

# Eye on the World

## May 12, 2018

This compilation of material for "Eye on the World" is presented as a service to the Churches of God. The views stated in the material are those of the writers or sources quoted by the writers, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the members of the Church of God Big Sandy. The following articles were posted at churchofgodbigandy.com for the weekend of May 12, 2018.

**Compiled by Dave Havir**

**Luke 21:34-36**—"But take heed to yourselves, lest your souls be weighed down with self-indulgence, and drunkenness, or the anxieties of this life, and that day come on you suddenly, like a falling trap; for it will come on all dwellers on the face of the whole earth. But beware of slumbering; and every moment pray that you may be fully strengthened to escape from all these coming evils, and to take your stand in the presence of the Son of Man" (Weymouth New Testament).



An article by Judah Ari Gross titled "After Alleged Iranian Barrage, Israel Launches Massive Counterattack in Syria" was posted at timesofisrael.com on May 10, 2018. Following are excerpts of the article.

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Some 20 rockets were fired at Israeli military bases by Iranian forces from southern Syria just after midnight on Thursday, sparking the largest ever direct clash between Jerusalem and Tehran, with Israeli jets targeting numerous Iranian-controlled sites across Syria.

The Israeli army said the initial missile barrage was carried out by members of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps' Quds Forces. This appeared to be the first time that Israel attributed an attack directly to Iran, which generally operates through proxies.

Some of the incoming missiles were intercepted by the Iron Dome defense system, the army said. There were no reports of Israeli casualties in the attack. An IDF spokesperson said damage was caused to Israeli military bases, but that it was "limited."

In response, Israel launched an extensive retaliatory campaign, striking suspected Iranian bases throughout Syria for hours following the initial Iranian bombardment, an Israeli military spokesperson said, warning Syrian dictator Bashar Assad not to get involved.

"The Israel Defense Forces is taking action at this moment against Iranian targets in Syria. Any Syrian involvement against this move will be met with the utmost seriousness," wrote Avichay Adraee, the Israeli military's Arabic-language spokesperson, on Twitter.

According to Arabic media reports, the Israel Defense Forces struck numerous targets across Syria, including weapons depots and Assad regime radar and air defense systems.

The Israeli military would not immediately comment on its specific targets.

Syria's state news agency, after initially reporting that the country's air defenses were intercepting dozens of "hostile Israeli missiles," later said Israeli jets hit military bases, as well as an arms depot and military radar, without specifying the locations.

Syrian rebels said these strikes targeted three airfields.

- The Shayrat air base, which was targeted by the United States last year for its role in an alleged chemical attack in the Syrian town of Khan Shaykhun.
- The Tha'lah air base, in southwest Syria, which has been tied to Hezbollah.
- The Mezzeh military air field outside Damascus, which is reportedly home to Assad's elite republican guard.

A large Israeli bombing raid was reported near the northwestern Syrian town of Qusayr near the Lebanese border, a known Hezbollah stronghold.

In the days and weeks before the Iranian barrage, defense officials repeatedly warned that Israel would respond aggressively to any attack from Syria.

On Wednesday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow about Iran's "explicit goal of attacking the State of Israel as part of their strategy to destroy the State of Israel," he said.

Netanyahu told reporters after the meeting that Putin was receptive to Israel's demand that it be allowed to operate freely in Syria's skies in order to defend itself.

The late-night Iranian rocket barrage and Israeli counterattack appeared to be the largest exchange in Syria since the 1973 Yom Kippur War.

In light of the aerial battles, numerous cities and towns in northern Israel decided to open their public bomb shelters, though the army did not require all of them to do so.

In one case, residents of the northern Israeli town of Metula, along the Lebanese border, were instructed to take shelter after a loud explosion was heard in the area. They were later cleared to leave as no signs of impact were found.

Shortly before 3 a.m., a loud blast was also heard in the northern city of Safed, prompting its mayor to release a statement to residents reassuring them that the explosion was "not a missile strike or anything else, but rather an IDF launch from our area."

Residents of central Israel reported hearing fighter jets flying overhead.

Tehran has repeatedly vowed revenge after the T-4 army base in Syria was struck in an air raid—widely attributed to Israel—on April 9, killing at least seven members of the IRGC, including a senior officer responsible for the group's drone program.

It apparently attempted to exact that revenge at 12:10 a.m. on Thursday, with its bombardment on Israeli military bases on the Golan Heights.

Sirens blared across the Golan Heights throughout the exchange, sending residents into bomb shelters. The IDF Home Front Command called on residents to adhere to security instructions as needed.

Residents of the Golan Heights were told they could leave the bomb shelters around 2 a.m., but were instructed to remain near the fortified areas until further notice.

The pro-Syrian government Al-Mayadeen TV said more than 50 missiles—not 20, as the IDF said—had been fired from Syria toward Israeli forces on the Golan Heights. A Syrian parliamentarian claimed on Twitter that Damascus, not Tehran, had launched the attack.

Immediately following the barrage, Syrian state media reported that Israeli artillery fire targeted a military post near the city of Baath in the Quneitra border region, where Syrian regime forces were stationed.

In the hours that followed, this Israeli retaliation expanded to include more artillery strikes and aerial bombings, according to Syrian reports.



A Reuters article by Stephen Farreh titled "Why Is the U.S. Moving Its Embassy to Jerusalem?" was posted at reuters.com on May 7, 2018. Following is the article.

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The United States opens its new embassy in Jerusalem on May 14, a move that has delighted Israel and infuriated Palestinians.

On Monday, road signs directing traffic there went up around the neighborhood where it will be situated, and next week's opening ceremony is timed to coincide with Israel's 70th anniversary.

The initiative was driven by President Donald Trump, after he broke last year with decades of U.S. policy by recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

Trump said his administration has a peace proposal in the works, and recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of America's closest ally had "taken Jerusalem, the toughest part of the negotiation, off the table."

Israel's prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, celebrated Trump's decision, but the move upset the Arab world and Western allies.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas called it a "slap in the face" and said Washington could no longer be regarded as an honest broker in any peace talks with Israel.

Initially, a small interim embassy will operate from the building in southern Jerusalem that now houses U.S. consular operations, while a secure site is found to move the rest of the embassy operations from Tel Aviv.

■ Why did Trump recognize Jerusalem as Israel's Capital, and Announce the Embassy will be moved there?

There has long been pressure from pro-Israel politicians in Washington to move the embassy to Jerusalem, and Trump made it a signature promise of his 2016 election campaign.

The decision was popular with many conservative and evangelical Christians who voted for Trump and Vice President Mike Pence, many of whom support political recognition of Israel's claim to the city.

Trump acted under a 1995 law that requires the United States to move its embassy to Jerusalem, but to which other presidents since then - Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama - consistently signed waivers.

■ Why does Jerusalem play such an important role in the Middle East conflict?

Religion, politics and history.

Jerusalem has been fought over for millennia by its inhabitants, and by regional powers and invaders.

It is sacred to Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and each religion has sites of great significance there.

Israel's government regards Jerusalem as the eternal and indivisible capital of the country, although that is not recognized internationally. Palestinians feel equally strongly, saying that East Jerusalem must be the capital of a future Palestinian state.

The city even has different names. Jews call it Jerusalem, or Yerushalayim, and Arabs call it Al-Quds, which means "The Holy".

But the city's significance goes further.

At the heart of the Old City is the hill known to Jews across the world as Har ha-Bayit, or Temple Mount, and to Muslims internationally as al-Haram al-Sharif, or The Noble Sanctuary.

It was home to the Jewish temples of antiquity but all that remains of them above ground is a restraining wall for the foundations built by Herod the Great. Known as the Western Wall, this is a sacred place of prayer for Jews.

Within yards of the wall, and overlooking it, are two Muslim holy places, the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque, which was built in the 8th century. Muslims regard the site as the third holiest in Islam, after Mecca and Medina.

