



QUOTES *In the News*

“It was an intentional, reckless and provocative action. We’ve informed regional partners and condemn China for such behaviour.”

Taiwan’s Foreign Ministry on China violating Taiwan’s airspace with Chinese fighters, bombers, and reconnaissance aircraft

CHINA | A3

“The UN approach to whistleblowers is to ignore all of its internal rules, and all deadlines, and drag out the retaliation as long as possible in the hope the staff member will resign, or be found guilty.”

Whistleblower Emma Reilly on her case against the UN over its alleged practice of providing China targets for genocide in Xinjiang

WORLD | A5

“China is a very serious threat to the United States geopolitically, economically, militarily, and a threat to the integrity of our institutions, given their ability to influence things.”

U.S. Attorney General William Barr on external threats to the U.S. elections

US | A8

“If you choose to make it so, this forced isolation can prove to be among the most rewarding and formative times of your life.”

Gary L. Gregg, Director of the McConnell Centre, Kentucky, writes on the potential of solitude and time

OPINION | A10

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U.S. President Donald Trump speaks during a Coronavirus Task Force press briefing at the White House in Washington on April 9, 2020.

UNITED NATIONS

Trump Halts WHO Funding Over Handling of Virus

Morrison facing pressure to review Australia's \$53 million contribution

IVAN PENTCHOUKOV & ZACHARY STIEBER

President Donald Trump has said he is halting U.S. funding to the United Nations' World Health Organisation (WHO) while his administration reviews the body's handling of the CCP virus outbreak in China.

The president indicated the move last week when he claimed the WHO is "too China-centric." He criticised the organisation for opposing his early decision to place a ban on travel from China aimed at preventing the spread of the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) virus to the United States.

"I'm instructing my administration to halt funding of the World Health Organisation while a review is conducted to assess the World Health Organisation's role in severely mismanaging and covering up the spread of the coronavirus," Trump said on April 14.

He said that the world relies on the WHO to gather accurate information about international health threats. But for COVID-19, the WHO

had failed in this responsibility to "put political correctness above life-saving measures" and work with all countries independently.

"The WHO failed in this basic duty and must be held accountable," Trump said.

The president said that the WHO should have acted on the threat from the CCP virus in December 2019 when there was credible information to suspect human-to-human transmission. But the WHO "failed to investigate credible reports from sources in Wuhan that conflicted directly with the Chinese government's official accounts."

He added that if the WHO had not remained silent about China's lack of transparency, "the outbreak could have been contained at its source."

"This would have saved thousands of lives and avoided worldwide economic damage," he said. "The WHO's reliance on China's disclosures likely caused a 20-fold

This would have saved thousands of lives and avoided worldwide economic damage.

Donald J. Trump, U.S. President

CORONAVIRUS

Iranian Health Officials Call CCP Virus Tolls a 'Bitter Joke'

TOM OZIMEK

Iranian health officials have called into question China's reporting of its CCP virus toll, saying the true figures are likely higher.

"After the virus spread, it became evident it wasn't as China reported," said Minoo Mohraz, a health ministry official and member of Iran's COVID-19 taskforce, AFP reported.

"They're currently retracting many of their articles and their figures and studies have not been very correct," she said, adding that "with what we know of their scientific studies—their figures are not trustworthy."

Another task force official, Hamid Sour, an epidemiologist, said China

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An electrician sets up wiring while construction workers drive excavators at the site of a new 1,000-bed field hospital being built in Wuhan, China, on Jan. 24, 2020.

CHINA

Worker Who Built Wuhan Field Hospital: We Are Isolated, Treated 'Like Prisoners'

EVA FU

Essential service workers all around the world are being recognized as heroes for helping to keep economies going amid the COVID-19 pandemic, but not so in China.

Leishenshan, a 1,600-bed emer-

gency field hospital in Wuhan, the central Chinese city that's the epicenter of the outbreak, was built in less than two weeks, because of the efforts of tens of thousands of construction workers who risked their lives while toiling day and night.

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MEDIA

Trump Campaign Sues TV Station Over 'Manipulated Audio' Ad on COVID-19

TOM OZIMEK

President Donald Trump's reelection campaign filed a defamation lawsuit on April 13 against an NBC-affiliated television station for airing an ad falsely claiming the president called the COVID-19 outbreak a "hoax."

The ad was cut by super PAC Priorities USA, which the complaint filed by the Trump campaign identified as "far-left."

"The advertisement, entitled 'Exponential Threat,' does not just contain false and defamatory statements about President Trump—it is far more insidious and, ultimately, far more dangerous," the complaint stated.

Naming the defendant as Wisconsin-based WJFW-NBC, the complaint alleges: "The advertisement was produced through the use of digital technology by taking audio clips from Trump Campaign events and piecing those clips together to manufacture a blatantly false statement that was never said by President Trump: 'The coronavirus, this is their new hoax.'"

The campaign said in the complaint

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CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON/THE EPOCH TIMES



U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo holds a press briefing at the State Department in Washington on Jan. 7, 2020.

MIDDLE EAST

Pompeo Welcomes the Formation of New Iraqi Government Ahead of Bilateral Talks

VENUS UPADHAYAYA

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo welcomed the formation of a new Iraqi government. The two countries are scheduled to meet in June for a strategic dialogue to discuss various

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CCP INFLUENCE

Beijing's Attempt to Influence Wisconsin Official Backfires, Results in Resolution Condemning Virus Cover-up

CATHY HE

The Chinese regime's attempt to get a Wisconsin state senator to voice support for Beijing's CCP virus containment efforts has resulted in the lawmaker introducing a resolution slamming Beijing's coverup of the outbreak.

Wisconsin Senate President Roger Roth on March 26 introduced a resolution to condemn the actions of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) for "deliberately and intentionally" misleading the world about the outbreak in Wuhan, which has resulted in a "global pandemic the likes of which has not been seen for generations," according to the resolution text.

Roth told The Epoch Times that the resolution would not have been

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SAM MOOY/GETTY IMAGES

Australian Jobless Rate ‘Heartbreaking,’ Morrison

SOPHIA JIANG

Australia’s unemployment is the worst it’s been since 1994, but the treasurer said the government’s \$320 billion economic stimulus package provides hope that Australia will recover more quickly once on the other side of the crisis.

The unemployment rate is set to surge to 10 percent—a 26-year peak—in the June quarter. That represents hundreds of thousands of Australians who have lost their jobs because of the crisis caused by the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) virus, commonly known as the novel coronavirus.

Treasurer Josh Frydenberg said it could be worse if not for government intervention in a statement released on April 14. “In the absence of the \$130 billion JobKeeper payment, Treasury estimates the unemployment rate would be 5 percentage points higher and would peak at around 15 percent.”

Those 5 additional percentage points translate to 700,000 more job losses.

The treasurer’s estimates nearly double the rate of 5.1 percent estimated in February before the CCP virus pandemic led to shutdowns and sweeping layoffs.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison lamented the forecasted unemployment figures during an interview with the Today Show on April 14.

“It’s a heartbreaking number. Un-

Every arm of government and industry is working to keep Australians in jobs and businesses in business.

Josh Frydenberg, treasurer



Prime Minister Scott Morrison at a press conference at Parliament House in Canberra, Australia, on March 22, 2020.

employment at that rate, hundreds of thousands of people losing their jobs. It is just absolutely heartbreaking,” he said.

The treasurer said that the estimated 10 percent jobless rate took into consideration both Australia’s economic strength before the crisis and the stimulus packages introduced by the government in March.

Worse Than 2008

The treasurer said the current downturn is far more significant than what happened in 2008. However, he is confident that the government is on the right track in boosting business resistance through the Jobkeeper program.

“More than 800,000 businesses have already registered for the Jobkeeper payment which will allow the economy to recover more quickly once we are through to the other side of the crisis.

“Every arm of government and in-

dustry is working to keep Australians in jobs and businesses in business,” he said in the statement.

The treasurer also assured Australians that the country hasn’t lost its AAA credit rating even with the unprecedented economic incentives in place.

Forecasts

The \$130 billion Jobkeeper package legislated on April 9 grants around 6 million Australian workers a \$1500 per fortnight lifeline subsidy. The money is paid to employers to continue paying their employees for six months. It also brings the total economic support provided by the government and the Reserve Bank of Australia to a staggering \$320 billion—more than 16 percent of GDP.

Economists responded positively to the stimulus packages. Westpac chief economist Bill Evans updated his forecasts following the announcement of the program in a video up-

date in early April.

He recognized the program as a “major game-changer for the Australian economy” and adjusted the unemployment rate for the June quarter from an initial 17 percent (amounting to a loss of 1.7 million jobs), down to 9 percent, before falling back to around 7 percent at the end of 2020.

As for economic growth prospects, Evans forecasted that June and September will see a GDP contraction by 8.5 percent and 0.6 percent respectively, before a 5.2 percent lift in the December quarter. Overall, the economy is expected to contract by 5 percent through 2020.

According to a recent economists survey by the Australian Financial Review, the June quarter will see a significant rise in unemployment rates, with the median forecast at 8.5 percent.

The official labour force figures for March are expected to be released on April 16.

‘Time to Reconsider Academic Collaboration With China,’ Senator Says

HENRY JOM

Senator Eric Abetz is urging Australian universities and government research organisations to reconsider their academic collaborations with the Chinese regime, amid concerns that the regime is attempting to control the narrative related to the origins of the CCP virus, commonly known as the coronavirus.

Abetz said that the restrictions placed by the Chinese regime on academic publications that report on the origins of the “CCP (Chinese Communist Party) virus, commonly known as novel coronavirus” have reaffirmed the view that the Chinese regime seeks to “stifle and control academic freedom within its own country and others.”

“We know from experience China has been pushing to exert undue and unwanted influence into our higher academic system and this latest development must prompt swift consideration,” Abetz said in a statement on Tuesday, April 14. “This is a serious wake-up call for the Australian tertiary education sector and the CSIRO.”

Chinese Communist Party (CCP) infiltration within Australian universities is well-documented and is evidenced through the workings of United Front bodies, and Confucius Institutes, where free speech and intellectual freedom are often discouraged and condemned. In one instance, a student, Drew Pavlou, received abusive messages and death threats after he supported Pro-Hong Kong students at the University of Queensland in July 2019.

On Friday, April 10, a directive that was issued by the Chinese regime’s Ministry of Education’s science and technology department was posted on the website of the Fudan University in Shanghai. The post, which was related to universities publishing research, was taken down after enquiries were made to the university about the post, reported News Corp.

The directive stipulated that academic papers, which report on the origins of the virus, “must be strictly

and tightly managed.” The document added that academic papers are required to undergo an additional vetting process and be approved by a special task force before being submitted for publication.

“From the outset Beijing has attempted to strictly control the narrative, covering up the break out in the wet markets, silencing the whistle-blowers who spoke out on the lethality and contagiousness of the virus, and bringing the World Health Organisation under its influence to bolster whatever little credibility it has left,” Abetz said.

Experts who conducted statistical modelling, eyewitness accounts from locals, and documents previously provided to The Epoch Times have shown that Chinese authorities concealed the true scale of the outbreak in Wuhan and other parts of China.

According to a report by Washington-based think tank American Enterprise Institute (AEI), there should be an estimated 2.9 million confirmed cases of the CCP virus in China, instead of less than 100,000 known cases currently reported by the Chinese regime.

Additionally, the lab origin theory has gained prominence partly due to the fact that Wuhan is the home of China’s only bio lab certified to work with the most dangerous pathogens such as Ebola or SARS.

“It is particularly insidious to eliminate the facts surrounding the origins of the virus as this will impact the world scientific and medical community’s ability to research and gather the information that can help stop the spread and mitigate the damage of the virus.

“It will generally raise doubts on any future medical or scientific information emanating from China and in particular any medical or scientific information on the coronavirus.”

Epoch Times reporters Petr Svab, Nicole Hao and Frank Fang contributed to this report.

This is a serious wake-up call for the Australian tertiary education sector and the CSIRO.

Senator Eric Abetz

JENNY EVANS/GETTY IMAGES



An aerial view of the Darling-Barka river in Wilcannia, Australia, on March 5, 2019.

Murray, Darling Rivers Linked for the First Time in 2 Years This Easter

The Darling and Murray rivers will link-up for the first time in two years this Easter due to flows pushed down the southern section of the system into Wentworth in NSW’s far south west.

Minister for Water, Property and Housing Melinda Pavey said the news was a relief for parts of the state that have suffered through the worst of this ongoing drought.

“Between 390 and 420 gigalitres of water is estimated to flow into the Menindee Lakes over the coming weeks,” Pavey said in a statement on Sunday.

This has been enough for WaterNSW to restart flows to the lower Darling, she added.

According to WaterNSW’s April 6 regional water availability report, “the relatively small inflows to most northern dams mean that drought measures and works are being reviewed, but most will likely remain in place, despite the large flows downstream.”

Pavey said, “We mustn’t be fooled into thinking this brings these regions out of the drought. It’s going to take more rain over the coming months to really take the pressure off these areas.”

WaterNSW also warned locals of short-term risk to native fish as decomposed litter from dry riverbeds is resuspended, which “can cause short term impacts on water quality.”

“Members of the public can be on the lookout for signs of stressed or dead fish and report them through the Fisher Watch Hotline on 1800 043 536,” the report said.

It added that rural water supplies were at 25.5 percent of current storage capacity as of April 6. Meanwhile, urban water supplies on April 6 stood at 83.1 percent of the total storage capacity.

By Ashlea Witoslawski. Epoch Times staff contributed to this report.

Worker Who Built Wuhan Field Hospital: We Are Isolated, Treated 'Like Prisoners'

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No sooner than construction was completed, however, these workers found themselves outcasts who were driven out of the city by force, with many unable to secure their basic salary.

One such laborer, Zhang Xiongjun, a scaffold worker from Guangzhou, wrote about his harrowing experience on the Chinese microblogging platform Weibo.

After construction at Leishenshan was completed, Zhang was given no contract and 500 yuan (US\$70.9) of cash for each day he worked. Upon speaking to fellow construction workers, he discovered that he was only paid a fraction of what he was entitled to. After the job ended, the workers were all “escorted out like prisoners” to nearby Hunan Province, Zhang said.

On April 8, Zhang and the group returned to Wuhan to demand that the construction company, China Construction Third Engineering Bureau, give them their full pay.

They drove to the provincial petition office located in Wuhan and planned to lodged complaints with government authorities about their compensation. But before they were able to, around two dozen people from the China Construction Third Engineering Bureau surrounded them and ordered them to squat down on the ground.

Zhang said he wasn’t sure how the company caught wind of their plans, but for the next nine hours, the people intimidated Zhang and his group, while denying them access to food or water. One person fainted under the scorching sun.

The company pressured them to sign a letter promising to never



Workers go about their duties building a section of the Leishenshan Hospital in Wuhan, Hubei, on Feb. 18, 2020.

This is what we frontline workers receive for putting our lives on the line.

Zhang Xiongjun, scaffold worker from Guangzhou

mention anything about the incident or their involvement in building Leishenshan. Company staff also demanded that they erase any photos or videos from their phones that proved they worked on Leishenshan. They were ordered to leave Wuhan.

Because the group had been to Wuhan, where the outbreak is still severe, no nearby hotels were willing to accommodate them. So they slept in the car.

For days, “we were either chased, turned away, or taken to quarantine,” he wrote. “We are merely refugees now.” They could not find new construction jobs either.

“I will never go to Wuhan again in this life,” Zhang wrote, after the failed attempt at seeking proper compensation.

‘Heroes’ to Homeless

Headquartered in Wuhan, the state-owned China Construction Third Engineering Bureau is one of the largest construction companies in the world and has for eight years been on Fortune Magazine’s Global 500 list.

Chen Weiguo, the company’s presi-



A worker carries guardrails at the site of a field hospital in Wuhan, Hubei, China, on Jan. 26, 2020.

dent and vice Communist Party secretary, told state broadcaster CCTV in a March 28 interview that the firm enlisted more than 31,000 people from all over the country to work on the Leishenshan project. He called the workers “heroes” and promised to hand out an honorific certificate to each individual.

But Zhang, who put on full-body protective suits during his work shifts and stood on the scaffolding to install color steel tiles, said he saw none of that.

For the past few days, Zhang has been roaming around, hoping to hear back from the construction company. He spent the past few nights on the curb of a park lawn.

“The sky is my blanket and the earth my bed,” he wrote in an April 12 post, adding that he had been “sleep-deprived for days.”

“This is what we frontline workers receive for putting our lives on the line.”

Complaints about lack of pay didn’t come from construction workers alone. In March, a hospital in Shaanxi Province was revealed to have paid

some managerial staff three to four times more than front-line medical workers, after a payroll document was leaked online. The disparity sparked online outrage, and the hospital’s director and vice director eventually resigned.

In a survey by Dingxiangyuan, a Chinese online medical forum, only 12 percent of 1,900 medical professionals around the country said they received the special compensation that Chinese authorities had promised to pay medical workers helping to fight the epidemic.

Huang, a Guizhou city resident who joined the Leishenshan work crew in mid-February, said he was quarantined for more than a month in Wuhan after the construction was complete. On his way home, he passed through the southern city of Shenzhen and was again quarantined for two weeks.

“When we were looking for work, they would ask us where we worked before. They immediately said no when we said it was Wuhan,” he told The Epoch Times. Having no plans in store, he said he was “taking it step by step.”



J15 fighter jets on China's sole operational aircraft carrier, the Liaoning, during a drill at sea in April 2018.

China’s Violations of Taiwan Airspace Are Testing US Response Amid Pandemic

CHRISS STREET

News Analysis

The recent violations of Taiwan’s airspace by Chinese fighters, bombers and reconnaissance aircraft are testing the U.S. capability to respond with resources strained by the CCP virus pandemic.

Taiwan Ministry of National Defense (MND) reported on April 10 that “several” Chinese J-11 jet fighters, H-6 bombers, KJ-500 command and early warning aircraft violated Taiwan’s western airspace in the South China Sea, before turning south to violate the Philippines and Taiwan airspace over the Bashi Channel.

The integrated air squadron violation follows another provocation that began at 11 a.m. on March 31 when two J-11 jet fighters from China’s People’s Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) crossed the so-called median line of the 110-mile Taiwan Strait.

Such provocations by both nations were common in the 1990s before a tacit agreement was put into place to reduce tensions by keeping their vessels from crossing it. But the ten-minute standoff with Taiwanese F-16 fighters

was the first median-line breach in over a decade, according to Bonnie Glaser, director of the China Power Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank in Washington.

Taiwan’s Foreign Ministry took to Twitter to emphasize the military seriousness of the Chinese air force crossing the median line: “It was an intentional, reckless & provocative action. We’ve informed regional partners & condemn #China for such behavior.”

The Chinese regime considers self-ruled Taiwan as its own territory, and has not renounced the use of force to bring the island under its control, despite the fact that it has its own constitution, democratically-elected government, currency, and military.

An article published by The Epoch Times on March 30 titled, “China Ramps Up South China Sea Provocations as U.S. Battles CCP Virus,” highlighted that the March 24 withdrawal of the USS Theodore Roosevelt aircraft carrier task force from patrolling around the South China Sea threatened to disrupt the balance of power in the region. The

aircraft carrier was immobilized after three sailors tested positive for the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) virus, commonly known as the novel coronavirus. More than 500 crew members are infected as of April 11.

The only other American aircraft carrier in the western Pacific that could have intervened as a restraint against Chinese provocations or hostilities is the USS Ronald Reagan, docked in Yokosuka, Japan. But the Reagan and its base have also been in a two-week lockdown due to an unknown number of sailors suffering from the CCP virus.

With virtually no combat effectiveness for its major theater domination assets, the U.S. Navy on March 27 sent the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS McCampbell on a “routine Taiwan Strait transit” in international waters, according to Lt. Anthony Junco, spokesperson for the U.S. 7th Fleet. Junco added that the exercise demonstrates the “U.S. commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific.”

