she said any long-term decisions about the future of Ford’s Australian operations would be considered and made by its U.S.-based parent company.

“Ford Australia is committed to our operations here in Australia and we’re excited about what our future lies ahead for us here,” Hart said.

“As a company, they will make that decision based on what is right for the corporation globally, but at the moment we are extremely committed, in terms of the Ford Motor Company, is extremely committed to Australia.”

Federal industry minister Karen



A Holden vehicle is parked in the employee car parking area at the Holden manufacturing facility in Elizabeth, South Australia, on Dec. 11, 2013.

I am sure there is some great talent in that Holden team.

Kay Hart, Ford Australia & New Zealand president and CEO

Andrews said with a workforce of just over 2,000 people, the government did not expect Ford to follow in General Motors’ footsteps.

“They are very focused on design and engineering so I am not foreseeing any imminent issues with Ford,” Andrews said.

Andrews said Hart had not given her a “never-ending commitment” about its operations remaining in Australia.

However, the company had agreed to “keep in touch,” with the pair expected to meet in the coming weeks.

GM and Holden have pledged to work closely with all their workers offering generous redundancy packages to staff across Australia and New Zealand, with most expected to be gone by June.

From AAP

homemakers

Big Sale \$\$\$



Sorrento 5Pce Dining

\$1399
Save \$376



Now \$2699

Princeton 2RR+R+R Reclining Suite



Now \$999

Loki Scandi Swivel Chair



New

Alinga Bed in striking Western Australia Marri Timber



Tel : 02 6280 0068

Address : 17/337 Canberra Ave, DFO Fyshwick ACT 2609

www.hmmf.com.au

Experience. Range. Service

“...amazing showrooms, a must see!”

“...people in the know”

RIVOLAND

THE REGION'S LARGEST TILE STOCKIST

Builders, Architects, Interior Designers and Renovators – visit our showroom – Rivoland's experience, range and expertise make it easy for you to choose the perfect tile.

MASTER BUILDERS MEMBER



Member of Australia's Tile Power Group

Rivoland Showrooms

100 Crawford Street, Queanbeyan

55 Darling Street, Mitchell

Tel: 6297 4510

Tel: 6241 1557

Trade Outlets

24-26 Aurora Avenue, Queanbeyan

55 Darling Street, Mitchell

Tel: 6297 9930

Tel: 6255 0535

www.rivoland.com.au



Rivoland is the ACT and region's largest tile stockist.

Experts Sound the Alarm Over North Korea Coronavirus Cases

CONTINUED FROM A1

central and provinces in a timely manner, and sent to the broadcasting networks in the country for intensive propaganda,” said a state news report. North Korea also announced it would extend a quarantine for suspected cases to 30 days “for the time being.”

Some South Korean news outlets, including the Chosun Ilbo paper, reported that the virus has already spread into the reclusive nation, coming through gaps in its border with China. There have been suspected cases quarantined in Musan that include locals smuggling between the two countries.

Experts Raise Alarm

Experts have worried that the country, one of the poorest in the world, could be ravaged by COVID-19 due to a lack of medical supplies.

“There’s not enough medicine for the country. I’m really concerned about them facing an outbreak,” Nagi Shafik, a former consultant at the World Health Organization who had worked in Pyongyang, told Business Insider. “It will be dangerous for them—it could go everywhere.”

Elaborating further, Shafik told the South China Morning Post that the country’s health care system and hospitals are “devoid of the most basic treatments for any sort of medical problem.”

This includes items “like antibiotics, any sort of preventative care are unheard of in the countryside or rural areas and only reserved for the party elite in Pyongyang,” he said.

What’s more, one researcher said North Korea likely isn’t reporting the true scope of its COVID-19 outbreak.

“There is no way that North Korea is not being impacted by the coronavirus—they are clearly lying as they don’t want to show any weakness or that there is any threat to the regime,” Harry Kazianis, director of



Workers of Songyo Knitwear Factory in Pyongyang, North Korea, produce masks for protection against the new coronavirus on Feb. 6, 2020.

Experts have worried that the country, one of the poorest in the world, could be ravaged by COVID-19 due to a lack of medical supplies.

Korean Studies at the Center for National Interest, told Fox News this week. “Considering how there are many porous sections of the North Korea-China border—and how the Kim regime depends on illegal trade to survive—it is clear the virus has come to North Korea.”

North Korea, meanwhile, has banned all tourists and cut off transportation with China in an attempt to curb the spread of the illness. However, Kazianis said such actions could actually exacerbate the problem.

“The real danger is if the situation were to spiral out of control and some sort of government collapse occurred,” he told Fox News. “While

I would say the chances are remote, this is the real danger that we must worry about when it comes to North Korea. If the Kim regime did collapse, from coronavirus or something else, who controls their nuclear weapons? What about their chemical or biological weapons? Who feeds the 25 million North Koreans?”

The International Federation of Red Cross told news outlets this week that North Korea urgently needs coronavirus testing kits and protective gear.

“We must act now,” the group said, according to VOA.

On Jan. 30, UPI reported there was at least one coronavirus case in Yanbian, an ethnic Korean region located

near the border.

The United States said it is ready to assist North Korea in curbing an outbreak of coronavirus, according to a spokesperson.

“We strongly support and encourage the work of U.S. and international aid and health organizations to counter and contain the spread of coronavirus in the DPRK,” State Department spokeswoman Morgan Ortagus said in a statement, referring to North Korea’s official name, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. “The United States is ready and prepared to expeditiously facilitate the approval of assistance from these organizations.”

RECEIVE

\$400

GIFT CARD

TO THE

SHEN YUN SHOW !

With any purchase of \$4,000 or greater.

5,000 YEARS OF CIVILIZATION REBORN

神韻晚會 2020

SHEN YUN

Experience Shen Yun at

CAPITOL THEATRE SYDNEY

4-22 MARCH 2020

ENTIRELY NEW 2020 PRODUCTION WITH LIVE ORCHESTRA

ShenYun.com/Sydney

OSMEN®

Outdoor Furniture

Alexandria Homemaker Centre

49-59 O'Riordan Street

Artarmon HomeHQ

1 Frederick Street

Auburn Showroom

276-278 Parramatta Road

Belrose Supa Centre

4-6 Niangala Close

Chatswood Chase Sydney

Shop G062, Ground Floor

345 Victoria Avenue

Hills Super Centre

16-18 Victoria Avenue & Showground Road

Smithfield Warehouse & Showroom

134 Gipps Road

osmenfurniture

www.osmen.com.au

No conjunction with any other special.

Ivanka Trump Lauds Saudi Arabia, UAE on Women’s Rights Reforms

IVAN PENTCHOUKOV

Ivanka Trump, senior adviser to President Donald Trump, praised Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Feb. 16 for taking on “significant reforms” to expand women’s rights.

“We know that when women are free to succeed, families thrive, communities flourish, and nations are stronger,” Trump, the daughter of the president, said in the keynote address at the Global Women’s Forum in Dubai.

Trump and her husband, Jared Kushner, hold senior advisory roles at the White House. The 38-year-old mother of three has led a number of women’s empowerment initiatives at home and abroad. Some of her efforts have gained bipartisan support in Washington.

Trump congratulated Saudi Arabia for recent changes in the law that allow women to travel abroad and obtain a passport without the permission of a male relative. In 2018, a ban on women driving cars was lifted. The changes, spearheaded by Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman, are part of a wide-ranging push to transform the Saudi economy and attract greater foreign investment.

Trump also lauded a handful of other Middle East nations: Bahrain for introducing legislation against discrimination in the workplace, Jordan for eliminating legal restrictions on women’s ability to work at night, Morocco for expanding women’s land



Ivanka Trump visits the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, on Feb. 15, 2020.

rights, and Tunisia for introducing laws to address domestic violence.

She noted, however, that more work needed to be done, pointing out that women across the region on average still have only half the legal rights of men.

Trump lauded Emirati leaders for “removing barriers to women joining the workforce and developing a national strategy that recognizes that women are central to sustain-

able growth.”

She noted that although 70 percent of Emirati university graduates are women, only 10 percent of the UAE’s total national income is derived from women.

“We know that this is going to grow and flourish in the years ahead,” she said.

The audience for Trump’s speech included Dubai ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum,

Dubai Crown Prince Hamdan bin Mohammed Al Maktoum, World Bank President David Malpass, and International Monetary Fund chief Kristalina Georgieva.

The Dubai ruler is wildly popular at home and is seen as a modernizing force. He has, however, faced some criticism abroad concerning women’s rights, following reports that one of his daughters tried to flee the country and was forcibly returned.

The UAE and Saudi Arabia were early supporters of the Women’s Empowerment Fund, a World Bank initiative to help female entrepreneurs that Ivanka Trump supports. During the first trip abroad of her father’s presidency to Saudi Arabia, the two Gulf countries pledged \$100 million to the fund.

During her two-day visit to the UAE, Trump met with women entrepreneurs and discussed a U.S. government project she’s leading that’s aimed at helping women in developing countries. The Women’s Global Development and Prosperity Initiative was launched last year with backing by the president.

On the day prior to the speech, Trump toured Abu Dhabi’s grand mosque, visited the Abu Dhabi branch of the Louvre Museum, and met with the country’s day-to-day ruler, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Love Island Host’s Death Sparks Petitions to Change UK Press Laws

KATABELLA ROBERTS

The death of former ‘Love Island’ host Caroline Flack has sparked a number of petitions calling for changes to UK media laws and to ensure that the mental health and human rights of celebrities are respected.

Flack took her own life on Feb. 15 at the age of 40. Her body was reportedly found by her father in her east London flat. The ITV host was due to stand trial at Highbury magistrates court on March 4 where she faced domestic violence offenses after being accused of an attack on her boyfriend Lewis Burton on Dec. 12 at a flat in Islington, north London. She had denied the charge.

Burton has repeatedly expressed that he did not want the case against Flack to go ahead and did not consider himself a victim. He also criticized the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) for not allowing him to have contact with her until the trial.

In the wake of the TV host’s death, three notable petitions have been launched in a bid to change laws regarding celebrity culture and reporting, as well as calling for a full investigation into journalistic practices.

The first calls on the UK government to launch an inquiry into the British press. It has so far reached 218,632 signatures and will now be considered for discussion in parliament.

“This campaign is calling on our government to launch an inquiry into the British press and their practices following the maltreatment of those in the public eye including Caroline Flack, Harry and Meghan Markle, to name a few,” the campaign says. “The headlines, harassment, and trial by media has to end and they must be held accountable.”

A second petition named “Exploiting people in the public eye” was launched by British actress and friend of Flack, Stephanie Davis.

The petition calls for “new and stricter laws around safeguarding celebrities and people in the public eye,” which it says should be put in place to prevent the newspapers, magazines, all forms of media and paparazzi from:



Caroline Flack attends the ITV Palooza 2019 at the Royal Festival Hall in London on Nov. 12, 2019.

- Releasing information that there is no evidence for and is therefore false
- Printing source quotes from anyone or an unreliable source
- Sharing private information that is detrimental to the celebrity and those around them
- Paparazzi taking and printing images without permission
- Releasing an individual’s private medical or health related information or their sexual orientation
- Releasing articles about leaked explicit photos or videos
- Stricter legal boundaries regarding unwanted trespassing nearby the property where the individual resides or is visiting

Davis said the petition would “ensure that celebrities’ mental health and human rights are being respected appropriately, safely, and with a duty of care. It will also help their family and friends’ mental health as they are affected also as unwanted negative attention is then attracted toward them and invades their privacy too.”

Flack is the fourth person linked to the ITV2 dating program to have killed themselves. The broadcaster has said they remained in close contact with Flack after she stepped down from the role following her arrest.

Flack’s death has also resulted in fresh scrutiny of the Leveson Inquiry, a judicial public inquiry launched in 2011 into the culture, practices, and ethics of the British press following the News International phone hacking scandal. The Rupert Murdoch-owned Sunday tabloid News of the World was subsequently shut down.

The inquiry was led by Lord Justice Leveson, and a series of public hearings were held throughout 2011 and 2012. However, plans for it to move on to a second phase focusing on media relations with the police were later dismissed by former Prime Minister Theresa May.

If you need support, call Lifeline on 13 11 14.

12 Right-Wing Terrorists Arrested in Germany Over Plot to Spark ‘Civil-War-Like Situation’

ISABEL VAN BRUGEN

Police in Germany have arrested 12 men suspected of instigating a plot to attack politicians, asylum-seekers, and Muslims across the country.

The arrest of the 12 men on Friday—including a German police administrative officer—followed multiple raids in 13 locations in Germany across six states, according to AFP.

The four prime suspects allegedly wanted to start “a civil-war-like situation” across Germany and were arrested on suspicion of forming a right-wing terrorist organization last September. The remaining eight suspects allegedly offered the group financial support and agreed to provide them with weapons or take part in future attacks.

A federal court judge ordered them detained on Saturday pending further investigations, prosecutors said.

Popular support for far-right groups is growing in Germany, notably in the country’s former Communist east, as part of a polarization at both ends of the political spectrum that is undermining the mainstream establishment that has been in government since World War 2.

The group was named “Der harte Kern” (The Hard Core) when it was formed by the men in September 2019, reported the German Welt am Sonntag newspaper on Sunday. It had been under surveillance since late last year.

The suspects are all German citizens reportedly aged between 20 and 50, including the police officer, who in the past had been suspended after he was suspected of having links to right-wing extremism, a source at the interior ministry in North-Rhine Westphalia state told AFP.

North Rhine-Westphalia’s Interior Minister Herbert Reul said the police officer would be suspended from duty.

The German Attorney General said in a statement the aim of the association was to “shake and ultimately overcome the state and social order of the Federal Republic of Germany.”

A number of weapons were uncovered in the raids across Germany, including a homemade “slam gun” which resembled the weapon used in the October 2019 attack on a synagogue in Halle. Investigators also uncovered stores of materials that could be used to produce home-made bombs, Welt am Sonntag reported.

Using Facebook-owned messaging app WhatsApp, the group allegedly regularly held meetings to plan their attacks. Two of the core suspects, named only as Werner S and Tony E, coordinated and organized the meetings.

Minister of Justice Christine Lambrecht said the arrests showed that there is “a very worrying right-wing extremist and right-wing terrorist threat” in Germany.

“We have to be particularly vigilant and act decisively against this threat,” Lambrecht added.

Police in Germany have paid special attention to tackling right-wing extremism in the country following the assassination of conservative local politician Walter Lübcke in June last year.

Authorities believe he was targeted for his stance of welcoming refugees into the country. Lübcke received death threats before his assassination for favoring German Chancellor Angela Merkel’s open migration policy.

Under German law, individuals suspected of being on the verge of committing serious offenses can be detained for up to 6 months, extendable to 12 months in extreme cases, according to legal experts.

Reuters contributed to this report.



One of 12 men suspected of involvement in a right-wing terrorist group is escorted by police as he arrives for his hearing at Germany’s general prosecutor in Karlsruhe, Germany, on Feb. 15, 2020.

Hackers Indicted in Equifax Breach Are Part of China’s Electronic Warfare Program

CONTINUED FROM A1

of personally identifiable information ever carried out by state-sponsored actors.”

Yet, despite the rare exposé of Chinese soldiers, little has been said about the hacker unit they were allegedly part of, reported by the FBI as the 54th Research Institute.

The case that most closely resembles this is the May 19, 2014, indictment of five Chinese military hackers for multiple alleged cybercrimes committed between 2006 and 2014. They were identified as being part of Unit 61398 of the Chinese military, the People’s Liberation Army.

The “Unit” and “Research Institute” named in these cases were previously known, but not widely known.

A Different Purpose

The hackers involved in the 2014 case more clearly fit the profile of their assigned military branch. An investigative series from The Epoch Times in 2015 detailed the structure of these units and their operations. Unit 61398 was under the Third Department of the General Staff Department—the former warfighting branch of the Chinese military. Under the Third Department were 22 known operational bureaus, and at least four known “research institutes” involved in their operations.

Beneath each unit were additional branches, each with a unique purpose, which in the case of the 2014 indictment were focused on the theft of trade secrets from the United States to advance the economic warfare operations of the Chinese regime. Among the regime’s programs that direct economic theft are Project 863, China 2025, the Torch Program, and others.

A July 27, 2015, report from the Project 2049 Institute, a think tank, stated that Unit 61398, also known as “The Second Bureau,” was one of the largest operational bureaus under the Third Department. It notes that the unit was structured like a Chinese military ground-force division, and was also involved in political warfare and in collecting military intelligence.

A first glance at the recent indictment of the Chinese hackers in the

... the unit was structured like a Chinese military ground-force division, and was also involved in political warfare and in collecting military intelligence.



Signs that depict the four members of China’s military indicted on charges of hacking into Equifax Inc. and stealing data from millions of Americans are seen at the Department of Justice in Washington on Feb. 10, 2020.

Equifax case would suggest the soldiers were part of the same department—namely, under one of the “research institutes” of the General Staff Department, Third Department. Yet they weren’t, which suggests the Equifax breach may have served a different purpose than economic gain.

The 54 Research Institute was under the Fourth Department of the General Staff Department, meaning that its operations were related to electronic warfare.

Defining Roles

As a brief breakdown, the General Staff Department had three main departments focused on operations of this nature. The Second Department was the human intelligence department, which was focused on more conventional spies; the Third Department was the signals intelligence department, which was focused on cyber intelligence; and the Fourth Department was the electronics intelligence department, which was focused on electronic warfare.