The city is also an important pilgrimage site for Christians, who revere it as the place where they believe that Jesus Christ preached, died and was resurrected.

#### ■ What is the city's modern history and status?

In 1947, the United Nations General Assembly decided that the then British-ruled Palestine should be partitioned into an Arab state and a Jewish state.

But it recognized that Jerusalem had special status and proposed international rule for the city, along with nearby Bethlehem, as a 'corpus separatum' to be administered by the United Nations.

That never happened. When British rule ended in 1948, Jordanian forces occupied the Old City and Arab East Jerusalem. Israel captured East Jerusalem from Jordan in the 1967 Middle East war and annexed it.

In 1980 the Israeli parliament passed a law declaring the "complete and united" city of Jerusalem to be the capital of Israel.

But the United Nations regards East Jerusalem as occupied, and the city's status as disputed until resolved by negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

#### ■ Does any other country have an embassy in Jerusalem?

In March Guatemala's president, Jimmy Morales, said that his country will move its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem on May 16, two days after the U.S. move.

Netanyahu said in April that "at least half a dozen" countries were now "seriously discussing" following the U.S. lead, but he did not identify them.

In December, 128 countries voted in a non-binding U.N. General Assembly resolution calling on the United States to drop its recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Nine voted against, 35 abstained and 21 did not cast a vote.

#### ■ What is likely to happen next? Has Jerusalem been a flashpoint before?

Since Trump's announcement there have been Palestinian protests and wider political tensions.

Arab leaders across the Middle East have warned the move could lead to turmoil and hamper U.S. efforts to restart long-stalled Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

More than 40 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli troops in Gaza during a six-week border protest due to culminate on May 15, the day after the U.S. Embassy move and when Palestinians traditionally lament homes and land lost with Israel's creation.

Although the clashes have not been on the scale of the Palestinian intifadas of 1987-1993 and 2000-2005, violence has erupted before over matters of sovereignty and religion.

In 1969 an Australian Messianic Christian tried to burn down Al-Aqsa Mosque. He failed but caused damage, and prompted fury across the Arab world.

In 2000, the Israeli politician Ariel Sharon, then opposition leader, led a group of Israeli lawmakers onto the Temple Mount/al-Haram al-Sharif complex. A Palestinian protest escalated into the second intifada.

Deadly confrontations also took place in July after Israel installed metal detectors at the complex's entrance after Arab-Israeli gunmen killed two Israeli policemen there.



An article by Andrew Rudalevige titled "If the Iran Deal Had Been a Senate-Confirmed Treaty, Would Trump Have Been Forced to Stay In? Nope" was posted at [washingtonpost.com](http://washingtonpost.com) on May 9, 2018. Following are excerpts of the article.

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Back in 2015, there were loud calls—not least from senators—for President Barack Obama to ask the Senate to ratify the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran, calling it a "treaty."

Instead, he chose to enter into an executive agreement, which has become something of a trend: Treaties are a tiny fraction of international agreements overall.

A 2007 study by political scientists Kiki Caruson and Victoria Farrar-Myers found that between 1977 and 1996 presidents negotiated nearly 4,000 executive agreements—but only 300 treaties.

Tuesday, though, many opponents of the agreement argued that Obama's failure to seek ratification was what allowed President Trump to end it unilaterally.

According to Sen. Ben Sasse (R-Neb.): "Donald Trump isn't ripping up a treaty . . . President Obama made a bad deal with Iran without support from Congress, and today President Trump is pulling out of President Obama's personal commitment, and he doesn't need Congress's support to do so."

Rep. Ron DeSantis (R-Fla.) tweeted that "President Trump had every right to withdraw the U.S. from what was effectively an Obama executive agreement."

Perhaps these lawmakers are fans of Thomas Jefferson's 1801 manual on parliamentary practice, which reads, "Treaties being declared, equally with the laws of the United States, to be the supreme law of the land, it is understood that an act of the legislature alone can declare them infringed and rescinded."

But presidents haven't necessarily "understood" things the same way.

It's surely possible that a treaty, in place of an executive agreement, would have wider support. Republicans would have had to vote to ratify it, and thus its abrogation might carry higher political costs.

As I noted in 2015, “the difference between seeking a treaty and negotiating an executive agreement is, at base, a political question. So is the outcome of either.”

And as political scientists Glen Krutz and Jeffrey Peake argue in their book “Treaty Politics and the Rise of Executive Agreements,” executive agreements conducted in “truly unilateral fashion” without even tacit congressional cooperation will be “codified but essentially hollow.”

Yet all else being equal, calling the JCPOA a “treaty” and getting Senate ratification would not have protected it from a presidential decision that it was “a horrible one-sided deal that should never, ever have been made.”



Looking back to 2016, here are excerpts from an article by Paul Farhi titled “Obama Official Says He Pushed a ‘Narrative’ to Media to Sell the Iran Nuclear Deal” that was posted at [washingtonpost.com](http://washingtonpost.com) on May 6, 2016.

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One of President Obama’s top national security advisers led journalists to believe a misleading timeline of U.S. negotiations with Iran over a nuclear agreement and relied on inexperienced reporters to create an “echo chamber” that helped sway public opinion to seal the deal, according to a lengthy magazine profile.

Ben Rhodes, the deputy national security adviser for strategic communications, told the *New York Times* magazine that he helped promote a “narrative” that the administration started negotiations with Iran after the supposedly moderate Hassan Rouhani was elected president in 2013. In fact, the administration’s negotiations actually began earlier, with the country’s powerful Islamic faction, and the framework for an agreement was hammered out before Rouhani’s election.

The distinction is important because of the perception that Rouhani was more favorably disposed toward American interests and more trustworthy than the hard-line faction that holds ultimate power in Iran.

Rhodes, 38, said in the article that it was easy to shape a favorable impression of the proposed agreement because of the inexperience of many of those covering the issue.

“All these newspapers used to have foreign bureaus,” he said. “Now they don’t. They call us to explain to them what’s happening in Moscow and Cairo. Most of the outlets are reporting on world events from Washington. The average reporter we talk to is 27 years old, and their only reporting experience consists of being around political campaigns. That’s a sea change. They literally know nothing.”

Rhodes set up a team of staffers who were focused on promoting the deal, which apparently included the feeding of talking points at useful times in the news cycle to foreign policy experts who were favorably disposed toward it. “We created an echo chamber,” he told the magazine. “They [the seemingly independent experts] were saying things that validated what we had given them to say.”

The manager of the White House's Twitter feed on Iran, Tanya Somanader, said one reporter, Laura Rozen of the Al-Monitor news site, became "my RSS feed. She would just find everything and retweet it."

Rhodes's assistant, Ned Price, told the newspaper that the administration would feed "color" (background details) to their "compadres" in the press corps, "and the next thing I know, lots of these guys are in the dot-com publishing space, and have huge Twitter followings, and they'll be putting this message out on their own."

In the article, Rhodes speaks contemptuously of the Washington policy and media establishment, including *The Washington Post* and *the New York Times*, referring to them as "the blob" that was subject to conventional thinking about foreign policy.

"We had test-drives to know who was going to be able to carry our message effectively, and how to use outside groups like [the anti-nuclear group] Ploughshares, the Iran Project and whomever else. So we knew the tactics that worked," Rhodes says. Speaking of Republicans and other opponents, including Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Rhodes adds that he knew "we drove them crazy."

Rhodes's boss, President Obama, has been a strong and consistent advocate for the agreement with Iran, which requires the country to curtail its nuclear program— notably its ability to produce fissile material that could be used in nuclear bombs in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions. He reinforced the misleading administration timeline in announcing the agreement last July. "Today, after two years of negotiations, the United States, together with our international partners, has achieved something that decades of animosity has not," he said then.

*The Times* article notes that Rhodes is a published short-story writer and aspiring novelist who is a skilled "storyteller."