The U.S. Defense Department dramatically increased military flights around Taiwan since the U.S. aircraft carriers were taken off-line. Examples of disclosed flights include an EP-3E ARIES II reconnaissance aircraft on March 25; a B-52 Stratofortress bomber and KC-135 tanker on March 26, and another B-52 bomber flight on March 27.

Taiwan News reported on April 11 that two American Combat Sent RC-135U reconnaissance aircrafts left their civilian transponders on while flying at least six missions over the South China Sea in the last week. The Combat Sent is deployed to locate and identify foreign military land, naval and airborne radar signals.

A Taiwan defense expert suggested that the U.S. warplanes may have intentionally turned on the transponders so they could be picked up by air movement trackers. This move would clearly reaffirm that the United States is closely monitoring the situation in the region and is prepared to respond, despite the CCP virus pandemic.

Province in Northern China Prepares for New Wave of Infections

EVA FU

A province in northern China has become a battleground against the resurgence of the virus outbreak.

Heilongjiang, China’s northernmost province, has locked down the city of Suifenhe, which borders Russia, and its capital of Harbin. Officials said they hoped to stem the flow of imported cases of the CCP virus, commonly known as the novel coronavirus, from Russia.

Beijing sent a 15-member expert panel to Suifenhe to help control the outbreak on April 12. The local Red Cross has been calling for public donations to cover basic medical supply needs.

The two cities also require all arrivals from overseas to undergo 28 days of quarantine, as well as nucleic acid and antibody tests.

A neighborhood officer, in a message on Chinese app WeChat seen by The Epoch Times, emphasized to residents of a complex in Suifenhe the gravity of the situation.

“Does everyone know how serious this is?” the officer asked. “You have no idea who’s got it and who has not ... having no symptoms is even scarier,” referring to asymptomatic infections.

Suifenhe also has built a 600-bed makeshift hospital dedicated to asymptomatic carriers.

Meanwhile, an internal notice from Heilongjiang’s health commission, dated April 8, shows that provincial officials plan to make available nearly 4,000 hospital beds elsewhere in the province.

The notice, which indicates the authority plans to set up a 1,100-member medical support team, also instructed local authorities to provide a candidate list within 24 hours.

While the Chinese regime has reported few new domestic infections in recent weeks, claiming most new cases are among travelers who were infected overseas, some Heilongjiang residents question whether the regime is providing the full picture.

Yu, who lives in the provincial capital Harbin, wonders if officials



A medical worker assists a patient at a Hospital in Huanggang, Hubei, on March 27, 2020.

are simply labeling all cases as imported to downplay the situation.

“If they acknowledged local cases, it would mean that the outbreak is not under control, and ‘imported cases’ would be a convenient excuse,” he told The Epoch Times. “Local officials have been covering it up, they don’t report the true [numbers].”

Another Harbin native, Deng, said her neighborhood is currently under lockdown measures, which includes a curfew at 10 p.m. She said that at least two residents in her area, while entering the security gate, received a yellow and red flag on their mobile virus detection app, respectively, meaning they are potential virus carriers and will be quarantined.

Deng said she didn’t dare to ask too much, since she didn’t want to be accused of “not believing in the government.”

“The information is not transparent,” she said.

Hotels in Suifenhe have shut their doors over infection fears following the new lockdown, according to a local resident, who said his surname is Li. Some Chinese who recently came back from Moscow have been quarantined in local sports arenas, Li said.

“Coming back is actually even more unsafe,” he said. “You might not have the virus, but it’s very easy to get infected in a concentrated group [of people]. You don’t know who may acquire the virus.”

Argentinian Media Offered Money to Run Articles Defaming Meditation Practice

NICOLE HAO

Agents suspected of working on behalf of the Chinese regime tried to pay media outlets in Argentina to publish an article defaming Falun Gong, an ancient Chinese spiritual practice that is severely persecuted in China.

The article capitalized on the pandemic to perpetuate propaganda vilifying Falun Gong adherents. Since the Chinese regime began persecuting the meditation practice in July 1999, it has used propaganda to vilify the adherents.

Falun Gong, also known as Falun Dafa, is a meditation practice with moral teachings based on truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance.

Introduced to the public in 1992, the spiritual discipline quickly grew in popularity. According to a November 1998 report by Chinese state-run Shanghai TV, more than 100 million people practiced Falun Gong in China at the time—greater than the number of Chinese Communist Party (CCP) members.

Fearing that such popularity would threaten the regime’s authority, then-CCP leader Jiang Zemin launched a nationwide persecution, with hundreds of thousands of Falun Gong adherents detained in prisons, labor camps, and brain-washing centers, according to the Falun Dafa Information Center.

Pay to Publish

On April 2, an editor from a small-sized media outlet in Argentina said that a broker offered to pay him a fee in exchange for publishing an article defaming Falun Gong.

Supporters of the Falun Gong spiritual practice take part in a march in Hong Kong on April 27, 2019.

The broker told the editor that he was hired to do this task by “some Chinese.” He offered the editor 20,000 pesos (about US\$310) to publish the article.



DALE DE LA REY/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

The editor contacted a staff member at another Argentinian media outlet who practices Falun Gong, wishing to inform the Falun Gong practitioner about the article, and recounted his experience. To protect their identities, The Epoch Times has withheld their names and the media outlets they work for.

The broker told the editor that he was hired to do this task by “some Chinese.” He offered the editor 20,000 pesos (about US\$310) to publish the article.

The Epoch Times obtained a copy of the article. In poorly written Spanish, it claimed that Falun Gong practitioners aren’t allowed to visit a doctor or treat their illnesses at a hospital. It then suggested that adherents wouldn’t seek treatment for the virus.

“What would happen if a large number of these people refuse to go seek medical services in the midst of a global pandemic?” it stated.

The broker tried to publish the

same article on Infobae, the most widely read online news media in Argentina—but failed because Infobae “asked for a big price,” the editor recounted. The broker also contacted other local outlets, such as El Cronista Comercial and Diario Popular.

None of the media have published the article so far.

Erping Zhang, spokesman for the Falun Dafa Information Center, said the article has misrepresented Falun Gong’s teachings, and that this type of misinformation is in line with the pattern of hate propaganda the Chinese regime has spread about Falun Gong since the persecution began.

“It has never stopped spreading rumors and lies and slander about Falun Gong. ... They have used these kinds of dirty tactics all these years,” he said.

Ellen Zhong, a Falun Gong practitioner in New York, said the spiritual practice has no such restrictions on adherents’ health choices.

“If you feel sick, you should visit a doctor. If you are healthy, you don’t need to bother the doctors. After practicing Falun Gong, I’m very healthy,” Zhong said. She added that when she first started practicing Falun Gong more than 20 years ago, her physical health improved dramatically within three months.

In 1998, China’s National Department of Sports published a large-scale investigation on the health benefits of Falun Gong, revealing that 41.5 percent reported that their illnesses had been completely cured, 36 percent had mostly recovered, 20.4 percent said they felt decreased symptoms of their illnesses, and 2.1 percent said they felt no change in symptoms.

The Spanish article also listed a series of false allegations about Falun Gong’s development in China.

The article claimed that Falun Gong practitioners violently protested on April 25, 1999, forcing Beijing to launch its repression.

Based on eyewitness accounts of practitioners who participated in the protests that day, roughly 10,000 adherents lined up along the streets outside the appeals office near the CCP headquarters in Beijing, seeking the freedom to practice their faith and hoping to appeal for the Tianjin city government to release practitioners who had been detained two days before. Western media outlets reported the appeal was peaceful.

Then-Premier Zhu Rongji agreed to meet with Falun Gong representatives that day and promised to resolve the issue. Falun Gong adherents then quietly left the area.



STR/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Health workers test people for COVID-19 symptoms outside Tehran, Iran, on March 26, 2020.

Iranian Health Officials Call CCP Virus Tolls a 'Bitter Joke'

CONTINUED FROM A1

na’s figures were “far from the truth,” basing his remarks on Iran’s assessment of the spread of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) virus, commonly known as the novel coronavirus, and the high fatalities it has caused around the world.

‘Bitter Joke’

It comes days after Iran’s health ministry spokesman Kianoush Jahanpour came under fire for pointedly calling into question China’s virus figures.

Jahanpour, who is also a medical doctor, made the remarks at a press conference and by tweet on Sunday, The Guardian reported.

He said China made it seem as if the CCP virus was like the flu but less deadly.

Calling the virus data presented by China a “bitter joke,” he said it led governments to downplay its threat, The New Arab reported.

“If in China they say an epidemic was controlled in two

months, one should really think about it,” Jahanpur wrote.

“Based on the epidemiological information and reports provided by Chinese researchers, 11 academic centers in the world [initially] considered the novel coronavirus to be less dangerous than at least type-A influenza. Today’s findings prove it wrong. And we trust our own findings more,” he wrote, The New Arab reported.

He was attacked on Twitter by the Chinese ambassador to Tehran, Chang Hua, who called on him to “respect realities and the great efforts of the people of China.”

“I suggest that you read their news very carefully in order to draw conclusions,” Hua said, The Guardian reported.

Following the Chinese official’s reproach, Jahanpour struck a diplomatic note, saying he was only saying that Iran does not agree with China’s epidemiological assessment of the virus.

Relations are typically warm between Iran and China, a top trading partner, particularly in oil exports.

But critics say Teheran’s reporting on the virus is also misleading.

According to Worldometer, which uses official Iranian sources, the virus has killed more than 3,800 and infected over 62,500, with some 27,000 recovered.

According to Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), parliament members and local officials in some of Iran’s virus hotspots said the death and infection tolls announced by the central regime are grossly understated.

Public-health expert Kamiar Alaei, co-founder and co-president of the New York-based Institute for International Health and Education, said mid-March that the real number of COVID-19 infections in Iran could be five times higher than official numbers reported at the time, RFE/RL reports.

Other experts say that not only are the real figures likely higher, but the Iranian regime’s lack of transparency and mismanagement of the outbreak fanned the pandemic.

Faisal Al-Rfouh, a professor of political science and international studies at the University of Jordan, called it an act of betrayal.

“I believe the Iranian government betrayed their people so they didn’t announce the extent of the coronavirus and they didn’t take the needed measurements to limit or minimize the extent of it in the Middle East,” Al-Rfouh told The Epoch Times in a statement.

Figures from the U.S. Institute of Peace indicate Iran has spread the pathogen to 23 countries, with cases as far away as North America, Europe, and New Zealand.

Even China, the initial center of the pandemic, reported 11 cases of the infection from Iran on March 5.

Venus Upadhayaya contributed to this report.

Pompeo Welcomes the Formation of New Iraqi Government Ahead of Bilateral Talks

CONTINUED FROM A1

thorny issues, including the status of the U.S. troops stationed in Iraq.

“The United States looks forward to the formation of a new Iraqi Government capable of confronting the COVID-19 pandemic, ameliorating the country’s current economic distress, and bringing arms under state control,” said Pompeo on Monday.

Mustafa al-Kadhimi, the Iraqi Prime minister-designate, met with government leaders on Saturday to quickly form a cabinet, according to the Al-Monitor, a Middle East media.

“With my mandate to lead the Iraqi government, I pledge before my honorable people, to work to form a government that radiates the aspirations and demands of the Iraqis at the top of its priorities, safeguards the sovereignty of the country, preserves rights,” 53-year-old Kadhimi said in a message on Twitter on Thursday.

Kadhimi, who served as the director of Iraq’s National Intelligence Service since 2016 and was a major opposition figure during Saddam Hussein’s rule, was appointed as the prime-minister designate by Iraqi President Barham Salih after Adnan al-Zurfi, a former governor of Najaf, declined the appointment on Thursday.

Zurfi was unable to find support among the Iraqi political parties for his candidacy. He was labeled as a CIA agent according to another Al-monitor report and couldn’t gather support from the Kurdish and Sunni political parties.

Kadhimi has 30 days to form a cabinet. All political party representatives were present during his nomination ceremony and this suggests he will most likely be able to sustain his government, reported Al-monitor.

Pompeo said the new government that is being formed due to a consensus between the Shia, Sunni, and the Kurdish political leaders will put the interests of Iraq first.



MANDEL NGAN/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo testifies before the House Foreign Affairs Committee on Capitol Hill in Washington on Feb. 28, 2020.

“The Iraqi people demand genuine reform and trustworthy leaders. These demands deserve to be addressed without violence or suppression. We stand with Iraqi people as they seek a sovereign, prosperous Iraq, free of corruption and terror,” said Pompeo.

The United States and Iraqi governments are scheduled to meet each other in mid-June to discuss various issues, but the most important remains the status of the American troops already stationed in the conflicted country.

“As a force for good in the nation and as Iraq’s closest friend, the United States has proposed a strategic dialogue with the government of Iraq to be held in [the] middle of June,” Pompeo told reporters at the State Department on April 7.

“With the global COVID-19 pandemic raging and plummeting oil revenues, threatening an Iraqi economic collapse, it’s important that our two governments work together to stop any reversal of the gains we’ve made in our efforts to defeat ISIS and stabilize the country.”

From the U.S. side, the strategic dialogue will be led by Under Secretary for Political Affairs, David Hale.

Whistleblower Reveals How She Was Silenced After Exposing Chinese Influence at UN

ALEX NEWMAN

This is part two of a story about a whistleblower who exposed corruption at the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. She was a former staffer at that office, which declined to comment when contacted by The Epoch Times about Reilly's accusations.

After almost seven years of suffering retaliation and abuse for blowing the whistle, Emma Reilly's case was finally heard before the United Nations in June 2019.

"The UN approach to whistleblowers is to ignore all of its internal rules, and all deadlines, and drag out the retaliation as long as possible in the hope the staff member will resign, or be found guilty in a phony investigation," she said, echoing the experiences of other U.N. whistleblowers who have tried to do the right thing.

Because of diplomatic immunity, it isn't possible for victims to sue the U.N. That means Reilly and the Chinese victims were at the mercy of a U.N. tribunal in which the U.N. itself sets the rules and changes them at will.

To win in what critics have referred to as the U.N.'s kangaroo court, she would have to prove a breach of contract—not that the U.N. was handing over names of Chinese dissidents and then beating up on the person who blew the whistle.

"The judge was clearly shocked by what he was hearing," Reilly said.

But the whole process was a giant sham, she suggested.

"The UN withheld important evidence and tried to make the entire case into a debate about my personality, as if it would somehow be acceptable for the UN to engage in a secret practice of facilitating identification of victims for the ongoing genocide in Xinjiang if I, as alleged, once took a document from someone's hand too quickly."

Incredibly to outside observers, when it looked as if the U.N. "judge" might rule in Reilly's favor, the judge was removed from the case and his post with less than 24 hours notice so he would have no time to issue a ruling.

Just this month, the new U.N. judge assigned to the case issued an order asking to hear from a list of "almost exclusively hostile witnesses," Reilly said.

She summarized the Kafkaesque



The U.N. Security Council meets on the Venezuelan crisis, in New York on Feb. 26, 2019.

developments: "When the UN realized it could be in danger of an embarrassing judgment revealing the cover-up, they removed the judge and assigned one who would effectively give them a second chance to retry the case, by calling witnesses on their behalf and shifting focus away from actively endangering people's lives and safety, to the fact that the people who did it didn't like me once they found out I reported them."

"This is an utter travesty of justice."

Permeated With Corruption

Reilly is hardly the first whistleblower to face such treatment from the U.N.

Another high-profile whistleblower, U.N. human rights official Anders Kompass, faced similar persecution after blowing the whistle on widespread rape of African children by U.N. "peacekeeping" troops.

Leaked emails later revealed that the highest echelons of U.N. management met in a secret meeting in Turin, Italy, to plot Kompass's removal.

In an explosive resignation letter, Kompass denounced the systemic corruption and the broken U.N. internal oversight mechanisms. He also expressed doubt that ethics could or would ever return to the U.N.

Even the former head of the U.N. Office of Internal Oversight Services, Undersecretary General Inga-

Britt Ahlenius, spoke out about the case, saying it showed a "decay of culture in the UN."

"These people were colluding against Kompass—and these are the supreme authorities at the UN," she said in a 2015 interview.

"The Central African Republic affair is a sign that shows how accountability will actually have to be demanded from the UN," Ahlenius said. "It won't come on its own."

Another tragedy, going back to the beginning of the U.N., involved whistleblower Povel Bang-Jensen of Denmark.

He blew the whistle on a U.N. coverup of Soviet atrocities in Hungary—a scandal that also involved the U.N. giving names of witnesses to their communist persecutors—before being persecuted himself by the U.N.

Eventually, Bang-Jensen ended up dead in a highly suspicious "suicide."

Reilly said her case was hardly an anomaly.

"It's systemic," she said. "The system of 'protection' is designed to fail. It's not a case of incompetence, but malice."

Outside Experts Agree

Geneva-based international attorney Edward Flaherty, who has knowledge of the case but doesn't represent Reilly, said her case highlights systematic problems within the U.N. that must be addressed.

"The disturbing case of Emma

Reilly shows how ineffectual whistleblower protection actually is today in the U.N.," Flaherty told The Epoch Times.

Reilly reported that the U.N.'s human-rights apparatus was secretly handing over information on human rights activists to the Chinese regime, "resulting in the arbitrary detention and even torture of them or their family members," he recounted.

And yet "every internal U.N. oversight body simply said that was OK and left her to face repeated retaliation at the hands of U.N. senior officials that has gone on for years."

Flaherty, who has followed developments on this case and has worked on other U.N.-related whistleblower claims, expressed shock at the U.N.'s decision to remove the judge.

"This was an act clearly designed to ensure he would not have time to issue his judgment, which, based on a prior judgment involving Reilly, was presumably going to again go against the U.N.," said Flaherty.

"This action violated every principle of independence of the judiciary," he said.

"But the U.N.'s appellate court last week rubber stamped the judge's removal, claiming it was simply the end of his term, failing to ask why no one from the U.N. had bothered to tell the judge in advance of his imminent discharge."

Regardless of what the U.N.'s policies are on paper, Flaherty said it's clear that the U.N.'s "so-called

internal whistleblower protection procedures" are "solely designed and operated to protect senior UN officials, not to determine truth or stop abuses of power."

As such, there is a "desperate need" for external oversight of the U.N.

This external oversight mechanism, he concluded, must have the power to order accountability for U.N. managers who hand the names of dissidents to Beijing, ignore the rape of children by U.N. "peacekeeping" troops, oversee the introduction by U.N. forces of deadly diseases such as cholera into places like Haiti, misappropriate taxpayer money, or ruthlessly retaliate against whistleblowers such as Reilly.

After working closely with whistleblowers exposing heinous crimes, another expert, attorney and former U.N. internal investigator Peter Gallo, echoed those concerns.

"The U.N. has gone to extraordinary lengths to misrepresent the facts, suppress this story, and retaliate against Ms. Reilly for having reported that the U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights was actually—rather than actually defending the people actually fighting to uphold human rights—was cooperating with governments that abuse them," he told The Epoch Times.

The U.N., he said, wanted to ignore the risk of people in China being tortured or dying of maltreatment in an effort to ensure that China would be elected to the Human Rights Council.

"This is an utter perversion that shows just how pointless the Human Rights Council really is," said Gallo, who leads the advocacy group Hear Their Cries supporting victims of U.N. abuses.

Reilly's case, like those of many other whistleblowers before her, shows "the utter hypocrisy of every facet of what the U.N. chooses to call its 'justice system,'" Gallo said, adding that it should be a "compulsory case study" for anyone who considers the U.N. to be a force for good in the world.

Alex Newman is an award-winning international journalist, educator, author, and consultant. He serves as the CEO of Liberty Sentinel Media and writes for diverse publications in the United States and abroad.

Taiwan Bans Zoom Amid Mounting Security Concerns

KATABELLA ROBERTS

Taiwan's government has banned all official use of video conferencing service Zoom amid mounting security concerns, marking the first time a government has imposed a formal action against the company.

In a statement published April 7, the Taiwanese government's executive branch said that "If agencies must hold remote videoconferencing for business needs, they should not use products with security concerns such as Zoom," and that "non-Chinese video software must be used."