However, these units were more recently merged into a different parent branch of the Chinese military, which removed them from the General Staff Department and placed them under the relatively new Strategic Support Force. A 2016 report from the U.S.–China Economic and Security Review Commission states, “This composi-

tion at a minimum would suggest the Strategic Support Force is charged with cyber, space, reconnaissance, and electronic warfare missions supporting joint integrated operations.”

The 54 Research Institute of the Fourth Department—the one named in the recent FBI indictment—was described in a 2018 report from the Institute for National Strategic Studies as “responsible for research and development of operational electronic and network countermeasures,” and was “moved over to the Strategic Support Force, likely under the Network Systems Department.”

The Third and Fourth Departments—which are again the parent departments of the respective hacker groups—are considered three of the five known Chinese military entities focused on espionage and intelligence gathering, according to a 2009 report from the U.S.–China Economic and Security Review Commission. The other two are the International Liaison Department of the PLA General Political Department, and a network of various defense industrial firms.

The 2009 report notes specifically that the Third Department (as in the 2014 FBI indictment) was focused on “Signals intelligence collection and analysis” and “Cyber intelligence collection and analysis,” whereas the Fourth Department (as in the recent case) was focused on “Electronic war-

fare (jamming, etc.)” and “Computer network attacks.”

It adds, however, that the Third Department and the Fourth Department “may also have a complementary relationship.” In other words, as The Epoch Times has previously reported, the units may have been working together on their operations.

When it comes to the specific roles of these departments in computer operations—such as the breaches the different units were charged for—the differences appear very fine, between “network exploitation” and “network attack.”

The 2009 report says the Third Department “bears primary responsibility within the PLA for computer network exploitation.” The Fourth Department, on the other hand, “plays the leading role in computer network attack.”

It describes network exploitation as “enabling operations and intelligence collection capabilities conducted through the use of computer networks to gather data from target or adversary automated information systems or networks.”

And it explains network attack as “actions taken through the use of computer networks to disrupt, deny, degrade, or destroy information resident in computers and computer networks, or the computers and networks themselves.”

US House Speaker Pelosi Warns Allies Against Using Huawei

CONTINUED FROM A1

from Western technology,” Pelosi, the senior Democratic lawmaker, told reporters in Brussels. “So, of course it’s going to be cheaper to put on the market. And if it’s cheaper, then they get the market share and then they (China) bring in their autocracy of lack of privacy.”

U.S. President Donald Trump’s administration has been raising national security concerns about Huawei, the world’s largest telecommunications equipment manufacturer, and is a lobbying Western allies to bar the company from their wireless, high-speed networks.

Trump administration officials, including Cabinet secretaries, say Huawei can give the Chinese regime backdoor access to data, allegations that the company rejects.

On Feb. 13, federal prosecutors charged Huawei and several subsidiaries with conspiracy to steal trade secrets and violate anti-racketeering laws, the Department of Justice announced. The charges are in addition to previous charges on Huawei relating to violations of U.S. sanctions on Iran in an existing indictment.

The United States has been trying to have European nations ban the gear from next-generation cellular networks, but some countries are shying away from banning it alto-



Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) speaks during a media conference after a meeting at NATO headquarters in Brussels, on Feb. 17, 2020.

gether. Britain, notably, announced last month that it would allow Huawei to participate in certain non-sensitive areas of its networks.

Pelosi warned allies not to cave in to Chinese pressure to take Huawei. “You cannot sell the privacy of the people of your country down the river,” Pelosi said.

Epoch Times reporter Cathy He contributed to this report.

From The Associated Press

US to Treat State-Owned Chinese Media as Operatives of the Communist State

ISABEL VAN BRUGEN

The United States will begin treating five major Chinese state-run media entities with U.S. operations as “foreign missions” and operatives of Beijing’s government, requiring them to register their employees and U.S. properties with the State Department.

China’s Xinhua News Agency, China Global Television Network, China Radio International, China Daily Distribution Corp., and Hai Tian Development USA, Inc.—distributor of the People’s Daily, the official publication of the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP’s) Central Committee—will be designated as “foreign missions” effective immediately, State Department officials said on Feb. 18 on condition of anonymity.

The designation was intended to create more “transparency” as the State Department will have more information about their employees and their holdings, one official said.

“We are serving a certain purpose by making clear that these guys are part and parcel of the PRC Government. These are not independent journalistic outlets,” they said.

A second State Department official said that Beijing’s control of

China’s state-owned media has become “more and more draconian.” In contrast, he said the department had long considered the decision, describing the media companies as “organs of the Chinese one-party state propaganda apparatus.”

According to the Foreign Agents Registration Act, the CCP has committed \$6.6 billion to its English-language newspaper, China Daily, since 2009.

A group of U.S. senators recently said that the articles the paper inserts into U.S. publications serve to paint the regime in a positive light and minimize its oppression of the Chinese and other peoples.

“Such articles serve as a cover for China’s atrocities, including its crimes against humanity in the Xinjiang region and its support for the crackdown in Hong Kong,” they said.

Responding to the decision, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told Axios in a statement that the action is “long overdue.”

The Epoch Times reached out to the media outlets for comment but didn’t hear back.

Reuters contributed to this report.



An aerial view of the Pentagon in Arlington, Va., on Oct. 28, 2019.

The Illusion of TRANSPARENCY

Lives lost, billions wasted, due to massive government records management failure, whistleblower says

CONTINUED FROM A1

cadesthat followed, the government has spent billions of taxpayer dollars on records management applications certified under that standard. But the money has largely been wasted, since the applications became unusable at the turn of the century as technological advances enabled a new era of interconnected digital workspaces bursting with records to manage. The 1990s-era applications require each government employee to declare every record manually. As both the amount and the types of records ballooned, the task became unmanageable. Darryll Prescott led the DISA task force that drafted the records management application standard from 1993 to 1995. He became aware of the issues in the early 2000s. “People are busy. They don’t have time to be dragging and dropping things,” Prescott said. “Billions have been spent on records management applications, which are not working and people are not using them. It’s a disservice to the citizens of the United States and a disservice to the people of this industry.” Don Lueders, a former federal contractor for IBM and other software companies, spent two decades developing and selling records management applications based on the Department of Defense (DOD) standard. He was often in a position to witness firsthand whether the applications bought by the government were actually put to use. And, according to Lueders, they never were, including at the Department of Justice, the Department of State, the Department of Treasury, the IRS, and multiple components of the DOD, such as the White House Communications Agency. “I trained on it. I consulted on it. I made a great deal of money off of that thing,” Lueders said. “About seven or eight years ago, I came to the conclusion that I couldn’t support it anymore. And I couldn’t support it anymore because I knew that not only had I never seen one record in a production environment enter into a DOD-certified repository, I’ve never even seen any of those applications successfully deployed. So they’re empty.” A former senior Pentagon official

told The Epoch Times that he had never used a records management application during his decadeslong tenure at the DOD. The official’s records management practice consisted entirely of placing files in folders on drives on the government-issued computer, a far cry from the exacting declaration, storage, retention, and destruction processes built into the records management applications the Pentagon mandated each official to use. “People are not rewarded for records management,” the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said. “I’ve never seen a bonus for properly doing records management. You are rewarded for production on the hot topic for management. When I retired and left government service, my records probably didn’t get preserved.” Marc Ruskin, a former FBI special agent, likewise confirmed to The Epoch Times that he had never used a dedicated application to manage any of the records he created or received over the course of his two decades at the bureau. He recalled a failed attempt to bring on a records management application in 2004 and 2005 during the tenure of FBI Director Robert Mueller. After the software was scrapped, the FBI began working on deploying a new system. Ruskin never used the new software, despite being trained on it, right up until he left the bureau seven years later. “There was a big paperless failure during Mueller’s tenure,” said Ruskin, who is also a contributor to The Epoch Times. “He was pushing aggressively to digitize everything. The FBI went ahead to transition to a system that was not fully developed, sort of a beta system, not ready for use. No one had the [courage] to tell the director they couldn’t meet his deadline.” **Heart of Accountability** Despite its stuffy title, records management cuts to the core of the relationship between the government and the American people, who fund it. The ongoing contract is based on accountability and transparency, neither of which are possible without records. The explosion in records that accompanied the information technology boom has greatly diminished the government’s ability to be accountable



Don Lueders, a former government contractor and certified records manager, outside the National Archives in Washington on Feb. 8, 2020.



Marc Ruskin, retired FBI special agent and author of “The Pretender,” in New York on Oct. 4, 2019.

and transparent. In theory, the Pentagon-certified applications were meant to address the issue. Instead, they provide little more than the illusion of records management, as the vast majority of these applications are never implemented. “You don’t have a democracy without accountability and transparency,” Lueders said. “You don’t have accountability and transparency without records management.” Without an effective system to preserve, protect, track, and—when required by law—destroy records, the ensuing chaos hands the power over the government’s records to career administrators, who can choose which records see the light of day and which simply disappear. “That’s been going on for almost a quarter-century,” Lueders said. “And it doesn’t matter who’s in the White House. I’ve seen it with my own eyes at these agencies. Information is the most valuable currency in the world now, and they control the information.” “So they can do and say whatever they want with absolute impunity. That’s a terrifying thought.” **Solution Ignored** After developing the DOD 5015.2 standard, Prescott had largely walked away from the records management industry when he received a call from John Carlin, the archivist of the United States, in 2003. Under one of President

George W. Bush’s initiatives, the National Archives was seeking to create and implement policies to regulate the maintenance of federal electronic records. Prescott interviewed for the job and began working as a detailee to the National Archives in 2004. He led an interagency effort to create a new standard for records management based on services, which would allow the government to catch up with the rapid advances in technology. After 4 1/2 years, a collaborative effort between 19 cabinet-level agencies led by Prescott resulted in the creation of a new standard. It spelled out the requirements for records management services (RMS), which would handle the insurmountable burden of manual tasks imposed on end-users by the DOD-certified applications. When the National Archives endorsed the DOD 5015.2 standard in 1998, big tech companies instantly had the business case to develop products to meet the government’s criteria since sales would be assured. Prescott knew this would also be the case if the National Archives endorsed the new RMS standard. Expecting an endorsement, two tech companies had approached his team with prototypes based on their services. But before a working solution was built, the National Archives walked away from the new standard. “The question remains: Why?” Prescott said. Prescott handed the new standard

NICHOLAS KAMM/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



to the Object Management Group (OMG), an international technology standards consortium. The OMG used the standard to create high-level models that could be used to create RMS software for any system.

After the OMG published the standard in November 2011, Larry Johnson, who is now on the board of directors at the OMG, presented it to the National Archives. Johnson was surprised the agency again didn't endorse the standard.

"I was kind of shocked," Johnson said.

At the time, the National Archives was looking for ways to comply with the presidential memorandum on managing government records, issued by President Barack Obama in late 2011. The RMS standard addressed almost all of Obama's requirements. However, the National Archives showed no interest.

"I was a little bit taken aback by the glassy-eyed response," Johnson said.

The National Archives didn't respond to a request for comment on why the RMS standard was never endorsed.

Despite spending billions on records management applications, today the federal government is stuck with unusable software.

"The standard is not wrong. The systems are not wrong," Prescott said. "The applications are just not viable for the current environment."

The Whistleblower

Lueders initially aired his concerns on his industry blog and social media several years ago. He then sounded the alarm at IBM, where he worked on a team selling records management software to the government.

Seeing that IBM wouldn't budge, Lueders filed a formal whistleblower complaint with the DOD inspector general (IG) in May 2017. The DOD IG relayed the complaint to the DISA IG, which interviewed Lueders a month later. The DISA IG declined to investigate and forwarded the complaint to the Joint Interoperability Test Command as a business issue.

IBM didn't respond to a request for comment.

In July 2017, Lueders submitted another whistleblower complaint to the Intelligence Community (IC) IG, but never heard back. Suspecting that the IC IG wouldn't investigate the complaint, he initiated contact with the office of his congresswoman at the time, Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-Va.), and stayed in touch before Comstock's staff abruptly cut ties. Comstock lost her seat in November 2018. Comstock didn't respond to a request for comment.

Applications built to meet the Pentagon's standard include crucial functionality for government transparency and accountability. They require every government employee to declare records into a certified system, where the record is secured so it can't be deleted or altered.

Records that should be destroyed after a certain time are forensically deleted by the application so they can't be recovered. This should have been the case for a significant portion of the 21.5 million records stolen from the OPM beginning in 2015, according to both Lueders and Prescott. If the records were in a DOD-certified records management repository or managed by the RMS standard, the software would have wiped out a significant portion in compliance with federal laws and regulations, long before a cyberattack, reported to have originated in China, breached the OPM systems.

Records that shouldn't be destroyed or altered are secured and made immutable if they are declared in the application. This should have been the

case with the emails of Lois Lerner, the IRS official at the center of the controversy surrounding the IRS's targeting of conservative groups. Instead, the IRS claimed that the emails, which were under subpoena from Congress, were lost due to a computer crash. The IRS later claimed that the emails for five more officials were missing due to computer crashes. Those emails wouldn't have been lost if Lerner and the other officials used a records management application.

Unviable Standard

The government's failure to use the certified applications is rooted in the nature of the DOD standard itself. Prescott developed the standard at the office of the assistant secretary of defense for command, control, communications, and intelligence in the 1990s, in response to the records management failures exposed when the federal government attempted to collect data on troops who suffered from Gulf War syndrome. Prescott worked on the standard from 1993 to 1995. The DOD released the first version in 1997.

In the 23 years since then, the standard was updated twice, but none of the changes adjusted the standard to the staggering advances in technology made since 1995. The core of the problem is that the standard guides the creation of applications that require manual input rather than services, which would handle this work in the background. The vast majority of the electronic records management applications at government agencies sit unused because the work required to manually enter each record into them is unsustainable.

"You have the appearance [of records management] and you have the reality," Prescott said. "That is not responsive to our republic."

The DOD standard doesn't include a usability requirement. Legal teams vetted the standard to determine that it would satisfy the records management mandates imposed by Congress and adhere to the regulations of the executive branch. Usability and viability weren't part of the process.

"Nobody—including the task force—tested these solutions to see if they would really work in a production environment," Lueders said. "And they don't."

Prescott, during his time on detail to the National Archives, noted in a presentation that records management applications "must be inserted in uncountable places in the business process" and have "never met requirements originally documented in the 1990s."

As an example of the work involved to declare a single record, a government official who sends an email would have to determine, based on records management training, whether the email even constitutes a record. The official would then have to drag the email from his or her outbox and drop it into the records management application and fill in the metadata, such as the classification level and a date for when the record should be deleted. This should be done for every record, be it an email, text message, social media post, text document, spreadsheet, calendar entry, or any other document so recognized.

"You're always pressed for time to do a lot of action. If you're saying you can't do that because you're following the records standard, you'd be viewed as crazy," said the former senior Defense Department official.

IBM hired Lueders in 2015 after he became a vocal critic of the failures stemming from the limitations of the applications. Lueders says he agreed to come aboard because IBM claimed to be interested in developing a solution unbound from the DOD's

Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Commissioner John Koskinen appears before a House Oversight and Government Reform Committee hearing on "IRS Obstruction: Lois Lerner's Missing E-Mails, Part I" on Capitol Hill in Washington on June 23, 2014.

Despite spending billions on records management applications, today the federal government is stuck with unusable software.

Shaelyn Gisler, 4, leave flowers on crosses that bear the names of victims outside the First Baptist Church, which was the scene of a mass shooting that killed 26 people in Sutherland Springs, Texas, on Nov. 9, 2017.

SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES



standard. He said that when he discovered that IBM was still selling the software based on the same standard, he complained and was eventually pushed out.

'The Nation's Recordskeeper'

Despite endorsing the DOD standard for all federal agencies since 1998, the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), which describes itself as "the nation's recordskeeper," uses a DOD-certified application only for its email records.

"NARA recognizes that a one-size-fits-all solution that addresses all of an agency's electronic records management needs is generally not practical," a spokesperson for the National Archives told The Epoch Times in an email.

The National Archives said it manages the rest of its records "in the system in which they are created, with dispositions being applied in manual or automated methods." The agency didn't respond to a request to explain what processes and policies are in place to meet extensive federal electronic records management requirements, including how the records are declared, made immutable, managed through their retention schedule, and, when required, forensically destroyed.

In 2017, the National Archives issued guidance clarifying that only the DOD is governed by the 5015.2 standard. In 2018, the agency issued its own set of universal electronic records management requirements.

"These requirements do not depend on a particular approach or tool, which gives agencies and vendors more flexibility to find records management solutions that meet NARA requirements," the spokesperson added.

Despite the recent changes at the National Archives, DOD-certified applications remain the go-to software most government agencies carry, in part because the standard is the only one specifically listed in the federal regulation governing electronic records management and the only solution that bears a DOD certification.

Cost to Taxpayers

The total cost to taxpayers after two decades of deploying the unviable records management software is hard to estimate, due in part to poor federal contract award record management. A non-exhaustive search for DOD-certified products turned up contracts worth tens of millions of dollars. According to Lueders, the tab easily could run into the billions.

"If you add up all the contracts that were awarded because the software included a DOD-certified repository and the services provided to support those contracts, you get into the billions pretty quickly," Lueders said.

The records management application industry in the United States was valued at \$17 billion to \$19 billion in 2016, according to GEP, a procurement and supply chain consulting firm. The General Services Administration recently rebid a contract for Defense Enterprise Office Solutions—a cloud office package that includes a DOD-certified component—for \$7.6 billion.

But the true cost of the chaos caused by poor record-keeping could be exponentially greater. In 2016, the DOD IG found that the Pentagon had insufficient records to account for \$6.5 trillion in expenses.

