

Eye on the World

Aug. 10, 2019

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 Aug. 10, 2019.

Compiled by Dave Havar

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 Alexandra Ma titled "Jailing Muslims, Burning Bibles, and Forcing Monks to Wave the National Flag: How Xi Jinping Is Attacking Religion in China" was posted at businessinsider.com on Aug. 3, 2019. Following are excerpts of the article.

China is waging an unprecedented war on religion.

Over the past year alone, China has detained Muslim for showing their faith, forced Buddhists to pledge allegiance to the ruling Communist Party, and coerced Christian churches to take down their crosses or shut down.

The Party, which is officially atheist, has for decades attempted to control religious organizations to maintain its dominance.

Its State Administration for Religious Affairs, set up in 1951, allows five religious organizations to exist under the state's control: a Party-sanctioned form of Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Protestantism, and Catholicism.

The state controls these groups' personnel, publications, and finances. Technically, citizens are free to practise religion freely, as long as their sect is officially sanctioned by the government.

Party officials in 2015 introduced the term "sinicization" into official government lexicon, in which they called on Muslim, Buddhist, and Christian leaders to fuse their religions with Chinese socialist thought.

Roderic Wye, a former first secretary in the British Embassy in Beijing, told Business Insider last year: "The party has always had trouble with religion one way or another, because often religious activity tends to imply some sort of organization."

"Once there are organizations, the party is very keen to control them," Wye added.

But under the presidency of Xi Jinping, the government's crackdown appears to have increased at an alarming scale.

In the western region of Xinjiang, the home of the majority-Muslim Uighur ethnic minority, authorities have installed a massive police state and is estimated to have imprisoned up to 1.5 million residents.

Many detainees said they were arrested for showing distinct markers of Islam, like growing a long beard or refusing to drink. Beijing this week claimed it had released most Uighurs from detention camps, but has provided no credible evidence.

Muslims elsewhere in the country are also vulnerable.

Authorities in Beijing have ordered at least 11 halal restaurants and food stalls to remove Arabic script and symbols associated with Islam, Reuters reported this week.

"They said this is foreign culture and you should use more Chinese culture," one restaurant manager, who asked not to be identified, told the news agency. It's not clear if it issued the order to all halal stores in the city.

The Communist Party, which is suspicious of foreign forces in its country, interpret symbols of Islam and the Arabic language as pledging allegiance to something other than the Chinese state.

"They [Chinese authorities] want Islam in China to operate primarily through Chinese language," Darren Byler, a Xinjiang expert, told Reuters.

The majority-Muslim Hui ethnic group, who are scattered around China, also fear that the government will extend its crackdown to them.

In the northern city of Yinchuan, home to the largest concentration of Hui Muslims in the country, authorities have banned the daily call to prayer because it apparently created noise pollution, the South China Morning Post reported last year.

One unnamed imam in Linxia, central China, also told Agence France-Presse: "They want to secularize Muslims, to cut off Islam at the roots. These days, children are not allowed to believe in religion: Only in communism and the party."

The crackdown extends beyond Islam.

Authorities have also targeted Christians outside the state-sanctioned Catholic and Protestant associations by burning Bibles, shutting down churches, and ordering people to renounce their faith.

Some churches allowed to remain open have to install facial-recognition cameras in the building, or risk getting shut down. Party officials censor and add state propaganda to pastors' sermons, Bob Fu, who runs the US rights group ChinaAid, told France24 last year.

Last September, authorities in China and the Vatican signed an agreement in which Pope Francis officially recognized seven Beijing-appointed bishops, who had been excommunicated because they weren't approved by the Holy See. Critics said the deal ceded power from the Holy See to the Communist Party.

China has about 9 million Catholics, 5.7 million of whom worship in state-sponsored churches and organizations, according to Radio Free Asia (RFA).

Additionally, there are about 68 million Protestants in China, but only 23 million of them worship in state-affiliated churches, RFA reported.

Buddhism and Taoism—which has historically deeper roots in East Asia—are not exempt either.

China restricts religious operations in Tibet, and spiritual leader the Dalai Lama remains in his decades-long exile.

Activists say the state monitors the daily activities of major Tibetan monasteries, limits believers' travel and communications, and has routinely detained monks on terrorism charges— not dissimilar from the situation in Xinjiang.

Last summer, China's famous Shaolin Temple—an ancient Buddhist monastery believed to be the birth place of kung fu—raised the Chinese national flag for the first time in its 1,500-year history as part of a government campaign to demonstrate its patriotism.

The Communist Party, keen to maintain its sole grip on power, disapproves of all kinds of grassroots organizations as they are seen to undermine it and disrupt internal stability.

Wye, the former British Embassy official, said China's keenness to exert control over religions is also to limit foreign influence.

"There's always been a concern the Chinese state has had about the extent of foreign influence over religion and the way foreign forces might use to manipulate societal thought," Wye, now an associate fellow at Chatham House, told Business Insider last year.

"This is part of the wider 'China dream' that Xi Jinping has, to make China big and strong again," he added.

"Whatever political and social development China will take in the future, it is to be decided and promulgated by the Chinese Communist Party, and no other source of moral or social authority is tolerated."



An article by Dimitri Alexander Simes titled "Is Russia Worried About China's Military Rise?" was posted at nationalinterest.org on July 30, 2019. Following is the article.

Even with its economy starting to slow down, China's military is still on the rise. Years of higher military spending fueled by high economic growth are starting to manifest themselves in new technologies and newfound assertiveness.

Beijing has made visible strides in its aviation, naval, and missile defense capabilities. Whether it be making territorial claims in the South China Sea or opening up its first overseas military base in Djibouti, China is starting to exert military influence in its near abroad and beyond.

How does Russia view this development?