"At present, all major international information service providers provide free software during the epidemic, such as Google or Microsoft. Under the security risk assessment, [these] can be considered for use," it continued.

Zoom's popularity has skyrocketed in recent weeks as strict social distancing measures and stay-at-home orders have



Zoom founder Eric Yuan speaks before the Nasdaq opening bell ceremony in New York City on April 18, 2019.

been rolled out in nations across the globe. Governments, businesses, and even schools have been forced to work from home amid the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) virus pandemic and have utilized the video conferencing service to maintain communication.

A statement published by Zoom's CEO Eric Yuan on April 1 said the company, which is headquartered in San Jose, California, has seen its daily user base grow from 10 million in December last year to more than 200 million last month, in-

cluding over 90,000 schools across 20 countries, adding that it had far surpassed their initial expectations.

However, Zoom has also come under scrutiny in recent months due to a range of security and privacy concerns and after the CEO admitted its encryption keys were being transmitted to servers in China in some cases. More recently, Zoom's privacy and security features are being carefully examined after hackers exploited a screen-sharing feature by hijacking meetings and online classrooms with messages in an emerging phenomenon known as "zoom-bombing."

Yuan has since apologized for mistakenly routing calls via China, explaining that it had occurred because the company had been dealing with a "massive increase" in demand. The CEO said the company has since corrected this and has stopped using that capacity as backup for non-Chinese clients. "We have also been working on improving our

encryption and will be working with experts to ensure we are following best practices," he added, but did not say how many users had been affected by the issue.

As China refuses to acknowledge Taiwan as an independent state—despite the self-ruled island having its own currency, military, and democratically-elected government—official data being relayed through China could be considered a privacy threat for the nation.

Shortly after Taiwan's announcement banning the video conferencing service, the German foreign ministry also restricted the use of Zoom on Wednesday, due to the lack of adequate encryption and "critical" weaknesses in the software, according to German newspaper Handelsblatt.

In the United States a number of schools have banned the use of Zoom for remote classes and switched to Microsoft Teams. New York City Attorney Gen-

eral Letitia James has also initiated investigations into Zoom over privacy and data security practices, while in California one of its shareholders has filed a lawsuit against the company accusing it of overstating its privacy standards and failing to disclose that its service was not end-to-end encrypted.

The shareholder, Michael Drieu, claimed in a court filing that a string of recent media reports highlighting the privacy flaws in Zoom's application have led to the company's stock to plummet.

More recently, Elon Musk's SpaceX banned employees from using the software because of "significant privacy and security concerns," while space agency NASA has done the same. Earlier this week, Google also banned the use of Zoom on employee computers as it "does not meet security standards."

Janita Kan contributed to this report.



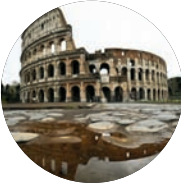
For years, many nations pursuing their economic interests sought to forge close ties with China’s ruling communist regime. These nations turned a blind eye as the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) quietly subverted their countries. The CCP was allowed to spread its propaganda freely, whitewashing its human rights

atrocities, while infiltrating all layers of society, from school campuses to think tanks. This has not only hurt economies and created financial dependence on China, but also affected people’s beliefs and morals, as principles have been abandoned in order to accommodate the CCP’s demands. National security has been put at risk by allowing

the CCP to infiltrate military and communications equipment. As the CCP virus, commonly known as coronavirus, has spread across the globe, countries that have close ties with the CCP have been hit hard. Meanwhile, are

Italy

Belt and Road Initiative
In March 2019, Italy was the first and only G-7 nation to sign on to China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI, also known as One Belt, One Road), despite disapproval from its European Union allies and the United States. Many in the West are concerned that the BRI could be the CCP’s Trojan horse project to infiltrate the EU. In addition, Italy’s



minister of industry said that Chinese tech giant Huawei, which has established links to the CCP’s military, should be allowed to participate in building the country’s 5G network infrastructure. Since May 2016, Chinese police officers have been permitted to patrol Rome and Milan during peak tourism season.

Over the past decade, Italy has received billions of euros in Chinese investment.

Japan

Business Interactions
According to a survey conducted by Teikoku Databank Corp., a total of 13,685 Japanese companies were operating in China in May 2019, of which 68.7 percent were companies with annual sales of more than 1 billion Japanese yen—an increase of 8.4 percent compared to 2016.

Iran

Trading Partners
The CCP agreed in 2019 to invest US\$400 billion in Iran’s oil, gas, manufacturing, and transportation industries over the next 25 years.



Senior U.S. officials have estimated that 50 to 70 percent of Iran’s oil exports are flowing to China.

After the United States sanctioned Iran, China in 2019 continued to purchase Iranian crude oil in large quantities.

Belt and Road Initiative
Iran is a key part of the BRI. A large number of Chinese workers are building railways in Iran, preparing to connect China with Iran and, in turn, Europe.

Tech Cooperation
Chinese tech giant ZTE has been sanctioned by the United States for violating court agreements related to its violations of sanctions on Iran, while Huawei and its CFO Meng Wanzhou have been charged by U.S. prosecutors for violating Iran sanctions.

Military Assistance
The CCP has provided Iran with missiles, fighter aircraft, and other weapons for decades. It also secretly helped Iran establish its chemical weapon projects and supported Iran behind the scenes in its nuclear weapons research and development. In 1991, the CCP sold Iran 1.6 metric tons of uranium products that allowed Iran to develop its nuclear technology.

United States

Ideological Infiltration
The CCP has launched a multibillion-dollar publicity campaign in the United States, promoting its state-run media in prominent locations such as New York’s Times Square.

The CCP not only controls most Chinese-language media in America, but also buys ad space in mainstream American media outlets to disseminate its propaganda. As a result, these U.S. outlets have carried many ads, designed to look like news content, that praise the regime while whitewashing its abuses.



“Thousand Talents Program,” a Chinese recruitment program that has been criticized for facilitating the transfer of intellectual property to China. Several Chinese American researchers who were in the program have been charged with stealing trade secrets or failing to disclose their ties to China.

Major American companies also have supplied the regime with surveillance technology used to monitor and control the Chinese population.

Military Supply Chain Infiltration
In 2011, a bipartisan congressional report found a widespread problem in U.S. military equipment: the use of counterfeit electronic parts originating from China. It also found that the Chinese regime was using various methods



A billboard advertising Chinese state media Xinhua, in New York’s Times Square on Aug. 1, 2011.

Meanwhile, the CCP’s Unified Front operation has been infiltrating overseas Chinese communities. The United Front Work Department is a CCP agency specially tasked with conducting overseas influence operations. As a result of these operations, many overseas Chinese in the United States have shown staunch support for the Party.

Science and Technology Cooperation
The CCP has embarked on a wide-ranging campaign to influence the U.S. government, think tanks, enterprises, and nongovernmental organizations.

A large number of American and Chinese scholars have joined the CCP’s

efforts to misrepresent the parts as being legitimate.

Chinese components had been banned for use in U.S. military equipment, yet it was revealed this ban was waived in 2014 for the production of the F-35 fighter jet, in which magnets from China were required for specialty equipment.

The U.S. government ordered a review of the military’s reliance on foreign materials in 2018, which found that the U.S. military supply chain was heavily reliant on China. The Defense Department report detailed how China gradually took over supply chain markets.

Google has an AI (artificial intelligence) center in Beijing and is collaborating on the technology with Tsinghua University, a prestigious Chinese academic institution that also conducts AI research for the Chinese military.

Economic Cooperation
Wall Street, eager to raise capital for the regime, has advocated for closer economic ties with China. Since at least 2018, three major indices (MSCI, FTSE GEIS, and Bloomberg Barclays) have endorsed China’s A shares and Chinese government bonds, injecting hundreds of billions of dollars into China’s economy.

Political Penetration
The regime has targeted U.S. states and cities through “sister city” programs and also has sought to influence local elections through campaigns on Chinese social media app WeChat.

For instance, the regime and New York state have established the Joint Working Group on Trade and Investment Cooperation and often organize forums on trade and investment cooperation.

Spain

Political Friends
In 1990, Spain became the first country among EU nations to send a foreign minister to China after international sanctions were placed on Beijing for its brutal crackdown on democracy protesters during the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre.

The king of Spain became the first European head of state to visit China after the massacre, in 1995.

The government also established a comprehensive strategic partnership with the Chinese regime in 2005. Additionally, eight Confucius Institutes have been opened in Spain.

An Epoch Times investigation revealed that in 2019, the director of the Royal Theater in Madrid was pressured by the Chinese ambassador to cancel performances by Shen Yun Performing Arts, a U.S.-based company that depicts traditional Chinese culture, as well as modern-day human rights abuses by the Chinese regime.



King Juan Carlos of Spain (R), the first head of state from the European Union to visit China after the Chinese regime’s 1989 suppression of democracy activists, walks with then-Chinese dictator Jiang Zemin, in Beijing on March 29, 1995.

PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES; (PHOTO ILLUSTRATION) THE EPOCH TIMES



Spreads Globally

Chinese Communist Party severely affected

etary supply lines and sell its
ent, despite warnings that it
ck doors.
nonly known as the novel
across the world, nations
the CCP have been notably
as where people have been

fiercely opposed to the CCP’s influence, such as Hong Kong and Taiwan, have seen a relatively smaller impact.
In this infographic, we explore how the CCP has systematically subverted countries around the world, as well as how some nations have stood against its influence.

REGIONS THAT OPPOSE THE CCP

BILLY H.C. KWOK/GETTY IMAGES



Demonstrators hold up illuminated smartphones during a pro-democracy rally in Hong Kong on Aug 2, 2019.

France

Close Diplomatic and Economic Ties
France was the first Western power to set up formal diplomatic relations with the communist Chinese regime in 1964. Since then, the two countries have fostered close economic ties and military cooperation.



Major French corporations, such as nuclear power company Orano (formerly known as Areva), have made heavy investments in China. Orano has built 15 nuclear power plants in China. In total, France had invested US\$18.15 billion in China as of September 2019.

The countries’ bilateral trade volume reached US\$58.55 billion in 2019.

Chinese tech giant Huawei’s European headquarters are located in France. The firm has a number of French projects, and the French government has not ruled out allowing Huawei to participate in building the country’s 5G infrastructure.

Meanwhile, French and Chinese generals have held 14 strategic dialogues, the most recent in Paris in July 2018.

In addition, the P4 biosafety lab at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, located near ground zero of the CCP virus pandemic, was designed with assistance from France’s Institut Merieux.

The lab handles level 4 pathogens, the most dangerous. A cooperation deal between the two countries, to conduct joint training and scientific research, was signed in 2004.

Notably, the lab also has ties to the Chinese military, drawing international concern about China’s bioweapons programs.

Germany

Largest Trading Partner in Europe
Although German Chancellor Angela Merkel has drawn attention to China’s human rights abuses, her administration has adopted Beijing-friendly policies.



China has been Germany’s largest trading partner in Europe for four consecutive years. In 2019, the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) imported approximately 28.1 billion euros worth of goods from China, accounting for about one-quarter of Germany’s China imports. The state’s exports to China amounted to 11.8 billion euros, accounting for about one-eighth of all German exports to China.

There are 3,000 Chinese companies in Germany, of which 1,100 are located in NRW. Huawei and ZTE’s European headquarters also are located there. In addition, Chinese tech firms Oppo, Vivo, and Xiaomi all have investments in the state.

NRW is actively participating in the BRI, an infrastructure investment project designed to connect Europe, Asia, and Africa via a network of transport routes, and the city of Duisburg in NRW has become an important transit hub for the China-Europe train line. The state shares 20 sister cities and 200 sister universities with China.

Hong Kong

Large-Scale Anti-CCP Protests
When millions of Hong Kong residents took to the streets last year to protest Beijing’s encroachment on the city, the CCP endorsed the Hong Kong government’s suppression of protesters through intimidation tactics and violence. The police’s use of force, including tear gas, pepper spray, and batons, in dispelling protesters was condemned by foreign governments and international organizations. Thousands of protesters were injured during the demonstrations.

Protesters decried the CCP’s tyrannical rule, which has resulted in diminishing freedoms and autonomy in Hong Kong, and adopted protest slogans such as “Heaven will destroy the CCP” and “May the Chinese Communist Party fall.”

According to a University of Hong Kong poll, Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam’s approval rating fell to 18.21 percent in February 2020—a record low for the leader.

Taiwan

Tough Stance Against Chinese Regime
For years, the CCP has tried to swing public opinion in Taiwan. Through economic coercion, propaganda, and military threats, the CCP has sought to intimidate and influence Taiwanese citizens into accepting Chinese rule.



In January 2019, Beijing proposed that Taiwan should accept Chinese rule under a “one country, two systems” framework, the same model that is now being used to govern Hong Kong.

Six months later, a pro-democracy movement erupted in Hong Kong, exposing for many Taiwanese the failure of China’s ruling model and solidifying their commitment to the island’s democratic system not found in the mainland.

Russia

Preventing Predatory Investment by China
The CCP made predatory investments in Russia, such as massive timber logging operations in the Siberian and Far East regions, and planned to build a bottled water plant on Lake Baikal. The projects were met with local protests, and in 2019, the Baikal plant was blocked by a local court. As a result of this push back, Russia has become more cautious toward China.

Russia also recently canceled the China-funded Moscow–Kazan high-speed rail project.

LAURENT THOMET/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



A Russian official checks passengers’ temperatures inside a plane that arrived from Beijing on March 21, 2020.

South Korea

Beijing-Friendly Policies

On Jan. 14, 2020, South Korean President Moon Jae-in said his government would continue to strengthen cultural exchanges with China and expand person-to-person ties. At the same time, South Korea would continue to advance its New Northern Policy, which seeks to enhance ties with Eurasia while pursuing cooperation with China’s BRI.



After the outbreak of the CCP virus in South Korea, Moon refused to close South Korea’s borders to Chinese tourists. As a result, 1.46 million angry citizens petitioned for his impeachment.

In 2016, South Korea succumbed

to CCP pressure and canceled local performances of Shen Yun Performing Arts.

Trade and Investment Relations

From January to September 2019, China was the largest export market for South Korea, with exports valuing a total of US\$99.8 billion. Moreover, 4.4 million Chinese visited South Korea during that time frame—an increase of 27 percent year-on-year.

South Korean tech conglomerate Samsung Electronics plans to invest US\$8 billion in its chip factory in China in order to increase its production of NAND memory cards. Samsung is also a major supplier for Huawei.

Chinese Regime Bigger Threat to US Elections Than Russia, Barr Says

JANITA KAN

The Chinese regime is a bigger threat to the U.S. election process than Russia, Attorney General William Barr said April 8.

The statement comes as the regime is under intense scrutiny from the United States for its economic espionage efforts, intellectual property theft, and more recently, its lack of transparency, leading to the worldwide spread of the CCP virus.

Barr made the comments during an interview with Fox News, while discussing a range of topics, such as the effect of the pandemic on American society and civil liberties, and the threat the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) poses to U.S. politics, academia, and businesses.

When asked whether he thought China or Russia was a greater threat to U.S. election security, Barr answered that it was the former.

“And not just to the election process, but I think across the board. There’s simply no comparison. China is a very serious threat to the United States geopolitically, economically, militarily, and a threat to the integrity of our institutions, given their ability to influence things,” Barr said during the interview.

In recent years, the Justice Department (DOJ) and the FBI have ramped up efforts to crack down on Chinese infiltration through attempts by state-backed companies to steal trade secrets from U.S. companies. The FBI said it was conducting roughly 1,000 investigations into Chinese intellectual property theft as of February.

The DOJ also is heavily engaged in confronting Beijing’s campaign to aggressively steal information. The department launched the “China Initiative” in 2018 to combat such



U.S. Attorney General William Barr speaks at the National Sheriffs’ Association conference in Washington on Feb. 10, 2020.

Around 80 percent of all economic espionage prosecutions allege activity that would benefit the Chinese regime, the DOJ stated in a report.

threats, which has resulted in at least 39 China-related espionage prosecutions, including cases involving Chinese intelligence officers, former U.S. intelligence officials, Chinese nationals, and naturalized U.S. citizens from China.

Around 80 percent of all economic espionage prosecutions allege activity that would benefit the Chinese regime, the DOJ stated in a report. In a recent example, a Chinese national who worked as an associate scientist at a U.S. petroleum company was sentenced to two years in prison for stealing proprietary information worth more than US\$1 billion from his employer.

In another notable example, a Harvard professor was arrested in January for allegedly lying about his

involvement in China’s Thousand Talents Program, while hiding tens of thousands of dollars of funding he received from the program.

The Thousand Talents Program is the regime’s recruitment initiative, designed to “attract, recruit, and cultivate high-level scientific talent,” to further the regime’s ambitions in science, economy, and national security. The program also tries to bring in Chinese overseas talent and foreign experts to share their knowledge and reward individuals for stealing proprietary information, the DOJ said.

“The Chinese are engaged in a full-court blitzkrieg of stealing American technology, influence our political system, trying to steal secrets at our research universities, and so forth,” Barr said.

He noted that the United States is trying to “tighten up” programs that allow Chinese researchers to work in the country, while adding that a number of universities are working with the DOJ to understand the nature of the threat.

“But it’s not just universities; universities are just part of the problem,” he said. “But a lot of American businesses just for short-term profit [are doing work in China or with the Chinese]. ... They know over the long run, it’s not going to be a long-term benefit to their business, but just for short-term gain, they are perhaps not doing what is necessary in the long-term interest of the United States.”

The attorney general’s comments come as the United States battles the burgeoning CCP virus pandemic, which has already caused widespread human and economic devastation. Several U.S. lawmakers have criticized the CCP for its mismanagement and suppression of information in the early stages that resulted in the spread of the virus, which causes the potentially deadly disease called COVID-19.

Rep. Chris Smith (R-N.J.) penned an op-ed, published on Fox News, that argues the CCP is responsible for misrepresenting information to the World Health Organization in the initial stages of the outbreak.

Other lawmakers have also raised similar concerns and have called for international investigations against the regime. Rep. Jim Banks (R-Ind.), who previously called on Beijing to pay reparations to the United States for mishandling the pandemic, has urged the federal government to bring a case against China for COVID-19 damages to the United Nations International Court of Justice.

Cathy He contributed to this report.

Trump Halts WHO Funding Over Its Handling of Virus

CONTINUED FROM A1

increase in cases worldwide, and it may be much more than that.”

Trump pointed out in a Twitter post on April 7 that the WHO is closely aligned with the Chinese communist regime despite the United States contributing the largest portion of its funding.

U.S. contributions to the United Nations’ organisation last year exceeded US\$400 million, which is roughly 15 percent of its budget, according to the State Department.

“They seem to err always on the side of China. And we fund it,” Trump said.

Trump said Washington would discuss with global health partners what it will do with the millions of dollars that would normally go to the WHO and said the United States would continue to engage with the organisation while addressing issues with its effectiveness.

The temporary freeze on funding extends Trump’s “America First” agenda, which has so far seen the United States quit the U.N. Human Rights Council, the U.N. cultural agency UNESCO, a global accord to tackle climate change, and the Iran nuclear deal.

The U.S. review of the WHO is likely to take 60-90 days.

Australian Response

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said on April 15 that while he sympathises with the U.S. decision to cut WHO funding, Australia would not be following suit because of the organisation’s work in the Pacific.

Morrison told Perth’s 6PR radio that Australia would remain in the WHO and push for reform of within.

“We work closely with them so that we’re not going to throw the baby out with the bathwater here. They’re also not immune from criticism and immune from doing things better,” he said.

Australian taxpayers contribute nearly A\$53 million a year to the organisation.

They're also not immune from criticism and immune from doing things better.

Scott Morrison, Australian Prime Minister



WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus at a daily COVID-19 briefing in Geneva on March 11, 2020.

Morrison is now facing pressure from both Liberal and Labor MPs to review Australia’s funding to determine if conditions should be added to the agreement given the criticisms of WHO’s handling of the CCP virus.

China-Bias?

The WHO has repeatedly praised China’s leaders despite experts and unearthed evidence showing how officials manipulated the true situation in the country where the CCP virus emerged last year.