'Tragic Consequences'

The cost of the opportunities lost due to insufficient records, as in the cases of those suffering from Gulf War syndrome, is likewise significant. Beyond the money, records management failures have more tragic consequences.

The families of the victims of the 2017 Texas church massacre filed several lawsuits against the government, claiming that the Air Force's records management negligence allowed the killer to purchase the weapons used in the killings. The lawsuits have since been consolidated into a single case. The families cleared a major hurdle last year when federal Judge Xavier Rodriguez allowed some of the charges in the case to proceed. The trial starts on Sept. 8.

In the ruling, Rodriguez noted that the Pentagon has long been aware of its records management failures, specifically when it comes to notifying the FBI about personnel being investigated, prosecuted, and convicted. In 2014, the DOD IG found that the Air Force Security Forces failed to submit fingerprint cards and final disposition reports to the FBI in 60 percent of cases. In 2015, the DOD IG examined the issue across several branches of the military and found that the Air Force failed to submit criminal conviction records to the appropriate computer databases 30 percent of the time.

The Air Force didn't remedy its records management failures by 2017 when the watchdog found deficiencies in reporting criminal convictions to the FBI in 94 percent of cases. The report stated, "Any missing fingerprint card and final disposition report can have serious, even tragic consequences, as may have occurred in the recent church shooting in Texas."

None of the IG reports from 2014, 2015, 2017, and 2018 include a single mention of the DOD's 5015.2 standard, which formally guides the handling of the electronic records examined in each report. In Kelley's case, Air Force personnel were, in some instances, simply unable to find the documents that would have been preserved if they had used a DOD-certified application.

By the time the Air Force had its third opportunity to send Kelley's records to the FBI on June 8, 2012, the FBI no longer accepted hard-copy fingerprint cards. As a result, the fingerprint cards should have been scanned and declared as electronic records into a DOD-certified application. The Pentagon took two more years to notify its personnel about the FBI's new requirement.

The Air Force and the Air Force IG declined to answer a question on why a review of compliance with the DOD 5015.2 standard was omitted from the reports.

The DOD, the Air Force, and the Air Force IG declined to comment, citing the pending litigation by the Sutherland Springs families.

An attorney for the Holcombe family, which lost nine family members in the massacre, also declined to comment due to the pending litigation.

IBM, the OPM, the DOJ, the State Department, the Treasury, the Patent and Trade Office, and the White House Communications Agency didn't respond to requests for comment.

Unlike the compliance failures uncovered in the Air Force IG reports, the records management failures related to the DOD-certified applications are connected to more than the federal government. In IBM's case, Lueders was vocal about the software being unused. He said the company kept on selling it.

Other tech giants have long been aware their records management software is unviable in current electronic environments, according to Prescott.

In a first for IBM's DOD 5015.2-certified products, the company announced it would discontinue support for one of its records management products in April.

First Coronavirus Patient Had No Link to Wuhan Seafood Market: Report

CATHY HE

The first coronavirus (COVID-19) patient in China did not have contact with a wild animal and seafood market in Wuhan City where the outbreak began, the BBC reported on Feb. 18.

The unidentified man, known as “patient zero,” was a pensioner in his 70s who was bedridden from a stroke and suffered from dementia. He fell ill on Dec. 1, 2019—one week earlier than what was reported by Wuhan health authorities, who said the first patient appeared on Dec. 8.

The revelation is consistent with a Jan. 24 study published in The Lancet analyzing the first 41 cases of coronavirus patients who fell ill between Dec. 1, 2019 and Jan. 2, 2020.

“He lived four to five stops [public transport stations] away from the seafood market,” said Wu Wenjuan, a co-author of The Lancet study.

“And because he was ill, he basically didn’t go outdoors,” she told BBC. Wu is also the director of the intensive care unit at Wuhan’s Jinyintan Hospital.

The source of the novel coronavirus outbreak, which originated from the central Chinese city of Wuhan, is still unknown. Chinese health officials have suspected the Huanan market to be the source of the disease, saying that “most” of the initial patients were linked to the market.



A doctor looking at an image as he checks a patient who is infected by the COVID-19 coronavirus at the Wuhan Red Cross Hospital in Wuhan in China's central Hubei province on Feb. 16, 2020.

Wu was present when the patient was admitted to the hospital on Dec. 29. Previously, the man presented to another hospital in Wuhan and was later transferred to Jinyintan Hospital when his condition deteriorated.

“The symptom onset date of the first patient identified was Dec. 1, 2019. None of his family members developed fever or any respiratory symptoms,” The Lancet study said.

The paper, written by a group of Chinese researchers, found that 14 out of the 41 patients had no link to the seafood market.

When asked by the BBC about whether the fact that the first patient had not been to the market suggests there is another source of the virus, Wu replied: “What you asked is exactly the direction of next steps in our research.”

Daniel Lucey, an infectious disease specialist at Georgetown University, previously told Science magazine that based on the findings in The Lancet study, the first human infections must have taken place in November in Wuhan—due to there being an incubation period before the onset of symptoms.

He added that it was thus possible that the virus spread between people in Wuhan—or even elsewhere—before the group of cases stemming from the market in December.

“The virus came into that marketplace before it came out of that marketplace,” Lucey told Science.



Chinese shoppers wear protective masks as they walk through a nearly empty shopping mall in Beijing, China on Feb. 12, 2020.

Virus Brings Trouble to China’s Economy, Despite Investors’ Denials

FAN YU

News Analysis

The Chinese Communist Party’s highest governing body seems to believe the country is still on track to achieve its 2020 goals, despite the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Party leader Xi Jinping reemphasized that the outbreak won’t keep China from meeting its social and economic objectives this year and urged authorities at all levels to ensure that outcome, according to minutes from the Feb. 12 Politburo Standing Committee meeting reported by state media Xinhua.

But outside the confines of the Party headquarters at Zhongnanhai, economic realities paint a vastly different picture.

The challenging mission of balancing growth while containing a deadly virus makes China’s past economic juggling seem trivial. Domestic economic activity essentially has come to a halt in much of China. While the week of Feb. 10 was when most businesses were scheduled to reopen after the Lunar New Year holiday, many didn’t.

Meanwhile, financial markets seem inoculated from these risks. Even in China, stocks rose almost as much as death counts from the virus. Absent actual economic metrics, perhaps investors are staying the course—or at least staying optimistic.

China’s first-quarter GDP growth will be closely watched. Any official reading other than a negative growth figure could raise eyebrows. Scott Miner, chief investment officer of Guggenheim Partners, suggested on CNBC that first-quarter GDP could be as low as negative 6 percent on an annualized basis.

Manufacturing and Transportation

So far, there have been some anecdotal and economically indicative clues that China is experiencing an economic collapse.

At a macro level, the transportation industry is reeling. The Baltic Capsize Index, which tracks the cost of freight shipping for dry bulk commodities, fell to its lowest level on record in the first week of February. The index, a key indicator of global trade, had been falling since December but cratered during January and early February, mainly driven by excessive shipping capacity as a result of the virus outbreak.

The energy industry is also bracing for the slowest oil demand growth in a decade—chiefly driven by China’s economic stoppage. The International Energy Agency sharply revised downward its 2020 projections last week.

On the ground, the picture comes into better focus.

So far, there have been some anecdotal and economically indicative clues that China is experiencing an economic collapse.



An investor sits in front of a screen showing stock market movements in a stock firm in Fuyang, east China’s Anhui province.

Daily economic levels can be observed with power consumption and passenger traffic. As of Feb. 13, or 20 days after the Lunar New Year, daily power coal consumption across China is approximately 50 percent lower in 2020 than 2016–2019 averages during the same time frame, according to research by investment bank Morgan Stanley. Daily coal consumption is a good proxy for electricity usage and manufacturing levels, a live indicator of economic activity.

Reduction in daily nationwide passenger traffic data is even more stark. On Feb. 13, or 35 days after the Lunar New Year travel rush, passenger traffic volume remains only 25 percent of levels observed a year ago, according to Morgan Stanley. Traffic congestion is typically an indicator of commerce and transportation activity, and at 25 percent of normal levels, this suggests that much of China is on lockdown and economic output remains halted.

Real Estate and Consumers

The health of the real estate industry—a barometer of household wealth—is also in a slump. Property sales levels in 30 major Chinese cities are only 10 to 20 percent of the levels seen from 2017 to 2019, according to data from Capital Economics. This is putting major pressure on a sector already slowing since last year.

Bloomberg reported that the southern city of Shenzhen, which has more than 22 million people, has banned home sales altogether, “as long as city authorities have the alert level set at the highest response.” And in Beijing, usually a hot property market, less than four units per day were transacted. Some developers have turned to virtual showings and online sales models.

Assuming depressed levels of sales activity will continue for as long as the risk of the virus remains elevated, this could severely damage the real estate industry. Highly leveraged developers sitting on unsold inventory could be at risk of insolvency.

January also saw a massive uptick in inflation. Constrained supply chains have crimped the supply of goods. Department and grocery stores in hard-hit areas are experiencing low inventory levels due to transportation restrictions as well as production stoppages around the country. Store shelves are sitting empty and prices are high.

Official readings from the National Bureau of Statistics reported that the consumer price index in January soared to 5.4 percent annually, the highest level in eight years. Food prices typically surge right before the Lunar New Year and then ease. But in 2020, China’s Food Wholesale Price Index has trended higher even after the holiday period, running about 5

percent higher than 2019 levels and 10 percent above 2018 levels, according to data from Capital Economics.

Even e-commerce giant Alibaba Group Holdings, a symbol of indefatigable Chinese consumer might, issued warnings regarding the virus’s impact to the company’s financials and consumer demand.

“The epidemic has negatively impacted the overall China economy, especially the retail and service sectors,” Alibaba CFO Maggie Wu said during a conference call with Wall Street analysts on Feb. 13. The company also outlined measures—mostly through its lending arm, Ant Financial—to support small and medium-sized enterprises, which have been most severely impacted by the virus outbreak.

Downside Risks Not Priced In

Alibaba CEO Daniel Zhang called the virus a “black swan event,” which describes an unforeseen and devastating market occurrence.

So far, onshore financial markets have largely brushed off virus worries. Investors appear to be stuck in a state of complacency, either believing the outbreak will end shortly or expecting Beijing regulators to flood the market with stimulus should the situation worsen.

Surprisingly, the Shanghai Composite Index, China’s benchmark equity index, is down only about 5.5 percent since Jan. 1. The smaller and technology-focused Shenzhen Component Index is even up on the year, rising 2.6 percent since Jan 1.

Stock analysts are disseminating tips on which stocks to buy “when the coronavirus is contained.” Traders speculate that China’s so-called “national team” of government-backed asset management companies and brokerage firms would flood the market with massive buy orders should stocks turn south.

“Investors who missed last year’s bull run are taking advantage of the correction to get onto the ride,” Huang Wei, a former trader who recently set up a forum on WeChat to offer stock tips to retail investors, told Reuters recently. WeChat is China’s most popular social media platform.

After all, the 2003 SARS outbreak was barely a blip on the radar for Chinese stocks.

But is this exuberance rational? The picture will get clearer when corporations announce first-quarter 2020 earnings. But compared with the barren streets, highways, and transportation hubs, China’s bustling stock market seems unusual. But perhaps it’s not so hard to understand. After numerous past bailouts and stimulus measures, Beijing has spoiled today’s investor community. Their Pavlovian responses today reflect that complacency.

Chinese Regime Hints of Political Infighting as Leader Xi Jinping Criticises Officials for Failing to Contain Virus

NICOLE HAO

Chinese leader Xi Jinping recently called out Hubei officials for not following his instructions to stem the new coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Previously, local officials complained that they were unable to disclose details about the outbreak because the central government did not allow them.

Meanwhile, state-run media published, then quickly deleted, a report about Gao Fu, current director of China's Center for Disease Control and Prevention, being disciplined for violating Party rules.

The media outlet has since published an apology, but the unusual move attracted netizens' attention.

Analysts say these are the latest indication that there are Party disputes over how to handle the current outbreak.

There are several factions within the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Xi is a leader of one faction, while former leader Jiang Zemin leads another. A number of officials belong to a faction loyal to former leader Hu Jintao. Some insiders have also claimed that premier Li Keqiang is at odds with Xi's faction in recent years.

Faction Conflicts

Chinese state-run Xinhua recently published a speech by Xi on Feb. 3, addressing the Politburo Standing Committee—the Party's top decision-making body—on the virus response.

Xi criticized Party leaders in Hubei Province.

“On Jan. 7, I gave my request to prevent the new coronavirus at the Politburo Standing Committee...On Jan. 22, I clearly asked Hubei Province to comprehensively and strictly control people's movement to the outside,” Xi said, according to the Feb. 15 report.

Wuhan City announced that the city's public transportation would be suspended indefinitely on Jan. 23.

Xinhua publishing Xi's speech 12 days after the event is broadly understood as an explanation for why



(Left) Chinese President Xi Jinping (C) attends a meeting in Burma on Jan. 18, 2020.

(Right) A man wears a protective mask as he walks dragging luggage on Yangtze River Bridge in Wuhan, Hubei province, China on Feb. 13, 2020. Flights, trains and public transport including buses, subway and ferry services have been closed for 22 days.



Who decided to lock down the city to contain the virus's spread: this is the conflict between Hubei senior officials and Xi.

Tang Jingyuan, U.S.-based China affairs commentator

Xi dismissed two top Party officials in Hubei Province—provincial Party secretary Jiang Liangchao and Wuhan Party secretary Ma Guoqiang—on Feb. 13.

Since Jan. 27, Hubei senior officials claimed in public statements that they reported the outbreak to the central government, but Beijing did not allow them to release the data. Wuhan mayor Zhou Xianwang also said the decision to lock down the city on Jan. 23 was made by him and Ma.

“Who decided to lock down the city to contain the virus's spread: this is the conflict between Hubei senior officials and Xi,” said U.S.-based China affairs commentator Tang Jingyuan.

He added that there was another hint of disagreements between central and local authorities: Beijing has asked all provinces except Hubei to reopen their businesses, but each local government has launched different rules.

On Feb. 14, Shanghai residents shared an official notice from different local governments that no non-local people and vehicles are allowed to enter or stay in the city. All the people and vehicles who en-

tered before must leave Shanghai as soon as possible.

Chinese businesses rely on migrant workers. By not allowing non-Shanghai natives to stay in the city, migrant workers are effectively shut out, and most businesses would not be able to operate normally.

On the same day, Beijing requested all people from other areas of China must be quarantined for 14 days before he or she can go to work.

Tang commented that these rules show local governments don't follow Xi's orders.

Report About Gao Fu

Gao, 58, earned his Ph.D. in biochemistry from Oxford University in the U.K. in 1994. He studied and worked in the U.K., Canada, and United States for 13 years.

After returning to China via a recruitment program called Hundred Talents Program in 2004, Gao was promoted from university professor to current CDC director; academician at the country's top research institute, the Chinese Academy of Sciences; and dean of the Savaid Medical School in Beijing.

Gao made several public statements about the COVID-19 outbreak

that have later been proven false, angering many Chinese netizens.

On Dec. 31, 2019, Gao said that the new disease “can be controlled and prevented,” and assured the public that it “won't be transmitted from human to human.”

On Jan. 22, Gao said the evidence collected by medical teams showed that COVID-19 would not infect children and young people easily.

Scientists and Chinese authorities have since confirmed that the disease is contagious, while doctors at a Wuhan hospital confirmed that pregnant mothers may pass the infection to their unborn children, after a newborn tested positive for COVID-19.

Tang analyzed that there is a possibility that Gao could really be investigated as the state-run media initially reported. “It happens frequently that the Chinese Communist Party officials were ‘shuanggui’ [an internal disciplinary process] after some leaked information,” Tang said.

Based on Xi's speech, the leader had asked officials to prevent the virus on Jan. 7. “Whether Gao followed Xi's instruction remains a question,” Tang said.

Chinese Censors Deploy ‘Wartime Propaganda’ Amid COVID-19 Outbreak

CONTINUED FROM A1

China, to regulate internet speech continuously, 24/7.

The trolls, through technological and manual screening, had identified as many as 606,800 posts online with “sensitive or harmful information,” it said.

Their approach, it said, was to “timely dispel the online rumors” and “strike powerful blows offline.”

As of Feb. 14, the online censors had deleted as many as 54,000 such “rumors,” and had social media influencers write nearly 400 commentary articles to shape the narrative.

The regime's propaganda efforts, the report said, should be directed toward promoting the effects of officials' outbreak control measures and the “moving deeds” of volunteers, community workers, and the police.

Some professional “internet commentators” had also made 400,000 comments to “counter the negative public opinions,” according to the document.

Posts mourning whistleblower doctor Li Wenliang, who died of the virus he was warning about in December, quickly disappeared from the internet in the hours after the news of his death was first announced. “I want free speech,” a phrase that became trending on Chinese social media following his death, was also swiftly erased.

Wuhan citizen journalists Fang Bin and Chen Qiushi also recently disappeared after posting regular videos online highlighting the se-

Chinese security guards patrol on a shopping area in Beijing amid the COVID-19 outbreak on Feb. 17, 2020.

The Chinese regime has made the suppression of information about the virus a priority.



verity of the outbreak.

As of Feb. 11, over 2,500 people had signed a joint online petition expressing anger over Li's death and criticizing the government for suppressing free speech during the outbreak. Several co-signees were subsequently summoned by local police. At least one was detained.