"He is adept at constructing overarching plotlines with heroes and villains, their conflicts supported by flurries of carefully chosen adjectives, quotations and leaks from named and unnamed senior officials," Samuels wrote. "He is the master shaper and retailer of Obama's foreign-policy narratives."



Looking back to 2016, here are excerpts from an article by David Reaboi titled "Ben Rhodes Reveals How Obama Duped America Into the Dangerous Iran Deal" that was posted at [thefederalist.com](http://thefederalist.com) on May 9, 2016.

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There are few things in the world less popular in the United States than the Islamic Republic of Iran. As the then-new, optimistic promise of the Obama presidency beckoned in 2008, Gallup found that overall opinion of Iran in this country was 8 percent favorable and a dramatic 88 percent unfavorable.

Even as the American people remained rightly skeptical of Iran in the last year of President Obama's first term, the Obama White House had begun secret talks with the Ahmadinejad regime, which would result in the world's acquiescence to Iran's nuclear program.

### **Create an 'echo chamber,' then cast off allies**

How would the American people react to knowing that an administration, then still stinging from Republican critiques of its anti-Americanism and weakness on the world stage, was holding secret negotiations in Oman with the most powerful still-standing member of George W. Bush's "Axis of Evil"?

Under these conditions, Obama—with the help of an equally arrogant 38-year-old national security fabulist, Ben Rhodes (with whom he's said to "mind-meld")—succeeded in remaking the Middle East to empower America's most hated enemy, the only United Nations member state committed to the annihilation of another state: the theocratic Islamic Republic of Iran.

Rhodes and Obama knew that, for anyone but the hard-left to accept a deal with America's bitter enemy in Tehran, a new narrative needed to emerge, even if it was relatively transparent nonsense.

As Rhodes explained to his bemused interviewer, David Samuels, in a *New York Times Magazine* profile this weekend, it was first necessary to lie to a corrupted and inexperienced American media about all sorts of things, beginning with the nature and intentions of the enemy Iranian regime.

Subsequent lies were caked on, as the White House took advantage of a dangerous mix of journalists' ignorance, their ideological and partisan commitment to the administration, and, finally, their career aspirations.

Rhodes said, "The average reporter we talk to is 27 years old, and their only reporting experience consists of being around political campaigns . . . They literally know nothing."

Thus they will believe what he tells them. He also tells friendly non-governmental organizations and think tanks what he is telling the journalists. Those outlets produce "experts" whose expert opinion is just what Rhodes wants it to be. These ignorant young journalists thus have quotes that look like independent confirmation of the White House's lies.

■ Here's how Samuels describes the scene: "In the spring of last year, legions of arms-control experts began popping up at think tanks and on social media, and then became key sources for hundreds of often-clueless reporters. 'We created an echo chamber,' [Rhodes] admitted, when I asked him to explain the onslaught of freshly minted experts cheerleading for the deal. 'They were saying things that validated what we had given them to say.' "

Of course, spinning reporters and promoting experts isn't exactly new; it's been standard practice in political warfare since the birth of the first press corps. What's both new and frightening is what Rhodes' and Obama's effort furthers.

■ As Lee Smith sums up in *the Weekly Standard*: “For the last seven years the American public has been living through a postmodern narrative crafted by an extremely gifted and unspeakably cynical political operative whose job is to wage digital information campaigns designed to dismantle a several-decade old security architecture while lying about the nature of the Iranian regime. No wonder Americans feel less safe—they are.”

It took months before a few dogged journalists started to ask questions about the talks Obama officials were engaged in with Ahmadinejad’s regime.

■ Samuels writes of Rhodes: “He is adept at constructing overarching plotlines with heroes and villains, their conflicts and motivations supported by flurries of carefully chosen adjectives, quotations and leaks from named and unnamed senior officials. He is the master shaper and retailer of Obama’s foreign-policy narratives, at a time when the killer wave of social media has washed away the sand castles of the traditional press.”

One of the “overarching plotlines” Rhodes crafted credited Hassan Rouhani’s election in June with signaling a new willingness of Iranians to negotiate that the Obama administration then embraced.

Obama, of course, would play the hero; the villains, however, numbered in the thousands, like the cast of “Ben Hur”: neocons, and those darkly loyal to Israel’s interests; partisan Republicans; knuckle-dragging warmongers, and other enemies of the peace.

Of course, it was all a lie.

Firstly, Rouhani is no sort of moderate. He has presided over a steady uptick of executions of Iran’s dissidents, as well as sexual and religious minorities.

Even more egregious, though, was the lie about the genesis of the negotiations, as Obama sent Rhodes and other select emissaries to talks with Iran’s hard-liner relentlessly anti-American president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad just as the latter was promising Israel’s annihilation.

### **Obama’s ‘compadres’ and ‘force multipliers’ in action**

Now, as Samuels reports, the White House knew it had enough political will and ideological accomplices in the media to jam the story down Americans’ throats and score a political victory:

■ Samuels wrote: “Rhodes has become adept at ventriloquizing many people at once. Ned Price, Rhodes’s assistant, gave me a primer on how it’s done. The easiest way for the White House to shape the news, he explained, is from the briefing podiums . . . ‘But then there are sort of these force multipliers,’ he said, adding, ‘We have our compadres, I will reach out to a couple people, and you know I wouldn’t want to name them’ ”

Samuels is chuckling because the game is so obviously rigged, even an outside observer would notice the con man’s skills trying unsuccessfully to blend into the crowd.

Among the honor-roles of “compadres” Rhodes has “become adept at ventriloquizing” are Zach Beauchamp and Max Fisher—two leftist Vox.com writers who couldn’t more closely resemble Rhodes’ remark, “they literally know nothing.”

Beauchamp is notorious for alleging the existence of a bizarre land-bridge between Gaza and the West Bank which (naturally) the Israelis use as a weapon of war against peaceful Palestinian commuters.

Fisher was recently plucked from Vox.com to ply his trade at *The New York Times* where, evidently, policy expertise and basic subject matter knowledge aren’t as important as eagerness to both take nasty swipes at Israel and play Rhodes’ ventriloquist dummy.

This brings us to *al-Monitor’s* Laura Rozen. Perhaps no other reporter in Washington is as identified with voicing the point of view of both the Iranian regime and the White House.

Unfortunately for the American people, this is anything but a difficult balancing act: the party line, in both cases, is almost always identical.

Rozen’s relentlessness in being on-message earned her a mention in the Times by White House Director of Digital Rapid Response Tanya Somanader, who ran the administration’s Iran Deal Twitter. “Laura Rozen was my RSS feed,” Somanader told Samuels. “She would just find everything and retweet it.”

Rozen’s willingness to swallow the administration’s lie—sorry, Rhodes’ “overarching plotline”—that was manifestly untrue about the origin of the U.S.-Iran negotiations was, as always, total.

To complete the echo chamber, others wrote very similar stories pushing Rhodes’ phony narrative.

Once Rhodes’ “force multipliers” in the media had cemented the narrative of a post-Ahmadinejad “thaw” in relations that led to negotiations, the White House was able to weaponize it against deal skeptics.

First, it was used against French President François Hollande, a doubter of the nuclear talks. “Why France Is to Blame for Blocking the Iran Nuclear Agreement,” blared *Daily Beast* writer Christopher Dickey on November 10, 2013.

The White House also used its weaponized “force multipliers” in what was evidently a Rhodes-led campaign to shout down opponents of the Iran deal.

The White House’s “force multipliers” were put to work every time the American people got too close to the truth about the Iran deal. This was most in evidence while a few intrepid reporters at the Wall Street Journal or Associated Press broke revelations of numerous radical Obama administration giveaways, especially the Parchin side deal.

Iran was allowed to make a deal with the International Atomic Energy Agency to inspect itself, and the terms of this deal were never turned over to Congress as the Corker-Cardin law required.

- Once again, friendly media action covered illegal action.
- Ignorant journalists who knew nothing but what they had been fed were willing partners in shutting down the debate.