American lawmakers have called on Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director-general of the WHO, to resign amid accusations of helping the Chinese Communist Party cover up the outbreak and probing whether WHO is complicit in the manipulation.

“We know communist China is lying about how many cases and deaths they have, what they knew and when they knew it—and the WHO never bothered to investigate further. Their inaction cost lives,” Sen. Rick Scott (R-Fla.) said in a statement.

“We could cut funding or we could tie future funding to certain changes,” Scott added to the Daily Signal. “It is supposed to be the World Health Organisation, world health, but it panders to China.”

Reporters have regularly pressed WHO officials on China’s role in the CCP virus spreading around the world but each time the officials have deflected answering directly,

often saying things similar to statements from top Chinese officials. The WHO has also faced questions on its dealings with Taiwan.

WHO officials said during a briefing after Trump’s remarks that funding should not be cut.

“We are still in the acute phase of a pandemic so now is not the time to cut back on funding,” Dr. Hans Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe, told a virtual briefing in response to a question about Trump’s remarks.

Dr. Bruce Aylward, senior adviser to the WHO director-general, also defended the U.N. agency’s relationship with China, saying its work with Beijing authorities was important to understand the outbreak which began in Wuhan.

“It was absolutely critical in the early part of this outbreak to have full access to everything possible, to get on the ground and work with the Chinese to understand this,” he told reporters.

Reuters contributed to this report.



The logo of the WHO is pictured on the facade of its headquarters in Geneva on Oct. 24, 2017.

Emergency Field Hospital Dismantled After Treating No CCP Virus Patients

JACK PHILLIPS

An emergency field hospital set up by the military in Washington state last week is slated to be dismantled after it treated no CCP virus patients, said the governor’s office.

The hospital was built inside the Century Link Field Event Center in Seattle. It will now be returned to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) so it can be sent to another state that has a greater need, according to a press release from Gov. Jay Inslee’s office.

“Don’t let this decision give you the impression that we are out of the woods. We have to keep our guard up and continue to stay home unless conducting essential activities to keep everyone healthy,” Inslee said in a release.

About 300 soldiers from Fort Carson, Colorado, and Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Tacoma built the facility inside the convention center. It is normally home to the Seattle Seahawks and the Seattle Sounders, but it was repurposed for Chinese Communist Party (CCP) virus patients.

“We requested this resource before our physical distancing strategies were fully implemented and we had considerable concerns that our hospitals would be overloaded with COVID-19 cases,” Inslee added. “But we haven’t beat this virus yet, and until we do, it has the potential to spread rapidly if we don’t continue the measures we’ve put in place.”

The facility housed about 250 beds, X-ray machines, intensive care facilities, and had more features, according to reports.

Local station KUOW reported that the hospital never had a single patient.

“With that said, I’m incredibly appreciative of the men and women from the 627th Hospital Center out of Fort Carson in Colorado. These soldiers uprooted their lives to help Washingtonians when we needed them most,” Insee added.

Beijing's Attempt to Influence Wisconsin Official Backfires, Results in Resolution Condemning Virus Cover-up

CONTINUED FROM A1

introduced were it not for the Chinese consulate's actions. He received two emails from an official in the Chinese consulate in Chicago, asking him to pass a resolution the consulate drafted that would tout Wisconsin state's support for Beijing's efforts to combat the outbreak.

When the senator's staff handed him a printout of the first email, dated Feb. 26, he saw that it came from a Hotmail account and thus dismissed it as a fake.

"I threw it away and thought nothing of it," Roth said.

But when he received a followup email on March 10, the senator asked his staff to verify the email address. After inquiries through state government sources, Roth's staff confirmed that the message was indeed sent from the consulate. Roth was told that Chinese consulate officials routinely use private email accounts.

"I got really angry, because ... by that point, the United States started to be hit by the coronavirus ... and we're trying to prepare, and we realized that we've been lied to," Roth said. "I was more than angry. I was downright furious."

So he sent a one-word response to the consulate: "Nuts."

"Then I signed my name and that was it," the senator said. The consulate official replied back expressing shock to Roth's email, but he didn't respond.

A few days later, Roth decided to take further action. He said he told his staff, "We are introducing a resolution on China, and we're going to pass it; it's just not going to be the one China wants."

The Chinese consulate in Chicago didn't return a request for comment.

Regime Obstruction

Roth said the resolution "lays out point by point" how the CCP has been "lying to the world" in relation to the outbreak.

It also calls out the Chinese consulate's attempts to influence Roth: "The Chinese Consulate reached out to the Wisconsin Senate President requesting that the Senate pass a resolution – written by the Chinese Consulate – including propaganda and falsehoods such as: 'China has been transparent and quick in sharing key information of the virus with the WHO and the international community, thus creating a window of opportunity for other countries to make timely response.'"

While Chinese authorities first reported on the outbreak in Wuhan on



Wisconsin state senators in Madison, Wisconsin, on Dec. 4, 2018.

I got really angry, because ... by that point, the United States started to be hit by the coronavirus ... and we realized that we've been lied to.

Roger Roth, Wisconsin Senate President



Falun Gong practitioners demonstrate in front of the Chinese Consulate in Chicago, Illinois, on July 20, 2009.

Dec. 31, 2019, a South China Morning Post report, citing government records, said the regime knew about the first patient in November 2019. Authorities also silenced and reprimanded those who tried to sound the alarm about the outbreak in late December.

And while the regime confirmed human-to-human transmission on Jan. 20, evidence shows authorities knew the virus was spreading between humans well before that time. "The only window of opportunity they gave the world was an opportunity for this virus to spread around the world and turn into a pandemic," Roth said.

The resolution also acknowledges that the Wisconsin senate "stands in solidarity with the Chinese people," a reflection of the senator's efforts to distinguish between the Chinese people and the CCP.

"I think that the Chinese people are a wonderful and great people," Roth said. "They've just been held hostage by this brutal, oppressive regime for the last 70 years."

Oppressive Regime

The resolution also highlights the communist regime's widespread human rights abuses, including its treatment of Tibetans, its internment of Uyghur Muslims, and forced organ harvesting from prisoners of conscience, including Falun Gong practitioners.

"When you look at the forced abortions and sterilizations, and organ harvesting, you realize that this Communist Party of China is just a terribly oppressive and brutal regime," he said.

It was for this reason that Roth said Wisconsin should not lend legitimacy to the CCP by passing the resolution proposed by the Chinese consulate, which the regime would in turn use for its domestic propaganda efforts.

"It's so imperative that we in Wisconsin don't do that and that governments around the world don't do that," the senator said. "Because we're giving legitimacy to a government that has the worst human rights violations of any modern state that I'm aware of."



Bill Gates at an event in New York City on Nov. 6, 2019.

AG Barr Opposes Bill Gates Proposal for COVID-19 Vaccine Certificates

ZACHARY STIEBER

Attorney General William Barr came out in opposition to a proposal floated by Bill Gates for people to eventually gain certificates for being vaccinated against the CCP virus.

"I'm very concerned about the slippery slope in terms of continuing encroachments on personal liberty. I do think during the emergency, appropriate, reasonable steps are fine," Barr said on Wednesday night when asked about the proposal during an appearance on Fox News's "Ingraham Angle."

Pressed to be more specific, he added, "I'd be a little concerned about that, the tracking of people and so forth, generally, especially going forward over a long period of time."

Gates is funding multiple efforts to produce a vaccine against the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) virus, commonly known as novel coronavirus. During a question-and-answer session on Reddit, an online forum, he floated the idea of a certificate when asked what changes society will have to make in light of the pandemic.

"The question of which businesses should keep going is tricky. Certainly food supply and the health system. We still need water, electricity and the internet. Supply chains for critical things need to be maintained. Countries are still figuring out what to keep running," he said.

"Eventually we will have some digital certificates to show who has recovered or been tested recently or when we have a vaccine who has received it," he added.

A number of commenters reacted strongly to the proposal, saying it validated conspiracy theorists about world leaders wanting mandatory marks for vaccines.

Asked about backlash to the proposal, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation told Reuters: "The reference to 'digital certificates' relates to efforts to create an open source digital platform with the goal of expanding access to safe, home-based testing."

Barr said there are situations where liberties can be restricted, such as during war and pandemics, but added the Department of Justice was going to look at whether "the draconian measures that are being adopted are fully justified and there are not alternative ways of protecting people."

When, on April 30, restrictions the U.S. government put forth expire, officials should let people adapt, Barr added.

"I think we have to allow people to adapt more than we have, and not just tell people to go home and hide under the bed, but allow them to use other ways, social distancing and other means, to protect themselves," he said.

Trump Campaign Sues TV Station Over 'Manipulated Audio' Ad on COVID-19

CONTINUED FROM A1

plaint that the "deceitful alteration of the audio" made it seem as though the word "this" referred to the virus, while it "instead refers directly to the Democrats' politicization of the pandemic."

The CCP virus, commonly known as novel coronavirus, has spread aggressively across the United States, with a Johns Hopkins tally noting more than 558,000 infections across America as of April 13, while the number of recorded fatalities attributed to COVID-19 stands at more than 22,000.

The words "The coronavirus—this is their new hoax," identified in the complaint, came from a Trump rally in North Charleston, South Carolina, on Feb. 28, according to multiple fact-checkers, including Snopes and PolitiFact, which provided the full context of the president's remarks.

"Now the Democrats are politi-

cizing the coronavirus, you know that, right? Coronavirus, they're politicizing it. We did one of the great jobs. You say, 'How's President Trump doing?' They go, 'Oh, not good, not good.' They have no clue. They don't have any clue. They can't even count their votes in Iowa. They can't even count. No, they can't. They can't count their votes," Trump said at the rally.

"One of my people came up to me and said, 'Mr. President, they tried to beat you on Russia, Russia, Russia. That didn't work out too well. They couldn't do it. They tried the impeachment hoax. That was not a perfect conversation. They tried anything. They tried it over and over. They've been doing it since you got in. It's all turning. They lost. It's all turning.' Think of it. Think of it. And this is their new hoax," he said.

The audio referred to in the complaint appears to have spliced



Pedestrians walk past the GE building where the NBC headquarters is located in New York City on Feb. 6, 2007.

disparate parts of Trump's remarks from that rally.

On Feb. 29, the day after the rally, Trump explained his remarks in a press conference.

"I'm not talking about what's happening here; I'm talking what they're doing," he said, referring to Democrats. "That's the hoax."

The Trump campaign sent the Wisconsin station a cease and desist letter on March 25, the complaint stated, after which WJFW-

NBC allegedly aired the ad 36 more times over 11 days.

"It is disappointing that WJFW-NBC would knowingly continue to broadcast this blatantly false ad and perpetrate falsehoods on the American people, even after the Trump campaign provided proof in good faith of the ad's falsity," Jenna Ellis, senior legal adviser to the Trump campaign, said in a statement from the campaign.

LUIS ACOSTA/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



A Cellist plays on the balcony of her apartment during the mandatory isolation from 5 p.m. to 5 a.m. in Panama City on March 23, 2020.

This Gift of Solitude and Time

GARY L. GREGG



In the 21st century, we are over-informed, endlessly stimulated, and undereducated. We have a world of information at our fingertips. Website after website has collected the latest (and the oldest, too) on pretty much any topic imaginable. YouTubers have created a “how-to” video for every project you can imagine and promises of “five minutes” to fix any flaw in your physique. Every newspaper and magazine can be delivered to your home at any time of day or night. Right now, you’re likely reading this on your computer or phone locked away in your home (as I wrote it locked away and alone with my computer in my sun-room.) And then there’s the cycle of press conferences of presidents, governors, and mayors, and wall-to-wall coverage of the virus that seems as bottomless as our entertainment options. We have Netflix and Hulu and Disney and HBO and just plain old cable TV. And we have video games that allow us to play with fellow gamers all over the world. Locked away in our homes, we are surrounded by continual information and waves of potential stimulation. To be bored in the 21st century is to commit the sins of hubris and ingratitude. We have so much and yet we want. The current pandemic has upended our lives. Many of us are struggling with social isolation, unemployment, and stress. Our daily routines have been upended. Our favorite restaurants and bars are closed. Our friends are unavailable to us. This is the Great Disruption of 2020. We can’t determine the circumstances of the times in which we live, but we can determine how we deal with them. Rather than focusing on the challenges brought by the disruption, rather than obsessing over the latest press conference or scientific model, we have the chance to treat this disruption as an opportunity. It may well be, frankly, the best opportunity we will ever have for the kind of deep study and preparation our age of information and stimulation ordinarily makes so difficult. Without the time spent getting ourselves together in the morning, then commuting to and then back home again

from work; without the distraction of colleagues popping into the office; without, unfortunately for so many, even the distraction of a job for which to work from home, we have the perfect time to focus on our own futures. For many of us, this should be a boon time for exploration and growth. Here are a few thoughts on how to make the very most of this time that may never happen for you again. **What to Do** First, take the time to be quiet. We live in a noisy culture. We are constantly subject to stimulation that comes from other people, technology, and corporations. Music, podcasts, television, traffic, and other conversations are the background of our lives. We often use this noise intentionally to distract ourselves from ourselves. Rather than face tough choices, deeper reasons, and self-examination, we let the noise of 21st-century life anesthetize ourselves to our selves. Take time to just be quiet. Sit in a quiet room and think. No music. No news. No television. No phone. Just be and let yourself think. You might be surprised, as so many of my students are, at how difficult quiet solitude has become. Perhaps, after a time, you can pick up a pen and a notebook and journal about your thoughts, experiences, hopes, and dreams. But, the writing should not distract you from the thinking and the experience of solitude. Second, when faced with all the temptations, ask yourself regularly through the day, “Is this making me better than I was yesterday?” Is this making me a better father, mother, son, citizen, athlete, teacher, mentor, friend? If your answer is “no,” then stop doing it and do something that does have the potential of leading to your own growth and development. Third, start reading—and I mean really reading. Pick your news source and don’t further obsess over news you can’t do anything about. Rather, take that extra time and start reading some serious books. Your chance to experience a wider life is cut off from you for the moment, but 10,000 life experiences are waiting for you in novels, histories, and biographies. Don’t exchange your lack of physical experiences in the world with mere en-

Don’t exchange your lack of physical experiences in the world with mere entertainment on the couch.

tainment on the couch. Exchange it for a vibrant new set of intellectual experiences that might make you better each day than you were the day before. Fourth, when you are tired of reading, start listening to a podcast or an audiobook while you take a walk or make lunch or clean the house. Whatever you choose to listen to or read, make it something that you wouldn’t otherwise have gotten to. Pick up that book you never really read in college. Remove some of the guilt for not having read that classic you have occasionally claimed to know. Make your choices worth this gift of time you have been given. This is a painful time for many of us. But it doesn’t have to be idle time. If you choose to make it so, this forced isolation can prove to be among the most rewarding and formative times of your life. Choose to discipline yourself to do the work you know you ought to. Choose to grow your imagination, to live a life that will never be possible for you otherwise. Choose to find heroes to emulate and villains to avoid becoming like. Wade into the vast intellectual and imaginative resources that are your inheritance. Choose to lead yourself at this time of preparation so that you can better lead others in the challenges to come.

Gary L. Gregg is director of the McConnell Center and is host of the brand new McConnell Center Podcast.

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

A man reads a book outside a house in the village of Eguisheim, France, on April 11, 2020.

SEBASTIEN BOZON/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



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ABOUT US

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

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

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

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

We report respectfully, compassionately, and rigorously.

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

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

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

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How the Specter of Communism Is Ruling Our World

Using the Law for Evil

The Epoch Times here serializes “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 Ten (Cont.)

3. How Communism Warps the Law in the West

c. Passing Evil Laws

Altering the Spirit of the Constitution: Interpretation and Case Law (cont.)

Judges rule according to the law, and laws are passed or repealed based on the Constitution. Thus, in order to change society through legislation, it is imperative to change the Constitution. In the United States, amending the Constitution requires support from two-thirds of Congress, and three-quarters of the states. These strict measures make it difficult to amend the Constitution outright.

The progressives’ strategy is therefore not to amend the Constitution, but to change the original meaning of the words in the Constitution by reinterpreting them. They regard the Constitution as a “living” and continually “evolving” document, and going on precedent set by the Supreme Court, encode the views of the left into law. In this way, they covertly exert their will over the Constitution, which is tantamount to undermining it.

Divine commandment is no longer the highest principle. The Constitution has taken a heavy beating under the gavels of liberal Supreme Court justices. Since Supreme Court rulings are final and must be respected by even the president, the judicial branch is taking an ever-increasing share of authority among the three branches established by the Founding Fathers. In practice, Supreme Court justices have acquired partial legislative and even executive powers.

Liberal Supreme Court justices have brought a number of consequences to American society that are severe and difficult to remedy. As things stand, the Supreme Court can, through case hearings, order the removal of the Ten Commandments from public schools and spaces, rewrite criminal procedures, raise taxes, recognize the right to abortion and same-sex marriage, allow the publication and display of pornography, and so on.

The growing supremacy of the judiciary combined with the ruling of liberal judges has given the specter of communism an important tool for achieving its designs.

Promoting Obscene Content in the Name of Freedom

The 1960s was an era of deep transformation across American society. Left-wing students drove the anti-war movement, rock-and-roll, hippie culture, the feminist movement, sexual liberation, and other anti-traditional currents, raising chaos throughout the country.

The chief justice of the Supreme Court in this period was the liberal Earl Warren. During Warren’s term as chief justice, the Supreme Court made very influential and far-reaching rulings. This included the prohibition of prayers in public school and the allowance of publications featuring sexually explicit material.

In her book “The Supremacists: The Tyranny of Judges and How to Stop It,” scholar Phyllis Schlafly provided statistics showing that from 1966 to 1970, the Supreme Court made 34 rulings that overruled lower level court decisions to prohibit obscene content. The Supreme Court’s rulings were not signed, and majority consisted of just one or two lines. Put another way, even the justices themselves didn’t bother to rationalize their decisions.

In 1966, Hollywood lifted its restrictions on showing obscene content in film. A profusion of various types of pornographic works soon followed, and today they have saturated every corner of society.

The First Amendment of the Constitution guarantees freedom of speech. It was intended to mean the right to express political opinions, not to manufacture and disseminate pornography.

Legalizing Drug Abuse

As the world got ready to welcome the new year on December 31, 2017, CNN broadcast a piece of footage with mul-

tiples shots of a female reporter smoking marijuana. Visibly under the influence, she appeared disoriented and unaware of her surroundings. The broadcast received widespread criticism.

In 1996, California became the first U.S. state to legalize marijuana as a prescription drug, and many states soon followed suit. By 2012, Colorado and Washington legalized marijuana for “recreational use,” that is, they legalized drug abuse. In these two states, planting, manufacturing, and selling marijuana to adults is completely legal. It has also been legalized in California. In June 2018, the Canadian government announced that marijuana use would become legal nationwide in the near future.

Aside from causing serious damage to the human body, drugs are psychologically addicting. Once dependent, people can abandon all moral inhibitions in order to obtain more of the drug. On the other hand, those who support legalizing marijuana believe as long as marijuana can be obtained legally, that would be an effective way to reduce drug trafficking. They say that legalization allows stricter regulation over the drug, and accordingly a reduction in drug-related crime.

Divine commandment is no longer the highest principle. The Constitution has taken a heavy beating under the gavels of liberal Supreme Court justices.

By legalizing drugs, many governments anticipate saving billions of dollars in revenue. But it’s not hard to see that as greater numbers of people become addicts, lose their desire to work, and suffer poor health, productivity will fall, and the aggregate wealth created by society will shrink. It is self-evident that legalizing drugs cannot increase government revenue in the long term.

Furthermore, judgment of right or wrong shouldn’t be based on economic profit, but on divine standards. Traditional morality sees the human form as sacred and created in divine likeness. Western religions believe the body is the “temple of the Holy Ghost,” while in the East, it was believed that the body could improve through cultivation to become a Buddha or a Tao. Drug abuse, then, is an act of desecration.