The department has also set up 11 work groups for the purpose of “wartime propaganda” work. The groups were communicating daily with propaganda officials from the central government to “coordinate public opinion” in real-time on issues “online and offline,” “inside the country and overseas,” it stated.

Ousting Local Reporters

According to the leaked report, at

least 60 reporters from 33 overseas news agencies came to Wuhan after the coronavirus outbreak began earlier this year. However, at least 47 of them agreed to leave, through the department's “communication and persuasion.”

As of the evening of Feb. 14, only five non-mainland outlets had reporters in Hubei.

To “lead overseas media to objectively report on the outbreak information,” the department has set up an international language section and have published 200 pieces on the outbreak from official channels in seven languages, the document said.

On Jan. 14, a group of reporters from at least four Hong Kong media were taken to a police station located within a hospital in Wuhan

after trying to interview patients, according to local media.

The police searched their belongings and asked them to delete the videos taken around the hospital. They were only released after 1 1/2 hours of interrogation.

Censorship Overdrive

The Chinese regime has made the suppression of information about the virus a priority.

At a Feb. 3 meeting, the Chinese Communist Party's Politburo Standing Committee, the top decision-making body, called for authorities to “strengthen internet and media control.”

This has filtered down to local authorities cracking down on people for “spreading rumors” on the internet about the outbreak.

Chinese state-run media have warned people not to “spread fake information” about the coronavirus, lest they be in violation of China's Criminal Law.

A provision of that law states that anyone found fabricating and spreading false information on an epidemic, disaster, or police activity, can be sentenced to three to seven years in prison.

Washington-based nonprofit Chinese Human Rights Defenders documented 254 cases of arrests between Jan. 22 and Jan. 28, in which Chinese citizens were punished for “spreading rumors” relating to the virus. The forms of penalty included fines, verbal warnings, and forced confessions.

OPINION

ANTHONY WALLACE/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



People in Hong Kong wear protective masks on Feb. 3, 2020.

China Hobbles Efforts Toward COVID-19 Virus Vaccine

JAMES GORRIE



As the threat of an emerging pandemic grows, medical experts are already predicting that COVID-19, the new coronavirus, will likely reach every nation on the planet.

They also warn that the longer the outbreak continues, the higher the risk there is for a global pandemic that could threaten millions of lives.

A Mutating Threat to Humanity

In other words, the longer the virus goes unchecked, the more difficult it will become to find a vaccine. The reasoning is simple but devastating.

Like a flu virus, COVID-19 has the ability to rapidly change its form—this is known as the mutation rate. As mutations occur, new strains of the COVID-19 virus can develop over time.

Those new strains would be both familiar with the human immune system and yet foreign to the human immune system at the same time. The process is deadly logical. As the virus infects victims, it gathers more information about the human immune system. The virus then mutates so that it becomes more adaptable to the immune systems of new victims.

That adaptation process makes the virus even more deadly. In fact, more than 20 strains of the virus have been found in infected people.

That's why and how COVID-19 can potentially become even more contagious and with higher fatality rates than the current strain. Plus, with an asymptomatic incubation period of up to 24 days, the potential for a greater and deadlier pandemic is all but assured.

Time, therefore, is not on our side.

Politicizing the Outbreak

The world may be facing a global threat that should neither be ignored nor politicized. And yet, that's exactly what's happening. The Chinese Communist Party

KEVIN FRAYER/GETTY IMAGES



ANTHONY WALLACE/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



▲ (Above) A medical worker wearing a protective suit checks his mask as he waits near a residential estate in Hong Kong on Feb. 11, 2020.

(Top) A Chinese police officer wears a protective mask as he stands guard at Beijing railway station before the Lunar New Year in Beijing on Jan. 22, 2020.

(CCP) is making the search for a cure to the COVID-19 virus more difficult than it already is or needs to be.

For one, even though the disease has become an outbreak in a matter of weeks, Beijing is still withholding critical information from its own people as well as the rest of the world.

As Jennifer Nuzzo from the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security recently pointed out, "As countries are trying to develop their own control strategies, they are looking for evidence of whether the situation in China is getting worse or better."

However, with Beijing manipulating the numbers of both infected and fatalities, no one can say for certain if the disease has slowed, as the Chinese authorities contend. It may simply be one more false effort to save face.

Needless to say, it is vitally important that all information about the virus itself as well as the status of the outbreak be made available to the proper and most capable medical authorities around the world. But information gaps persist. Researchers are still unclear on the contagion level—known as the R0 rate—of COVID-19 due to incomplete information.

Data gaps in information from Chinese authorities also make it difficult to get an accurate model of the outbreak, which would help predict the spread of the disease going forward.

Getting Almost the Best Help?

On a positive note, Beijing has finally invited scientists and doctors from the World Health Organization (WHO) to China to help solve this very urgent situation. And yet, for more than a month, China refused the offer by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to help with the outbreak.

Why exclude one of the most knowledgeable resources on the planet? Does the CCP fear that it will appear incompetent? Too late. That fact spread quicker than the virus.

The CCP's political pride is not only a main cause of the spread of the disease, but also a luxury that neither China nor the rest of the world can afford.

More Unknowns

As it currently stands, much of the information from the CCP leadership and health authorities is incomplete, confusing, or contradictory.

For example, Chinese authorities have lately suggested that countries resume air travel to China and claimed that they are getting ahead of the outbreak.

But given the deteriorating situation on the ground, and Beijing's dissembling, how could anyone know or believe anything that the CCP says, to be true?

For instance, it isn't known whether COVID-19 is a seasonal virus, more active in winter than in warmer months, or not. If it is, that

As mutations occur, new and even more deadly strains of the COVID-19 virus can develop over time. Time, therefore, is not on our side.

would give the scientific community more time. But no one yet knows.

Another theory postulates that men are more susceptible to the virus. Is that because more men in China smoke? That's one possibility, but it remains unverified.

Or more importantly, is the virus a product of bioengineering, or did it come from wild animals kept in the open market in Wuhan? If the former, a vaccine may already exist or partially exist within that same Chinese laboratory. In either case, correct information would be helpful.

But there doesn't seem to be any definitive answers to these and many other questions coming from Beijing. As former CDC chief Tom Frieden noted recently, "We still don't have very basic information."

If we are going to get ahead of this disease, if we want to minimize the potential suffering and tragedy caused by the expanding COVID-19 outbreak, the one thing that must not be quarantined is information. Everything about it, from its origins to its mutations to studying survivors' immune systems, must be made available.

Fortunately, there is some good news. Biolabs and pharmaceutical companies around the world are working together, sharing information, to develop a vaccine.

The CCP should follow their example.

James Gorrie is a writer and speaker based in Southern California. He is the author of "The China Crisis."

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

Lillian Fan, Publisher
Jasper Fakkert, Editor-in-Chief
Melanie Sun, Regional Editor
Gigi Fu, Layout Artist

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.

CONTACT US

Australian Epoch Times Ltd.
49A Treacy St,
Hurstville NSW 2220
02 8988 5600

Advertising
ad@epochtimes.com.au

Subscriptions
subscribe@epochtimes.com.au

General Inquiries
info@epochtimes.com.au

Send Us Your News
press@epochtimes.com.au



SUBSCRIBE TODAY

Get the independent news you won’t find anywhere else.

Subscribe and get the insights only The Epoch Times can provide, delivered to your door every week.

ReadEpoch.com.au
02 8988 5600

SPECIAL SERIES

How the Specter of Communism Is Ruling Our World

The Communist Economic Trap

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

Chapter Nine (Cont.)

4. Public Ownership and the Planned Economy: Systems of Slavery

Heaven created man, endowed him with wisdom and strength, and decreed that his life would be one in which he would reap rewards for his labor—and thus be able to obtain enough to secure his life. As the Declaration of Independence says, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

Naturally, these rights include the power to possess and allocate property and assets.

In contrast, Marx stated in “The Communist Manifesto,” “In this sense, the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property.” This is a reference to public ownership, under which a planned economy is a mandatory aspect. The essence of this system violates Heaven’s principles, runs contrary to human nature, and is a form of slavery.

a. Public Ownership: A Totalitarian Yoke

The American anti-communist pioneer Fred Schwartz told the following joke in his book “You Can Trust the Communists ... to Be Communists,” about an interviewer who visits first a Soviet automobile plant and then an American one:

“Who owns this factory?”
‘We do,’ they replied.
‘Who owns the land on which it is built?’
‘We do.’
‘Who owns the products of the factory when they are made?’
‘We do.’
Outside in a corner of a large park were three battered jalopies. The visitor asked, ‘Who owns those cars out there?’
They replied, ‘We own them, but one of them is used by the factory manager, one is used by the political commissar, and the other is used by the secret police.’

The same investigator came to a factory in America, and said to the workers, ‘Who owns this factory?’
‘Henry Ford,’ they replied.
‘Who owns the land on which it is built?’
‘Henry Ford.’
‘Who owns the products of the factory when they are made.’
‘Henry Ford.’
Outside the factory was a vast park filled with every make and variety of modern American automobile. He said, ‘Who owns all those cars out there?’
They replied, ‘Oh, we do.’”

In name, public ownership means that the wealth of a country is shared by all citizens, but in practice, it means that the privileged class monopolizes resources and looks after itself first.

This story vividly displays the consequences and differences between systems of private and public ownership. Under the system of public ownership, resources and the gains from labor are nationalized. Gone are the mechanisms that motivate individual enthusiasm,

striving, and innovation, as with the sense of responsibility conveyed by personal property rights. In name, public ownership means that the wealth of a country is shared by all citizens, but in practice, it means that the privileged class monopolizes resources and looks after itself first.

The ultimate factor in economic growth is people. Public ownership chokes people’s vitality and motivation to be productive. It undermines morale, promotes inefficiency, and causes waste. From Soviet collective farms to the people’s communes in China—including failed collectivization in Cambodia and North Korea—the system of public ownership brings starvation wherever it goes. For example, a man-made famine in China killed tens of millions of people.

Private ownership accords with the principle that man works for his bread. Collective ownership, on the contrary, violates this principle.

Both evil and kindness exist in mankind. Private property allows man to develop his kind nature and encourages labor and thrift. Collective property, however, encourages the evil in human nature, promoting jealousy and sloth.

Friedrich Hayek writes that the growth of civilization relies on social traditions that put private property at the center. Such traditions spawned the modern capitalist system and its attendant economic growth. This is an organic, self-generating order that does not require a government for its action. Yet communist and socialist movements seek to exert control over this spontaneously arising order—what Hayek called their “fatal conceit.”

If private ownership and freedom are inseparable, then the like applies to collective ownership, wed as it is to dictatorship and suppression. The system of collective ownership nationalizes resources, degrades economic productivity, and turns people into the country’s servants and slaves. All people must obey the commands of the central party, and any ideas and voices inconsistent with the regime can be shut down through economic punishments. People are then powerless against state intervention.

Thus, the elimination of private ownership and the establishment of collective ownership inevitably leads to totalitarian outcomes. Collectivism is a yoke affixed on the necks of man by a totalitarian state. Freedom is stolen—including the freedom to be kind—and everyone is forced to follow the moral commands of the communist regime.

Some people have said that power must not be privatized and wealth must not be collectivized, or else disaster awaits mankind. That is indeed true.

b. Economic Planning: Destined to Fail

Under the planned economy, an entire society’s production, allocation of resources, and distribution of products are based on a plan established by the state. This is completely different from the organic planning of firms and individuals.

The planned economy has natural and obvious defects. First, it requires the collection of a huge amount of data in order to make reasonable arrangements for production. For a country, especially a modern one with a large population, the amount of relevant information is unimaginably large. For instance, the former Soviet Union’s commodity pricing bureau had to set prices for 24 million different kinds of goods. Such calculations are impossible.

The complexity and variability of society and people cannot be solved through a unified planned economy. Even with the use of modern big data and artificial intelligence, human thoughts cannot possibly be inputted as variables, and so the system will always be incomplete.

Economist Ludwig von Mises discuss-

es the relationship between socialism and the market in his article “Economic Calculation in the Socialist Commonwealth.” He notes that without a real market, a socialist society won’t be able to make reasonable economic calculations. Thus, the distribution of resources cannot be rationalized, and the planned economy will fail.

Public ownership chokes people’s vitality and motivation to be productive. It undermines morale, promotes inefficiency, and causes wastage.

Second, economic planning requires coercive state control of resources. This ultimately requires absolute power, quotas, and commands. Moreover, an economics of power is first of all beholden to politics, rather than to the actual needs of the people. When the requirements of the real world fail to conform to state planning, then state power tramples on natural economic trends, thus causing the mass misallocation of capital and all its attendant problems. The planned economy uses the limited power and wisdom of government to play God. This is doomed to fail.

Economic planning and high-pressure politics are inseparable. Because national plans are inevitably flawed, when there are problems, the plans will be challenged both inside and outside government. Those in power then feel that their authority is being challenged and will fight back with political pressure and purges. Mao Zedong, for instance, ignored the laws of economics and forced through the Great Leap Forward, resulting in a three-year famine that caused tens of millions of deaths. This led to yet further challenges for him, which is a key reason he later launched the Cultural Revolution.

The disastrous effects of the planned economy and collective ownership have been fully exhibited in the current conditions of Chinese state-owned enterprises. In recent years, a large number of Chinese SOEs have stopped or slowed production, suffered losses every year, or become insolvent. They rely on government subsidies and rolling bank credit to maintain operations. They’ve essentially become parasites on the national economy, and many are widely known as “zombie enterprises.” Among the 150,000 state-owned enterprises in China, with the exception of state monopolies in the lucrative sectors of petroleum and telecommunications, other SOEs report minimal profits and suffer serious losses, serially destroying capital. By the end of 2015, their total assets accounted for 176 percent of GDP, debt accounted for 127 percent, and earnings accounted for only 3.4 percent. Some economists believe that zombie enterprises have essentially hijacked China’s economy.

Meanwhile, economic planning deprives people of their freedom and forces the state to look after them. The essence of the project is about turning people into slaves and machines. All aspects of people’s lives come under the control of the state, which locks people in an invisible prison, seeks to abolish free will, and alters the parameters of human life laid down by God. This is yet another manifestation of the communist revolt against God and natural law.

See next edition for the next installment.

It's 2020: Why Are We Equating the Objectification of Women With Empowerment?

NICOLE RUSSELL

It's 2020, and by now we realize women can do and be many things—smart, sexy, brave, beautiful, courageous, intelligent, empathetic, hard-working ...

Yet the Superbowl halftime show, which featured Jennifer Lopez and Shakira, two attractive, talented female singers dancing on stage in skimpy clothing and with a stripper's pole, demonstrated that many still view women as one-dimensional beings who will remain objectified, unempowered, and sexualized.

Of course, the Superbowl halftime show is known for its gratuitous, but entertaining, shows. At last year's show, a tattooed Adam Levine of Maroon 5 walked around shirtless and jammed to his hit songs. While I expected to see two female stars singing, dancing, and yes, even being super sexy, I didn't quite expect Sunday evening's number.

Sunday night's show had a particularly sexual vibe to it. Lopez performed part of her number on a stripper's pole, an homage to her blockbuster hit "Hustlers," while wearing little clothing and baring her behind for the viewers at home. Shakira opened on the floor in a dance that seemed explicitly sexual: grinding, grabbing herself, and emulating sexual positions.

The immediate reaction from fans was that the show was not just sexy and entertaining but a show of female empowerment, especially because the women who performed are over 40 and Latina.

The Superbowl halftime show might seem empowering to women because they're doing what men do in the workplace: using their strengths, such as they are—in this case, their ability to titillate, sex appeal, and femininity—to gain money,



(L-R) Shakira and Jennifer Lopez perform onstage during the Pepsi Super Bowl LIV Halftime Show at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami, Florida, on Feb. 2, 2020.

respect, and recognition.

Unfortunately, I don't think this is empowering; it's objectifying. We are now decades beyond the point in time when women decried the use of sexual prowess to gain power, a voice, or wealth. This is a generation or more beyond the point when many women felt like using their sexuality at a strip club was a last resort, not their first option.

If women want to get on stage, grab their privates, shake their nearly bare behinds, and mimic sexual acts, let's call it what it is: Sexy—because sex sells! Let's not, as a collective, feminist, progressive society delude ourselves and call it empowering.

Anything done in public can and should be both lauded or criticized publicly. As much as I believe in the beauty of sexuality, the power of sex permeates wherever its focus lies: In this case, Lopez and Shakira have managed to co-opt something for the public that should remain private.

Not only that, but this contradicts the typical progressive message that men and women are equals and have little gender differences: This show took the differences between men and women and emblazoned them all over the stage in fireworks, sequined dresses, and hundreds of dancing extras.

There's another flawed element to

the halftime show, and that's the message it sent to men and women about relational and even workplace dynamics.

I'm honestly surprised that, in a society two years beyond the powerful #MeToo movement that succeeded in stripping abusive, powerful men from their perches because they took advantage of women verbally, physically, and sexually, SuperBowl officials and the network thought this would be an appropriate or important time to roll out two women of color in scanty clothes behaving like sex objects.

Overt sexuality or revealing clothing do not invite or justify abuse by all means, but they do send a message, do they not? If not, why bother? If so, what is that message?

True feminism sought to support women's equality, to encourage them to find and speak their voice, and to rise to a challenge because they were equal in worth and merit, despite differences. Although feminists say society has advanced, the Superbowl halftime performance showed modern feminism has regressed: We are back to relegating women to a single power grab—sex, not beauty, art, intelligence, or creativity.