Even as Moscow and Beijing strengthen their cooperation across all areas, many Western experts warn that China's growing military might will increasingly become a source of tension between the two countries.

The National Interest spoke with several Russian defense analysts and Sinologists to better understand the Russian perspective on China's military rise.

"At the present moment, our national interests coincide with China's national interests so the development of China's armed forces and military technology does not alarm Russia's military command and political leadership," said Yuri Tavrovsky, a professor at the Russian People's Friendship University.

Nevertheless, Tavrovsky admitted that there was some level of apprehension in Moscow about China's military build-up.

"In the long run, we watch China's success and do not rule out any possible scenario because we remember how Beijing's foreign policy changed from the 1950s to the reform period under Deng Xiaoping," he said.

Alexander Lukin, a China scholar at the Higher School of Economics, expressed a similar sentiment.

"My sense is that there is understanding [in the Kremlin] that someday China could pose a problem, but right now these concerns are far less than the concerns regarding the West," he told me.

"Hypothetically speaking, if relations with the West were better, then the approach to China would probably be different," Lukin said. "But since relations are not getting better and are unlikely to get better, the tendency towards closer cooperation with China will continue."

Overall, the Russian analysts *The National Interest* spoke to did not regard China's military buildup as a direct threat. Viktor Murakhovskiy, editor-in-chief of the *Arsenal of the Fatherland* magazine, told me that Beijing's efforts were clearly aimed at Washington, not Moscow.

"If you look at the situation geo-strategically, China does not have an interest in expanding in Russia's direction and has a very clear observable interest in securing its security in the South China Sea and further out in the Pacific Ocean region," he said.

Russia's and China's shared desire to balance the United States greatly shaped how the experts that *The National Interest* spoke to viewed China's newfound military might. Some even saw it as a potential blessing for Moscow. Tavrovsky argued that Russia benefits from a stronger China which can more effectively challenge the United States.

"It was one thing when Russia was the only strategic adversary of the West," he said. "Now that the National Defense Strategy [of the United States] lists two adversaries, all of America's and the West's resources are divided between our two countries."

Tavrovsky noted that the United States' growing emphasis on containing China "to a certain degree lessens the pressure on Russia."

In Washington, a growing number of policymakers and analysts are concerned about Beijing's global military ambitions. By contrast, in Moscow, China is praised as a conservative and responsible military power.

"China so far is behaving in a very restrained manner," Lukin told me.

He argued that with its current financial resources, Beijing could have had numerous overseas bases by now if it wanted to. That China's global military footprint remains small is evidence for Lukin that the Chinese "are more interested in resolving economic problems" than in expanding their military influence abroad.

Lukin concedes that with its mounting global economic interests, China is likely to increasingly rely on military force to safeguard those interests. But he asserted that "even if China will increase its military activities, it will take a hundred years before it can compare to that of the United States."

Furthermore, he stressed that even a more militarily active China is less threatening to Russia than the West because Beijing's foreign policy is less ideological than Washington's.

"We know that the United States bombs other countries because it does not like them, that the United States wants to install democracy all around the world," Lukin said. "China does not want to install Confucianism or Communism in Russia."

Russia played an instrumental role in helping to equip the new Chinese armed forces.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, China was Russia's largest weapons purchaser from 1999 to 2006, with China accounting for as much as 60 percent of Russian arms exports in 2005. However, over the subsequent years, China's share of Russian arms sales fell dramatically. By 2012, it was a mere 8.7 percent.

The primary cause for this rapid decline was growing Russian anxiety over Chinese reverse engineering. For example, during the 1990s Moscow sold

Beijing a number of its elite Su-27 fighters and later even granted China a license to assemble them domestically.

China later canceled the contract and used the technical knowledge it gained from building Su-27 to debut its J-11 fighter, an almost exact copy of the Russian plane.

Arms trade between Russia and China has rebounded somewhat in recent years. Moscow secured a deal in 2015 to supply Beijing with the S-400 anti-aircraft system and Su-35 fighter jets, some of Russia's most advanced weaponry. Russia is also reportedly interested in selling China the Su-57, its new fifth-generation fighter.

Moscow has no illusions about China reverse-engineering Russian arms in the future. Vadim Kozyulin, director of the Asian Security Project at the Moscow-based PIR Center, confessed to me, "When we make deals with China, we always keep in mind that China wants to first of all copy our weapons."

He added, "Russians understand this threat, but the instruments for pushing back against this are not that many."

What then explains Moscow's sudden reversal on arms trade?

According to Lukin, the political fallout with the West over Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 made the Kremlin more willing to accept some of the costs of tighter cooperation with China.

"Based on the Russian government's actions, it clearly made the decision that we do not have any other choice other than to move closer to China," Lukin said.

At the same time, Russian analysts are increasingly confident about their country's ability to maintain its innovative edge in military technology.

Tavrovsky told me that Chinese reverse engineering is less of a concern now than it was in the 1990s because unlike then, "the Russian defense industry and military research today receive sufficient funding from the government."

He explained that the Russian military-industrial complex now "feels itself quite confident" and "sells advanced weapons and military technologies to China under the assumption that our configurations are more advanced than the ones we sell to China and other countries."

Murakhovsky similarly expects the Russian defense industry to remain very much competitive against China's.

"When they say [about China], here is a giant country, with an enormous population, a mighty economy, with an increasingly powerful military—that's all correct," he said.

"But to feel that we are so small and miserable standing next to it, begging them to sell us some military technology—it is not like that."

Murakhovsky added: "China will not surpass Russia in the development of key military systems. We have a formidable military-technical capability, it is continually updated and we look to the future with confidence."

At the same time, all the Russian experts interviewed also acknowledged that Beijing has already outpaced Moscow in certain areas.