This gave cover for the president's few allies in the Senate to stage their filibuster. It was successful, as the Senate never voted to accept or reject the Iran deal. The failure to disclose the side deals' terms to Congress violated the Corker-Cardin law.

Ignorant journalists who knew nothing but what they had been fed were willing partners in shutting down the debate.

Similarly, the White House's pet journalists fell all over themselves making sure that every outlet in America described the post-deal elections in Iran as a victory, inevitably, for the theocracy's "moderates." They described the election in glowing terms, as if it were a clear endorsement of openness brought about by Obama's wisdom.

The effect of national security policy enacted and cheered on in the press in this way has been disastrous, as real experts tried to warn us it would be. Those experts were shouted down by a mob that "literally knows nothing," but is happy to participate in a mutually beneficial information operation.

The White House's political war on Iran deal opponents reconfigured the debate as a partisan issue, as Rhodes had planned. With the very notable exception of the Associated Press' Matt Lee, most of Washington's journalists, who are supposed to be the eyes and ears of the American people, actively helped them.

The White House's political war on Iran deal opponents reconfigured the debate as a partisan issue, as Rhodes had planned.

In the *New York Times Magazine*, Rhodes—and, by extension, the president he continues to work for—confessed to misleading the media, members of Congress, and the American people, all in service of a truly massive re-alignment of the nation's interests and security.

Abandoning longtime allies while embracing states that have long been enemies is a massive strategic shift more momentous than what can ordinarily be explained as "foreign policy."

It's a fair bet that most Americans didn't sign onto a duplicitous "larger restructuring of the American narrative" by junior fiction writers when they sent Obama to the White House in 2008.

But it's what the country got and, thanks to Rhodes' work creating his "force multipliers" of freshly minted star journalists and partisan experts, will continue to get.



An article by Thomas D. Williams titled "Saudi Arabia Inks Deal With Vatican to Build Christian Churches" was posted [breitbart.com](http://breitbart.com) on May 4, 2018. Following is the article.

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For the first time in history, Saudi Arabia has entered into a joint agreement with the Vatican to build churches for Christians living in the officially Muslim nation.

The agreement was signed by the Secretary General of the Muslim World League Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdel Karim Al-Issa and the President of the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue in the Vatican, Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, according to a report Wednesday from the Egypt Independent newspaper.

*The Financial Express* has reported that Saudi Arabia's newfound openness to and socio-cultural cooperation with the non-Muslim world stems from a desire to reduce dependency on oil resources, its primary economic driver.

Cardinal Tauran visited Riyadh on April 16-20, where he was received at the royal palace by King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, who acts as the country's prime minister as well as the custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, and his son, the crown prince Muhammad bin Salman.

Tauran and his delegation also visited the Center for the Fight against Extremist Thought, and met with the current Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia, Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdullah Al ash-Sheikh.

In his address to Saudi officials, Tauran made mention of the "hundreds of thousands of Christians in the Saudi Kingdom," insisting that Pope Francis follows their situation "with close attention."

The cardinal also reiterated the Vatican position on the equal treatment of all citizens regardless of their religion, including those who do not profess any religion, and called for establishing a common basis for the construction of centers of worship.

Fruit of the cardinal's visit was the joint agreement that provides for the building of churches to care for the needs of Christians in Saudi Arabia as well as underscoring the key role of religions in renouncing violence, extremism, terrorism and achieving security and stability in the world.

The new accord also calls for the establishment of a coordinating committee with two representatives from each side to organize future meetings. The committee is expected to meet every two years, alternating between Rome and a city chosen by the Islamic World League.

Saudi Arabia is currently the only country in the region without a single Christian church, after Qatar opened a church in March. Saudi Arabia embraces Islamic Wahhabism, which bans all forms of non-Muslim religious activities.



“Eye on the World” comment: The following list of articles consists of headlines of extra articles, which are considered international. The articles were not posted, but the headlines give the essence of the story.

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- An article by Katie Pavlich titled “Netanyahu Praises Trump for Leaving Terror-Supporting-Iran-Deal as Israel Braces for Potential Attack” was posted at townhall.com on May 8, 2018.
  - A Reuters article by Sarah Dadouch titled “Iran-Aligned Houthis in Yemen Fire Missiles at Saudi Capital” was posted at reuters.com on May 9, 2018.
  - An article by Karl Smallman titled “Volcano Eruption Fears As Almost 300 Earthquakes Rock Spanish Holiday Hotspot” was posted at euroweeklynews.com on May 8, 2018.
  - An article by Davis Richardson titled “The United Nations Doesn’t Want You to Watch Fox News” was posted at observer.com on May 3, 2018.
  - An article by Bill Gertz titled “Pentagon Confirms Chinese Fired Lasers at U.S. Pilots” was posted at freebeacon.com on May 3, 2018.
  - An article titled “Argentina Raises Interest Rates to 40%” was posted at bbc.com on May 4, 2018.
  - An article by Nicole Winfield titled “Swiss Guards: World’s Oldest Standing Army Gets New Headgear” was posted at apnews.org on May 5, 2018.
  - An article by Alex Horton titled “Navy to Resurrect Fleet to Protect the East Coast and North Atlantic From Russia” was posted at Imtonline.com on May 5, 2018.
  - An article by Piers Morgan titled “If the Met Gala was Islam or Jewish-themed, All Hell Would Break Loose—So Why was It Okay for a bunch of flesh-flashing celebrities to Disrespect My Religion?” was posted at daily-mail.co.uk on May 8, 2018.



A video and an article by Ian Schwartz titled “Jason Whitlock on Kanye: If You Say Trump has a Good Idea, You Get Kicked Out of the Black Race” were posted at realclearpolitics.com on May 8, 2018. Following is the article.

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Sports journalist Jason Whitlock explains why Kanye’s tweet about President Trump was one of the best tweets of all time in a Tuesday appearance on Tucker Carlson Tonight.

Whitlock lamented that the African-American vote has been taken for granted by the Democratic party and that blacks have made a mistake by swallowing liberalism wholly.

Whitlock noted the historical importance of the church in black history and said liberalism and the Democratic is now the church for blacks and it is “not working out for us.”

He also spoke about the backlash musician Kanye West has received for his decision to come out and say he supports some policies of President Donald Trump. Whitlock said of course Kanye doesn’t agree with Trump and the Republican party on a lot of issues but he is someone willing to acknowledge a good idea.

Whitlock said that type of thinking puts you at risk of being “kicked out of the black race.” He said if we cast someone out of the human race just because we disagree with them then we would have no one left.

“I don’t really like politics much at all, but if you just say I think Trump has a good idea here, you get kicked out of the black race,” the sportswriter told Tucker Carlson. “Kanye is saying I don’t agree with everything Trump believes in. Kanye, I’m sure, disagrees with Trump and the Republican party and conservatives on a lot of issues but he’s not willing to cast someone out of the human race just because he disagrees with him. If I cast everybody out that I disagreed with I would have no one.”

He also blacks have to examine why they are the only group that has gone all in with one party and why they are “chained” to an ideology that hasn’t worked out for the race for the last 60 years.

“I think we’ve made a mistake,” Whitlock said.

He also knocked writer Ta-Nehisi Coates who believes he is the “overseer of black thought.”

Whitlock made an interesting comparison of the Democratic party being marketed to black Americans as the solution to all the race’s problems like cigarettes were decades ago.

“It’s been marketed to us the same as cigarettes—fashionable, sophisticated, it’s supposed to be liberating but I think it needs a Surgeon General’s warning, hazardous to your family and all the values you were taught as a child,” he said of liberalism.

**JASON WHITLOCK:** I think what Kanye is trying to do open black America’s mind to the fact that perhaps we have chosen a bad strategy by swallowing all of the Democratic party and liberalism whole. I say in my column in The Wall Street Journal that in the immediate aftermath of the civil rights movement in the 1960s Democrats marketed to us liberalism as the solution to all of our problems and liberalism now is like the cigarette. It’s been marketed to us the same as cigarettes—fashionable, sophisticated, it’s supposed to be liberating but I think it needs a Surgeon General’s warning, hazardous to your family and all the values you were taught as a child.