This is not only the pure objectification of women in the name of empowerment but it's also a step backward in the right direction.

Nicole Russell is a freelance writer and mother of four. Her work has appeared in *The Atlantic*, *The New York Times*, *Politico*, *The Daily Beast*, and *The Federalist*. Follow her on Twitter @russell_nm.

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



神韻晚會 2020 SHEN YUN

5000 Years of Civilisation Reborn



NEW YORK-BASED SHEN YUN RETURNS WITH AN ENTIRELY NEW 2020 PRODUCTION
ACCOMPANIED BY LIVE ORCHESTRA *Secure Your Seats Now!*

SYDNEY 4-22 March Capitol Theatre	CANBERRA 24-25 March Canberra Theatre	MELBOURNE 27 March - 5 April Arts Centre Melbourne
--	--	---

BOOK NOW!

ShenYun.com

Presented by Falun Dafa Association of Australia, Inc.

Egypt Beyond the Pyramids

In 2018, more than 11 million tourists visited Egypt, and the World Tourism Organization recently ranked it as the world’s fastest-growing travel destination.

See B2

FRED J. ECKERT



RIDO/SHUTTERSTOCK



Gearing Down to an Early Death?

Exercise is important as you age, and downsizing your activity level can shorten your life.

See B5

LIFE

THE EPOCH TIMES

AFRICA STUDIO/SHUTTERSTOCK



THE UNIQUE STRUGGLE OF
Forgiving Yourself

Many of us either overlook our shortcomings or believe they are all that we are

CONAN MILNER

Forgiveness is the release of resentment in exchange for compassion. It is a highly regarded pursuit in some religions, and research shows that it can improve our mental and physical health.

But the benefits don’t come easy. Just try genuinely loving your enemies and praying for your persecutors. When resentment is tied to pain and disappointment, releasing it can seem impossible.

The same struggles still apply when it comes to forgiving ourselves. Many of us subject ourselves to a cruel inner dialogue for years over past mistakes. For some, even a tiny stumble can trigger a disproportionate helping of grief.

How could I have been so stupid? What was I thinking? How could I let this happen? What’s wrong with me?

It’s appropriate to feel some regret—the queasy twinge of guilt and shame plays a role in keeping us on the straight and narrow. But according to Dr. Gail Saltz,

a psychoanalyst, best-selling author, and psychiatry professor at the New York-Presbyterian Hospital Weill-Cornell Medicine, subjecting yourself to an endless tape loop of trash talk only makes things worse.

“There’s a reason why we do it, but taken too far it has other negative consequences,” Saltz said. “If you are angry, upset, or intensely guilty toward yourself, this can precipitate depression and anxiety.”

Being upset with ourselves is perhaps the worst feeling we can experience, and until the rift is resolved we have no escape from this inner battle. It’s a relationship we’re most compelled to fix, because our happiness, peace, and well being depends on it. We either forgive, or carry on a lifelong habit of self-hate.

But Saltz said forgiving ourselves can be even more challenging than forgiving others. Both types of forgiveness have the same basic goal of finding compassion. But self-forgiveness has a unique feature that can make compassion much harder to locate: a lack of space.

We have the option to forgive

people who are no longer in our lives. With time to reflect on our pain at a safe distance, the process of forgiveness may become a little easier. But we never have a chance to get away from ourselves.

Self-forgiveness is about owning up to what you did, accepting your faults, and working to avoid a repeat of the same mistake. But Saltz said that, because of the distorted perspective we often have of ourselves, we actually prevent this process from happening. Instead of really examining and acknowledging our behavior, we view it in a polarized way: either all good, or all bad. This causes us to either ignore the problem, or beat ourselves mercilessly with it.

“Many people have these rigid standards of themselves where they’re either perfect or awful,” Saltz said. “That’s why it’s hard for people to accept that they have made mistakes, to own their mistakes, and to be able to forgive themselves.”

The ease with which we forgive often boils down to the amount of malicious intent we perceive a mistake to contain. Deeds filled

Self-forgiveness is about owning up to what you did, accepting your faults, and working to avoid a repeat of the same mistake.

with malice are the most challenging cases, because they’re vicious and intentional. However, most mistakes are a mix of less volatile ingredients: accidents, poor judgment, laziness, bad timing, ignorance, and confusion.

When it comes to forgiving others, it’s a lot easier to let things go when we see the offender’s behavior as an honest mistake. If they show appropriate remorse, clarify misunderstandings, or convince you that they never meant the harm they caused, forgiveness can be a breeze.

But Saltz said people can become so attached to their self-flagellation that they’re never able to have this understanding with themselves.

“There are people who think, ‘If I don’t feel guilty all the time, than I risk becoming a terrible person. I have to keep paying this price every day. This is what keeps me in check,’” she said. “The vast majority of people who are saying these things to themselves may not be conscious of them. They’re stuck in a cycle of holding on to this.”

Continued on B4

Egypt Beyond the Pyramids

FRED J. ECKERT

“How could I have been so foolish as to have missed this until now?” I asked myself one day while 785 miles south of Cairo visiting Abu Simbel, down near the Sudan border, in an area where the ancient Egypt of the pharaohs once stood looking out toward the ancient Kingdom of Nubia.

As I looked up at four colossal sandstone statues of the great Egyptian King Ramses II seated upon his throne wearing a huge double crown signifying reign over both Upper and Lower Egypt, I felt the same way I felt the first time I gazed upon such wonders as the pyramids, the Great Wall of China, the Taj Mahal, or the effigies of Easter Island.

I had been to Egypt twice before, but only to Cairo to see the pyramids and explore the Egyptian Museum of Antiquities. Now I realize that just isn't enough. To truly appreciate Egypt, you have to look beyond the pyramids.

The four gigantic figures of Egypt's longest-reigning pharaoh tower 66 feet high and are set against a 108-foot-high façade recessed into the side of a cliff—an absolutely incredible work of ancient Egyptian art that rivals the pyramids. Not many steps away, a smaller temple is flanked by six 35-foot-high alternating statues of Ramses II and his favorite wife Queen Nefertari, portrayed as the goddess Hathor.

Both the larger Temple of Ramses II and the smaller Temple of Queen Nefertari were erected in the 13th century BC to impress and intimidate visitors traveling from southern Africa with this stunning display of the grandeur of Egypt and the greatness of Ramses II. Later abandoned, they remained buried for centuries until discovered in 1813 by a Swiss explorer who noticed their heads sticking out above the sand.

That last visit of mine had begun—as most visits to Egypt do—in Cairo, where I visited the Egyptian Museum of Antiquities and the pyramids, as well as the museum containing the funerary boat of the Pharaoh Cheops, whose nearby pyramid is the largest of the three pyramids on the Giza Plateau, the other two being the pyramids of Chephren and Mycerinus.

Given all the tumult of recent years, you might seriously hesitate



(Above) An Egyptian man who works in one of the temple shrines walks to his next task.

(Right) At the Great Temple of Abu Simbel, also known as the Temple of Ramses, four gigantic figures of Egypt's longest reigning pharaohs are set against a façade recessed into the side of a cliff.

about considering Egypt among your top choices to visit. But it has been making a surprising return to form. In 2018, more than 11 million tourists visited Egypt, and the World Tourism Organization recently ranked it as the world's fastest-growing travel destination.

No wonder: It's such an awesome feeling to look at the pyramids and the Great Sphinx, the 66-foot-high and 190-foot-long face of a man (a pharaoh, perhaps?) and body of a lion that guards the pyramids.

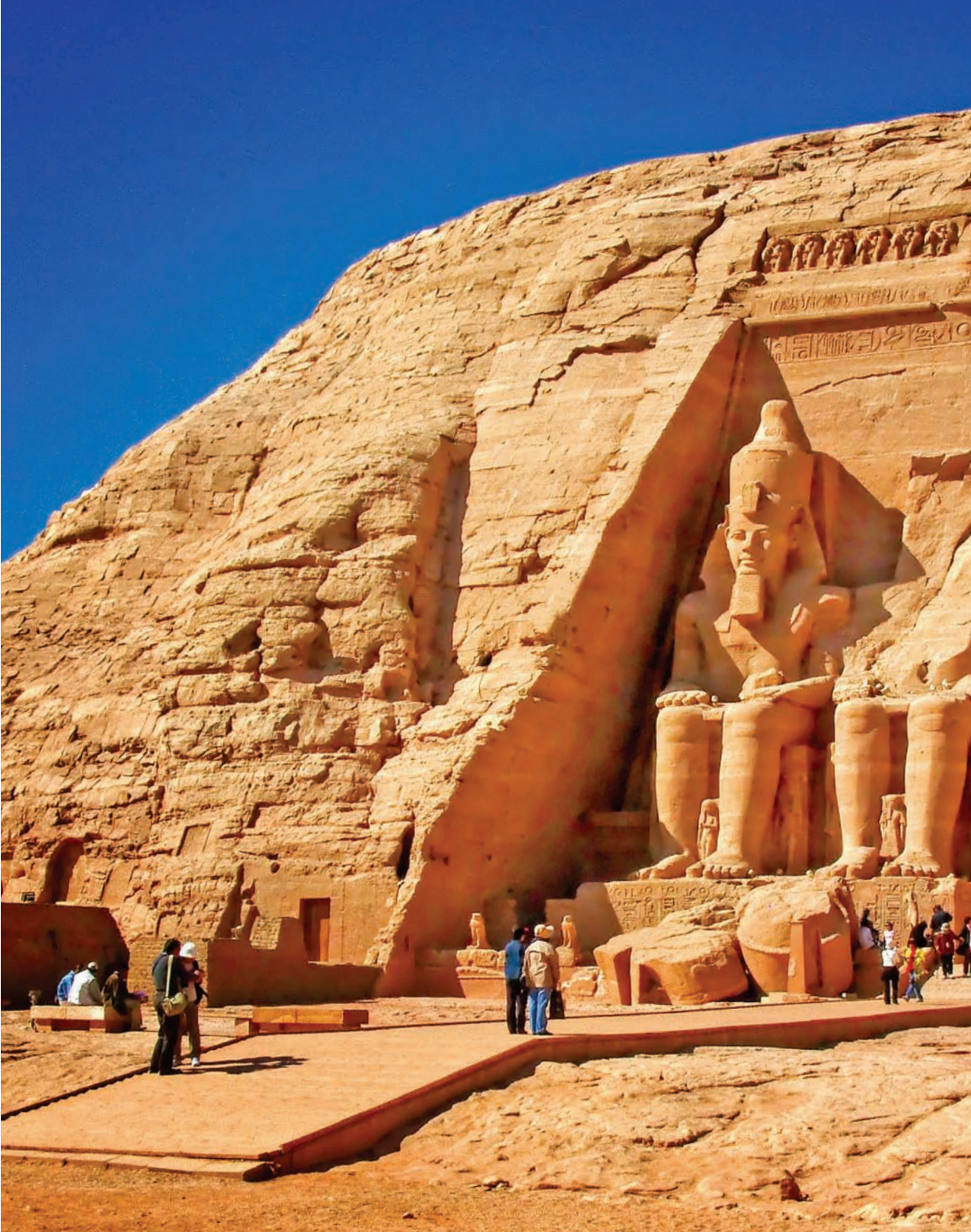
From Cairo, we flew 420 miles south to Luxor, the land of Thebes, capital of the New Kingdom. Here, succeeding pharaohs built two great temples along the east bank of the Nile.

The Temple of Luxor, entered through a façade marked by giant statues of the pharaoh who built its first pylon—Ramses II—is compact compared with the Temple of Karnak, which is located just under two miles away. The two are linked by a path flanked on each side with a row of sphinxes.

Karnak, not only more sprawling but also more convoluted, is best known for its Great Hypostyle Hall, with 137 gigantic columns and a footprint bigger than the area of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris.

Nearby, on the west bank of the Nile, we visited the Valley of the Kings (best known for the early 1900s discovery of the more than 3,000-year-old tomb of Tutankhamen) and the Valley of the Queens. Tombs of many rulers and family and nobility were carved deep into hard rock in these valleys by rulers who preferred that to pyramids.

Also in this area the magnificent Temple of Hatshepsut,

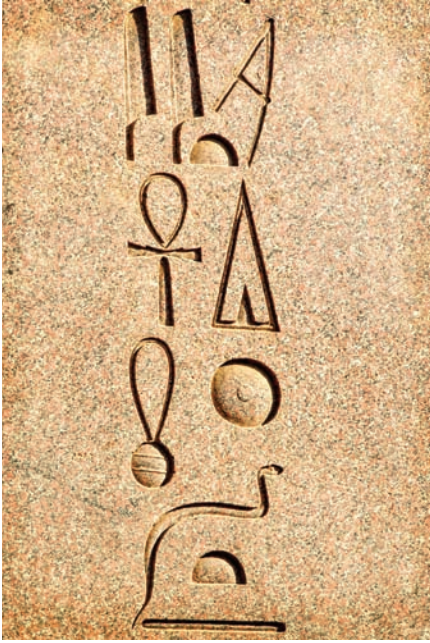


(Top left) A huge statue of Horus, ruler of the skies and the deity of the pharaohs, depicted with the head and body of a falcon at entrance to the Temple of Horus, sometimes called the Temple of Edfu after its location.

(Top right) A wall scene at the Temple of Karnak in Luxor. The best tours include a professional Egyptologist who brings history to life by explaining meanings of wall sketches and hieroglyphics.

(Bottom left) A felucca sailing on the Nile Nile; these distinctively Egyptian small sail boats are a common sight and are evocative of the Nile and Egypt.

(Bottom right) The Temple of Karnak, only two miles from The Temple of Luxor, is best known for its Great Hypostyle Hall, with 134 gigantic columns.



ancient Egypt's only female pharaoh, stands in a great amphitheater at the foot of a sheer limestone cliff; you'll also find the Colossi of Memnon, two faceless 60-foot-tall enthroned statues of Pharaoh Amenhotep III, one of which the ancient Greeks and Romans believed emitted a singing sound each dawn.

Cruising on the Nile

As interesting as monuments and ruins of the ancient world may be, there is also much to be said for the amenities of the modern world, which is why the best Egypt trips show you some of the best of way back then while making sure you experience some of the finest of right now.

How nice it was, upon returning from a great ancient site, to step aboard a fully air-conditioned boat and sail on to our next destination down the Nile River in a sort of floating five-star boutique hotel.

My cabin on Sun Boat IV—the ship has 36 cabins plus four suites—was unusually spacious, with full-width

floor-to-ceiling windows, a decent-sized ensuite bathroom, and a very comfortable bed. It was nicely decorated and included a color satellite TV and a direct-dial international telephone. Internet access was available on ship as well.

This beautifully refurbished ship, superbly furnished and decorated in contemporary style with Art Deco influence, has a chic lounge area and bar, a well-equipped gym, a good library, a small pool, two spacious sun decks, and a comfortable restaurant featuring picture windows so you can take in the scenery while dining.

Activities onboard included a slide presentation by our professional Egyptologist guide, an authentic Egyptian folklore performance, and a party for which we were each provided a souvenir “galabeya,” the traditional Egyptian outfit, to wear.

The food—a wide selection of American, Continental, International, and Egyptian—and the service were outstanding.

Between the Luxor area and As-



Giant statues of the Pharaoh Ramses II mark the entrance to the Temple of Luxor.

ALL PHOTOS BY FRED J. ECKERT



Riding a camel near the pyramids outside Cairo has long been popular with tourists.

wan, we stopped along the Nile to visit three additional sites. At Edfu, we visited the Temple of Horus, the falcon god. At Kom Ombo, we visited a Greco-Roman temple, where one half is dedicated to Horus the Elder, or Haroeris, a falcon god combined with a god of light whose eyes were the sun and the moon, while the other half is dedicated to the crocodile god Sobek. In the Aswan area, we visited the magnificent Philae Temple, site of an especially beautiful temple shrine honoring the greatest of Egyptian goddesses, Isis.

Wherever we went, our Egyptologist guide brought history to life by carefully explaining the significance of wall etchings and deciphering for us many of the things written in hieroglyphics.

Sometimes during the trip, I'd sit on the deck of Sun Boat IV, sipping coffee in the morning or having afternoon tea, pondering the wonders

I had seen thus far and soaking up views of the Nile. Small, distinctively Egyptian sailboats called feluccas sailed by carrying people or materials or even animals; a lone farmer toiled his small plot in the fertile soil near the shore of the great river; a youngster rode along a shore path on a donkey, swishing a palm branch against its side, making it move along faster—scenes surely no different from what I would have seen had I been there centuries earlier.

What a wonderful way to experience Egypt!

Fred J. Eckert is a retired U.S. ambassador and former member of Congress. His writings have appeared in many leading publications, including Reader's Digest and The Wall Street Journal. He is also an award-winning photographer whose collection of images spans all seven continents.

IF YOU GO

Information: A number of leading tour operators serve Egypt. My trip was through Abercrombie & Kent (AbercrombieKent.com).

Best time to go: During winter. It's extremely hot in Egypt in the summer.

Safety: Because tourism is such a crucial part of Egypt's economy, its government focuses keenly on security. It's still wise to take every precaution.

Travel tip for peace of mind: If you ever had to be medically evacuated while traveling, it could cost you tens

of thousands of dollars. Many plans that claim they cover this fall far short. My wife and I cover ourselves against this with membership in MedjetAssist (MedjetAssist.com).

Guidebooks: "DK Eyewitness Travel Guide: Egypt" was the only one I took with me on this trip. It is compact yet thorough. Its three-dimensional appearing maps and highlights at a glance made navigating sites on my own easy when I felt like wandering off to check out photographic opportunities. Their great photography makes these guidebooks nice mementos of your trip.