Some of the examples they cited included developing a military application for artificial intelligence, shipbuilding, drone-making, and introducing anti-carrier ballistic missiles.

In the not so distant future, China could be the one selling arms to Russia. Murakhovsky told me that he thinks “purchasing certain types of weaponry from China, would be very beneficial for both countries.” In particular, he welcomes the prospect of Russia buying Chinese drones or ships.

“China has a potent shipbuilding industry. They make their frigates and destroyers like hot buns on a stove—produce several things a year and put them out to sea,” Murakhovsky said.

“It is totally possible to order hulls for our prospective ships from China because the experience of our shipbuilding shows that we build very slowly.”

Thus, China’s northern neighbor is trying to make the best out of Beijing’s rise.

While Russia has its reservations about the implications of China’s new military strength and its track-record of reverse engineering foreign technologies, its interest in forming a united front with Beijing to counterbalance the West is even greater.

Only one question remains: will it be this way for long?



“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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- A Reuters article by Andrew Osborn and Polina Devitt titled “Putin to Trump: We’ll Develop New Nuclear Missiles If You Do” was posted at reuters.com on Aug. 5, 2019.
 - An article titled “Iran Unveils Three New Precision-Guided Missiles” was posted at afp.com on Aug. 6, 2019.
 - A Reuters article titled “Australia Won’t Host U.S. Missiles, Prime Minister Says” was posted at reuters.com on Aug. 5, 2019.
 - An article by Ryan Pickrell titled “China Warns It Will Not ‘Sit Idly By’ While the US Moves to Put New Strike Missiles on It’s ‘Doorstep’ ” was posted at businessinsider.com on Aug. 6, 2019.
 - An article titled “The U.S. Might Sanction China’s Largest Oil Company [for Accepting Shipments of Iranian Crude]” was posted at oilprice.com on Aug. 6, 2019.
 - A Reuters article titled “China Continued Iran Oil Imports in July in Teeth of U.S. Sanctions: Analysts” was posted at reuters.com on Aug. 8, 2019.

- An article by Brian Wingfield titled "Saudi Arabia Is Steering Ever More Oil to China, Draining the U.S." was posted at bloomberg.com on Aug. 2, 2019.
- An article by Javier Blas and Will Kennedy titled "Saudis Are Discussing Options With Producers to Halt Oil's Slide" was posted at bloomberg.com on Aug. 8, 2019.
- An article by Kim Hjeimgaard titled "Iran Seizes Another Foreign Oil Tanker, State Media Says" was posted at usatoday.com on Aug. 4, 2019.
- A Reuters article by Tuqa Khalid titled "Iran Says Will Not Tolerate 'Maritime Offences' in Gulf" was posted at reuters.com on Aug. 5, 2019.
- An article by Archana Chaudhary and Ismail Dilawar titled "Two Nuclear-Armed States [China and Pakistan] Accuse India of Harming Sovereignty" was posted at bloomberg.com on Aug. 6, 2019.
- An article by Ashok Sharma and Munir Ahmed titled "Indian PM: Changes in Kashmir Will Free It From 'Terrorism' " was posted at apnews.com on Aug. 8, 2019.
- An article by Vandana Ravikumar titled "India and Pakistan Have Been Fighting Over Kashmir for Decades; Is This Tug of War About to Go Nuclear?" was posted at usatoday.com on Aug. 8, 2019.
- An article by Nick Perry titled "NATO Says It's Not Preparing for An Unlikely US Withdrawal" was posted at apnews.com on Aug. 6, 2019.
- An article by Felicia Schwartz titled "Israel's Left Struggles for Traction in Bid to Topple Netanyahu" was posted at wsj.com on Aug. 4, 2019.
- An article by Rim Haddad and Delili Souleiman titled "Damascus Rejects Turkey-US Plan, Kurds Give Guarded Welcome" was posted at afp.com on Aug. 8, 2019.
- An article by Sebastien Roblin titled "Saudi Arabia Is Paying Billions for the U.S. Navy Ship the Navy Hates" was posted at nationalinterest.org on Aug. 2, 2019.



An article by John Broich titled "Why Voters Need to Know the Differences Between 'Left' and 'Liberal' " was posted at nationalinterest.org on July 30, 2019. Following are excerpts of the article.

According to press accounts, all of the Presidential contenders taking the stage for recent debates rank on a spectrum of more or less "liberal."

While most are liberal, two or three are leftist, not liberal. It's important that voters start distinguishing between those terms because the primary presents them a stark choice between the two.

Leftism and liberalism are distinct political categories with different histories. Understanding the problem of fusing them requires a quick tour of British history from around 1845 to 1980 with just a few stops along the way to the U.S.

Liberalism from 1840s

I teach my British history students that liberalism as a party platform dates from 1840s England, when a group of politicians proposed a set of ideas very different from their Tory and Whig colleagues.

The Tories were the party of Crown and countryside, while the Whigs tended to favor merchant interests over aristocratic landowners. Neither party fit our notions of “left” or “right.”

By the 1840s, neither fit the needs of industrializing Britain, either, according to the new liberal thinkers. England’s population was booming, while people were leaving the farm for the factory and bitterly poor living conditions in cities. Could industrial capitalism work for everyone, the liberals asked, not just industrialists?

Keeping commerce going

These liberal newcomers, people like Richard Cobden and William Gladstone, seized on ideas like those in Scottish economist Adam Smith’s “Wealth of Nations” for answers.

For example, they embraced Smith’s idea that industrial wealth could create prosperity beyond just capitalist owners. They figured that when new factories opened, capitalists bought widgets and hired workers to use them. The workers would have spending money, the theory went, and demand new goods. In response, another capitalist would build a factory to provide these consumer goods and factory widgets, in a virtuous cycle.