I think us as African-Americans, we have to examine why are we the only ethnic group that has gone in wholly with one political party? No one has to compete for our votes. We are chained to an ideology that just isn’t working

over the last 50, 60 years. Liberalism, the swallowing of it whole. Our families have been destroyed. Our children lost and confused. Our black men incarcerated and emasculated and we've moved away from the traditional values that have always defined us. I think we've made a mistake.

**TUCKER CARLSON:** The thing about politics is if you give your vote away for free you don't get anything in return. And so maybe the hysterical reactions to the Kanye West tweet is the reaction of a party that knows that once people figure that out it's got a major problem on its hands, so you need to tamp down any independent thought immediately or else it can get out of control.

**WHITLOCK:** And it's being tamped down as viciously as anything I've ever seen. When they call in the great writer, Ta-Nehisi Coates, basically I call him the overseer of black thought. Basically he is there to keep everyone in line with the groupthink that the only solution is liberalism for black America's problems.

If that were the case our problems would be being solved much faster because 90, 95% of us are afraid to even admit that we have conservative values and we have been sold—we've moved away from our church. We've been the most religious people in America for years, hundreds of years and we're moving more secular. We're moving away from the church. Our religion now is liberalism and the Democratic party is our church and it's just not working for us.

**CARLSON:** So if Kanye West, who is not just one of those popular black Americans, but one of those popular Americans just across the board, if he doesn't stand a chance of just raising this question because it's a totally valid question, then who does?

**WHITLOCK:** Well, actually he does stand a chance because when someone like Kanye speaks out, he creates space for others to speak out because anybody that has said—Tucker, I am a non-voter.

I don't really like politics much at all, but if you just say I think Trump has a good idea here, you get kicked out of the black race. Kanye is saying I don't agree with everything Trump believes in. Kanye, I'm sure, disagrees with Trump and the Republican party and conservatives on a lot of issues but he's not willing to cast someone out of the human race just because he disagrees with him. If I cast everybody out that I disagreed with I would have no one.



An article by John Nolte titled "Smashing the Overton Window—Kanye West's Support for Trump is Not the Point" was posted at [breitbart.com](http://breitbart.com) on May 7, 2018. Following are excerpts of the article.

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Tomorrow, today, or even before this piece is published, mercurial genius Kanye West could come out against President Trump's tax cut, against The Wall, and endorse Democrats in the upcoming mid-terms.

While Kanye obviously likes Trump personally, as far as I know, the music and fashion superstar has yet to endorse any of his policies.

In fact, before this whole Trump brouhaha exploded, Kanye West only followed a single account on Twitter, the one owned by his wife Kim Kardashian. Post-brouhaha, West has followed only two additional accounts: black conservative Candace Owens and . . . Emma González, the left-wing Parkland student committed to stripping us of our Second Amendment rights.

And that is okay because from what I am seeing, Kanye is not talking politics or policy or right or left. What he is talking about is freedom, specifically intellectual freedom, which is even more important than supporting MAGA.

My growing investment in Kanye actually has nothing to do with seeing him in a Make America Great Again hat. Rather, what excites me is Kanye's push to widen the Overton window.

The Overton window is what gauges the range of what is and is not acceptable political discourse, which decides what ideas will or will not be tolerated. And He Who Controls the Overton Window controls the future.

Right now, it is the media desperately hoping to control the range of ideas and discourse allowed. Naturally, they are desperately trying to shift the window to the left. Some quick examples:

Acceptable: Socialism, citizenship and drivers licenses for illegal immigrants, biological men using women's restrooms, partial birth abortion, gun confiscation, Maxine Waters.

Unacceptable: Questioning Global Warming (science denier), opposing illegal immigration (racist), opposing same sex-marriage (homophobe), believing transgenders suffer from a mental illness (trans-phobe), arming qualified teachers (you hate children), Clarence Thomas.

By shifting the Overton window away from traditional ideas, by legitimizing radical left-wing thought while branding as unacceptable ideas that just ten years ago were considered mainstream, the establishment media is hoping to make it socially unacceptable to discuss and debate those ideas.

Then, by extension, this speech blacklist will affect our politics by making it impossible for a candidate to run who holds certain values.

In other words, through the use of social pressure and bullying, the media is hoping to dramatically shift and or shrink the Overton window to a point where right-of-center ideas are considered beyond the pale.

Trump, of course, shattered at least two decades that found the media carefully and methodically manipulating the terms of legitimate debate. And now the Jihad is on to ensure Trump and his presidency are never normalized or legitimized.

Yes, the media wants him impeached, but that is merely a goal within the existential battle to ensure Trump is only ever seen by the public as a virus, a freak event, a temporary abnormality.

Within the black community, the Overton window is so breathtakingly narrow, that many (including myself) have described it as a Thought Plantation, a place that so rigidly enforces what ideas, attitudes, and beliefs make a person black, it is unimaginable that such a thing could happen in America.

Even harsher is the way in which this conformity is enforced. Step off this Thought Plantation, and you are immediately annihilated as a sell-out, an Uncle Tom, an Oreo (black outside, white inside); and then have to face the likes of a pompous hater like Ta-Nehisi Coates (over) writing a gajillion word piece declaring you white.

But this is precisely what West is bristling against, this cultural fascism, this breathtaking ignorance that defines "black" as everything but skin color; this appalling tribalism that manipulates and oppresses the thought, beliefs, and individualism of millions of free men.

Kanye West might not agree with a single plank in the MAGA platform; he could very well be a gun-grabbing, pro-abortion, socialist fanatic.

I don't care.

As long as West is standing up for a black man's right to be intellectually free, as long as he is defending the right to break the chains of a suffocating conformity that has gripped that part of our population for decades, he deserves our support and praise.



An article by Matthew Cochran titled "How Schools Quietly Indoctrinate Your Kids on Abortion and Transgenderism" was posted at [thefederalist.com](http://thefederalist.com) on May 3, 2018. Following are excerpts of the article.

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A new study from the Public Religion Research Institute reveals just how badly social conservatives are losing the battle over marriage and sexuality.

Not only do two-thirds of Americans polled support so-called gay marriage, but even among evangelicals, support is rapidly growing. The majority of evangelical youth now reject Christ's teaching on the subject.

Outcomes like this surprise too many of us because we underestimate both the power of rhetoric and the extent to which conservatives willingly submit ourselves and our children to it.

Anyone who is competent in the art of rhetoric knows the value of "frame," deliberately using the unspoken assumptions that shape a discussion. The quintessential example, of course, is the loaded question, "Have you stopped beating your wife?"

The way the question is framed assumes a history of violence regardless of whether that's actually the case. It slips an assertion into the dialogue with-

out having to make an argument in support of it, and when people fail to notice what happened, the assertion quickly becomes an assumption that changes the course of the discussion.

It's a powerful rhetorical tool that lends itself to deception, as can be seen in that failing debate over gay "marriage." The Left was quite adept in framing the discussion as whether we allow gay couples to get a government license.

Of course, such talk of permission presupposes that a man could actually marry a man or a woman marry a woman in the first place—an assertion that flies in the face of natural law, human biology, and history.

Yet conservatives largely took the bait on that one, and as a result, public perception went from "unthinkable" to "of course" in a remarkably short period of time.

After embracing, without argument, the dubious assumption that two men can actually get married, it's virtually impossible to effectively argue that they shouldn't be permitted to marry.

### **Framing device a pervasive tactic**

On this and other key issues, rhetorical devices of this kind hit far closer to home than conservatives like to admit. Too many of America's educators are happy to use this same kind of deception against the children entrusted to them, as a friend of mine recently discovered.

His granddaughter is attending a public middle school in Iowa, where all parents were recently given a typical notification about an upcoming class. They called the topic "personal development." Back when I was in school, it was called "health class." Putting aside the various euphemisms that have been adopted over the years, it's essentially sex education.