ALL PHOTOS BY THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION/RINA CHANDRAN



Residents sit in the historic neighborhood of Murad Khani in Kabul's Old City, Afghanistan, which has been restored as part of a plan to preserve cultural sites while boosting business opportunities, on Nov. 4, 2019.

Glories of Old Kabul Emerge From Decades of War—and Trash

KABUL —Kabul is rising from the ashes, shedding decades of war and mountains of trash to rebuild its pummeled culture.

It's no small job.

When restoration began in the Old City, some locals had moved their "front door" to the second storey, so high were the heaps of garbage piled against their homes.

Today, more than a decade on, dozens of mud and wood courtyard homes have been restored in the historic Murad Khani district, and locals throng its narrow alleys and weave through its once decimated bazaar of food stalls and shops.

In a city brimming with security checkpoints and newbuilds, old mosques, community bathhouses, and gardens have come back to life, drawing visitors and locals alike.

"The preservation of cultural heritage is important, and is far more valuable than converting Kabul into a sterile, glass-and-steel city," said Pietro Calogero, a professor of urban studies at the San Francisco State University.

"Monuments and cultural heritage are integral to the political effort to win the loyalty of the Afghan people."

Forty years of war, from the Soviet occupation of the 1980s to internal strife and Taliban rule, have destroyed much of Afghanistan's prized art, artifacts, and architecture.

When the Taliban government was ousted in 2001, restoring monuments and historic neighborhoods was a low priority, given the urgent need for essentials from roads to sewer lines.

So non-profits—including the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) and Britain's Turquoise Mountain Foundation (TMF)—stepped into the void.

"The restorations instilled a sense of pride in the local community," said AKTC general manager Luis Monreal, who credits the build with also creating homes, jobs, and tourism.

"Far more than a program of historic preservation, the work has sought to contribute to the lasting redevelopment of the economy, society, and culture of the country," he said.

"The government lacked the resources to restore damaged heritage structures, even if it recognized the merit in doing so," said Kabul Mayor Ahmad Zaki Sarfaraz.

"So we encouraged the participation of non-profits and others in preserving Afghan heritage, which is a way for the city to recover and boost its revenue potential also," he said.

In 2002, AKTC signed a deal to restore several buildings, monuments, parks, and other public spaces in Kabul.

In the Asheqan wa Arefan area, AKTC renovated more than two dozen homes, buildings, and bathhouses; it paved alleyways, built drains, and improved water supplies, Monreal said.

The project provided training and work for dozens of locals in conservation, along with old crafts such as carpet weaving, woodwork, glass-blowing, and tile making, he said.

"Afghan traditional cities and architecture are the product of centuries of development, which have a direct bearing on regional identity and sense of place," Monreal said.

"A rich cultural heritage in danger of being cast aside in the race to modernity after years of war was a significant element in reconstruction, not only of buildings, but awareness and professions that contribute to Afghan identity," he said.

When the Taliban government was ousted in 2001, restoring monuments and historic neighborhoods was a low priority.

Business Is Back

In Murad Khani, an 18th-century area just north of the Kabul river, TMF has restored some 50 houses, and set up an institute to train Afghans, women included, in woodwork, ceramics, calligraphy, jewelry, and glazed tiles.

Their output is sold by well-known global brands such as Kate Spade, Monsoon, and Asprey, according to its website.

At one courtyard house, the walls have been fortified and the restored woodwork gleams in the sun.

"It is good that it is being renovated and preserved for future generations," said Safia Ahmad, who says the house has been in her husband's family for generations.

Parts have been left for residents to fix, though, and Ahmad said they could not afford to repair the cracks in the walls and stop the ceiling from caving in.

"We will have to wait till we have the money to do it," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Elsewhere in the neighborhood, men sit outside the mosque chatting, and shoppers throng the food stalls and shops.

Some businesses moved in after restoration, said Murtaza Masoomi, who has run a silver jewelry shop for 20 years.

"More people come here now because the roads have been cleared and paved, there are more shops, and it is cleaner and nicer," he said.

"It is good for us, good for Kabul that more people are coming here. It means things are getting better."



A shopkeeper in the historic neighborhood of Murad Khani in Kabul's Old City, Afghanistan.

By Rina Chandran
From Reuters

THE UNIQUE STRUGGLE OF *Forgiving Yourself*

Continued from B1

A Need for Others

We pay a high price for chronic self-resentment. Feeling hurt and fundamentally broken, we withdraw from life. Over time, we wall ourselves off for fear of screwing something else up.

But this loner impulse can become an obstacle to resolving the relationship with ourselves.

Although self-forgiveness is primarily an internal struggle, Saltz said the way out typically involves other people. Sometimes the process involves an apology, or finding another way to resolve matters with someone we've hurt. For other instances, we just need an objective ear. A therapist, clergy person, close friend, or a family member we trust can provide the kind of clear and honest perspective we need to help us to really see our mistakes for what they are, and move on.

"It often requires some communication with someone else because it's hard to do it in the vacuum of your own head," Saltz said. "That objective other is really helpful in doing that. If you're stuck in a loop it's hard to break out of it on your own."

If sharing details of your inner struggle can help foster self-forgiveness, hiding them surely pushes this opportunity further

away. A few years ago, marketing strategist Steve Kurniawan suffered with a gambling addiction. This led to financial disaster, followed by an escalating series of lies told to family and friends to secure loans and conceal the extent of the damage.

As his life was falling apart, Kurniawan was devastated by what he had become, but he still couldn't stop the cycle.

"After the mistake, we see ourselves as some kind of a monster and hate ourselves," Kurniawan said. "We keep blaming ourselves and often it leads to a relapse of making the same mistake."

What ultimately allowed Kurniawan to move on was divulging his problem with those closest to him, and demonstrating that he was dedicated to change. In turn, the people he let in were able to acknowledge his improvement. The feedback let Kurniawan slowly see himself in a better light.

"I personally went through a long spiritual journey before being really able to forgive myself," Kurniawan said. "It's important to have a support system of people who can encourage you and affirm that you are not a monster."

Self Examination

Other people can provide a

sounding board, but the effort to examine our mistakes has to come from within.

If you're feeling like a failure, it can be comforting to remember that we all make mistakes. But Saltz said forgiveness is much more than just admitting that you're human. It's about understanding where your mistakes come from, working toward an effective way to deal with them, and dropping the useless self abuse routine that is holding the process in limbo.

"Insights come where the person says ... 'The mode I am processing this through makes sense in a perverse way, but in the light of day it is not helping me or my kids,'" Saltz said.

Although it's tempting to run from negative feelings about ourselves, Katie Wock, a certified life coach specializing in forgiveness, encourages us to embrace them.

"Don't push these negative feelings away. Open them up and explore them," Wock said. "Try to remember the event in its entirety and try to name the emotions associated. This is hard. It's going to make you cringe and feel gross, but it's worth the effort."

Once you have recalled the incident to the best of your ability, consider why it still makes you react. Does it trigger some sense of incompetence or unworthi-

It's important to have a support system of people who can encourage you and affirm that you are not a monster.

Steve Kurniawan

ness? If so, try to untangle it.

"Anger and shame are often intertwined," Wock said. "Most likely, the anger's only purpose is to cover the hurt you may feel when remembering this incident. Let it go. It is not helping you."

Finally, consider the deeper lesson to be learned, and take it to heart. For example, if you are haunted by a hurtful comment you said to someone in the past, consider if you still have a habit of making hurtful comments.

"Sometimes, our brains will keep bringing up events which we thought we have made peace. If this is the case, there may be something more to the situation we are not seeing," Wock said. "Try remembering it in a third person's point of view. Objectivity might support a breakthrough."

NEW AFRICA/SHUTTERSTOCK



Are You *Mentally Well Enough* for College?

A rising number of students are failing classes due to mental health issues, warns psychologist

NICHOLAS JOYCE

Last spring an 18-year-old college freshman who got straight A's in high school—but was now failing several courses—came to my office on the campus where I work as a psychologist.

The student was seeking a medical exception so that he could withdraw from the classes he failed instead of taking the F's and dragging down his GPA.

I evaluated the student and determined, based on information from prior visits, that the student was depressed. This condition was zapping the student's motivation and energy. Consequently, the student missed classes, didn't study much and ultimately did poorly in class. I completed a medical exception form to enable the student to withdraw from the classes he failed so that he could keep his GPA from plummeting.

This happens more than you may think. At the end of every semester, I complete dozens of these medical exception forms for students who failed their classes due to mental health reasons.

From my vantage point as a licensed psychologist who has worked in college mental health for a decade, this outcome points to what I believe is a bigger problem in higher education. And that is, at a time when parents and society are putting increased pressure on students to go to college in order to have a successful life, students' mental health and overall readiness for college—both of which have greatly diminished in recent years—are being overlooked.

Problems Are Prevalent

Anxiety and depression afflict as many as 1 in 5 college students, and students are seeking mental health treatment on campus at record levels.

For instance, in the 2017-2018 school year, 179,964 college students sought mental health treatment. Although it could be due to changes in reporting, the figure represents an increase over the prior two years, when 161,014 and 150,483, respectively, sought mental health treatment, according to the Center for Collegiate Mental Health.

In the case of the 18-year-old who was depressed, although the student struggled with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD, in high school, back then the student's life was managed by a parent who

made sure everything was done completely, correctly and on time. Now the student was on his own for the first time.

A Temporary Fix

For those who get medical exceptions in order to avoid a failing grade, the move might save their GPA. However, it also pushes their graduation date back and requires students to spend more time and money to complete their degree.



WAVEBREAKMEDIA/SHUTTERSTOCK

Without internal motivation, it's hard to stick with college when things get hard.

More importantly, getting a medical exception does not resolve the underlying issue that led to the failure in the first place. In my experience, many students who get the medical exception return the next semester without addressing their mental health needs and end up failing more courses.

In order to avoid being one of the many students who seek a medical exception due to mental illness, I would recommend that students and families focus on the following things:

1. Manage Your Life

Many students come to me after years of

having parents who basically manage their time for them. The parents set their schedule, checked to make sure their homework was done and ensured they got to places and various appointments on time.

This might have worked well to help the student succeed in high school. But when students no longer have that kind of support once they transition to college, they often have no idea how to do these things on their own.

Other students have had these conditions for years but had no idea they were treatable or preventable. The conditions then get exacerbated at college due to increased academic pressure.

For all these reasons, it is important for students to get help with mental health issues before college begins. Otherwise, students could end up failing a class and seeking a medical exception for a problem that could have been addressed before things got to that point. A medical exception may save your semester, but it's not a cure for what brought you there in the first place.

4. Don't Expect College to Fix Mental Health Issues

Many of my students tell me they had to wait to attend college to finally address their mental health needs. For these students, they were long aware of their condition, be it anxiety, depression or something else, but their family either did not believe in mental health treatment or denied that anything was wrong.

Other students have had these conditions for years but had no idea they were treatable or preventable. The conditions then get exacerbated at college due to increased academic pressure.

For all these reasons, it is important for students to get help with mental health issues before college begins. Otherwise, students could end up failing a class and seeking a medical exception for a problem that could have been addressed before things got to that point. A medical exception may save your semester, but it's not a cure for what brought you there in the first place.

know what they want to study or do for a living. They have no internal motivation for what they are doing, which contributes to the reason why they fail. Without internal motivation, it's hard to stick with college when things get hard.

3. Ask for Help

Most colleges and universities have a variety of academic and non-academic resources—from counseling to tutoring—to help students. Still, I meet many students who are so worried about how they will look if they ask for help that they won't take advantage of those services, such as free tutoring.

Students have to come to terms with the fact that they need help, and it's okay to ask for it, whether that be academic help or with mental health issues, or something else.

Anxiety and depression afflict as many as 1 in 5 college students.

Many of my students tell me they had to wait to attend college to finally address their mental health needs. For these students, they were long aware of their condition, be it anxiety, depression or something else, but their family either did not believe in mental health treatment or denied that anything was wrong.

Other students have had these conditions for years but had no idea they were treatable or preventable. The conditions then get exacerbated at college due to increased academic pressure.

For all these reasons, it is important for students to get help with mental health issues before college begins. Otherwise, students could end up failing a class and seeking a medical exception for a problem that could have been addressed before things got to that point. A medical exception may save your semester, but it's not a cure for what brought you there in the first place.

Nicholas Joyce is a psychologist at the University of South Florida Counseling Center. This article was first published on The Conversation.

Gearing Down to an Early Death?

Exercise is important as you age, and downsizing your activity level can shorten your life

SCOTT LEAR

It's well-documented that regular exercise is good for us. Being active can reduce your risk for a variety of diseases such as heart disease and cancer, as well as improving psychological well-being. Current guidelines from the World Health Organization recommend getting 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity per week. This works out to about 20 to 30 minutes per day of activity such as brisk walking, swimming, or playing tennis. It's not much of a time commitment, yet most people don't achieve it. Barely 20 percent of Canadians are considered physically active, according to national guidelines. And if things in Canada are the same as in the United States, this number likely hasn't changed in the past 15 years. The good news is that the very best time to start exercising is now. Research from the United States and the UK reveals that middle-aged and older adults can reduce their risk of death by becoming more physically active, irrespective of past physical activity levels.

Why We Exercise Less as We Age
Hidden among these statistics on physical activity is how much it decreases with age. As an adult, our activity usually peaks in our 20s. After that, there is a steady decline in vigorous activity (exercise that increases heart rate) throughout life, while light physical activity (such as easy walking) stays relatively constant until around 60 years of age and then declines. In addition, sedentary time increases. Many will argue that this is part of the aging process: we get weaker as we age and therefore we can't do as much vigorous activity. However, the physiological changes in our body with age likely only account for a small portion in the decline in activity. People who remain active see only a fraction of the decrease in fitness compared to their inactive counterparts. Much of this decrease in activity is due to conscious and unconscious changes in life circumstances. In our 20s, we're more likely to have been engaged in competitive and recreational sports, rely more on transit and active transportation as we can't afford our own car. Our entry-level



Every little bit helps throughout the day, not just the time you go to the gym or do a run.

jobs are more active, but as we progress up the career ladder, we're likely to spend more time sitting at a desk. **Downsizing to an Early Death?** Retirement is also another significant stage at which time most people experience a further decrease in activity. Even if one's job was sedentary, it usually provides a small amount of activity. So unless a conscious effort is made to keep some form of activity up in retirement, it will be lost. Many people also downsize their home in retirement, perhaps moving to a one-story apartment and losing their yard. While there may be good reasons for downsizing, it also results in further decreases in activity, as there are no stairs to take or yard to manage. Some people downsize purposely, thinking they should be doing less activity. As activity decreases, so do our fitness and strength levels. Because of those changes, we become even less capable of doing activities we did when we were younger, so we further decrease our activity, and the cycle continues. As a result, risk factors such as high blood pressure, obesity, and high blood

When it comes to exercise and health, what you have done lately is more important than what you did years or decades ago.

Scott Lear is a professor of health sciences at Simon Fraser University in Canada. This article was originally published on The Conversation.

sugar may appear, further increasing our risk for disease and early death. **It's Exercising Now That Matters** However, it's not all bad. Our body can also adapt to increasing activity. And when it comes to exercise and health, what you have done lately is more important than what you did years or decades ago. A study of more than 300,000 men and women aged 50 to 71 living in the United States divided participants into maintainers (high level of activity during leisure time throughout life), decreasers (high activity in teens and low in later life), and increasers (low activity in teens and high in later life). Of the three groups, maintainers had the lowest risk for early death, but the increasers had a similar benefit. The decreasers didn't fare much better than people who were inactive their entire life. When looking at total physical activity (activity during leisure combined with occupational activity), similar results were reported among 15,000 people in the United Kingdom. Again, what mattered most was how much activity people were doing most recently, not 25 years earlier. Those who increased their activity had the lowest risk for early death, even if their previous activity levels were high to begin with. In addition, people with heart disease or cancer also benefited to the same extent as those without.

Walk for 20 Minutes a Day Beginning, or even restarting, an exercise program in middle-age or later can be daunting. From time to time, we hear inspiring stories of people running their first marathon in their 70s, but these people are the exception, and not everyone needs (or wants) to be exercising that much. We demonstrated that as little as 20 minutes of brisk walking per day can result in a 20 percent reduction in early death over seven years. If you increase to 90 minutes of walking or 25 minutes of running, you get a 35 percent reduction. The greatest gains come from doing nothing to doing something. And every little bit helps throughout the day, not just the time you go to the gym or do a run. Taking the stairs, going for a walk on your lunch, or parking farther away all add up.