The idea was that if you got the cycle going fast enough through free trade rules and low taxes—in those days usually raised during wartime, so wars had to be avoided—the value of a worker would go up while the price of goods would go down.

The main role of government for Britain’s new Liberal Party, then, was just keeping the wheels of commerce greased and staying out of the way.

The new Liberals ultimately replaced the Whigs and led the British government off-and-on for the next 70 years, all the way to World War I. More important, their theories about small government were often predominant across party lines.

Liberals not helping the struggling

That changed somewhere around the turn of the 20th century, when a new party, the Labour Party, arose arguing that the Liberals were not willing to do what was needed to help the struggling.

For generations, hands-off liberalism had allowed poverty to persist, said people like Scottish M.P. Kier Hardie. Adam Smith’s “invisible hand” tended to hand industrialists big payoffs while handing workers scarcely enough to keep them upright on the factory floor. That left “the poor,” Hardie said, “to struggle for existence unaided by the State.”

The new Labour Party replaced the Liberal Party from roughly the mid 1920s, introducing policies that Americans would today consider “leftist.”

Expansion of government

Britain's Labour Party steadily expanded income taxes from the later 1940s onward, created disability insurance and old age pensions, and after World War II oversaw the creation of the National Health Service, providing free health care for all.

The trend of economic interventionism quickly caught on in the United States. In 1932, Democratic presidential candidate Franklin Roosevelt defeated the more liberal Republican Herbert Hoover by promising a massive government stimulus package that would address the Depression's wreckage: The New Deal.

Broadly speaking, this expansion of government-run social welfare programs, a hallmark of the left, continued through World War II and the next 40 years or so.

Even Republicans began to see a larger role for government. Dwight Eisenhower embraced some New Deal policies, expanding Social Security and supporting low-income housing, while Richard Nixon tried to expand federal support for child welfare.

Anti-left backlash

The anti-left backlash came in the late 1970s. Proponents of a return to economic liberalism included University of Chicago economists Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman.

By 1980, President Ronald Reagan was arguing for unfettered capitalism. He wanted to unleash the "magic of the market." In this, Reagan was following Adam Smith's belief in an invisible hand, the supposedly natural power of market demands to sort out the economy and, implicitly, society.

Reagan—like his British counterpart Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher—reduced taxes on the wealthy, fought unions, shrunk the social safety net and privatized national utilities and industries.

This return to liberal ideas, generally called "neoliberalism," crossed party lines in the late 20th century, with U.S. President Bill Clinton's "New Democrats" and U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair's "New Labour" adopting them beginning in the mid-1990s.

Sensing voters approved of Reagan's liberal policies, Clinton, a Democrat, campaigned on reducing welfare and completed George H.W. Bush's North American Free Trade Agreement.

Britain's Tony Blair, meanwhile, dragged the formerly leftist Labour Party toward the liberal, campaigned to "modernize" in his words, the U.K.'s welfare system.

"I believe Margaret Thatcher's emphasis on enterprise was right," he said in 1996. "[P]eople don't want an overbearing state."

Liberal and the left now

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden is squarely liberal in the mode of the Clintons. He was a supporter of NAFTA and championed the market-based Affordable Care Act over universal health care.

Other major contenders remain a bit of a mystery on where they stand on the liberal-left divide. Some observers thought Kamala Harris avoided tipping her hat in her recent biography; while Pete Buttigieg is also hard to pin down.

Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren are left-leaning.

They're both in favor of a national health insurance, and call for an end to private health insurance to make the system work. They're both for tax changes that would take more income from the wealthy in order to bolster Social Security and other welfare. They're both for greater regulations on the banking and lending industry and the creation of post office banking.

Understanding the difference

Voters need to understand the fundamental differences between liberalism and leftism.

It's the difference between a candidate who believes capitalism (with just a little refereeing) will eventually provide what working people need, versus a candidate who believes serious intervention in the capitalist economy is necessary.



An article by Katie Pavlich titled "Five Things President Trump Has Proposed to Stop Mass Shootings" was posted at townhall.com on Aug. 5, 2019. Following is the article.

President Trump addressed the nation Monday morning after two evil cowards carried out separate mass shootings over the weekend.

During his remarks, the President called for action and issued a number of proposals and directives.

■ He's calling on the DOJ and FBI to investigate white supremacy and other forms of hate or terrorism on the internet, with help from social media companies.

"The shooter in El Paso posted a manifesto online consumed by racist hate. In one voice, our nation must condemn racism, bigotry and white supremacy. These sinister ideologies must be defeated. Hate has no place in America—hatred warps the mind, ravages the heart, and devours the soul. We have asked the FBI to identify all further resources they need to investigate and disrupt hate crimes and domestic terrorism, whatever they need," President Trump said. "We must recognize that the internet has provided a dangerous avenue to radicalize disturbed minds and perform demented acts. We must shine light on the dark recesses of the internet, and stop mass murders before they start. The internet, likewise, is used for human trafficking, illegal drug distribution, and so many other heinous crimes. The perils of the internet and social media cannot be ignored and they will not be ignored."

■ He's offering support for Red Flag laws.

"We must make sure that those judged to pose a risk to public safety do not have access to firearms—and that if they do, those firearms can be taken through rapid due process. That is why I have called for 'Red Flag' laws, also known as Extreme Risk Protection Orders," he said.

■ He's asking for Republicans and Democrats to work together.

"In the two decades since Columbine, our nation has watched with rising horror and dread as one mass shooting has followed another, over and over again, decade after decade. We cannot allow ourselves to feel powerless. We can—and will—stop this evil contagion," he said. "In that task, we must honor the sacred memory of those we have lost by acting as one people. Open wounds cannot heal if we are divided. We must seek real, bipartisan solutions, we have to do that in a bipartisan manner, that will truly make America safer and better for all."