Upon learning that subject is coming up, wise and dedicated parents are going to investigate the curriculum to see what their child is going to be taught.

That's exactly what this student's mother did. She asked the teacher for more details, and along with an assurance that the teacher's personal beliefs would not play a role, she was given a list of subtopics including puberty, reproductive systems, sexually transmitted diseases, abstinence, birth control, sexual orientation, and gender identity. She was also invited to take a look at the curriculum if she wanted greater detail—an offer she accepted.

As it turns out, the curriculum ("Rights, Respect, Responsibility: A K-12 Sexuality Education Curriculum") is being used throughout the district and was produced by the far-left political advocacy organization Advocates for Youth.

It is a great (which is to say terrible) example of the way hyper-progressive political ideologues team up with public educators to weaponize our schools against our children and any parents who aren't on board with radical Left's agenda.

### **Hidden indoctrination is real**

Now, the list of subtopics the teacher gave certainly contained some red flags for Christians, conservatives, and others concerned with the West's moral decay.

More interesting, however, were the items that weren't listed but showed up in the curriculum nonetheless—abortion, for example.

In the lesson "Great Expectations: Signs and Symptoms of Pregnancy," consider what teachers are instructed by the curriculum to tell students regarding pregnancy:

■ "Once a person confirms they are pregnant, they need to decide whether they are going to have the baby and become a parent, have the baby and let someone adopt it, or end the pregnancy (at its earliest stage). The second two options are available for a number of reasons, including that the pregnant person may not feel they would be able to take care of a baby because of their age or life circumstances."

The statement doesn't explicitly argue in favor of abortion. The word itself doesn't even show up anywhere in the lesson. One might even claim it's neutral in that it offers both abortion and adoption as choices.

Nevertheless, it frames the issue in a way that brings the entire pro-abortion mindset in through the backdoor—without argument, without evidence, and without even the acknowledgment that any controversy on the subject exists.

To say that a "pregnant person" (we'll get to that in a moment) has to decide whether "to have the baby and become a parent" presumes that an expectant mother is not already a parent, and that she does not already have a baby.

It's a rhetorical sleight of hand meant to obscure the reality that abortion is a grisly decision mothers make regarding the baby they already have.

The second deception is that the curriculum frames the lifecycle of a pregnancy as though abortion were just one of the natural outcomes.

Entirely missing are any of the factual details on exactly how abortion ends a pregnancy—by deliberately killing a helpless and innocent human being. It's like teaching that death is just a natural part of life when you're talking about assassination.

Sure, like pregnancy, human lives "end," but glossing over the moral weight that comes with deliberately choosing to end lives is fundamentally dishonest.

Presenting the existence of another human being as some kind of innocuous consumer choice—"You can click 'okay' to proceed or 'cancel' to end your pregnancy"—is reprehensible.

But then, while the teacher might have excluded her own views, Advocates for Youth are happy to force their radical ideas on vulnerable students at taxpayer expense.

## **Gender identities**

The third deception, of course, is found in all the really awkward language that occurs whenever you would expect to see gendered speech.

Both biology and uniform human experience show that women are the only humans who get pregnant, leaving only activists and fake news to tell us to ignore our lying eyes.

Yet the curriculum on pregnancy is filled with grammatically odd phrases all meant to avoid acknowledging the concrete fact that maternity belongs exclusively to women.

This is a deliberate choice, for the curriculum explains:

■ “Language is really important and we’ve intentionally been very careful about our language throughout this curriculum. You may notice language throughout the curriculum that seems less familiar—using the pronoun ‘they’ instead of ‘her’ or ‘him’, using gender neutral names in scenarios and role-plays and referring to ‘someone with a vulva’ vs. a girl or woman. This is intended to make the curriculum inclusive of all genders and gender identities. You will need to determine for yourself how much and how often you can do this in your own school and classroom, and should make adjustments accordingly.”

So not only is the curriculum also laying the groundwork for trans advocacy, it’s also instructing the teachers to promote it this way as much as they can get away with—another hallmark of deliberate dishonesty.

All without argument, in the shadows of deceptive rhetoric designed to promote the new proliferation of meaningless genders as an unquestioned assumption.

It even goes further than that. Any suspicions a parent might have upon learning his or her child’s school is teaching about gender identity are confirmed by examining the curriculum.

In the lesson “Blue is for Boys, Pink is for Girls . . . Or Are They?,” the class is instructed to compile a list of stereotypes for boys and girls.

Next, they’re told to come up with exceptions to those stereotypes that they’ve seen and discuss them, noting how the treatment of exceptions can make people feel.

From there, the teacher tells them “There are also people who don’t identify as boys or girls, but rather as transgender or gender queer. The[sic] means that even if they were called a boy or a girl at birth and may have body parts that are typically associated with being a boy or a girl, on the inside, they feel differently.”

The rhetorical impression this is supposed to give is quite clear: Penises are merely “typically associated with” boys just as “be[ing] the one to ask the girl out” is typically associated with boys.

A boy who likes ballet is “called a punk” just as a baby born with a penis was “called a boy at birth.” Stereotypes are, of course, naturally fluid, as are a person’s feelings about those stereotypes. Biological sex, however, is not.

Conflating the two in this way is an intellectually dishonest way of proselytizing students who attend school to be educated.

After a handful of forms, emails, and meetings, my friend's granddaughter was exempted from this portion of the class through her parents' diligence. The rest of the class was not.

When the mother reviewed the curriculum in person, she was the only parent at the school who had even come in to look at it. Their vigilance is, unfortunately, all too rare, even among conservatives who know there's a big problem in our schools, and most parents stay in the dark.

This particular kind of abuse of public education for political advocacy is not the sort of thing that parents would even find out about without examining the curriculum themselves.

A typical middle school student who is presented this material isn't going to come home at the end of the day and tell her parents her teacher was advocating abortion, even though that's exactly what this curriculum does.

A typical middle school student is likely to come away from these lessons very confused about gender, but not likely to realize she or he has just been preached to.

In public education, no matter where individual school, faculty, and staff may stand—and yes, good people work within it—the overarching system is the enemy of your child's moral development.

Even a good teacher is pretty limited when he or she has to keep personal views separated from a mandated curriculum like this.

In 2018, all competent parents know they need to be vigilant—to read the notifications from the school, meet with their child's teachers, familiarize themselves with the curriculum, help the kids with their homework, and so forth.



An article by Dennis Prager titled "The War on Wisdom" was posted at townhall.com on May 8, 2018. Following is the article.

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There is more knowledge available today than ever before in history. But few would argue people are wiser than ever before.

On the contrary, many of us would argue that we are living in a particularly foolish time—a period that is largely wisdom-free, especially among those with the most knowledge: the best educated.

The fact that one of our two major political parties is advocating lowering the voting age to 16 is a good example of the absence of wisdom among a large segment of the adult population.

What adult deems 16-year-olds capable of making a wise voting decision? The answer is an adult with the wisdom of a 16-year-old—"Hey, I'm no wiser than most 16-year-olds. Why should I have the vote and they not?"

America has been influenced and is now being largely led by members of the baby-boom generation. This is the generation that came up with the motto "Never trust anyone over 30," making it the first American generation to proclaim contempt for wisdom as a virtue.

The left in America is founded on the rejection of wisdom. It is possible to be on the left and be kind, honest in business, faithful to one's spouse, etc. But it is not possible to be wise if one subscribes to leftist (as opposed to liberal) ideas.

Last year, Amy Wax, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, co-authored an opinion piece in the Philadelphia Inquirer with a professor from the University of San Diego School of Law in which they wrote that the "bourgeois culture" and "bourgeois norms" that governed America from the end of World War II until the mid-1960s were good for America, and that their rejection has caused much of the social dysfunction that has characterized this country since the 1960s.