FOOD IS MEDICINE

Daily Probiotics Can Ease Depression and Anxiety

Brain-gut connection drives link between the microbes in our stomach and our state of mind

DEBORAH MITCHELL

Once upon a time, experts considered beneficial bacteria (probiotics) to be helpful in managing only physical symptoms and conditions, such as diarrhea, heartburn, and irritable bowel. The presence of these microorganisms in the gut environment has been shown to help restore balance to the intestinal tract and assist in keeping related functions running smoothly. Now, a growing number of studies are indicating that mental health is among those related functions. This line of thinking goes hand-in-hand with the growing evidence of the strong link between the brain and the gut, also known as the brain-gut connection or brain-gut axis. This link is the basis of the constant communication and reciprocity between these two areas of the body and the effect they have collectively on our health. **Probiotics for Mental Health** The majority of research thus far has looked at the impact of probiotics on the gut bacteria environment in animals, and the findings are promising. We have seen, for example, that providing probiot-

ics to mice, which modified the bacteria in their gut, caused the rodents to be less anxious and lowered their levels of cortisol, a stress hormone. Human studies have demonstrated a significant relationship between beneficial bacteria in the gut and mental health. In a clinical trial involving 40 patients with major depressive disorder, for example, half were given a placebo and the other half took a probiotic supplement (Lactobacillus acidophilus, L. casei, and Bifidobacterium bifidum, 2 billion CFUs each) for eight weeks. At the end of the study, individuals who had taken the probiotic had significantly lower scores on a depression test when compared with placebo. The probiotic group also experienced other benefits, including significantly lower insulin levels, reduced systemic inflammation, lower insulin resistance, and a significant rise in the antioxidant glutathione. In another study, a group of individuals with chronic fatigue syndrome was given a probiotic and anxiety symptoms were reduced. For two months, the patients in the double-blind, randomized study took either a placebo or 24 billion CFUs of Lactobacillus casei strain. At the end of the study, those who

had taken the probiotic showed a significant decrease in anxiety symptoms. **Probiotics and the Gut-Brain Connection** Researchers are delving deep into the mysteries and functions of the gut-brain axis and uncovering various relationships. For example, in a new study entitled "Anxiety, Depression, and the Microbiome: A Role for Gut Peptides," the authors explain how the two-way communication between the brain and the gut is very much a cooperative effort of different systems, including the immune, endocrine, enteric, and autonomic nervous systems. Despite this realization, however, there is still much to be learned about all of the interactions and how they affect mental and physical health. The authors noted that, "given the emerging role of the gut-brain axis in a variety of brain disorders, such as anxiety and depression, it is important to understand the contribution of bidirectional interactions between peptide hormones released from the gut and intestinal bacteria in the context of this axis." These experts believe gut peptides and brain peptides are very significant in the regulation of brain-gut communication and

they name names. For example, they call out neuropeptide Y, pancreatic polypeptide, peptide YY, corticotropin-releasing factor, oxytocin, and ghrelin, among others. These and other peptides play a significant role in brain-gut signaling in stress-related psychiatric conditions. Two examples are gut peptides that are known to bind with receptors on immune system cells and vagus nerve terminals, which enables indirect brain-gut communication. Another way that probiotics affect mental health may be through their ability to produce neurotransmitters, such as serotonin, gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), and acetylcholine. When these neurotransmitters are secreted in the gut, they may cause cells in the gut lining to release molecules that send messages to the brain and impact behavior. **Taking Probiotics for Mental Health** So what does this mean for the average person? Maintaining a healthy balance of bacteria in the gut is paramount to good mental as



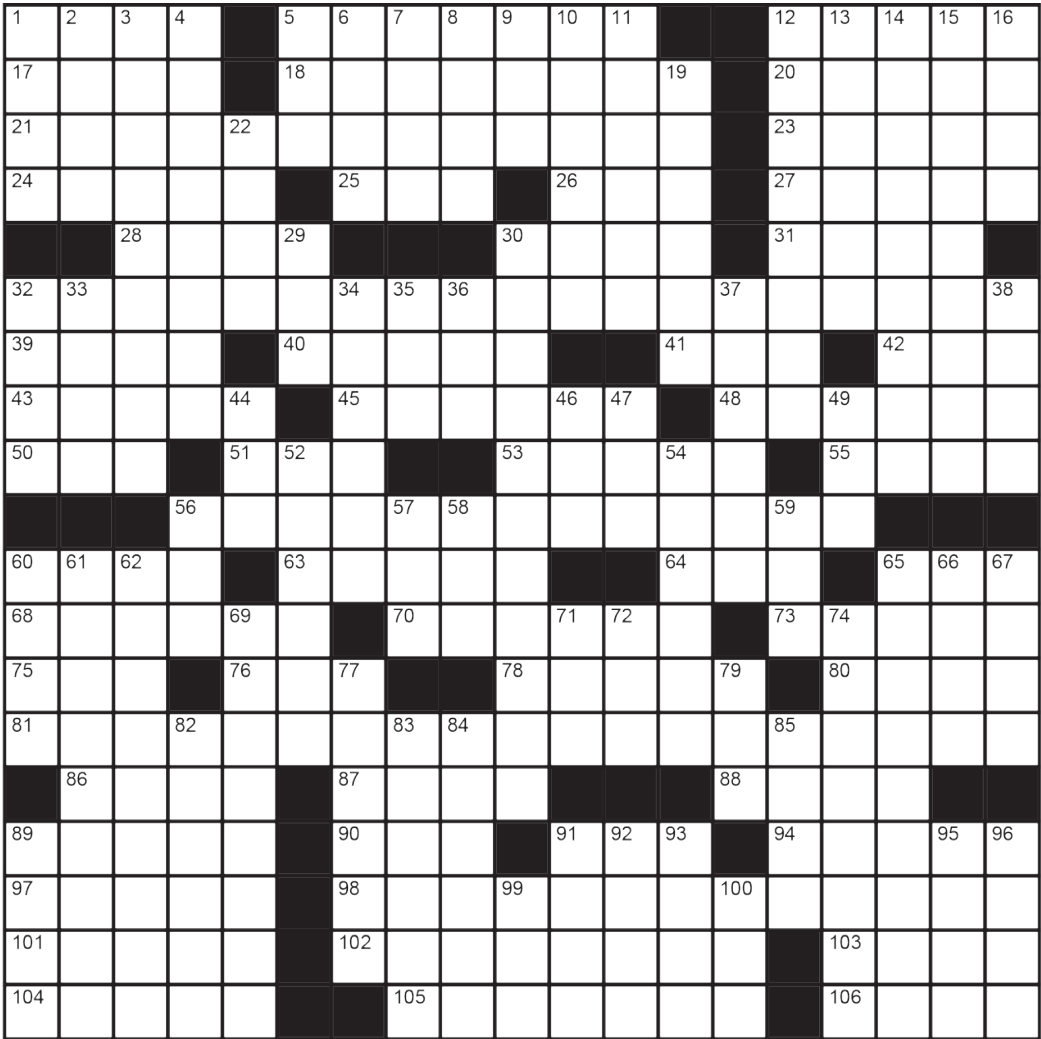
Healing the body can help heal the mind, and fermented foods, like yogurt, can help.

well as physical health. To that end, if you aren't getting enough probiotics in your diet, daily supplementation with a high-quality and clinically proven probiotic is recommended. Deborah Mitchell is a freelance health writer who is passionate about animals and the environment. She has authored, co-authored, and written more than 50 books and thousands of articles on a wide range of topics. This article was originally published on NaturallySavvy.com

* 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. Dig
- 5. Indian drinks similar to ambrosias
- 12. Breaks
- 17. Auxiliary
- 18. Like some ulcers
- 20. Clear
- 21. Kind-hearted
- 23. Gozo Island is part of it
- 24. Curl one's lip
- 25. Addition, in construction
- 26. Allowing no alcohol
- 27. Malayan canoes: Var.
- 28. Like Death Valley
- 30. Scan
- 31. Tibetan monk

- 32. Kelvin
- 39. It may be proper
- 40. Boat-seam sealer
- 41. Surfing site
- 42. Roofing material
- 43. Garden pest
- 45. Threaten
- 48. Hinge
- 50. It comes before long
- 51. Have
- 53. Flightless birds
- 55. Manipulates
- 56. Novelty street performers of the 19th century
- 60. A lift, in Aspen
- 63. Muscat native
- 64. Front
- 65. Cornfield sound

- 68. Occurring by turns, old style
- 70. Shade
- 73. Answer
- 75. Cricket club
- 76. Musical talent
- 78. Protect
- 80. Newts
- 81. Idle payments
- 86. Pants part
- 87. Sounds from the meadow
- 88. Bridge site
- 89. Roomy vehicle
- 90. Hart Trophy winner, 1970-72
- 91. North Sea diver

- 94. Cart part
- 97. Leaning
- 98. Measles, chickenpox, etc.
- 101. Magical wish granter
- 102. Convivial
- 103. Bring down the house in Lewisham
- 104. Sharpened
- 105. First prime minister of Great Britain
- 106. "Enterprise" jaunty

Down

- 1. Bursae
- 2. Androcles's friend
- 3. Impressions
- 4. Pizza topping
- 5. Plugs
- 6. Ponder
- 7. Muddy
- 8. Matinee ____
- 9. Gymnast's goal
- 10. Wreath for the head
- 11. Ancient Persia governor
- 12. Beam for supporting joists
- 13. Ancient debarkation point
- 14. Alaskan dogs
- 15. Relating to the transition zone between river and seashore
- 16. Limitless quantities
- 19. Dutch cheese
- 22. Botanical seed cover
- 29. Brace
- 30. Henry the VIII had five
- 32. Feed the kitty
- 33. 1922 Physics Nobel
- 34. Percussion instrument
- 35. "Duke" Ellington, initially
- 36. Ale cask
- 37. View from Jidda

- 38. Bounds
- 44. "Ad astra ____ aspera"
- 46. X, in Athens
- 47. Dusk, to the Bard
- 49. Zit cream?
- 52. Describing the last breaths of life
- 54. "How"
- 56. Something to pick
- 57. Art photographer Goldin
- 58. African antelope
- 59. Genetic material
- 60. Forbidden: Var.
- 61. Covered
- 62. Like some physicians
- 65. Cafe
- 66. "Against" prefix
- 67. Toward sunset
- 69. Changed one's sinful ways
- 71. Sister
- 72. Jazz fan
- 74. Souvenir shop item
- 77. "A.I." characters
- 79. Animal house
- 82. Ear of corn in Africa
- 83. Peter who co-wrote "Puff, the Magic Dragon"
- 84. Rattle
- 85. "____ The Time", Charlie Parker classic
- 89. Learned
- 91. "And hurry!"
- 92. A convex shape
- 93. "... let's ____ all the lawyers": Shak.
- 95. "So what ____ is new?"
- 96. Soup vegetable
- 99. Bubkes
- 100. Call

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

930

80

610

+

-

X

÷

Hard 1 - 2 Solutions

326

99

17

+

-

X

÷

Hard 2 - 1 Solution

510

94

46

+

-

X

÷

Easy 1 - 1 Solution

210

39

24

+

-

X

÷

Easy 2 - 1 Solution

WORDSEARCH

CONSTRUCTED BY TOM HOUSTON
EPOCH TIMES STAFF

Help with Today's Crossword Puzzle?

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

- ALTERN

ANADEM

ARARAT

ATONE

DEPEND

EDGED

ERASE

GENIE

GUARD

LEYDEN

MALAMUTES

MALTA

MARACA
- MEALIE

MENACE

NUANCE

OAKUM

OMANI

PEPERONI

PRAUS

RED SEA

REPENTED

RHEAS

ROBOTS

SATRAP

SEDAN
- SNEER

TAMES

THRIP

WHEEL

ADVERB

AMRITAS

ATILT

DUODENAL

ESTUARINE

REMARRIAGES

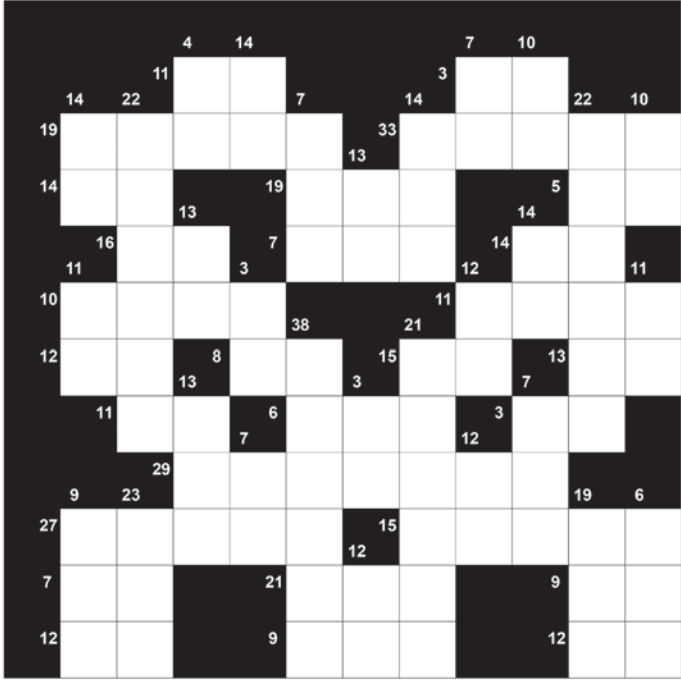
YARROW

KAKURO

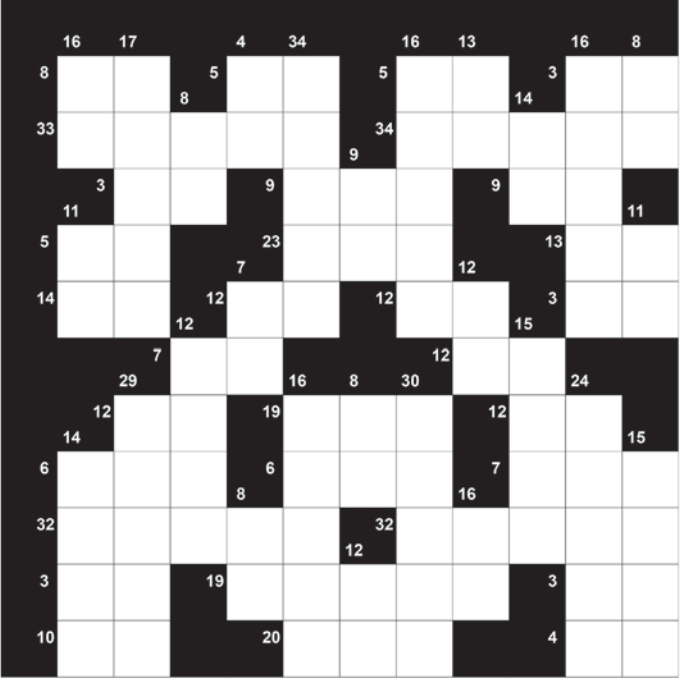
CONSTRUCTED BY EPOCH TIMES STAFF

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



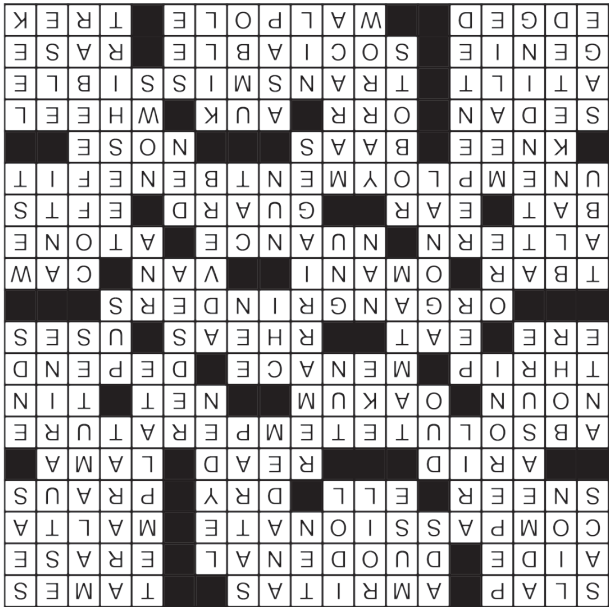
Large: Easy



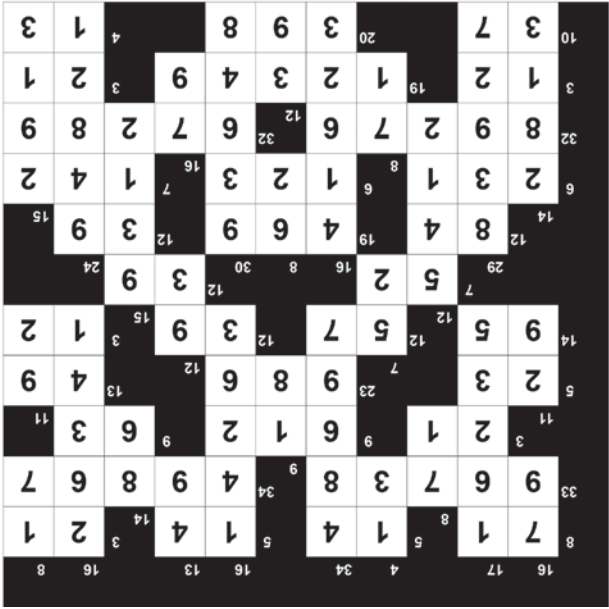
WORK SPACE

SOLUTIONS

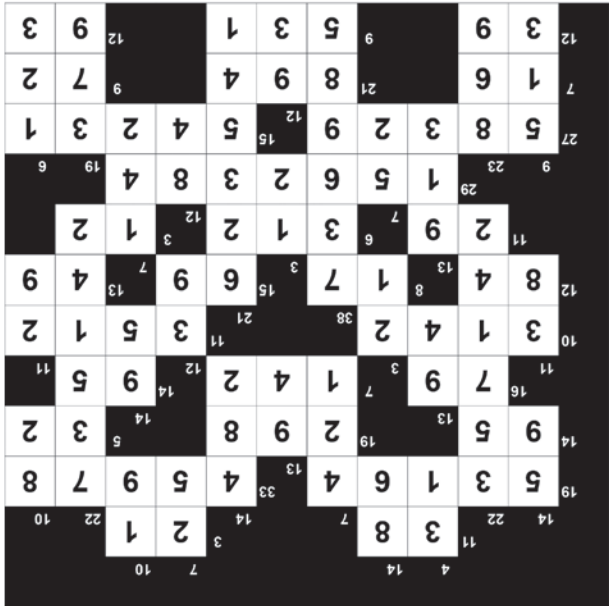
CROSSWORD



KAKURO LARGE: EASY



KAKURO LARGE: HARD



4NUMBERS

- HARD 1

$$(9 - 6) - 3 \times 3 = 0$$
$$9 \times 6 + 9 + 10 = 30$$
- HARD 2

$$1 \times 3 \times 3 + 7 = 26$$
- EASY 1

$$10 + 5 + 6 + 4 = 25$$
- EASY 2

$$10 \times 4 - 2 = 38$$

CAROLINE CHAMBERS



TABLE FOR TWO

A Pasta Bake Made for Gifting

CAROLINE CHAMBERS

Being from the South, I was raised under the strict belief that “you never show up empty-handed.” Whether I’m attending a dinner, spending a weekend as a houseguest, or just popping by for coffee, I always try to show up with a little something. The gift depends on the level of severity of my imposition: a bottle of wine, a box of chocolates from a local chocolatier, or, best of all, something homemade from my kitchen.