"These are just a few of the areas of cooperation that we can pursue. I am open and ready to listen and discuss all ideas that will actually work and make a very big difference," he continued.

■ He wants the death penalty for mass murder and hate crimes.

"I'm also directing the Department of Justice to propose legislation ensuring that those who commit hate crimes and mass murders face the death penalty—and that this capital punishment be delivered quickly, decisively, and without years of needless delay," he said.

■ He wants the mental health system reformed.

"We must reform our mental health laws to better identify mentally disturbed individuals who may commit acts of violence—and make sure those people not only get treatment, but when necessary, involuntary confinement. Mental illness and hatred pulls the trigger, not the gun," he said.

Whether these proposals will work is another story, especially when it comes to Red Flag laws, which often times infringe on a number of constitutional rights.

Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Lindsey Graham announced Monday, shortly after the President's remarks, that a bipartisan agreement has been reached on funding for state based Red Flag laws.



An article by Walter Williams titled "Was Trump Right About Baltimore?" was posted at jewishworldreview.com on Aug. 7, 2019. Following is the article.

Here's what President Donald Trump tweeted about Baltimore's congressman and his city: "Rep. Elijah Cummings has been a brutal bully, shouting and screaming at the great men & women of Border Patrol about conditions at the

Southern Border, when actually his Baltimore district is far worse and more dangerous. His district is considered the worst in the USA.”

“As proven last week during a congressional tour, the border is clean, efficient and well run, just very crowded,” Trump added. Cumming’s “district is a disgusting, rat and rodent infested mess. If he spent more time in Baltimore, maybe he could help clean up this very dangerous & filthy place.”

President Donald Trump’s claims suggesting that Rep. Elijah Cummings’ Baltimore-area district is “considered the worst run and most dangerous” has been called racist. But whether Trump’s claims have any merit is an empirical matter settled by appealing to facts. Let’s look at a few.

In 2018, Baltimore was rated one of the “Rattiest Cities” in the nation by pest control company Orkin. According to Patch Media, although there has been progress in the last few years, Baltimore ranks ninth in rat infestation, down from its sixth position two years ago on Orkin’s list.

What about safety?

In 2017, St. Louis had the nation’s highest murder rate, at 66.1 homicides per 100,000 residents. Baltimore came in second, with 55.8 murders per 100,000 people.

The unpleasant fact is that predominantly black and Democratic-run cities have the worst records of public safety.

The Trace, an independent nonprofit news organization, using 2017 data from the FBI’s Uniform Crime Reporting program, listed the 20 major U.S. cities with the highest homicide rates.

After St. Louis and Baltimore, Detroit was third, with 39.8 murders per 100,000 people. Other cities with high murder rates included New Orleans; Kansas City, Missouri; Cleveland; Memphis, Tennessee; and Newark, New Jersey. With 24.1 murders per 100,000 residents, Chicago ranked ninth in the nation, followed by Cincinnati and Philadelphia. Washington, D.C., was 17th.

What about education in Baltimore?

In 2016, in 13 of Baltimore’s 39 high schools, not a single student scored proficient on the state’s mathematics exam. In six other high schools, only 1% tested proficient in math. In raw numbers, 3,804 Baltimore students took the state’s math test and 14 tested proficient. Citywide, only 15% of Baltimore students passed the state’s English test. Money is not the problem. Of the nation’s 100 largest school systems, Baltimore schools rank third in spending per pupil.

Baltimore’s black students receive diplomas that attest that they can function at a 12th-grade level when in fact they may not be able to do so at a sixth-, seventh- or eighth-grade level. These students and their families have little reason to suspect that their diplomas are fraudulent. Thus, if they cannot pass a civil service exam, they will accuse the exam of being racist.

■ When they get poor grades in college and flunk out, they will attribute their plight to racism.

The information that these black students have is that they, just as white students, have a high school diploma and the only explanation they see for unequal outcomes is racism. The same story of poor education outcomes can be told about most cities with large black populations.

■ The problems that black people confront are immune to who is the president of the U.S.

Those problems were not ameliorated when Barack Obama was president. Those problems are not going to be ameliorated by Trump's presidency, though the black unemployment rate is considerably lower.

■ The lesson for black people is that politicians and government handouts are not solutions.

If they were, at a public expenditure that tops \$22 trillion over the past half-century, black people would not be confronted with today's problems.



An article by Burt Prelutsky titled "Lunacies of the Left" was posted at patriotpост.us on Aug. 3, 2019. Following are excerpts of the article.

I wish there were a few of me because I'm finding it harder and harder to singlehandedly keep up with all the nonsense spewing forth from the Democrats while also having to keep track of their blatant hypocrisy.

■ Bernie Sanders

Take Bernie Sanders. Please! First, he ordered his campaign staff to stop letting the world know he wasn't paying them \$15-an-hour even though he kept insisting that paying any less than that was immoral, and then said he would pay the \$15, but that he'd be cutting their hours, which would mean they'd lose their health care benefits.

The old schmuck sure is sounding more and more like the cold-hearted, exploitative, Capitalists he's always railing against and less and less like a warm and fuzzy Socialist.

He is a classic example of "Do as I say, not as I do."

He also remind me of the 70% of my fellow Jews who oppose the Second Amendment and will always vote for Socialists, even the anti-Semitic ones like Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib, although over the past century no group of people have needed guns more or suffered more cruelly at the hands of Socialist dictators Joseph Stalin and Adolph Hitler.

That is what makes their infatuation with Sen. Sanders so predictable and so infuriating.