According to a report by the Los Angeles Times, one of the important figures lobbying for the legalization of marijuana in the United States is a wealthy progressive. In March 2017, six senators wrote letters to the U.S. State Department requesting that this individual be investigated for using his foundation to promote progressivism abroad and subvert conservative governments.

The legalization of drugs is an additional step in making people lose their inhibitions and cut them off from the divine. As society experiences turmoil and economic downturns, conditions arise for communists to establish political power.

Legalizing Same-Sex Marriage

The book of Genesis describes the destruction of Sodom. One of the crimes the doomed city’s residents committed was homosexuality. This is the origin of the term “sodomy,” meaning sexual relations between men. Those with basic knowledge of the Bible would know that homo-

sexuality goes against the will of God.

In June 2015, the Supreme Court ruled in a 5–4 decision that same-sex marriage is a right guaranteed by the Constitution. When the ruling was passed, the U.S. president at the time changed the banner on the White House’s official Twitter account to the rainbow flag in support of LGBT rights. The Supreme Court’s ruling prohibited the 14 states that banned same-sex marriage from enforcing these laws.

In August 2015, a Rowan County, Kentucky, clerk refused to issue marriage certificates for same-sex couples due to her beliefs. She was later jailed for five days since she had defied a U.S. federal court order to issue the documents. In fact, the court had violated her constitutional right to freedom of belief.

When the Supreme Court ruled in favor of legalizing same-sex marriage, former governor of Arkansas and former Republican presidential candidate Mike Huckabee called it “judicial tyranny.”

Constitutional lawyer and scholar Phyllis Schlafly listed nine methods judges use to undermine social morality. They rewrite the Constitution, censor acknowledgment of God, redefine marriage, undermine U.S. sovereignty, promote pornography, support feminism, handicap law enforcement, interfere with elections, and impose taxes.

As of 2017, 25 countries and territories have officially acknowledged or accepted same-sex marriage, including developed Western countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Spain, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Portugal, Belgium, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. This is a disturbing development. The law has the power to reinforce morality or influence its movement in a new direction. To legalize behavior that deviates from traditional moral values is the same as having the government and laws train the people to betray morality and disobey God’s commandments.

Under the influence of political correctness, criticism of the chaos that our society finds itself in—whether from the people, civil associations, or religious groups in particular—can be easily escalated to the level of politics or law, and result in restrictions on free speech or other punishments. Following the legalization of immoral behavior, any comments or criticisms on related issues are often accused of violating laws, such as those concerning gender discrimination. The law has been twisted into a means of strangling people’s ability to make moral judgments. It is essentially promoting homosexuality and encouraging people to give themselves to endless desire and degeneracy.

Doing Away With Personal Responsibility

Traditional religions emphasize the importance of personal accountability. In the Bible, the book of Ezekiel uses father and son as a parable to depict good and bad examples. Though they are father and son, they bear the consequences of their respective conduct and are not personally responsible for each other’s actions. As the Bible says, “For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” The Chinese believe that goodness begets goodness and that evil will be punished, which states the same principle.

Liberty means responsibility. A person has the right and freedom to choose his ideas, speech, and actions. He also needs to be responsible for his own choices. Once a person has committed a crime, he should be punished accordingly. This is the principle of justice. Liberal judges, however, encourage people to shirk their responsibilities and shift accountability to prevailing social conditions, such as their economic or racial background, physical and mental health, education, and other demographic parameters, allowing criminals to escape legal punishment.

See next edition for the next installment.

China Trade Talks—What Forced Organ Harvesting Can Tell You About Your Trading Partner

TORSTEN TREY

As trade talks with China continue, some events have drawn attention to the longstanding ethical debate regarding free trade, human rights, and corporate responsibility.

There are numerous examples of Western corporations bowing to China's censorship, placing profits above principles. China's demand last October for the National Basketball Association to fire the Houston Rockets' general manager stands as the highest-profile organization threatened by the authoritarian regime, in a challenge of one of the core values of free and democratic societies: the freedom of speech.

Meanwhile, a bipartisan congressional delegation led by Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney (D-N.Y.) was denied entry to China last year because of his delegation's intention to visit Taiwan. It has become ever more clear that the core values of U.S. corporations and our democratic principles are on the line and need to be defended.

How can our trade talks be considered successful if our core principles must be sacrificed to facilitate talks and exchange?

Although we can't change another country's policies, we are free to decide to what extent we are willing to sacrifice our ethical values and principles. In this context, a subject that is gradually gaining the recognition it deserves might be worth considering while trade discussions are moving along. We're talking about forced organ harvesting from prisoners of conscience in the People's Republic of China.

In 2006, the international community first learned about the forced organ harvesting of Falun Gong practitioners and other prisoners of conscience. Since then, independent investigations have compiled volumes of credible evidence and reports, yet despite being one of the most



Doctors perform an organ transplant in China.

heinous and well-researched crimes against humanity in the 21st century, the international reaction has been surprisingly muted.

A global petition calling for the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights to intervene in China's transplant abuse collected more than 3 million signatures over six years. Yet it took more than a decade before the crimes of forced organ harvesting were presented for the first time at the United Nations Human Rights Council in September 2019.

Transplants in China Are Unethically Sourced

China's transplant system has relied on these unethically sourced organs since its inception. In 2005, China admitted the use of organs from executed prisoners, yet as of today, has never admitted using organs from prisoners of conscience, such as detained practitioners of Falun Gong, Uyghurs, Christians, and Tibetans.

Although Chinese medical authorities declared that as of January 2015, China would no longer use organs from executed prisoners and would base its

organ transplantation solely on voluntary donors, an analysis of official Chinese deceased organ donation data, published in 2019 in the BMC Medical Ethics journal, casts serious doubts on the credibility of China's organ transplant reform. The data points to systematic falsification and manipulation of official organ transplant datasets and the misclassification of executed prisoners as voluntary donors.

Although we can't change another country's policies, we are free to decide to what extent we are willing to sacrifice our ethical values and principles.

In June 2019, an independent People's Tribunal on China's forced organ harvesting practices published its judgment affirming these concerns. The tribunal, chaired by Sir Geoffrey Nice QC, former prosecutor at the U.N.'s International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, systematically reviewed available research findings and

conducted more than 50 interviews with witnesses and experts.

The panel stated in its final judgment that "the Tribunal's members are certain—unanimously, and sure beyond reasonable doubt—that in China forced organ harvesting from prisoners of conscience has been practiced for a substantial period of time involving a very substantial number of victims... and that Falun Gong practitioners have been one—and probably the main—source of organ supply."

A South Korean TV documentary from November 2017 is just one of the many pieces of evidence reviewed by the tribunal. A hidden camera that was carried inside the Tianjin First Central Hospital in China recorded a nurse saying, "with US\$10,000, you can get an organ as soon as in two days."

It's the medical community's responsibility to recognize its moral duty to safeguard international standards of medical ethics. However, it is our entire society's responsibility to speak out against human rights atrocities, especially those classified under international law as crimes against humanity.

We believe that trade negotiators and the business community should also put human rights on the table and avoid compromising our values and principles.

Nice concluded that "Forced organ harvesting is of unmatched wickedness, even compared ... with the killings by mass crimes committed in the last century," underscoring a serious human rights abuse that should be considered in any principled interactions we have with China.

Co-authors: Torsten Trey, M.D.; Alejandro Centurion, M.D.; Joseph Gutierrez, M.D.; and Jacob Lavee, M.D.

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

How to Keep Safe From the CCP Virus

In times like these, you need trusted information.

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That is because we are truly independent and not afraid of reporting honestly on the Chinese

Communist Party (CCP) and the threat it poses to the world.

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THE EPOCH TIMES LIFE & TRADITION

From living in a refugee camp to owning luxury hotels, the hotelier's story shows that the American dream is alive and well.

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Parenting: How to Crush It

BARBARA DANZA

Do people still say, “crush it?” I don’t know—I’ve been parenting for a while now.

I’m probably at least a decade behind on the popular lingo. Being cool fell off my priority list long ago.

What is on my priority list is being a phenomenal parent. Am I succeeding? Who can say? We’re all just figuring this out as we go. Childhood moves fast—switching phases in the blink of an eye. The moment you feel like you might actually know what you’re doing, your kid moves on, requiring a whole new set of parenting superpowers.

Along the way, though, we each happen upon some realizations, strategies, or truths that take this parenting gig from good to great. Here are ways I think anyone can take the monumental responsibility of parenting and crush it.

Dedicate Yourself

Few responsibilities bestowed upon us in life come close in gravity and importance to that of the role of parent. So, go all in.

Dedicate yourself fully to nurturing your family, providing a magical childhood to your children, and raising up-right, kind, and capable people who will carry on the excellent traditions, values, and lessons you’ve bequeathed to them. There’s simply no other way to approach this than with your whole heart.

Bask in the Wonder

The challenges of parenting may be great, but the rewards are beyond measure. One of the most rewarding aspects of being a parent is experiencing the world through your children’s eyes.

From the time they open them, their curious minds begin to be amazed by everything they see. Whether it’s the discovery of tiny little toes at the end of their feet, colorful images in a bedtime story,



Rein in the temptation to shower your children with too much stuff and opt instead for simple playthings that require imagination, oodles of time in nature, and as few screens as possible.

or their first taste of ice cream, the sights, sounds, and experiences of new places and new things bring new discoveries—and you’re lucky enough to come along for the ride. It’s miraculous to behold and a gift that reminds you of how much there is to appreciate in life.

Keep Things Simple

One might assume that a “magical childhood” consists of rooms full of toys, lavish vacations, and all the latest technology. What truly makes childhood magical, though, is simplicity.

Rein in the temptation to shower your children with too much stuff and opt instead for simple playthings that require imagination, oodles of time in nature, and as few screens as possible. Read books together, cook together, go for walks together, play games together, grow together and cheer your children on.

Living simply means appreciating the little things, being a responsible steward of your resources, choosing healthy, whole foods to nourish your family, and prioritizing experiences over things. The good life is a simple one.

Embrace Adventure

Bottle up that sense of wonder and head out on adventures with your family as often as you can. Whether it’s a day trip, a weekend getaway, or a week or more into the unknown, family adventures are some of the greatest joys of parenting.

When the whole family steps away from the day-to-day routine and heads off together, they can be present, in the moment. Every new place and new experience is a learning opportunity for your children (and you). You’ll bond further as a family and create memories that last a lifetime. They can be as

simple or extravagant as you wish, but the point is to just go.

Educate Your Children

Whether you send your children to a traditional school or homeschool them, you are their primary educator. Fill your home with books. Encourage their exploration of the best music and art. Teach them history—most schools miss the mark greatly. Make sure they are competent in reading, writing, and speaking. Help them understand mathematics fully. Dive deep anytime they express interest in any subject whatsoever. Encourage messes, experiments, creativity, and making.

What’s more, teach them your family’s history, the traditions that have been passed down from your elders, and the values you hold in the highest esteem.

Recognize Your Reflection

As much as you’ll teach your children, they’ll teach you. Especially when your children behave in ways that displease you, consider whether or not they are reflecting a character trait you also possess. Discipline your children with wisdom and look within for the lessons they in turn will teach you. They can be little mirrors allowing us to see more of ourselves, if we’re wise enough and brave enough to look.

Take It Day by Day

Nobody does this job perfectly, so give yourself a lot of grace and always remember that tomorrow is another day. You’ll make mistakes. You’ll have regrets. You’ll fumble along like humans tend to do.

At the end of the day, love your children and ensure that they know that no matter what happens you will continue to love them. Teach them well. Be confident that you’re exactly the right person to be their parent. Basically, crush it.

Tackling Money Issues: Why Financial Wellness Matters

BARBARA DANZA

Money. It’s an aspect of life everyone must manage. For many, the stresses that come along with personal finances affect their relationships, their health, and their overall well-being.

I spoke to Brian Hamilton, the vice president of SmartDollar, a new program for employers being offered by Ramsey Solutions. SmartDollar aims to offer a way for employers to help their employees tackle their money issues.

The Epoch Times: In a thriving economy, a majority of Americans are still living paycheck to paycheck. Why do you think that is?

Brian Hamilton: It’s not just a majority. It’s 78 percent of Americans that are living paycheck to paycheck, no matter their pay grade. There are people making six figures who have never even had \$1,000 saved before. You can make pretty good money like that and never get ahead because of bad money behaviors. When you live like that, simple inconveniences become emergencies.

The Federal Reserve found that 39 percent of Americans can’t even cover a \$400 emergency. So, what do they do? They go into debt for something that they should’ve had the cash saved up to cover.

All of this points to poor financial behavior. Most people know what to do with their money; they just have a hard time doing it. It creates a cycle where they’re always relying on debt in the form of credit cards, loans, and payday advances, which puts them at all kinds of risk. At SmartDollar, we believe it doesn’t have to be this way. That vicious cycle of bad money habits can be fixed—but you’ve



Brian Hamilton, vice president of SmartDollar.

got to take control. It’s not about head knowledge, it’s about behavior change.

The Epoch Times: How do financial struggles affect one’s well-being?

Mr. Hamilton: Money is one of the most common causes of stress in America, with 60 percent of Americans stressing about it every day and night. People are literally losing sleep over it. And that’s just the beginning. Money stress is making people physically and mentally sick—it’s affecting how they use their health care and making them miss work. It hurts relationships and marriages, too. Money fights are the No. 2 cause of divorce in America. And when it comes to their jobs, they bring that stress to work with them, making them less productive, more distracted, and causes them to miss work more often. That costs businesses money in lost productivity and turnover.

The Epoch Times: What inspired Ramsey Solutions to offer its new SmartDollar program as an employee benefit?

Mr. Hamilton: For three decades, our CEO, Dave Ramsey, has been teaching people how to budget their money and get out

of debt so they can live and give like no one else. We’ve offered that message through financial wellness education to businesses for almost 20 years.

But in those two decades of experience, we learned that there’s a stigma around talking about money at work. There was also the problem that a physical class at work limited our ability to reach as many lives as possible. So, in 2015, we developed and launched the digital version of that product that allowed us to scale to the needs of thousands of businesses and millions of employees.

Businesses needed a financial wellness benefit that actually worked and could show them the return for the company. Employees needed the privacy and ability to access it from anywhere. Our product meets the needs of both. Today, SmartDollar is in thousands of companies, changing the lives of millions of employees across the country. But our work isn’t done.

The Epoch Times: What incentives do employers have to offer such a program to their employees?

Mr. Hamilton: Look, financial wellness benefits are the hot trend in the benefits space right now. But almost none of them focus on the right things. A lot of them actually hurt employees with things like dangerous payday advances and student loan refinancing built-in. Debt is not the answer; kicking the can down the road is not the answer. These “benefits” don’t lead to life change. And if it doesn’t teach your employees to change how they handle their money; it’s not helping them.

I mentioned how employees are stressing about money and how it impacts their health. For the business, you have to look at

ROI through the lens of engagement. What is engagement? It’s when your employees watch the videos, complete the quizzes, update their wellness scores, get into a rhythm with their budgets, and it actually changes their lives. SmartDollar users see an average financial turnaround of more than \$25,000 in the first year alone. No other benefit in the industry can touch that. If you’re a business, the incentive is that your employees show up to work without their money stress, are more focused, and are more productive as a result. Plus, employees who are secure in their finances show lower turnover rates and miss work less often. That saves your company money. That helps your bottom line.

The Epoch Times: What strategies does the SmartDollar recommend to find one’s way to financial health?

Mr. Hamilton: Financial wellness isn’t a math problem—it’s a heart problem. To have it, you need to change your behaviors around money. You have to say, “Enough is enough,” and commit to changing. You have to want it. You wouldn’t expect to get in shape after going to the gym just once, would you? It’s the same with financial wellness.

SmartDollar doesn’t just treat the symptoms of poor financial behaviors, it attacks the root cause of them. We do this by giving employees a clear plan that’s easy to understand. We don’t do high-brow financial language that nobody understands. We have the top names in money guiding them throughout their journey, as well as all the tools they need to help them put what they’ve learned into action.

We’ve found that when em-

ployees focus on one goal at a time, putting one foot in front of the other, they build momentum to work the plan, and the result is a lasting life change. We’re not exaggerating. People are changing their family trees. People are finding hope, sometimes for the first time in their lives.

The Epoch Times: For the person reading this article and in poor financial health, what first step would you recommend they take to begin to make improvements?

Mr. Hamilton: Following Dave Ramsey’s 7 Baby Steps is the only concrete way you can move the needle with your finances. They are the foundation of SmartDollar and the journey all our users are on to finding financial wellness. If you want to get out of debt, build wealth, or live and give like no one else, you need to start your journey on the Baby Steps. Right now. It doesn’t matter whether you’re just starting out or about to retire. Anyone can work the plan.

1. Save \$1,500 as a starter emergency fund.
 2. Pay off all debt with the Debt Snowball.
 3. Save 3–6 months of expenses in a fully funded emergency fund.
 4. Invest 15 percent of your income for retirement
 5. Save for your children’s college.
 6. Pay off your home early.
 7. Build wealth and give.
- It doesn’t matter what you make, what your current money situation is, or how old you are. It’s never too late to start. You can do this!

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF EFREM HARKHAM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

Efrem Harkham

A Journey From Rags to Riches, From Baghdad to Beverly Hills

CHANNALY PHILIPP

Efrem Harkham’s story was written across the globe, from Baghdad to Beverly Hills—by way of Sydney—from chaotic refugee camp to luxury hotels. It’s a story of rags to riches that shows the American dream is alive and well. But it’s not a tale of naked, hard-nosed ambition. Though hardship has punctuated his journey, it’s also been marked by kindness—given and received—along the way. Harkham, the chairman and CEO of Luxe Hotels and Luxe Collection Hotels, has hospitality in his blood. His mother ran a warm, welcoming home in Iraq, fragrant with the aromas of wonderful delicacies.

But peace in his native Iraq would be breached by Hitler’s propaganda. In 1942, Jewish homes, businesses, and synagogues were burned. After Israel declared its independence in 1948 and subsequently pushed back against attacks from neighboring countries, life became worse for Jews in Iraq; their businesses were taken over by the Iraqi government, and their rights were stripped away.

Harkham’s family was among the last group of Jews to leave Iraq in 1951. They could only take five pounds of personal possessions with them, including clothes and photos.

From Iraq to Israel

Israel was to be their new home. All of the new arrivals were sprayed with DDT, and, along with 100,000 others, Harkham and his family were redirected to old British military camps, where tents and sheet-metal huts awaited them. It was muddy and chaotic; disease flourished.

About 700,000 Jews had arrived in Israel in the last five years, an influx that caused a food shortage. The future of the country, beset by economic woes, was uncertain.

The Harkham family would live in the camp for the next four years.

But though most of their material possessions were left behind, what they had left—faith and hope—would be the foundation for building their future.

“My parents believed that we are on earth for a reason, and that in our journey through life, God is always with us,” Harkham wrote in his new book, “Living the Luxe Life: The Secrets of Building a Successful Hotel Empire.”

They knew that not only did something better await them, but also they could make their surroundings better, little by little, for themselves and for others.



Efrem Harkham as a young boy.

The Chicken and the Goat
Harkham’s parents were pre-occupied in different ways.

His mother was in charge of feeding the family; she was given ration coupons for eggs, milk, and bread. But with the bit of money she had, she got two chickens, which meant that they could now have eggs. And then a few months later, she was able to get a goat, which meant goat milk to feed not only the family, but also friends and family nearby.



Magical things happen when you show up.

Efrem Harkham

“Due to my parents’ examples during these years, I learned that when things are at their worst, you should try to make things better around you,” Harkham said.

His father was concerned with improving education for kids in the camp, and by and by was able to get funding to build a school for more than 400 children. Somehow, even though there was a food shortage, he managed to get the kids a daily lunch—a bread roll and a small bottle of milk. For the kids, it would stave off hunger during the school day.

Perhaps everyone experiences a first moment of newfound maturity. For Harkham, it was while accompanying his mother to the market when he was 5; she was acutely stressed, as she needed to return to tend to the baby. Harkham had come along to help carry bags. He was hit by a great sense of responsibility toward her, as well as a sense of pure, selfless love.