Homemade food is a love language where I grew up in North Carolina, something that was passed to me from my mother, and to my mother from her mother. Making food for the people I love is central to who I am; it’s a part of my DNA.

For Every Occasion

When someone dies in the South, that person’s family members are bombarded with casseroles for weeks upon weeks. Funerals are practically synonymous with casseroles. Though they get a bad reputation for being full of fattening ingredients like butter and cream, casseroles are powerhouses: they feed a ton of people, and can be refrigerated or frozen and heated up whenever they’re needed.

They are the ultimate food to drop off for a friend in need of a comforting pick-me-up.

But funerals aren’t the only time that Southerners turn to food as a display of love and affection. The week before my wedding, my mom’s best friends dropped off chicken salad, sandwiches, freshly baked cookies, and hoards of other fuel to keep us going until showtime. I’d hardly classify throwing a wedding as a “time of need,” but the gesture was so deeply appreciated in those final days of pre-wedding mayhem.

My personal favorite time to give food as a gift is when friends have a baby. I never truly appreciated just how hungry and exhausted new parents are until I had my own baby nine months ago. I devoured whatever casserole, frittata, or baked pasta came through the door.

My husband George and I live in California, across the country from most of our friends and family, but our East Coast loved ones still found creative ways to get food into our hungry, sleep-deprived bodies.

My friend Mary Pell overnighted a box of her famous chocolate chip cookies the day our son was born, so that they’d be waiting on us when we got home from the hospital. My friend Martha lives in New York, but found out which restaurants in our town delivered, and sent us cheeseburgers and pie one evening. Shane and Brit live down in San Diego, but encouraged us to get out of the house for an early dinner with the

Home-made food is a love language where I grew up in North Carolina, something that was passed to me from my mother, and to my mother from her mother.

Caroline Chambers is a recipe developer, food writer, and author of “Just Married: A Cookbook for Newlyweds.” She currently lives in Carmel, Calif., with her husband, George, and baby boy, Mattis.



ONE-SKILLET BAKED CHICKEN PARM GNOCCHI

SERVES 2 HUNGRY EATERS

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
 - 1 large shallot, minced
 - 3 garlic cloves, minced
 - 230g ground chicken
 - 1 teaspoon kosher salt
 - 2 teaspoons oregano (or Italian seasoning)
 - 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
 - 1 (395g) can diced tomatoes
 - 1 (340g) bag Trader Joe’s Cauliflower Gnocchi, frozen
 - 2 tablespoons tomato paste
 - 1/4 cup grated parmesan, plus more for garnish
 - 1/3 cup fresh mozzarella (this is 1/2 of a standard mozzarella ball)
- Optional: chopped parsley, to garnish**

Preheat the oven broiler.

Warm oil in an 8-inch (20cm) skillet over medium heat. Add shallot and cook for about 2 minutes, until softened. Add garlic and continue cooking for 30 seconds.

Add ground chicken, salt, oregano, and red pepper flakes and cook, stirring frequently and using a spatula to break up the meat, until chicken is cooked through and any liquid has evaporated. Stir in the tomatoes, gnocchi, and tomato paste and raise heat to medium-high. Cook until meat sauce is thickened and no longer watery, 4–5 minutes. Stir in parmesan..

Smooth out the top of the gnocchi and meat sauce. Tear up the mozzarella with your hands and evenly distribute on top.

Broil for 3–5 minutes, until mozzarella is melted and beginning to brown.

Garnish with parmesan and parsley, if using, and enjoy!

NOTES

Don’t have a Trader Joe’s where you live? Just use regular gnocchi. You’ll have to cook it before using it in this recipe.

If giving this meal as a gift, purchase the smallest disposable aluminum tray that you can find, and transfer the mixture to the tray after stirring in the parmesan. Top with mozzarella, wrap tightly with plastic wrap or aluminum foil, and freeze or refrigerate. Include instructions to bake at 200 degrees C for 20 minutes from refrigerated, or 30 minutes from frozen.



This chicken parm gnocchi bake combines a lean protein, a hearty starch, and a whole lot of comfort.

Give a skillet of this make-ahead chicken parm gnocchi to a friend in need—or your future self

baby, and then called the restaurant where we were eating and picked up the tab.

Recently, a friend of ours in Carmel has been in and out of the hospital, and I’ve dropped off a few meals. He and his wife stick to a rather healthy diet, but I also knew that during this time, what they needed was hearty, warming comfort food.

George and I are absolutely obsessed with the frozen cauliflower gnocchi from Trader Joe’s—they have a super clean, minimal ingredient list, and let you eat an overflowing bowl of gnocchi without feeling stuffed. Using that as a jumping-off point, I created this chicken parmesan meets pasta bake with the intention of delivering a lean, healthful protein (ground chicken), a hearty starch (the cauliflower gnocchi), and a whole lot of comfort (a fabulous red sauce and plenty of cheese).

Since creating this dish for our friends, we’ve since made it several times at home for ourselves. George and I love cooking together after we’ve put the baby to bed, but this recipe is great for busy days when we know we won’t be able to cook together, but will still need a delicious, nourishing meal.

During the day, I can throw this recipe together while feeding the baby his breakfast or lunch, and place the whole skillet in the refrigerator for George to retrieve in the evening. He can bake it while I’m putting the baby to sleep, and by the time I come out of the nursery, a bubbling, cheesy skillet of chicken parm gnocchi will be waiting for me. The best part? The only dirty dishes are one knife, a cutting board, a spatula, and a skillet.

The Lost Kitchen

An Alzheimer’s Caregiver Preserves Memories Through Recipes

MELANIE YOUNG

When Miriam Green’s mother, Naomi Cohen, was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s at age 69, Green found herself in the role of caregiving for the parent who once cared for her.

Green admits that no one is fully prepared for facing this disease, which affects around 50 million people worldwide. An award-winning poet who lives in Be’er Sheva, Israel, Green turned to cooking and writing as a coping mechanism, and began recording family recipes.

Those recipes thread through her first book, “The Lost Kitchen: Reflections and Recipes from an Alzheimer’s Caregiver” (Black Opal Books), which delivers an honest, touching account of living with a parent with Alzheimer’s. Green blends poetry, storytelling, humor, and recipes into her chapters as she details her family’s struggle to maintain a “new normal” as her mother’s health deteriorates.

The book initially started as a funny notion around her father’s newly gained cooking prowess.

“The kitchen has always been my mother’s domain, and now my father was cooking for the first time in his life. I used the creation of a book to cope with the sudden changes in our lives,” Green explained. “We were going to call it, ‘The Man’s Emergency Cookbook,’ but I soon realized



Miriam Green (L) and her mother, Naomi Cohen.

that this vehicle was not broad or deep enough for me to express everything I needed to say.”

Writing to Cope

As her mother’s world grew smaller, Green’s expanded through her writing. While working on her book, she started a blog, also called The Lost Kitchen, documenting her mother’s health and sharing a recipe with each entry.

“The idea of blogging each week was a way for me to record my mom’s decline, and use my writing as a way to overcome the emotional stress of constantly mourning her,” she explained.

In one blog post titled “A Shrinking World,” Green shares how her mother’s love of music transcends her mental and physical limitations. It “awakens dormant memories,” Green writes, “trans-

porting her from her small surroundings into unbridled joy.”

In the accompanying recipe for pomegranate chicken, Green writes that the pomegranates “serve as a sign of fertility and righteousness and they animate our blessings ... If each one of us is like a pomegranate, then so is Mom. I envision her as a husk containing sparks of self-consciousness that allow her to connect with us in our reality, which in turn helps us to continue to bond with her.”

Remembering the Bitter and Sweet

Preserving happy memories of her once vibrant, music-loving mother is important for Green. She does this throughout her book by sharing recipes and anecdotes.

One example is her mother’s chicken soup, an aromatic golden broth with chunks of chicken, potatoes, and carrots, seasoned with dill, parsley, and celery. Green writes, “Perhaps our cooking is like our personality ... Mom’s personality was always cheerful and kind, open and generous, much like her chicken soup.”

Desserts figure prominently throughout the book, perhaps a metaphor for sweet childhood memories as well as a nod to her father’s affinity for chocolate. One recipe, for her mother’s “Failure Cake,” is especially poignant for Green.

“I remember with such happiness licking the bowl to a cake that Mom called her ‘failure cake,’” she writes. “I was probably too young to realize what might be missing; I assume she forgot an ingredient or doubled one by mistake. But whatever the reason, that cake when it was baked was delicious. We kept asking her to make the same ‘failure cake’ again and again, its flaw becoming a kind of perfection in our eyes.”

For Green, failure cakes are a metaphor for Alzheimer’s, and the realization that she must reframe the inevitable tragedy of losing her mother to the disease, and focus instead on enjoying the present moments spent together.

Continued on B10

- ADVICE FROM AN ALZHEIMER’S CAREGIVER**
- I asked Miriam Green to share a few tips for finding joy in Alzheimer’s.**
1. Live in the now. Change the way you speak. Alzheimer’s sufferers don’t remember things. It is pointless to ask, “Do you remember...?” It places needless stress on the individual. Instead of, “Do you remember when I spilled my coffee last week?” you can say, “Last week I spilled my coffee.”
 2. Throw out your anger. Anger is a counter-productive emotion at the best of times. How much more so when you’re dealing with an Alzheimer’s patient. Mom does not act out of malice; she simply cannot help herself. It makes Mom extra tense and irrational when we are angry with her, which in turn prompts her own angry, venomous reactions.
 3. Shield them as much as possible. Stay away from noisy environments. Keep a watchful eye. Always be where she can find you. Avoid upsetting topics like the death of a loved one (I mean, Mom thinks her father is still alive though he’s been dead for more than 16 years).
 4. Be their active memory. Play games, sing songs, show them photos of their grandchildren, watch old movies, read poetry. Carry within you the precious moments that make up a lifetime of blessings.

THE EPOCH TIMES

TRUTH and TRADITION

YOUR ADVERTISE-
MENT
HERE

Call 02 8988 5600
or email
ad@epochtimes.com.au

Tom's Poultry

The Poultry Specialist

Serving Canberra for 22 years

★ Chicken ★ Duck ★ Eggs

★ Crumbed Products

This week special

chicken neck 12kg \$32.00

Chicken Maryland supreme \$5.00/kg

Chicken wing fresh \$2.50/kg

Frozen Chick wings 10kg /box \$13.00

Chicken Carcasses 10kg /box \$10.00

Free delivery to businesses

Monday-Friday 5am-3pm

31 Isa Street Fyshwick ACT 2609

(02) 6280 4188

info@tomspoultry.com.au

SUMHERB

TCM Urinary Function Formula

To Relieve Urinary Frequency

3x 10g Sachets Net 30g

AUST L 302683

SUMHERB

TCM Urinary Function Formula

10g Oral Powder Sachet

To Relieve Urinary Frequency

Directions for use: Take ½-1 sachet/day. Dissolve in hot water. Drink warm 1 hour after dinner & before sleep.

AUST L 302683

71888EXP06-2020

Sumherb TCM Urinary Function Formula

Price \$62 one box

For more information, please visit website: www.sumherb.com.au

E: fei@sumherb.com.au

TILEFLAIR

AFFORDABLE ELEGANCE

A great range of wall tiles and floor tiles in glass, natural stone, porcelain and ceramic.

We are not just a tile showroom and tile supplier. We can connect you with a quality tiler and quality builder.

Mon - Fri: 7am - 5pm | Sat: 8am - 3pm | Sun: 10am - 3pm

22 Essington St, Mitchell ACT 2911

02 6241 7474

info@tileflair.com.au www.tileflair.com.au

Pure Sealed

Renovations WATERPROOFING TILING

PURE SEALED

OUR SERVICES

★ Bathroom Renovations ★ Free Quotes ★ Laundry Renovations

★ Leaking Shower Repairs ★ Waterproofing & Tiling

The team always finish their projects within the agreed time frame. Customer satisfaction is our highest priority. No matter the size of the job, we will ensure that your project is completed to the highest of standards at a competitive price.

Phone: 0412079004 Address: 3/34 Isa St Fyshwick ACT

Email: info@puresealed.com Pure Sealed @puresealed

Discover The Higher Origins of Traditional Beauty



CHINA WAS ONCE known as the Land of the Divine. Legend has it that each dynasty came from a unique heavenly paradise. Over the course of five millennia, deities descended to Earth and took on human form—playing roles from emperors to heroes and from sages to generals. Their wisdom and virtue laid

the groundwork for China's rich culture. It is even said that classical Chinese dance and attire mirror those in the heavens.

China's dynasties have come and gone, and much of this heritage has been lost. Shen Yun strives to bring this ancient and mythical culture to life on stage, reviving five thousand years of profound wisdom and divine beauty.

Enjoy Music that Runs Millennia Deep

Music is such a big part of every Shen Yun performance—from the live orchestra that accompanies each dance to the vocal and instrumental solos on stage. Shen Yun's orchestra is one of a kind, harmoniously blending the distinct beauty of ancient Chinese instruments with the grandeur of a Western orchestra. The result is a vivid sound with great emotional range—perfect for bringing to life the soul of an ancient civilization.

"I was overwhelmed.
My entire body was trembling—but in
a very loving way. I felt very joyful.
It was beautiful, it was healing."

—Elisa Brown, renowned soprano

"Her voice was **so ethereal...**
Powerful, marvelous soprano."

—Lee Meriwether & Marshall Borden



Vibrant Ethnic and Folk Traditions

Let Shen Yun whisk you away to the top of the Himalayas for a sacred celebration or to the vast grasslands to join Mongolian horsemen. You will discover how diverse Chinese culture actually is, with dozens of different ethnic groups and regional folk traditions, each with its own distinct costume and dance styles. You will be amazed by how these dances fill the stage with color and energy.

Legends. Mischief. And Miracles.

Everyone loves a great story, and Chinese culture has 5,000 years full of them. Historic epics, timeless literary classics, and mystical folklore make up this world of deities and magic. Each Shen Yun performance includes short dance stories of heroes who battle evil, fly up to the heavens, or even visit deep-sea palaces. Packed with action, courage, and humor, these tales embody the wisdom and virtues of ancient China.

ERHU

The erhu has a history of over 4,000 years. Although it has only two strings, it can in the hands of a virtuoso fill the air with tenderness, sorrow, or joy—holding the audience spellbound.



SYDNEY 4-22 Mar | **CANBERRA** 24-25 Mar | **MELBOURNE** 27 Mar-5 Apr

ShenYun.com



神韻晚會 2020 SHEN YUN 5,000 Years of Civilization Reborn



Pushing the Boundaries of Art

This epic production immerses you in stories reaching back to the most distant past. You'll explore realms even beyond our visible world. Featuring one of the world's oldest art forms—classical Chinese dance—along with patented scenographical effects and all-original orchestral works, Shen Yun opens a portal to a glorious civilization of unrivaled beauty, artistry, and inspiration.

Enter a world where philosophers and poets alike sought harmony with the Dao, or “Way,” of the universe. Where maidens danced with ethereal grace and generals fought with explosive athleticism. Where timeless tales of valor and virtue were born. Where heaven and earth intersected, and even magic was possible.

Traditional Chinese culture—with its profoundly optimistic worldview and deep spiritual roots—was displaced by communism in China. Today, only the New York-based Shen Yun is keeping this precious heritage alive on stage. And it's an experience that will take your breath away.

Shen Yun Performing Arts is a nonprofit organization based in New York. Its mission is to revive 5,000 years of traditional Chinese culture, which under decades of communist suppression was left deeply scarred and impoverished.
Shen Yun cannot perform in China today.

Shen Yun's unique artistic vision expands theatrical experience into a multi-dimensional, deeply moving journey through one of humanity's greatest treasures—the five millennia of traditional Chinese culture.



“The show presents both the superb art of the profound Chinese culture, as well as its spiritual aspect. There is a massive power in this. It brings great hope... It truly is a touch of heaven.”

*—Daniel Herman, former Minister of Culture
of the Czech Republic*

“**Mesmerizing!** Reclaiming the divinely inspired cultural heritage of China ... I encourage everyone to see and all of us to learn from.”

—Donna Karan, fashion designer

“**The ancient Chinese wisdom** will benefit not only the Chinese people, but also the whole world.”

*—Ted Kavanau, founding senior producer of CNN
Headline News*

SYDNEY 4-22 Mar | **CANBERRA** 24-25 Mar | **MELBOURNE** 27 Mar-5 Apr

ShenYun.com