■ Barnyard election

Speaking of Socialism, John Lewis passed along one of the most succinct definitions of the madness I have ever come across: "If there was a barnyard election, the pigs would always vote for the person who feeds them, even though he is the same person who is going to slaughter them one day."

■ No more showing of hands at debates

The Democrats are so fearful that their debates will cost them more votes than they garner, they have decided there will be no calling for a show of hands at next week's event. That's because in hindsight, they discovered that when in response to how many of them would provide illegal aliens with tax-funded healthcare, all 10 idiots on stage, including Joe Biden, raised their hands.

■ Closed borders until they needed votes

Over the past dozen years, Chuck Schumer, Nancy Pelosi and Barack Obama, all joined the Clintons in calling for our borders to be shut down and illegal aliens to be kept out. But, of course, that was before the Democrats realized they were losing voters among blacks and blue-collar whites and needed to replace them by giving driver licenses to illegals as a way of garnering their votes.

■ Prevented DNA testing

It was recently disclosed that the combination of Janet Napolitano and Eric Holder prevented Homeland Security from using DNA testing to determine the criminal status of illegal aliens entering the country.

And these are some of the same people who accuse President Trump of treason.

■ Admitting error

I don't have a problem of admitting when I'm wrong, as when I assumed Mitt Romney would defeat Barack Obama in 2012 and, again, in 2016, when I figured that Mrs. Clinton would win the election.

■ Tooting own horn

So I don't mind tooting my own horn when I actually guess right, especially when I appear to be one of very few.

In the first instance, I was certain that the widely heralded Arab Spring would prove disastrous. In the second, I said that Turkey was not an ally of the western democracies and that, under Recep Erdogan, was an Islamic theocracy and had no place in NATO.

This guess has been borne out by Erdogan's cozying up to Vladimir Putin, the very man that the NATO nations feel most threatened by.

■ Illegal aliens can sue

In the madhouse that America is fast becoming, American citizens can't sue sanctuary cities or states if they're the victims of crimes committed by illegal aliens who have no right to be in the country, let alone constitute a protected class, but illegal aliens can sue the authorities for essentially any reason under the sun.

■ Loony First Step Act

Another protected class are prison inmates. Thanks to the loony First Step Act, a piece of congressional legislation that has already led to 2,000 convicted felons being released because of over-crowded prisons.

Although the bill was supposed to be limited to non-violent criminals, among the 2,000 are 59 murderers, 106 robbers, 239 rapists and 496 who were doing time for crimes involving guns and explosives.

A brighter solution would be to build more and bigger prisons. And don't we keep hearing that infrastructure is something that members of both parties agree we need? Would it really constitute a hardship if they added prisons to highways, bridges and airports?

John Kennedy (R, LA), one of the very few senators with a functioning brain and a sense of humor, told Tucker Carlson how it is that the First Step Act was passed 87-12: "Some votes can only be explained by the fact that a majority of fools are on one side."

He added that he and Sen. Tom Cotton (R, AR) were two of the few who actually read the bill and understood that in spite of the sales pitch that only low-level, non-violent criminals would be let out, rapists and killers would soon be back on the street.

■ Kamala confused by numbers

Kamala Harris, in her desire to offer more freebies than the other contenders for the Democratic nomination, claims she will not only come up with the \$35 trillion to pay for federal health care for all, including illegal aliens, but do so without raising taxes on the middle-class.

Apparently, she believes that she can come up with that much money by taxing the super-rich down to their skivvies. She probably does believe that's possible because she is as stupid as Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and has an equally weak grasp of economics.

It has long been my belief that liberals are easily confused by numbers, especially when it comes to millions, billions and trillions. It explains why Maxine Waters once insisted that a piece of legislation would put 500 million Americans out of work. Quite a trick in a nation with only 300 million people at the time.

The fact is that even if Sen. Harris took away all the money from every billionaire, not only in America, but in the world, you would only wind up with a paltry few trillion, not nearly the 35 trillion her fantasy requires.

■ Handing out ghost-written books

I am always amazed when I hear that people like Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders have become multi-millionaires thanks to their book sales.

I know that the DNC bought hundreds of thousand copies of the ghost-written books by Bill and Hillary Clinton and handed them out to donors. But do they do the same for politicians who never resided in the White House?

It's bad enough that I've written eight books, including books of political commentary, interviews with notables, a funny book about angels and an autobiography, and not one of them has ever sold a thousand copies.

But being out-sold by politicians who probably never even read the books they allegedly wrote really hurts.



An article by Burt Prelutsky titled "Miraculous Waters" was posted at patriot-post.us on Aug. 5 2019. Following are excerpts of the article.

At first glance, you wouldn't think that the Red Sea, the English Channel and the East River, had very much in common, asides from their being rather small bodies of water.

But, all three have been the place where divine intervention clearly seems to have taken place.

In the first instance, we are told that God parted the waters so that the Jewish people could escape their bondage in Egypt. In the second, a large portion of the English army was trapped by the Nazis at Dunkirk. Thanks to the Germans pausing before attack, hundreds of thousands of Brits lived to fight another day when every Englishman with a boat came to the rescue.

A lesser known miracle took place when George Washington and his 9,000 troops were defeated at the Battle of Brooklyn by General William Howe's 34,000 redcoats.

In an article titled "George Washington and the Hand of God" by John White, he writes that a combination of bad weather and poor judgment by Gen. Howe prevented him from advancing the mile and a half of open terrain and winning the war for England. Howe decided to postpone the final assault until the following morning.

In the meantime, one of Washington's officers based in Manhattan commandeered enough small boats to enable a fair number of the trapped troops to escape from Brooklyn under the cloak of darkness.

But with the coming of the dawn, the Brits could have brought in their own ships to cut off the full retreat. But once again Providence came to the rescue when a heavy fog rolled into Brooklyn, whereas it was clear and sunny in Manhattan.