He intensely felt the difficulties his parents were going through and wanted to spare them as much worry as possible. For example, he would wear out his shoes, getting holes in them—and never let his parents know.

It might have been easy for the family to fall into despair, given their sudden descent into poverty and difficult circum-



Efrem Harkham is the chairman and CEO of Luxe Hotels and Luxe Collection Hotels.

stances. But they relied on their faith, and Harkham took a lesson from their adversity: “As Jews, we are constantly taught the reason God tests us with adversity is because God wants us to develop to our fullest potential. ...We must remember that our abilities are greater than we imagine.”

Over the years, the family has remained tightknit.

Passage to Australia

Meanwhile, his father was focused on getting the family out of Israel, and the trajectory of their lives shifted when the opportunity to move to Australia came up.

On their way Down Under, they had a layover in Hong Kong, where Harkham and his siblings saw their first hotels and ate in their first restaurant. “It was better than Disneyland,” he recalled.

In high school, Harkham was bullied a great deal. He told his family that the black-and-blue eyes he received over the years were the result of sports-related injuries. But things came to a head one day, when Harkham found his voice and fought back. He was cast as the perpetrator by the adults, but his bullies never bothered him again after that.

Harkham blossomed after school, joining his brother’s company as a traveling salesman (he was also studying law at the time), and then partnering with him. It was the beginning of many years of hard work and success in the apparel industry, both in Australia and, later, in the United States.

At age 21, now a millionaire, he moved to Los Angeles.

It All Boils Down to Showing Up

Harkham says that much of his success can be attributed to one simple thing: showing up.

One day, he was invited to a luncheon to honor a friend, a local councilman. He wasn’t particularly in the mood to go, but he knew that “magical things happen when you show up.”

Seated next to a banker, he struck up a conversation. The banker asked him if he’d be interested in buying a discounted note for a hotel on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills. He was in escrow 30 days later.

This is how after 14 years in the apparel industry, he transitioned to the hospitality industry, starting with owning the only hotel on the famous Rodeo Drive.

While running his hotel, Harkham—like all good businessmen—saw a void in the industry: a lack of consistency and targeted marketing, for example. He created a global hotel representation group, which would give managers and owners of individually owned hotels the tools to improve profits, whether through marketing, sales, or training. Part of what the Luxe Collection does is connect hotel members to corporate clients or travel

consortiums. In effect, the company becomes part of an extended team, helping the hotels achieve what would be difficult for an independently owned hotel to do on its own.

Harkham became known not just for showing up, but also for forging those connections—among his contacts, his staff, and his community.

It was something that President Ronald Reagan would remark on one day.

Harkham had met Reagan on a few occasions and, at his office in California, was struck by an engraved quote on the former president’s desk that said, “There is no limit to what a man can do or where he can go if he does not mind who gets the credit.”

It was none other than Reagan—the man who called for Gorbachev to “tear down this wall” and who didn’t care who would get the credit for it—who reinforced in him the idea to surround oneself with the best people possible and to set aside one’s ego.

This month, Harkham opened the Luxe Life Hotel New York, in what used to be the headquarters of Time Life magazine. There, the artists and writers of Life had lived above their shared offices; they included Charles Dana Gibson, Norman Rockwell, and Robert Capa. The architects were John M. Carrere and Thomas Hastings, who also went on to build the New York Public Library.

Perched above the doorway is a gilded statue of an angel by sculptor Philip Martiny. This “Life Angel” would be featured in the magazine, its hand over a globe of the Earth.

A Family Legacy

For all of his success in business, Harkham also has been focused on giving back through education. It was always a cherished cause of his father, who passed away last year, at age 105. It was no surprise that he was often asked the secret to his longevity; he would explain that you get back what you put in, tenfold.

Seeds continue to be planted: The family’s Hark Angel Foundation builds schools in poor communities around the world, most recently in Burma. There are other schools in Los Angeles, Sydney, and Kenya.

Reaping what you sow goes back to a simple truth that Harkham was taught very young.

In that refugee camp, half a world away, Harkham and his siblings fervently believed their parents when they told them things would get better.

In his book, Harkham writes: “Remember that if you plant poison, you get poison. If you plant great stuff, innovative thoughts, and positive ideas, it grows as such. Our minds are fertile ground, so whatever you put in is what you get out.”



Family picnic in Centennial Park, Sydney, 1969, with (L-R) siblings Rebecca, David, Terry, Sophie, his father Nagi, and mother Aziza.

COURTESY OF LUXE HOTELS



The newest Luxe Hotels addition, Luxe Life Hotel in NoMad, Manhattan.



The fantasy of a fairy tale not only helps them to make sense of reality, but it also stretches the imagination.

Once Upon a Time

The Importance of Fairy Tales for Children

ALL ILLUSTRATIONS IN PUBLIC DOMAIN

JEFF MINICK

I hardly knew my mother’s mother, who died when I was in second grade, but to this day, one picture of her face remains vivid in my memory.

Three years before her death, we were in an upstairs room of our house, and Grandma was telling me the story of “Little Red Riding Hood.” Her front teeth were large, and protruded a bit, and when she came to the part where Little Red Riding Hood says to the wolf, “What big teeth you have, Grandmother,” my grandmother scared the dickens out of me by then roaring, “The better to eat you up with, my dear,” and snapping those teeth at me.

Whenever I reach that point in the story, while telling it to my own children and grandchildren, in my mind’s eye, I don’t see a wolf. I see Grandma.

That’s no insult to her. It’s very much a tribute both to her story-telling talents and to fairy tales.

My grandmother scared the dickens out of me by then roaring, ‘The better to eat you up with, my dear,’ and snapping those teeth at me.

From Campfires to Movie Theaters

For untold generations, human beings have swapped stories about fairies and goblins, princesses in distress, witches, spells, animals transformed into people and vice versa. Some folklorists like the Brothers Grimm collected and recorded these tales. Others like Hans Christian Andersen composed their own fairy tales.

Even today, writers refashion or invent fairy tales. After all, what is Tolkien’s beloved “Lord of the Rings” if not a fairy tale par excellence?

Some of these tales are as familiar to Americans as the Golden Arches of McDonald’s. “Cinderella,” “Sleeping Beauty,” “Beauty and the Beast,” “The Little Mermaid”—Disney has made a for-

tune releasing these and other films. Fairy tales have also appeared frequently on television, in series ranging from the “Shirley Temple’s Storybook” of the 1950s to the more recent “Once Upon a Time.”

Are Fairy Tales Harmful?

Not everyone finds value in these stories.

In “Five Reasons to Stop Reading Your Children Fairy Tales Now,” Olivia Petter attacks fairy tales as “riddled with prejudicial and archaic stereotypes,” claiming that they perpetuate “misogynistic characters, degrading plot lines and racial uniformity.” She is especially critical of what she sees as sexism in these stories, women who stay at home, princesses who need rescuing, evil stepmothers, and witches.

She writes, “In a culture where we’re getting hitched later than ever before and many choose never to marry at all, the compulsory ‘let’s get married and live happily ever after’ narrative seems practically medieval.”

Despite the fact that many women still do wish for marriage and family, there is an unintended irony in this criticism. Today’s females, most of whom surely heard fairy tales when they were children or watched them in a movie theater, belong to the most independent generation of women the world has ever seen. Fairy tales, therefore, seem to have inflicted little damage on the female psyche.

And as so often happens these days, when political correctness has wormed its way into every corner of our lives, this criticism misses the bigger picture, especially the value of fairy tales for the very young.

Here are four good reasons for sharing fairy tales with our children.

Distinction Between Darkness, Light Is Sharply Drawn

Let’s consider the Brothers Grimm version of “Cinderella.” Unlike the Disney cartoon, Cinderella’s dying mother enjoins her to “be good and pious.” Her sisters “were beautiful and fair in appearance, but at heart were black and ugly.” As the story progresses, we see a real struggle between good and evil. (At the end of the original tale, two pigeons



“The Emperor’s New Clothes” teaches a child that human beings can deceive themselves. “Goldilocks and the Three Bears” warns against taking what belongs to others. “The Three Little Pigs” stresses the importance of a job well done. “Pinocchio” tells youngsters that lying is a bad idea.

pluck out the wicked stepsisters’ eyes. Fairy tales can be violent.)

Not only do fairy tales illustrate the canyon between good and evil, but they also show children that evil can be overcome, that good can win out in the end. When I watch my small grandchildren wave their sword sticks at imaginary enemies, and I ask them to identify their opponents, they always reply, “The bad guys.”

Later, when they are older, they will be able to parse moral ambiguity, but first, they must learn the basic distinction between the “good guys” and the “bad guys.”

A quote attributed to G.K. Chesterton—he put down the idea, but not in these words—offers this wisdom: “Fairy tales do not tell children that dragons exist. Children already know that dragons exist. Fairy tales tell children the dragons can be killed.” When Jack kills the giant by hacking down the beanstalk, when the Gretel shoves the witch into the oven, when the Red Cross Knight dispatches the dragon, children see good triumphing over evil.

Fairy Tales Fire Up Imagination

We all enjoy turning on the ignition switch of the imagination. Consider the popularity of the Star Wars movies or the many superhero movies of the last 20 years.

Children have this same need. The fantasy of a fairy tale not only helps them to make sense of reality, but it also stretches the imagination. Just as a playground builds muscles, balance, and motor skills in a child, so too can fairy tales build up the powers of imagination and creative play in the mind.

Fairy Tales Offer Life Lessons on a Level Children Can Understand

“The Emperor’s New Clothes” teaches a child that human beings can deceive themselves. “Goldilocks and the Three Bears” warns against taking what belongs to others. “The Three Little Pigs” stresses the importance of a job well done. “Pinocchio” tells youngsters that lying is a bad idea.

These tales get their messages across through entertainment rather than overt moralizing. The listening child absorbs these lessons along with the story’s enchantments.

Fairy Tales Are a Part of Our Culture and Tradition

Tradition derives from the Latin “tradere,” meaning “to hand on,” “to hand over.” When we fail to hand over a part of that culture, we are failing the young. Many young people, for example, are ignorant of the Bible, which means they will be stymied by literary or conversational references even to basics like “Sermon on the Mount” or “the widow’s mite.”

The same is true of fairy tales. Most of the young are familiar with such tales as “Cinderella” or “Aladdin” through movies, but how many know “The Princess and the Pea” or “Rumpelstiltskin?” By sharing these stories with our youngsters, we introduce them into the broader culture.

“Once upon a time....” When strung together, surely those are four of the most magical words in the English language.

Let’s make sure our children hear them.

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooling students in Asheville, N.C. Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. See JeffMinick.com to follow his blog.

How to Find More Joy in Your Life

MICHAEL COURTER

Most of the people who come to seek help from me struggle to find a balance between fulfilling their responsibilities and engaging in the activities that bring them joy.

According to a study in the Lancet, Americans work more hours and experience more stress-related illnesses than other comparable countries. It doesn't take a scientific research study for most people to understand that a lack of joy leads to increased stress, anger, sadness, and other negative emotions. People need joy, genuine relationships, and relaxation to lead fulfilling lives.

People have told me all kinds of reasons why they can't, won't, or just don't deserve to have positive experiences. These are some of the common refrains I hear when I ask people what makes them happy:

"I don't know how to have fun."
"I have too many things to do."
"I don't deserve it."
"Having fun is for kids."

These beliefs, or variations on them, keep us from having the balanced and fulfilling lives we are looking for.

'I'm Too Busy to Enjoy Life'

A lot of us are under the impression that we have to finish our responsibilities before we can "relax and have fun." There are two primary problems with this.

First, it's a false dichotomy that we don't need to enjoy fun or relaxation while we are fulfilling our responsibilities. If we think that joy is supposed to come later, we will be intentionally leaving large joyless swaths of time in our lives.

The second problem is that people simply can't be their best selves—whether as students, parents, or workers—without balance. Many of the people I work with simply collapse in front of the television once they are too exhausted to go on any further.

The average American adult spends over 35 hours per week watching television; that's more than 10 full weeks per year. In 2017 alone, the average U.S. consumer spent 238 minutes daily (3 hours, 58 minutes) watching TV, according to a Nielsen report. While this activity may be restful, it generally does not leave us feeling fulfilled.

To find joy amid the things we do every day, we need to balance two states of mind: task completion and mental presence.

The idiom "stop and smell the roses" is related to the idea of being present. When we are taking care of responsibilities, our mental state is in task completion mode and not very aware of our sensory experiences. In other words, we don't notice the roses. We also don't pay very close attention to the people around us, other than how they help us complete our tasks.

We even tend to ignore our own bodies, not noticing if we are tired or hungry or how we are feeling.

The key to breaking down the wall of this false dichotomy is to be present while taking care of our responsibilities. This doesn't mean that you will suddenly enjoy everything you have to do in your life, but it does mean you will be open to



TOA HEFTIBA/UNSPLASH

**A lot of us
are under the
impression
that we have
to finish our
responsibilities
before we can
'relax and
have fun.'**

noticing when joy does come your way.

The key to being present while doing things is to focus on your performance—not the outcome or when it will be finished. When we are focused on getting the outcome we want, it detracts from our ability to be present and our performance. Peak performance comes when we are immersed in what we are doing. That is, we are present with ourselves, our environment, the people around us, and we are all in on our performance. We are truly present and focused. Some people also refer to this as being "in the zone."

When possible it is also useful to schedule more traditional fun activities. The same principles still apply. You have to be aware and present to really enjoy them.

'I Don't Know How to Have Fun'

Many people that I work with who struggle with depression or anger issues tell me that they don't know how to have fun and that they were never allowed to play. However, when I break down the qualities of a joyful experience, they can recognize times when this happens.

Here are three things that happen when we are enjoying ourselves. One, we don't want the experience to end. Two, we lose track of time or time seems to fly past without us noticing. And three, we are not self-conscious; that is, we are not focused on how other people are perceiving us.

Can you think of anything you do where those states happen naturally? If something you do causes you to feel

Schedule time for the people and things that bring you joy. If you perceive yourself as too busy, tell yourself that finding joy is necessary to be your best self.

that way, try and schedule more time for it. If there are people you want to enjoy time with, ask them what activities bring out these states, and see if you share anything you like to do together. Schedule time with them to do the things you enjoy.

Finally, if you can't schedule more time for things that easily make you feel joy, see if you can bring these states into your day-to-day activities. With the right mental attitude, even mundane tasks can be enjoyable. When I am doing something that doesn't require my full mental capacities, I try to enter a prayer-like state, where I focus on my joyful and fulfilling connection to the divine as I go about my day.

'I Don't Deserve to Have Joy'

Many of us impose on ourselves an injunction against joy because we feel that we don't deserve it. This normally coincides with a constant feeling of not being good enough that starts with trying to win approval from an apparently unpleasable parent. What I like to ask people with such beliefs is: "Why don't you deserve joy? What would you have to do to deserve it?" Usually, they have internalized their beliefs without thinking about it clearly.

When you try to explain what you would have to do in order to deserve joy out loud you might realize how absurd it is that you impose unrealistic standards on yourself that you would never impose on other people.

If you notice that you have emotions of guilt or fear about having joy, you need to clarify the beliefs that are causing these emotions and stopping you from leading a full life.

How to Have Joy, Step by Step

1. Make a list of things that you like to do so much that you don't want them to end, that make you lose track of time and of your awareness about how other people are perceiving you. Look for things that make you feel good and that you feel good about. Our vices might also distract us from our worries but they don't leave us feeling good about ourselves.
2. Share your list with your family and friends, and ask them what they truly enjoy. Look for things you have in common.
3. Schedule time for the people and things that bring you joy. If you perceive yourself as too busy, tell yourself that finding joy is necessary to be your best self.
4. Work through any emotions or beliefs that stop you from feeling like you deserve joy. Get help from people you trust or a professional if guilt will not give way.
5. Train yourself to be present and aware of joy, whether you are in the midst of fulfilling your responsibilities or intentionally engaging in an enjoyable activity.

Michael Courter is a therapist and counselor who believes in the power of personal growth, repairing relationships, and following your dreams. His website is CourterCounsel.com

Do you have questions about relationships or personal growth that you would like Michael to address? Send them to mc@CourterCounsel.com



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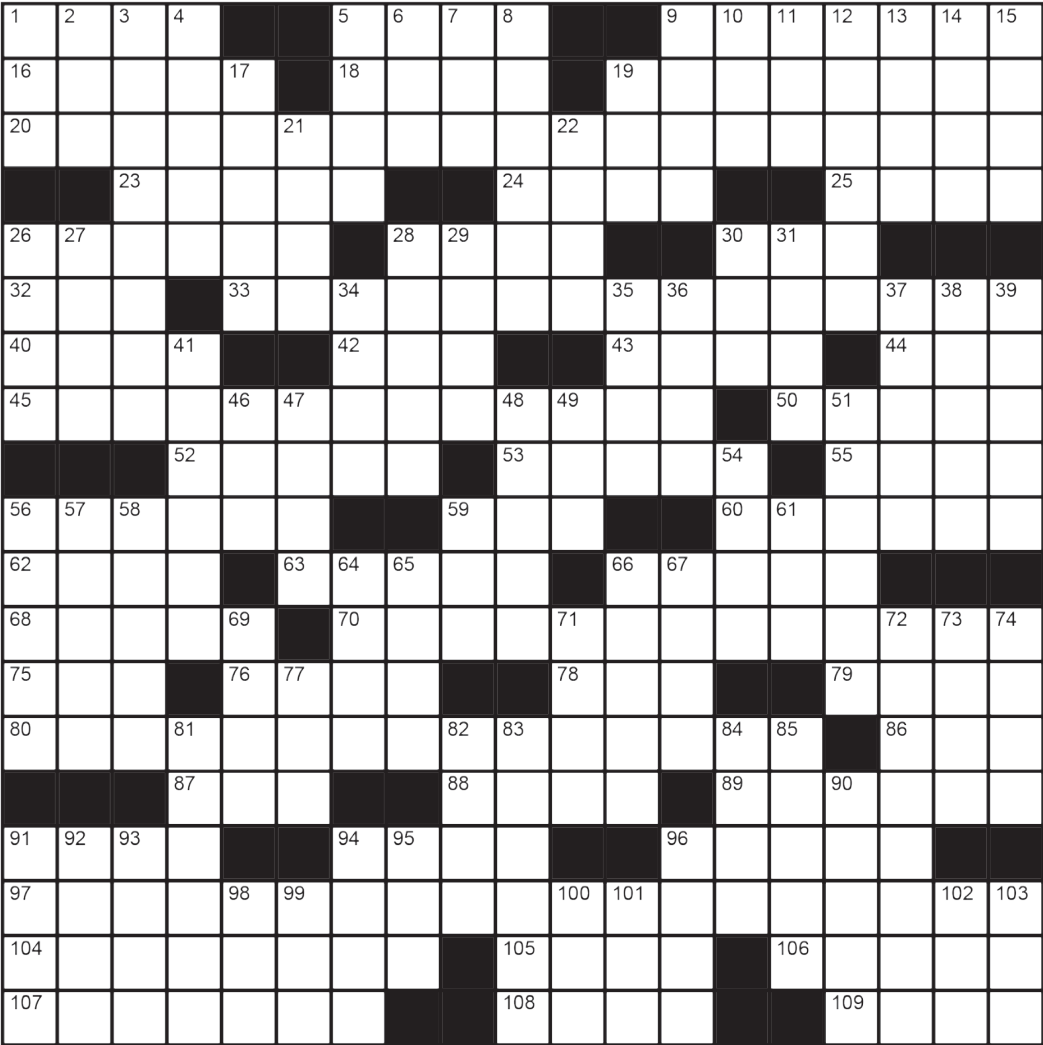
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* Use American spelling to enjoy these puzzles made by our parent company in New York.