Those values included, in their words: "Get married before you have children and strive to stay married for their sake. Get the education you need for gainful employment, work hard, and avoid idleness. Go the extra mile for your employer or client. Be a patriot, ready to serve the country. Be neighborly, civic-minded, and charitable. Avoid coarse language in public. Be respectful of authority. Eschew substance abuse and crime."

Recognizing those norms as universally beneficial constitutes wisdom. Rejection of them constitutes a rejection of wisdom—i.e. foolishness.

Yet the left almost universally rejected the Wax piece, deeming it, as the left-wing National Lawyers Guild wrote, "an explicit and implicit endorsement of white supremacy," and questioning whether professor Wax should be allowed to continue teaching a required first-year course at Penn Law.

To equate getting married before having children, working hard and eschewing substance abuse and crime with "white supremacy" is to betray an absence of wisdom that is as depressing as it breathtaking.

It is obvious to anyone with a modicum of common sense that those values benefit anyone who adheres to them; they have nothing to do with race.

But almost every left-wing position (that differs from a liberal or conservative position) is bereft of wisdom.

Is the left-wing belief in the notion of "cultural appropriation"—such as the left's recent condemnation of a white girl for wearing a Chinese dress to her high school prom—wise? Or is it simply moronic?

Is the left-wing belief that there are more than two genders wise? Or is it objectively false, foolish and nihilistic?

Has the left-wing belief that children need (unearned) self-esteem turned out to be wise, or morally and psychologically destructive? To its credit, last year,

the Guardian wrote a scathing expose on the “lie”—its word—the self-esteem movement is based on and the narcissistic generation it created.

Is it wise to provide college students with “safe spaces”—with their hot chocolate, stuffed animals and puppy videos—in which to hide whenever a conservative speaker comes to their college? Or is it just ridiculous and infantilizing?

Is the left’s rejection of many, if not most, great philosophical, literary and artistic works of wisdom on the grounds that they were written or created by white males wise?

One example: The English department of the University of Pennsylvania, half of whose law school professors condemned Amy Wax and almost none of whose law professors defended her piece, removed a portrait of William Shakespeare (replacing it with that of a black lesbian poet).

Is multiculturalism, the idea that no culture is superior to another morally or in any other way wise?

Isn’t it the antithesis of wisdom, whose very premise is that certain ideas are morally superior to others, and certain literary or artistic works are superior to others?

And the veneration of feelings over truth, not to mention wisdom, is a cornerstone of leftism.

Here’s one way to test my thesis.

- Ask left-wing friends what they have done to pass on wisdom to their children. Most will answer with a question: “What do you mean?”
- Then ask religious Jewish or Christian friends the same question. They won’t answer with a question.



An article by Brendan Kirby titled “The Five Judges Who Have Most Thwarted Trump’s Agenda” was posted on lifezette.com on May 7, 2018. Following is the article.

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President Donald Trump’s political enemies have made a cottage industry of suing him or his administration, and the litigation has slowed down or completely blocked his agenda on key promises he made during the 2016 campaign.

The president’s defenders complain that litigants have shopped for friendly “activist” judges and argue many of the rulings fly in the face of traditional judicial review—producing judgments they never would render against another president.

Eventually, the Supreme Court will resolve many of these disputes.

But for now, the Trump administration must wait it out.

Here are the five judges who have done the most to stymie Trump.

### ■ **U.S. District Judge William Alsup, Northern District of California**

The case: Regents of University of California, et al v. Department of Homeland Security

The dispute: Whether the administration can reverse a decision of the previous administration that created the quasi-amnesty program known as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

What the judge wrote: "In terminating DACA, the administrative record failed to address the 689,800 young people who had come to rely on DACA to live and to work in this country. These individuals had submitted substantial personal identifying information to the government, paid hefty fees, and planned their lives according to the dictates of DACA. The administrative record includes no consideration to the disruption a rescission would have on the lives of DACA recipients, let alone their families, employers and employees, schools and communities."

Status: The administration has appealed the ruling to the San Francisco-based 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

### ■ **U.S. District Judge John Bates, D.C. District Court**

The case: NAACP et al v. United States

The dispute: DACA

What the judge wrote: Going even further than Alsup and another federal judge in New York and ordering the administration to begin accepting new DACA applications, "DACA's rescission was arbitrary and capricious because the department failed adequately to explain its conclusion that the program was unlawful. Neither the meager legal reasoning nor the assessment of litigation risk provided by DHS to support its rescission decision is sufficient to sustain termination of the DACA program." The judge even used the politically correct term "undocumented aliens," explaining in a footnote that he was eschewing the legal term because of a "certain segment of the population that finds the phrase 'illegal alien' offensive."

Status: The administration has not yet responded to the April 24 ruling, but last week seven states filed a lawsuit to end DACA, arguing that it never was legal in the first place.

### ■ **Senior U.S. District Judge Harry Leinenweber, Northern District of Illinois**

The case: City of Chicago v. Sessions

The dispute: Whether the administration has the authority to target "sanctuary" jurisdictions by blocking certain federal grant money to cities and counties that do not cooperate with federal immigration officers

What the judge wrote: "The executive branch cannot impose the conditions without congressional authority . . . Efforts to impose them violate the separation of powers doctrine."

Status: A three-judge panel of the Chicago-based 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the ruling, and the Department of Justice (DOJ) has asked the full court to review the case.

### ■ **U.S. District Judge Derrick Watson, District Court of Hawaii**

The case: State of Hawaii v. Trump

The dispute: Whether the administration has the authority to temporarily prohibit people from certain terrorism-compromised countries from traveling to the United States

What the judge wrote: After citing statements from Trump on the campaign trail and his aides, "The Court will not crawl into a corner, pull the shutters closed, and pretend it has not seen what it has."

Status: The Supreme Court allowed the ban to take effect, with certain restrictions. Last month, the justices heard oral arguments on the case, which will test the limits of executive power in determining which foreigners enter the United States and which do not.

### ■ **U.S. District Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly, D.C. District Court**

The case: Jane Doe v. Trump

The dispute: Whether the administration can reverse a decision of the previous administration and ban transgender people from serving in the military.

What the judge wrote: "The court finds that a number of factors—including the sheer breadth of the exclusion ordered by the directives, the unusual circumstances surrounding the president's announcement of them, the fact that the reasons given for them do not appear to be supported by any facts, and the recent rejection of those reasons by the military itself—strongly suggest that plaintiffs' Fifth Amendment claim is meritorious."

Status: A three-judge panel of the D.C. Circuit Court rejected an appeal to put the judge's injunction on hold and allow the transgender ban to take effect while the case proceeded. In March of this year, the Trump administration issued a revised executive order. Kollar-Kotelly kept the preliminary injunction in place, and the plaintiffs filed an amended complaint.



An article by Alan Dershowitz titled "Federal Judge Rightly Rebukes Mueller for Questionable Tactics" was posted at thehill.com on May 7, 2018. Following is the article.

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An experienced federal judge has confirmed what I have been arguing for months, namely, that the modus operandi of special counsel Robert Mueller is to charge associates of Donald Trump with any crime he can find in order to squeeze them into turning against the president.

This is what Judge T.S. Ellis III said at a hearing Friday: "You don't really care about Mr. Manafort's bank fraud . . . What you really care about is what information Mr. Manafort could give you that would reflect on Mr. Trump or lead to his prosecution or impeachment."

This tactic is as old as Adam turning against Eve. But, as the judge correctly pointed out, it risks the possibility that the squeezed witness will not only sing, he will compose.

Here is what Ellis said about that: "This vernacular is to 'sing,' is what prosecutors use. What you got to be careful of is, they may not only sing, they may compose."

I have been using this "compose" metaphor for decades and I am gratified that a judge borrowed it to express an important civil liberties concern. Every experienced criminal lawyer has seen this phenomenon at work.

I have seen it used by prosecutors who threaten wives, parents, siblings and, in one case, the innocent son of a potential witness who was about to graduate law school. Most judges, many of whom were former prosecutors, have also seen it. But few have the courage to expose it publicly, as Ellis has done.