Gen. Washington had helped carry off the deception by ordering that camp fires be kept going, fooling Howe into thinking the Americans would be easy pickings in the morning.

When the fog finally lifted, the only soldiers left in Brooklyn were British.

There was yet one more watery miracle to be played out. It occurred at Yorktown. This time it was the Americans who had the upper hand, and it was General Cornwallis who hoped to beat a strategic retreat across the York River. But at the very moment that escape was in the offing, a tremendous storm began, driving the English boats down the river.

Cornwallis had no option but to surrender.

There's no doubt that Gen. Washington was a powerful adversary. But combined with God, the Brits never really had a chance.

■ Biden is not shining

Joe Biden never struck me as terribly impressive, either as a politician or a man, but he seems to be going out of his way to make a fool of himself.

It wasn't that long ago that he was challenging President Trump to a fist fight. Last week, he challenged him to an arm wrestling contest.

That's a lot of big talk. But as I recall the first Democratic debate, Biden couldn't even hold his own against Kamala Harris in a pissing match.

■ Still smearing Trump

The left-wing cable nitwits are still smearing Trump as a racist for suggesting that the four anti-American shrews in Congress should go home, improve things in Boston, Detroit, the Bronx and Somalia, and then come back and tell us all how they did it.

It sounded like good advice to me and not the slightest bit offensive.

■ Kamala's past

A wise guy pointed out that Kamala Harris finds it bizarre that Mike Pence refuses to meet with women unless Mrs. Pence is present, adding: "But if other men followed the Vice President's example, Kamala Harris wouldn't be in the Senate today."

That's a reference to the fact that in her 20s, she began her climb up the California political ladder by being the mistress of the Speaker of the State Assembly, Willie Brown, who was 60 and married at the time.

■ Wrong guesses

Nancy Thorner sent me a list of wrong guesses that dwarf even some of my own.

In 1946, Darryl Zanuck, the studio boss of 20th Century-Fox, announced: "Television won't last because people will soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night."

In 1921, when David Sarnoff approached friends to invest in something called radio, he was told "The wireless music box has no imaginable commercial value. Who would pay for a message sent to no one in particular?"

In 1959, IBM let Xerox know that "The potential market for copying machines is 5000 at most, and therefore there's no market large enough to justify production."

In 1878, Sir William Preece, Chief Engineer of the British Post Office, declared "The Americans have need of the telephone, but we do not. We have plenty of messenger boys."

In 1903, the president of the Michigan Savings Bank advised Henry Ford's lawyer against investing in the Ford Motor Car Co., "The horse is here to stay, but the automobile is only a novelty, a fad."

■ Hindsight

This astounding lack of foresight reminds me of a cartoon Steve Maikoski passed along. It shows a dog seated in an optometrist's office having its eyes tested. On the wall is a chart showing the rear ends of nine dogs. The patient is reading them off: "Husky, Collie, Beagle, Afghan, Poodle, Pug, Yorkie, Maltese, Corgi."

Standing behind him, Dr. Dog gives him the good news: "Your hind-sight is 20/20."

■ Unusual observations

Bert Black sent along a number of questions and observations, including "Do twins ever realize that one of them was unplanned?" "Which letter in 'scent' is silent, the 's' or the 'c'?" "Intentionally losing a game of rock/paper/scissors is just as hard as trying to win." "Your future self is watching you right now through memories." "Many animals probably need glasses, but nobody knows it."

In the meantime, Joe Neuner wants to know "whether a hearse carrying a corpse can drive in the carpool lane" and "How did the man who made the first clock know what time it was?"



"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.

Finances

■ An article by Katie Pavlich titled "Woke to Broke: Gillette Loses Billions After Anti-Men, Transgender Shaving Ads" was posted at townhall.com on Aug. 1, 2019.

■ An article titled "Lowe's to Cut Thousands of Jobs As It Seeks to Outsource Workers" was posted at wabcny.com on Aug. 2, 2019.

■ A Reuters article titled "Walgreens to Close About 200 Stores in United States" was posted at reuters.com on Aug. 6, 2019.

- A Reuters article by Hallie Gu and Tom Daly titled "U.S. Farmers Suffer 'Body Blow' As China Slams Door on Farm Purchases" was posted at reuters.com on Aug. 5, 2019.
- A Reuters article by Susan Heavey titled "Trump Vows to Help Farmers As China Halts U.S. Agricultural Purchases" was posted at reuters.com on Aug. 6, 2019.
- An article by Steve Karnowski titled "[U.S. Agriculture Secretary Sonny] Perdue: US Farmers Will Regain Markets Lost in Trade War" was posted at apnews.com on Aug. 7, 2019.
- A Reuters article titled "Mexican Trade Chief Slams U.S. Demand on Tomato Inspections As 'Unacceptable' " was posted at reuters.com on Aug.. 7, 2019.

Green New Deal

- An article by Elad Vaida titled "Hey AOC and Bernie Sanders: If Medicare Is for All, Why Not Chevrolets for All?" was posted at nationalinterest.org on Aug. 2, 2019.
- An article by Catie Edmondson titled "Embattled Ocasio-Cortez Aides [Saikat Chakrabarti and Corbin Trent] Are Leaving Capitol Hill" was posted at nytimes.com on Aug. 2, 2019.
- An article by Mary Kay Linge and Jon Levine titled "Feds Probing AOC's Chief of Staff Saikat Chakrabarti After Sudden Resignation" was posted at nypost.com on Aug. 3, 2019.
- An article by Rachel Greszler titled "Sorry AOC and Bernie: A Mandated \$15 An Hour Wage Would Backfire" was posted at nationalinterest.org on Aug. 3, 2019.