CROSSWORD

CONSTRUCTED BY TOM HOUSTON
EPOCH TIMES STAFF



Across

- 1. 1.3 ounce Asian weight
- 5. Work units
- 9. Medicinal syrups
- 16. Blast from the past
- 18. Legalese for “unless”
- 19. Small excavation
- 20. Abampere
- 23. Nothing
- 24. Wine county
- 25. Gym set
- 26. Numbers games
- 28. At the home of, in French
- 30. Stole
- 32. Scientist’s eggs
- 33. It’s hypothetically alive and dead at the same time
- 40. Tartan pattern

- 42. Feel awful
- 43. Goofy stuff
- 44. Stink
- 45. Cash cache
- 50. Hashemite Kingdom’s capital
- 52. Can be early or late
- 53. Having one component
- 55. Burglar
- 56. Pass
- 59. Compass heading
- 60. Sleeper’s woe, to a Brit
- 62. Prefix meaning “left”
- 63. Former Isuzu model
- 66. Skylit courts
- 68. “Nothing ____!”
- 70. Very frugal manner
- 75. One-striper: Abbr.

- 76. Biblical shepherd
- 78. Zone for Red Sox home games
- 79. Old World duck
- 80. “Chapter 11” events
- 86. Foot the bill
- 87. Order of corn
- 88. Nile wader
- 89. 2010 Heisman Trophy’s Cam Newton’s alma mater
- 91. Priestly garb
- 94. Coffee holders
- 96. Sculled
- 97. Cruel and unusual punishment, per U.N.
- 104. “All Time High” singer Rita

- 105. “The ____-splitter” (Lincoln nickname)
- 106. Rajah’s wife
- 107. Tick off
- 108. Tournament passes
- 109. Greek portico

Down

- 1. Nail holder
- 2. ____ right
- 3. Sloth or armadillo
- 4. Permissible
- 5. Chemical compound
- 6. Border
- 7. U.S. Government rate setters (abbr)
- 8. Autographed
- 9. Tiny bit
- 10. Letter that appears twice in the Schrödinger equation
- 11. And so on: Abbr.
- 12. Imitates a partridge
- 13. Outstanding
- 14. Paper holder
- 15. Certain volleyball shots
- 17. Cultural values
- 19. “The Portable ____ Talk: Motivational Morsels for Inspiring You to Succeed”
- 21. One CPU arch
- 22. WWII German Political Party
- 26. At sea
- 27. “Your turn”
- 28. ‘Hear ye!’ shouter
- 29. “Dateline NBC” anchor Lester
- 30. Casbah headgear
- 31. Fertilizer ingredient
- 34. Fast one
- 35. “Planet of the Apes” girl
- 36. “Movie” follower
- 37. Tiny part
- 38. Maxim
- 39. Island nation east of Fiji

- 41. A silver fish
- 46. Start of a cheer
- 47. Exploitative type
- 48. Chatter
- 49. Low digit
- 51. Avian mimics
- 54. Tall tale
- 56. Church official
- 57. Western director Sergio
- 58. Dispatch boat
- 59. “Hallow” add-on
- 61. Photo
- 64. Dentist’s order
- 65. Supermarket section
- 66. Orbital point
- 67. He broke with Stalin in 1948
- 69. “Alejandro” singer, casually
- 71. Abominable Snowman
- 72. Deserving of a time-out
- 73. Intimate
- 74. 17th century actress Nell
- 77. Setting for many a joke
- 81. Draw back; rebound
- 82. A penny, mostly
- 83. Take in
- 84. Bread from a tandoor
- 85. More likely
- 90. Basilica Chancels or almemors
- 91. Fungal spore sacs
- 92. Wacko
- 93. Alliance
- 94. Itch
- 95. Bar stock
- 96. Aromatherapist’s substances
- 98. Canterbury can
- 99. Personals, e.g.
- 100. Aye’s opposite
- 101. Cry of disgust
- 102. “The Matrix” hero
- 103. Lapsang souchong is my favorite

4NUMBERS

CONSTRUCTED BY C. CHANG
AT 4NUMS.COM

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

630

25

428

+

−

×

÷

Hard 1 - 1 Solution

1125

51

814

+

−

×

÷

Hard 2 - 1 Solution

110

38

14

+

−

×

÷

Easy 1 - 1 Solution

410

12

410

+

−

×

÷

Easy 2 - 2 Solutions

WORDSEARCH

CONSTRUCTED BY TOM HOUSTON
EPOCH TIMES STAFF

Help with Today’s Crossword Puzzle?

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

- AMMAN

APNOEA

APSIS

ATRIA

AUBURN

AVISO

BEMAS

CAMEO

CHURRS

CRIER

DOING

EDENTATE

ELAPSE
- ELDER

ETHOS

IMPUDENT

IPECACS

LEONE

LICIT

LOTTOS

MYNAHS

NIHIL

OARED

OLDIE

RANEE

RESILE
- RISER

RODEO

RUN-ON

SIGNED

SURER

TONGA

UNARY

ABSORB

ADAGE

COOLIDGE

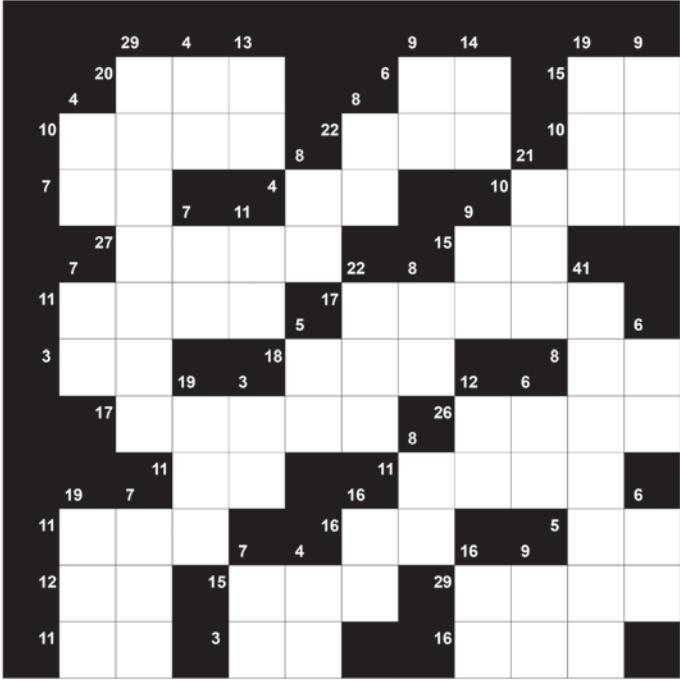
INCENSE

KAKURO

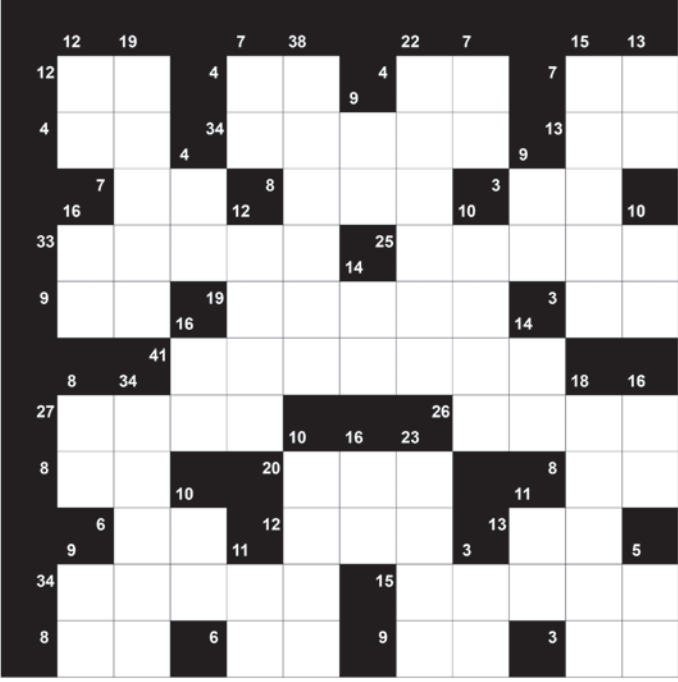
CONSTRUCTED BY EPOCH TIMES STAFF

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: Easy



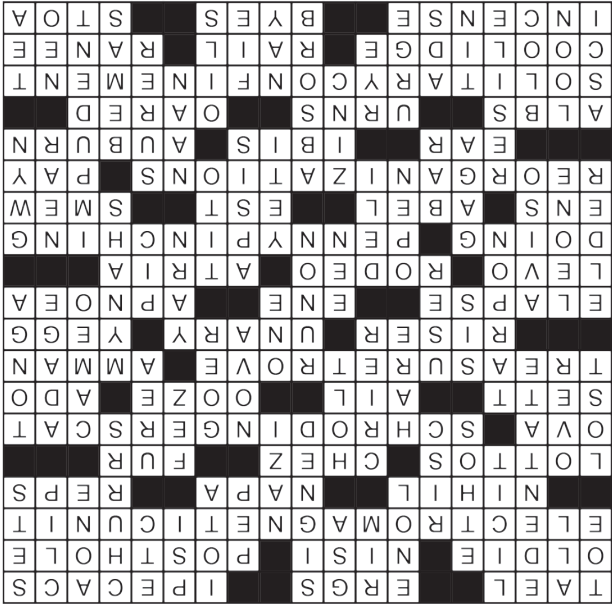
Large: Hard



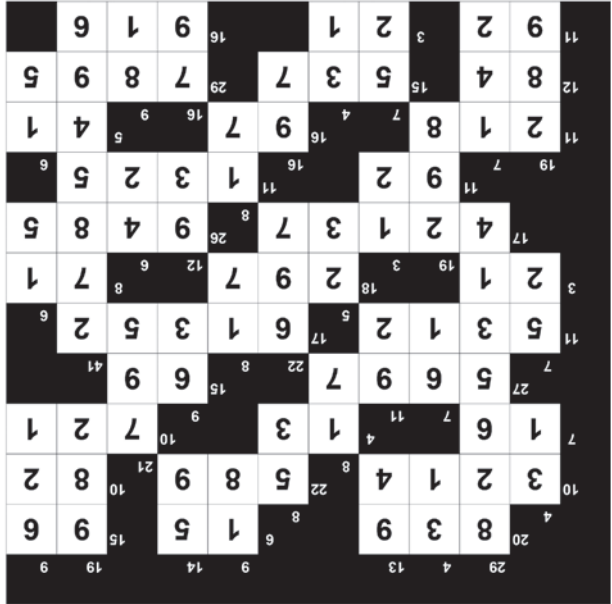
WORK SPACE

SOLUTIONS

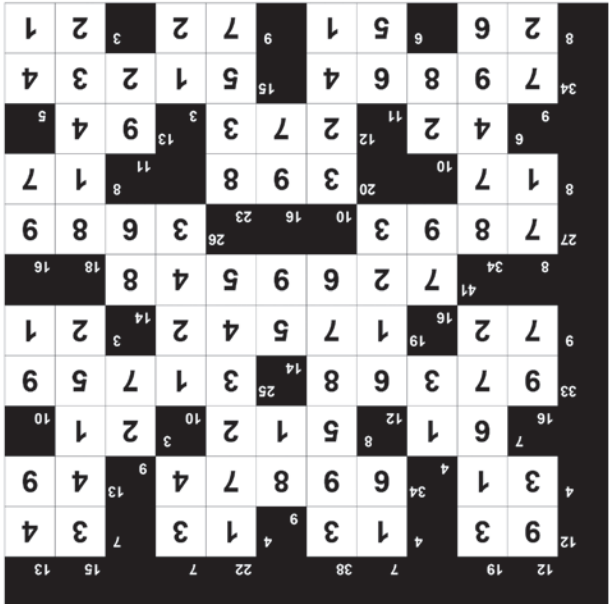
CROSSWORD



KAKURO LARGE: EASY



KAKURO LARGE: HARD



4 NUMBERS

HARD 1

28 = − + + + (4)

HARD 2

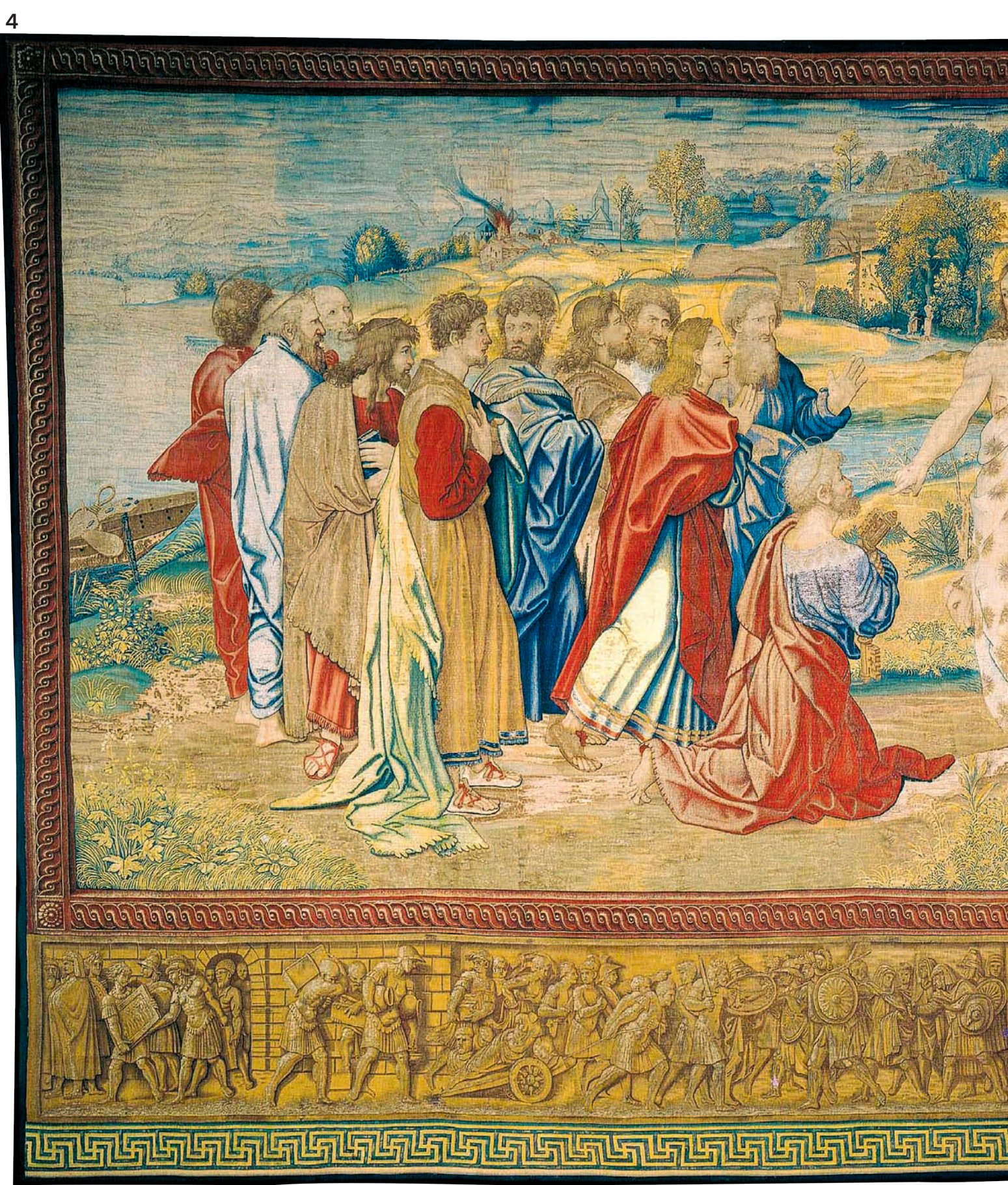
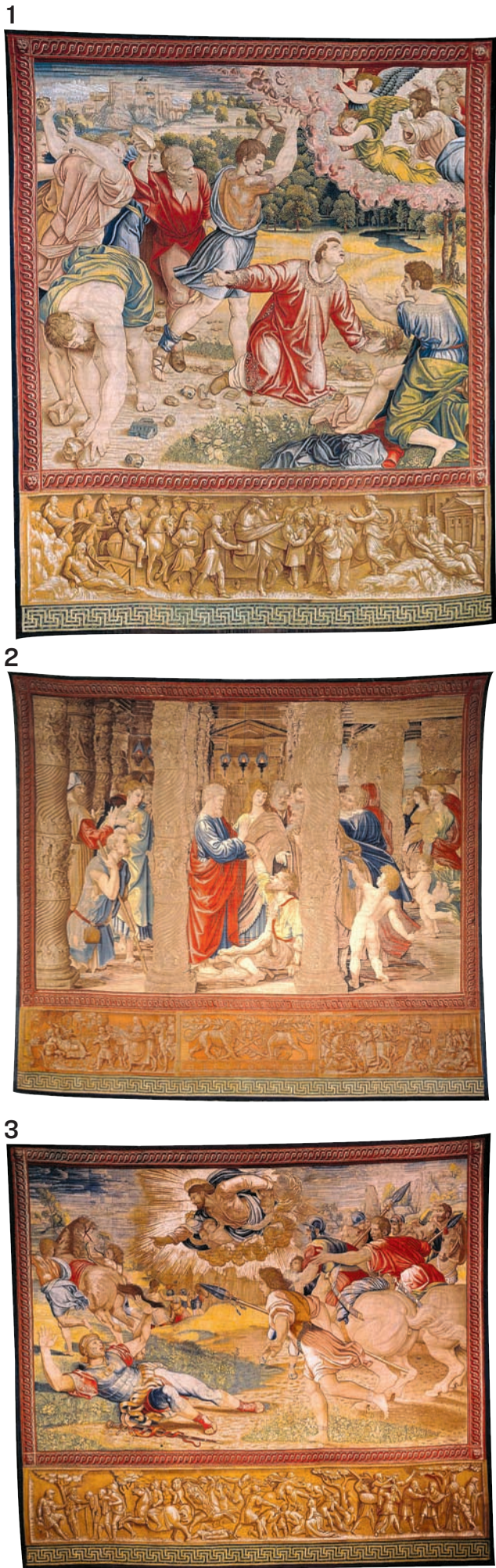
(25 = − 8) × (14 = 11)

EASY 1

10 = 4 − 1 − 1

EASY 2

4 = 10 − 10 ÷ 10 (4)
10 + 10 − 4 − 4



Raphael's 'Acts of the Apostles' tapestries were replicated for the world's royalty: England's Henry VII, France's Louis XIV, and Austria's Charles I.

Raphael's Divine 'Acts of the Apostles' Tapestries

LORRAINE FERRIER

In universal judgment, nothing more beautiful has ever been seen in the world.
ut fuit universale iuditium, sunt res qua non est aliquid in orbe nunc pulchrius
—Paris de Grassis, master of ceremonies for the 16th-century Pope Leo X, wrote in his diary after seeing Raphael's "Acts of the Apostles" tapestries.

More than 500 years later, all 12 of Raphael's "Acts of the Apostles" tapestries were recently hung as Pope Leo X had originally intended, on the lower wall of the Sistine Chapel. The last time the complete series of tapestries were hung together in the chapel was in the late 1500s, exhibition and Vatican Museums curator Alessandra Rodolfo told Reuters.

The rare event celebrated the 500th anniversary of Raphael's death in 1520. It also paid homage to the ancient custom of adorning the papal chapel with fine textiles and tapestries for noble ceremonies and important Christian liturgical traditions, Rodolfo said in a press release.

The Sistine Chapel "is of universal importance, not only for visual arts but for our faith," Barbara Jatta, the director of the Vatican Museums told Reuters. "So we really want to share this beauty with people, even if only for one week."

The beauty of the tapestries can be appreciated even more since their recent renewal.: The Vatican Muse-



One of Raphael's "Acts of the Apostles" tapestries is taken into the Sistine Chapel where all 12 tapestries were hung together for the first time in 500 years.

ums conservators have, over a number of years, restored the tapestries.

The Papal Commission
In 1515, Pope Leo X commissioned Raphael to design the tapestries to depict the lives of Saint Peter and Saint Paul—the fathers of the Christian church. The art added to the chapel's existing pictorial message of how the Gospel came from Jerusalem to Rome.

The tapestry cloths were made to be hung on feast days, on the lowest part of the Sistine Chapel walls, which are painted as faux curtains. When hung, the tapestries are just below the frescoes depicting the stories of Moses and the life of Christ that were painted by renowned 15th-century artists.