Defenders of Mueller's tactic argue that the threatened witnesses and their relatives are generally guilty of some crime, or else they wouldn't be vulnerable to the prosecutor's threats.

This may be true, but the crimes they are threatened to be charged with are often highly technical, elastic charges that are brought only as leverage. They are dropped as soon as the witness cooperates.

This was precisely the point Ellis was making with regard to Manafort. A similar point could be made with regard to Trump's former national security adviser, Michael Flynn, and perhaps to his personal attorney, Michael Cohen. Indeed, Flynn pleaded guilty to a highly questionable charge precisely because his son was threatened with prosecution.

Civil libertarians have long criticized this tactic, since the time it was used by Joseph McCarthy and his minions to pressure witnesses to testify against suspected communists in the 1950s. In recent decades it has been deployed against mobsters, terrorists and corporate predators.

But Ellis has accused Mueller of using this questionable approach to develop a political case against the duly elected president of the United States.

For those who argue that everything is fair, if the goal is to prevent a president from being above the law, Ellis provided a compelling response: "What we don't want in this country, we don't want anyone with unfettered power . . . It's unlikely you're going to persuade me the special counsel has unlimited powers to do anything he or she wants."

He was referring to the manner by which the special counsel was using his power to "tighten the screws" on Manafort by indicting him for an alleged crime that the judge believes has nothing to do "with what the special counsel is authorized to investigate."

Civil libertarians should be applauding Ellis for seeking to cabin the “unfettered power” of the special counsel to do “anything he wants.”

But no, because his ruling may help Trump, and because Trump has applauded it, the civil liberties and criminal defense communities have not been heard from.

The judge has not yet ruled on the propriety of the special counsel’s actions, and it is unlikely he will dismiss the charges against Manafort.

But Mueller is on notice that he may not have unfettered power to indict Trump’s associates for old crimes that are unrelated to the Russia investigation for the purpose of making them sing or compose against the president.

The civil liberties community no longer has an excuse to ignore or defend, as some have done, tactics that pose considerable dangers to civil liberties, just because they are being used against Trump.

Last week was not a good one for special counsel Mueller. Nor was it particularly good for Trump, as his new lawyer Rudy Giuliani presented a somewhat garbled narrative with regard to the payments made to adult film star Stormy Daniels.

But it was an excellent week for the Constitution and for all Americans, because a federal judge made it clear that no one—not even the special counsel—is above the law and beyond scrutiny by our system of checks and balances.



“Eye on the World” comment: The following list of articles consists of headlines of extra articles, which involve the United States. The articles were not posted, but the headlines give the essence of the story.

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## Finances

- An article by Terence P. Jeffrey titled “Manufacturing Jobs +304,000 Under Trump” was posted at [cnsnews.com](http://cnsnews.com) on May 4, 2018.
- An article by Terence P. Jeffrey titled “Federal Government Jobs Creep Up 1,000 in April” was posted at [cnsnews.com](http://cnsnews.com) on May 5, 2018.
- An article by Susan Jones titled “6,346,000: Number of Unemployed at 17-Year Low” was posted at [cnsnews.com](http://cnsnews.com) on May 4, 2018.
- An article by Joseph Lawler titled “Black, Hispanic Unemployment Rates Hit Record Lows in April” was posted at [washingtonexaminer.com](http://washingtonexaminer.com) on May 4, 2018.
- An article by Terence P. Jeffrey titled “Social Security Beneficiaries Top 62,000,000 for First Time” was posted at [cnsnews.com](http://cnsnews.com) on May 7, 2018.
- An article by Andrea Riquier titled “With No Letup in Home Prices, the California Exodus Surges” was posted at [marketwatch.com](http://marketwatch.com) on May 6, 2018.

## **Illegal immigration**

- An article by Susan Jones titled "Trump: 'Southern Border is Under Siege'; 50,924 Caught/Turned Away Last Month" was posted at cnsnews.com on May 4, 2018.
- An article by Molly Hennessy-Fiske titled "The Great Test for Trump's Border Wall: Texas' Rio Grande Valley" was posted at gazettextra.com on May 4, 2018.
- An article by Anna Giaritelli titled "Border Deployment Leads to Arrest of 1,600 More Illegal Immigrants" was posted at washingtonexaminer.com on May 9, 2018.

## **Comments about weapons**

- A video and an article by Kyle Olson titled "Hollywood Actress [Alyssa Milano] Attends Anti-Gun Protest—With Armed Guards" was posted at theamericanmirror.com on May 5, 2018.
- Looking back to 2016, an article by Matt Vespa titled "Yes, the Australian Model on Gun Control Means Ban and Confiscation" was posted at townhall.com on Jan. 27, 2016.
- Looking back to 2017, an article by David Scharfenberg titled "Hand Over Your Weapons" was posted at bostonglobe.com on Nov. 10, 2017.
- An article by Matt Vespa titled "Democratic Congressman: Let's Force Gun Owners to Turn Over Their AR-15 and Other Rifles" was posted at townhall.com on May 4, 2018.

## **Comments about Trump support**

- An article by Michael Morris titled "Mark Levin: 'Mueller Cannot Be a Power Unto Himself' " was posted at cnsnews.com on May 2, 2018.

## **Comments about Trump opposition**

- An article by Allum Bokhart titled "Facebook Enlists Eric Holder's Law Firm to 'Advise' on Anti-Conservative Bias" was posted at Breitbart.com on May 2, 2018.
- An article by Matthew Continetti titled "The Media is Killing the Democratic Party" (with a subtitle "The Democratic Message has Been Reduced to Russia and Stormy Daniels") was posted at freebeacon.com on May 4, 2018.
- An article by Michael W. Chapman titled "Judicial Watch: Mueller is Doing All He Can to Destroy Trump 2020" was posted at cnsnews.com on May 8, 2018.
- An article by Rachel Marsden titled "Trump's Withdrawal From Iran Deal is a Mistake" was posted at townhall.com on May 9, 2018.

## **News about the media**

- An article by David Limbaugh titled "Sorry, Liberal Media, But You Own Michelle Wolf" was posted at townhall.com on May 4, 2018.
- An article by Tim Graham titled " 'The View' Can't Find Any Evidence of Black Progress Under Trump" was posted at newsbusters.org on May 7, 2018.

- An article by Rich Noyes titled “The Media Get Trumped: President’s Polls Improve Despite 90% Negative Coverage” was posted at [newsbusters.org](http://newsbusters.org) on May 8, 2018.
- An article titled “First Lady Admonishes Reporters to “Be Best” in Their Jobs” was posted at [yahoo.com](http://yahoo.com) on May 8, 2018.
- An article by Kyle Drennen titled “ABC & CBS Focus More on 3rd Place Loser Than GOP Primary Winners [in West Virginia]” was posted at [newsbusters.org](http://newsbusters.org) on May 9, 2018.

### **General interest**

- An article by Keith Griffith and Matthew Wright titled “Life-Threatening Toxic Gas Spews From Hawaii’s Kilauea Volcano As Molten Lava Destroys Homes and Forces 1,700 Terrified Islanders to Flee” was posted at [daily-mail.co.uk](http://daily-mail.co.uk) on May 5, 2018.
- An article by Pam Wright titled “Rare Magnitude 4.5 Earthquake Strikes Off Coast of Louisiana” was posted at [weather.com](http://weather.com) on May 6, 2018.
- An article by Callum Adams titled “Millennials are Turned Off Sex, Study Suggests, With One in Eight Still Virgins at 26” was posted at [telegraph.co.uk](http://telegraph.co.uk) on May 6, 2018.
- An article by Sarah Knapton titled “Criminals Could Alter DNA to Evade Justice With New Genetic Editing Tools” was posted at [telegraph.co.uk](http://telegraph.co.uk) on May 5, 2018.



***Isaiah 55:6-11***—“Seek you the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. ‘For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,’ says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.”