Illegal immigration

- An article by Todd Garrin titled " 'Fox & Friends Co-Host [Brian Kilmeade] Defends Trump's Use of the Word 'Invasion' for Border Crossings: 'It's Not Anti-Hispanic, It's a Fact' " was posted at yahoo.com on Aug. 6, 2019.
- An article by Nick Squires titled "Italy to Fine Migrant Rescue Boats Up to 1 Million [Euro] As Tough Salvini Law Passes" was posted at telegraph.co.uk on Aug. 6, 2019.

Comments about weapons

- An article by Brennan Weiss titled "Only 3 Countries in the World Protect the Right to Bear Arms in Their Constitutions: the US, Mexico and Guatemala" was posted at businessinsider.com on Aug. 6, 2019.
- An article by Greg Stohr titled "Supreme Court Weighs Second Amendment Showdown After Mass Shootings" was posted at bloomberg.com on Aug. 6, 2019.
- An article by Sonya Mansoon titled "Texas to Enact at Least 9 Pro-Gun Laws in Wake of El Paso's Mass Shooting" was posted at time.com on Aug. 6, 2019.
- An article by Jessica Campisi titled "Demand for Bulletproof Backpacks Surging in the Wake of Shootings: Report" was posted at thehill.com on Aug. 6, 2019.

Comments about Trump support

■ An article by the cnsnews.com staff titled "Ted Cruz in El Paso: 'This Murderer Was a Bigoted, Hateful, White Supremacist Terrorist' " was posted at cnsnews.com on Aug. 8, 2019.

Comments about Trump opposition

■ An article by Katie Pavlich titled "AOC: People Have No Choice But to Violently Riot" was posted at townhall.com on Aug. 1, 2019.

■ An article by Rachel Frazin titled "Biden Is Only Top 2020 Democrat Leading Trump in Ohio: Poll" was posted at thehill.com on July 25, 2019.

■ An article by Susan Jones titled "Biden: We Will Ban Assault Weapons and Create a Buy-Back Program" was posted at cnsnews.com on Aug. 8, 2019.

■ An article titled "Joe Biden Says Trump Uses the Language of 'White Nationalists' " was posted at marketwatch.com on Aug. 6, 2019.

■ An article by Zamira Rahim titled "Elizabeth Warren Calls Trump a White Supremacist" was posted at independent.co.uk on Aug. 8, 2019.

■ An article by David Axelrod titled "Elizabeth Warren Is Running a Brilliant Campaign" was posted at cnn.com on Aug. 3, 2019.

■ An article by Brendan Bures titled "Bernie Sanders Tells Joe Rogan He'll Legalize Marijuana If President" was posted at yahoo.com on Aug. 7, 2019.

■ An article by Amy Taxin and Michael R. Blood titled "Democrats Now No. 1 in Former California GOP Stronghold [Orange County]" was posted at apnews.com on Aug. 7, 2019.

■ An article by David French titled "The Dangerous Folly of Donald Trump's Infatuation With Kim Jong-Un" was posted at nationalreview.com on Aug. 2, 2019.

Kamala Harris

■ An article by Glenn Harian Reynolds titled "While Democrats Get crazier, Gabbard Hits Harris Criticism Right on the Nose" was posted at usatoday.com on Aug. 5, 2019.

■ An article by Nate Silver titled "Polls Since the Second Debate Show Kamala Harris Slipping" was posted at fivethirtyeight.com on Aug. 7, 2019.

Robert Francis (Beto) O'Rourke

■ An article by Jeff Poor titled "Beto Ties Trump to El Paso Shooting—'He Is a Racist, and He Stokes Racism in This Country' " was posted at Breitbart.com on Aug. 3, 2019.

■ An article by Dominique Mosbergen titled "At El Paso Vigil, O'Rourke Says Trump 'Traffics in Hatred' With His 'Third Reich' Rhetoric" was posted at huffpost.com on Aug. 5, 2019.

News about the media

- An article by Lee Moran titled “*New York Daily News Goes Where The [New York] Times Wouldn’t on It’s Front Page [With Hard-Hitting Headline]*” was posted at huffpost.com on Aug. 6, 2019.
- An article by Jordan Culver and Adrianna Rodrigiez titled “ ‘Headline Was Flawed’: New York Times Changed Headline About Trump Speech After Backlash” was posted at usatoday.com on Aug. 6, 2019.
- An article titled “ ‘Morning Joe’ Co-Host Mika Brzezinski Slams Ivanka Trump for ‘A Lack of Intellectual Ability’ ” was posted at yahoo.com on Aug. 7, 2019.
- An article by Lindsey Ellefson titled “Breitbart’s Audience Has Dropped 72% Since Trump Took Office—As Other Right-Wing Sites Have Gained” was posted thewrap.com on Aug. 7, 2019.

General interest

- An article by Andrew Michalsen titled “The Fasting Cure Is No Fad” was posted at wsj.com on Aug. 1, 2019.
- An article by Bruce Schreiner titled “Rand Paul Undergoes Lung Surgery Stemming From [2017] Assault [Outside His Home” was posted at apnews.com on Aug. 5, 2019.
- An article by Aaron Calvin titled “Baby Born at 23 Weeks Weighing 13 Ounces Lived for ‘25 Days of Love and Happiness’ ” was posted at usatoday.com on Aug. 6, 2019.
- A Reuters article titled “Trump Says He May Commute Sentence of Former Illinois Governor [Rod Blagojevich]” was posted at reuters.com on Aug. 8, 2019.
- A Reuters article titled “Nets’ [Kevin] Durant: Warriors Not to Blame for Torn Achilles” was posted at reuters.com on Aug. 7, 2019.



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.”