Pope Leo X paid five times the cost of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel frescoes, which was 3,000 ducats. Raphael received only 1,000 ducats, and the rest was absorbed by the manufacturing of the tapestries.

Raphael and his workshop created the tapestry cartoons between 1515 and 1519.

Raphael depicted the stories of St. Peter and St. Paul from the Bible's Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles for 10 of the tapestries, and he designed the Hours and Seasons on two narrow tapestries.

Raphael's designs were sent to Brussels and woven at the workshop of world-renowned tapestry weaver Pieter van Aelst. The fully colored cartoons were cut into strips about a yard wide to make transferring the designs easier. Then the cloths were finely woven with silk, wool, and precious silver and gold thread.

Seven of the tapestries arrived in

Rome in 1519 and were hung in the Sistine Chapel to celebrate Holy Mass on Dec. 26, 1519, St. Stephen's Day. By 1521, all 12 tapestries had arrived at the Vatican. Raphael may have seen only these first seven tapestries hung in the chapel, as he died suddenly in 1520, at the age of 37.

Raphael: A Man of Great Art and Character
"When this noble craftsman died, the art of painting might well have died also, seeing that when he closed his eyes, she was left as it were blind," wrote historian and artist Giorgio Vasari in "The Lives of Artists."

"For in truth we have from him art, coloring, and invention harmonized and brought to such a pitch of perfection as could scarcely be hoped for; nor may any intellect ever think to surpass him," he added further in the passage.

For Vasari, Raphael's greatness wasn't confined to his art: He was genuinely a good and great man. Vasari believed that Raphael had "grace, industry, beauty, modesty, and excellence of character as would have sufficed to efface any vice" and that he "was so full of gentleness and so overflowing with loving kindness, that it was seen that the very animals, not to speak of men, honored him."

The whole of Rome, it seems, turned out for Raphael's funeral procession to the Vatican for his funeral Mass. "The true grandeur of the procession was that immense concourse of friends, of pupils, of artists, of renowned writers, of personages of every rank, who accompanied him, amidst the tears

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF GOVERNORSHIP SCV-DIRECTORATE OF MUSEUMS



1. “The Stoning of St. Stephen,” 1517–1519, from Acts of the Apostles 7: 55–60.
2. “The Healing of the Lame Man,” 1517–1519, from Acts of the Apostles 3: 6–7.
3. “The Conversion of Saul,” 1517–1519, from Acts of the Apostles 9: 3–5.
4. “Christ’s Charge to Peter,” 1517–1519, from John 21: 15–17.
5. Frieze of the Hours, 1517–1521.

for the Sistine Chapel



Visitors gain a sneak peek at Raphael’s “Acts of the Apostles” tapestries as they are hung in the Sistine Chapel prior to being open to the public.

of the whole city; for the grief was general and the Pope’s Court shared in it,” wrote the French biographer Quatremère de Quincy in his 1824 “History of Raphael.”

And Vasari wrote: “Wherefore it may be surely said that those who are the possessors of such rare and numerous gifts as were seen in Raphaello da Urbino are not merely men, but, if it be not a sin to say it, mortal gods; and those who, by means of their works, leave an honorable name written in the archives of fame in this earthly world of ours, can also hope to have to enjoy in heaven a worthy reward for their labors and merits.”

Raphael 500
Although the tapestries have now left the Sistine Chapel, they can still be seen behind glass on a rotational

basis at the Pinacoteca (art gallery) of the Vatican Museums.

The Vatican Museums are just one of many world-renowned institutions that are celebrating what some are calling “Raphael 500,” with exhibitions and events, marking Raphael’s brilliance half a millennium after he died. Currently the exhibition “Raphael and His Circle” is at the National Gallery of Art in Washington. The “Acts of the Apostles” cartoons in the Raphael Court at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London will reopen in late 2020 after an extensive gallery and display renovation.

The titles of “Acts of the Apostles” tap- estries in this article come predomi- nantly from the titles of Raphael’s cartoons in the Royal Collection Trust.

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SOURDOUGH STEW

Use whatever cooking setup you would to make bone broth. I use an electric pressure cooker, aka the Instant Pot, but you can make this in a slow cooker or on the stovetop. Your active time is about the same either way, but the slower methods take longer and burn more energy, while the Instant Pot is like going into hyperspace. Time speeds up inside the pressure chamber, allowing the food to travel great distances in short periods of time.

- MAKES 4 LARGE SERVINGS**
- 1 piece marrow bone, preferably an end piece with bits of meat and gristle**
 - 450 grams meat, the more gristle and connective tissue the better, cut into 1-inch cubes**
 - 1 loaf of the best sourdough you can find, white or brown, sliced**
 - 2 tablespoons cider vinegar**
 - 2 large carrots, cut in half**
 - 4 stalks celery, cut in half**
 - 1 onion, cut in half**
 - 1 large potato, cut into 1-inch cubes**
 - 1 sprig fresh thyme or 1 teaspoon dried**
 - 1 cup wine (white wine with white sourdough, red with dark sourdough)**

For serving: butter to taste to adjust fat, if necessary

Brown the meat and bones under the broiler, turning often before anything burns, until everything is brown. For the last few minutes of browning, add the bread, in whole slices or chunks. Turn the slices quickly, before they burn.

When meat, bones, and bread have been browned all around, transfer the meat and bones to your cooking vessel, in enough water to cover everything by two inches. Crumble the toasted bread into the water, as finely as possible. Add the cider vinegar and cook for an hour in a pressure cooker; or about 4 hours on the stove, covered on medium heat; or about 8 hours in a slow cooker. Add the carrot, celery, onion, potato, thyme, and wine. Cook for another half-hour under pressure (or 2 and 4 hours, respectively, for the other methods). Remove carrot, celery, and onion. Save the carrots for later.

Depending on how fatty the bones are, at this point you might want to allow the soup to cool for a spell, perhaps overnight, so you can skim the fat. You could do this after the first or second cooking.

Finally, slowly cook it down until the broth is mostly gone, stirring often and occasionally scraping off the starchy accumulation that tends to build up on the bottom. When it's more chunky than brothy, it's basically ready. About 20 minutes before serving, remove the bone, and slice the soft carrots and return them to the soup. Season with whatever else strikes your fancy. Sometimes I even add soy sauce and a pho seasoning cube, for old times' sake. If the soup tastes too lean, I add butter.

FLASH IN THE PAN

Sourdough Stew, a Two-in-One Meal

An entire loaf of bread adds richness, body, and tang to this thick and hearty stew

ARI LEVAUX

Sourdough stew resembles a classic, simple meal: a bowl of soup and a piece of bread. Except in this case, the bread seemed to have thought it was a bone, and snuck into the stock pot. When you try this rich, slightly tart, chunky stew, you will be glad it did.

To make sourdough bone broth, bone and bread are treated equally, browning under the same broiler before being locked together in a vat of boiling water. The sourdough flavor impregnates the broth and everything in it, while filling the air with the faint yeasty aroma of a microbrewery.

The bread proves almost as durable as the bone, slowly breaking down but never leaving. Pieces of bread remain in the broth, soft clouds floating around your bowl

The bread seemed to have thought it was a bone, and snuck into the stock pot.

like the egg drops in a bowl of egg drop soup. We could blend it all into a puree, but then we'd lose the delicate features of this comforting bowl of bone and bread broth.

I never intended to find a way to combine bread and soup into one easy-to-slurp meal. I was trying to recreate Beef Stew Sandwich, my favorite dish at the best Vietnamese restaurant in Albuquerque.

At the time, I was the restaurant critic for Albuquerque's Weekly Alibi, so I had a say in such matters, and had proclaimed Viet Taste the city's best of its category. The Beef Stew Sandwich consisted of a toasted section of baguette on a plate, next to a modest bowl of chunky soup. The toast was chewy enough that you could use it to grab chunks of stew, packed with carrots, potato, and beef.

The aromatic stew tasted pho-like, but was disorientingly thick

with melted cartilage. I first assumed that this sludge was simply what was left at the bottom of the pho pot, with added vegetables, and I was totally on board for that. I now know that this was a stew called bo kho, flavored similarly to pho. But in my early attempts to recreate that Beef Stew Sandwich, I came up with sourdough soup.

I was trying to reduce the liquid in a pot of meat and bones down to a thick paste, but it would not thicken enough. Getting impatient, I ripped up the bread I was going to serve with the stew, and threw the pieces into the pot.

My breaded broth didn't thicken into a luxurious brown sauce like in the Beef Stew Sandwich, but something curious happened. The bread happened to be sourdough. As the meat cooked in the sourdough broth, a promising aroma emerged, like a pot of coq au vin

after you add a second bottle of wine.

For the tart sourdough flavor to assert itself, the bread you use must be a top-shelf loaf or baguette, not some off-the-rack clone from the back of the supermarket baked by some out-of-state company. Find who is baking the best sourdough close to home, and use their bread. My favorite is a local multigrain sourdough, which imparts a porridge-like quality to the soup.

Use red meat bones, like beef or lamb, preferably with chunks of meat and gristle attached. Deer bones work great, too. Depending on your tastes, you'll probably want to skim the fat. I find butter to be the most appropriate and "comfy" fat in a bowl of bread soup.

Ari LeVaux writes about food in Missoula, Mont.

This recipe works on the stovetop, in a slow cooker, or in an Instant Pot.



BECCA TAHERI/UNSPLASH

Why You Should Teach Your Kids to Cook

A conversation with Katie Kimball, founder of online cooking class Kids Cook Real Food

ANDREW THOMAS

Katie Kimball is a mother on a mission to help parents teach their kids how to cook. Based in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Kimball is a former teacher and the mother of four children ages 5, 8, 11, and 14. She’s the founder of Kids Cook Real Food, an online cooking class for kids, and the voice behind Kitchen Stewardship, a family-focused healthy food and cooking blog. Over 8,500 families have taken her course.

I had an opportunity to speak with Kimball about the importance of teaching young children how to cook, the obstacles parents face and how to overcome them, and how to get kids excited about getting in the kitchen in the first place.

THE EPOCH TIMES: Why is it important to teach cooking skills to children at an early age?

KATIE KIMBALL: I started wanting to teach my kids because I thought they needed those life skills, and I needed help in the kitchen. I hit a point where I just couldn’t keep up anymore, and I felt like I was spending all my time in the kitchen feeding these children that I wasn’t seeing.

For any household responsibilities, if they’re learned younger, kids can make mistakes when the stakes aren’t high. They can make their mistakes and failures when their parents are there to help them through it, instead of when they’re young adults and maybe should be focusing on moving into a career and being successful in the world, instead of figuring out how to feed themselves.

Kids are really intrinsically motivated between the ages of zero and five to do everything their parents do. If we can start giving them a little bit of competence and responsibility and life skills at an early age, they’re intrinsically motivated, and we can keep that unbroken line of motivation going until they’re older.

What surprised me is the incredible additional personal benefits. I tell people now: any trait or quality you want to teach your kids, it can be done in the kitchen, from an attitude of service to others, to a sense of humor, to problem-solving creatively, to just creating things with your hands.

We had a 9-year-old who had created her own soup. She went out into their garden and picked all this weird food that didn’t seem like it would go together and made soup for her family, and it ended up being really good.

You can just see the confidence in their faces, and we’ve found that that confidence spills out into other areas of life. My daughter in fifth grade applied for her class officer position and talked about how she’s able to cook dinner for her family, and she was so proud of that.

THE EPOCH TIMES: How does the Kids Cook Real Food e-course work?

MS. KIMBALL: It’s multimedia digital. We use videos because obviously kids need to see what’s going on in the kitchen.

We have three levels: beginner, which is our preschool kids; intermediate, which is basically once kids can read, so early elementary; and advanced, which is usually anyone who’s mastered those intermediate skills. All the videos have two kids of that age group demonstrating skills with me.

I worked really hard to logically connect over 30 basic skills. In order to read and follow a recipe well, you’ve got to know how to measure ingredients, you’ve got to know a couple different ways to stir and the fact that you need a uniform mixture.

I like to start with knife skills. I think if you’re going to eat a healthy diet, that includes a lot of cutting up whole foods in order to make them edible.

We get knives in the hands of 2-year-olds and 18-month-olds. I teach the same technique with a butter knife as with a chef’s knife. Part of that logical progression is that when you’re using a technique with a dull knife, but treating it like it’s a sharp knife, the child feels comfortable moving up to a sharp knife. The parents also feel comfortable and confident because they’ve seen that child do the exact same technique already, and learned to respect even the dull butter knife as they would a paring knife or a chef’s knife.

The goal is that when kids graduate, they can make any recipe they come across, because we’re teaching the skills, not just a recipe repertoire. We do have recipes included, but it’s very flexible so families with food allergies or sensitivi-



ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF KATIE KIMBALL



(Above) Katie Kimball with the cast of Kids Cook Real Food’s cooking videos.

(Left) Knife skills are foundational.



Katie Kimball, founder of Kids Cook Real Food.

ties, or just kids who don’t like something in a recipe that we demonstrate, can practice the same skills using their own family’s favorite recipes.

“Any trait or quality you want to teach your kids, it can be done in the kitchen, from an attitude of service to others, to a sense of humor, to problem-solving creatively, to just creating things with your hands.”

Katie Kimball, founder, Kids Cook Real Food

THE EPOCH TIMES: What are some of the most common questions or concerns you get from parents, and how do you address them?

MS. KIMBALL: “The kids are slow.” “The kids are messy.” “I don’t have time to invest in this because we’re so busy,” and “I don’t know how to cook myself. How in the world am I going to teach my kids?” Those are definitely the top four.

The slow and the messy, that’s just about educating yourself and getting over that psychological roadblock, realizing that cooking is a messy scene and it will be worth it in the end. Like any investment, there is a return. The beautiful thing is we hear over and over that after just the first class, or just the knife skills class, their kids are helping already.

THE EPOCH TIMES: What about the importance of safety and cleanup?

MS. KIMBALL: Another objection that parents have is “Is this going to be safe? We’re talking knives and fire here, Katie.” But I do find that when kids learn safe skills, when they’re taught to respect things like sharp knives, then they’ll have that respect engrained in them for

the rest of their lives. Start early.

THE EPOCH TIMES: How does that apply to kids’ lives outside of the kitchen?

MS. KIMBALL: I think that probably does apply to other areas of life, because then kids can learn to respect crossing the road, or driving a car, or the responsibility of a cellphone, and also there’s a trust built up.

I think cleanup is an important piece of responsibility that comes back to building the chores as a whole in the household. In my house, all of our kids have after-dinner chores, and every couple of years, as they get older, the chores shift.

THE EPOCH TIMES: How do you get children excited about and interested in cooking?

MS. KIMBALL: What we find is that just taking the first step is really important. A lot of the time what’s really motivating as a first step is making food for someone else. We hear stories a lot from our members about the kids who really want to make food for dad when he gets home. Or the savvy moms will do a first cooking lesson right before a potluck or party that they’re going to, and then when you go to that party, you can say to the other people, “Guess who made the potato salad, or the guacamole that we brought?” and the kids are getting this praise from other adults heaped on them. They feel amazing about that, and now they want to cook much more than maybe they did previously.

I actually like using social connections as leverage to help kids be excited about getting into the kitchen. When I taught my kids cooking skills, we spent a whole summer doing the curriculum, and I let them each invite a friend.

THE EPOCH TIMES: What have been some fun experiences teaching your kids how to cook?

MS. KIMBALL: It’s always fun to see their faces when they serve their own food. That’s the best. When the kids feel really good about what they’ve made.

Interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.

FOOD AS MEDICINE

Mediterranean Diet Feeds Gut Bacteria Linked to Healthy Aging

Older adults can better avoid frailty, inflammation, and cognitive decline with these helpful bacteria

PAUL O'TOOLE

As our global population is projected to live longer than ever before, it's important that we find ways of helping people live healthier for longer. Exercise and diet are often cited as the best ways of maintaining good health well into our twilight years. But recently, research has also started to look at the role our gut—specifically our microbiome—plays in how we age.

Our latest study has found that eating a Mediterranean diet causes microbiome changes linked to improvements in cognitive function and memory, immunity and bone strength.

The gut microbiome is a complex community of trillions of microbes that live semi-permanently in the intestines. These microbes have co-evolved with humans and other animals to break down dietary ingredients such as inulin, arabinoxylan, and resistant starch, that the person can't digest. They also help prevent disease-causing bacteria from growing.

However, the gut microbiome is extremely sensitive, and many things including diet, the medications you take, your genetics, and even conditions like inflammatory bowel disease and irritable



The Mediterranean diet has garnered another verified health claim after researchers discovered it fostered gut bacteria associated with improved cognition and healthy aging.

bowel syndrome, can all change the gut microbiota community. The gut microbiota plays such a huge role in our body, it's even linked to behavioral changes, including anxiety and depression. But as for other microbiome-related diseases such as Type 2 diabetes and obesity, changes in the microbiome are only part of the issue—

the person's genetics and unhealthy lifestyle are major contributing factors.

Since our everyday diets have such a big effect on the gut microbiome, our team was curious to see if it can be used to promote healthy aging. We looked at a total of 612 people aged 65–79, from the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, Italy, and Poland. We asked half of them to change their normal diet to a Mediterranean diet for a full year. This involved eating more vegetables, legumes, fruits, nuts, olive oil and fish, and eating less red meat, dairy products, and saturated fats. The other half of participants stuck to their usual diet.

Small changes in one year can make for big effects in the longer term.

Mediterranean Microbiome

We initially found that those who followed the Mediterranean diet had better cognitive function and memory, less inflammation, and better bone strength. However, what we really wanted to know was whether or not the microbiome was involved in these changes.

Interestingly, but not surprisingly, a person's baseline microbiome (the species and number of microbes they had living in their gut before the study started) varied by country. This baseline microbiome is likely a reflection of the diet they usually ate, alongside where they lived. We found that participants who followed the Mediterranean diet had a small but insignificant change in their microbiome diversity—meaning there was only a slight increase in the overall number and variety of species present.

However, when we compared how strictly a person followed the diet with their baseline microbiome data and their microbiome after following the diet, we were able to identify two different gut microbe groups: diet-positive microbes that increased on the Mediterranean diet, and diet-negative microbes whose abundance was reduced while following the diet.

Diet-positive microbes are microbes that flourished in the Mediterranean diet. Diet-negative microbes either couldn't metabolize the diet, or they were unable to compete with diet-positive microbes. These diet-pos-

itive microbes were linked with less frailty and inflammation in the body, and higher levels of cognitive function. Losing the diet-negative microbes was also associated with the same health improvements.

When we compared the changes in the number of these microbes in the treatment group (those on the Mediterranean diet) and the control group (those following their regular diet), we saw that the people who strictly followed the Mediterranean diet increased these diet-positive microbes. Although the changes were small, these findings were consistent across all five countries—and small changes in one year can make for big effects in the longer term.

Many of the participants were also pre-frail (meaning their bone strength and density would start decreasing) at the beginning of the study. We found the group who followed their regular diet became frailer over the course of the one-year study. However, those that followed the Mediterranean diet were less frail.

The link between frailty, inflammation, and cognitive function to changes in the microbiome was stronger than the link between these measures and dietary changes. This suggests that the diet alone wasn't enough to improve these three markers. Rather, the microbiome had to change too—and the diet caused these changes to the microbiome.

These types of studies are challenging and expensive, and the microbiome dataset is often difficult to analyze because there are many more data-points to study than there are people in the study. Our findings here were possible because of the large group sizes, and the length of the intervention.

However, we recognize that following a Mediterranean diet isn't necessarily doable for everybody who starts thinking about aging, usually around the age of 50. Future studies will need to focus on what key ingredients in a Mediterranean diet were responsible for these positive microbiome changes. But in the meantime, it's clear that the more you can stick to a Mediterranean diet, the higher your levels of good bacteria linked to healthy aging will be.

Paul O'Toole is a professor of microbial genomics at the School of Microbiology and APC Microbiome Institute at the University College Cork in Ireland. This article was first published on The Conversation.

THE EPOCH TIMES

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